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Oral Charms in Structural and Comparative Light

Заговорные тексты в структурном и сравнительном освещении

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Charms, Charmers and Charming

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Российский государственный гуманитарный университет
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Материалы конференции
Комиссии по вербальной магии
Международного общества по изучению фольклорных нарративов
27–29 октября 2011 года
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Russian State University for the Humanities
Marc Bloch Russian-French Center
for Historical Anthropology

Institute of Linguistics, Russian Academy of Sciences

Institute of Slavic Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences

Oral Charms in Structural and Comparative Light

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Preface

This volume contains papers submitted to the international conference 'Oral Charms in Structural and Comparative Light' which is to take place on 27–29 October 2011 at the Russian State University for the Humanities (Moscow).

The conference is organized by the International Society for Folk Narrative Research's (ISFNR) Committee on Charms, Charmers and Charming, the Marc Bloch Russian-French Center for Historical Anthropology of the Russian State University for the Humanities, the Institute of Linguistics of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the Institute of Slavic Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The primary aim of the Committee on Charms, Charmers and Charming is the coordination of charm and incantation studies in different countries, the development of methods for their structural and typological description, and the publishing of international and local charms-indexes. With this goal in mind the Committee annually organizes conferences and prepares their proceedings for publication. Previous conferences took place in London (2003, 2005), Pecs (2007), Tartu (2008), Athens (2009), and Bucharest (2010). The activities of the Committee are covered on its internet-site: http://www.isfnr.org/files/committeecharms.html.

The conference will be devoted to problems of systematization and structural and comparative analysis of charms in different ethnolinguistic traditions, including Slavic, German, and Romance. The following questions were proposed for discussion: geography and history of the charms tradition, distribution of various charm types, possibilities for systematizing national charms corpora and for creating charms-indexes, charms and analogous verbal forms (Christian prayers and prayer-like charms, apocryphal prayers, curses, etc.), charms in oral and manuscript traditions, magical inscriptions on various objects, medieval amulets with charms in the archaeological record, social functioning of the charm tradition, charms and their performers, the contribution of the church and clerics to the diffusion of charms, differences between the Catholic and the Protestant churches in this respect, as well as between the Orthodox church and non-Christian confessions, psycho-social sources of suggestion; how do charms work? why are they relevant? practices of 'charming with words' in the contemporary society, recording charming acts on video and the relevance of these materials to charm studies.

Papers for this conference were submitted by researchers active in the fields of folklore and medieval literature from Belgium, Croatia, Greece, Estonia,

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Finland, Hungary, Northern Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Romania, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and USA.

The members of the Organising Committee are: *Dr. Tatyana A. Mikhailova*, Leading Research Fellow at the Department of Indo-European languages of the Institute of Linguistics RAS; *Dmitry S. Nikolayev*, Postgraduate Student at the Centre for Typological and Semiotic Folklore Studies RSUH; *Dr. Jonathan Roper*, Chair of the ISFNR's Committee on Charms, Charmers and Charming, Senior Researcher at the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore of the University of Tartu (Estonia); *Dr. Irina A. Sedakova*, Leading Research Fellow at the Department of Typology and Comparative Linguistics of the Institute of Slavic Studies RAS; *Alevtina A. Soloviova*, Research Fellow at the Centre for Typological and Semiotic Folklore Studies RSUH; *Dr. Andrei L. Toporkov* (Chair), Correspondent-Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Lecturer at the Marc Bloch Russian-French Center for Historical Anthropology RSUH.

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Предисловие

В настоящем издании собраны доклады, предоставленные для международной научной конференции «Заговорные тексты в структурном и сравнительном освещении».

Время и место проведения конференции: 27–29 октября 2011, Российский государственный гуманитарный университет (Москва).

Организаторы конференции: Комиссия по заговорам Международного общества по изучению фольклорных нарративов (ISFNR), Российско-французский центр исторической антропологии им. М. Блока РГГУ, Институт языкознания РАН, Институт славяноведения РАН.

Комиссия по заговорам Международного общества по изучению фольклорных нарративов (ISFNR) ставит своей целью координацию изучения магического фольклора в разных странах, разработку методов системного описания и изучения заговорной традиции, подготовку региональных и международных указателей заговоров. С этой целью Комиссия ежегодно проводит конференции и готовит к изданию их материалы. Предыдущие конференции состоялись в Лондоне (2003, 2005), Пече (2007), Тарту (2008), Афинах (2009), Бухаресте (2010). С деятельностью Комиссии можно познакомиться на ее сайте: http://www.isfnr.org/files/committee charms.html.

Конференция посвящена проблемам систематизации, структурного и сравнительного изучения заговорно-заклинательных текстов разных этноязыковых традиций, в том числе славянских, германских и романских. На обсуждение вынесены вопросы: география и история заговорной традиции; распространение отдельных заговорных типов; возможности систематизации национальных корпусов заговоров и составления указателей; заговоры и смежные формы (церковные молитвы и заклинания, апокрифические молитвы, проклятия и т.д.); заговоры в устных и рукописных традициях; магические надписи на различных носителях; средневековые амулеты с заговорами в археологических материалах; социальное функционирование заговорной традиции; тексты заговоров и их исполнители; роль церкви и священнослужителей в распространении заговоров, различия в этом отношения между католицизмом, протестантизмом, православием и нехристианскими религиями; психосоциальные источники суггестии; как работают заговорные тексты? каковы причины их актуальности?; практики «зачаровывания» словом в современном обществе; видеофиксации заговорно-заклинательных актов и их значение для изучения традиции магического слова.

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Для сборника материалов конференции прислали свои доклады специалисты в области изучения фольклора и истории средневековых литератур из Бельгии, Великобритании, Венгрии, Греции, Сев. Ирландии, Латвии, Нидерландов, России, Румынии, США, Финляндии, Хорватии, Швейцарии, Швеции, Эстонии.

Оргкомитет конференции: *Т.А. Михайлова*, доктор филологических наук, ведущий научный сотрудник отдела индоевропейских языков Института языкознания РАН; *Д.С. Николаев*, аспирант Центра типологии и семиотики фольклора РГГУ; *Дж. Ропер*, доктор философии, председатель Комиссии по вербальной магии Международного общества по изучению фольклорных нарративов, главный научный сотрудник Кафедры эстонского и сравнительного фольклора Тартуского университета (Эстония); *И.А. Седакова*, доктор филологических наук, ведущий научный сотрудник Отдела типологии и сравнительного языкознания Института славяноведения РАН; *А.А. Соловьева*, сотрудник Центра типологии и семиотики фольклора РГГУ; *А.Л. Топорков* (председатель), член-корреспондент РАН, доктор филологических наук, профессор Российско-французского центра исторической антропологии им. Марка Блока.

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ИСТОРИЧЕСКИЕ И ЖАНРОВЫЕ ТРАНСФОРМАЦИИ ЗАГОВОРОВ ОТ ЛИХОРАДКИ

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ALEXEY LYAVDANSKY
Moscow, Russia

Syriac Charms in Near Eastern Context: Tracing the Origin of Formulas

Syriac charms are known to the scholarly world since the middle of the 19th c. when George Percy Badger, Anglican missionary and orientalist, after his three-year travel to Mesopotamia and Kurdistan, published a book dedicated to the Assyrian Church of the East (Badger 1852). However, the study of these texts began much later, with the publication of the Syriac amulet from the collection of the Semitic Museum at the Harvard University (Hazard 1893). It would be unfair to say that these texts are neglected by scholars, but there are many issues which remain to be explored. One of the main problems connected with the study of Syriac charms is that they are known mostly to orientalists and, as other Near Eastern magic texts, are rarely analyzed in the comparative and typological perspective. One of the aims of the present paper, which is in its methodology comparative, though restricted to the Near Eastern context, is to introduce these texts to the community of scholars dealing mostly with European charms.

At the moment there are not less than forty manuscripts with Syriac charms in libraries and private collections around the world, but published texts constitute but a very small part of this corpus[1]. There are two different types of these manuscripts. The more widespread type is a book, usually of a small format, containing several dozens of charms of different type. These booklets were apparently copied and kept by priests of the Assyrian Church of the East, and they could be used as compendiums of charms for variuos purposes. Some of these charms could be recited or copied from this book on certain specific occasions – illness, dangerous endeavor like travel or war etc. These booklets were also used by lay people as protective amulets, for example, being kept under a pillow[2]. Another type of manuscripts consists of amulets in the form of a scroll with a much lesser amount of text, usually not more than

[1] The published material includes three books of charms (Gollancz 1912), three scroll amulets (Hazard 1893; Hunter 1993, 1999), and a small number of separate charms (Nau 1907; Hunter 1987, 1992).

[2] As told me by late Michael Sado, an owner of a collection of Syriac charms.

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four or five charms. The scrolls were created for individual use: they were generally worn wrapped around the body under clothes. Syriac charm manuscripts date to the 18th–20th cc. Most of them were created and copied in Kurdistan, the original settlement area of Assyrians (Syriac-speaking Christians who belong to the Assyrian Church of the East).

The manuscripts in question are not the only type of recorded Syriac charms. There are much older specimens of verbal magic in Syriac which are written on clay bowls (Hamilton 1971) and on animal skins (Gignoux 1987). These texts belong to another tradition which was probably invented by Jews or Mandaeans in antiquity and later apparently adopted by Syriac-speaking, or, more correctly, Syriac-writing people. This tradition is represented mainly by Aramaic magic bowls from Mesopotamia (ca. 5th–7th cc. CE). There are certain similarities between this older tradition of magic bowls and skin and metal amulets from Mesopotamia-Syria cultural area (ca. 5th–7th cc. CE) and the later tradition of manuscripts from Kurdistan (18th–20th cc.). It is also hard to imagine that Syriac charm manuscripts were not being created earlier than 18th c.[3]

The sources of the tradition of Syriac charms as registered in manuscripts are multiple. For obvious reasons they are not restricted only to cultures of Ancient Near East or medieval Middle East. Since this magical tradition had evolved within a Christian culture, it incorporated popular figures, motives and formulas from other Christian traditions, for example Byzantine. As characteristic probably of most magical traditions, it was open almost to any influence of the adjacent cultures. In this paper I will concentrate on the genealogy of two formulas which occur in Syriac charms and have Medieval and Ancient Near Eastern parallels.

1. '*Gabriel on his* [protected person's] *right and Michael on his left*' (Cod A §7; IOM Syr. 4, 11r: 14 – 11v: 1)

This formula usually occurs in charms entitled "Before the authorities" and is an integral part of a longer formula as exemplified by the following text: "Gabriel (being) on his right and Michael on his left, I Am That I Am, Al-

[3] The absence of earlier manuscripts of Syriac charms in collections and libraries may be explained by the fact that this type of texts was certainly not an object of constant copying in monastic scriptoriums and careful preservation in libraries, as it happened with the writings of Church Fathers or the Bible (Peshitta). The copying of charms by local priests was apparently tolerated by church authorities but not welcomed. As the existing corpus demonstrates, the copying of charms was only possible within the Assyrian Church of the East, among Syrian-speaking Christians.

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mighty God, Adonai (being) above his head, the Cherubim in front of him, and the Seraphim behind him" (Cod A §7). This longer formula and the motives contained in it are widespread in Ancient Near Eastern magical texts (Krämer 1928) and European Christian magic (Топорков 2005:221–2).

According to Louis Ginzberg, the similar formula occurs several times in ancient Jewish sources. My main concern here is the spacial orientation of the angels. As it appears, the most common orientation of (arch)angels in respect to the center in Jewish sources is the following: Michael to the right, Gabriel to the left[4]. In addition to a number of ancient Jewish sources it is also found in the Ashkenazic (Franco-Germanic) Jewish prayerbooks (in the text of the bedtime prayer) in the form very similar to the Syriac text in question. The angels are positioned around the praying person: 'May Michael be at my right hand, Gabriel at my left; in front of me, Uriel, behind me, Raphael; and above my head the Presence of God' (Sacks 2009:300).

The shift in orientation of Michael and Gabriel, attested in Syriac charms manuscripts, may have happened for several reasons, but now I want to point out some Arabic sources which exhibit the same orientation of angels as the Syriac charms. One of such texts was discussed by famous arabist Ignaz Goldziher, who endeavored to demonstrate the presence of Jewish influence in Arabic magical texts (Goldziher 1894). He quotes from an Arabic legend about the fight of 'Ali (the forth caliph) with the dragon, published by René Basset (Basset 1893). In one version of this legend 'Ali overcomes the demonic forces with the help of incantation, which includes a number of quotations from Koran and the following formula: 'I spell you by the Name of God, by Ehye Asher Ehye Adonay Tsvaot El Shadday, Gabriel is to my right, Michael – to my left, Israfil is behind me and Allah appears before me' (Goldziher 1894:359). A. Kohut testifies that this orientation of angels in Arabic sources is not casual, as it is recorded e.g. in al-Baydawi's (ob. ca. 1316–7) commentary to Sura II, 91 (Kohut 1866:30).

Taking into account that Syriac-speaking Christians were in a lasting contact with Arabic-speaking people, e.g. Kurds, it is no surprise that ancient Jewish protective formula could be borrowed by Syriac Christians from Arabic written or oral sources. The presence of Arabic influence on Syriac charms tradi-

[4] E.g., 'Four classes of ministering angels minister and utter praise before the Holy One, blessed be He: the first camp (led by) Michael on His right, the second camp (led by) Gabriel on His left, the third camp (led by) Uriel before Him, and the fourth camp (led by) Raphael behind Him; and the Shekhinah of the Holy One, blessed be He, is in the centre' (Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer 4; Friedlander 1916:22).

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tion is undisputed since a number of manuscripts contain a charm built on Arabic formulas (Cod A §19; NYPL Syr. 2 f. 9r).

2. ‘*Mother who strangles children*’ (Cod B §7; Cod C §2, §25)
This formula usually appears in a typical text where a female demon reveals her names to a protective figure who is represented in Syriac charms by Mar ‘Avdisho (Odisho)[5]: ‘My first name (is) Geos[6]: second, Edilta: . . . eleventh, Zarduch, Lilita, Malvita, and the Strangling Mother of boys’ (Gollancz 1912: lxix). The female demonic figure in this story, at least in the aspect of child-killing, is a representative of the well-known type of demons sometimes called ‘a child-stealing witch’ (Gaster 1900), but probably it is better to use a more general label ‘child-harming’ or ‘child-killing’ female demon. The concept of such a demonic figure is probably universal, but most of the material we have is from Mediterranean, Middle East and Europe. According to J. Spier, who follows in many respects the earlier work of A. Barb, it is exemplified by Mesopotamian Lilitu and Lamashtu, Jewish Lilith, Greek Gello and Byzantine Gylou (Spier 1993; Barb 1966). The specific story associated with this figure was analyzed in many studies and is known as the ‘Sisinnios/Melitene type’ according to the classification of R. Greenfield (Greenfield 1989).

As regards Syriac charms and their Near Eastern context, it is interesting to note the ‘strangling’ capacity of this personage. First of all, in Syriac charms manuscripts this feature of a female demon had been fossilised in a certain formula which appears almost invariably with the same wording as *ʼmʼ ḥnwqtʼ dṭlyʼ* ‘mother who strangles children’. As most of the texts attest, this phrase is used in Syriac charms as one of the designations of a female demon who may have different names, including Lilita, Malwita, Zardukh and many other names. The tradition of Mesopotamian magic bowls, most closely related to Syriac charms linguistically and geographically, exhibits the same concept: ‘Just as there was a lilith who strangled (*dḥnqʼ*) human beings...’ (Naveh&Shaked 1998:159); ‘I adjure you, Haldas the lilith... who... strikes and kills and bewitches and throttles (*wḥʼnqʼ*) boys and girls’ (Yamaouchi 1967:231)[7].

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[5] The story is certainly belongs to ‘the Michael type’ of Gylou story (Greenfield 1989).

[6] One version has ‘Gelos,’ and it is tempting to compare this name to Gylou, a female demon, mentioned e.g. in a Byzantine text *peri daimonon* (Spier 1993:35).

[7] Lilith is written with lowercase letter because it is often understood in Mesopotamian bowls not as a personal name, but as a designation of a species of demons.

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Probably the same idea is found in the incantation from Arslan Tash (Syria, ca. 7th c. BCE), whose dialect is believed to be Aramaic with some admixture of Phoenician: 'Incantation against "T", goddess, against SSM, son of PDRŠŠ', god, and against the Breaker-of-the-lamb's neck (*ḥnqt 'mr*)' (Gibson 1982:83)[8]. One particular aspect of this comparison between Syriac *ḥnwqt'dṭly'* '(female) strangler of children' and Arslan Tash *ḥnqt 'mr* '(female) strangler of lamb' may be of special interest here. Syriac *ṭly'* is an old Aramaic term which is attested in Syriac and other Aramaic dialects. In Syriac and Mandaic it has the meaning 'child, youth', but in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic and in Targumic Aramaic, where it has the same meaning 'child', it also had retained one of the older meanings – 'lamb' (Sokoloff 2002:504)[9]. The possible semantic overtone in Syriac phrase *ḥnwqt' dṭly'* '(female) strangler of children/lambs(?)' may point to the archaic nature of this phrase, but the question needs further study.

The Mesopotamian background of the phrase '(female) strangler of children' is possible, taking into account commonly accepted Mesopotamian origin of the demon described in the Arslan Tash incantation. Indeed, the 'strangling' character of a female demon is seen e.g. in the Old Babylonian incantation against Lamashtu: *ṣé-ḫe-ru-tim ḫu-nu-qú ú-ḫa-an-na-aq* 'She strangles little ones' (YOS 11, 20.11; Cunningham 1997:109).

Among the texts discussed by J. Spier, there are two passages which deserve our attention in this connection. The first one is from The Testament of Salomon, chap. 13, where a female demon is saying: 'I do not rest at night, but travel around all the world visiting women and, divining the hour [when they give birth], I search [for them] and strangle their newborn infants' (Spier 1993:34). This passage was put by J. Speir historically into the Byzantine period, but for me it is important that this Greek document 'incorporates early demonological beliefs and Jewish legends' (Ibid.). Another passage is a quotation from *peri daimonon*, 'a thirteenth- or fourteenth-century text formerly attributed to Michael Psellos' (Ibid.). It demonstrates the survival of the concept of 'strangling female demon' in the later Byzantine literature. These are the words of the demon Gylou, who is met by archangel Michael: 'I will strangle [their] children, or I will let them live for a while and then kill them...' (Ibid.:35).

Now I may try to trace the history of the specific concept of 'strangling female demon', or 'female demon, who strangles children'. As the above-

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[8] T. Gaster points to this parallel between Arslan Tash, Mesopotamian magic bowls and Syriac charms (Gaster 1947:186).

[9] I am grateful to Leonid Kogan who drew my attention to this term in Arslan Tash and to the etymological aspect of this parallel.

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mentioned texts demonstrate, the concept in question may have been born in Ancient Mesopotamia, not later than in the Old Babylonian period (1800–1600 BCE). It was borrowed by adjacent Aramaic-speaking people in Syria, as attested by the text from Arslan Tash (ca. 7th c. BCE), and by the creators of Aramaic magic bowls in Sassanian Mesopotamia (5th–7th cc. CE). It is most natural to think that the 'strangling female demon' was inherited by the Syriac charm tradition from the tradition of Aramaic magic bowls together with many other figures, motives and formulas common to these two traditions. The borrowing of a concept from Byzantine magic is possible in principle, but less probable in this particular case.

The genealogy of the two formulas used in Syriac charms which I tried to trace above demonstrates two types of borrowing. The formula 'Gabriel on his right and Michael on his left' was apparently borrowed from Arabic texts by way of a loan translation. The Arabic formula in the legend about 'Ali fighting with dragon which includes the phrase 'Ehye Asher Ehye Adonay Tsvaot El Shadday' was also taken from an unknown Jewish source, most probably in this exact wording. In this and other similar cases we are dealing with direct verbal borrowing, sometimes through a loan translation (calque). In the case of the Syriac formula 'mother who strangles children' the mechanism of borrowing is different: the object of borrowing represents an idea of a certain demonic *modus operandi*, or a concept which may be expressed by different morphological models and syntactic constructions.

Abbreviations

Cod A – Codex A, published in Gollancz 1912: xxv-lx, 1–35
Cod B – Codex B, published in Gollancz 1912: lxi-lxxii, 36–76
Cod C – Codex C, published in Gollancz 1912: lxxiii-lxxxvii, 77–92
IOM – Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, St. Petersburg
NYPL – New York Public Library
YOS 11 Van Dijk, J., Goetze, A., Hussey, M.I. *Early Mesopotamian Incantations and Rituals* (Yale Oriental Series, Babylonian Texts, XI). New Haven and London, 1985

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Incantations in the Dead Sea Scrolls

11Q11, the fragmentary manuscript of an Essene composition found in Qumran contains four short texts. Another manuscript from the Qumran library, the Great Psalms Scroll, gives a list of the songs written by David (11Q5 27.4–10). According to this, the king wrote 3600 psalms, 364 songs for the daily perpetual burnt-offerings, 52 songs for the Sabbath offerings, and 30 songs (*šyr*) for the New Moon offerings, festival days and the Day of Atonement. The list is added with four 'songs for charming the demon possessed with music'.

The list shows a clear calendrical character. 364 is the number of the days in the ideal calendar related to the solar year. Further numbers refer to the monthly and weekly division of this year. The exorcising songs were supposed to be recited on four different days of the year: on solar equinoxes and solstices, considered in many cultures as the four liminal days of the year. The additional element 'to recite' (*lngn*) in the title refers explicitly to the musical accompaniment of the song, probably provided with a stringed instrument. The four compositions in 11Q11 were identified with the four davidic songs 'for the afflicted' mentioned in 11Q5. Songs 1–3 of 11Q11 are not known from any other source while Song 4 is identical (with only minor changes and additions) with Psalm 91. It is the only one among the four compositions the text of which can be reconstructed *in extenso*, thus its structure and meaning can be expounded. Accordingly, it is appropriate to begin our examination with this song.

Song 4 (Psalm 91), (11Q11 6:3–34)

The composition bears the title 'A song of David' (*šyr ldwyd*). This title is not present in the Masoretic text. Psalm 91 is one of the so-called *ašrē*-psalms (known also as macarism), a type named after the blessing form *ašrē* ('blessed is the one who') that introduces the psalms. Being blessed means a special status for the recipient of the blessing; it means being protected by divine power from the plagues that are enumerated in the following text. This status is expressed with the metaphor of being sheltered, staying in the shadow of the source of protection (Ps 91:1). God, the source of the ritual power, is called by several names in Psalm 91: Most High, Almighty (Ps 91:1), YHWH (Ps 91:2, 9), and God (Ps 91:2) (=11Q11 6:3–4) – the second name being the name used for magical purposes in the incantations. This is followed by a reference to God as a permanent source of assisting magical power: 'My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust' (91:2).

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To keep off evil forces Psalm 91 uses the form of negative affirmation declaring the ineffectiveness of any evil power in respect to those who hold the blessing of God. The plagues are listed in three sequences, The first series involves three items: ‘the fowler’s snare/trap’, ‘pestilence’ (*dbr*), and ‘destruction’ (Ps 91:3) (11Q11 6:5). The second series comprises four names: ‘nocturnal dread’, ‘arrow which flies by day’, ‘pestilence coming in darkness’, and ‘destruction devastating at noon’ (Ps 91:5–8) (11Q11 6:7–8). The third series includes five components, namely ‘stone’, ‘lion’, ‘adder’, ‘young lion’, and ‘serpent’ (Ps 91:121–3) (11Q11.11–12). Two animals (serpent, lion) are doubled by synonyms. The total number of the plagues is twelve (3+4+5=12) so as to maintain numeric symbolism.

The items of the three series evoke a sense of helplessness, pestilence (*deber, qeteb*), plague, nocturnal angst, and physical dangers caused by natural obstacles (stone) and by animal onslaughts and snakebites (the latter one being the object of a number of incantations and amulet texts written throughout the ancient Near East). The metaphor of the arrow may refer to both sun stroke and pestilence, arrows (of the sun) being particularly associated with pestilence in antiquity. The temporal adverbs connected with some plagues allude to the continuous presence of danger of plague in the community. A number of evil agents listed in Ps 91 have a demonic character.

The negotiator of the divine help in Psalm 91 is God’s angel (*ml’kw*) who guards the suppliant on his ways (Ps 91:11). The expression refers to the religious practice governed by the right interpretation of the Mosaic Law. Divine blessing assures magical power and protection against physical evil represented in the form of plagues.

The psalm text in 11Q11 ends with the words, ‘And [t]he[y] shall an[swer: Amen, amen.] Selah’ (11Q11 vi.14), the closing formula of numerous biblical psalms. This serves as a magical reinforcement of the content of the speech act. The words preceding the formula lead to suppose a practice of communal recitation of the psalm.

Song 3 (11Q11 5:4–6:3)

According to its title, this is a composition attributed to David, ‘a charm for the stricken, in Yahweh’s name’ (11Q11). The generic term ‘charm’ (*lḥš*) is unattested in Psalms. It clearly refers to a magical song used against demonic forces. The title also indicates at what time the song is to be recited (11Q11 5:5). A possible reconstruction of the text leads one to see here a reference to the *lyl šmrym*, the vigil before the day of the Exodus (Exod 12:42).

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The title is followed by a question: ‘Who are you?’ It leads one to reconstruct a scene of encountering the demon which is to be made harmless. Learning the name of the demon (if not known to the exorcist) is the first objective of any exorcism and the initial phase of the ritual. It seems that in 11Q11 the person attacked by the demon and the exorcist are the same person.

The demon is described in 11Q11 as a visible phenomenon, probably with human traits (face) and animal characteristics (horns) (11Q11 5:7). The natural element associated with the demon is darkness – demons usually are thought to be dwelling in the nether world, the country of dust and darkness. Moreover, darkness in Essene thinking has a peculiarl function being identified with sins and impurity.

Further characteristics of the demon are originating ‘from humans and from the seed of the holy ones’ (11Q11 5:6). This refers to the tradition of the Watchers known from the Enochic collection (1 En. 6–11) according to which the sexual union of human women with the Watchers (heavenly beings called also ‘holy ones’) resulted in the emergence of giants, originators of the demons. This tradition is attested in several Qumran texts. It seems that the demon described here is a *phantasma*, mentioned also in amulet texts. The image of the horned demon may have its origin in the figures of horned semi-divine figures known throughout Mesopotamia and Syria. No sickness or plague is named in the text of the third song of 11Q11. It seems that the ‘plague’ was the *phantasma* itself, the apparition of the demon.

Legible words of the subsequent part of the text (11Q11 5:8–6:3) refer to the nether world (*tḥtyt*, 11Q11 5:9), Sheol, and bronze gates (11Q11 5:9). Sheol is depicted as the world of darkness through the use of the antonym to light (*lw ’wr*, 11Q11 5:10). This part can be reconstructed with the help of well-known pieces of the exorcistic literature where the conquest of the demon is described as its binding, *defixatio*. The line containing words referring to God, the nether world, and its bronze gates (11Q11 5:9) is, most likely, a statement concerning the disempowering of the demon and its binding and casting into the nether world. The next line depicts the dark realm of Sheol, the place of punishment of the demon.

The readable words in lines 11Q11 5:11–14 are ‘angel’, ‘guard’, ‘[spirit of jus]tice’, ‘spirit of hostility’, ‘through his power’, ‘Go[d]’. These terms suggest that this portion of the text is a report on the punishment of sinners and the deliverance of righteous, supposedly by an angel (11Q11 5:11–14). This act will end with the complete annihilation of the lot of ‘the sons of Belial’ (11Q11 6:1–3), the group diametrically opposite to that of the righteous.

The word *selah*, proceded probably by two *amen*, most likely marks the end of the composition (11Q11 6:3).

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Song 2 (11Q11 2:1–5:3)
There are good reasons to reconstruct its title, purpose, and genre on the basis of the third and fourth as, '[David's composition. For the stricken; a charm] in the name of [YHWH]'. In view of the very fragmentary character of the text only some motifs and names can be recognized in the text. Solomon's name is mentioned in a context of incantation, together with spirits and demons (11Q11 2:2–3). This may be a reference to the origin and efficacy of the incantation (and at the same time the first reference to Solomon in magical literature).

Subsequent lines enumerate names and characteristics of the demons (11Q11 2:3–5), together with YHWH as the creator God of the universe (11Q11 3:6–[14]), enumerating the signs and wonders of YHWH's almighty power (11Q11 3:1–3). This reference serves for attesting God's universal power, and his supremacy over the demons.

The word *mšbyʿ* ('adjuring') occurs twice in the text of the second song (11Q11 3:4, 4:1). This term (and its equivalents in other languages) is a substantial element of the exorcistic formula: the exorcist calls up the demon and, with the help of the divine/magic power that is invoked by him, compels it to leave the human community or the person possessed. The demon is sent to a place that lies outside the borders of the local human community. This can either be an impure place, the desert (thought to be a space frequented by demons), or the nether world, i.e., the home of ghosts and other demons. In 11Q11 it is the nether world, to which the expressions 'into the great Abyss' (11Q11 4.7) and the 'curse of Abaddon' (11Q11 4:10) refer. The text mentions 'spirits', without any specification of their character; the specific name of the illness or the plague caused by them is not known either. The mention of these terms together with Raphael's name (11Q11 5:3), and the well-known background of the angel's healing role lead us to suppose that the theme of Song 2 was an illness caused by spirits.

The incantation was probably closed by the formula 'Amen, amen, selah' (11Q11 v.3).

The First Song (11Q11 1:1–[14])
Due to the fragmentary state of the text we can only suppose that it began with a title similar to those of songs 2 and 3. The word 'seventy' (2 ii 7) – a 'magical' number – may refer to demons mentioned later in the song (*šdym*, 1:10). Specific words, such as 'earth', 'man', and 'water', probably allude to the works of the creation and the role of YHWH as a creator God whose omnipotence is the basis for the success of the charm. The nature of the plague cannot be reconstructed from the fragments. The words 'oath' (1:3), and 'adjuring you' (1:7)

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may refer to the forcing and expelling of the demon. The word 'he will dwell' (i:11) may refer to the nether world, the dwelling place of the demon overpowered. The end of the song was probably 'Amen, amen, Selah', the common ending of individual and communal prayers recited aloud.

To sum up, it can be established that probably all of the fours songs have a title with a reference to David as its author. Song 2 mentions also Solomon, probably as a person who successfuly used the incantation. The title of Song 4 (Psalm 91) has no generic reference. Song 3, according to its title, is an incantation (*lahaš*), and Songs 1–2 might have been labeled with the same generic term (*lahaš*).

Song 4 (Psalm 91) shows a tripartite structure, with three series containing names of various plagues. The series repeatedly end with a reference to the magical power. The composition is concluded with a formula that refers to a communal recitation. Psalm 91 is a blessing text, used in 11Q11 probably with an apotropaic purpose, intended to keep away demonic dangers and plagues. It seems that songs 1–3 have a common structure different from that of Song 4 (Ps 91) and the *ašrē*-psalms in general. The title and the reference to the magical power in these songs is followed by a section that gives a description of the demonic harm and refers to the almighty God, the creator of the universe. This is followed by an exorcistic formula, the 'fixation' of the demon, introduced by the term '[I am] adjuring' (*mšby'*). The act of the disempowering of the demon is followed by a description of its lot: to be sent to the nether world and locked there. Following a repeated reference to the source of the magical power the compositions are closed by the formula 'Amen, amen, selah'. Song 4 (Psalm 91) of 11Q11 was probably performed during a communal recitation while this cannot be proven for the rest of the songs.

In light of the calendrical setting of the list of 11Q5 the question arises: which dates and occasions were the four songs recited on, and what was their possible role and function? Equinoxes and solstices were considered in ancient cultures as liminal time and there is good reason to suppose that the four songs were recited at the turning-points of the solar year. The beginning of the year in the schematic form of the Jewish ritual calendar might have been fixed to the time of the fall equinox. The date of the recitation of the first song was this date. The second song may have been recited at the winter solstice, the third one at the spring equinox, and the fourth one (Ps 91) at the summer solstice. The sun at the time of summer solstice was thought to be the cause of noxious effects and plagues, and Psalm 91 was written against sunstroke, pestilence, and physical dangers. Rescue from these dangers is attributed to God who dominates over heavenly bodies. Mesopotamian hymns recited at the

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summer solstice and addressed to the sun-god Nergal serve as a good parallel to this apotropaic practice.

Song 3, a charm (*lḥš*) describing a *phantasma* seen in a nocturnal vision, may have been recited at the spring equinox and was probably connected with the night vigil that preceded the feast of Passover. Songs 2 and 1 might have been recited, respectively, at the winter solstice and the autumn equinox. The content of Song 2 is not known; the mentioning of the angel Raphael at the end of the text (11Q11 5.3) leads one to suppose that it was written against illnesses and physical evil (perhaps plagues and epidemics). Song 1 was supposedly recited at the fall equinox, neither its purpose nor its content are known.

The length and the form of 11Q11 do not allow for the possibility that the text could be stored inside an amulet worn on the body. The leather on which the text was written shows no traces of folding. The manuscript was, in all probability, a library copy used as a manual for appointed days, in special liturgies. The text of 11Q11 is the earliest example for the use of a psalm text in a magical liturgical context. Songs 1–3 are not known from any other collection. They are apparently 'new' texts, written for the special objects of an apotropaic collection. They reflect the characteristics of magical incantations, containing an invocation to the magical power, describing the demonic harm, the disempowering the demon, its and expelling to the nether world.

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‘Do not allow sleep or health to him who has done me wrong…’: Charms against Thefts in Ancient Rome and Modern Russia

The present paper continues our earlier work on the functions of personal names within charm texts. We had suggested before that any personal name found within a charm fitted into one of the two categories: it is a background name (a name of a deity/saint, according to the author’s confessional identity) or a subject name (the particular name of a person for/against whom the charm is intended)[1]. By the ‘subject name’ we understand any proper name in the text of a charm, which transforms a ‘receipt’ (the term of J.G. Gager, see Gager 1992) of a potentially magical text into a real magical performance. According to the observation of V.N. Toporov, introducing a personal name into a charm is mandatory, ‘A text of a charm is a mere text and nothing more, until a name is incorporated into its large immutable body. It is only adding the name, uttering it turns a verbal text into a ritual performance, that is, into an actual charm that works as such’ (Toporov 1993:100).

However, in many cases putting a name (subject name) into the charm is impossible, because it is not known either to the charmer or to his/her customer, the charm not being intended against a particular person. This is exactly the case with charms against thieves, which are quite widespread. Charms of this type are generally referred to as ‘Justice Prayers’ (for the history of the term and of research on this category of *tabellae*, see Versnel 1991).

The first known Latin *tabella defixionum* of this type was found in 1972, in Italica (Spain). Its text roughly translates:

> Domna Fons Foyi […] ut tu persequaris tuas res demando quiscunque caligas meas telluit et solias tibi illa demando (ut) illas aboitor si quis puela si mulier siue [ho[mo inuolauit […] illos persequaris.
>
> (O Mistress Spring Foyi… I ask you track down your possessions. Whoever has stolen my shoes and sandals I ask that you… Whether it is a girl, a woman or a man who stole them… pursue them.)
>
> (Versnel 1991:60)

Calling the stolen sandals the ‘possessions’ of Mistress Spring Foyi may seem baffling for a modern reader, yet it is fully explicable through the idea

[1] For more details, see (Mikhailova 2006, 2010).

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that the deity owned the objects entrusted to her or brought under her protection.

Many lead tablets of the same type – aimed at getting back one's stolen properties – are known from the earlier Greek tradition. Compare, for instance, the tablet found in 1957 on the island of Delos (1st cent. BC?). Its text pleads the gods to put their fury against the unknown people who had stolen the customer's necklace (the customer's gender is unidentifiable):

> Κύριοι Θεοὶ οἱ Συκοναιοι Κ[...]
> Κυρία Θεά Συρία ἡ Συκονα Σ[...]
> ΕΑ ἐκδικήσετε και ἀρετήν
> γεννὴσετε κέ διοργιάσετε
> τόν ἄραντα, τόν κλέψαντα τόδράκιον,
> τού συνιδότες, τού μέρος
> λαβόντες ἴδε γυνὴ ἴτε ἀνήρ.
>
> (Lords gods Sykonaioi, Lady goddess Syria Sykona, punish, and give expression to your wondrous power and direct your anger to the one who took away my necklace, who stole it, those who had knowledge of it and those who were accomplices, whether man or woman.)
>
> (Jordan 1985:158)

Tablets of that type were found in abundance during the excavations at the Bath site of the Gallo-Roman temple dedicated to the goddess Sulis Minerva (see Tomlin 1988). This site, with its natural hot spring that is up to now believed to have healing properties had already been worshiped in the pre-Roman era and was associated with the goddess Sulis whom the Romans would later identify with Minerva. The 1st century AD saw the building of a temple and baths at the site. Later the temple was enlarged and decorated with statues. 'Visited by many thousands of tourists today, Roman Bath was also, as is proved by inscriptions on stone from the areas, visited by travelers from far and wide during the glory years of the Empire' (Mees 2009:30).

Among the multiple archaeological findings made at the site (such as coins or votive images of body parts allegedly healed by the goddess), there are 130 lead tablets of diverse content. Along with name lists and commendations addressed to the goddess, there is a considerable proportion of tablets that can also be categorized as Justice Prayers. Their authors address Sulis in order to return stolen things. See, for instance:

> Docilianus Bruceri deae sanctissimae Suli devoveo eum qui caracellam meam involaverit si vir si femina si servus si liber ut […] dea Sulis maximo

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> letum adigat nec ei somnum permittat nec natos nec nascentes donec caracallam ad templum sui numinis pertulerit.
>
> (Docilianus (son) of Brucerus to the most holy goddess Sulis. I curse him who has stolen my hooded cloak, whether man or woman, whether slave or free, that… the goddess Sulis inflict death upon… and not allow him sleep or children now and in the future, until he has brought my hooded cloak to the temple of her divinity.)
>
> (Tomlin 1988:122)

or

> deae Suli Minervae Solinus dono nutnini tuo maiestati paxsam balnearem et palleum nec permittas somnum nec sanitatem […]ei qui mihi fraudem fecit si vir si femina si servus si liber nissi se retegens istas species ad templum tuum detulerit...
>
> (Solinus to the goddess Sulis Minerva. I give to your divinity and majesty my bathing tunic and cloak. Do not allow sleep or health to him who has done me wrong, whether man or woman, whether slave or free, unless he reveals himself and bring those goods to your temple...)
>
> (Tomlin 1988:150)

What is remarkable here, is the formulaic nature of these texts, which show variations depending on the object stolen yet almost identical in describing the supposed thief, ‘whether man or woman, whether slave or free’. However, all known inscriptions differ in handwriting which indicates that ‘written pages or preparatory models used in the manufacture of the tablets may have been prepared by professional curse-composers, but the individual curses of the *defixiones* were required to write the texts onto the specially created lamellas themselves’ (Mees 2009:33). It seems plausible to suggest that both the formula relating to the thieves and the list of curses intended to affect them in case they do not return the stolen properties circulated in oral tradition and were of folkloric origin, that is, they were incorporated in the background knowledge of any person belonging to this culture.

The abundance of such tablets in the temple dedicated to Sulis Minerva is hardly surprising, since the apodyterium where bath-goers would store their clothes had cubicles rather than lockers. Their addressing Sulis suggests that she was seen as the deity responsible for the belongings ‘entrusted’ to her.

The explainable absence of subject names in these texts seems to indicate that they were replaced in the charms (Graeco-Roman *defixiones* being indeed charms) by the formula identifying the potential victim as ‘the one who has stolen my property’. Therefore, the invariable rule of introducing a personal name into the body of the charm predicted by Toporov seems to be fulfilled. It

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is also worth noticing that the Latin *nomen* had a broader meaning than just 'personal name' signifying also 'identity' (represented in a name). Compare, thereupon, a similar curse against an unspecified thief found on the foreshore of the Hamble Estuary, Hampshire:

> domine Neptune, tibi dono hominem qui solidum involavit Muconi et argentiolos sex. ideo dono **nomina** qui decepit, si mascel si femina, si puuer si puuella. ideo dono tibi, Niske, et Neptuno vitam, valitudinem, sanguem eius qui conscius fueris eius deceptionis. animus qui hoc involavit et qui conscious fuerit ut eum decipias. furem qui hoc involavit sanguem eiius consumas et decipias, domine Neptune.
>
> (Lord Neptune, I give you the man who has stolen the solidus and six argentioli of Muconius. So I give the ***names*** who took them away, whether male or female, whether boy or girl. So I give you, Niskus, and to Neptune the life, health, blood of him who has been privy to that taking-away. The mind which stole this and which has been privy to it, may you take it away. The thief who stole this, may you consume his blood and take it away, Lord Neptune.)
>
> (Bowman et al.:2)

The oral charming tradition faces the same challenge: to identify the thief and to return one's belonging stolen by an unknown person. However, oral charms, unlike Graeco-Roman lead tablets, can also be protective. Texts and magical actions aimed at *preventing* the theft are not at all infrequent:

> Ne forstolen, ne forholen nanuht þæs ðe ic age, þe ma ðe mihte Herod urne drihten.
>
> (May nothing I own be stolen or concealed, any more than Herod could steal or conceal our Lord.)
>
> (Storms 1948:209)

Compare the Russian text below:

> Нужно взять палку из муравейника и объехать с нею вокруг стада три раза, а потом воткнуть по середине круга и сказать: Заговариваю я (имя рек), сей заговор над моим табуном. Как мураши где они ни ходят, ни гуляют, а приходят и не отлучаются от своего гнезда – так бы мои добрые кони не вышли бы из сего круга.
>
> (Take a stick out of an anthill and ride with it around your herd three times; then stick it in the middle of the circle and say: Casting I am, [the speaker's name], this charm upon my herd, As ants, wherever they come and go, come back to their nest and never leave it, so may my good horses never get out of this circle.)
>
> (Majkov 1994:123)

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If something has already been stolen, other kind of charm can be used, the one aimed at identifying (and punishing) the thief and/or regaining the stolen thing. Though these two aims are naturally inter-related, the actual data from the Graeco-Roman tablets show that they lay stress upon the second one: the charm is thought to have worked in case the stolen cloak is returned to its owner. Possible parallels can bee seen in English charms. Compare:

> Gif feoh sy undernumen. Gif hit sy hors, sing þis on his fetera oððe on his bridel. /…/ And Petur, Pol, Patric, Pilip, Marie, Bricgit, Felic. In nominee Dei et Chiric. Qui querit invenit.
>
> (In case your cattle are stolen. If it is a horse, sing this on its shackles or on its bridle /…/: And Peter, Paul, Patrick, Philip, Mary, Bridget, Felix. In the name of God and the church. Who seeks will find!)

(Storms 1948:207)

Methods of identifying the thief and punishing them are most commonly derived from a kind of rite originating in primitive sympathetic magic. According to Storms, 'Everything that has come into contact with man, or that has his mark on it, remains an integral part of his person for ever: the name by which a man is called is identical with himself; the clothes he has worn, the arms and tools he has used, excrements, nails, hair, not only serve to represent him, they remain an integral part of that man. The same thing is true of his footprints, for they are something personal. /…/ In Japan, if a house has been robbed by night and the burglar's footprint are visible in the morning, the householder will burn mugwort on them, hoping thereby to hurt the robber's feet so that he cannot run far, and the police can easily overtake him' (Storms 1948:210–211).

Compare the following Russian method of 'searing' the object that had been in contact with the thief:

> Картошку, яблоки воровали – только что останется, из рук выпадет у того человека, принеси, на трубку положи – сохнет, и тот человек сохнет. С трубки сбросишь – и человек встанет и падет.
>
> (If potatoes or apples have been stolen, take what is left over, what that person has dropped, and put it on a [smoking?] pipe: as it dries, that person dries. If you push it off from the pipe, so that person will stand still and fall down.)

(Khristoforova 2010:209)

Contagion is also used in the following rite of 'stabbing' the thief:

> Чтобы вор подкинул украденное: спицей очертите то место, с которого вором было что-то похищено. Прочитайте заклинание и колите это ме-

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> сто сорок раз: Колю тебя, вор, за то, что ты у меня спер. Колю и колоть буду. Не прощу тебя, вор, и не позабуду, до тех пор, пока ты, вор, не вернешь мне (перечислить). Верни, вор, потерю на место. Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа. Аминь.
> (To make the thief return the stolen thing: with a knitting needle, draw a circle around the spot from where the thief has taken it. Say this charm, stabbing the spot forty times: I am stabbing you, thief, for what you have stolen. I am stabbing and will stab more. I will not forgive you, thief, or forget it, until you, thief, bring me back my [the list of stolen properties]. Return, thief, my losses. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.)
>
> (Stepanova 2003:71)

However, some charms against thieves, cited by A.L. Toporkov, are apparently aimed at punishing the thief rather than regaining the stolen properties, and the thief's name *is* probably known to the charmer: '...объявите гибель мою раба имярек' – 'declare of my death (the name of the person [presumably of the thief])' (Toporkov 2010:327).

Returning to the Bath lead tablets or their parallels, we can suggest that the formula *the man who took it* might be classified as a substitute for the unknown subject name and is functionally aimed at creating the kind of uniqueness a charm needs to be actualized. The person specified thus becomes subject to the power of the charm which is, as shown above, aimed most frequently at doing him some kind of harm. In this way, the Graeco-Roman theft-related tablets are functionally equivalent to the oral charms cited above (many other examples of which could be given).

There might be indeed at least a partial parallel. Yet, on the other hand, there is a striking fact that Justice Prayers, unlike conventional *defixiones*, contain, as a rule, the name of the aggrieved party. Conceivably, it is their name that stands for the subject name of the charm, so the actual model of a Justice Prayer is not 'let N (who has stolen my X) be hurt', but rather 'I, N, ask the deity to return my X (through punishing the thief)'. This means that the actual message of a charm is loss recoupment rather than revenge. So the subject name is in fact uttered explicitly and its use fits into Toporov's rule according to which it is a personal name only that makes a charm actual. However, this conclusion is open to further discussion.

Taking all this into consideration, we cannot overlook a story related to a very different tradition – that of Old Irish saga narration. Thus, the 12th-century manuscript known as *The Book of Leinster* contains a short story of a

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satirist poet named Aithirne. This character appears throughout the Ulster Cycle and is known for his poetic/magic art capable of scaring all the Irish kings into obedience: no king may refuse Aithirne's demand since the poet can perform a special charm (Old Irish *áer*) whose magic can deprive the king of power, kingship and even of his very life. Yet, as cited by Fred Robinson, 'Because of his niggardliness, it is declared, Aithirne never ate his full meal in a place where any one could see him. He proceeded, therefore, on one occasion to take with him a cooked pig and a pot of mead, in order that he might eat his fill all alone. And he set in order before him the pig and the pot of mead when he beheld a man coming towards him. 'Thou wouldst do it all alone,' said the stranger, whilst he took the pig and the pot away from him. 'What is thy name?' said Aithirne. 'Nothing very grand,' said he. Aithirne neither got the pig, not was able to make rhyme of the satire' (Robinson 1912:116).

Presumably, Aithirne could have uttered a charm against the thief even without knowing his name, yet he fails to do that. Why? He could probably well have performed one of his poetic curses addressing 'the one who had stolen the pig', or cursed the misdoer's footprints, or performed a protective poem aimed at regaining the stolen food. Yet within this situation he is unable to perform any of these actions. Arguably, the particular kind of verbal magic known to ancient Irish poets[2] and typically built around the name of the person being cursed was unrelated to the true charm genre[3].

Old Irish satires were unique (that is, created individually for a particular case and most probably performed but once) and did not contain any background names. Therefore, the subject name in a poem of this type could not be replaced by a descriptively periphrastic clause.

From our point of view, the Irish case cited above shows clearly that not every magical text can be classified as a true charm (*zagovor*), despite sharing common traits with this genre. The position and functions of personal names within such texts can possibly be the clue to the further genre specification.

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[2] Or, more accurately, to the literary tradition describing the ancient Irish poets.

[3] *Zagovor* in Russian; while the English vocabulary of folklore studies normally refers to any magical text, including glossolalias, as 'charm', Russian scholars distinguish between *zagovor* and *zaklinaniye*. The difference is rather vague and the two words are often used as synonyms, yet it is commonly agreed that a true *zagovor* contains a specific sequence of formulae (including background names of deities, spirits or saints). Thus, nonsense texts used for magical purposes are not *zagovors* by Russian standards though in English they may be classified as 'charms'.

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Russian Spells against Snakes: An Attempt at Interpretation in Light of the Egyptian and Mesopotamian Traditions

Incantation texts are traditionally classified according to functions, patterns or subjects (Bozóky 2003:46–47). Within a comparative framework all three criteria are of importance. However, functions and patterns can serve as a basis for a simple and transparent classification, while subjects – basically inherited from folk-beliefs – would only provide fluctuating boundaries as they constitute the smallest unit of measurement and do not easily lend themselves as a means of classification. Accordingly, our work will first rely on an analysis of the first two criteria before attempting to deal with the third one.

As regards their function, Russian magic spells can be divided into three types.

Type I: Charms with medical function which aim at curing actual bites (therapeutic version) or at preventing them (prophylactic version). A special case involves bleeding (see, e.g., Аникин 1998:№№1611–1614): as this case is linked to the 2nd Merseburg incantation, we shall henceforth ignore it.

Type II: Charms with love-magic function involving a metaphoric bite and aiming at arousing or extinguishing love.

Type III: No bite is involved. The snake either personifies evil or is viewed as a help for herding or for everyday care of domestic animals.

The Russian tradition uses two terms: *zmeja* 'snake' and *zmej* 'serpent'. *Zmeja* is limited to type I, whereas *zmej* is used for types II and III, although occasionally also for type I. Even though we remain quite aware of what differentiates these two terms (cf. СД II (1995), 330–337), their close connection – *zmej* is the mythical ancestor of *zmeja* – invites us to study them together. We shall from now on make use of the word 'snake' without quotation marks as a generic term.

As for the pattern of the spells, we find the classical forms.

1) A tale (*historiola*) staging mythical or Christian heroes with whom the narrator starts conversing. He addresses a snake, presented either as the mother of all snakes or as their king, and complains about a bite. He asks the snake to take the venom and/or its children away. The snake accepts the request or – in the more elaborate version of he text – turns it down. The speaker

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then threatens it with asking Saint Michael, Saint George, or even Christ himself, to strike it with lightning or to wipe it from the earth's face.

2) A conjuration as a direct command to the snake. This is mainly used in connection with prophylactic motives. 'Against snakes you should repeat three times when entering the woods: "I, God's servant, am going into the forest. And you, snake, go down three steps under ground"' (Майков 1992:№191) [my translation]. The spell can also include a section which aims to transfer the evil to a neutral object.

3) Analogy is a common feature of all types: it is particularly well represented in love charms where variations on the fire theme are set to work: 'Do not set fire to X's possessions, but set N's heart to flames.'

4) The prayer is used for prophylactic purposes and foremost as a protection against evil in general (type III). It regularly refers to verse 13 of psalm 90, 'You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot,' and to the apocryphal motive of the Virgin Mary's dream.

The mention of snakes in charms with such widely different functions raises the issue of connections between these three types. Miller has already pointed out numerous similarities between Russian and Assyrian spells (Miller 1896:79–84). It is therefore of interest to check for the presence of types I–III within Egyptian and Mesopotamian magical traditions and to make an attempt at interpretation of the similarities in patterns and subjects. Quite unfortunately however, I am only able to access these texts through translations, and many of them are yet to be edited.

Type III charms are well attested, as could have been expected from the psalm reference.

In the Egyptian tradition, the motive of the snake, the embodiment of evil, is linked to Apophis, the Serpent god of the Underworld. He is ontologically opposed to the god Rē with whom he engages each night in a merciless battle in order to swallow up the solar boat and to prevent the sun from rising (LÄ I (1975):351–352). The Book of Overthrowing Apep (Apophis), in its most complete version as preserved in a papyrus of the New Kingdom (1550–1069 B.C.), describes how to defeat Apophis, among other possible ways, by means of incantations so as to crush him under the left foot, to spear him through with a lance and to burn him to death (Faulkner 1937:167–168). The parallel with Gn 3.15, 'He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel', or with Saint George slaying the dragon is obvious.

In Mesopotamia mythical snakes appear in the oldest incantations, albeit in rather obscure contexts. From the Neo-Sumerian Period on, chaos-monsters are described as transmitters of disease (Cunningham 1997:90).

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Type I, quite usual in Egyptian and Mesopotamian magic, takes most often the form of a dialogue between deities. It involves snakes as well as scorpions, and sometimes even dogs.

In the Mesopotamian tradition (2500–1500 BCE), the god Asallu'i/Marduk sends a messenger to his father Enki/Ea to inform him that a man has been bitten and that he does not know what to do. The father answers that his son shares in all his powers and that he may do as he likes (Falkenstein 1968:55; Cunningham 2007:24).

In the Egyptian tradition, Horus, left unattended, is bitten by a snake or scorpion. His mother Isis finds him in tears and, distressed, looks out for help. The child is being taken care of by Thoth/Atum who orders the venom to step away (Borghout 1978:NN 90, 91, 94, 95 *et passim*; see also Leitz 1999:BM EA 9997+10309 where crocodiles are also mentioned; BM EA 10085+10105).

These *historiolae* have no exact counterparts in the Russian tradition: the speaker's identification with the divinity is stronger than the Russian concluding words 'it is not me who is speaking, but X (Virgin Mary, Saint Michael)'. The oriental magician had indeed no qualms about beginning his incantation with 'I am god X'.

> 'I am Isis, the goddess, the mistress of magic, who practises magic, whose words are useful, whose speaking is effective – all biting snakes listen to me!' (Borghout 1978: No 91)

Likewise, in the prophylactic type:

> 'You will not bite him! He is Rē. You will not sting him! He is Thoth […].' (Borghout 1978: No 142).

'It is not my charm, it is Ningirim's,' it reads in the oldest known Akkadian incantations (Krebernik 1984:194). The goddess Ningirim, pre-eminent magician among the gods, Lady of Spells, also rules over the snakes (RAV IX (1998):366).

Apophis is presented as the father of snakes:

> 'There will be no heir-snakes of you in this land, oh Apap, enemy of Rē, after Horus the Oldest One has destroyed you. You will not conceive, and there will not be conceived of you. You will not give birth, and there will be no giving birth of you […]. Be annihilated, Apap!' (Borghout 1978:No 144)

After these rather general parallels, let us now examine a close correspondence between a Demotic incantation and a Russian one.

> '[Spell] to be said to the bite of a dog: 'My mouth being full of blood of a black dog, I spitting out the redness of a dog, I come forth from Alkhah. O

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this dog who is among the ten dogs which belong to Anubis, the son of his body, extract your venom, remove your saliva from me also! If you do not extract your venom and remove your saliva, I shall take you up to the forecourt of [the temple of] Osiris, my watchtower (?). I will do for you ... according to the voice of Isis, the magician, the lady of magic, who bewitches everything, who is never bewitched in her name of Isis, the magician'' PDM xiv.554–62 [Betz 1992:226], II or III CE.

177. '[...] a snake-scorpion is lying in this nest. Mother snake-scorpion, take your venom away from bones and muscles. I urge you, I servant of god N [...]: Mother snake-scorpion, take away your children, from the well, from the swamp, from the woods, the flying ones, the creeping ones [...]. If you don't, I'll refer to King David and ask him to cure all these evils and remove the power of the snake.' (Майков 1994:№177) [my translation]

In both cases, the victim addresses the head (mother/queen) of the animal class involved (dog/snake) and asks for the cause of the harm to be removed. In case of refusal, the victim threatens to turn to a more powerful intercessor (Isis/David). In the Demotic spell the venom is known to be inside the victim; the Russian spell personifies it as young animals spread throughout nature.

What connects the dog with the snake? Old Akkadian and Sumerian charms apply to the snake, the scorpion and the dog alike. They all have to do with a venom inoculated by these animals. This is obvious in the case of the snake or the scorpion. As to a dog's bite, this is medically speaking innocuous, unless the animal suffers from rabies: the abundant saliva of the mad dog was viewed as the venom being transmitted (Cavigneaux 1995:89). But in Antiquity even the saliva of a healthy individual was considered dangerous: in Akkadian, the word *intu* refers to saliva as well as to poison (CAD I [1960]:139). According to Pliny (*N.H.* VII 15), the spittle of a fasting man can kill a snake (Nicholson 1897:24).

The Akkadian charm goes even further and associates saliva with sperm:

'From his teeth hangs his semen: wherever he bit he left behind his child'. (Old Babylonian, cf. Finkel 1999:214, Cunningham 1997:106).

The child mentioned can either be inside (result of the bite) as in the above example, or outside (giver of the bite), as in the Russian tradition.

In a Late Babylonian incantation, Gula, the goddess of healing, is presented as the mother of all dogs, including the one that has just bitten; her name is invoked for curing purposes as if she were eventually responsible for the harm:

'In Egalmaḫ dwells Gula and (?) her throne is established; her whelps crouch. A dog sprang up: it bit the man.' Its ritual: you take some clay, and

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> rub the outer surface of the wound (with it), you fashion a dog from the clay, you place it on the north wall directly in the sun. You recite this incantation three times over it, and thus you say as (above) until the dog gives up its moisture (and) the man's bite dries up [...]'. (Finkel 1999:220–221).

The dog can be presented metaphorically: an Old Babylonian tablet uses the word 'worms' for the dogs surrounding Gula:

> '[…] When Gula was walking in bravery, (her) dogs were walking behind her. "Worms! to (my) side! to me!" [...]'. Wasserman (2008:81–83).

Between worm and snake there is but one step. The dog metaphor is also used for vermin and small rodents that damage crops (George 1999:291–299). The *tertium comparationis* linking these animals together – the gnawing capacity – is of the same nature as the one we observe between saliva, venom and sperm, or between snakes, scorpions and dogs.

We have seen that the Ancient tradition placed charms against snake, scorpion and dog bites within a single category. It seems reasonable to think that the Russian spells against scorpions have been re-interpreted and ascribed to snakes, hence the name 'snake-scorpion' (*zmeja skorpeja*) (Виноградов 1907:№ 80, Аникин 1998:№ 1962). Taken over from the Greek σκορπίος, then transferred to the feminine gender, the term appears in numerous variants due to popular etymology (for some variants, see Юдин 1997). The occasional attribution of a sting to this animal leaves but little doubt concerning the borrowed character of these charms. For the other cases that have been mentioned, it is more likely a matter of influences. But through which channel were they transmitted? Links between Egypt and Mesopotamia were quite close, especially in the field of medicine; during the Hellenistic period, the influence of Alexandria spread all over the Mediterranean area. These incantations could very well have reached Greece first before being adopted by Slavic peoples through commercial or missionary contacts (type III charms in particular, which are linked to a biblical motive). An in-depth study of Greek and Byzantine spells would perhaps allow us to check these hypotheses. We have, finally, not found any snake in the Egyptian and Mesopotamian love charms (type II). But Dionysus, born – according to the Orphic tradition – from the union of Persephone with Zeus in the disguise of a snake (DS [1969] IV:192), provides directions for further research.

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Myth and Greek Narrative Charms: Analogy and Fluidity

Introduction

One of the basic categories of charms comprises the ones whose text is presented in the form of a narration of a mythical event occurring in the distant past (*illo tempore*). This particular type of charms as well as the function of the myth in magic has drawn the interest of many researchers. While discussing narrative charms E. Bozóky (2003:39) remarks: 'Le mécanisme d'action de ces textes fait penser au fonctionnement de la "magie" analogique (appelée aussi sympathique ou homeopathique),' and goes on to add that the preceding myth 'sert à réactualiser un miracle' (op. cit. 40). Focussing on the functional aspect of mythical narration, Van der Leeuw (1986 [1933]:424) claims that a narrative pertaining to miracles intrinsically possesses this miraculous property. To this effect, M. Eliade (1963:24–28) claims that the therapeutic power of the magic narration of a myth is due to its content, a view already put forward in the early 20th century by Ebermann (1903:133). D. Frankfurter (1995:464) considers the narrative charms to be correlated with 'the performative transmission of power from a mythic realm articulated in narrative to the human present,' and he also regards them as constituting a link 'between a human dimension, where actions are open-ended and a mythic dimension where actions are completed and tensions have been resolved' (ibid.).

Upon examining narrative charms, one can detect a link, an analogy, but at the same time, a fluidity and a blurring of boundaries between different levels of the text structure and its performative context. This is the case, for instance, between the time when the mythic antecedent happened and the present situation for which the charm is performed, between the mythic protagonists and the human agents of the present critical situation as well as between the past crisis already efficiently resolved and the new, equally critical situation which is still to be resolved. The paper, based on Greek narrative charms collected from oral tradition, examines analogous patterns as paradigmatic of such fluidity and the ways in which the latter is structured and organized in order to achieve the desired goal. A joint examination of both the performative framework and the text is important as it can contribute towards forming a holistic

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approach to the function of the myth in narrative charms as well as towards bringing forward the pattern upon which the therapeutic effectiveness of the healing ritual is based.

Text and performative context: analogy and fluidity

One of the basic elements of narrative charms is the fact that in these forms the 'I' of the performer withdraws and the effectiveness as well as the validity of the cure is explicitly linked to a similar event of an analogous critical moment in the mythic past having been successfully dealt with. The fact that this cure is usually administered or performed in the mythic narrative past by a sacred person can surely enhance its effectiveness. It appears, however, that the category of 'sacred' does not constitute the only factor contributing to magic efficiency, since occurrences of narrative charms involving protagonists unrelated to the religious realm are not uncommon. Nevertheless, in all cases, whether it concerns myths linked to sacred protagonists or not, the common theme is the successful therapeutic treatment of a similar critical moment in the mythic past.

This particular therapeutic perspective constitutes the point which determines not only the link but also the fluidity between narrative and performative structures, mythic and human actors (performers), narrative past and performative present. The following points are to be examined: a) the way in which various charm forms along with the healing process mentioned in the mythic episode contribute towards the creation of a fluid space, and b) the extent to which narrative and performative occurrences are engaged with and play a part in the creation of this space

A common healing process frequently encountered during narration involves – embedded within the narrative charm – ritual instructions which are to be observed in the performative present. These instructions, which constitute a series of technical guidelines and principles, pertain to actions and objects employed in the performative act itself. The following excerpts from charms are indicative of the way the instructions within the text are linked to the performative context. The information pertaining to the contextual frame corroborates the employment of these technical performative instructions in the milieu surrounding the text.

Για τη βασκανία:

Λιάρα γιλάδα γένν'σι,
λιάρκου μουσκάρ' έκαμι.
Γυρίσαν οι αγέλ' κι του είδανι κι τ' αβουσκάνανι.
Γύρ'σ' η μητέρα τ' κι τ' άγλειψι κι του ξαβόσκανι.

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Εκείνος που ξέρει τα λόγια αυτά, την επωδή αυτή για το μάτι, στέκεται μπροστά στον βασκαμένον […]Τρεις φορές λέγει την επωδή και τρεις φορές γλείφει το μέτωπο και φτύνει.

(Σκιάθος, Ρήγας 1968:153–54)

For the evil eye:

A white cow gave birth,
to a white calf.
The other cows turned and saw it and gave it the evil eye.
Its own mother turned too, licked it and the spell was broke.
He who knows these words stands in front of the one under the spell […].
Thrice he utters the charm and thrice he licks the forehead and then spit.

Για το μουσαφίρη:

[...] Χαμογέλασε ο Χριστός, είπε […]:
– Πάρε ένα μαυρομάνικο μαχαίρι σταύρω το τρεις φορές
και φύσα τρεις φορές να γιάνει.
Το σταύρωνε τρεις φορές η γιατραίσσα με το μαυρομάνικο μαχαίρι, τρεις φορές το φύσαγε και γιάνισκε.

(Σαραντή-Σταμούλη 1938:213–14)

For the dirt in the eye:

[…] The Christ smiled, and said […]:
'Take a black-handled knife, cross it thrice
and blow thrice to heal it.
Carrying the black-handled knife, the sorceress would cross it thrice; would blow at it thrice and it would heal.'

The blurring of the borderline between the narrative text and the performative present becomes even more conspicuous in cases where technical instructions proposed by the mythic sacred person come along with an embedded charm, as well as in cases where the embedded charm constitutes the very kernel of the proposed healing. This embedded charm appearing in the form of a simile or command or even in the form of another narrative, depending on the narrative type, not only enables and graphically enhances both the bidirectional relationship and the consonance of the performative past with the actual present, but also promotes the merging of the narrative and the performative/actual healer. Although the charm is delivered or imparted by the mythic narrative healer and is rooted in the mythic past, it is also embedded both organically and functionally in the performative present, but also in reverse order, that is, although it is performed in the present, it is embedded in the narrative mythic past. At the same time it not only enables the mythic sacred person

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to appear in the present time of the performative act via the correlative association with the healer, but it also allows the healer to enter the mythic narrative structure thus enhancing the validity and prestige of the healing process.

This interrelation and fluidity is even more noticeable when the embedded charm takes the form of a command, which is primarily to be found in the narrative charms involving the encounter of a sacred person with the personified malevolent force which is in the process of causing harm. In these forms, what the mythic narrative person does is make use of the command in order to redirect the operation of the harmful force. This command is performed within an ambiguous time frame; it can neither be rooted exclusively in the past nor in the present, residing somehow in both. This ambiguity in the time frame also extends to the plane of the narrative and performative/actual healers, who, by ambiguously occupying a mediating role within a fluid time frame between present and past, essentially merge into each other. A telling example of an embedded charm in the form of a command is the following excerpt, in which Archangel Michael meets a female demon ('Good Lady', euphemistically) and following the stereotypical discourse orders her to change her intended course of action, and sends her away to uninhabited places:

> Γητειά για το μάτι:
>
> […] – Που πάεις κερά Καλή, [...]?
> – Πάω κοράσια να μαράνω, οζά να ξελερώσω, βούγια να ξεζευλώσω […].
> – Μη πας κοράσια να μαράνεις, οζά να ξελερώσεις, βούγια να ξεζευλώσεις […]. Μόνο να πας στα όρη στα βουνά, να βρεις τ' άγριν λάφι να μπεις στο κεφάλι του και να σχαμουριέσαι κιόλας [...].
>
> (Βαρδάκης 1926:46)
>
> *For the evil eye:*
>
> *[...]'Where to Good Lady […]?'*
> *'I'm on my way to wilt girls, to take the bells off the animals, to take the animals off the yoke, […].'*
> *'Don't wilt girls, don't take the bells off the animals […] Go up in the mountains to look for a deer, go into its head and yawn too […].'*

The same ambiguity can be seen in the embedded charm in the form of a simile, which usually involves the motif of an encounter between a sacred person, usually Christ, and a sufferer himself or an intermediary, for instance, a group of (sacred) people, who, acting on behalf of the sufferer, ask for instructions in order to treat his disease. Blurring of boundaries becomes even more conspicuous when the name of the actual sufferer is incorporated in the

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text of the embedded charm. An illustrative example is the following excerpt from a charm for treating wounds, where Christ hands Saint John, Saint George and Saint Pantaleon an embedded charm in the form of a simile to treat wounds. The embedded charm delivered by Christ incorporates both the name of the actual sufferer and the very ailing part of the body:

> […] Ως εβάρηκε τη χατζαργιά Οβριός ο Ζαχαργιάς τ' αφέντη μας του Χριστού στη δεξιά μεργιά και δεν εμάρτσιασε και δεν ομπύασε και δεν κακοσύνεψε,
> να μην μαρτσιάσει και να μην ομπγυάσει και να μην κακοσυνέψει του δούλου του Θεού (δεινός) η κεφαλή.
>
> (Πάγκαλος 1983:372)
>
> *[…] As Zacharias the Jew pierced our Lord Christ's side and no pus oozed nor did it get worse, likewise may it not ooze pus nor get worse […] the head of the servant of the Lord* (name of sufferer).

The incorporation of an actual sufferer's name in embedded charms enables the identification of the performative sufferer with the narrative one, linking, thus, not only the narrative episode with the present performative act, but also incorporating the actual sufferer in the narrative past. The analogy which is grounded on the fact that both the narrative and the actual sufferer are afflicted with the same ailment enables them, via this fluid time frame, to identify with each other. The following charm is characteristic of this identification.

> Κίνησε η μασκανού και η μασκανίτσα
> να πάει να μασκάνει το... (όνομα του πάσχοντος).
> Η Παναγία εσταύρωσε στο δρόμο.
> – Πού πας μασκανίτσα;
> – Πάω να μασκάνω τον... (όνομα).
> – Ο... (όνομα) είναι βουτησμένος, μυρωμένος
> κι από το Θεό ευλοημένος [...].
>
> (Λενακάκης 2007:60)
>
> *The evil eye along with the little evil eye*
> *was on their way to give...* (name of the sufferer*) the evil eye.*
> *Virgin Mary came upon them on the way.*
> *'Where to little evil eye?'*
> *'I'm on my way to give…* (name of the sufferer*) the evil eye.'*
> *'(Name of the sufferer) has been immersed in the font and anointed*
> *and is blessed by God […].'*

It should be noted that the appearance of the actual sufferer who stands in for the narrative one can be traced extensively in narrative charms which have

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been recorded from the oral tradition and may pertain to transformations derived from the original motif of the encounter, where the roles of the narrative and actual sufferer are distinct, at least in the first part involving the stereotypical encounter of the main protagonists and the ensuing typical discourse. This widespread transformation, however, reveals a basic structural form of narrative charms which, based on the analogy, enables by way of an intentionally created fluidity this functional blending.

Conclusions

The study of the ritual act involving charms based on a mythic precedent reveals an interrelated connection of analogy as well as of fluidity between elements of different levels, between text and contextual frame, past and present, mythic and human, of an already resolved issue and a current one calling for resolution, as well as between narrative and performative occurrences. The narrative past is blended harmoniously and functionally with the present and vice versa, that is the performative present is blended and stretched back into the narrative past. The same applies to the narrative and actual protagonists, to the healer and the one undergoing therapy. The observable blurring of the borderline (cf. *'between and betwixt',* [Turner 1987:9]) enables the creation of an ambiguous 'place' of power: neither present nor past, but at the same time both past and present, neither purely mythic/divine nor human, but at the same time both mythic/divine and human.

It should finally be mentioned that the attempt at coalescing the two levels into the same time frame is further confirmed and augmented via the use of the stereotypical introductory formula frequently preceding the narrative charms: 'On 25 December Christ is born. That moment and this present time is but one,' which more often than not appears in charms within the Greek domain (Πασσαλής 2000:161). This fluid sacred time resulting from the dynamic interaction between text and performative frame enables the transition from analogy to coalescence of different categories as well as facilitates the handling of the critical moment which necessitates resorting to ritual healing. At the same time, it brings forth a basic structural pattern of the healing process which is not based solely on the use of the 'sacred' as a healing power, but also on the handling of the category of 'time' as a contributory factor effectuating readjustment and restoration of a 'disorder', a state of affairs to be further examined, of course.

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Bulgarian Medieval Charms and Amulets: Written and Oral Forms of Apotropaic Verbal Magic

The focus of this papers is on the interaction between the oral and the written forms of apotropaic verbal magic. As the examination of the sources shows, the oral and the written represent two aspects of a complex cultural phenomenon. This phenomenon encompasses multilevelled connections between the words of power, the objects of power, and their users.

The sources for this study are medieval and early modern Bulgarian texts in Old Church Slavonic language, written in Cyrillic and Glagolitic alphabets. These texts are often referred to as 'apocryphal prayers' (*апокрифни молитви*) or 'untrue prayers' (*лъжливи молитви*). This terminology has many limitations and problematic issues which are outside the scope of this paper. The important point here is that the examined texts definitely belong to the category of words of power. In my opinion, they should be called charms as they correspond to the definition by Ferdinand Ohrt (Ohrt 1936:49–58), or, in some cases, represent borderline cases between charms and prayers (Roper 2005:17–19). Therefore, further on in my study I address the source materials with the terms 'charm' and 'words of power'.

The Bulgarian charms discussed here belong to two different groups of source materials, coming from two different time periods.

The first group of sources includes texts, written on medieval metal amulets, discovered during archeological excavations and dated from 9–10th to 14th century. These amulets are small pieces of lead (folded or rolled), on which texts are written (Dinekov 1995:850–853). Depending on the content of the texts, two groups of amulets are distinguished: the amulets for the dead (found in graves) and the amulets for the living humans and animals (found in various environments). In terms of broader milieu, the amulets are discovered within medieval urban settlements (Popkonstantinov 1994:288).

The second group of sources includes texts preserved in medieval and early modern manuscripts, and dated from 12th to 19th century. The majority of these manuscripts are Eastern Orthodox Christian religious books: priest's service books (*служебници*) and books of needs (*требници*). The charms, however, can be often found also in miscellanies (*сборници*) and healing books (*лековници*). Today the manuscripts are kept in the National Library in Sofia and some other libraries in Bulgaria and abroad (Tsonev 1910:I–IX).

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The two groups of charms (and the material supports they are written on) have their specific, complex and interesting contexts of existence and transmission. Shaped by many factors, these contexts encompass various different elements. On the one hand, there is a rich apocryphal and heretic tradition, characterized by the tensions between the normative and the dissident forms of religion and culture. On the other hand, there is a question of continuities of motives, information and practices. And at the center of this complex environment, we can see a key and at the same time mysterious figure: the figure of the practitioner, of the user of the charms, with her/his needs, aims, practices, memory and levels of literacy (or illiteracy). This is the figure, about which we have the least information, yet it is a crucial element in the practice and the process of transmission of the charms.

Let us go back to the two forms of verbal magic (the written and the oral) and the two groups of charms. On the one hand, we have more sources and information about the written form. The charms are written down on metal amulets and in books. Additionally, the charms themselves contain instructions to be written on lead, paper, bread, etc. Naturally, the written form is very closely connected with the material support, with the objects. This written form can be regarded as verbal magic to be preserved. The written transmission is often accompanied by respect 'for particular wording, for precise reiteration' (Smallwood 2004:15; cf. Petkanova 1981:14–18). The written evidence is unique and of key importance. 'In fact one soon realizes that the written record, far from being universally set down from memory or dictation, is at some periods and in some types of document unlikely to be anything of the sort. Altogether, if we put together these different aspects of the transmission of charms, what we have to expect in studying them is evidence of the interplay of the oral and the written and, within each, of casual change and careful repetition' (Smallwood 2004:12–13).

In the case of manuscripts, it is also important where and how are the charms situated in the book and among the other texts. Are they inserted in unexpected places? Are they embedded or incorporated integrally in the content of the manuscript? Is the introduction of charms in religious books due to the daily needs, a result of the practice of local priests? (Popkonstantinov 1994:290) All these different aspects 'suggest different methods of transmission for the charm-copies concerned' (Smallwood 2004:17). The oddly inserted charms could come from any source: from memory, from a written source (which in its own turn can be of various content, length, etc.) The integrated and 'the "embedded" charm-copies are of course straightforward examples of written transmission. And on the whole the copies of charms found

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in the innumerable original "receptaries" must again be examples of written transmission' (Smallwood 2004:17).

The written form has its special authority. Let us make a comparison with early modern England, where 'chapbooks were hardly the most impressive of literary formats, so continental cunning-folk also made written compilations of their contents in more awe-inspiring manuscript books' (Davies 2007:176). In the English case there are two major cultural influences on the cunning-folk: religion and literacy. 'For cunning-folk the possession of literacy and literature were crucial, the inference being that when it came to assessing their worth, people placed more emphasis on the acquisition of written knowledge than other sources of magical inspiration' (Davies 2007:183). In the Bulgarian case, the written forms are important on several levels: for preservation of information, as a source of authoritativeness of certain texts and practices, as a representation of persisting motives and practices (Popkonstantinov 1998:29).

On the other hand, there is the oral form. The charms contain instructions to be read, uttered, pronounced, etc. The information about the oral form is much more limited and comes mainly from the charms themselves. 'In the far wider reaches of society with no access to professional medical help, desperate recourse to charms would have been all the more likely, and all the more thoroughly oral. Given this unbounded non-literary circulation, when charms do turn up in writing we have every reason to expect corruption, incoherence, reworking and variation of all sorts. If we think of charms as texts, they are not so much *textes mouvants* as *textes courants*' (Smallwood 2004:12). Bulgarian medieval and early modern charms on one stage of their development were captured in a written form. And yet, charms are very much an oral discourse, representing verbal magic to be used, verbal magic in action. Later evidence from Bulgarian folklore shows that the same charms (or their variants) continue being *textes courants*, with the oral form as a dominating one (Todorova-Pirgova 2003).

The oral and the written are also very much dependent on the practice of keeping the magical knowledge in secret. From our knowledge of a later period we can infer that if a practitioner does not pronounce orally the magical formula but writes it down on a sheet of paper the secret is kept. On the other hand, the written form provides an effective way to preserve important knowledge (Todorova-Pirgova 2003:11–12).

Considering directions of further research, the link between the oral and the written form should be examined in a broader context of ritual. Practitioners, users and patients, texts and objects, movements and gestures, time

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and space, oral and written forms – all these constitute ritual as a complex phenomenon. In an ideal case, we should have data about all these elements. What about the texts examined here, the Bulgarian medieval and early modern charms? Here the research confronts a major problem. The data about the entire ritual or procedure of usage of the apocryphal prayers, about the users and the patients, about the objects, about the spatial and temporal settings are scarce or entirely missing. We have only information on some elements of the picture, mainly the verbal aspect. The surviving charms are one of the elements of the complex magical ritual. The other surviving elements are the amulets. In some cases the ritual is present through a description in the text. In some cases the ritual is missing, and we have only the text. In some cases we have the text and the magical object meant to be worn as a protection against evil.

The charm 'exists in two interactive domains, that of popular oral composition, in which a large number of stock elements can be arranged in a variety of traditional structures at the choice of the appellant or performer, and that of the written spell-book, in which the spell assumes a fixed form and may be transmitted, or collected, in this form' (Ryan 2004:116). The Bulgarian medieval and early modern source materials present a good example of written and oral verbal magic, operating together and in constant contact. The written form appears in manuscripts and on objects. Its apotropaic role is supported by the authority of the written word of power. At the same time, the written form provides better and more secure transmission of important magical information. The oral form is testified by texts of the charms, and by the way the charms are included in the structure of different religious books. The written form has its roots in the oral one, and the oral form continues its existence as a written text. This intense interaction shows that the two forms are inseparably connected and necessary for each other.

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On Correlation of Charms and Prayers in Czech and Russian Folklore Traditions: An Attempt at Textual Analysis

The notion of *genre* in folklore varies from one '(national) tradition' to another[1]; besides, sometimes even within the framework of one particular tradition it seems hardly applicable to the study of certain texts. For instance, in many traditions, similar (and sometimes even the same) texts can be referred to as charms or/and (popular) prayers; in particular, many researchers have already written about the difficulty to differentiate charms and prayers in Slavic folklore (cf. Познанский 1995 [1917]:1; Харитонова 1992:4–8, 63, etc.; Аникин 1998:5; Кляус 1998:38; Толстая 1999:239; Белова, Левкиевская 2004:276)[2]. At present, there exist two opposite points of view concerning the texts of charms and popular prayers:

1) *charms (incantations)* and *popular prayers* are nothing more than conventional terms; therefore, even the same texts can be referred to either as charms or as prayers (Левкиевская 2002:246);

2) charms and prayers are on the opposite pole of a certain 'continuum; of magic texts (Топорков 2005:9; 2008).

As it turns out, the aptness of these statements depends on concrete folklore traditions: for example, the correlation of charms and popular prayers seems different in Russian and in Czech folklore.

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[1] Cf. (Аникин 1995) on the difficulties of employing the notion of *genre* in the study of folklore, in contrast to literary criticism.

[2] In this regard, the question of the origin of charms from ancient (pagan) prayers deserves attention (cf. Потебня 1860:31; Афанасьев 1995 (1865):I, 43–44, 414; Порфирьев 1891:7; Капица 1995:329; Агапкина 2010:9). Representatives of the so-called 'mythological school' in the study of folklore study especially insisted on this interpretation of incantations in diachrony. On the other hand, in the late 19th–early 20th century, folklorists actively discussed the correlation of charms and Christian prayers (Соколов 1888, 1889 and 1895; Алмазов 1896, 1990 and 1901; Миллер 1896; cf. also Веселовский 1881), V. Mansikka even considered that all charms go back to written sources (Mansikka 1909). As to more recent classifications of Slavic charms, either modern or going back to the 20th century, 'charms-prayers' are sometimes distinguished as a particular group of incantations (cf. Петров 1981([1939):123; Агапкина 2003:11).

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On an extralinguistic level, the difference between Czech charms and popular prayers consists, as a rule, in the latter's 'preventive' nature. Even if it is also often so with Russian texts (and with texts of some other traditions, cf. [Топорова 1996:4]), the degree of 'vitality' of charms and popular prayers is actually not the same in Russia and in the Czech Republic. In East Slavic folklore traditions incantations are still very popular (numerous books of collected charms which are published today constitute a striking demonstration of this tendency). On the contrary, with a few exceptions (charms against 'mild diseases', like hiccups or sty) Czech incantations do not circulate actively at present[3], unlike popular prayers which are still used by Czechs: many children know at least one or two little popular prayers by heart which they remember their whole lives[4].

In Russia it is not always possible to distinguish between charms and popular prayers on a purely linguistic basis (cf. Топорков 2008). In the Czech tradition, on the contrary, texts of these two groups differ considerably[5]. Text analysis permits to reveal distinctions between them at practically all levels, for instance:

1) phonetically, texts of popular prayers are almost completely deprived of 'phonetic symbolism', which is often particular to incantations; the 'semantically justified' use of homonyms (for instance, *růže* 'rose' – *růže* 'erysipelas' in medical charms[6]) is also much more typical of charms than of prayers;

2) morphologically, popular prayers contain a lot of diminutive forms. Diminutives in incantations are most often used (with purpose of 'coaxing') to

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[3] The so-called neopagan charms constitute a special phenomenon and, as in the case of Russian neopagan incantations, are worth being studied separately.

[4] It facilitates collecting these texts; in our study, we shall analyze several dozens of popular prayers communicated by informants from different regions of the Czech Republic (even if regional distinctions between these texts seem insignificant).

[5] This is in spite of the fact that one of Czech words referring to incantations is *zažehnávaní*, etymologically derived from the verb *žehnati* 'to bless', 'to sign oneself' (already the inner form of this noun indicates the connection of charms-*zažehnávaní* with prayers, cf. Вельмезова 2004:19). Besides, in the West Slavic folklore (in particular, in Czech and Polish incantations) canonical prayers (*Otčenáš*, *Veřím v Boha*, *Zdrávas* – for the Czech texts) were parts of charms much more often than in Russia: either charms started with them or prayers were put at the end of these texts (Вельмезова 2002).

[6] Cf. *Růže bílá, růže červená, růže modrá. Co jsi tak do mých očí složila? Jdi radši na louky, na suché palouky, trhej tam květinky*… (Вельмезова 2004:№ 139). Later on, referring to Czech incantations, we shall indicate only the numbers of texts in (Вельмезова 2004).

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describe diseases and other misfortunes, while their use in popular prayers is wider and involves even 'neutral' words[7];

3) in the syntax of 'popular prayers', there are much less comparative turns than in charms, where comparisons are so important that some researchers even considered them to be at the origin of incantations (Крушевский 1876:27; Потебня 1877:21–22; Зелинский 1897:19, 52; Потебня 1905:619). Besides, long chains with numerous homogeneous parts of sentences are rare in prayers – in contrast to charms[8] (cf. Невская 1983 on their functions, supposing a 'desemantisation' of their lexemes);

4) finally, the most striking differences between Czech charms and popular prayers can be found in the vocabulary (Вельмезова 2007a; 2007b; 2009). First, some important concepts (such as 'colour', 'space', 'sea', 'sky', etc.) have different semantics and symbolism in texts of these two groups which can be explained by different pragmatic orientation of prayers and charms. Among other things, the specific practical purposes of prayers could also be the reason why the majority of lexemes denoting space and related concepts in these texts are, in one way or another, connected with saints – the 'main characters' of prayers who are expected to help the praying person. On the contrary, the space of Czech charms seems hostile and alien to people: it is the world of demons, misfortunes and bad weather. On the other hand, the 'space' of prayers is much smaller, in comparison with the 'space' of charms[9]. As to more concrete distinctions, in charms, unlike prayers, the 'stone' never 'marks' any sacral loci; in charms diseases and demons are sent to 'precipices' while in popular prayers it is a (temporary) purgatory for souls ascending to heaven; the 'sea' in incantations is a part of inhuman universe associated with evil, but in popular prayers it is almost always a holy locus, etc. (Вельмезова

[7] Cf. *Šel Pán Ježíš do zahrádky na zelenou travičku, na studenou rosičku, naklonil svou svatou hlavičku* (Vlasáková 1903:34); *vykvet' kvítek prostřed moře, třikrat dražší než ta růže. Panenka Maria si ho oblíbila, sedmi slovy ho obložila. Dět'átko na oltáříček položila. Letěli tamtudy andělíčkové, vzali si ho pod svá křídla. Letěli s ním pod nebesa. Nebesa se otvíraly, dušičky se radovaly* (Laušman 1925:346).

[8] Cf. *Šla Panna Maria přes zelenou louku, potkala ji růže červená, bílá, modrá, suchá, pichlavá* (140); *zažehnávám tě, nátcho s růží dělaná, bředlavá, suchá, loupavá, palčivá, studená, horká, hnojivá a mořivá, po těle chodivá. Pokud nespočítáš písek v moři, hvězdy na nebi, po stromech listí, po lesích pařezy, po lukach mech, dotud toto tělo nemocné spokojem nech* (104), etc.

[9] Isolated references to the universe of evil in popular prayers were probably borrowed from texts of charms: *O satanáši, nepřistupuj ke mně, k mému loži, pokud nespočteš písek v moři, drn na zemi a hvězdy na nebi* (Felix 1903:219).

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2007a; 2007b). As to the rich colour range of Czech incantations, it is considerably reduced in popular prayers: most often, only 'green' is mentioned as a constant epithet (for instance, *zelená travička* [Vlasáková 1903:34; Vaněk 1894:46; cf. Вельмезова 2009])

Besides, different pragmatics of incantations and popular prayers probably explain the fact that, in general, the vocabulary of charms is much richer and wider than that of prayers: in order to overcome a misfortune, one had to 'conquer' it verbally, which presupposed its detailed description. On the contrary, in popular prayers (and in some incantations of a different pragmatic orientation) evil (which has not happened yet) only exists potentially; that is why there is no need to describe it minutely.

The results of our analysis show the necessity to sometimes take into account the so-called cognitive-perceptual factor in the study of popular culture: in folklore, the notion of genre involves not only formal and semantic factors, but also the point of view of the performer, his opinion on the concrete texts (Аникин 1995:105) – even if at present it is hardly possible to say who has called texts *charms* or *(popular) prayers*: informants, collectors or editors of folklore.

As to the important distance between charms and popular prayers in Czech folklore (in comparison with corresponding Russian texts) it can testify to the fact that in certain catholic countries, Christianity and paganism were kept much more separate from one another than in orthodox traditions.

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The Theme of Joy in Canonical Christian Texts and East Slavic Charms

Magic formulas representing the theme of joy are worth attention among the similes found in charms (for example: '...as I rejoice at the red sun, at the bright moon and at God's world, and as I rejoice at the God's throne and to my Lord Jesus Christ so may my cattle and my dear peasant belongings rejoice at me, servant of God [the name of the person], the herdsman' [Ефименко 1878:172]). When picked out and listed in an index of charm subject types, these similes make up a compact, but not homogeneous group (compare several examples in **B13** from the index of charm plots and situations [Кляус 1997:358–359]). They are remarkable by virtue of their Christian content, yet not limited to it; occurring mainly in charms taken from manuscripts collections, they, however, are occasionally present in texts transmitted orally. This makes them a very interesting object of studies.

At first sight, the theme of joy seems rather abstract and, therefore, not quite relevant to charms whose nature is purely functional. Nevertheless, researchers who noticed its occurence in certain functional groups of charms have pointed out that the theme of joy is capable of adaptation. Depending on the functional purposes of a magic text, it can express glorification of the personage of the charm, that is, not only of a sacred assistant, but also of the speaker – as a means of his or her self-sacralization. The latter has been covered in detail by A.L. Toporkov in a case study of social charms (Топорков 2005:192–196), yet it can also be observed in some love charms. Besides, the theme of joy contributes to creating an impression of unity or joint action in charms aimed at successful hunting, bee-keeping and grazing.

The specific rhetoric character of these magic formulas deserves some more attention. Their obvious book-lore content encourages a scholar to search for their literary foundations and, consequently, to inspect ecclesiastical literature. Yet it would not be too bold to suggest that the theme of joy, being initially connected with the Christian tradition where the basic semantic and formulaic models had been developed, was then adopted by apocryphal prayers and through them by charms, so that it received additional impulses to further development and evolved into new variants.

In the Orthodox Christian literary tradition the theme of joy is represented, first of all, through reminiscences of the Nativity and the Resurrection of Je-

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sus Christ originating in the corresponding gospel episodes. The standard salutatory formula 'Rejoice!' (Greek χαῖρε) appears in the Gospel chapters covering, from the dogmatic point of view, the most important events, and the most popular quote proved to be the initial words of the archangel's annunciation to Virgin Mary: 'Rejoice, you highly favoured one! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women!..' (Luke 1:28). These words have been widely used by Orthodox theologians and poets as a basis for liturgical hymns. The best example of this tradition is the Vespers troparion (forming part of the Sunday all-night vigil) *Rejoice, O Virgin Mother of God* (English *Hail Mary*), widely known as both the *Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos* and at the same time one of the major prayers of everyday religious practice.

The salutatory words of the archangel have been repeated frequently in festive hymns performed at the service on the day of Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (25 March Julian/7 April Gregorian) – compare, for example, the first sticheron of 'Lord, I Called' on this holiday: 'Revealing the eternal council, Gabriel appeared before Thee, Virgin, kissing and prophesying: rejoice, the earth that has not been sown; rejoice, burning bush that remains unconsumed; rejoice, depth unfathomable; rejoice, bridge that leads to heaven and high ladder that Jacob saw; rejoice, divine vessel of manna; rejoice, deliverance from the curse; rejoice, Adam's restoration, the Lord is with You!' (Православный богослужебный сборник 1991:213). Later this formula was introduced into stichera and troparia for other holidays, which presented an opportunity to reinforce the dogmatic message of the major gospel events that form the annual circle of the church calendar. A vivid example of this practice is the refrain of the ninth song of the Easter canon, where John of Damascus compares the message about the Resurrection with the message about Christ's forthcoming birth: 'The Angel cried out to Her who is full of grace: Rejoice, pure Virgin! And again I say, Rejoice! Thy Son has risen on the third day from the tomb, and has raised the dead. Be glad, you people!' (Ibid.:298).

The *Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos* had been accompanying the Feast of the Annunciation for many centuries (Акафистник 1992:41–48). This church hymn was created in the early Byzantine era to glorify Virgin Mary who had protected Constantinople from the invasion of enemies: Persians and Avars (Филарет 1995:186). Throughout several centuries it had remained an unique instance of the new genre whose flourishing occurred in the High and Late Middle Ages. It is remarkable that the plot outline of the *Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos* is linked, rather than to any military theme, to the Annunciation, what is also specified in the beginning of the first oikos: 'An Archangel descended from Heaven to say to the Theotokos: Rejoice...'

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(Акафистник 1992:41). This plot proved to be a successful framework for adding *xairetismoi*, i.e. salutations of the character being lauded which begin with the greeting 'Rejoice!' and evolves into a list of allegoric names for this personage. One of the numerous simile formulas in the oikos (the thirteenth, unpaired, following after twelve twin) became a refrain. In the *Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos* containing a total of 145 such similes, the refrain is 'Rejoice, the Bride Unbrided' (Ibid.). Xairetismoi became an expressive feature of the akathist as a hymnographic genre, regardless of whom it was addressed to (Аверинцев 1997:246–248).

Xairetismoi as a stock device of the akathist genre made further progress into the ecclesiastical literary tradition. There were special topoi used not only in hymns, but also in sermon prose. In the *Sermon for the Feast of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos* by Sophronius of Jerusalem, created nearly at the same time as the first akathist, this theme is represented in the following way: 'The herald of joy begins the speech to Her with joy, for he knows, that to all people, and equally to all creatures, its announcement will be a source of pleasure and the termination of great grief... What joy and what pleasant feeling can surpass this announcement from the angel to the Blissful Virgin, the real Mother of joy? – Rejoice, o Ancestor of the supercelestial joy! Rejoice, o Mother of the highest joy! Rejoice, the Founder of saving joy! Rejoice, the Cause of immortal joy! Rejoice, the Haven of ineffable mysterious joy! Rejoice, the marvelous cornfield of ineffable joy! Rejoice, the all-blissful source of inexhaustible joy!' (Проповеди святителя Софрония 1988:17–18). The rhetorical devices of that kind become increasingly important in the art of composing sermons and panegyrics. Old Russian scribes adopt them, showing their skills at mastering Byzantine rhetorical traditions. A good example is the end of *A Laud to the Intercession of Our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary* by Pachomius the Serbian (Logofet) who uses the same formula of Mary 'rejoicing': 'What words can be requital for your blessings? Only the archangel's speech, as adequate to the joy, saying: Rejoice, joyful, the Lord with you, and for your sake – with all people! Rejoice, verbal paradise, where the divine tree, Christ, was planted instead of the tree that ruined Adam, but granting for everybody immortality and life! Rejoice, the divine icon-case made from celestial pearls, having Christ in yourself, you the source of water of life, who has shed life upon us! Rejoice, the archangelic triumph and the angelic hilarity, and renewal of all the mortal people! Rejoice, the staff of Moses who divided the sea and drowned the torturer Pharaoh by the power of your Son, and showed good people the way to the Promised Land! Rejoice, the rod of Aaron, both royal and priestly, from which the fair blossom, Christ,

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blossomed, born of you without corruption! Rejoice, the star of non-evening light, illuminating all creatures and dispersing heretical darkness!..' (Библиотека литературы Древней Руси 2003:54–61).

Charms would adopt the devices developed by the literary tradition because charmers would tend to imitate ecclesiastical literary texts, seeing them not as merely authoritative, but as sacred. Charming itself was usually supplied with saying prayers. This was the way *Hail Mary* had been introduced into ritual practice. It was used either as a part of a charm or, more accurately, its 'escort' (support), or independently, seen as ensuring strong protection by itself.

However, within the charm tradition many original texts were created after the patterns of real ecclesiastical prayers. Thus, dependence on the model of the troparion *Rejoice, O Virgin Mother of God...* and the *Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos* is apparent in the charms where the theme of joy is represented in the greeting formula: 'On the sea on the ocean a white stone lies. On that stone there is Mother Most Holy Theotokos. (*Make an earth-low bow to the Theotokos.*) We will pray Mother Most Holy Theotokos. The Sanctuary doors open. Rejoice, Mother Pure Lady the Theotokos!.. (*Three bows.*)' (Фадеева 2010:137); 'Rejoice, walls and roots. Take out the disease from the jaws and the teeth of [the name of the person] servant of God, so that it cannot be found unto ages of ages...' (Виноградов 1907:30).

Charms where the theme of joy is represented in parallel formulas show signs of a more independent development of the Christian plot and, most notably, its freer interpretation. Social charms (for successful communication with officials or any other people), love charms and some herdsmen's charms would, through the use of this subject theme, employ the mechanism of comparison between the speaker and the Lord, which certainly contradicts the canonical tradition, but is possible in apocrypha. The self-sacralization to which the charmer resorts assumes that attitude to him or her will be equivalent to the love of the Virgin for the Son, or Christian people's (or the charmer's personal) belief in God. The understanding of joy as maternal love can be revealed, on the one hand, plainly, without allusions to any certain biblical events: 'As Mother of God rejoices and cheers up at the Lord – so may at me, Nikita servant of God, masters rejoice and cheer up' (Виноградов 1907:49); on the other hand, it may be reinforced by a parallel with the Nativity: 'There is a light day in the world, in this light day there is a light hour, in this light hour Jesus Christ, our Lord, is born and cheered, Mother Our Lady the Most Holy Theotokos rejoices at her Son Jesus Christ, so may any commanders from high to low, from old to young, not raise their hands against me, nor open their mouths at me, [the name of the person] servant of God' (Русские

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заговоры из рукописных источников 2010:685); '...and how the Most Holy Theotokos Mary the Ever-Virgin nursed her beloved Son, our God Jesus Christ, in her arms, and swaddled him, and kissed him on the lips, with neither anger nor evil, rejoicing and cheering in the heaven kingdom ever and ever, – so may at me, [the name of the person] servant of God, all the people rejoice and cheer up till my death, from now unto ages' (Майков 1994:153); or by a parallel with the Resurrection: 'As Most Holy Theotokos rejoices at her only-begotten Son, the Christ, his rise and resurrection, so may all princes and boyars, deputies, archbishops, archimandrites, abbots, princes and boyars and all kinds of authorities and people of all ranks rejoice and cheer up...' (Ефименко 1878:155).

If Christians are introduced as an object of comparison, the theme of joy can be unfolded through gospel events – the Nativity and the Resurrection, but in this case it can represent the idea of a church holiday as well: 'As Mother the Most Holy Theotokos gave birth to her only-begotten Son Jesus Christ and … all Orthodox Christian people, from young to old, rejoiced at that birth, so may princes, and boyars, and grandees, and all the authorities, and officials and my enemies, who are with me, [the name of the person] servant of God, at court, be glad and rejoice at me, [the name of the person] servant of God' (Фадеева 2010:138); 'And as tsars, and princes, and boyars, and all Orthodox Christians rejoice and cheer up at Christ's three-day resurrection and sunrise, so may at me, [the name of the person] servant of God, everybody rejoice and cheer up, now and ever, and till my death, at any hour and time...' (Майков 1994:152); 'Each time she sees me, [the name of the person] servant of God, or hears my voice, may her white body rejoice at it – the zealous heart, the memorable thought, the black liver, the hot blood, bones, and veins, and all the joints would rejoice at it. And as people wait for God's festive day, for Christ's blessed Resurrection and bell-ringing, so may she, [the name of the person] servant of God, wait' (Ефименко 1878:139).

The joy theme can be employed for expressing the idea of a joint action, as in charms for successful hunting, through the image of the Christian people gathering in the church for a festival: 'And as Orthodox people rejoice at Christ's blessed Resurrection (Easter), go and enter the golden church, there are priests with their wives, deacons with their wives, lay-brothers with their wives and all Orthodox people, – so may to me, servant of God, white beasts come, run, enter my traps' (Майков 1994:125); 'I [the name of the person] servant of God, will go to church, I will see how Orthodox people gather, celebrate and rejoice; so may any living bird given by God, Jesus Christ, to us as an offering, rejoice and be cheered and fly to me' (Ефименко 1878:181).

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The theme of Easter joy quite often suggests mentioning natural elements, primarily the playing (rejoicing) sun: 'And as on Christ's blessed Sunday (the Resurrection) the red sun, and apostles, and all saints, and the whole Orthodox world rejoiced, and as the dawn rejoices and waits for the red sun; and as tsars, and princes, and all authorities, and the whole Orthodox world look at the red sun, so may tsars, and princes, and all authorities, and the whole Orthodox world wait for and look at me, [the name of the person] servant of God N…' (Ефименко 1878:222). Apparently, the reference to solar symbolism is pertinent to the Christian tradition (Christ being 'the Sun of Truth'). However, it is necessary to notice that in some charms, the theme of joy follows the same formulaic pattern without direct links to Christianity, their characters being compared with stars, moon, dawn, light, sun: 'As the dusk rejoices at the dark night, so may [the name of the person] servant of God rejoice at [the name of the person] servant of God. As the dark night rejoices and cheers up at the thick stars, so may [the name of the person] servant of God rejoice at [the name of the person] servant of God. And as the thick stars rejoice and cheer up at the light moon, so may [the name of the person] servant of God rejoice at [the name of the person] servant of God. As the light moon rejoices at Maria the dawn, so may [the name of the person] servant of God rejoice at [the name of the person] servant of God. And as Maria the dawn rejoices at the daylight [or: at the world], so may [the name of the person] servant of God rejoices at [the name of the person] servant of God. As the whole world rejoices at the red sun so may [the name of the person] servant of God rejoice and look at the sun, and may she love me as a soul in a body, as the cross on church, so that she cannot either live or be without me, [the name of the person] servant of God' (Ефименко 1878:156). However, the number of such charms is significantly lower than of those using explicitly Christian imagery.

This short overview does not claim to cover all representations of the joy theme in East Slavic charms. Its task is to outline basic tendencies in the interaction between the charm tradition and Christian literary sources. They can be defined as

(1) formal reproduction of the structures originating in book-lore, mostly through the use of the salutation formula ('rejoice...') in some charms,

(2) independent development of motifs derived from Christian sources (joy of the Virgin, all Christians as a model for people's/animals' attitude to the protagonist), and

(3) introduction of non-Christian imagery into plots or situations derived from Christian sources.

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Parallel Motifs in Healing Charms of East and West Slavic Peoples

While the East Slavic charm tradition presumably forms part of a broader Slavic tradition, it has retained very few traits indicating to its Proto-Slavic origin. At the same time, East Slavic (i.e. Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian) charms in the course of their evolution had been considerably influenced by the other two trends of Slavic folklore, West and South. This influence can be traced through various parallels between themes and motifs in healing charms of Slavic peoples. The present publication does not claim to cover all of these parallels or even to list them; it only presents a brief summary of our earlier research on textual parallels between East and West Slavic charms (Агапкина 2010).

As Viktor Zhirmunsky pointed out, 'The question whether the similar folklore stories are linked to each other through typological parallels or through borrowing is a matter of history. It cannot be treated abstractly; instead, we should analyze the particular conditions under which the historical evolution of ethnic communities and their cultural interaction occurred' (Жирмунский 1979:336). This idea proves valid when applied to the folklore tradition of the large zone of Polish-Slovak-Ukrainian-Belarusian frontiers where the cultures of Slavia Orthodoxa and Slavia Latina get in touch and interact. Charms, forming part of each culture, reflect this interaction.

At the same time, it is quite clear presently that, in the context of East Slavic charms, West Slavic traditions were not the primary source of influences, but rather the mediating link for transmitting West European – mostly Germanic – influences. This is arguably indicated by the 'milestones' left by the motifs in the course of their migration, that is, the chronology of their emergence in Germanic, West Slavic and finally East Slavic records.

The initial step is to identify the specific plots, motifs or formulae in East Slavic charms that yield regular matches with West Slavic and/or West European traditions. Despite the seeming abundance of such matches, only some of them can be proved reliably. These are the following:

1. Charms against skin diseases: the story of how 'Jesus is walking along, carrying three roses, all the roses die and "the rose" [i.e. erysipelas] dies'. For instance: 'Jesus Christ came down from

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heaven, went around the field and met three roses [or: faces – Russian *рожа* is both 'erysipelas' and 'mug'].He has beaten one, crashed another and destroyed the third away, he gave good health to [the name of the person], servant of God' (Народная традиционная культура Псковской области 2002:337).

Among the East Slavs, this plot is attested most widely in West and North West Russia and in Belarus (the regions of Olonets Karelia, Pskov, Vitebsk, Mogilev, Homel and Brest). It is based upon likening erysipelas (рус. *рожа*), that is, red rash caused by it, to a flower, which is reinforced by the paronymy of the Russian words *рожа – роза* (the former being etymologically a phonetic variant of the latter).

This charm is quite popular in Europe and its prevalence seems to cling to the northern parts of Europe. Thus, in Poland it is mainly attested in the north, especially among Kashubians; a somewhat modified version is known to Czechs; the parallel Russian and Polish charms are widespread in Lithuania. Besides, the story of three roses carried by Christ is frequent in Lithuanian and Latvian charms (even more frequent than in Polish and Czech texts). It is, however, absent in the Balkan Slavic tradition.

Charms of the same type, very similar to those of East Slavic and Baltic peoples, are well-attested in Germany, from where they presumably were passed eastwards to Balts and Slavs. The German charms also tend to feature Christ or Virgin Mary who carry (or pick) a certain number of roses (3 or 1); these roses (=diseases) are dispatched, lost, changed, dispersed, etc.

Concerning the question of how this story made its way into East Slavic folklore, one has to conclude that the source was Polish, though in Poland occurences of this charm are relatively infrequent. The hypothesis of the Polish source is supported by the following facts:

1) the geographical distribution of charms of that type shows its prevalence in North West Russia and Belarus, that is, places where the interaction between East and West Slavs was especially active;

2) outside these areas – in Bohemia, for instance, – charms of the same type are much rarer and functionally different (they are used not against erysipelas, but against some other skin diseases).

2. Charms against joint dislocation and bruise: the type of the Second Merseburg Incantation (Old High German, probably 8th century). A Belarusian example: 'Jesus Christ was riding across a gold bridge, his donkey trod and sprained its leg. Jesus is standing, weeping and crying; Virgin Mary comes: 'My son beloved, why are you weeping and crying?' – 'I was riding across a gold bridge, my donkey trod and sprained its

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leg.' – 'Don't weep, son, don't cry, I have settled it as proper as its mother bore it, I have put bone to bone, sinew to sinew, blood to blood' (Полесские заговоры в записях 1970–1990-х гг. 2003, № 380, Homel region).

This plot is popular in Belarus (while much less frequent in Ukraine or South and West Russia) and is well-attested among Poles, Czechs and Slovenians. It is, however, completely absent in North and Central Russia, Bulgaria, Serbia and Macedonia. This indicates that the plot was borrowed into the East Slavic oral tradition from West Slavs (Poles mainly), and Slovenians who, according to Lj. Radenković, received it immediately from Germans. This is quite plausible, since this charm belongs to one of the most popular types in Europe and is well-paralleled by texts found in Germanic and Finno-Ugric traditions of Germany, England, and Scandinavia. While the earliest Germanic records of this charm date from 10th or 11th century, continuing into the High Middle Ages and later, in the West Slavic tradition it has been attested since mid-16th century among Poles and since the early 17th century among Czechs.

Besides the West Slavic/Belarusian match, this charm might have had another source. One of its formulae – that of putting together *bone to bone* – is attested, besides Belarus, in North Russia (Olonets Karelia) where it occurs in charms against bleeding rather than sprain (unlike its Belarusian match).

It is possible that these two dialectal trends of charms (Belarusian and Olonetsian) derive from two different source traditions: the Belarusian version was borrowed by East Slavs from their western neighbours and, given that Belarusian charms are so textually close to Polish ones, most probably through Poland, while the version from Olonets came from the Karelo-Finnish tradition or at least was influenced by it (it is hardly accidental that in the Karelo-Finnish tradition, especially that of East Finland and Karelia, the plot type of the Second Merseburg Incantation is attested in multiple records; for details, see Christiansen 1914).

3. Charms against toothache: the plot of three brothers/kings in heaven, in sea, and on earth, 'When all the three gather, let my teeth ache' (that is, never). For instance: 'A king in heaven, an oak tree in the wood, a dead man under ground. When the three brothers sit together to sup, let then my teeth ache' (Малинка 1902:221, Черниговская губ.).

This plot is frequent in Belarus, Ukraine and South Russia. Outside the East Slavic area, it occurs in different Slavic communities, though not so regularly. A single counterpart is found in an early 17th-century Carpathian manuscript book of receipts; there are some isolated occurrences in West Balkans (Bosnia, for instance); a rather confused version is attested in Bohemia; finally, in Po-

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land some texts have been recorded that are almost identical to the East Slavic charms. For a better understanding of the genesis of this plot, one should perhaps consider the Late Latin 'moon' charms that predate the Slavic charms in question. (Mansikka 1909:86).

Hereby, despite the fact that this plot meets few parallels outside the East Slavic tradition, the total distribution of matches indicates an outer source. How exactly this charm was transferred into the East Slavic cultural environment, is yet not quite clear, since the rare Polish or even rarer Czech records cannot plausibly explain the mass occurrence of suchlike charms in northern and western parts of East Slavia. However, the very fact that the West Slavic parallels exist contradicts the position of M.V. Zavialova, who insists upon the 'exclusively East Slavic isogloss of this plot' (Завьялова 2005:283).

Of all West/East Slavic matches, charms against bleeding are the most prevalent. This is hardly accidental, taking into consideration that healing charms of this type make up the largest group in the West European (especially Germanic) traditions (see Ebermann 1903).

4. The plot of three rivers, the third of which is blood and is being stopped. For instance: 'On a rock, on an isle, on the Mount of Zion three rivers flowed: one of water, one of mead and one of blood. I will splash out the water, drink up the mead and charm up the blood' (Ви, зорі-зориці 1991:71, Харьковская губ.).

It is attested in Ukraine, Belarus and South Russia. Its known parallels are West Slavic – Polish mostly, Czech less commonly. Besides, it appears in German charms, and the formulaic pairing of blood and water, referring to the Crucifixion and Christ's wounds, is generally common in European charms against bleeding (Ebermann 1903, Part VI).

5. The motif of 'sealing the wound with fleece'. For instance: 'Jesus Christ was riding along, he caught a sheep, took some of its fleece and sealed the wound – may red hot blood not flow' (Сборник Ирины Антоновны Семенцовой... 1892:286, Черниговская губ.). Among East Slavs, this motif is known in various parts of Ukraine and Belarusian Polesia.

The origin of this motif seems to be linked to an early Medieval charm from Europe, featuring 'three good brothers' who go to the Promised Land to fetch herbs expected to stop bleeding. They meet Jesus who advises them to take some fleece from a sheep, soak it in olive oil and apply it to the wound. This plot is widely attested in the Germanic tradition (Ebermann 1903, Part III) and occurs also in Greek *euchologia*. This motif seems also to have been adopted by East Slavs through the West Slavic mediation because it occurs in Czech and sometimes Polish charms.

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6. The magical formula 'Stop, blood, as still in the wound as water/Jesus in the Jordan'. It is attested in Belarus, Ukraine, somewhat rarer in South and West Russia. As for other Slavic traditions, the formula occurs in Poland and, even more commonly, in Polish texts recorded in Lithuania; it is also found in Czech charms, though intended against disorders other than bleeding.

Based upon a Medieval apocryphal story of how the Jordan waters stopped their flowing when Jesus entered them, this formula was incorporated into European charms against bleeding, the earliest of which dates back to the late 9th or early 10th century (Ebermann 1903, II). The corresponding charms of Central, West and North Europe (based on the Jordan formula) have generally two parts: the first part is narrative (the story of Jesus and John the Baptist going to the Jordan where Jesus then stops the river's flow) and the second one is the actual charm ('may blood be stopped as the Jordan was'). The Polish version is most commonly of the same structure, while the East Slavic charms against bleeding have lost the narrative part.

The distribution of the Jordan formula on the whole indicates that its source had also been West European, through the West Slavic mediation. It is, however, unclear why this formula, once well-known in Central and Northern Europe, was only preserved in Polish charms in Lithuania and (very poorly) in south-western parts of Poland, while in the western parts of East Slavic lands it became so popular.

The above-mentioned six motifs/plots are the strongest evidence for parallels between healing charms of East and West Slavic peoples (a broader interpretation of suchlike parallels is given by V. L. Klaus, see Кляус 2000:118–122). Summing up our argumentation, we may conclude that:

1. The matches identified in the present work are mostly (in 4 cases out of 6) specific narrative stories which can be quite easily identified by comparing certain charms from the East and West Slavic traditions.

2. Charms containing these plots in the East Slavic cultures tend most commonly to retain their original function (the three roses carried by Christ still occur in charms against erysipelas, the Jordan formula in charms against bleeding, etc.).

3. The plots/motifs listed above are found in a variety of versions that clearly indicates a rather compact area of distribution. Moreover, nearly all of them concentrate in the western part of the East Slavic lands which is a large zone of contact between East and West Slavs. At the same time, they are unattested in the tradition of Balkan Slavs, which rules out the possibility of their shared Proto-Slavic origin.

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4. Each of the motifs shared by East and West Slavs has West European (mostly Germanic) matches. This indicates that West Slavic charms served as a mediator between the East Slavic tradition and Western influences.

5. Some of the shared plots and motifs (mostly those against joint dislocation, after the pattern of the Second Merseburg Incantation, and also the charm about the three roses held by Christ), being transferred into the East Slavic tradition, took functional positions that had apparently been vacant before. It must be pointed out that, besides the ones listed above, East Slavs have not had any charms specifically intended for treating joint dislocation or erysipelas. Therefore, adopting foreign charms also resulted in changing the whole functional structure of the charm discourse, since, along with taking up new plots, it created new functional categories of charms, such as those against joint dislocation and erysipelas.

6. One may notice that some of the matching plots and motifs are much less common in West Slavic texts than in East Slavic, which seemingly casts doubt upon the notion of borrowing them by the East Slavs from the West. Yet the possible explanation is that the whole charming tradition of the East Slavs, compared to that of the West Slavs, survived much better and in a greater variety.

7. As far as West Slavic parallels are concerned, Polish and Czech charms have been mentioned, but not Slovak. The omission of Slovak charms is not unintentional. The reason is that the Slovak charming tradition, being West Slavic by its language, is textually much closer to that of West Ukraine and Carpathians, which makes it an intermediate link between East and South Slavic magic.

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Some Collateral Motifs of Herdsmen's *Otpusks* ('Release' Charms) in Ritual and Mythological Context

In the northern regions of Russia, the rituals related to the beginning of grazing season are shaped by two traditions – East Slavic and Finno-Ugric – and are much more complicated then in other Slavic regions. This complexity is achieved mainly by doubling the ritual: if in other regions the ritual for livestock protection and/or keeping the herd whole is performed either by the herdsman or the animals' owner, in northern Russia this function is duplicated (rather than shared between the two). Cattle owners perform ritual actions for their individual animals, while the herdsman later performs a similar ceremony for the whole herd. The core elements of the two rituals are basically the same: triple clockwise walking around animals with a candle, an icon and/or some other objects; feeding animals with bread, either specially baked or ordinary (all the animals on which the rite is performed eat pieces of the same loaf which is supposed to reinforce the unity of the herd and to prevent it from dispersal); passing through a specially constructed gate (not the gate leading from the cattle shed to the street or into the fenced pasture, but a ritual gate over which an icon is placed and at the bottom of which a girdle is laid that is to be put on by the shepherd or the animals' owner after having completed the ritual; also it may include open fire tongs that are closed after the animals have passed over them, or a padlock and a key on the sides of the gate, to be locked and hidden after the cattle passes the gate, etc.); recitation of a special charm, etc. The charm texts pronounced by the herdsman and the animals' owners are also similar. This excessiveness is one of the characteristic traits of northern Russian rituals for opening the grazing season.

Another peculiar phenomenon is the tradition of herdsmen's written charms (*otpusks*, literally, 'releases'). They are not merely oral charms written down, but a special genre of literary texts, much lengthier than typical oral charms, of more complicated composition and written in stylized Church Slavonic, with prayer formulas and clichés. These texts were either circulating among herdsmen themselves or bought from sorcerers. Often an illiterate herdsman would either ask someone to read an 'otpusk' or perform the ritual himself without reading, having contended himself with carrying the manuscript only.

The third peculiarity of Northern Russia is the widespread notion that the herdsman, by performing the ritual of the first graze, makes a contract with

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the *leshiy* (wood-spirit), who is to look after the herd for a certain fee received from the herdsman (eggs, a loaf of bread, a bottle of vodka, etc., up to the best cow from the herd). The herdsman, on his part, is obliged to observe some taboos: during the grazing season, he must not cut his hair or beard, hunt, gather mushrooms and berries, have sexual intercourse, etc. If a herdsman observes the conditions of the contract, he is supposed not to follow the herd, he only drives it out in the morning to the forest and then collects it in the evening, since the *leshiy* is expected to do the whole job. Any violation of the agreement is believed to result in death of the animals and even of the herdsman himself.

Hence, the fourth peculiarity is that, while in the rest of the Slavic world and beyond it the herdsman has a very low social status, nearly of an outcast, in Northern Russia this attitude coexists with him being regarded as a kind of sorcerer, provoking fear and respect. The herdsman is believed to possess abilities to harm and other magical skills. According to the bearers of the tradition, a good herdsman having an *otpusk* does not follow the herd at all, but spends the whole day in a state of emphasized idleness (sleeping at home, sitting near the fire and carving wooden whistles, playing with children in the village, sitting on the fence and playing the horn or the accordion, etc.).

Both the ritual of *otpusk* and the corresponding type of charm text (metonymically called by the same name of *otpusk* as the ritual itself) are described well enough. In the last two decades, the corpus of recorded and published texts, both oral and literary, significantly increased. They have been explored in various aspects, such as their textual history, poetics and pragmatics, relations to Old Russian literature and other types of popular rituals, the status of a herdsman as a mythological figure (that is, his being linked to the wood-spirit), herdsmen's attributes and magic practices, their position in the rural society, etc. (Дурасов 1989; Гуляева 1986; Криничная 1986; Криничная 1994; Бобров, Финченко 1986; Бузин 2000; Ильина, Ипполитова 2009; Федосова 2007; Мороз 2001; Мороз 2003, etc.). However, there are some aspects of the *otpusks* (both texts and rituals) that, while being peripheral within the scope of the above-mentioned studies, certainly deserve some more attention. I would like to have a closer look at some of them.

1. Twisting a rope

As already noted, the animals' owner, when in spring letting animals for the first time out of the cattle shed, puts her girdle on the doorstep of the shed so that her cattle should step over it. Then she puts the girdle on herself, to wear it for the whole grazing season; alternatively, she may hang it afterwards over

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an icon in her house. According to our informants, it may be just her own girdle (or even an apron), but in some cases it is emphasized that a special belt is made: ‘In the evening before the first graze the cattle’s owner would braid a rope of three flax threads (*pleteshok*, ‘braidy’), whispering: “Как этот плетешок плетется, так милая скотинка плетись на свой двор из следа в след, из шага в шаг. Нигде не заблуждайся, ни в темных лесах, ни в зеленых лугах, ни в чистых полях, ни в быстрых реках. Кругом пастыря толпитесь, нигде не заблудитесь во веки веков. Аминь” (“As this braidy is being braided, so you, my dear livestock, come home, foot by foot, step by step, nowhere lose your way, neither in dark woods, nor in green meadows, nor in open fields, nor in swift rivers. Hang around your herdsman, do not lose your way. Amen”). Then the owner would put the *pleteshok* around herself and wear it day and night. Before the very moment when the cattle was to go out of the shed she would take the girdle off and bury it under the threshold of the cattle shed, so that no cow could carry it off by its foot, and say: “Коль крепко и плотно пояс вокруг меня держался, так крепко Пеструнюшка круг двора держись и своей большушки-матушки” (“As this belt was tight and strong around me, so may you, Pied Cow, cling tight and strong to the household and to your mistress”). It was believed that this girdle could protect animals from any evil and make them always come home in the evening’ (Дурасов 1989:267–268). The same data is recorded in our field materials: ‘В ворота всё пояс, фартуцёк или цёво ли туды и росстелеш, когды корову выпускать, она ц’ерез этот пояс штобы прошла, штобы знала дорогу домой: “Как верёвочцька вьётце кругом там хозяйки, так и ты вейся, коровушка”’ (‘Put your girdle, apron or anything in the gate when you let your cow out of the cattle shed, so that it passes over this girdle to know the way home: “As the rope is twined around the mistress, so you [the cow] twine about”’ (КА, Карг., М. Шалга, В.С. Бизюкова, born 1924). Verbal puns are important: in the first example, on the verb *плестись* (both ‘to be braided’ and ‘to walk slowly’, which is not directly translatable into English), in the last one, on the verb *виться* (both ‘to twine’ and ‘to hang around’). The verbal parallel ensures that just as the girdle clings to its wearer, the cow would cling to her owner when returning from the pasture.

We do not know exactly whether herdsmen would also perform a ritual of braiding a belt or rope, but the object itself was a very important ritual item. A herdsman would run his herd over a girdle (or a rope) lying at the gates of the pasture, sometimes having tied a number of knots on it – either a certain magic number (e.g. 7) or the number of animals in the herd, – after which he would put it around his body, to wear it for the whole season. In case he

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wanted the herd to go around the forest and graze on their own, he loosened his girdle to tighten it again when the time came to get the cows together and drive them home. It is often specified in the manuscripts of the 'otpusks', in the section called *правило* ('rule'): 'Правило пастуха. при выпуске обойдеш кругом завяжош семь узелков напоясу и маленькой кусочек воска, и закрой замок, и опусти в воду [...] пояс положыть в ускoe место чтобы весь скот проходил через нево впереди взод поутру пояс отслабляй к обеду убавить, к вечеру утягай' ('Herdsman's rule. At the beginning of the graze, walk around the herd, tie 7 knots on the girdle, put a piece of wax onto the girdle, lock a padlock and put it into water ... Put the girdle across a narrow passage so that all livestock is to pass over it; in the morning, loosen the girdle; in the midday, tighten it a little; in the evening, tighten it close') (КА, Карг., Тихманьга, Б.Г. Третьяков, born 1936).

One of the most important results of the *otpusk* ritual is that animals on which it has been performed are expected to go together, so that when the shepherd does a certain magic action (tightening his girdle, blowing his horn, rattling, etc.) they go to the village on their own accord. Their way home is described by our informants (from the villages quite remote from each other) through an extremely stable standard formula – cows are referred to as 'twining a rope' (*веревочку вьют*): 'Затрубит в рожок, и коровы как верёвку вьют, все идут' ('The herdsman blows a horn and the cows go home as if twining a rope') (КА, Карг., Волосово, Л.Е.Зуева, born 1931); 'И оне уж знают время, опять к этому, из лесу фсе, как верёвку вьют' ('They [the cows] just know the time, they come back from the forest as if twining a rope') (КА, Карг., Ягрема, Л.А. Фаркова, born 1932). This formula describes cows' way back from grazing metaphorically as making a rope – they are going one by one. Sometimes the formula is deformed: 'Вот так выпустишь корову. Она идёт домой, как струну вьёт' ('So you let your cow out [to graze] and it goes home as if twining a string') (КА, Карг., Рягово, М.И. Чекрыгина, born 1922). Here *вить* ('to spin') is used probably for *виться* ('hang around') – like in the charm cited above, this formula is pronounced during rope-braiding.

Thus links are observable not only between the ritual and its expected results, but also between the ritual action, the charm formula and the formula used in spontaneous descriptions. In this case, three interlaced meanings are present simultaneously: *вить, i.e.* 1) 'to braid' (junction); 2) 'to twist', or, more precisely within this context, 'to align, as if along a rope' (a continuous sequence); 3) meaning more or less interchangeable with that of *виться* 'to hang around' (approaching or connection).

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2. Stumps, roots and gray stone

Texts of *otpusks* contain a number of stable formulas expected to protect livestock from predators. One of these formulas mentions ‘пенье, коренье (выскидие, колодье), (синее) каменье’ ‘stumps, roots/logs, (blue) stones’: ‘О, Пресвятый царь Господи, нашли, Господи, злых лютых тридевять меледеньских кобелей с вострыми ногтями, з железными зубами, чтоб прогонили из [м]оей поскотины и осеку от моего вышеписанного коровья стада и диких, и разных, и разноимянных, и разношерстных звирей и мидвидей за синей окиян море на дикой лес. Тамо еште зеленую траву, а пейте болотную воду, а ломайте и ворочяйте пение и колодье, и выскидие, и дикое камение’ (‘O, Our Lord the Holiest King, send me three-by-nine fierce and frightful mastiffs with sharp claws and with iron teeth to chase away from my pasture and from my herd all kinds of beasts and bears across the blue ocean to the wild woods. There let them eat green grass, drink bog water, break and roll stumps, logs, roots and tough stones’) (Ильина, Ипполитова 2009:239). The verbs with meanings ‘break’ and ‘roll’ denote the predators’ actions that are expected to be a substitute for attacks on livestock. The same objects appear in other charms, with other predicates, like ‘eat’: ‘ешьте вместо скотины пение и колодие гнилое’ – ‘eat stumps and rotten logs instead of cattle’ (Русские заговоры Карелии 2000:№414). In both examples, predators’ normal actions or their objects are substituted by something else – in the former case the action itself is replaced, in the latter the object only, – so that predation is transferred from cattle on stumps, stones, etc. It is quite consistent with general semantics of *otpusks*. Somewhat less logically, the following version has: ‘укрывает Она, Пречистая Богородица, меня р<аба> Б<ожьего> (имя), и все мое стадо любимое, скот укрывает небом и землею, пением и колодием, и белым камением от всякого черного зверя...’ – ‘Our Lady covers me, servant of God (name) and the whole of my beloved herd, livestock with sky and earth, with stumps and logs and white stones from every black beast’ (Русские заговоры Карелии 2000:№414). In this version, the livestock is supposedly hidden under the same stumps and stones. Finally, there is one more version of this motif mentioning the same objects. It describes the animals turning into stumps and stones, at least in the eyes of predators: ‘Истинный Христос и Пречистая Богородица, Илья Великий, Георгий Храбрый, Святый Василий отверните (a scribal lapse, it is supposed to read оберните – A.M.) Государи мои милый скот, мой милый живот всякими шерстьми и всякими пестрянами, пеньев и колодьев и белых каменьев’ – ‘True Jesus, the Most-Pure Virgin, Elias the Great, George the

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Brave, Saint Basil, turn my darling cattle, my darling livestock of any colour into stumps, logs and stones' (С.Е. 1911:565); 'Покажися мой скот и живот кустом и лесом и диким камнем' – 'May my cattle and livestock seem [to predators] bushes and wood and wild stones' (КА, Карг., Тихманьга, О.М. Зобова, born 1937). The same formula is also found in the charms used by the cattle's owner: 'Николай Милостивый вплавь (sic), и Егор Милостивый вплавь. Я вас прошу: берегите и спасите мою скотинку на всё лето красноё от зверя едучего, от змея летучего, чтоб показалася моя скотинка днём пнём а ночью серым камнём' – 'Nicolas the Merciful and George the Merciful, I beg you: protect and save my livestock, for all summer long, from an eating beast, from a flying serpent, make my livestock seem a stump at day and a grey stone at night' (КА, Карг., Лекшма, М.И. Замятина, born 1926). The motif of the livestock's transformation into natural objects can be expanded and more detailed: 'и кажись он милый мой живот, крестьянский скот ... лютому черному зверю … при водах – водою, при дворах – воротми, при огородах – огородом, при людях – людьми, при щепе – щепою, при песках – песком, при пеньи – пеньем, при колодье – колодьем, при коренье – кореньем, при листу – листом, при пещерах – пищерами' – 'and may my darling livestock, a peasant's (or: Christian, due to homonymy) cattle seem to a fierce black beast water near water, a gate near a yard, a garden near a garden, people near people, splinters near splinters, sand near sand, stumps near stumps, logs near logs, roots near roots, leaves near leaves, caves near caves' (Ефименко 1877:№3).

All these motives could be reduced to a single invariant: livestock being symbolically replaced (for predators) by inanimate natural objects. However, within a wider ethnographic context this substitution can be interpreted not only as symbolic, but also as mythological and ritual.

In the same region where the above-mentioned grazing charm is known, a belief exists that one can conceal a being (human or animal) magically – *закрыть, скрыть, поставить на круг* ('to conceal, to hide, to put into a circle'). While our informants do not tell how it can be done, they confidently state that a sorcerer, a herdsman (if he is offended by the animal's owner) or a wood-spirit can do it. As a result, the *closed* animal or person becomes invisible to others and cannot walk out from the circle in which they are confined. If nobody 'opens' the victim, it is doomed to starvation. The folk stories about searching closed animals have some recurrent details: in the course of their search, the animal's owners sit down to have a rest on a fallen tree/stump/stone or near a bush, and when a sorcerer is called to

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open a bewitched animal, it becomes clear that it was turned into this very thing. All the grass inside the circle is eaten up to the ground and the animal is discovered either dead or completely exhausted with hunger. Thus, a cursed animal or person appears to observers as a stump, bush, stone or log: 'Вот, и корова была закрыта против розулища, видно от улицы́, от поля. Искали дак, ей места-то отведено было вот с эту кухню, дак она там скоко – неделю ли, што ли искали, корову, не могли найти – дак она уж тут землю-ту всю съела, не то что уж чево... Ей уж не выйти. И старуха ходила, искала корову, дак ну все ходили, конешно, помогали раньше искать. Говорит: "Я на этом-то месте сидела, тут вроде как берёза лежала, говорит, вроде сидела на берёзе-то ещё", – а пришли – корова-то подохла' – 'A cow was closed near the crossroad, one could see [the place] from the field. They'd been searching for her – she was only allowed as little room as this kitchen, and she had been there – I don't know how long. They'd been searching her for a week or so, I think. The cow had even eaten all the soil around it. She was no more to get out of the circle. An old woman who was searching for the cow – many people went searching – says: "I was sitting, it seems to me, on a fallen birch – it was here". When they had opened the cow she was dead in the same place [instead of the fallen birch]' (КА, Карг., Калитинка, Д.Е. Ворсин, born 1926).

The effect of a herdsman's *otpusk* is described in the same words: a bear walks among the cows in the herd but does not touch animals, because they appear to it as stones, stumps or bushes: '[Why does a wild beast not touch cows?] I don't know why; they become stones. [Who?] Cows become stones. A beast does not see them' (КА, Карг., Ягрема, С.С. Янкин, born 1931, herdsman).

The effect of an *otpusk* is identical to that of a curse by a sorcerer who *closes* an animal: in both cases it means concealing it from a person or other animal (a predator) who is not to see it (there are some texts indicating that no one except the herdsman can see the cattle). At the same time, the animal is confined to a certain space which it cannot leave. There are no direct indications that the reason for the herd's not getting scattered about the forest is its being *closed* (*put into a circle*), yet one of the main tasks of an *otpusk* is keeping the herd together. The notion that animals look like stones, stumps, bushs or fallen trees, i.e. like immovable objects, should probably emphasize the idea that the livestock is magically attached to the designated area.

In the context presented above, other variants of this motif (*eat / break / roll logs, roots*, etc.) can be understood as results of modifications made in order to explain those parts of the text that could have become obscure.

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Abbreviations

КА – Kargopol Archive of the RSUH's Laboratory of Folklore containing field materials from Kargopol, Nyandoma, Plesetsk, Velsk and Primorsky districts of the Arkhangelsk Region.

Карг. – Kargopol district of the Arkhangelsk Region.

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Ritual Prohibitions and Prescriptions for Performing Charms (based on data from Vladimir Oblast)

Due to explorations performed within the scope of the Program for Studies of Traditional Culture of Central Russia[1], some evidence for existence and good preservation of ritual prescriptions was recorded in Vladimir region[2]. These prescriptions are meant to regulate the use of texts belonging to many folklore genres, including charms (charms/spells are widespread in the geographical area covered by the study[3]). Some specific rules (prohibitions and prescriptions) of how to pronounce magic texts and to perform actions accompanying them are still in active use in the above-mentioned region. Though many people who remember magic texts do not know these rules or at least do not talk of them[4], there are still some who know and partly follow these rules.

It is possible to identify several groups of people who use charms, and each of these groups has a particular set of rules concerning charm performance. The first of these groups consists of people who use charms occasionally. Their use of magic is typically limited to household-related charms, the most widespread healing charms (first of all against bleeding), and some rites performed on the first year of a child's life (*зарубание пут* 'cutting the hobbles', a symbolic action believed to encourage a baby to walk; *отлучение от груди* 'weaning') along with spells for attracting or suppressing one's love – that is, texts and rites normally performed by the immediate beneficiary, rather than by a professional sorcerer as a mediator[5].

The second group consists of those who practise charming 'professionally'. There are several types of these 'professional charmers'. First of all, there are

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[1] This Programme has been performed by State Republic Centre of Russian Folklore for the last 18 years in Vladimir and partly Yaroslavl' regions.

[2] For more details, see (Добровольская 2002, 2006a, 2007/2:26–28)

[3] Material on the charming tradition of Vladimir region is presented in the publications (Добровольская 1999:220–225, Фадеева 2004:443–456, Фадеева 2008:383–416).

[4] It needs to be mentioned that collectors of folklore rarely do ask their informers about traditional rules of performing folklore texts.

[5] The reasons for using/not using verbal charms by a sorcerer (they practise both ways) are covered in detail in (Никитина 1928:306–307; Щепанская 2001:71–94; Добровольская 2001:95–105; Харитонова 1995:151–152).

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healers, i.e. experts at medical spells and special spells for curing those bewitched or under an evil eye. Another category is midwives who specialize in spells related to prenatal care, childbirth and postnatal period. Sometimes, midwives use spells for healing children, yet in the Vladimir tradition midwives are more typically expected to treat women only, while medical treatment of children is a prerogative of female healers. Then, there are men engaged in economic activities that are characteristic of Vladimir region, such as shepherds, fishermen, beekeepers and carpenters, who use charms and spells related to their profession in order to achieve a better result. Spells used by men of these trades were not recorded by the participants of the Programme, but evidence of their existence was recorded well enough, along with some magic actions used by these people at work.

The next group consists of those who use black magic. Though maleficent spells are nearly absent in written records, their existence and broad use are well-attested in oral narrations from the Vladimir area.

Lastly, there are professional sorcerers who use charms[6].

Each of these groups has its particular regulations of charm use. The regulation systems can partly overlap, but there are also essential distinctions between them.

The present paper only deals with the first of the groups named above, i.e. common people using spells in their everyday life. While not seeing themselves as professional sorcerers, they regard their knowledge of some magic texts and actions as part of household life. Yet, at the same time, it is a very special part that demands taking extra care when one is involved in it. That can probably be the reason for the fact that ‘common people’ know and follow much more rules of charm performing than ‘professional sorcerers’ do.

From the records collected during last two decades, it is possible to identify several types of rules related to the use of spells by non-professionals.

Among those, the most widespread are calendar-based prohibitions to use certain (or any) spells at certain days or seasons. For example, it is prescribed not to use charms against splinters during Yuletide; the Holy Week is considered unlucky for using charms against bleeding. The use of children-related

[6] The question whether traditional Slavic cultures consider it mandatory to involve a professional sorcerer while performing love magic provoked a vivid discussion at the XIV International Conference of Slavic Scholars (Sept 10–16, 2008, Ochrid, Macedonia). Some researchers state that a professional mediator who knows magic is a necessary participant in love-magic rites. Others (whose opinion we share) think that such participation is well possible but optional.

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charms (which any woman who had children was expected to know) was also restricted according to the calendar. Thus, it was strictly forbidden to perform the rite of 'cutting the hobbles' and, therefore, the corresponding charm on the Beheading of St. John the Baptist (in Russia, September 11), because at this day it was believed necessary to avoid hand-contacts with any sharp or cutting things, in order to prevent either personal or communal misfortune.

Performing 'face-washing off coals'[7] wasn't recommended on the Summer Day of the Theotokos of Kazan (July 21)[8] and on the *Neopalimaya Kupina* (Theotokos of the Burning Bush)[9] day, in order to prevent a fire.

As for the kinds of magic related to housekeeping and economic activities, the prohibition to perform any magic actions or recite incantations connected with opening the cattle grazing season before the beginning of May was especially widespread. Bringing to one's home a new cow, and, hence, saying corresponding charms was prohibited on the Spring St. George's Day (May 6)[10]. On the contrary, the Spring St. Nicolas' Day (May 22)[11] was seen as the best day for those charms. The Intercession of Our Lady (Russian *Pokrov*) and some holidays of the Christmas Fast (especially St. Andrew's day, December 13) were regarded to be the best time for love magic, the former's name being interpreted as a pun on the Russian word for 'veil' (since married women in pre-modern or rural Russia were expected to wear headscarves, 'veil' became a metaphor for marriage).

The recommendations concerned with the best (or worst) time for charming do not specify calendar dates and cycles only, but also the time of the day. Thus, the majority of charms are not to be pronounced in the day-time. While professional sorcerers recognized several periods of day when charming could be performed, there was a single period regarded as safe and suitable for non-professional charmers – the dawn (household charms are never to pronounced at dusk). Infrequent as they are, there are

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[7] Putting some hot coals into a bowl of water and washing a person's (typically, a child's) face with it; expected to remove binding-spells.

[8] Not to be confused with another feast of the Theotokos of Kazan (November 4) which is of historically later origin. Both, however, are dedicated to the same image.

[9] Another type of Theotokos icon (it is characteristic of the Russian tradition that some feasts are established to honour a particular image of a saint, rather than the saint him- or herself).

[10] To be distinguished from the Autumn St. George's Day (December 9, formerly November 26, hence the definition 'Autumn').

[11] St. Nicolas of Myra in Lycia; this day is alternatively called 'the Summer Nicolas', to be distinguished from the Winter St. Nicolas' Day (December 19).

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some prescriptions that limit charm use according to various atmospheric phenomena. Thus, one should not pronounce the charm against stye if a rainbow is seen (otherwise the person will suffer from coloured dazzle). It is not appropriate to use charms in stormy weather since the magic power of the words 'will go off with the wind'. Prohibitions concerning the day of the week are not of much variety. The most unlucky day for using charms by non-professionals is Tuesday, otherwise, on the contrary, most commonly considered to be lucky[12].

Another cluster of restrictions widespread among non-professional charmers represents those related to one's social status and standards of behaviour defined by age, gender, etc.[13] Limitations of that kind are rather strict. Thus, a woman can charm only if she is married (with the exception of love magic). Moreover, some of our informants laid stress upon the belief that even a married woman could only use charms after having become the actual householder. For a man, charming is considered proper (as our rather scanty data on this subject shows) after he has had been in military service.

Another category of prescriptions concerns the physiological condition of the charmer. The most frequent case is menstruation. The popular belief is that during this period a woman should not use charms against bleeding and most charms related to housekeeping or economic activities. Pregnancy also imposes certain restrictions on performing charms: a pregnant woman should not charm to stop bleeding, and some informants state that she must not pronounce magic texts at all because they presumably can harm her future child. Notably, many our informants specified that a woman, while in her reproductive age, would mainly use those spells which did not demand any special magic 'training' from her. But her getting older would lead to a shift of the whole strategy of charm use and corresponding regulations. If a woman of post-reproductive age did not move into the category of professional sorceresses (i.e. of those who exorcise human illnesses, treat cattle or operate as midwives on a regular basis), she was discouraged from any charming in her everyday life at all (otherwise she or her family or all her rural community risked suffering some misfortune). It is the transition into the 'old' age group that coincides for many women with the beginning of their 'professional' specialization in magic, particularly in midwifery which can be only practiced by a woman of post-reproductive age who has given birth to at least three children. Our informants stated that many female healers have begun to practice

[12] For details, see (Добровольская 2006б:276–292).

[13] For details, see (Берштам 1988).

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either healing or removing binding spells/the evil eye only after having passed into the 'old' age group.

Traditional limits of charm use are partly connected with the charmer's gender. Among economic-related charms, a clear division between 'masculine' and 'feminine' charms is observable: the charms connected with the first grazing, purchasing and/or keeping livestock, as well as those whose purpose is to ensure family's well-being or to protect the house, are 'feminine', while the magic related to agricultural activities (especially to their beginning) and tool use[14] are 'masculine'. The belief is that if the given order of things is broken, the person responsible for this breach will face great troubles. Though in love magic gender distinctions are generally barely identifiable, our informants hold that love magic is 'women's business and males shouldn't say these words'. This evidence suggests that within the tradition in question the love charms that still survive today are (exclusively or mainly) 'feminine' texts aimed at 'marriage or family strengthening, rather than sexual submission of a person of the opposite sex' (Топорков 2005:132). In the regions under scrutiny, despite their rich manuscript tradition, men's love charms have not been recorded at all,[15] so any regulations concerning their performance are unavailable.

A relatively low number of specifications is based on religious concepts. Usually it deals with the opposition between 'baptized' and 'non-baptized'. The most frequent specification is that a non-baptized person should not perform charms for livestock, otherwise the charm will not work. (Interestingly, in the modern children's magic which largely involves conjuring various characters like the Queen of Spades, such prohibitions re-emerge.) Into the same category some quite rare rules can be fitted that prohibit performing household-related charms by 'strangers'. 'Strangers' is an umbrella term for any

[14] I.e. repairing agricultural implements or preparing them for work. It should be mentioned that sometimes we have recorded specifications forbidding women to touch men's working tools (e.g., plows and scythes) while there are seemingly no such prohibitions for men, concerning women's tools (sickles, etc.) Moreover, sharpening a tool is considered as specifically masculine activity. If a woman sharpens a sickle, or sometimes even a knife, it is seen as threatening her family. See further (Добровольская 2010:207–227).

[15] It seems that now the women's tradition has almost completely superseded the men's one found in earlier written sources where the pattern of distribution had been dramatically different. As A.L. Toporkov has noticed, it was the men's tradition that dominated in manuscript sources: '...the "feminine" tradition survived in manuscripts considerably worse than the "masculine" one' (Топорков 2005:132).

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people of non-Russian ethnicity (rather than non-Christians). It is presumed that a charm pronounced by any of them would do harm instead of helping, since it either loses its power or works the wrong way.

Finally, there is one more group of restrictions concerning particular situations in the charmer's life of basically individual nature. Thus, informants tend to point out that it is non-appropriate to charm (1) within a year after any relative's death; (2) if there is a baby, a pregnant woman, or a sick person in the house; (3) if any relative is in military service or in prison, etc.[16]

We may conclude that in the two regions of Central Russia covered by the present research, regulation rules connected with performing charms and/or corresponding magic actions form a rich and well-preserved tradition. The better charms themselves are preserved, the more developed is the system of specifications regulating their use. Moreover, our records of last years show that these specifications start to exist as an independent genre of both informative and didactic nature and knowing them indicates a person's belonging to a certain community.

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[16] See for further details (Добровольская 2009/1:39–50).

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Spell and Charm Traditions of the Argun River Region: Transformation and Evolution over Time

The river Argun has marked a division between Russia and China since the 17th c. The Argun fort was the first Russian settlement in the border region, and it was first located on the right bank of the river (1681), but after the signing of the Nerchinsk agreement with China it was moved to the left bank (1689). Dozens of Cossack villages appeared in 18–19th c. on the banks the border river and its tributaries on the Russian side.

The empty Chinese lands near the Argun, rich with forests, meadows, animals, and fish, attracted the attention of Russian Cossacks over the ages. Sometimes of their own volition, sometimes with the permission of Chinese authorities, Cossacks built hunting houses on the right bank of the Argun, sent their livestock to pasture there, and fished and hunted across the river. After the Civil War (1919–1921), Russian Cossacks who had taken the side of the White Army escaped with their families into China, populating this land. Thus on the site of former hunters' houses, the new villages and towns of the Transbaikal Cossack Army appeared. This population was mostly located in the area of Three-Rivers (*Trekhrechiie*), that is on the rivers Gan, Derbul and Khaul. All of them flow into the river Argun.

In the 1950s the core part of this population returned to its historical homeland, which, after 1917, became a totally new country. Those who did not want to go to the USSR moved on to Australia, Argentina, and America. Russians who stayed in the Three-Rivers area basically were women who married Chinese, and their children, born into these mixed families. Today they are the guardians of the Russian folk tradition in China (Кляус 2008).

The first records of magic spells were made in the Argun area in 1850s. They were made by N.I. Kashin, a doctor of medicine who served for seven years (from 1851 to 1857) in the Transbaikalia Cossack Army.

In the history of medicine Nikolai Ivanovich Kashin is known thanks to his discovery and description of Kashin-Beck disease – an endemic degenerative osteoarticular disorder characterized by specific changes in the human musculoskeletal system.

But medical practice in Cossack villages of the Argun region was not Dr Kashin's only concern. He was interested in the everyday and cultural life of the Cossack settlements entrusted to him. He conducted research, collected

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folklore, and described customs, rituals, and beliefs. Dr Kashin devoted a substantial article to the folk medicine of the Argun population. In addition to physical treatment methods, the folk medicine he described also included magic spells. This article was published in 1860 in *Vestnik Russkogo Geographicheskogo Obshchestva* ('Proccedings of the Russian Geographic Society').

Dr Kashin published fourteen magic spells. It is not a large corpus, but if we imagine the conditions of his work in the middle of the 19th century we may argue that he made a significant contribution. Even now, after 160 years, the documentation of this folk genre is quite difficult. Kashin wrote, 'The most important remedy of the local healers used during treatment is pronouncing magic spells and whispering. It is difficult to learn all the actions, magic spells, and the whispers. At the same time I managed to track down some of them and here I present the magic spells word for word, with all accuracy and preserving irregularities in pronunciation' (Кашин 1860:141).

Thanks to Dr Kashin, we have the following magic spells recorded from Argun-area healers of the 19th century: against fever – five texts; against cramps (*rodimets*) – two, one for each; against fever with high temperature (*ognevishche*); against hernia (white hernia/*khomut*); against pricking pain (*kolotio*); against angina (*zhaba*); against stye (*yachmen'*), against snake's sting; against pathological growth of a horse's hoof (*nogot'*). Later the essential part of this collection was included in the classic compilation of Russian magic spells published by L.N. Maikov (Майков 1869). Thus we can argue that Russian folklorists were familiar early on with the tradition of magic spells in the Argun area.

The next publication of the Argun region magic spells was made by Konstantin Dmitrievuch Loginovskii, an outstanding collector and researcher of rituals and folklore of Transbaikalia Cossacks. He was an officer of the Amur-area Department of the Russian Geographical Society.

In 1899 and 1903, this department published two of Loginovskii's articles: 'The Wedding Songs and Rituals of Cossacks of the Eastern Transbaikalia Area' and 'Materials to the Ethnography of Transbaikalia Cossacks'. Apparently, at about this time he moved to Khabarovsk. In the first article he included a detailed description of the wedding ceremony with samples of wedding songs and magic spells: protective magic spells, magic spells to arouse passion (*prisushki*), and magic spells to destroy passion (*otsushki*) (nearly forty texts in all) (Логиновский 1899). The second article included a special chapter devoted to magic spells – 'Healing and Witchcraft' (*Знахарство и колдовство*). This chapter included 179 texts: healing charms, charms used

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for economical purposes, for hunting, aimed at commanding a positive attitude from authorities (*na nachalstvo*) (Логиновский 1903).

Loginovskii collected magic spells personally and used records made by other people, perhaps, at his request. After every text there is information on by whom, where and from whom a record was taken. If a magic spell was taken from a hand-written copy book, information is provided on its owner. According to the statement of the collector, in all texts he published 'everything is preserved precisely as it was in the originals' (Ibid.:134).

The quantity and variety of magic spells make his collection on a par with the collections of P.S. Yefimenko and E.R. Romanov, who in great detail and for the first time in the history of Russian research had presented separate local traditions of the Eastern Slavs. Some magic spells published by Loginovskii are unique. For example, researchers and collectors rarely can obtain texts which people use in order to curse somebody. Loginovskii published magic spells to send a hernia (*для надевания хомутца*) which was one of the most fearful types of magical harm in the worldview of the Pribaikalye and Transbaikalia Russian population. There were also magic spells aimed at bringing bad luck on a wedding train and on a best-man, and some other texts as well.

The geography of Loginovskii's collecting work is Nerchinsk-the-Plant, Nerchinsk, Akshinsk, and Chita districts located in the eastern part of the Transbaikalia territory. Besides this he used records made by doctor N. Kirillov from the Verkhneudinsk district (in the western part of the Transbaikalia territory) who was also interested in the tradition of magic spells (Кириллов 1893). There was only one settlement located in the Argun area which supplied materials published in Loginovskii's works. This is Doninskaya stanitsa of the Nerchinsk-the-Plant district. Nowadays it is a village named Dano of the Kalgan district of the Transbaikalia territory.

Apparently Loginovskii did not collect materials personally in the Doninskaya stanitsa. There he had an interested correspondent, literate and at the same time fully aware of the folk tradition, a Cossack with the last name Kosykh. Comments which Loginovskii makes to the Doninsk materials (29 magic spells) illustrate the following:

1. Part of the records were made directly from Kosykh, because it was mentioned: 'recorded directly from the words of a Cossack named Kosykh from Doninskaya stanitsa, Nerchinsk-the-Plant district' (Логиновский 1903:89, 117, 121, 121–122);

2. It seems that an essential portion of texts was recorded by Cossack Kosykh from some other respondents because Loginovskii writes, 'recorded by a

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Cossack named Kosykh from Doninskaya stanitsa, Nerchinsk-the-Plant district' (Логиновский 1899:V; Логиновский 1903:41, 47, 64, 70, 104, 107). In particular, Kosykh had questioned a Cossack named Serebryakov from the same stanitsa. One of the text has a notable comment: 'From the words of Cossack Serebryakov from Doninskaya stanitsa of Nerchinsk-the-Plant district, recorded by Cossack Kosykh' (Ibid.:85). I assume that in this particular case when it was simply mentioned: 'recorded from the words of Cossack Serebryakov from Doninskaya stanitsa of Nerchinsk-the-Plant district' (Ibid.:57, 63, 101), it was also recorded by Kosykh.

3. Another set of the Doninsk materials are magic spells from the manuscript which belonged to Serebriakov (Ibid.:32, 36–37, 38, 42, 46, 51, 52, 54, 85, 90, 107, 108, 116–117, 124). Most likely, this manuscript Loginovskii received with Kosykh's help.

It seems that, for Loginovskii, the work with correspondents was an ordinary thing. He did not only personally collect folk materials, but also used the records made by other people. We have already discussed the texts collected by Dr Kirillov from Verkhneudinsk. I also should note the records made by Stepan Loginovskii (it is not clear whether he is a relative or a namesake) from the town of Onokhovskii (now it is town Onokhovo of the Baleiskii district) (Ibid.:33, 34, 37–41, 45, 49, 53, 58, 72–73, 92–97, 100, 123).

Kosykh's literacy and his interest in all the mystical and magical arts testify to the fact that Loginovskii heard directly from him a story about witches who had turned themselves into magpies and removed a baby from the body of a pregnant woman (Ibid.:13). He also learned from him a method to discover a witch with the help of word 'zumzeas' (*зумзеаз*), written several times in a special form.

Magic spells from the *Doninskaya stanitsa* essentially broaden our perspective on the tradition of the Argun area. First, we find that they document its existence in oral and written forms. I should note that my own research has shown that both these forms have been preserved to the present day. In addition, we should emphasize the functional variety of the texts. In the Doninskaya stanitsa there were magic spells aimed to arouse passion (*prisushki*), against melancholy, for causing and removing hernia (*khomut*), charms 'against different diseases' (*от разных болезней*), against evil eye, against cramps (*rodimtsa*), against fever for madness, bleeding, pricking pain, worms, scrofula, stye, angina (*zhaba*), drinking-bout, and toothache. There were also magic spells to protect the cattle when first sent out to pasture, for successful hunting, against anger of authorities and judges, for beginning an enterprise and for success in trade. They are almost all represented by only one text in Loginovsky's compilation. Only magic spells

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for successful hunting, against various diseases, and against hernia (*khomutnye*) are represented by two texts. The most interesting are the latter spells. These texts, as I have mentioned before, are unique, because they belong to the so called 'black magic'. Three of these magic spells were reproduced in Serebryakov's manuscript and one was recorded by Kosykh, which indicates the special confidential relationship between Loginovskii and these Cossacks. As we can see the magic spells recorded in Doninskaya and included in Loginovskii's compilation exposed the Argun area tradition of magic spells and how the texts functioned. Before Loginovskii, the Argun area tradition was only known thanks to Dr Kashin's records.

The next and, perhaps, the last publication of the Argun area magic spells was made in 1911. A selection of materials entitled 'The Magic Spells and Beliefs of Transbaikalia' was published in two issues of the journal The Siberian Archive. The material was probably collected by P.M. Tolmachiov (Толмачев 1911). It is known that Petr Matveievich Tolmachiov was a country teacher and an officer of the Chita museum, organized, as mentioned above, by A.K. Kuznetsov (Петряев 1965:76).

'The Magic Spells and Beliefs of Transbaikalia', probably, is the only published work by Tolmachiov devoted to folklore and ethnography of the Russian population of the Transbaikalia territory. It is quite a large collection. The work included more that seventy texts of magic spells with different functions: healing, household use (against animal diseases), hunting, of social character (for authorities, used during trials and weddings).

According to the author, the texts were collected 'in different places of Transbaikalia', and, unfortunately, only for some of them the locations where the texts had been recorded were provided. Namely five magic spells – against yawning (Толмачев 1911:64–65), against fever, for the court, against an evil eye during hunting (two texts) (Ibid.:74, 141, 150–151, 152) – are provided with comments as to that they were received recorded in a copy book in a village of Sharakany from 'a peasant' and from some *Murzins*, just from their 'copy book'.

The village Sharakany is located in the neighborhood of Doninskaya. Today it is the village of Sharo and belongs to the Alexandro-the-Plant district of the Transbaikalia territory. Functionally, a number of Sharakany magic spells published by Tolmachiov completely correspond with the Argun area magic spells from the works of Kashin and Loginovskii. It is possible that some other texts published by Tolmachiov were recorded in Argun area. Thus, we have access to 48 published Argun area magic spells which were used in the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th c.

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My field research conducted in the former villages of the Transbaikalia Cossack Army, on the left bank of the Argun River, have shown that in this territory magic spells are actively used today in everyday life. Magic spells also exist in the Chinese part of Argun territory among ‘Chinese Russians’ – half-breeds who are living in the former Russian villages of the Three-Rivers area. Of course, these magic spells are not used there as actively as they are on the Russian territory. This fact may be ascribed to the fact that the Russin language is disappearing from everyday life on the Chinese side of the border.

Today the Argun area tradition of magic spells, as in the times of Kashin, Loginovskii and Tolmachiov, exists in two forms: written and oral. I have familiarized myself with copy books and separate pages containing magic spells in the village of Dano, in Nerchinsk-the-Plant, and in the former Russian settlement *Popirai* (People’s Republic of China, now Tan’dzetui). Significantly more often Argun area healers know their magic spells by heart, reciting them from memory during healing process. Nerchinsk-the-Plant, Argunsk, Damosovo, Dano are on the Russian territory. Shchuchiie, Karavannaya, Dragotsenka are on the Chinese side of the border (the contemporary Chinese names for these settlements are Suchin, En’khe, San’khe). In 1992 and in 2007–2010, in these settlements, I was able to videotape authentic rituals involvig magic spells and incantations. I also recorded texts of magic spells which narrators recited to me.

The repertoire of Argun area magic spells that existed on the cusp of the millennium and the repertoire that was documented at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries are comparable to each other. At the same time, there are magic spells mentioned in the earlier records contemporary texts functionally similar to which I was not able to document. However, this certainly does not mean that some functional groups of texts did not occur in the past, or some texts collected by the researchers of the Argun area folk tradition of magic spells do not occur today. Our field studies are always limited, and to be sure of the total absence of a particular functional group we must conduct exhaustive research. Nevertheless that the inclination toward certain magic spells existed in different times among the Argun area population is quite clear and can be explained.

For example, I was not able to record a single magic spell intended to bring good luck during hunting. At the same time, according to the publications made by Loginovskii and Tolmachiov, we know three texts of this group. The reason is that at the end of the 20th century hunting no longer played an essential role in the economy of the Argun area population. For Russians this activity is an entertainment first and foremost, a way to relax. In China any hunting

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is strictly forbidden. However, elements of the once wide-spread hunting magic could still be discovered. Thus, in the Argunsk town in 2008 I recorded the following method of 'repairing' a hunting gun, if somebody has cursed it with bad luck. A gun must be pulled through the trouser-leg of its owner. Similarly, in the repertoire of the modern Argun area healers, no single magic spell for *nogot'*, a disease affecting horses, has been documented. This fact is also connected with the changes in everyday life of the Russian population living on the banks of the Argun River. Until the middle of the 20th century, a horse played the central role in household, economic and frontier life of the Argun area population (both in Russia and in China), but currently one seldom encounters a horse on the streets of the Argun area settlements.

On the basis of previously recorded texts, the largest functional group is magic spells against fever, a fact which has been mentioned in its time by Dr Kashin: 'For an alternating fever ... many remedies are current, often quite disgusting. There are also extremely numerous magic spells and written texts in use among local population' (Кашин 1960:141). In the present these texts are rarely found. Among texts I collected, there is only one magic spell against fever. It was found in a copy book from the Dano village. The reasons for this change in repertoire are plain. In modern medicine, fever is not a separate disease. It is the process of rising of body temperature, which is typical for many diseases and can be successfully suppressed by medication.

Among the Argun area magic spells I collected and documented, the largest group is formed by texts against bad luck (*porcha*) and fright (*ispug*). Of course, these magic spells were widespread during the period of the first collectors of the Transbaikalia folklore. But in the present, when many diseases are treated by the means of modern medicine, several functional groups of magic spells were unattested, namely against bleeding, toothache, splinter, angina, burns, etc. They can be found in the healers' repertoires, but, in my opinion, this is the result of inertia of the folk tradition.

There is a totally different situation with magic spells against diseases having a mysterious etiology: evil eye (*urok*), hernia (*khomut*), bad luck (*porcha*), fright, phobia (*ispug*). These texts are the most popular among the Argun area population in the present day.

One particular fact attracted our attention. In the Chinese Argun territory I was practically unable to record magic spells of different functions. I heard some stories and received information that sometimes in the past the healers from the Three-Rivers area healed hernia and cramps, stopped bleeding, cured snakebite and burns, caused passion and brought bad luck. However, the memory of the Argun area Chinese Russians had not preserved any single text for these functions.

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However, magic spells for fright and bad luck are used by half-breed population in the contemporary period. The faith in their magic power has been preserved. This is indicative, according to the stories I recorded, that today these magic spells are used exclusively on children. The opportunities and achievements of Chinese medicine are well known. But in China children are provided with special care. Hence the traditional Russian healers' repertoire has been preserved in particular in this niche.

I should add that my interviews from Russian emigrants, who migrated from the Chinese Argun area to Australia in the 1950s–1960s and who live today in Sidney, have shown that magic spells and incantations have totally disappeared from their folk repertoire. Emigrants have preserved only sketchy memories about them. The small population, new ethnic surroundings, new forms of house-holding and everyday life, a stable and more advanced economic situation, and most importantly, inclusion in another social and cultural milieu and interaction with state institutions have not promoted their conservation.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that a comparative analysis of the modern 'Russian' and 'Chinese' Argun area magic spells, including those which were videotaped during healing rituals, detected their essential similarity in actions and in the number of objects used. This allows us to broaden significantly the context of magic spells (the magic spells of certain functions) practiced in the past. The comparison of materials published by Kashin, Loginovskii and Tolmachiov with modern records has uncovered the fact that the repertoire of magic spells of the Argun area healers has become more restricted; they use magic spells in more simple ways, including those texts which exist in written form. At the same time, the influence of 'book knowledge' has become clearer because it explains the phenomenon of a magic word in the terms of parapsychology and esoteric notions such as these. On the whole, this situation seems to be typical for the transformational and evolutionary processes of the Russian magic spell tradition over approximately the last one hundred and fifty years.

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Charms, Omens, and Apparitions of Storms in Maritime Tradition of Ireland

Introduction

We shall start with defining 'maritime memorate' as a folklore genre intrinsic to the Gaelic-speaking communities of Ireland and will look at specific examples of memorates and contemporary legends that deal with such things as omens, portents and apparitions before the storm.[1]

Memorates and contemporary legends

In folklore studies, memorates are an under-studied area. Defined as personal accounts of supernatural happenings, memorates are centred around various phenomena of human life and constitute an extremely popular and productive folklore category. They include a variety of extraordinary maritime experiences and other accounts, which occur in liminal spatio-temporal contexts, such as the sea-shore, streams, fords and bridges. These stories typically involve encounters with ghosts and other beings, and portents of death symbolised in phantom boats.

The study of memorates was established at the start of the 20th c. by Carl Wilhelm von Sydow (1948), who introduced the distinction between a memorate and a fabulate. Memorate in his view was a first-hand narrative describing a series of events, while a fabulate was a similar narrative heard second- or third-hand. Linda Dégh and Andrew Vászonyi (1974) postulate the existence of proto-memorates – memorates concealed behind a fabulate.

The dearth of research carried out in the area of memorates in Ireland is in inverse proportion to the exceptionally rich collections recorded there. Over the years, a good deal of attention has been paid to the traditional folklore categories of fairy legend, traditional tale and oral narrative by scholars researching Irish tradition. Frequently, these categories contain quite long narratives. Recently, however, greater attention has been paid to the study of the

[1] Our study is based on the tentative preliminary results of the project 'Stories of the Sea: A Typological Study of Maritime Memorates in Modern Irish and Scottish Gaelic Folklore Traditions' funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (ref. AH/H039376/1).

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shorter items which include memorates and contemporary legends (Tangherlini 1990; Bennett, Smith 1993).

The popularity of the fairy legend, the contemporary legend, and the memorate in folk tradition is probably due to their inherent deep cognitive structures. All three categories give rise to affectively engaged states of mind. Fairy legend brings this aspect to life through the medium of appealing to extreme, liminal metaphors and images associated with Otherworld archetypal figures and forces. Contemporary legend expresses subconscious fears and anxieties, existing within certain social groups and urbanised locations. Memorates operate on a scale relative to the concepts of fabulation and empirical truth (Honko 1964).

The narrator and his/her audience believe in the truth of the accounts contained in the memorates which belong to the domain of religious numinosity and ethical order, often combined. The efficacy of memorates also depends on the narrator's capacity to fit his/her own extraordinary experience into a contemporary context, enriching the story with both traditional and newly invented metaphors.

AT F230 Marvels: Appearance of fairies as portents of drowning/storm

Let us now look at various examples of AT F230 motif 'Marvels: Appearance of fairies' among maritime memorates in which various portents to do with sea, weather forecast and the outcome of fishing are contained.

Appearance of supernatural beings out of the sea was considered to be an omen of storm by the fishermen:

> They were not long there when a strange man came up out of the water and spoke to them. He asked them if they saw any pigs along the sea, because his pigs went away from him and that he wanted to bring them home because he was afraid it would make a very bad night. The fishermen told him they did not see any pigs at all, but they saw a lot of porpoises. The man said that those was his pigs. He asked the fishermen for a smoke of tobacco because he forgot to bring his own pipe with him. A fisherman gave him a quarter of tobacco, but the man of the sea wouldn't take all of that but instead he took a pipe full and put it in his pipe and had a smoke for himself. When he finished smoking he said that he should be going away now because it was going to be a very big storm soon (NFC 744. 473–5, recorded in co. Kerry, Annascoul, by P. Ó Suillebháin from local fishermen).

This example is not, strictly speaking, a memorate in so far as the story comes second-hand through the medium of the collector writing about the fishermen in the third person plural. It is however, quite significant in so far as the information was a first-hand account and received straight from the infor-

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mant (Ir. *o bhéal go béal*). The fishermen encounter 'a strange man', looking for his 'pigs' that turn out to be 'porpoises', engages in conversation and even gets a smoke of tobacco. Notice, however, that the man does not accept a generous offering of 'a quarter of tobacco', but took whatever was sufficient for that particular moment – 'a pipe full' – and being satisfied, informed the fishermen of the coming disaster, indirectly referring to it. This characteristic of the story that the creature from the sea, ultimately symbolising the sea itself, was satisfied with whatever was sufficient can be connected with the widespread belief among Modern Irish (and also Scottish Gaelic) fishermen – 'the sea must get its own' (Ir. *caithfidh an fharraige a cuid féin a fháil*, lit. 'the sea must get its own share').[2] Although the latter is primarily concerned with drowning incidents and the prohibition to save the fishermen from drowning, in our story, the offering of tobacco is the 'share' that the sea, metonymically represented by the 'strange man', 'gets' from the fishermen who are consequently informed about the storm, escape it and ultimately do not drown. In this incident, they all come home safe by giving a share of tobacco to a strange man: they provided a substitute for themselves, and released themselves from the power of the sea to have them drowned. In other incidents, if the fishermen do not show enough respect to the sea creatures, and abuse the sea resources by overexploiting them, they can get drowned very easily. The following story, collected from Seán Ó Cuinnigeáin by Seán Ó hEoachaidh between 1935–55, comes from the *Fairy Legends from Donegal* publication:

> There was a boat crew from Teelin fishing for salmon one summer... This afternoon they put out the net at Muckros Head. When they had been for a while bending over the net they saw something about the size of a seal near the estuary of the river. They backed the boat in and when they came near enough they saw it was a man standing waist-high in the sea. They were frightened... all but one man amongst them who said they should go for the net and take it in, that what they saw was a fairy man who would not meddle with them. They did with great care, and the fairy man did not meddle with them, although he was no sooner at one side of the boat than they would see him on the other. They lifted the last of the net into the boat and they had made a good haul of salmon. They got home without mishap... The same crew boat went fishing for herring at Samhain time and the man who had

[2] This is also discussed by Mac Carthaigh (1999:172) who claims that 'the phrase "the sea must have her own"... which, though well-worn, is an accurate reflection of the mindset of the fishermen. The phrase implies a resigned, almost fatalistic, attitude to the sea. This is hardly surprising, since fishing is one of the most dangerous professions, one likely to generate a potent mixture of fear and respect for the sea'.

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> given them courage the night they saw the fairy man was lost; the sail swept him into the sea and he was drowned (Ó hEochaidh, Ní Néill & Ó Catháin 1977:201, 203).

In the latter, it is clear that there is a distinction between the bold fisherman who has no fear of the supernatural sea man, and the rest of the crew who are terrified and do not really want to interact with the 'fairy man'. The one who has no fear and respect to the sea man and who encourages fishing despite such portent is punished for this – and, as the outcome of this attitude, he is drowned. The fact that the fisher folk were supposed to be respectful towards the sea and its creatures and not over-exploiting in regard to its resources is very much part of the framework of the interrelationship established between the coastal communities and the natural order. The story 'The woman in the sea' from *Seán Ó Conaill's Book* is a vivid example that the sea (exhibited in a form of a fairy woman in the story that rises to its surface between the lines of the terrified fishermen) takes on revenge against those fishermen who take no heed of the warning given by fellow fishermen and goes on fishing despite such portents (Ó Duilearga 1981:277–8). As a further example of the vital necessity to respect every strange thing that one may encounter whilst at sea is shown by another example from the National Folklore Collection below:

> When they pulled the line to the surface of the water, they noticed to their great surprise that it was a lovely looking child that was tangled in the hook. ... he had lovely rosy cheeks, and he was laughing at them, the old man that was in the boat told them to be very careful with the child and to take the hook out of his clothes and to mind not to tear any part of his clothes. They put child back into the water again. The old man advised them not to delay any longer but to make their way as quick as they could and at that even they had not time to spare, when they just landed then a very big storm came on and if they were at sea all of them would be drowned (NFC 782.127).

This story was recorded in co. Kerry, at Keel, by a NFC collector P. Ó Suillebháin from John Ashe, a fisherman, on 19 May 1941, who was eighty at the time, and referred that the incident took place roughly 50 years from the date of its collection. It is clear that the old man who is in the centre of the story exercised a lot of care and attention not to cause any anger or mischief in relation to the sea's child and advised that the child be returned to the sea safe and sound. Let us notice that all fishermen returned safely once they deposited the supernatural child back into the sea intact and no one was drowned. In the story about the Teelin fishermen, on the contrary, the protagonist of the story did not take any special notice of the sign and was punished as a result of this.

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It is also to be noted that the supernatural child engaged in contact with the fishermen in a way appropriate for a child – laughing, whereas the 'strange man' of the first story engaged in a way appropriate for a male – by smoking a pipe of tobacco which he borrowed from the fishermen.

An extreme form of showing disrespect to the portents shown by the sea is mocking and making fun (Ir. *magadh*) of the members of the crew if they exhibit any fear to such things. A more extreme term that is used in the example below is *diabhlaíocht* 'devilment, mischievousness, cursing (using the word 'devil')' and would imply extremely negative connotations. The ones who would be given to mockery would expose themselves to mortal danger and, as a result, would be punished, and subsequently drowned:

> A young crew from Teelin were fishing for herring one year. The oldest of them was no more than twenty-six. ... They got very few herring and they raised the sail to go home... The steersman was getting cold and he said to another of the crew: 'Keep your hand on the tiller until I warm my hands'. There was a fire below in the front of the boat... He was not below ten minutes when there was a shout from the deck that a boat was coming down on them in full sail and that it looked like ramming them into the sea. The steerman came up and looked around and could see no boat at all... On their way to Killybegs the man who had seen the boat set about making a mock will. There was no man of the crew he did not leave some article of his clothing from his boot to his cap... Next night they went the same way... the poor man who had made the mock will the night before stumbled in some way and fell aboard and was drowned (Ó hEochaidh, Ní Néill & Ó Catháin 1977:213, 215).

Of course, the reference that the crew with whose member this incident occurred was 'young', hence inexperienced and not on the watch-out for supernatural omens, can be taken as a moralising factor: the presence of an old man among the members of the crew was deemed to be the necessary factor of its subsequent success or survival. Fishermen had to exercise extreme care when seeing such portents of phantom-boats, and the knowledge of the old fishermen could have been very handy in such cases.[3] Some portents or visions, such as the one referred to below, could be of extreme and straightforward

[3] We shall not be looking at phantom-boats as the portents of storm in detail; I refer the interested reader to a study by Mac Cárthaigh (1999), in which he looks at such portents as 'points of crisis' of the members of a specific social group – of the fishermen – signifying their intrinsic link (and contact) with the supernatural and the world of the dead.

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nature, and hence the message embedded in them could be understood without any difficulty:

> THE HEADLESS GHOST. It was one Saturday night long ago when we were out fishing for salmon. There were four of us – three of us rowing, at that time, and one man at the rudder... So the man who was in control of the boat in the stern said: 'We'll take shelter in *An Poll Dorcha* for a while,' said he. That's *An Poll Dorcha* over behind *An Leac*, you know, under *An Strapa Ghorm* at *Barr na Spince*. That's where *An Poll Dorcha* is. So when we went in there a while a man lit his pipe. 'Well damn your souls,' said the man at the rudder, 'put out your oars and row for all your'e worth. Look what's in on the rock!' So I glanced round, anyway, and from that day to this, I think it was the headless ghost I saw. Even so – we shed some sweat before we landed at Portacloy beach. The man at the rudder said that he saw that he was looking at it a while and that it was a man with no head. Be that as it may, it was a hard earned evening by the time we reached the shore. Ever since then I have never gone out fishing for salmon on a Saturday night (Ó Catháin 1983:47).

The dreadful and shocking effect of such portent left no doubt to Seán Ó hEinrí, the informant, that they were doing something wrong. By abstaining from fishing on Saturday, as was the message, the fisherman was able to survive. A similar incident in terms of abstaining to practice fisherman's craft on a certain day of the week was recorded regarding fishing for salmon on Sunday:

> THE FAIRY SALMON AND THE SUNDAY FISHERS. In the old days my grandfather and his crew were fishing for salmon in a place called Gobán an Uisce which is to the west below Slieve League about half-way between Teelin and Malinbeg, a very gentle place indeed. It was a Sunday morning and they had half the net out in a semi-circle since two or three o'clock. When they thought it was Mass time they said they should say the Rosary. They had hardly begun when a salmon went into the net... When they had the net by the lugs the third time one of the crew said they would catch it this time unless it was the red devil himself! The word was not out of his mouth before a red salmon leaped from the sea out of the net and over the corks. This haul was empty also. When they saw that, they made for home as quickly as they could. The fairy salmon frightened them for they thought it was not a good thing that put it in their way on a Sunday morning (Ó hEochaidh, Ní Néill & Ó Catháin 1977:203, 205).

As we have just seen, it was no help while the fishermen were in the open sea to utter the prayers: the fairy salmon was playing its trick upon the people regardless of their efforts. In fact, the salmon got worse when one of the crew

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mentioned 'the red devil' and scared the fishermen by leaping over the corks. The red (Ir. *ruadhearg*) colour attributed to the salmon irrevocably brings into one's mind (and identifies it with) the Irish otherworld creatures (Ir. *sí*) that are primarily (but not exclusively) described in Irish folklore in general as having red hair. It should be noted, that primarily, but not exclusively, the fairy folk in maritime memorates is malignant to humans. Because of such associations, the red was not favoured by the fishermen: red-headed creatures were not to be mentioned by fishermen whilst at sea.

> 18. It was not permitted [when fishing] to mention anything *rua* (brown-or red-haired). There was a malediction in regard to fishing – '[May there be] a fox on your hook!' When I used to go fishing I remember when *Peaidí Rua* – a man who lived in Ventry parish – was mentioned that he was not called *Peaidí Rua* but *Peaidí Deaghdhathach* ('the good coloured')[4].

Returning to our story, it must be said that the fishermen clearly showed their intentions to keep up with the rest of the society by invoking prayers. Such prayers were to be recited during the Sunday mass where presumably the rest of the community was at the time of the described incident. And yet, they were unsuccessful. However, they had their ways of remedying such situations. In many instances, the fishermen would attempt to cure such apparitions by turning to a priest. The latter would perform a ritual to purify them from the side-effects of seeing (or hearing of) such portents. The following example is the perfect illustration of the AT motif D1273.0.2 'Magic spells mixed with Christian prayers' that is employed here:

> 'What cause have you,' asked the priest, 'to be afoot at this time of the day?'
> They told him what they had heard.
> 'Here is the man,' said the skipper, 'who heard it all.'
> 'Have you all the crew here?' asked the priest.
> 'I have them all,' said the captain, 'except one man and he mocked us when we told him about it. He would not come with us on any account.'
> 'Well,' said the priest, 'he is the one most wanted of all. Can any man here ride a horse?'
> 'Yes'...

[4] Trans. from An Seabhac (1928:139). We can refer to a memorate 'The Red-haired Woman', in which the informant tells of his unsuccessful fishing when he saw such a woman; once she disappeared, he 'began to kill again until I had killed a good lot of pollock' (Ó Duilearga 1981:282). Cp. a Scottish Gaelic proverb '[May there be] a red head on all the [fish] out [in the sea] (= may all the fish have the ill luck to be caught by us') (Nicolson 1882:77).

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> He rode off and he brought the man back with him. The priest made them all kneel and he read for a long time over them. When the reading was finished... he said to the servant girl to bring in three bits of stick. The girl brought in the sticks. He burned them in the fire and then ground them up through the *office*.[5]
> 'Now,' said the priest to the skipper, 'take that and shake it through the boat and in the sea about the boat. Moreover, there is one thing you must never do and that is to lead the fleet going out to sea...'
> They followed the priest's advice, and they spent their life coming and going on the sea and always fishing together, and never did they see or hear anything strange (Ó hEochaidh & MacNeill 1977:198–201).

As we have seen, there has been a whole inventory of supernatural sea apparitions and symbolic forms that included a man, a woman, a child, a ship, a headless ghost, and a red salmon. The fishermen were supposed to be able to 'read' such portents in order to escape a disaster. Were there any other ways to escape drowning? Indeed, there were: let us invoke a selection of fishermen's taboos that were randomly collected throughout Rathlin island, co. Antrim:

> No boat to make a turn against the sun.[6]
> Never to go without a boat completely empty: one should always have some loose change in coins in one's pocket.
> Never to have a white stone in the ballast of the boat.[7]
> Never to whistle aboard a boat: such could raise a wind.
> Throw a coin into the sea, or holy water, to calm a sea; also sparks of a lighted coal or lighted turf if available.
> Coin of the realm to be hammered and concealed in the bow of new boat (Murphy 1987:68).

The power of the Christian tradition had an important effect on such escape. Other than the powers of a sacred person, the priest, mentioned above, that were invoked to destroy the spells of the fairies cast over the fishermen and

[5] 'The blessing of salt for certain purposes was known as an *office*' (Ó hEochaidh, Ní Neill & Ó Catháin 1977:201, n. 1).

[6] Cp. a similar custom from Dingle, Co. Kerry, recorded by An Seabhac (1928:139, §17): 'In the case of a boat going fishing, the skipper would always like to turn the boat about with the sun – to the right'.

[7] The white stones were associated with the fairies. Cf. the Donegal belief recorded by Ó hEochaidh, Ní Neill & Ó Catháin (1977:100): 'It is said there were never white quartz stones anywhere but a place where the hill-folk had a dwelling. They are fairy stones by right and it is not good to have anything to do with them'.

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restore their safety at sea, there was a strong connection between sacred objects of both canonical Christian (e.g. holy water and churches) and folk religious provenance (holy wells and sacred stones) and various accidents at sea. According to an account collected by S. P. Ó Piotáin, a person will never be drowned who goes thrice through a window in St. Arabella's Chapel in Blackrod, co. Mayo (NFC 117. 94).

On the contrary, turning the Saints' Stone (Ir. *Leac na Naomh*) on Caher Island (Ir. *Oileán na Cathrach*), co. Mayo, was believed to cause storms (O'Donovan 1838:243–5). And yet, if the Well of the Fair Winds (Ir. *Tobar na Glórach*) at Teelin, co. Donegal, was to be cleaned out it would bring about favourable winds for storm stayed boats at Sligo, Balina or Belmullet, but there was a danger that a member of the family that cleaned the well would die (Ó Muirgheasa 1936:149).[8] It was also believed that the fishermen sailing out from Teelin Bay to fish in the open sea lower their sails by way of salute on passing the well. An identical custom was registered in relation to The Well of the Holy Women (Ir. *Tobar na mBan Naomh*) whereas the fishermen would salute it on passing, take off their caps and ask the help and blessing of the holy women. E. Ó Muirgheasa reports that a similar salutation was performed by the fishermen on the northwest coast of county Mayo, 'who, passing under a jutting cliff known as the Cailleach Crom, salute it bareheaded three times in occult terms, at the same time striking the water with the flat of their oars' (Ó Muirgheasa 1936:149).

Conclusion

Within the scope of this short contribution, we have dealt with the motif AT F230 (appearance of fairies as portents of drowning). Having defined the concepts of memorate and contemporary legend within the context of primarily Modern Irish maritime tradition, we have looked at appearances of various supernatural beings and objects from the sea (both animate and inanimate) that were indicators of the imminent drowning or storms. Such supernatural creatures included friendly males and repellent females, laughing children and jumping salmon, headless ghosts and phantom-boats. The fishermen who were serious about such apparitions, were able to escape the storms or drowning that awaited all those who had no respect for the sea and its creatures. These legends tie together the sea, as both the garden to be cultivated[9] and the ele-

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[8] On the Scottish comparanda, see Mackinlay (1893: Chap. 13, 'Weather and wells').

[9] The following appellations for the sea have been recorded throughout Ireland: *Garraí Phaddy Lally* 'Paddy Lally's Garden' (Co. Mayo), *Gáirdín na Maighdine Muire* 'The

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ment to be afraid of, and the fishermen, engaged both in its cultivation and veneration, into a close-knit unit of a Northern maritime tradition at the periphery of Europe.

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Virgin Mary's Garden' and *Garraí an iascaire* 'The fisherman's garden' (Co. Clare), *Gáirdín an iascaire* and *Gáirdín cailm* (Co. Galway).

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Charms and Amulets for Conception and Childbirth

The English charm tradition extends from the 10th through the 20th centuries. During its early period up to about 1500, which is the focus of this paper, charms appear in three principal languages, vernacular English (Old English or Anglo-Saxon and later Middle English), Latin and vernacular French (Anglo-Norman). Early charms include motifs from Irish as well. So it is important to make the point at the outset of this paper that English charms in this context does not refer solely to charms in the English language, but rather it designates charms recorded in England and presumably employed in England. With regard to charms generally, as well as those specifically related to the problems of conception and childbirth, formulas often move easily between Latin and English and French, according to the individual preferences of the translators and historical and social circumstances. Nevertheless, all are firmly fixed within what we can call the English tradition. Indeed, while Old English and Latin share space in the same manuscripts before 1100, Middle English, Latin, and French often share space in the same documents between 1100 and 1500. Thus, the early charms that we consider here will not be segregated according to language because they are not represented that way in the manuscript sources. However, where the language employed to record the charm or the code-switching within a charm offers clues to the particular circumstances of the environment in which it was circulated or transmitted, or information about who, where or how it was performed, then language will be taken into account for the evidence it may offer.

The question of who was responsible for circulating charms for conception and childbirth in England before 1500 has not been much studied. The answer must lie in trying to determine where, when, under what conditions and for what purposes the charms were written down, in so far as these things can be discerned. Whether a charm belongs to a doctor's healing skills, is distributed as part of a cleric's pastoral care, or is recorded mainly as women's knowledge can often be determined from its manuscript context. A somewhat different issue is that of performance: knowing who was involved, and what rituals and objects may have accompanied the verbal performing of the charm. The prob-

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lem arises, familiar to students of verbal charms from all cultures, that the verbal formulas often function in company with gestures, rituals, objects, and medical concoctions, so that highlighting the words necessarily suppresses other features of the remedy. In this paper we aim to select examples that throw light on these two aspects of charms for procreation – that is circulation or communication of charms on the one hand and circumstances and agencies of performance on the other.

The domain of charms we are considering is limited to two aspects of procreation. In focussing on conception and childbirth we realise that we are leaving out other aspects well represented in the charm traditions; in particular we have not the space here to include charms that focus on the health of the womb, on restricting or encouraging the flow of menses. Many of the conception and childbirth charms we consider do however include introductory statements of their purpose. Thus for example an Anglo-Saxon charm beings, 'Gif wif ne mæge bearn beran ...' ('If a woman cannot bear a child') (Pettit, 2001:clxi). The Latin formula 'ut mulier concipiat' ('to make a woman conceive') is frequently found throughout the period (e.g. Hunt, 1990:31), and takes a more positive view of fertility. Statements of purpose are sometimes coded in such a way as to suggest that the person writing the charm down feared that helping conception might meet with disapproval. A charm headed 'Carmen ad faciendum mulieres parere' ('Charm to make women bear children') hides the last two words by a substitution of letters (Olsan, 1989a:122). In relation to childbirth, the statements of purpose may seek to speed the birth ('Ad accelerandum partum') or to deal with complications or pain relief ('Also in hard turment and long laboure and strong payne of chyldying', Oxford, Bodleian Library Ashmole MS 1443, p. 341). There are also charms whose relation to childbirth is only one part of their range of use; the Latin verse to be worn with a wax *Agnus dei* amulet wards off lightning, destroys sin, saves from drowning, 'and women, while their travell lasteth, it saves...' ('Praegnans servatur, simul & partus liberatum') (Scot 1991:131).

Conception

English charms to promote generation in previously sterile couples were circulated from the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries in manuscripts of the works of two famous physicians, Gilbert the Englishman and John Gaddesden, and one west-country medical practitioner, Thomas Fayreford, respectively. All require that cryptic formulas be written and attached to the subjects. Gilbert's charm must be written in the juice of a plant, collected on the eve of the feast of John the Baptist (June 24):

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> Dixit dominus crescite. +. Uthiboth. +. et multiplicamini. +. Thabechay. +. Et replete terram. +. Amath. +. (New Haven, Cushing-Whitney MS 19, fol. 144vb, C.E. 1300)
>
> 'The Lord said, Increase. +. Uthiboth. +. And multiply. +. Thabechay. +. And fill the earth. +. Amath.'

The motif 'Increase and multiply and fill the earth' derives from the Biblical blessing at Genesis 1:28, which is bestowed by God on the two newly created humans. Gilbert's charm is applicable to either a man or a woman and the written amulet should be worn during intercourse. If the male wears it around his neck, the child will be male; if the female wears it, the child will be female. Gaddesden prescribes an amulet consisting of a string of letters to be worn around the neck, which he says will cause a women to conceive and can be tested by hanging it on a tree, that has never produced fruit, to cause it to germinate (Hunt 1990:31). Fayreford's amulet to make a woman conceive should be written on lead. He supplies a diagram of two embedded rectangles with a ladder across it diagonally with the following letters: os. T. acori. sa: t. p + ʋ.ii. N.d.: (London, British Library, Harley MS 2558, fol. 118v).

Closely related to charms to conceive are formulas to help a woman in danger of miscarrying a fetus or delivering a child too weak to live. Old English vernacular, poetic charms 'for a woman who cannot nourish her child', that is, successfully bring her child to term and safely delivery it, are recorded in a monastic medical collection (London, British Library, Harley MS 585). The vulnerable woman goes to a cemetery and says as she steps over a grave:

þis me to bote þære laþan lætbyrde;	*This is my cure for a hated late-birth;*
þis me to bote þære swæran swærtbyrde;	*this is my cure for a black-birth;*
þis me to bote þære laþan lambyrde.	*this my cure for a hated slow-birth.*

When a woman knows that she is pregnant, she should step over her husband in bed, while reciting the following:

Up ic gonge, ofer þe stæppe	*Up I go over you I step*
mid cwican cilde, nalæs mid cwe[l]endum,	*With a living child, not a dead one,*
mid fulborenum, nalæs mid fægan.	*With a full-term one, not a weak one.*

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When she knows that the child is living, she goes to church, stands before the altar and says:

Criste ic sæd, þis gecyþed.	*Christ I said (called on), this (child) is* revealed.

Another formula in the same collection 'for a woman who cannot bear a child' is based on a Latin distich: 'Solve iubente deo terrarum Petre catenas / qui facis pateant caelestia regna beatis' ('Loosen by God's order the chains of the of the world, Peter, who makes open the heavenly kingdom to the blessed'). The childbirth charm found in the Harley 585 collection reduces the first line to 'Solue, iube, D(eus), ter, catenis' ('Loose by order God the chains three times [or, 'of the world', erased]') (Brown 1987; Pettit 2001:2,301).

For the woman in labour

One charm for a woman in labour explicitly requires the presence of a priest or cleric. He reads the formula over the woman's head and writes it on a strip of parchment which is placed over her pregnant belly. This charm with its ritual and birthing amulet appears in Latin added into a 13th-century manuscript (Hunt 1990:233). The directions in this manuscript stipulate that those standing around the woman should secretly say the *Pater Noster* and *Ave* and the text is followed by a formula for the woman to say as well: 'May these holy words help me [name] in my delivery and free me from any danger by the most glorious virgin and mother of God, Mary'. In the 14th century, a French speaker records the instructions for the priest or cleric to read the charm over the head of the woman in labour and then wrap the written text around her (Hunt 1990:90). Next we meet it about 1400 in the collection of John Mirfield (d. 1409), chaplain of the hospital of St. Bartholomew, Smithfield, in London (Hunt 1990:90). The charm centers on the *peperit* and *exi foras* motifs.

> In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti amen Anna peperit Mariam Elizabet Johannem Baptistam Sancta Maria dominum nostrum Jhesum Cristum sine corde et absque dolore In nomine illius meritis et precibus sancte Marie virginis et sancti Johannis Baptiste exy infans sive sis masculus sive femina de utero matris tue absque dolore et absque morte tui et absque illius.
>
> 'In the name of the Father and son and Holy Spirit Amen. Anna gave birth to Maria, Elizabeth to John the Baptist, Holy Maria to our lord Jesus Christ without being late-born and without pain. In the name of his merit and the prayers of Holy Maria the virgin and Saint John the Baptist, come out, infant, whether you are male or female from the uterus of your mother without pain and without your death and without hers.'

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This charm is a short version of the *peperit* motif, the most widely circulated charm for childbirth during the medieval period, combined with the *exi foras* motif which often appears for childbirth (Elsaakers 2001:187–189, Hanson 2004:278–80). Currently, the earliest known version of the *peperit* formula occurs in an Anglo-Saxon manuscript (Oxford, Bodleian, Junius MS 85, fol. 17r) where the formula appears among Lenten sermons. The phrase, *Lazare, veni foras,* is introduced by the liturgical sentence (based on John 11:33–43) as part of the formula to be written on wax and bound under the woman's right foot. Near the end of the medieval period in England, the *peperit* formula is recorded in the *Tabula medicine*, an encyclopaedic handbook in Latin made by English friars between 1416 and 1425 (Cambridge, King's College MS 16, fol. 93; Jones 2011). Here it is followed only by the *sator* palindrome. Throughout the 15th century, *peperit* also appears in Middle English medical remedy books containing herbal recipes and charms for healing (Olsan 2009:226), although the formula itself never seems to have been translated into English

The charms for safe delivery with the *peperit* formula sometimes included motifs apparently far removed from the narrative of holy births that constitute the formula. Two lines from Virgil's *Aeneid* are cited in continental examples, 'Oceanum interea surgens Aurora reliquit' ('Meanwhile Aurora arose and left the ocean'), and 'Panditur interea domus omnipotentis Olympi' ('Meanwhile the gateway to Olympus, the seat of supreme power, was flung wide open'), as part of the charm (Franz 1909:2, 201–2; Elsaakers 2001:193). But these lines occur in English sources only as independent charms for childbirth (e.g. Thornton MS in Ogden 1969:57; New Haven, Cushing-Whitney MS 47, fol. 38r). There is evidence for the circulation of the 'Oceanum' line in fever charms as early as the 9th century. Medieval birthing rituals are supposed to have taken place in female-only environments, and the fact that some of these birth charms are found in manuscripts compiled by and for men, gives pause for thought. One example is the case of the book of remedies ('Liber de diversis medicinis') written in the mid 15th century by Robert Thornton in south Yorkshire, which contains three birth charms, an *Arcus* charm (Olsan 1989b), a *peperit* and the *oceanum* motif. This suggests that we cannot assume that oral circulation of these charms amongst women dominated their medieval transmission, or even that men would not have been involved in their performance. A late-15th-century example written in the medical notebook of the English scholar William Worcester (London, BL, Sloane MS 4, fol. 35r) requires that the lines be written on parchment with the *Pater Noster*, then recited, then bound to the right leg of the woman.

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Irim de celo misit saturnia iuno. Panditur interea domus omnipotentis olimpi.

'Juno the daughter of Saturn sent down Iris from heaven. Meanwhile the gateway to Olympus, the seat of supreme power, was flung wide open.'

In this instance, the two lines from Virgil are the *Panditur* line and a new one from Book 9, line 4 of the *Aeneid*, from a different part of the epic poem. Men with clerical as well as medical skills like William Worcester might have been expected to know their Virgil (in fact he has 'corrected' the word *domus* to *deus* in suprascript), to write on the amuletic parchment, to recite the Latin lines, and to bind the parchment to the woman about to deliver the child.

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Metre in the Old English 'Metrical' Charms

Of the various English-language charms and procedures that survive from the 10th, 11th and 12th centuries, twelve have been conventionally designated as being 'metrical'. That is to say, they have been identified as consisting of 4-member verses-lines in which alliteration is a necessary (a 'structural') characteristic. Thus it is that these charms with their wide variety of uses (finding lost cattle, restoring unfruitful land, curing wens and treating 'water-elf' disease) appear alongside works such as *Beowulf*, in the pages of the six canonical volumes of the *Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records* (ASPR), though their unusual character is perhaps signalled by their inclusion in the last volume of the series. However, the charms exhibit distinct prosodic differences from the other texts in this series.

Firstly, as Gerhard Storms has pointed out, in only one of these twelve texts is the alliteration 'regular throughout the charm' (1948:199). The canonical pattern of alliteration in Old English alliterative verse is assumed to be alliteration between the first and/or second and the third stress, and never on the fourth stress, i.e.

a	*a*	*a*	*x*
a	*x*	*a*	*y*
x	*a*	*a*	*y*

The 'Metrical Charms' on the other hand, also have examples of lines with the following kinds of alliteration (Logsdon 1989:267–271):

'cross'	*a*	*b*	*a*	*b*
'double'	*a*	*a*	*b*	*b*

As well as this, we find 'extra alliteration' involving words which are not one of a line's chief stresses (or also due to repetition of words). Repetition of words in different lines can also give rise to 'linked alliteration', i.e. alliterations that apply between (rather than within) lines.

Secondly, the relation between sense and line differs from those typically found in other verses in the ASPR. Whereas enjambment, i.e. the mismatch of line-unit and sense-unit, is common in many of the more learned works, a closer match of line and sense typifies the Metrical Charms. A typical instance of learned verse displays much run-on of sense (as the added punctuation here brings out), as can be seen in the opening lines of the Old English translation of *Genesis*:

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Us is riht micel ðæt we rodera weard,
wereda wuldorcining, wordum herigen,
modum lufien! He is mægna sped,
heafod ealra heahgesceafta,
frea ælmihtig. Næs him fruma æfre,
or geworden, ne nu ende cymþ
ecean drihtnes, ac he bið a rice
ofer heofenstolas. Heagum þrymmum...

As we can see, there is substantial enjambment in this extract. The end of the sentences never coincides with the end of the verse-line – instead they end in the middle of lines 3, 5, and 8. But when we examine the lineation of Metrical Charm 8 (intended to make a swarm of bees settle), we can find that the basic sense-units do not run over the line-ending:

Fo ic under fot, funde ic hit.	*I seize it under foot, I have found it.*
Hwæt, eorðe mæg wið ealra wihta gehwilce	*So, earth has power against all creatures*
and wið andan and wið æminde	*And against hatred and against enmity*
and wið þa micelan mannes tungan…	*And against the tongue of a great man.*
Sitte ge, sigewif, sigað to eorþan!	*Sit, victory-women, sink to earth!*
Næfre ge wilde to wuda fleogan.	*Never fly wildly to the woods!*
Beo ge swa gemindige mines godes,	*Be as careful about my good*
swa bið manna gehwilc metes and eþeles.	*As every man is about food and belongings!*

While some sense units end in the middle of the line (e.g. line 1), and while others straddle two verse-lines, the essential unity of the sense-unit is not broken, unlike the drastic breaks seen in the previous example: to use the parlance of a later period, all these lines could be regarded as 'end-stopped'. Likewise, although the *ASPR* publishes these texts, just as it does all the other, more prosodically orthodox, poetic monuments of Anglo-Saxon England, with mid-line breaks, e.g.:

and wið andan and wið æminde,

there seems no reason to assume that there were caesuras in the charms.

In short, the prosodic practice found in the 'Metrical Charms' is at variance with most other surviving Old English alliterative verse: the 'Metrical Charms' are, it seems, not very metrical. Why should this be? We could see it as a function of the genre's popular character (e.g. Logsdon 1989:272), which we might oppose to the often learned ('bookish', 'monkish') character of the remainder of Anglo-Saxon verse, much of which consists of retellings of Biblical narratives. There is much in favour of such an argument. But it is also

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conceivable that there might be something *genre-specific* at work here, i.e. these peculiarities might rather be typical of charms than of all 'popular' genres. If this is so, could the key to the irregularity of the Old English *gealdor* be found in the Icelandic *galdralag* (charm-measure)?

This measure is exemplified by Snorri Sturluson in the *Háttatal* (101), but unfortunately he does not describe its formal characteristics. We can however make some inferences based on the example text he presents us with:

Sóttak fremð,	*Sought I honour,*
sóttak fund konungs,	*sought I meeting with [a] king,*
sóttak ítran jarl,	*sought I [a] noble earl,*
þá er ek reist,	*when I cut,*
þá er ek renna gat	*when I made run*
kaldan straum kili,	*cold current [with a] keel*
kaldan sjá kili.	*cold sea [with a] keel.*

I.e. I sought honour, I sought a meeting with a king, I sought a noble lord, when I cut, when I got running, a cold current with a keel, the cold sea with a keel.

Anaphora divides this text into a tripartite structure, of 3, 2 and 2 lines, respectively. In the last pair of lines the bonding is even stronger as there is also epiphora on 'kili'. When discussing *galdralag* in his edition of the *Háttatal*, Faulkes (1991:74) claims that 'its distinguishing feature is its having a seventh line, with its repetition or echo of the sixth'. We might rather say that the most relevant aspect of the measure is not line seven, but the fact there are seven lines. All of the other hundred plus examples of verse that Snorri presents us with here have an even number of lines. In terms of alliteration, lines 1 and 2 alliterate (on f), lines 4 and 5 do (on r), as do lines 6 and 7 (on s) (I have ignored the alliteration between repeated words here). Line three is the line that sets the measure apart, in being partly independent by having its own internal alliteration (on í-j), but also partly dependent in sharing the opening of lines 1 and 2. We can show the structural ambiguity of the form, but setting it out two ways, once with lines 1, 2 and 3 together:

Sóttak fremð, sóttak fund konungs, sóttak ítran jarl,
þá er ek reist, þá er ek renna gat
kaldan straum kili, kaldan sjá kili.

and once with line 3 by itself:

Sóttak fremð, sóttak fund konungs,
sóttak ítran jarl,

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þá er ek reist, þá er ek renna gat
kaldan straum kili, kaldan sjá kili.

Lines 1–3 show a great deal of sound repetition, the density of which increases at the close (line 3). We could represent this as: a-a-aa. And so for the stanza as a whole. The sound repetition which is significant to begin with (ll. 1–3), increases (ll. 4–5), and reaches its peak in the final set of lines (ll. 6–7). Again this can be represented as: a-a-aa.

But while Snorri has preserved for us a beautiful form which he calls 'charms-measure', when we turn to look at the Icelandic ethnographic record we find no charms in *galdralag*. Nor are any of the Old English charms in such a measure. In our attempt to understand the form of the 'Metrical Charms' we are, as yet, none the wiser. One attempt to make something of the *galdralag* after all was made in 1923, by the Swedish researcher, Ivar Lindquist. His work, *Galdrar*, investigates the style of old Germanic charms and compares it with that of Swedish runic inscriptions from the period of folk migrations. As one might expect, he is mostly concerned with north Germanic matters, but he does deal with the two Merseburg charms, and also touch on Old English charms. He suggests that the *galdralag* is a later development of an earlier, common Germanic form (that he calls *galderform*), and that whenever we find verses of the form of ll. 1–3 in Snorri's *galdralag* example, *or* resembling ll. 4–5, *or* resembling ll. 6–7, i.e. where we find anaphora introducing parallel expressions of the same basic idea ('thought-rhyme'), alliteration and end-rhyme/epiphora in charms, we have an instance of *galderform*.

For instance, Lindquist (12) cites a pattern in Metrical Charm 1:

bidde ic þone mǽran **drihten**,
bidde ic þone miclan **drihten**,
bidde ic þone háligan heofenríces weard,

which does not *exactly* replicate any section of Snorri's example, but does contain parallel expressions introduced anaphorically, involves alliteration between what here are lines 1 and 2, and within line 3, as well as the epiphora between lines 1 and 2. Overall, we again have a pattern of a-a-aa. Lindquist and, following him, Magoun (1936–7), Schneider (1961, 1969), have suggested that such plurilinear clusters can be found in each of the twelve 'Metrical Charms', although it should also be noted that such clusters identified are so various that we might be justified in speaking of *galderforms* rather than *galderform*.

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Certainly, whether *galderform* actually did exist, and whether it is detectable in the texts we have today without too much special pleading or evidence-tampering, are moot questions. Ohrt's responses (1923, 1938) to Lindquist's work were sympathetic, but sceptical. He noted the variability of the *galderform* in practice. He also brought out the contradiction in Lindquist's own account of how widespread this form was – on the one hand, Lindquist points out Sanskrit, Latin and Greek parallels, on the other, he insists this is a particularly Germanic development. Overall, Ohrt suggests that the similarities between the passages that Lindquist presents us with are more due to 'magic-technical' than 'verse-technical' reasons, in other words, magical texts are often organised and sub-organised into threes (three agents, three ailments, etc.) and this is what gives rise to tripartite parallel sections rather than any fixed verse form. Ohrt later drew a parallel from the Latin charm repertoire (1938:135) to show the widespread nature of this parallel tripartite pattern in charms.

Indeed one might go further, and point out that such a-a-aa tripartite units with anaphora and sound repetition are common in folk verse elsewhere and elsewhen too. For example:

> one for the farmer,
> one for the dame,
> and one for the little boy who lives down the lane.

This example from an English children's rhyme reminds us that there is nothing genre-exclusive about such units, although they may still be genre-specific of charms. Such a-a-aa units, which attempt to reconcile the odd with the even, to reconcile 3 with 2 (or if you like 3 with 4), are the stock in trade of skilful verbal artists in a number of times, places and genres.

For these clusters do exist, whatever we might want to call them, or however we might think of them historically, and Lindquist and others have done well to bring this to our attention. To conclude, I would suggest that these units should not be considered diachronically as 'Überreste' or remnants of an earlier verse form or style, but in the context that we find them. For these units tend to occur at the end of what I have called (1998:59) 'sections'. In other words, among whatever else they may do, they signal the end of such sections. It is also notable that the sections they end are not usually concluding sections. In fact they are often found at the end of opening sections (e.g. in Metrical Charms 1, 9 and 11). And when they do come at the end of a charm, then that charm is one of several in a multi-charm procedure (e.g. in Metrical Charms 6 and 8). In other words, it would seem that although such forms mark a local climax, their role is not to mark the close of the magical act as a whole.

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'Be as still as the water in the Jordan River!'

1. The River Jordan figures prominently in a common motif in western Finnish blood-stopping charms. Used to ensure the stoppage of blood, the motif refers to the river ceasing to flow as a consequence of Christ's baptism.

Seiso veri niin kuin seinä	Be still, blood, like a wall,
niin kuin vesi Jordanin virrassa,	like the water in the River Jordan,
Jossa pyhä poika kastettiin.	Where the holy son was baptized.
SKVR XI 1620	
Seiso Jortaanin virta,	Be still, River Jordan
jossa Kristus kastettiin.	where Christ was baptized.
SKVR VI:1 3372	

How did a biblical motif find its way into a Finnish healer's verbal formula? The charm has its origins in a passage from the Gospel of Matthew (3:13–17): 'Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'

Although the story from the Bible makes no mention of the water ceasing to flow, the motif appears in numerous European charm variants and in some ecclesiastical texts (Ebermann 1903). According to an Ambrosian hymn, the flow of the water actually reversed its direction (Ohrt 1922:104–105):

Seu mystico baptismate	Through the mystical baptism
Fluenta Jordanis retro	Jordan reversed its course,
Conversa quadam tempore	At a moment such as this
Praesente sacraris die.	On this consecrated day.

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The stopping motif can also be found in the Bible: the Book of Joshua (3:16–17) describes the stopping of the flow of the Jordan River when the Israelites crossed the river on their return from living in slavery in Egypt: '... the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon a heap... even the salt sea failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.'

The model for the episode derives from the parting of the Red Sea to create a safe passage: '...and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land... and the waters were divided. ... and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left' (Exodus 14:21–22).

The parting of the Red Sea was also employed in Finnish charms to make sure that a patient would stop bleeding:

Seiso veri, seiso veri. Seiso niinkuin Punainen meri slloin kun israelinlapset ohitse kävi.	Be still, blood, be still, blood. As still as the Red Sea when the children of Israel crossed over.

X:1 2419

This motif appears not only in charms but also in the texts used for the sanctification of water and salt in the Catholic sacrament of baptism. 'Benedictio maior salis et aquae', a text dating back to the 12th century, contains the following words to exorcise evil: '... in ipsius nomine te exorcizo qui filios Israel per medium mare duxit... in ipsius nomine te exercizo, quem Iohannes in te babtixait' ('... in his name, who led the children of Israel through the sea, I exorcise you... in his name, whom John in you baptized, I exorcise you'). Also, when the water used for the blessing of a home is sanctified with the blessing 'Benedicto aquae spargendae in domo', the theme is mentioned (Franz 1909:154–158, 129).

The motif of the stopping of the flow of the River Jordan in relation to blood-stopping is found in a text added to the margin of the HS 5359 manuscript in the Vatican Library dating from the 11th century. The text reads as follows: 'Christus et sanctus Johanne ambelans ad flumen Jordane, dixit Christus ad sancto Johanne, "restans flumen Jordane". Commode restans flume Jordane: sic resta vena ista in homine isto. In nomine, etc.' ('When Christ and Saint John were traveling to the Jordan River, Christ said to Saint John: "Stop, Jordan River". The River Jordan stopped flowing. As the River Jordan complied by ceasing to flow, so, too, will this person cease to bleed') (Eberman 1903:24).

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'Milstätter Blutsegen' (Schultz 2003:81), from the 12th century, is perhaps the most well known version of the charm: 'Der heligo Christ wart geboren ce Betlehem dann quam erwidere ce Jerusalem da ward er getoufet vone Johanne in demo Jordane Duo verstuont der Jordanis fluz unt der sin runst Also verstant du – bluotrinna durh des heiligen Christes minna Du verstant an der note also der Jordan tate duo der guote sancte Johannes den heiligen Christ toufta verstant du – bluotrinna durh des heliges Christes minna' ('The holy Christ was born in Bethlehem. Then he returned to Jerusalem. There he was baptized by John in the River Jordan. Then the River Jordan stopped and also its flow. Bleeding, you, too, will stop. For the love of the holy Christ. You are obliged to stop, just as did the River Jordan, where Saint John baptized Christ. Bleeding, stop, for the love of the holy Christ').

2. When the background of a Finnish charm is shown to share traits similar to European variants, not to mention ritual texts of the Catholic Church, we need to ask how and from whom the Jordan – or the Red Sea – motif was incorporated into the healing charm. Due to the religious character of the subject matter, understanding the motif requires familiarity with the Christian tradition.

The conversion of the Finns to Christianity was initiated in the 12th century. With the exception of the eastern areas, missionary work was conducted by the Catholic Church. Having said this, it is worth noting that the population had already had some exposure to the new religion. Because so few documents have been preserved, however, we can only learn about the Christianization of Finland on the basis of indirect data. Archeological discoveries providing evidence of Christian burial practices can be dated to the early centuries AD. These findings point to occasional trade contacts. After the random migrations to Åland and the southwestern coast, the Swedish expansion of the 12th century brought Christian settlers into the inland (Vahtola 2001:119–121). Did the Jordan-motif possibly constitute part of the charm repertoire of the new settlers? Did the motif transcend the language barrier separating the new settlers from the local population?

The Western Church's expansion between the 12th and the early 14th centuries was accompanied by the increasing commercial domination of the Germans in the Baltic. The growing commercial activity at the end of the Viking Age had a profound impact on 13th-century Finland. Seafaring merchants sought solace and security in the Christian faith; indeed, they often assigned Dominican monks to accompany them on their voyages (Pirinen 1955:53–56; Salo 1955:13–19). With the establishment of the parishes, the Catholic Church became the first administrative power to cover vast areas of Finland.

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What kind of knowledge did the Church, a representative of written culture, bring to the common people? Unable to read or write, the new converts to the faith occupied an oral-aural reality. Although there is only scant information available about day-to-day life in the Middle Ages, we do know that the liturgical texts that had been adapted to local circumstances largely conformed to the Catholic practice. The ritual texts for the sacraments were in Latin, but Christian teachings were conveyed in the vernacular through the sermons. The Dominicans, who put an emphasis on teaching, are known to play a key role in the spread of Christian knowledge among the Finns. Were they actually able to communicate with the local people in Finnish?

What religious practice served to link the Jordan-motif to the teachings of the Catholic Church? One plausible answer could be the sacrament of baptism – simply because of its tremendous significance during the conversion of the population. Baptism represented a border between the rightness and goodness represented by the Church and the kingdom of evil residing beyond it. During medieval times, the sacrament of baptism was carried out as an impressive ritual with its exterior symbols (signs of the cross, smearing of saliva, blowing) as well as the affectively uttered exorcism. The sacrament of baptism brought about a change in a human being's state; it had the power to heal the evil of sin like a healing charm could cure illness. Was the experience of the rite of baptism comparable to a healing charm?

3. During the Middle Ages, oral and written cultures were in a relationship characterized by overlapping and mutual influence. The written text was often intended to be read aloud, and, in turn, reading aloud was a form of communal communication. The written record of the orally performed charm was transformed in the monastery collections into a written message. Because the common people were unable to read or write, the person who read texts aloud was travelling along the interface of written and pre-written communication. Correspondingly, when read aloud, the written text became oral (Ong 1967:58). In this way, too, the texts from the Manual of the Catholic Church in the course of being heard were absorbed into oral communication. Primarily accustomed to oral-aural communication, the common people were able to partake in written communication through the act of listening. Insofar as written and unwritten communicative elements are interchangeable, a reciprocal relationship between them evolves as the written message is transmitted orally (Finnegan 1988:60–62). Could the power of the word – even when attached to the ability to perform charms – retain its autonomy vis-à-vis the variation of the core communicative concepts and thus make such seamless transition?

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According to Walter J. Ong, Christianity was by its very nature deeply rooted in written culture, despite the *word* serving as its basic point of departure (1965:60). Did the tradition codified in writing but taught orally contain elements that were easily grasped by the popular imagination? In other words, were such elements incorporated with ease into the intellectual capital of the local population? Images function as effective mnemonic devices in the oral transmission of information. Religious concepts and rites are accommodated to the social reality and the everyday life of the faithful. The conventional foundation created by them influences the regulation and understanding of linguistic expressions. The mental filter of the belief system controls the reinterpretation of the concepts and the incorporation of corresponding equivalent expressions. Adaptation is partially based on the ability of language to sustain layers of meaning and to convey information according to the terms of day-to-day reality (Rappaport 1999:407–408, 414). With regard to the Jordan-motif this must have happened among people speaking some Latin-based language still being spoken around 500–800 AD (Ong 1967:76).

4. None of the above-mentioned contacts between local inhabitants and newcomers (migrants, overseas merchants, clergymen) alone can explain the connection between the Jordan River-motif (or the Red Sea-motif) and the mythical landscape of an ancient blood-stopping charm. Yet did the images conveyed from various sources forge a link between texts – though with different backgrounds – composed to manipulate reality?

The stopping of the river Jordan is the most frequently repeated charm motif for ensuring that bleeding stops. Why did the local people eventually find that it was 'worthwhile' to pick out this communicative element from foreign culture, even though the charm and the text of Christian origin represent different world views? Blood-stopping charms were probably recited before the acceptance of Christianity. This assumption is corroborated by eastern Finnish variants, whose imagery is archaic and whose vocabulary suggests ethnic myths. What was the rationale for replacing an element of the charm with new content? The answer may reside in the status of the above-mentioned contact groups: they carried with them an aura of success. The settlers came with the authorization of the Swedish Crown; they also brought with them a more highly developed agricultural technology. The affluent seafaring merchants for their part mastered the cash economy and travel routes. According to the declaration of the Church, the Christian faith was a force for keeping a community together; the world beyond was based on the worship of idols – and had to be replaced with the true order. The Church justified its right to taxation by

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explaining that payment signified the recognition of God's omnipotence. What is more, submission to it was a guarantee of success also in this life (Heininen-Heikkilä 1996:25; Pirinen 1962:208–209). Their message may have contained something worth learning.

The world view of the successful contained parallels easily applied to popular thought: if, according to folk belief, water contained mythical qualities, would not also the Jordan River, which stopped flowing thanks to the power of the Christ-hero's word. Why wouldn't blood also obey the force of the charm? The equation of Christian and archaic expressions involved no logical contradiction.

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Digitizing Irish and Dutch charms

When life is tough, people use 'words of power' as coping tools (Borsje 2008:134). When their life is threatened, they may pray. They may utter a curse against an opponent or entice a desired person through a charm. People may seek to be blessed before starting a journey or an enterprise. Wounds are not only treated with medicine such as herbs and dressings, but also with healing words. A well-known example is the 'Bone-to-bone charm':

> Bone to bone
> Blood to blood
> Limb to limb
> Joint to joint
> Sinew to sinew.

Variant versions of this formula in different languages were used from the Middle Ages to modern times (see e.g. Ködderitsch 1974; Hillers 2007; Hillers 2010).

Not only cups and swords but also 'words of power' with which people believed to be able to influence reality were traded between ethnic groups in the past. They are an important part of our cultural heritage and range from simple rhymes to obscure complicated texts.

In 2005, during an expert meeting on European 'words of power' held in Soesterberg in the Netherlands, the wish was expressed that these texts be digitized in their original language, accompanied by English translations. All relevant texts from European cultures dating from the beginning of literacy until today should be included. This paper presents the beginning phase of the pilot project containing Irish and Dutch 'words of power'.

This paper discusses methodological issues concerning transmission processes: from reality to manuscript, from manuscript to printed text, from printed text to digital environment. The first part deals with why the wish for such a database; the second part discusses methodological challenges that we encounter during this pilot phase. Although the pilot project covers both Irish and Dutch 'words of power' (the latter under the directorship of Dr Hester Dibbits), the focus of the present paper is on medieval Irish material.

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1. Why Words of Power in a Database?

Why should we want to digitize forms of verbal power?

The main reason digitization was felt desirable was the need to make the original texts available to international scholars from various disciplines. The English translations should make these texts in different European languages accessible for the scholars involved. An on-line database would create a basis to collaborate in a virtual environment.

Second, such a database would enhance the study of the transmission of texts. Scholars compare variant versions that occur in different cultures in order to establish what happens if (parts of) texts are translated and/or taken over. What happens in the new context; what is taken over; what is omitted; what is added? Insight into the adaptation processes of such texts which were tools for daily life enhances our understanding of cultural change. The database will have a much wider scope in time and place than what is commonly undertaken by individual scholars or in research projects. The amount of material will increase beyond what is normally manageable but we can move to this grander scale thanks to computerized search functions.

Third, the database could offer a way out of fixed thinking patterns. Within one culture or language, some texts multiply and change over time. It has been common to create a stemma of the variant versions of a text: a diagram of a genealogical or family tree that relates variant versions to each other and hypothesizes a parent or the original text, the so-called *Urtext*, which is often lost. This model may be accompanied by the (romantic) idea 'older is better'. If we look at our texts as daily coping tools with their own social context that need to be studied individually as well, this hierarchical model becomes less relevant. The influence of the stemma model on our way of thinking is, however, considerable. As Toms Ķencis (2010) argued, only a digital database would allow avoiding errors due to hierarchical categorization.

Finally, the database would be useful for the study of the bilingual or multilingual character of some of these texts. Some forms of verbal power may contain mysterious language that has been seen as gibberish or nonsense for a long time (Gager 1992:9). Stanley Tambiah, however, argued for the meaning and function of foreign and mysterious language in various genres of verbal power. Multilingual or polyglot spells are used to address demons in a modern case study (Tambiah 1968:176–8). In order to communicate with supernatural entities, one should speak their language. This point of view also exists in ancient texts (Gager 1992:10). The presence of language unintelligible to the majority of believers in rituals is furthermore explained as an instrument of the professional classes: as the keepers of the sacred, sometimes foreign and

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mysterious language of the holy texts, they distinguish themselves from the believers, clients or patients (Tambiah 1968:179–83). This use of language forms may, therefore, be a mark of the professional performer of verbal power.

Mysterious language may contain (sometimes corrupt or garbled) words in Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, Persian, ancient Egyptian, Coptic, Latin and other languages (Gager 1992:10). Elsewhere I discussed a charm in an Old-English medical manuscript (Borsje 2010), which was 'gibberish' according to Anglo-Saxonists but identified as Irish by Celticists (Zimmer 1895; Meroney 1945). If the mysterious language in fact is or contains a foreign language, the database with its on-line texts will enable international linguists to recognize what *can* be recognized, so that our insight in this matter may be improved.

2. Digitizing Words of Power

The wish to create a digital database of words of power, expressed in 2005, remained dormant for four year, for several reasons. Lack of adequate financial support was one. Worries on how to manage the huge quantity of texts was another. Queries about how to deal with quality control and copyright issues and how to manage such a huge project time wise were further hindrances to get started.

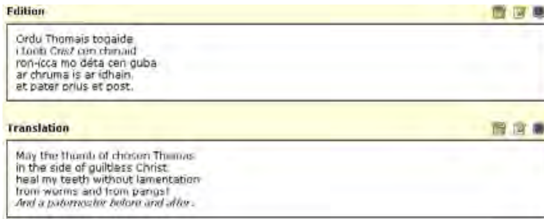
Despite all these doubts, the assistants in my research project on 'The Power of Words in Medieval Ireland' digitized Irish words of power. Where and how to put them in a database remained unresolved.

In 2009 contacts were made with two research institutes of the Royal Dutch Academy, the Meertens Institute (http://www.meertens. knaw.nl/cms/) and the Virtual Knowledge Studio (http://virtualknowledgestudio.nl/). We established an interdisciplinary research group, entitled *Digitizing Words of Power*, consisting of scholars from E-Research, Computer Sciences, Dutch Ethnology, Celtic and Religious Studies. Gradually, we started making the wish reality.

During inspired meetings, we regularly noted our different languages despite the English means of communication. In order to be able to communicate on what the transmission of texts from manuscript to database entails, we needed to express ourselves very precisely, avoid all jargon and go back to the basics. The discussions within the research group led to new desires for the database, such as the addition of audio-visual material and a virtual research environment (see also Beaulieu and Antonijevic 2010).

We now turn to problems that arose and new possibilities that were discovered. Our case study is the first text selected as basis for the plans to build the database. It is a short healing text without a heading (Stokes 1883:392):

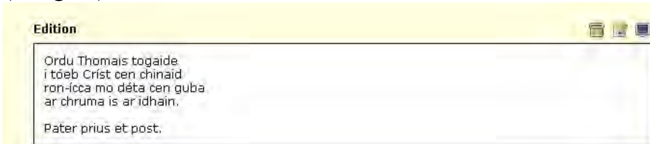
(Image 1)



Worms were seen as the cause of illnesses, including dental diseases. This idea already existed in Mesopotamia, ancient India and ancient Egypt (Stokes 1883:391–2; Mandel 1983:926–7). So far, everything is straightforward.

Thirteen years later, the same text was edited and translated again by Kuno Meyer (1896:116), who seemed to be unaware of the earlier edition:

(Image 2)



The minor differences in the edition of the text can easily be explained, but there are other texts where this is not the case. We deal here with a transmission phenomenon. Something happens when scholars transcribe texts from manuscripts. They may correct the text by adding diacritics. Sometimes they go further and 'normalise' the text, which means that they rewrite the text according to current grammatical standards and insights. Or – when they think the text lacks in sense – they emend the text and 'improve' it by inserting better readings. We are then dealing with a reconstructed text instead of a transcription from a manuscript.

These scholarly efforts are worthwhile and helpful to understand what the text is about, but we also want to know what the text looked like in the manuscript. What we see as errors may have been there on purpose. We need to study the text in its manuscript context as well.

This led to a solution of adding visual images of the relevant part of the manuscript to the database, so that users may compare the printed edition with the hand-written text.

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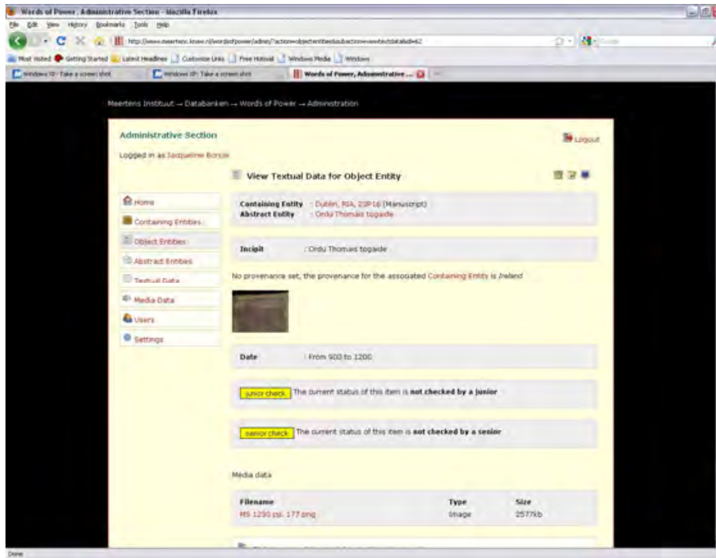
(Image 3)



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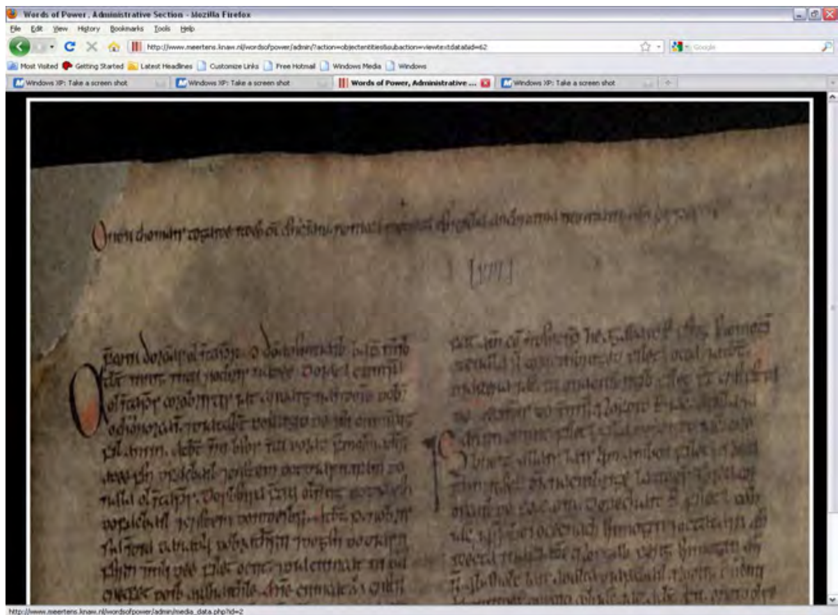

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Our tooth charm is written as a single line in the upper margin of page 177 of *Leabhar Breac* (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, 1230, olim 23P16). This observation leads to another methodological consideration: we need to be aware of the location of the texts in the manuscript. Charms were often written in margins or on the last page. This could be a sign of their status being marginal, but another explanation might be that they are easier to find in this way.

This does not exhaust the problems in the area of transmission from manuscript to database. Our example is a text extant in a single manuscript. The case becomes more complex when a text exists in several manuscripts. This phenomenon has led to the above-mentioned stemma model. It also has led to the creation of non-existing texts. A scholar usually transcribes a text from one manuscript and adds variant readings from other manuscripts at the bottom of the page. Sometimes, however, scholars reconstruct a new text based on the best readings that they found. The text of the Bible, for example, is a reconstruction based on readings from many different manuscripts that contain variant versions of the separate books that now form the Bible. In other words: the ultimate printed text is the result of decisions made by scholars. Even though they did this according to certain academic standards, subjectivity unavoidably played a part in the procedure.

Scholars similarly sometimes make combinations of texts when they try to reconstruct the lost supposedly original text. They might even add words or phrases of their own. Normally, they indicate what the basis of their reconstruction is but it may also be up to us to discover what they actually have done. The above-quoted bone to bone formula is a non-existent text, for which I combined a German with an Irish version: lines 1 to 3 are German (Ködderitzsch 1974:45), the rest is Irish (Gray 1982:32–33). My example is of course outrageous; more subtle examples are found in scholarly publications. The first line in a reconstructed Old Irish spell, for instance, stems from the editor, for in this form it does not occur in any of its three manuscripts:

> Gaibiu fi[u]s
> ibiu fi[u]s
> ibiu anfi[u]s
> Frisbru[u] ūathu
> ibiu līthu.
> Christi Jesu.

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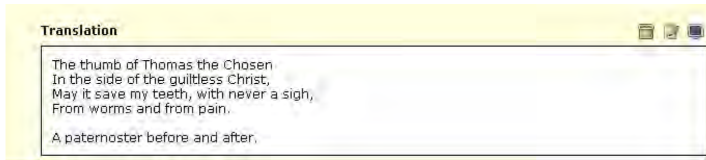
Ich nehme wissentlich,
Ich trinke wissentlich (oder)
Ich trinke unwissentlich;
Ich zerschmettere die bösen Geister,
Ich trinke die Festgelage Jesu Christi (Pokorny 1936:488).

Another dimension in the transmission process is the translation of texts. Our example text acquires a different function in the translation by Meyer (1896:116):

(Image 4)



According to this translation, the text will protect instead of heal teeth.

How do we handle these issues in our database in which printed editions are given? These problems are connected with subjectivity. Trying to make sense of texts from the past may call for creativity, which is subjective. On the other hand, we as scholars are subjective as well.

Our solution which links up with the advantages of digitization is the Virtual Research Environment, which is part of the Database. Here, we may comment on the work of previous scholars, and add our own ideas and insights. Here is an example of the Virtual Research Environment on the tooth charm (image 5a–b):

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Manuscript Context

The text forms one line written in the top margin of page 177 of Leabhar Breac. The Irish text forms a unity with the Latin ritual prescription (recitation of *pater noster* as start and end).
The page is visible on Irish Script on Screen: http://www.isos.dias.ie/english/index.html.

Ritual Context

The ritual is prescribed in Latin: the Latin *pater noster* should be recited before and after the Irish text.

Literary Context

The words of power in the top margin imply the scene from the Gospel of John 20:27, concerning the Apostle Thomas and Jesus Christ.
The Irish text is to be uttered after and before another Gospel text: the prayer of Jesus in a Latin translation: Pater noster (Mt 6:9-13; Lc 11:-5).
The main text of MS page 177 contains The Passion of the Apostle James (see Atkinson, Passions and Homilies, for an ed. & tr.).

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Kuno Meyer, 'Anecdota from Irish MSS XIV', *Gaelic Journal* 7 (1896), 116.
Whitley Stokes, 'Irish Folklore', *Revue celtique* 5 (1883), 391-2.

Genre user: Jacqueline Borsje

* Prayer: *pater noster*
* Charm, according to W. Stokes 1883: 392.
* Charm, according to R.I. Best 1913: 266.
* Healing text (Jacqueline Borsje, 17-03-2011)

Comparanda user: Jacqueline Borsje

* Panjábi charm for toothache (Stokes 1883: 391-2)
* Further references by Stokes (1883: 392) to Shakespeare, Much Ado About Nothing III.2; and folklore from Mecklenburg, Westfalen and England.
* Cp. the Caput Christi texts, in which the mention of body members of sacred persons seems to be invoked against physical ailments (Jacqueline Borsje, 17-12-2009).

Function user: Jacqueline Borsje

Healing of toothache (Jacqueline Borsje, 17-12-2009)

Form user: Jacqueline Borsje

This is a metrical text in the form of *rannaigecht becc* (John Carey, 10-1-2010). [*Rannaigecht becc*, i.e. seven syllables in each line, and the endings are disyllabic, all of which can be expressed in the formula 7(2) + 7(2) +7(2) +7(2); James Carney, Medieval Irish Lyrics selected &translated, Dublin, Dolmen Press, xiii.]
The fact that *guba* makes *aicill* rhyme with *cruma* suggests (as would in any case seem likely) that "*cen guba*" is mainly a cheville (John Carey, 10-1-2010). [*aicill*: name of rhyme of the end-word of one line with a word in the beginning or interior of the next line; e-DIL s.v.]
The last line in Irish looks like the listing of evils from which the speaker wants protection, which occurs in loricae and in other Irish healing texts in list formulae, starting with *ar* ('against worms and against pain'; Jacqueline Borsje, 17-12-2009)
The line in Latin is a ritual prescription which refers to another text of power: *pater noster* (Jacqueline Borsje, 19-02-2009)

Linguistic comments

The nasalization in *ron-icca* is curious (John Carey, 10-1-2010).

Comments on Translation user: Jacqueline Borsje

A literal translation of the endings of lines 2 and 3 brings out better the parallelism, indicated by the repetition of the preposition *cen*, 'without':
... Christ without sin
... my teeth without sighing (Jacqueline Borsje, 17-12-2009)

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We collect the published views from scholars and give our own, accompanied by the indication of a name and the time. In this way the Database also becomes a scholarly community, in which people can collaborate on-line in an international context. It will be a Wiki-like enterprise: scholars can add data and academic points of view.

I conclude with a final problem. Our tooth charm prescribes in Latin praying a *Pater Noster*, uttering the Irish text and ending with the Latin *Our Father* again. This ritual prescription is rather meagre if we compare it with other examples. Nevertheless, it is all that remains in this case.

This observation brings us to another part of the transmission process: from historical reality to manuscript. Once, someone wrote this text in the manuscript as a memory aid or for others to use. But when a healer applied this cure, there was a sensory dimension of touch, sight, sound and smell that has left no trace in our written remnant. How was the text to be uttered? Whispered, chanted, sung, or murmured? Were there any gestures made? Was the patient touched? In many cases, we no longer know this. The social, psychological and sensory dimensions of the ritual context are, however, very important for our understanding of the functioning of words of power.

Because our field of study extends from the beginning of literacy to the present day, we realised that we want to add to the database recent audio- and visual material of rituals in which words of power are employed. This is, however, still a wish which has not yet become reality and which will bring new methodological challenges.

Conclusion

The considerable challenges that I mentioned earlier – financial, quantity, quality and time management – are still there. New challenges arise but we also find solutions. Step by step we build and refine the Database with its Virtual Research Environment. Last but not least I want express my gratitude to computer scientist Drs Matthijs Brouwer who is able to listen to our sometimes wild plans and then starts to build according to our wishes.

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The Magic Word *tuva* ('tuft') on a Bracteate from the 6th Century AD and the Word *tuva* in Swedish Snake Charms from the 19th and 20th Centuries

In charms, magic words and formulations can survive for a long time. In 20th-century charms words and formulations sometimes date back to pre-Christian times. But during that time their initial meaning may get lost. The words get distorted or change their signification.

The oldest runic inscriptions are from 300–400 AD and from this time forward we can find traces of Nordic magic charms. Most commonly these charms consist of short words for protection and good luck written on amulets, grave stones and weapons. Examples of such words are *alu*, *salu*, *laukar*, *lin*, and *tuva*.

There are a number of Nordic 20th-century charms which are concentrated to a minor area in the Nordic that contain sexually meanings and lack Christian elements. These charms can date back to very old times. They are almost uninfluenced by the excorsims and benedictions of Catholicism. 'Prayers of Fire' which were read at night to keep the fire burning until the next day, are examples of such a very old type of charms known from Sweden and Norway (Af Klintberg 1980:9, 131).

> Ashy balls
> Pussy mouse
> Never shall the fire
> fade in my house.
>
> (NM EU 3255, Gotland, 1930)

The protective powers of sexual words can at the time of the writing have been forgotten. This has happened to several Nordic charms. In the 'Prayer of Fire' from the county of Värmland the sexual words are now lost:

> Ashy pladus
> Ashy pladous
> Never shall we lack warmth in our house.
>
> (IFGH 1917, Värmland, 1929)

Many writers have noted how incomprehensible the charms are and how they sometimes seem to lack meaning and substance (Herjulfsdotter 2008:19).

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Words and formulations have survived through the ages, but the meanings have been lost. One of these words is *tuva* ('tuft') which occurs in a number of Swedish charms from the 19th and 20th centuries, a word that has several interpretations. I will in this paper focus on the word *tuva* and its symbolic meanings.

The magic word *tuva* on a bracteate

The oldest Nordic known use of the word *tuva* consists of a rune inscription (*luwatuwa* or *tuwatuwa*) on a bracteate from the 6th century AD found in 1774 in Vadstena, Östergötland, Sweden. A bracteate is a kind of amulet used for protection. Most bracteates miss inscriptions but some of them have inscriptions written in runes or in Latin, mostly very difficult to interpret. They are difficult to read because bracteates are often copies of roman coins. First the Latin texts were copied, often partly wrongly and then they were replaced by symbols similar to runes and real runes. The rune inscriptions are magic words of protection.

In the centre of the bracteate a human head is depicted over a four-legged animal and in front of the face there is a bird. Surrounding the centre there is a rune inscription. First are 8 runes of which all but the first are clearly visible. After a point the full version of the runic alphabet, *futharken*, begins. The bracteate is framed within a thick lace consisting of two golden threads. Under the simple loop there is an ornament of one large and three smaller grains of gold soldered on the bracteate together with two golden threads. The runes got reversed during printing because they were right on the stamp used. The bracteate was stolen in 1938 from the Historical Museum of Sweden, but replicas still exist.

Another bracteate made with the same stamp as the bracteate from Vadstena was purchased in 1906 by the Historical museum of Sweden. The bracteate is still in the possession of the museum but since the edge is lost only the lower part of the runes are still visible and they are not of any use for deciphering the text.

The very first of the runes on the bracteate have probably been just as visible as the other but since a triangular tip has been attached to the front, just below the loop, it is possible that a part of the rune has been hidden. If there is a rune called 't-bistav' under the tip, the first 8 runes can be interpreted as *luwatuwa* or *tuwatuwa* (Lundeby, Williams 1992:12).

For years it has been debated which of the interpretations is the correct one. According to runic expert Erik Brate, who has done the most accurate interpretation of the original, the runic inscription shall be read as *luwatuwa* (Brate

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1911:167). The interpretation *luwatuwa* was first used by Sophus Bugge (1871:203) and has been accepted by Oscar Montelius (Montelius 1906:146) and many other scholars. However this interpretation has been questioned. According to other interpretations made from replicas made in the 1870s with rubber castings which through electrolytic methods have been covered in copper and then gilded, it is suggested that the text on the bracteate shall be interpreted as *tuwatuwa* (Lundeby, Williams 1992:17). Regardless if the rune inscription is *luwatuwa* or *tuwatuwa* they both hold the word *tuva* ('tuft') which is my focus in this paper. Perhaps my ethnographic contribution can be of some help in this archaeological discussion

Magic rune inscriptions

Magical inscriptions are found on amulets of different kinds, for example stone axes dating back to prehistoric times. Words in runic inscriptions – powerful but difficult to interpret – have been found in Denmark, depicted on objects laid in mosses from around 250 AD, and in Norway an arrowhead with a runic inscription has been found in a grave from the late 100 AD. The oldest known Swedish runic inscription *sioag* is depicted on an arrowhead found in Moos, the county of Gotland, and can be dated back to the 3rd century AD. The inscription is known to be runes of magic (Brate 1922:9). The word combination *luwatuwa/tuwatuwa* are considered to by words of power, a magical-phonetic construction without any specific purpose (Juhl Jensen 1969:143) or as a magic combination of letters or words of protection (Bæksted 1943:14, Moltke 1976:90). Lundeby writes that it is not unreasonable to assume that inscriptions with this type of words have its origin in the idea that there are transcendental forces in our existence that can manifest themselves in plants or other elements in our surroundings. The forces were activated through the mentioning of these plants and/or elements. Bracteates can contain words that often are repeated, and that seems to have its origin in the nature; words for special plants or products drawn from plants, for example *alu* (can be interpreted as the word for 'beer'), LATHUFROHILA ('fill the little seed'), *laukaR* ('onion'), *lina* ('flax') and *tuva* ('tuft'). Archaeologists believe bracteates are amulets containing symbols and elements concerning growth, vitality and fertility.

The word *tuva* on a medieval amulet

There have been several prehistoric stone axes found with medieval inscriptions written in runes. On a stone axe found in Vejle on Jylland in Denmark the inscription *lyfatyiö* can be read. The inscription can be dated to the begin-

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ning of the 13th century and has been interpreted as *luvatuva* or *luvato.* The axe was found in 1892 in the soil. The axe is dated to the stone- age but has been used again as an amulet during the Middle Ages. In Sweden we call this type of axe *åskvigg* ('thunderbolt'), and they were placed inside or under the house for protective purposes. It could for example be placed in the barn to protect the crops. The axe could therefore have been used as a protection against fire caused by thunder.

According to Brate, the magic of *luwatuwa* on the bracteate from Vadstena is enhanced by the fact of the similar inscription *lyfatyiö* on the stone axe from Vejle in Denmark (Brate 1922:12).

From *tuva* to *tó*

The phonetics leads us from *tuwa* to *tó*. The word *tó* is still in use in Nordic languages and means 'material for spinning'. In the county of Skåne we have the words *toed* and *to* meaning 'wool' and *tokatt* which is 'prepared wool ready to use for spinning' (Karlholm 2000:116). The words *tuva, to* and *lin* have partly similar signification. In Norwegian dialects the word *to* is most commonly used for flax or hemp. Thus, the Norwegian word *tona* means 'to make fabric of flax', *tonad* means 'yarn, thread' or 'fabric made of flax' or 'hemp'. *To-agner* and *tosagner* means 'flax waste' which according to Lundeby signifies that the most commonly sense of the word *to* is 'flax'. In Sweden the genius for 'flax' was called *to-vasing*. The word *to* in the old agricultural society was standing for both 'flax' and 'wool in unprepared condition', in other words 'soft entangled bundles of textile raw material' (Sandklef 1945:49). There is a resemblance between the soft entangled bundles of textile raw material and soft, curly pubic hair. The words *tuva* and *to* in the meaning of female pubic hair has its origin in antiquity. The words 'plants' and 'cuttings' have since long been used to describe pubic hair (Adams 1982:76). The word *toet* have had similar significance in erotic riddles in the Swedish agricultural society (Lövkrona 1991:272). The words *tuva* and *to* are synonymous.

The word *tuva* in charms

The 17th century. The personal name *Toffwa* is found in a Swedish charm from the 17th century, read against the water sprite (Näcken). The charm was read in 1635 by an old woman (Linderholm 1917-40:195)

'Tooe for fra tre Land...' ('Tooe traveled from three countries') (Möller-Christensen 1944:28–29) occurs in the Danish charm from the 17th century, used to bind the uterus (*For Moderen* 'For the mother').

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Tuva in charms against snakebite

I have found that the word *tuva* occurs in 82 charms from Sweden and in the Swedish-speaking parts of Finland. Most of the texts were written down in the late 19th century. In the major group in which the word *tuva* is included, 78 charms concern readings against snakes or snakebites. A large proportion of these charms totally lack Christian elements. The Virgin Mary is not mentioned, and they are not ending with the otherwise commonly invoked Holy Trinity. This may indicate that this type of charms is of a very old origin.

In 27 of these charms the Virgin Mary is however called upon and in one of the charms Saint Peter walks on a tuft: ‘Sancte Pär klef på en tufva...’ (NM EU 9056). In 16 of the charms where Virgin Mary is called upon there are no endings with the Holy Trinity.

The word *tuva* occurs in about a third of the charms where Virgin Mary is mentioned. This does not necessarily indicate that the charms where created in a Christian environment. The Virgin’s name could have been used in an old type of charm to enhance the power of the words.

The word *tuva* is commonly occurring in charms against snakebite. A tuft of grass is a natural place for a viper. But it is not always that the word *tuva* means ‘tuft of grass’. *Tuva* sometimes occurs in a personified form; *Toffwa, Too, Tooe, Tove, Tåva*, often in an encounter with a snake.

The following initial words in a charm against snakes is of certain interest concerning the bracteate inscription *luwatuwa* and stone axe inscription *lyfatiö*: ‘Luva i tuva...’ (ULMA 1390:8,1).

Sometimes there is no snake occurring in the snake-charm. The formulation: ‘I am sitting on my tuft...’ (IFGH 1020,26) indicates that *tuva* used in charms is not always the same as the home of the snake. The formulation is instead more applicable to a curing-ritual. The formulation ‘I’m sitting on a tuft...’ is not only occurring in charms against snakes and snake bite. In a Norwegian charm used for problems with the uterus, three sisters are sitting on a tuft (*tue*) (Grambo 1974:4).

The word *tuva* and cows

The word *tuva* frequently occurs in readings over cows with milking-problems. When a cow could not be milked due to problems with the udder, the explanation was that the cow had been bitten by a snake, even though no snake had been seen nearby. Several women state that they learned these charms for sick cows from other, elder women (ULMA 8161,1). ‘Snake-bitten’ cows, that is cows that for some reason could not be milked, were cured by the following reading:

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Slo låg på tuva med ettertand och ettertunga.
Jungfru Maria med sin linda befallde slo binda.
Allt helt som förut var. I den treenige Gudens namn,
i Faderns, Sonens och den helige Andes namn.

(ULMA 2173:8,55)

The words *to* and *tuva* occur also in other contexts concerning cattle. The word *tuva* is, for example, occurs in a riddle with connections to cows: 'Four virgins are sitting on a tuft and are all spinning just as nice'. Answer: the udder of a cow.

The word *tuva* can be connected to cattle in many contexts. *Tuva* is known to be a name for a cow in Sweden in 1799 (Leibring 2000:206). In addition to this the word *tuva* occurs in a pasture-song used when watching over grazing cows (VFF 1010,58). The pasture-song includes metaphors and symbols for the spring-time and its vital forces, growth and fertility, for example that the onion sprouts, the cuckoo calls and the women are spinning silk for (children's) caps. This ambiguity could be the reason why the word is so frequently used in riddles, pasture-songs and charms. The Finnish folklorist Lotte Tarkka writes about how metaphors of a girl's 'tuft' or 'bundle' were used in charms and pasture-songs to protect the cattle (Tarkka 1998:121–122).

Perhaps the word *tuva* in the examples concerning cows can be interpreted in the same way? Women who worked in the old agricultural society were primarily focussed on female responsibilities where taking care of the cattle was an important part. A woman's sexuality and fertility were closely connected to good luck of the cattle on the farm. The inscription and pronunciation of *tuva* can be compared to making sexual gestures for protective purposes. In the spring when the cows were let out to graze for the first time, it sometimes happened that they had to pass between a woman's legs. To protect the cattle against predators the girls showed their genitals. Protective powers could be obtained by striking the animals with clothes that had been in touch with the lower parts of the body. Women in the Nordic agricultural society summoned protective powers by using their genitals, apron, skirt or shirt (Herjulfsdotter 2008:156–157).

Tuva – a feminine component in words of sexuality in old Nordic magic for protective purposes

When looking at the word *tuva* in a dictionary of Swedish dialects the word is given the following meanings: 'The same honorable word for a women as rascal used to describe a man', 'little girl' and 'female genitals'. The same

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names for cuttings and plants have since antiquity also been used for pubic hair. The words *toet* and *tuva* have had similar significations in the Nordic agricultural society (see Lövkrona 1991:272).

The word *tuva* can be interpreted as a powerful word with the signification 'shrubbery, tangled knot, tuft, plant having feminine connotations'. During the 17th–20th centuries the word *tuva* primarily occurs in women's charms and in contexts concerning women's bodily functions and the cattle protection including the protection of milk.

The word *tuva* occurs in charms as a feminine component in counterparts – one feminine and one masculine, for example: *näcken* ('the water sprite') – *Toffwa*, *orm* ('snake') – *tuva*. The terms 'snake' and 'tuva' are ambiguous. Several of the snake-charms described above starts with a female and a masculine counterpart.

The formulation 'orm på tuva' ('snake on a tuft') can be viewed as words with an underlying sexual meaning. Such counterparts can also be found in the beginning of the 'prayers of fire'. The combination of a masculine and a feminine sexual word could have been considered extraordinary powerful and therefore useful for the purpose.

May *tuva* as a magical word for protection has its roots in the 6th century?

The word *luwatuwa* on the bracteate from Vadstena is a word of power and protection. In the examined charms the word *tuva* also occurs. The word *tuva* has been compared to 'flax' in, for example, the magical inscription *lina laukaR*. Several inscriptions on bracteates have their origin in the flora and these words of protection allude to fertility and vitality.

Could the word *tuva* in the charms from the 19th and 20th centuries have its origin in pre-Christian times? Nordic charms have their origin in medieval blessings, written down in European monasteries, while others can be traced back to folklore. The folkloric origin should be an indisputable fact considering the simple but effective type of charm where, for example, we find the word *tuva*. In about half of the charms that include the word *tuva* the otherwise so often used religious ending is missing, namely the invocation of the Holy Trinity. The unusual ending, the spells' geographical limitation to the Nordic countries and the fact that the word *tuva* has been used in a runic inscription on a bracteate from the 6th century indicate that the charms are of old age and perhaps even older than Christianity in the Nordic countries.

My conclusion is that the terms *to*, *toe*, *too*, *Toffwa*, and *tuva* on objects like the bracteate from Vadstena (6th century AD) and the stone axe from Vejle,

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Jylland, Denmark (inscription from the 13th century) as well as the charms (from the 17th century onwards) are of ambiguous symbolic signification with feminine connotations. As words of power in the described contexts, they have since long times back had a protective content against evil. Both the formulation *Luva på tuva* and the word *tuva* are words of power in Nordic tradition. In an early phase the word *tuva* has had several significations, some of them having to do with sexuality. Over time, a shift of significations took place. When the last of the charms were collected in the 1920s the original meanings were forgotten and 'snake on a tuft' now means literally 'a snake on a tuft of grass'.

The charms against snakebite, where the word *tuva* has survived over such long time can be viewed as a last trace of a 1500-year-old history. The word *tuva* has survived but the signification as a word of power is lost in time.

Scholars are still debating if the inscription on the bracteate should be read *luwatuwa* or *tuwatuw*a. By combining archaeology and ethnology it may be possible to take one step further concerning the inscription on the bracteate.

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Solar Imagery in Finnish Charms of the Kalevala Metre

Incantations and spells form an essential part of the oral poetry in Kalevala metre, otherwise Kalevalaic. Contrary to the incantations, other genres, i.e. epic poems, ballads or lyrical songs, have been performed by singing, whereas spells were not sang at all, but recited with a gloomy voice. Some incantations have been rather long, above hundred lines. In this paper instances are quoted from the extensive file edition of rune-poems' variants 'Suomen Kansan vanhat runot' (SKVR), 1908–1948+1997, published in the serial publication 'Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seuran toimituksia' (SKST) since 1908 until 1949 as 33 books, structurally 14 volumes, distributed by region of recording, with additional volume XV which appeared in 1997.

Elder incantations, especially dealing with healing, folk medicine, are linked closely with the epic poems dealing with mythological stories on the plot level, e.g. hemorrhage's interception is linked to the myth about the origin of steel or to the narrative about Väinämöinen's knee, wounded by the axe during the building of a boat (possibly, a dragon ship). The latter is represented by multiple variants, obtained from the Northern Ostrobotnia, e.g. (SKVR XII-1 1934: N 21), that is 51 lines long, and Kainuu region, e.g. (SKVR XII-1 1934: N 30), 33 lines long. The old Väinämöinen is hewing a boat upon the rock, his axe's blade slips, the blood flows like a river and he leaves on the sleigh to search for the healer, visiting three houses. Despite the embedded narrative, north-eastern Finnish charms are not very long and contain not more than 50 lines. There in the Viena's Karelia, otherwise the Archangel Province the steel's origin is explained either by the wolf's and bear's traces upon the marsh, e.g. (SKVR I-4.1: N 163), obtained by the female local collector Nasto Lesonen, or by the heaven's maiden's breast milk dropping. Linking with the epic narrative about the wounded knee appears systematically. A typical variant, 289 lines long (SKVR I-2 N 1023), was performed by Vihtoora Lesonen from the Venehjärvi village of the Vuokkiniemi parish and recorded by linguist Kustaa Karjalainen in 1894. It starts with the search of a healer for Väinämöinen's wounded knee, slapped with an axe while building a boat upon a rock. Bleeding is so strong, that high mountains as well as little tussocks get overflowed with the blood deluge. Väinämöinen visits three houses: the lowest, one of medium size and the highest, looking for someone to offer a plug. A senior married couple, trying to help him with a charm, reminds that the

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hero himself is aware of the origin of the Steel that has appeared from the breast milk of three maidens. A wolf, running over a marsh, and a bear, wandering along the heathers, are involved also. The wise Seer reminds the Steel about its miserable position upon the marsh where swans lay eggs and geese sit on eggs. In accordance with the operation pattern, typical of Finnish-Karelian charms (Siikala 2002:87), the healer invites the prototypical injurer to appear and recognize the damage. Then he orders the blood to stop the same way as a wall stands and a fence is established firmly, as a fallen sword stands in the sea, a sedge among the swamp, a stone in the waterfall, a flat rock on the edge of a field ('Veri seiso niinkuin seinä, Asu hurme niinkuin aita, Kuin miekka meressä seiso, Saraheinä sammalessa, Kivi koskessa kovassa, Poasi pellon pientaressa!').

Knowledge of the origin of dangerous things, including phenomena such as fire, frost or diseases, animals, such as the bear or the snake, has been believed to provide the power over them and/or the harm, caused by them. The healer and seer was called 'tietäjä' ('the wise man'), in Finnish and Karelian languages.

The solar mythology as such is represented by epic narratives in the Kalevala meter. They were neither used for the pragmatic purpose of healing, nor performed during spring rituals, as far as it concerns the period of recording Kalevalaic oral poems from the Christian rune-singers in the 19th century or later. Pagan rituals dedicated to the awakened Sun have not survived in their entirety, yet one can reveal a plenty of their relics in many calendar fests related to the Easter, the Whitsuntide and the Midsummer feast (Ivan's Day among the Orthodox) in the agricultural traditional culture of Karelians in North-West Russia, Izhors in Ingria, and Finns. According to the historical-geographical approach in folkloristics, elaborated by Kaarle Krohn, that seems very relevant for the mythological epic plots and it is necessary to distinguish between two regional branches of the epic poetry in the Kalevala meter. The northern branch should be defined as Karelian, including epics obtained from the Viena district, the north-west territory of the Archangel Province, inhabited by Karelians in the 19th century and extending to the Karelian districts of the Olonets province on the Russian side of the border. It has been performed in the proper Karelian and Olonets dialects of the Karelian language. On the Finnish side of the border before 1939, the tradition was performed in the Olonets dialects of the Karelian language as well as in the Savo-Karelian dialects of the Finnish, extending geographically to the Kainuu region with the local dialects of the Finnish. This northern branch of the epic poetry should be defined as performed predominantly by male singers and has been regarded as

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more archaic. The southern branch covers the Kalevalaic poetry of Ingria (Saint-Peterburg region), where it has been performed predominantly in the Izhor language, including local Savolax dialects of Finnish, that seems to extend to the Karelian Isthmus and thus to the Finnish region of Southern Karelia. The southern poetry in the Kalevala meter has been performed predominantly by female singers and it is specified with strong lyrical genre substance. It was performed by maidens choirs authentically (Harvilahti 1994:97), but recorded on the request of the collectors from smaller groups or pairs of the elder female singers: married women aged 30–40 or even senior widows. There in the Northern epics, the solar mythological plot, revealing the origin of the Earth and the luminaries (the Sun, the Moon, and the stars) is incorporated into the heroic destiny of Väinämöinen. The hero is riding a blue moose (elk: 'Šeläššä šińisen hirven'), eg. (SKVR I-1 N 17), performed by Iivana Iivanaińi, one of the Rahuset-family from Pismalaksi of the Jyskyjärvi parish, Viena, recorded by A. Borenius in 1877, when a revengeful Lapplander shoots him down with the bow despite his own mother's attempts to forbid it. The protagonist falls down into the sea waves and starts floating similarly with a spruce chunk. Certain webfoot birds create the world with the luminaries by the medium of Väinämöinen, e.g. in the variant (SKVR VII-1 N 17), recorded by Hj. Basilier in 1884 and performed by Fedotta Sotikainen from Loimola of the Suistamo Parish, Ladoga district of Karelia, it's a splendid sea-duck from the marsh ('Suo-sotk(a) on soria lintu') that lays an egg upon the hero's knees, and when it drops into the water its split fragments turn into the luminaries. There in the 'Ingrian' female lyrical epics the ornithological creator of the world is usually a swallow, Väinämöinen is not involved and the broken egg gives either birth to the world with luminaries or to the green island, where a maiden is born to wait for suitors and to give birth to young lads going to perish during the war. E.g. 47-year-old Nasto Lari, aka Aleksantra Anastasova, from Metsäpirtti of the Sakkola Parish, Southern (Finnish) Karelia, in her variant (SKVR XIII-1 N 681), recorded by Ad. Neouvius in 1888, describes the ornithological creator as a swallow-bird, the bird of the day, a bat, the bird of the night ('Peääskylintu, päivälintu, Yöl[intu], lep(akko)l[intu]'), that lays eggs upon the deck of a ship, from which the wind rolls them down into the water. The Ego of the ballad rakes the fragments from the sea, sends them to the sky and creates the luminaries: the Moon from the white of the egg and the star from the yolk. According to the unknown performer of the (SKVR XIII-1 N 691), recorded in 1880 at the Rautu parish, the swallow obtains a rag from the smithery herself and sends the yolk and the white of the broken egg to Heaven. The 25th line of her variant is based on a

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specific Finnish non-finite verb form, so-called Third Infinitive, consisiting of the ma-suffix and the local case inflection of the illative (meaning inclusion inwards for nouns), with semantics close to that of purpose infinitive, referring to the noun in the so-called translative case, indicated by the inflection -*ksi* with the semantics of the transformation into something.

Löysi sit puolen alkuaista,	*(She) found half a white,*
Sen sit lähät taivosehen	*(she) has sent it to the sky,*
Kuuksi kumottamahan.	*(turning it) into the Moon to shine.*

The line 'Kuuksi kumottamahan' ('[to turn it] into the Moon to shine') appears in the charms verbatim constantly along with a line with the same noun, applied in another case, usually used with different verbs. A strong alliteration facilitates the crystallization of the line into the verbal constant, that gets linked together with a semantically close line, describing the shining sun by means of syntactic parallelism. In the Ingrian Kalevalaic poetry Jesus, the son of God appears as the protagonist of the mythological narrative about the rescue of the Sun. This poem should be defined as a Christian folk legend, and it is indicated with narrative features of a fairy tale in many variants, as well. E.g. 155-lines-long variant (SKVR IV-2 N 1837) was performed by Varvana-named old woman from Lenttisi, Hevaa district, in the middle Ingria, and recorded by linguist Volmari Porkka during his fieldwork in 1881–83. People have got to live in the darkness and to sow by candlelight. The only God's son, alert Kiesus, rescues the Sun and the Moon, stolen to Pohjola realm, from the hackberry and sallow tousle. He hangs the luminaries upon the tree so that they provide equal shine for rich and poor. This action is described by means of the familiar formulaic line-part, based on the 3rd infinitive: 'Jumalaisen a[inoi] p[oikoi] Sai päivöin paistamaan, Pani kuun kumoittamaan. Nyt ei nykkyin rahvas' ('The only son of God Has got the Sun to shine, Has put the Moon to blaze').

There in the incantation poetry in the Kalevala meter the solar imagery, manifested through similes and verb metaphors, appears frequently in the charms, concerning maidens' marriage luck.

It is typical of Kalevalaic similes and metaphors, that nouns serving as a descriptive references for a described object, are applied to a verb. Lines, exploiting solar imagery, vary in grammar patterns, and verbs are substituted with partial synonyms. Such nouns as 'päivä' the Sun, 'kuu' the Moon, 'täh(d)et' the stars, that represent descriptive references for the girl's beauty aiming at the evocation of the girl's and marriage luck ('Lemmen nosto'). The concept of the Lempi, despite involving connotations of love, comprises girl's

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beauty and attractiveness for many groom challengers. Its purpose is not to bewitch a certain person, but to provide a girl reaching the age of marriage, as much opportunities to choose a groom, suitable both to the girl herself, and for her family, as possible. The magic practices consisted a sort of bathing, either in a sauna or in a brook. The charm (SKVR XIII-3 N 9950), recorded among others from 61-year-old male singer Tuomas Osa from Kaukola parish by Jorma Väänänen in 1935, incorporates a solar simile, linked with a comparative conjunction 'niin kuin'.

Siun kunniais kuulumaa,	*Your virginal honour to rise to fame,*
Lempeyes liehumaa	*Your beauty to wave,*
Viiteekuutee kirkkokuntaa,	*Over 5-6 churches,*
Seitsemäntee seurakuntaa	*Over 7 parishes,*
[35] Nii kuumottaa ku kuu,	[35] *To shine like the Moon,*
Nii paistaa ku päivä.	*To blaze like the Sun,*
Tulkuut sulhaset ettäält,	*Come on grooms from a far,*
Tulkuut sulhaset liikkiilt,	*Come on grooms from near,*
Venehillä vettä myöten,	*By boat along the water,*
[40] Suksella mäkeä myöten.	[40] *Skiing along the hill.*

The simile's pattern based on the comparative conjunction may induce an action pattern of a healer, that appeals to God asking to release the sufferer in the same way, as he has liberated the sun, if he supposed that the maiden's poor attractiveness was caused by evil magic. 70-years-old female singer Oksenja Havakka form Otsanlahti, Kurkijoki parish, that performed the variant (SKVR XIII-3 N 9966) to O. Matikainen in 1993, has reported a detailed description of the maiden's bathing ritual at the sauna, while the healer is using three scythes, red threads, splint and rowan branches in order to 'open the road' for suitors, pleading:

Piästä luoja, piästä luonto,	*Liberate, Pancreater, liberate nature,*
Piästä luoja luonnolleis,	*Liberate, o God, to her nature,*
[20] Jiessus syntymäiselleis,	[20] *Jesus to her birth,*
Niin kuin kuu kehästä pääsi,	*As You have liberated the Moon from the circle,*
Päivä pilvestä pirahti. {…}	*The Sun to sprinkle from the clouds. ...*
[24] Paista päivä piällitseis,	[24] *The Sun, shine over You [the maiden],*
Kuu kuumota alatseis!	*The Moon, blaze beneath You!*

Grammar pattern of the translative case inflection is used also. In the SKVR_XIII (3) 9974, performed in 1935 by 81-year-old Mari Lötjönen from Kurkijoki, during washing the healer encourages the maiden:

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Pane silkit silmilleis,	*Put some silk over your eyes,*
[10] Kultalangat ulmilleis,	[10] *Golden threads over your brows,*
Mäne kuuks kirkkoo,	*Turn into the Moon to go to the church,*
Auringoks alttarille!	*Into the Sun to go to the altar;*

cf. very closely in the (SKVR XIII-3 N 9976), performed by Okkuliina Kusmin from Jaakkima in 1909.

A specially Finnish-Karelian grammar pattern of a simile, verging into a verbal metaphor, is based on the essive case of the noun, that expresses the state of something, probably achieved as a result of a transformation, e.g. *kuuna* – either 'in the mode of the Moon' or 'acting as a Moon'. There in the Savolax incantation poetry, this pattern gets applied to the references of the luminaries frequently in charms lifting maidens' beauty and marriage luck. A line pattern, that includes a noun, denoting one of the luminaries, with the essive case inflexion, seems stereotypical for the Savolax charms. For instance, maidens were encouraged to rise to shine as the Moon, to gain the gloss of the stars, using synonymic verbs, in the variants (SKVR VI-2 N 6102), recorded from 85-year-old male singer Juho Tissari from Pielavesi parish in 1934 ('Nouse kuina paistamaan, Tähtinä kilottamaan!'); (SKVR VI-2 N 6118), recorded from female singer Reeta Laukkanen form Kiuruvesi parish in 1885 ('Hyi, kuuna kuultamaan, Tähtenä terottamaan!').

Solar similes and metaphors appear as crystallized details of the description of the forest realm in the hunters' charms, especially Savolax. A plenty of such charms have been collected from the Savo Province of Finland since the beginning of the 19th century, decades before the creation of the famous 'Kalevala'-epics by Elias Lönnrot. Lines emphasizing conifer trees in the festive landscape of the boreal forest appear as an ornamental feature of the verbal description, that contains immanently (Foley 1995:7) the traditional mythological meaning of a bridal chamber for the male hunter and the female Mistress of the desired game and dangerous beasts, although charms, recorded in the end of the 19th century and in the beginning of the 20th, are addressed to the golden king of the forest on a par with the generous hostess.

A distich bound with syntactic parallelism occurs with substitution of synonyms. Nouns denoting luminaries are used with the essive case inflexion and refer to certain trees: the Moon to the spruce (lat. *picea*) and the Sun to the Pine (lat. *pinea*), which is confirmed by alliteration of the words' pairs: kuusi ← → kuu, petäjä ← → päivä. These formulaic lines seem extremely stable, although there is no verbatim coincidence between multiple variants. They appear either in general hunters' charms or especially in the incantation poetry

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dedicated to the bear. Killing of the most dangerous beast of the boreal forest, the bear (sometimes regarded as the golden King of the forest himself) was followed with a traditional collective feast, 'Karhunpeijaiset' or 'Karhun vakka', that existed in the Savo province up to the 19th century. There in the (SKVR VI-2 N 4822), performed by Matti Waljakka from Mäntyharju in 1858, the Ego of the hunter boasts with his own handsome face and blue eyelashes before the festive forest is described on the way to the bear's lair:

40 Kuuna paistoi kuusen oksat,	*The spruce's branches shine as the moon,*
Päivänä petäjän oksat	*The pine's brances as the sun,*
Ohtosen pesän ovella.	*Before the doors of the bear's lay.*

Two synonyms for the pine are used in the hunter's charm variant (SKVR VI-2 N 4826), that was reported by V. Lavonius from Puumala in 1858 to be performed by local lumbermen:

Kuuna paistoi kuusen oksat,	*The spruce's branches shine as the moon*
50 Hopiana hongan oksat,	50 *The redwood brances as the sun,*
Päivänä petäjät[!] kerkät	*The pines' apexes as the sun,*
Miehen mennessä metälle	*When the man is leaving for the forest.*

The variant (SKVR VI-2 N 4829), recorded in 1890 from 60-years-old Kalle Kähärä from Kangasniemi, includes plenty of similes, based on the essive-case pattern:

Koirani keränä vieryi,	*My hound was spinning as a clew,*
5 Itse lensin kyyhkyläisnä.	5 *I myself flew as a dove.*
Minun mesälle mentyäin,	*On leaving for the forest,*
Mäin päälle päästyäni,	*On reaching the top of the hill,*
Korvesta kohottuani	*On arising from the depth of the forest,*
Kuuna paistoi kuusen oksat,	*The spruce's branches shine as the moon,*
10 Päivänä petäjän kelkit,	10 *The pines' apexes as the sun,*
Huavat oli hopia vöissä,	*Aspens wear silver belts,*
Koivut kulta kakkaleissa.	*Birches wear golden shafts.*

Stock-taking of the textual fabric of the charms in the Kalevala meter, that include solar imagery, demonstrates, that verbatim stability is peculiar of the given word-groops, e.g. such syntagms as 'kuu → kuumottaa', 'kuu → kuusi'. They are bound with alliteration, that has been regarded as a primary prosodic vehicle of the Kalevala meter along with 4 stresses in its rhymeless lines. Distinct visual stability of the verbal description is relevant. Thus, the traditional

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imagery is based on the crystallized motion-picture shots, probably existing in the minds of rune-singers and manifested through verbalization during the performance.

Abbreviations

SKVR I-1 (1908). Vienan läänin runot. Kalevala-aineiset kertovaiset runot. Toisinnot 1-700. Julkaissut A.R. Niemi. In SKST 121-I

SKVR I-2 (1917). Ibid. Kalevalan-aineisia kertovaisia runoja. Toisinnot 701 - 1027. In SKST 121-II.

SKVR I-4,1 (1919). Ibid. Toisinnot 1-822 {Loitsut}. In SKST 121-IV,1.

SKVR IV-2 (1926). Keski-Inkerin runot. Toisinnot 1504-1272. Julkaissut Väinö Salminen. In SKST 140, II.

SKVR VI-2 (1936). Savon runot. Loitsuja. Toisinnot 4011-6403. Julkaissut J. Lukkarinen. In SKST 142-II.

SKVR VII-1 (1929) Raja- ja Pohjois-Karjalan runot. 1. Kalevala-aineiset kertovaiset runot. Julkaissut A.R. Niemi. In SKST 143-I.

SKVR XII-1 (1934). Pohjois-Pohjanmaan runot. Julkaissut Martti Haavio. In SKST 149-I.

SKVR XIII-1 (1936). Etelä-Karjalan runot. Toisinnot 1-2692. Julkaissut Väinö Salminen. In SKST 150-I.

SKVR XIII-3 (1939). Ibid. Toisinnot 6442-10333. Julkaissut Väinö Salminen. In SKST 150-III.

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The Magic Performance on Easter in Latvia: 'Tying Up the Hawk'

Seasonal customs and magic are closely linked to one another and exist in specific use by the community. Past and present interpretations of tradition cannot be distinguished, because they mutually intersect as intertextual values to exist in the user's consciousness (Tarkka 1993:169). But, according to American folklorist Richard Bauman's understanding of cultural and social context, the researcher must examine traditions and the mutual relation between them and the user. Cultural context demands that the historical, political, and religious conditions which have determined the development of the tradition to the present day be understood and also that attention be paid to regional cultural and historical peculiarities, as well as how the narrator and folklore material fit into them (Bauman 1983:363–364). The social context, on the other hand, draws attention to the repertoire, the conditions during the folklore performance, and how the narrator fits into a certain social group (Bauman 1983:365–366).

The study is based on the audiovisual documentation of the 'tying-up-the-hawk' performance – tradition, which was filmed before sunrise on Good Friday for three years (2007, 2009, 2010). The study examines the participation of one of the narrators in the preservation of this tradition. The narrator, Anna Dintere, was born in 1943 in Kuldīga district, Latvia. She has lived her whole life in the same home. She is known locally as an avid knitter and crochetier. In her conversations with the author of the study she presents herself as a person with special skills and knowledge; she can heal people, she has inherited her father's book of magic formulas, she can chase away rats from a home, and she can protect poultry from predators. She does not let her neighbours and other locals know of these powers and she does not actively heal people, although she asserts to the author that she has the knowledge and skills to do so.

'Tying up the hawk' is one of the Easter cycle customs and is done in order to protect chickens from predatory birds for the coming year. It is a typical custom in the agricultural calendar. Good Friday, like other significant holidays (Christmas – winter solstice, Jāņi – summer solstice) is a prime time for magical activities with the goal of ensuring prosperity and protection for the family and farmstead in the coming year. Just as important is the fact that the

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action is performed in the evening, at night, or before sunrise. In Latvian folklore, the Thursday and Friday before Easter is a time when sorcerers and witches are active (Olupe 1992:135). Anna Dintere also associates herself with witches during the 'tying-up-the-hawk' performance.

The tying, limiting, and destroying of the predatory hawk is a wide-spread technique in Latvian folklore and can also be found in the customs associated with other spring holidays, for example, at Juŗģi (April 23): 'In order that the fierce birds not attack the chickens, one must take an old stove broom and tie it to the fence on the morning of Jurģi. If anyone asks: "What are you tying there?" Then one must answer: "I'm tying the feet of all the crows, hawks, and magpies!" All the chickens will stay healthy [alive] during the coming year" (Бривзэмниекс 1881:161–162).

The dialogue formulas are well-known and quite widespread in both Lithuanian (Vaitkeviciene 2008:118–143) and Estonian (Koiva 2007:7–44) as well as Latvian folklore (Straubergs 1939:247–252). In Latvian folklore, dialogue-type formulas are used in the healing of *džirkste* (sprain), *graizes* (stomach pains), and consumption as well as for the 'clipping of wings' (remedy for restlessness) and 'cutting hobbles' (to encourage a child to walk). Dialogue is also used in seasonal customs when chasing insects and rodents from homes, to tie a wolf's mouth shut, and other situations. As demanded by the description of the formula, namely 'dialogue', its performance requires two, or sometimes more, participants. The performance of Anna Dintere's 'tying-up-the-hawk' tradition seems to have at one time included more than one person. But Anna asks and answers the questions herself: 'Where are you going [riding]? – 'I'm riding to the forest to tie up the hawk. I'll tie, tie, tie until it's all tied up'.

Dialogue formulas are considered one of the ingredients of performance. R. Bauman, one of the founders of the performance theory in folkloristics, states that several components of a performance of folklore are equally significant: the event, act, role, and genre (Bauman 1984[1977]:32). These components influence each other and thereby determine and create anew each performance and occasion of magic formula's being said. These can also be influenced by the text, which can also vary (Kerewsky-Halpern, Foley 1978). The event that is examined in this study is the tradition of 'tying up of the hawk'. The act is both the utterance of the magic formula and the actual pulling, tying, and burying of the 'hawk'; the role is Anna Dintere as the performer, but also the onlookers, observers, and filming group as well as others who will later become observers of the performance; the genre is magical formulas, or, more precisely, dialogue formulas.

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There is a considerable amount of folkloric material on 'tying up the hawk' and similar seasonal customs and dialogue formulas. But this material consists only of units in archives that have never been documented in such a way. There could be several reasons for this. One explanation is that magical activities such as this are often hidden from others and performed at a time when the chance of meeting someone else is relatively small, for example, in the forest before sunrise. The activities may also be hidden for other reasons, such as to avoid misunderstandings with neighbours or to avoid the action being called 'backward' or ignorant. The second explanation revolves around the traditions of folklore documentation and preservation, which are closely linked to technological advances and the methodology of folkloristics in general.

Special relationships, which Bauman calls 'roles', develop between the narrator and the 'onlookers' during a performance (Bauman 1984[1977]:29–30). Just like anyone in our modern society, Anna realises the role of the video camera as an intermediary in the imparting of information. Behind the camera stands not only a person holding a piece of equipment during the time of the specific performance, but also another member of potential audience who will watch the event later. This situation causes the narrator to feel uneasy or anxious about whether his or her appearance and actions correspond to his or her own and society's conceptions and views. Even though Anna's uneasiness can be felt, after having 'tied up the hawk' she describes and justifies her actions thus: 'Is what I do such a secret? Am I worried that people will laugh at me, that I'm there with a broomstick? Well, a smart person isn't going to laugh, but let the fools laugh! Yes, and those who don't understand anything!'

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Appendix: 'Anna the Flyer' – presentation of a film

The documentary film 'Anna the Flyer' shows the Latvian Easter-time custom of 'tying up of the hawk'. This tradition belongs to the spring cycle of traditions ensuring protection, fertility, and success for the coming year. The hawk is symbolically tied up in the forest so that it will not kill chickens in the summer. The hawk must be tied up every year before sunrise on Good Friday. The hero of the film, Anna Dintere, agreed to allow another person assist her in the execution of the ritual, although according to tradition it must be done with no one watching, otherwise the ritual will not provide protection.

This is the first time this particular tradition has been documented on film; until now the ritual had been recorded only as a folk belief that had once been practiced but then died out. For three years (2007, 2009, 2010) researchers filmed the same person, in the same place, performing this ritual before sunrise on Good Friday.

Length of film min. 13: 30

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Mythological Character in Spells: Latvian 'Saint Maidens' – Skin Sores

Personification of illnesses is a typical phenomenon in spells of many traditions. The participation in spells of various anthropomorphous characters, which embody the illnesses and simultaneously cure them, also is not a rarity. Among these characters there are most often the female mythological beings (as Virgin Maria and other possible saints, especially popular in the Western tradition, like anonymous grandmas, maids, fevers and other). These characters perform certain actions resulting in patient's healing (the bleeding stops, the erysipelas disappears, the wound skins over).

However cases where illness is fully associated with a mythological character, are rare enough (for example, Old Indian spells against malicious demons or the Polish and Czech spells against 'white (cold) people', but in these cases the etiology of illnesses is rather unclear).

In this context the 'saint-maidens' (*svētas meitas*) plot in Latvian spells seems remarkable. The 'saint maidens' are independent mythological characters (data about them can be found not only in spells, but also in popular beliefs, folk tales, dainas); they send and personify illnesses. It is considered that 'saint maidens' are a unique reason for the severe skin disease (blisters, sores, lumps). These formations are called 'saint maidens', both the mythological characters, and the illness. A similar plot and such direct identification are not found in any of the neighboring traditions (West and East Slavic, Lithuanian).

Here are some examples of similar Latvian spells:

> *Es svētājām meitām apņemu riņķi apkārt ar adatu, – svētas meitas vidū balts, visapkārt sarkans. Svētas meitas nīkones, iznīkst kā rīta rasa, kā vecs mēnesis, kā vecs pūpēdis.*
>
> 'I lead round a needle circle of saint maidens, – in the middle the saint maidens are white, around they are red. Saint maidens, wither; (they) will pine as morning dew, as old moon, as old puffball' (Трейланд:№ 220).

> *Mīļās svētās meitas, māsiņas, atraitītes, sieviņas, meitenītes, kas jūs esit, es jūs lūdzu, atstājat nost no to cilvēku N. kājas. Eita tur avota lejē, apakš alkšņa krūmiņa. Tur varat vērpt un šūt, rakstīt, ēķelēt. Es jūs lūdzu, esit tik žēlīgas, atstājas nost no tās Jāņa kājas.*

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‘Lovely saint maidens, sisters, get rid, women, widows[1], who are you, I ask you, lag behind feet of this person N. Go in a spring, downwards in an alder bush. There you should spin and sew, embroider, knit. I ask you, be so kind, lag behind feet of this Janis’ (Straubergs).

Svētās meitas, māsiņas, eita kārklienā jaktēties; ņemta to lūku banti, sasienat, lai tas kārklu kūlis nokalst tā kā Līzes augums.

‘Saint maidens, sisters, go on willows to play about, take a bast lace, fasten, let this willow sheaf dry up, as Lize’s body’ (Straubergs).

Latvian mythological tradition provides some versions of the origin of the ‘saint maidens’. According to one version, a ‘saint maiden’ is a soul of the young girl who has refused affinity to the furious German lord who has tortured her in a cellar. The unfortunate girl was shut up in a dungeon, was regretted by a passerby who has stretched to her in a window a yarn which she spun until her death. In other legends they are the souls of the maidens working (especially spinning) at night on Sunday and holidays for manufacturing their dowry. According to the third version, ‘saint maidens’ are the inhabitants of the castles which have falle under the earth, they leave on walk through ‘chimneys’ sticking out from under the earth (‘small red young ladies’) (Трейланд:137, footnote).

The functions of ‘saint maidens’, besides sending illnesses, are mainly related to spinning (when at night it is clearly heard how the beetles bore wood in a wall of a house, it is said that ‘saint maidens are spinning’, Трейланд:137, footnote), in this case the similar sounds foretell death to someone of the inhabitants of the house. ‘Saint maidens’ also help women to spin and kidnap their children (the changed child is whining and ugly and quite often turns to a birch log).

Place of their dwelling is first of all the space of the house: more often they live in cracks between logs, in the corners, in the base, in a fence, behind an oven (Straubergs). According to popular beliefs, ‘saint maidens’ live in home fire and if someone puts out the water there, they will spit their poison and will infect the person by sores (Šmits:29945). They also appear if someone spits into the fire (Šmits:29946). However, according to some beliefs, ‘saint maidens’ appear on the trees (especially on the birches) and can be seen only at night of summer solstice (Straubergs).

They are connected with the wood locus also because the mushrooms-tinder growing on stubs or rotten trees are called ‘saint maidens’ (it is considered that

[1] ‘Saint Maidens’ in spells can be called also ‘girls, young ladies, dames’, can be in singular and in plural, and also can be not called at all. In one spell against ‘Saint Maidens’ there is a male character (‘black little man’).

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the person who has touched them can become ill with a skin disease of the corresponding name). The same outgrowths on trees is also called 'the vomit of witches'. There are legends in which 'saint maidens' come from another world and graze 'dark blue cows', if one sees such a herd and throws a cloth above on the 'saint maidens', they can remain in this world (Šmits:29938).

'Saint maidens' are dangerous for health. Besides sending skin diseases they also entangle the hair of women in mats which are called 'manes of Laima or Mara'. If these mats are cut off, they will grow again, but in addition the eyes will become ill (Šmits, Vl, 32, 1). For treatment of skin abscesses fats (ointments, sour cream, grease) and ashes of the burned grasses and plants (for example, mountain ashes), and also tobacco were used. It was considered that water (wetting of ulcers) could aggravate the illness and if someone with these sores goes to a bath, it will be very difficult to get rid of them. It is strange, that despite an interdiction to wash in a bath to the persons with this illness, the motive of a bath is very popular in spells from 'saint maidens'. It will be told about it below.

Thus, we can see the contamination of 'saint maidens' with several characters of the lowest mythology. We will present these connections in the form of the table (in this table there are only those lines of characters which have crossings with an image of 'saint maidens'):

	appearance	origin	functions	location
Mermaids		unnatural and premature death	spinning, kidnapping	wood, trees, ponds
Laume[2]			spinning, substitution of children	wood, trees, ponds
Laima[3]				bath, threshold
Mara[4]			cattle pasture	bath
"bannik"			substitution of children who turn to a birch log	bath
gnomes	small growth			underground

[2] A character of Baltic lower mythology, connected with spinning and substitution of children, has zoomorphic or partially zoomorphic appearance (with chicken feet) and has distinctive features: long matted hair, protruding eyes and long breasts which are hanging down to the earth.

[3] Baltic goddess of destiny patronizing women (especially women in childbirth).

[4] Latvian goddess patronizing women, by her functions similar to Laima.

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As we can see in the table in spite of the fact that 'saint maidens' have similarity to many characters (first of all with mermaids and Laume though they differ from them by location), they do not coincide completely with any of them.

Some researchers of Latvian mythology argue that 'saint maidens' have not developed into a separate character and incorporate features of multiple other mythological beings. P. Shmits considers them to be a new phenomenon in the Latvian mythology as they are seldom mentioned in popular songs. Moreover both words in their name ('saint' and 'maiden') are loans, from Russian and German, respectively (Šmitas:28). However, in spells the image of 'saint maidens' is so impressive that it deserves special attention.

It is worth mentioning that spells reflect almost all mythological concepts of this character:

Kidnapping, spinning, connection with Laima:

Maza maza jumpraviņa, tā bij bērnu nesējiņa; piecas meitas jūriņā zīdu diegu šķeterē; pirtī zili dūmi kūp, cauri spiežās pasekņiem. Svētas meitas, jumpraviņas, atstāj nost no (vārda) miesām! Eitat dziļā jūrā, tur dancojat, plātaties; man atnāk Laimas māte, mīksta slota padusē, - tik mīksta kā zoses s..., tik šķīsta kā tītara s...

'The small, small young lady – here is she who carries children! Five maidens in the sea twist a silk thread; a dark blue smoke goes out of the bath, gets through the bottom row of beams! Saint maidens, young ladies, lag behind the flesh of (name of person)! Go away in the deep sea, dance there, disperse; the mother Laima comes to me, (she has) the soft bunch of bath under her arm, – it's as soft as the shit of goose, it's as liquid as the shit of turkey' (Трейланд:№ 211)

Spinning, connection with trees:

Svēta meita, svēta meita, svēta meita, ko tu vērp, ko tu šķeterē? Zīdu šķeterē melnā alkšņa kokā, apsē. Amen

'Saint maiden, saint maiden, saint maiden, why do you spin, why do you twist a thread? Twist a silk thread in a black alder tree, in an aspen. Amen' (Трейланд:№ 222).

Connection with a space of a house:

Mūc, mūc svētā, svētā meita, tav pieder istaba, tav pieder ugune, tav pieder ūdens tav pieder krāsne.

'Run, run, the saint maiden, the log hut belongs to you, the fire belongs to you, the water belongs to you, the stove belongs to you' (Šmits:29947).

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Connection with a bath, gnomes:

Redz, kur zili dūmi kūp pirtes pamatā, – mazs vīriņš, melna cepure galvā; redz, kur zili dūmi kūp pirtes pamatā, – melns vīriņš, melna cepure galvā; redz, kur zili dūmi kūp pirtes pamatā, – mazs vīriņš, melna cepure galvā.

'Look, where a dark blue smoke is going out of the bottom of the bath, – the little man, a black cap on his head; look, where a dark blue smoke is going out of the bottom of the bath, – the black little man, a black cap on his head; look, where a dark blue smoke is going out of the bottom of a bath, – the little man, a black cap on a head' (Трейланд:№ 209).

A small (black) man with a black cap on a head is probably the association with sores on a body, but simultaneously (in connection with a bath) black color can correspond to the coals from the burned tree. Compare the spell in which 'saint maidens' put out a burned stub:

Trīs jumpraviņas brien pa jūru, baltas zeķes, melnas kurpes, viņas uziet vienu liepas celmu, to viņas apspļauda, apdzēš, paliek melus kā bijis, – ar Dieva paligu sadzist.

'Three maidens wade sea, (they have) white stockings, black boots; they find one lime (burned) stub, they cover it with spittle, put out it, it remains black as it was, – it heals with the help of God' (Трейланд:№ 217).

Here the extinguishing of a burning (burned) stub which becomes black corresponds to the treatment of illness.

In general comparison of illnesses (especially skin illness, which appear in the form of inflammations) with fire is very often. Therefore extinguishing, blowing out the fire can associate with illness treatment, as here:

Trīs vērgu sievas nāk; viena uguni nes, otra uguni pūš, trešā uguni dzēš. Jūs svētas, svētas, svētas, eitat savu ceļu, jums še nekāda dzīve nav!...

'Three women-slaves come; one brings fire, another blows fire, the third extinguishes fire. You, saint, saint, saint, go your own way, here there is no life for you!...' (Трейланд:№ 219).

Mīļā svētā jumpraviņa, nāc ar abām rociņām, apglaudi, apspļaudi, appūš, nodzēš visas mana bērna vātītes projām…

'The lovely saint girl, come and stroke with both hands, cover with spittle, blow, clean all sores of my child…' (Šmits:29948).

Thus the symbolism of a bath and steam, arising everywhere in spells against 'saint maidens', becomes clear: a fire, which is associated with illness, is extinguished in a

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bath (is put out by water) and turns to steam, that is connected with the disappearance of the illness ('disappear as a smoke of a bath'). Thus the water is the hostile element to 'saint maidens' (compare also the belief that if the person pours out water after washing child in that place where 'saint maidens' live, they can attack the person, i.e. send illness, Šmits:29936). Nevertheless they (as well as many characters of spells) are standing in the sea and are sent to the sea:

> *Maza maza jumpraviņa, tā bij bērnu šautējiņa; piecas meitas jūriņā, zīdu diegu šķeterē; zila zaļa uguntiņa caur pīrtiņas paseķniti. Atstāj nost, svētā meita, no (vārda) miesām! Ej dziļā jūrā, uz dižas laivas vēlogiem, uz laumes vēmekļiem!*
>
> 'The small, small girl – here is she who flogs the children! Five maidens twist a silk thread in the sea; the blue, green spark (gets) through the bottom of a bath. Lag behind, the saint maiden, from the flesh of (name of person), go to the deep sea, on the sails of the big ship, on vomit of Laume!' (Трейланд:№ 210)

In this text 'the blue, green spark' is mentioned. It is necessary to tell that colours of 'saint maidens' in spells are various: 'in the middle they are white, around they are red', 'they have white stockings, black boots', they take steam in a bath by 'silver bunch, with gold leaflets'. The bright colours are probably associated with fire burning, and the dark ones – with extinguishing of fire:

> *Zili melni dūmi kūp Garām piertes pamatiem; Raibas kaķis dancoja Ābola kalnā; Skrej pa kalnu kalniem, Pa leju lejām, Pa jūdžu jūdzēm.*
>
> 'The dark blue black smoke go out by the steam from the bottom of a bath. The motley cat dances on an apple mountain. Run on valleys of valleys, on mountains of mountains' (Straubergs).

The occurrence of a motley cat dancing on an apple mountain in this spell must be noted. Probably, it is a certain association with flame (dancing) and smoke (motley). It is possible that the image of a cat is also connected with the bath (we can notice that Slavic 'bannik', spirit of the bath, could turn, in particular, to a cat, СД 1:138). The last spell is interesting also because the illness is sent simultaneously to the mountains and valleys (i.e. both up and down). The mountain as a stayig place of 'saint maidens' appears also in other spell:

> *Trīs māsiņas pirti kūra triju kalnu stārpiņa*
>
> 'Three sisters heated a bath between three mountains' (Трейланд:№ 215).

Having united all motives of these spells, we can build a semiotic model of the image of 'saint maidens', based on the main oppositions:

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Light–Darkness:		
bright colors: white, red, green, blue	– motley –	dark colors: dark blue, black
Top–Bottom:		
mountain	– trees – (alder tree, aspen, willows, stub)	sea, valley, bottom of a bath
Water–Fire:		
spring, sea	– steam, smoke, bath –	sparks, ashes, oven, hearth
One's own – Another (space):		
house (hut, table, bed, cradle, hearth)	– bath –	sea, mountains, wood

As we can see in this table, the image of 'saint maidens' is full of connotations connecting them not only with poles of oppositions, but also with their intermediate values. It must be noticed that we derive all this data only from texts of spells without other folkloric sources. Spells in this case give us the richest material, showing a full image of the character, which is identified with illness and at the same time an independent mythological being with rich associations.

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Latvian Fever Charms: Comparative Coordinates and Cases

Fever, being a symptom of various diseases, occupies one of the central places among maladies in folk medicine. Furthermore, in different traditions it has also acquired some level of anthropomorphization, allowing to speak of fever as a lower mythological being. Fever or multiple fevers are imagined as generic spirits, as a devil-like character – The Fever, as well as the beings described in the apocryphal texts. Therefore the understanding of a particular charm tradition requires two directions of comparison. First, as is common in charm studies, a cross-geographical historical analysis mapping the distribution of a particular charm type or its elements in time and space. Second, the cross-genre analysis summarizing features of fever in beliefs, customs and folktales. This study highlights some preliminary conclusions on both directions of research regarding Latvian fever charms.

The majority of the 514 recorded Latvian fever charms consists of palindromes or standard (Christian) formulae, equally characteristic also to other groups of healing charms. The analysis of healing practices not involving charming, as well as other narratives on fever, relates to the semantic field corresponding to charming traditions of other people. In Latvian folk beliefs fever acquires the following features: it is related to fear (serving both as a cause and a treatment of the fever), it is transmittable from one person to another, it is juxtaposed to water, especially cold and running one, it is anthropomorphic (and can thus be cheated), and it avoids places traditionally related to chthonic deities and the dead. Accordingly, typical ways of treatment are:

1) scaring the patient (6012[1], 6022, 6023, 6100, *et al.*);

2) cold water: swimming (6025), lying in fast-running water (6086), descending into a well (6080);

3) hiding: by pretending to be dead (6027), pretending to be someone else (6019), leaving clothes nearby the river (6028), or hiding under the water (6029), under logs in the garden (6031), in sheep droppings (6030), or sheep byre, while not responding to anyone (6090);

[1] Here and further – number of corresponding entry in Šmits (1940).

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4) giving or selling it to someone else (6035–36, 6039, 6074, 6075–76, 6083, 6099);

5) sleeping in netherworld-related places: in a graveyard during midday (6041) or night (6040), or in a coffin at the crossroads for three nights in a row (6052), or naked on the crossroads on Thursday evening (6073); just walking around the graveyard might also help (6080), or simply sleeping to the neck in the bones of the dead (6071);

6) consumption of disgusting substances: like smoke (e.g. of burning nails and corpses) or dirty liquids (6053, 6060, 6063, 6070), eating a spider with bread (6045), drinking one's own blood (6051), a black cat's blood (6052), own urine (6066), eating pork could also be related, because 'fever is afraid of pork like a Jew' (6056), eating a boiled frog (6057), or frog bone powder (6058), dried mice tails (6092), as well as medicine brewed from moss growing on tombstones (6079); wearing a sack with 27 spiders around the neck could also be helpful (6046), as well as wallowing in cow droppings (6089); dried frog and spider amulets are also encountered in Russian tradition (Ryan 2005:45).

A whole cluster of treatments is related to horses and riding: the sick must ride a stove poker to the crossroads, leave it there and return home by a different route, without looking back (6048), also riding a broom might help (6049, 6076, 6095), as well as sleeping in a dead horse's ribs (6050), drinking medicine brewed from the grass that has grown through a dead horse's skull (6055); this skull can also be worn on the head (6072). Curiously, in beliefs involving direct speech quotation, the fever often addresses his victim as a horse. As such, it is also related to nightmares (Lat.: *lietuvēni*), which are lower mythological beings too, literally riding their victims during their sleep.

Another cluster of treatments revolves around the rowan tree. One method of healing is running around the rowan tree and biting it (6043). Four entries in fever-charm index in the Archives of Latvian Folklore prescribe 'taking a piece of rowan tree, cutting 9 crosses on it, tying it with a tread with 9 knots, and wearing it around the neck for 9 days. When fever strikes, the piece of wood must be cast into fire with these words: "let the 9 devils burn in the flames of hell"' (type 9a[2]). Three entries combine rowan tree, riding and transmission: 'one must ride to the crossroads on a rowan tree stick cut on St. John's day, drop it there and say: "he who sees this stick first, let him keep the fever"' (type 9e).

The appearance of fever is also characterized by several folk beliefs: it comes from the forest (6014, 6015); sometimes it appears as a voice: answer-

[2] Here and further: a reference to charm-type index at Archives of Latvian Folklore.

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ing it means becoming ill; fever is related to the devil (6018), it may act as a devil (6019), or make an appearance as a devil or an exquisite gentleman (6027, 6053). The latter is also a common image of the folk devil in Latvian vernacular views. One treatment also mentions fever as 'nine devils' (6034). 'In old times fever used to walk around as a grey pig or appear as a water bubble; the one that recognized it and said something, became ill' (6020). Fever may also appear as a ball of wool: the one who touches it becomes ill (6021). A certain charm against fever also mentions the following appearance: 'Three balls roll over the mountain: one red, another black and yet another white. Roll, roll, I will meet you – first the red one, next the black one, then the white one. Pater-noster... x3' (type 7b).

A longer description of fever and its features was also published in one of 19th-century Latvian periodicals (see Zariņu Jānis 1892). Here verbal intercourse is named as the main cause of fever: one can catch fever by addressing someone on the road or responding to someone. Sometimes the sick would behave loudly on purpose in order to get attention and be spoken to. Fever could also wonder around in the shape of a strange man, a wolf or another animal; when spoken to, it would disappear, and the speaker fall ill. Fever was believed to be especially active in fasting days, therefore even neighbours and acquaintances refrained from speaking to each other. Curiously, it was also believed that one and the same fever could possess several people, though not at the same time, but only in turns. So, if fever strikes every other day – it is shared by two persons, every third day – by three persons, etc. Persons that share the same fever can be recognized by the similarity of their nightmares. A particular magical practice involved writing the following on the doors: 'Fever, do not enter, X (name of the man) is not at home today'. The latter is an international practice also mentioned in Scandinavian and Czech (Orth 1987:1467), as well as Eastern-Slavic sources (Ryan 2005:46).

Folktales too present some additional descriptions of fever. It can appear as a whirlwind (LPT 15[3]) and be brought by the devil (Ibid.); the treatment may involve spending a night in a graveyard (LPT 15; 25), hiding under moss (LPT 16), sleeping in a dead cow's bones (LPT 30), or drinking a mixture of 9 vodkas (LPT 23). In several folktales fever refers to his victim as a horse or a mare (LPT 16; 17; 23). Fever may come as two persons (LPT 19; 33), as well as a lone rider (LPT 22), just a voice from somewhere (LPT 26), an exquisite gentleman (LPT 28; 31), or a bubble in the porridge (LPT 33; 37).

[3] Here and further – reference to Šmits' (1925–1937) edition of Latvian legends and folktales, numbers in section of folktales on diseases.

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In Russian tradition fever is depicted as a single or multiple characters, and referred to by different names, e.g. *трясовица*, *тресея*, *лихорадка*, *трасся*, *трасюха*, *кумоха*, etc. (Власова 2008:497). All these words are feminine in gender and indicate that the demon is thought to be female (Ryan 2005:38). Ryan also suggests that the original demon seems to have been forgotten and replaced by (usually) twelve or seven, ten, nineteen, forty, or seventy seven evil women who are further identified as Herod's daughters, or in some cases Herod's sisters (Ryan 2005:43). Often the fever charms in this case are vernacular prayers to St. Sisinnius, St. Michael or Archangel Michael. 'The *triasavitsy* are variously described in popular icons as a young woman dressed in white without griddles and with unbound hair, or sometimes as naked but in different colours, or they may be hairy old women with hooked noses' (Ryan 2005:44).

One Latvian charm also mentions seventy seven fevers: 'Kneeling at this place, before the sunrise I cast off my seventy seven fevers. In the name of...' (type 8b). Elsewhere, fever appears in relation to female figures in the most frequently recorded charm: 'Go, you coward fever, to the bridge over the great river, look down at the water, five maidens are dancing there on pieces of ice; there you looked, there you stay. The maidens disappear, the ice melts, the coward fever perishes. Pater-noster...' (type 5, 67 records). At the same time, almost precise similarities in wording suggest a very late distribution of this charm from a single written source: it was published in the first academic collection of Latvian charms in 1881. Strangely the same can not be said about the six other charms published in this collection (see Треиландь 1881). 'Fever shakes the greybeard; if fever will not leave him, the devil will take the greybeard' (type 6a) is recorded only six times. The aforementioned charm involving the burning of a rowan-tree stick (type 9a) is recorded 4 times. The suggestion that the sick one 'should go into the field for nine mornings in a row and greet everyone encountered – if someone answers, they should say: "let my fever stay with you"' (type 9d) is recorded three times. However, there are 17 unpublished charms featuring the transmission of fever to a person or animal (type 10b). The only other charm that might strongly suggest recent distribution from the same collection is a particular Abracadabra charm variation: 'Take seven crusts of bread, on each one write the line from the text below, and eat one a day, for seven days:

Abaraka
Abrak
Abra
Abr
Ab
A'

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(types 11 a and b, 25 records; also type 12, 18 records). Furthermore, there are 119 other Abracadabra charms for curing fever (type 13, subtypes a–e), featuring 'Abrakadabra' instead of the shorter 'Abraka', and advising wearing the text as an amulet, eating it (written) on paper, burning, or casting in flowing water. This charm type is spread all across the corpus of Latvian charms with very minor variations, and also recorded in relation to fever lore in Russia (Власова 2008:497) and Lithuania (Vaitkevičiene 2008:560). The sixth charm in the Archives published in 1881 has three copies: 'When you notice fever approaching, take a ribbon woven from nine threads and bind it around a stick, saying: "Fever, fever, I say to you: leave me! Go shake grey stones, go shake stumps in the forest!" Say it three times, tying a knot each time. When it is done, say: "he who unbinds you, let him be bound himself! Amen, Amen, Amen". Do not look back on the way home' (type 10a). In addition there are several charms featuring the transmission of fever to an inanimate object, for example: 'The fever is so bad; you, fever, shall burn in hell, you shall be tied to a stone or a tree; the Holy Trinity commands it' (type 3a, 4 records). A similar transmission of fever to a stone in the garden of Eli (type 7c, 2 records), or simply a stone to be thrown into the sea (type 7b), is mentioned. There is a semantically rich Latvian fever charm, similar to the charm against scald or burn: 'Ice in the well, ice in the ditch; water is heating beyond the doorstep, mutton is boiling in the cauldron, firewood of ice below, a blue goat lies stretched in the rye; be dragged to hell, be dragged to hell with all the pain! A red maiden wades into the sea, white stick in her hand' (type 9c, 2 records). Tying knots while performing healing magic is also mentioned in Lithuanian healing charms (Vaitkevičiene 2008:844). The widespread Sator or Satar formulae are also shared with Lithuanians (type 20, 9 records). It is interesting to note that, while there is a type of Latvian fever charms mentioning 77 fevers, a rather similar (also one of a kind) Lithuanian charm features 99 agues (Vaitkevičiene 2008:743). As such it can be related to the German charms recorded already in the 12th century, for example 'Dies ist das wahre Christi Blut, das sei für 99 Fieber gut' ('This is the true blood of Christ, it is for 99 fevers good'), formula performed while pouring water (Orth 1983:1463). The number seventy seven in the context of performing healing magic near flowing water (cf. Latvian beliefs), is also encountered in charms recorded in Polesia region, the borderlands of Russia, Belorussia and Ukraine. For example:

> Шухля, е ў вас се́мдесят симь,
> Забира́й мою зовсим,
> А кому нэдоста́тки –
> Забира́итэ мои тра́тки.

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This motif of feeding 77 fevers is also encountered in Belorussian, Ukrainian and South-Russian charms (Агапкина et al. 2003:303), as well as in Germanic sources (Orth 1983:1464). Some Ukrainian and Russian charms also suggest the origin/source of fever to be in the water (Агапкина et al. 2003:304). A similar fever charm, relating a female figure to water, is also recorded in Estonia (in Seto dialect):

> Valgõ mõr'z'a, illoz mõr'za,
> maka lätte perä all,
> Ku timä lättest ar juusk ussõ,
> timä valgõp ni iluzop.
>
> *'White bride, handsome bride*
> *sleeps behind the edge of the spring,*
> *If serpents run away from her spring,*
> *[then] she is more whiter and more handsome'* (AES, MT 216, 27[4])

The same relation between healing fever and flowing water (as well as crossroads, as in Latvian beliefs) is also widespread in Germanic tradition (Orth 1983:1466).

Conclusion

Should the aforementioned Ryan's hypothesis on fever as an original demonic figure in Slavic tradition, later replaced by multiple (female) characters in vernacular Christianity, be right, the Latvian charms and other related texts could support the reconstruction of this figure on common Indo-European (Balto-Slavic) level. Due to the tabooed nature of disease/demonic names in folk religion, such analysis is hardly possible within the comparative linguistic framework; therefore it has to be done by reconstructing the semantics related to this figure. Leaving aside the binary opposition of hot-cold as a polygenetic feature rising from the nature of the illness, the comparison of charms shows a stable motif of flowing water. Latvian texts also suggest a relation of fever to horses, introducing the figure of a demonic rider – probably, also a shapeshifter. Fever's similarities to the folk devil might be attributed to a common feature among the more recent layers of vernacular religions: under the influence of Christianity multiple lower mythological beings were merged into this one character. At the same time, only a few charms in Latvian tradition feature multiple fevers, therefore suggesting it to be a unique figure, instead of a class of mythological beings.

[4] Number in the collection of Estonian Folklore Archives.

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Visual Representations of Charms against Fever on Russian Icons

The tradition of Russian Orthodox iconography has a subject of 'Archangel Michael (Sachiel[1], Raphael) defeating seven (or twelve) fevers'. This subject type has already been noticed by researchers. For instance, William Ryan wrote on it in 'The Bathhouse at Midnight: An Historical Survey of Magic and Divination in Russia' (Ryan 1999; Russian translation: Райан 2006:355–356); see also his article 'Ancient Demons and Russian Fevers' (Ryan 2006). This image type has been also described by Ivan Benchev in 'Иконы ангелов. Образы небесных посланников' (Russian translation: Бенчев 2005; original in Bulgarian). Our presently forthcoming article deals with the subject of 'Archangel Michael defeating the fevers' in Russian art, its origins, history and social functioning. This report is meant to be a brief presentation of the article's content (the full text will be published in Russian).

We are aware of 16 icons of this type, the earliest of which dates back to the second quarter of the 17th century; the majority, however, are from the 19th century. Throughout the 1870s and 1880s, 'such icons could be seen in abundance. They are believed to cure fever which occurs among commoners more frequently than any other disease' (Голышев 1882:1). According to the late-19th- and early-20th-century written records, they were present in many churches of Vladimir, Tver, Moscow and Oryol provinces.

The composition of most icons has clear vertical/horizontal divisions. The top part of the image usually shows sacred characters: Jesus on clouds above, St. Sisinnius and Archangel Michael below (paired symmetrically). The bottom part shows either a cave or a water surface housing the fevers (personified as maidens) in the number of 7 or 12. The fevers are typically placed below St. Sisinnius, and Michael is shown holding in his raised right hand a rod (or a spear, or a trident) which crosses the picture space diagonally and is striking one of the fevers.

In some icons, the size of figures represents the hierarchy of the characters: thus, the archangel is the largest; St. Sisinnius is smaller than the archangel,

[1] An apocryphal archangel found neither in the Bible nor in canonical lists of archangels of any confession. In early modern West, linked to esoteric teachings; in Russia, appears mostly in charms against fever. – *Translator's note.*

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yet larger than the fevers; finally, the fevers are smaller than St. Sisinnius and can even be tiny, almost doll-like. However, the proportion has not always been consistent. Thus, a image made in 1795 has St. Sisinnius nearly as large as Sachiel (*В свете горнем* 2004:51, № 65), and in the image from the Tikhvin Church in Kholuy St. Sisinnius is even larger than Michael (Голышев 1872).

Within the common iconographic pattern, some details vary. For instance, the archangel may be identified as Michael, Sachiel or Raphael. He is most frequently carrying a rod, a spear or a trident (to strike the fevers with), yet some images have him carrying a bundle of birch twigs. He may be wearing either a peplos with a himation or armour.

Some icons bear strikingly particular features. For instance, two icons dating from 1831 and 1855 respectively, contain an additional scene showing martyrdom of Sisinnius, Bishop of Cyzicus[2] (Комашко 2004:192, № 145; Косцова, Побединская 1990:129, № 137). A late 18th-century image represents the fevers as bodies piled one over another (Бенчев 2005:107), which may be a conflation of the fever-fighting subject with the one of War in Heaven, that of Archangel Michael throwing Satan and his angels down. The landscape in a 1795 icon lacks stylized ledges yet shows a river in which, under the water surface, the silhouettes of the fevers can be seen. (*В свете горнем* 2004:51, № 65); this image may have been influenced by the pattern of the Baptism of Our Lord where a river flowing downwards and some pagan underwater spirits do sometimes appear.

Many icons introduce some additional characters, such as St. Photina, St. Maro, St. Mennas etc. There is a 19th-century icon which, along with St. Sisinnius and the archangel, shows a large group of characters: Job, Venerable John of the Cave[3], Venerable Paphnutius of Borovsk, St. Varus the Martyr, St. Julietta carrying St. Quiricus (Бенчев 2005:117).

Throughout the 17th to 19th centuries icons had been subject to considerable change caused by the shift in their social semantics – from the late medieval canon to the mass-trade icons of early modern era. While in 17th- and 18th-century icons the fevers are represented as demons of unspecified gender, at

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[2] A saint not found in Western tradition; his martyrdom is believed to have occurred about 300 AD. Perhaps just another version of St. Sisinnius the deacon known in the West. The link between either of Sisinnii and the Sisinnius of fever charms is problematic. The 'fever-charm' Sininnius could be derived from either of them, from another St. Sisinnius (the member of the trio including Martyrius and Alexander), or be a vague conflation of all. – *Translator's note*.

[3] A 12th-century Kievan saint. – *Translator's note.*

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least some of 19th-century images clearly show them as girls or young women. The canonical landscape of stylized ledges becomes superseded by more realistically painted sceneries.

The general tendency in the 19th century is partial deviation from the earlier Orthodox canon and adopting more and more traits of realistic Western-type art. While the background and figures of the fevers change dramatically, depictions of St. Sisinnius and Archangel Michael are remarkably stable. The different rate at which the change was occurring in different parts of an image makes the contrast between its lower and upper part even more evident.

The fevers are typically placed within a cave or a water space like a river or the sea. The cave can sometimes be black, implying Hell, or bearing wave-like features reminiscent of the sea. There are two known types of fever personifications: as demons and as young women or girls. As demons, they may have beast-like faces, bat wings or hair standing on end. Their most remarkable feature is their varied and non-human colour, which is paralleled both by their descriptions in charm texts and by the Western traditions of iconography showing demons of different colours.

In 19th-century images, the fevers sometimes look like women who are either bathing or making a kind of round dance. The supposed nudity of the female fevers posed a difficult problem before an artist: a charm could just say that they were nude, but visual representation of their nudity was a different matter. The problem was getting even worse as the fevers were gradually losing their demonic nature and starting to look more and more human-like. On the one hand, the audience should be able to identify their femininity, on the other hand, an icon painter would not be allowed to show their breasts or pubic areas. To overcome this challenge, artists would employ a variety of tricks, such as employing side-views, cutting the lower part of the image, omitting the breasts or covering them with the figure's hands, omitting the genitals completely. Some images give little indication of femininity beyond hairstyles, faces and prominent bellies.

This type of icon, by its subject and dramatis personae, apparently matches Russian charms against fever.[4] A typical fever charm contains a sequence of motifs that can be seen in the painted composition: St. Sisinnius sitting on the Mount of Sinai; 7 (or 12) fevers coming out of the sea; St. Sisinnius praying; Our Lord sending an archangel (Michael, Sachiel or Raphael); the archangel asking the fevers where they are going and what their names are; each fever naming herself and the ailments she inflicts upon people; the archangel strik-

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[4] On East Slavic charms against fever, see (Агапкина 2010), with bibliography.

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ing or wounding the fevers; the fevers swearing not to enter the house where the name of the archangel is uttered.

An icon would render the narrative themes of the charm into visual language. Beyond apparent parallels between the texts and the painted images, there are, however, multiple differences. One is that the painted version typically shows Michael striking the fevers with a rod. Charms, however, mention interrogating the fevers, thrashing or wounding them, expelling them back to Hell, etc., but never rod-striking. It is quite natural, since the symbolic purpose of a charm is not exactly destroying the fevers, but rather exorcising them in order not to let them come back. The artists who had created this image type seem to have designed it after a very popular type of Michael as a warrior, holding a spear or a rod. (Compare, for instance, such icons as *Чудо в Хонех* [*The Miracle at Chonae*] or *Архангел Михаил – воевода* [*Archangel Michael the Stratigus*]). This caused two major inconsistencies somewhat contributing to the particular nature of such images: first, Michael's warlike gesture is intended against the non-threatening figures of naked women; secondly, the fevers are multiple, while the rod can apparently strike a single figure only. Another apparent discrepancy is that between the dynamic gesture of the archangel and the static poses of the fevers who do not seem to be bothered in the least by the fact that one of them is being stabbed by the spear. The rod/spear is sometimes pointing at one of the figures' pubis. Some icons have it pointing at her rear while she is leaning forward, which may represent a kind of artistic humour.

Besides true icons, the subject of the twelve fevers occurs in illuminated manuscripts. There are two examples of which we are aware, though one of them has not survived and is known from a description only. The surviving picture is reproduced in 'The History of Russian Literature' edited by Yevgeny Anichkov[5]. The picture is inscribed below: 'Двенадцать трясовиц: Трясовица, Медия, Гарустоша, Коркуша, Коркодия, Желтодия, Люмия, Секудия, Пухлия, Чемия, Немодия, Невия перед св. Сисинием' – 'The Twelve Shivers [i. e. fevers]: Tryasovitsa, Media, Garustosha, Korkusha, Korkodia, Zheltodia, Lumia, Sekudia, Pukhlia, Chemia, Nemodia, Nevia'[6](Аничков 1908, the plate between pp. 40 and 41).

[5] Its black-and-white photocopies can be found in a recently re-printed edition (Аничков 2002:99), in Ryan's book (Райан 2006:335) and in his article 'Ancient Demons and Russian Fevers' published in Warburg Institute Colloquia, Vol. 7 (Ryan 2006:50).

[6] The names are of different semantic transparency, sometimes apparent:

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Another picture of such type is said to have been in a mid-18th-century manuscript codex bought by Nikolay Vinogradov at a flea market in Kostroma, in summer 1907.[7] It features the point at which St. Sisinius has already pleaded the four Evangels and Michael the Archistratigus for help, they have taken birches and Michael is moving downwards. The further text of the charm describes thrashing the fevers severely, after which they disclose their names, yet this part of the story is absent in the picture. What is actually depicted seems to be rather peaceful – at least, nobody is being beaten or tormented.

While the charm discloses the list of the fever's names by making the fevers pronounce them in turn, the picture has five of them inscribed above and the remaining seven can be identified with the help of either the explanation below the picture or from the charm itself. Nine of the figures (the picture shows in fact eleven) are arranged in two lines, five in the front line and four behind them. The five of the front line are wearing long colourful robes girdled just below the breasts. The four of the back line do not look like clothed at all, but their figures are concealed behind a hill and some trees up to their upper chests. All of them have long hair flowing over their shoulders.

The first of the fevers, identified as Tryasovitsa (Shivery), is 'holding a small red human figure enveloped by flames'(Виноградов 1909/2:7). This fever is wearing a scarlet dress and nursing the little figure as a baby. The little person is, however, bearded and making an obviously non-childish gesture – raising his arms with elbows bent, which is presumably an expression of horror. The artist seems to have illustrated Shivery's speech: 'Яко пещь распаляет дровами, тако я распаляю у человека все члены и кости' – 'As a stove burns firewood,

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Tryasovitsa (also a general name for fever) is 'Shivery'; Pukhlia is 'Swelly'; the names ending in *–dia* have *–deya* in other versions, which clearly means '(feminine) agent', so Zheltodia and Nemodia are 'Yellowner' and 'Dumbener'. The other version of the picture, however, has Nelyudia ('non-human') rather than Nemodia, perhaps due to the resemblance between the manuscript Cyrillic letters *мо* and *лю.* Sekudia may be derived from Russian *seku* 'I flog', though a conflation with Latin *secunda* is also possible. Korkusha is a sound imitation of coughing. Korkodia, therefore, is 'the one making people cough', yet there is also a pun on 'crocodile' (*korkodil* in medieval or dialectal Russian, the word vaguely associated with demons). Media, given the phonetic variation, may be a reference to Medea, a child-killing character of classical mythology (the original Sisinius charm of Greek tradition was intended against a child-killing demon, rather than fever). For the same reason, Lumia may be a distorted *Lamia. – Translator's note.*

[7] The manuscript, however, has been lost and is only known from Vinogradov's description.

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so I burn human limbs and bones' (Виноградов 1909/2:7). The bearded man in flames must be the person affected by the fever's 'fire'.

The above case seems to be the only one in Russian tradition where a charm's influence upon an icon can be immediately seen. One may wonder what was the mechanism of such influence. Three explanations can be offered that are in fact complementary:

1. Fever charms of this type are closely related to non-canonical prayers or other apocrypha. They are abundant in written records where they bear a variety of scribal identifications such as *молитва* ('prayer'), *сказание* ('legend'), *видение* ('vision') and even *повесть* (formerly, a general term for any narrative story, including secular ones; in today's Russian, 'novella').

2. While the official-church leaders tended to include fever charms in prohibitory indexes, such texts were nonetheless widespread and could be found within a special ordinary 'against fever', performed by priests despite being not formally recognized by the Church (Лахтин 1912:44–46, № 501; 1660s to 1670s). So people could quite naturally have perceived them as proper prayers and not charms or sorcery.

3. Fever charms were tightly linked to popular beliefs where fever was also personified as one or more female demons. In this case, popular demonology was complementary to that of official Church, and vice versa. An icon served as a visual representation of a fever charm and was perceived by its owner as an amulet against fever.

Thus, the emergence of this particular image type was rooted in a combination of three factors: 1. the narrative and thrilling nature of the text, not unlike apocryphal narration; 2. widespread perception of such texts as of seemingly proper prayers and even parts of a church ordinary against fever; 3. matches between the charms' imagery and that of popular beliefs about fevers.

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Gospels and Knots: Healing Fever in Romanian Manuscript Charms

This paper continues my previous research on Romanian manuscript charms meant to heal fever and focuses on three charm-types, equally preserved in Romanian manuscripts written in the 18–19th centuries. If the prior research was dedicated to charms which used the history of the decapitation of John the Baptist as a paradigmatic story for healing fever (Timotin 2009a) or which assigned the function of curing fever to Saint Photeine and to the forty martyrs of Sebasta (Timotin 2009b), this paper discusses charms that rely on biblical fragments and describe rituals based on tying knots.

1. Three charms, all written by scribes whose identity is unknown, are based on fragments taken from the Gospels: two are preserved in manuscripts of the Romanian Academy Library (ms 3218, fol. 62v; ms. 1118, fol. 40r); the third one is preserved in the Library of the Sextil Puşcariu Institute of Linguistics and Literary History in Cluj (ms 34, fols. 168r–v).

The charm against fever preserved in Cluj was written around 1750; his scribe seems to have been highly interested in magical texts and edifying apocrypha, as prove the other texts he wrote: another charm against fever, a charm against plague, an exorcism of an aquatic demon, a sermon on the resurrection of the dead, various apocrypha such as ‘The Lamentation of Adam’ and ‘The Legend of Twelve Fridays’. The scribe of the charm preserved in ms. 3218 was also concerned with religious texts that could be assigned specific functions: apart from the charm against fever, he also noted down psalms that had to be recited in various needs, a hymn to Saint Nicolas, and songs for different services. The scribe of ms. 1118 wrote the charm against fever close to medical recipes meant to heal the same disease.

All the three charms refer to Saint Peter’s mother-in-law, whose suffering from fever was miraculously relived by Christ (Mathew 8:14–15; Mark 1:29–32; Luke 4:38–39). The text preserved in ms. 3218 conflates two distinct evangelic fragments: it begins with the first verse of John and continues with the description of the miraculous healing of Peter’s mother-in-law. By using the first verse of John, the Romanian charm becomes part of a long and stable tradition of the European magic literature which assigned various functions to the formula ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the

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Word was God' (cf., for example, Lecouteux 1996: s.v. *Évangile de Saint Jean*; Delatte 1957:107; Berthoin-Mathieu 1996:60; Corradini Bozzi 1997:237, 245; Ohrt 1921:48; Lecouteux, Marcq 1990:107–112). The Romanian text uses this line twice, but the second time it slightly modifies it, despite its authority.

The analysis will inquire how familiar these fragments from the Gospels were to ordinary people and will discuss whether the phenomenon of modifying such texts is current in the magic literature.

2. The Gospels play an important part in a another Romanian manuscript charm type against fever, illustrated by two manuscripts written in the first half of the 19th century and preserved in the Romanian Academy Library (ms. 5706, fols. 57v; ms. 2980, fols. 3r–v). The scribes were inhabitants of Moldavia and were most probably laymen, who wrote the charms against fever close to other charms and medical recipes.

The position of the evangelic fragments in these charms is different from the part they play in the charm-type described above. Here they no longer make part of the charms, but their lecture is still compulsory for the two charms described here to become effective.

According to the two texts, the success of the healing of fever depends on the confection of a thread with twelve knots which is said to have acquired therapeutic virtues thanks to its consecration in the church. In order to obtain such a helpful instrument, it is necessary to assist at the evening mass on Maundy Thursday, during which the priest reads twelve fragments taken from the Gospels that describe the Passion of Christ, and to tie a knot on a thread at the end of the lecture of each fragment. This knot, if untied when the patient suffers from fever, will provide him with the expected healing. It is interesting to notice that the Passion of Christ, which serves here as a background for a magic ritual, is referred to as a paradigmatic history for healing fever in other magic traditions (Roper 2005:183). The analysis will try to establish the reason of this similarity, also it will discuss the significance of the Maundy Thursday in the Romanian beliefs, and define the charmer's opinion regarding the power of the knots he ties in parallel to the religious service (cf. Eliade 1952:145–148).

3. The same manuscripts (ms. 5706, fol. 57v; 2980, fol. 3v) preserve two other charms against fever that are quite similar to the second charm-type presented here insofar as they also describe a ritual of tying knots which are said to have the power to heal fever and other diseases. There are also other differences between this charm-type and the one presented previously: this time, the object that should be consecrated is not necessarily a thread, but it can also be a clothing of the traditional cos-

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tume (cf. Mihail 1978:156); the number of knots becomes three; the ritual has no longer any connection with the religious service, but with the song of frogs.

The analysis will focus on the words that are to be pronounced in order to consecrate the belt active against fever, describe the traditional beliefs related to frogs and their connection to the ritual presented in the charms, debate on their similitude with the Latin and other contemporary beliefs (Pliny, *Historia naturalis*, XXXII, 38; Candrea 1928:143–146; Muşlea, Bârlea, 1970:284; Coman 1996:96).

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Translation of Russian 17th-Century Charms into English: Problems of Approach

What is presented in this paper began somewhat a year ago when, at one of the RSUH conferences, Andrey Toporkov said that he would like to have some charms of the Olonets Codex translated into English. I found this challenge immensely interesting and grasped at his idea.

The Olonets Codex (OC) is a collection of charms, dating back to the early 17th century; it was discovered in 1876 by L.L. Malinovsky, yet never published completely until 2010 when an edition by A. Toporkov appeared (Топорков 2010). All of my translations are based on the latter edition. The original manuscript is in the Manuscript Department of the RAS Library in St. Petersburg (designation *21.9.10. Сев. 636*).

Translating magical texts from early modern Russian into today's English presents some challenge – a genre challenge, not in the last. While the English academic tradition identifies any magical text as 'charm', the Russian one tends to distinguish between *заговор* and *заклинание.* While the difference between the two is often vague and some scholars use these words interchangeably, it is commonly agreed that a true *заговор* is an invocation addressed either to a disease itself (as a personification) or to a mediator such as Christ, Mary, a saint, a demon, etc. and contains a certain sequence of formulae unfolded in a narrative manner. A simpler combination of words or sounds (such as an 'abracadabra') is a *заклинание.* (The closest English equivalent would be 'magic words', though the actual folklore texts in English are not referred to as such – this naming implies 'magical' texts existing in modern fiction only.) The English 'word squares', by the Russian standard, are *заклинания*. Yet between the two extreme points, that is, a lengthy narration full of mythological details and a text consisting of several nonsensical words, there is a continuity of variants whose genre classification is less apparent.

In fact, the overwhelming majority of the OC texts are true *заговоры*. But the scribe would occasionally supply the texts with his own genre definitions. There are three of them appearing in the OC: 1) *заговор*; 2) *молитва*; 3) *слова*. In fact, the difference between the three is mostly the matter of self-

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description. As there are no other variants, I have to translate *заговор* as 'charm'; and it is no problem translating *молитва* literally as 'prayer' because charms in the form of apocryphal prayers (and identified as such) are very much the same all over the world. The only difficulty is the third category, *слова* meaning literally 'words'. I chose to render it as 'spells'.

The genre or theme identifications in the headlines belong to Andrey Toporkov, the editor of the original Russian texts. To distinguish them from the main text, I put them into brackets.

The problem of method is also essential. While the academic tradition (especially in the English-speaking countries) generally holds that, the more literal translation is, the better it is, it is not always the case. Charms are the texts functioning in a well-established – and limited – context of practical magical use, many of them even contain manuals on actions accompanying the recitation. Outside this context, they cannot be understood properly. And the process of performance is often tightly linked to the repetitive formulae in the text: for instance, a reference to three personages may indicate triple votive offering, or be linked to three ritual gestures, etc. So the formulaic nature of charms is not a merely stylistic matter, but rather their indispensable substance.

While some shorter formulae of the OC charms meet nice ready parallels in contemporary English charms (for instance, *as... so, say upon, may the blood cease, a far country, three good brothers strolled on a road* etc.)[1], and it would have been unwise to ignore them, this kind of help is very limited, Russian charms being much longer and more detailed than English ones. Anyone who tries to compare Russian charms with corresponding English texts will immediately see how much of colourful and often obscure imagery the former contain. This imagery tends to be of a non-Christian or at least syncretic nature. Nothing like that is observable in English charms which are typically short and consist of a very narrow range of Christian-themed formulae. This may be the result of the rigid Protestant ideology of early modern era, which was aimed at eradicating all non-orthodox practices.

So, the OC texts largely require working out more special solutions. Ideally, a translator of charms should combine literality with the recognizable formulaic pattern; yet sometimes it is not possible. Besides, literality does not always mean semantic accuracy. For instance, *человек* (commonly translated as 'man') has sometimes to be translated as 'people', because it is used as a collective noun. A pre-Norman Anglo-Saxon would have little trouble to understand it, because the Old English 'man' meant 'anybody'; but in modern Eng-

[1] The examples are cited from (Forbes 1971:293–316).

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lish it means ‘a male person’ and its use may be highly misleading. One should also distinguish meaningful details from those which are only rhetoric convention: thus, names of herbs should be translated accurately, yet the frequent formula *красное солнце* needs not to be translated literally as ‘red sun’, but rather, ‘bright sun’, being very little of a colour epithet. In the latter case, translating the formula literally would be too exotic.

These steps bring us, not unexpectedly, to the notion of artistic translation, and the next step is posing the following question: Should the original style be preserved? For a modern native reader, the specific ‘folklore’ style of the texts is very much apparent. Some words or details of grammar do not exist in Russian any more, some are of distinctly dialectal nature. Even the orthography of the OC charms is different from today’s standard Russian. Due to these particular traits, the style of the charm texts is not infrequently perceived as inherently ‘artistic’, so Russian readers tend naturally to maintain that preserving the style of folklore texts is the main task of the translator. I disagree with this idea, and here I am going to give my reasons why. First of all, there is no deliberate ‘folklore style’ in the Olonets charms. Their authors did not perceive the texts as archaic or containing dialectal words, since they wrote in the language they spoke daily. Their purpose was not to create an artistic impression, but to contact otherworldly beings. To render the texts in the way we would translate a Modernist poet would be highly confusing.

Secondly, any attempt at preserving non-standard words in the texts would ruin the factual accuracy of the translation, because in many cases non-standard Russian and non-standard English vocabularies do not overlap. A translator of literary works can solve this problem through substitution, putting stylistically loaded words into other parts of the text than in the original or replacing some denotations with the ones for which more expressive words exist in English, but it would be hardly a suitable solution for a scholarly translation of folklore texts, since the task of the latter is giving the English reader as much accurate information as possible. The content of the texts should not be sacrificed even partly in this case. So, while preserving the syntax is reasonable, preserving stylistically loaded vocabulary is not. However, the texts must be readable, so paying some attention to the style is necessary – but only to the extent of keeping good English.

To make the point clear: my translation, though it shares some characteristics of an artistic translation, should not be seen as ‘semi-artistic’ in the way of Nabokov’s translation of *Eugene Onegin*, but as purely functional. Its task is helping any English-speaking person who does comparative folklore studies to grasp the genre parallels existing in different cultures. At the same time, it

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is expected to give an English-speaking scholar detailed information on syncretic beliefs in early modern Russia, not surviving elsewhere.

The basic principles of my translation are following:

1. Latinisms or words sounding too bookish and/or modern, are avoided if possible.

2. Repetitive formulae (either in vocabulary or syntax) are preserved as fully as possible; however, the uniformity of word choice throughout the whole text or even the whole collection of texts cannot be preserved perfectly, because multiple meanings of a single word do not always overlap in Russian and in English (see above).

3. Prayer formulae are rendered into the actual English prayer formulae where possible.

4. 'Thou' and 'thy' are used where 2nd person singular forms are found originally, in order to make the number of personages clear.

For illustration, I have chosen two of my translations, which I am presenting below along with some comments.

> No. 4, Folio 3^v–4^r. (Against bleeding):
>
> In the sea, in the ocean there is a blue sea, in that sea of ocean there is an *olater* stone, on the stone there sits a fair maiden of two heads, she is sewing up and charming up the wounds of [*the name of the person*], the servant of God, arrow wounds, spear wounds, scimitar wounds, axe wounds, knife wounds, charming up the 74 veins and sewing up all with red silk thread. And her needle has no eye. And she has dropped her needle into the blue sea, into the ocean. A raven comes, catches the needle by its thread and brings it away to the Mount of Sinai. As the needle is lost in the mountains and seen no more, so may the blood of [*the name of the person*], the servant of God, of any wound, be seen no more.
> Say this prayer to anyone old and aged or young and whole, on any day and at any hour.

In this relatively short text a variety of characteristic traits can be seen. The first phrase – 'In the sea, in the ocean there is a blue sea' – seeming to be almost nonsensical, represents, however, a specific kind of folklore syntax well known in English ballads:

> But she hadna pu'd a rose, a rose,
> A double rose, but barely three
> 'Duke of Perth's Three Daughters' (Kinloch 1827:212).

Despite the monstrosity of the two-headed girl, one should not be confused by the adjective *красная* (literally, 'red') – when referring to women, it is a

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common formulaic epithet well matching 'fair'. The formulaic name of the stone (appearing in various texts as *олатер, алатырь, латарь*, etc.) is, however, more obscure. It is present almost exclusively in charms, and word's origin and meaning are unclear. An urban legend, still popular among scholars, claims that it should be understood as 'amber'. However, it is never referred to as part of jewellery; and, being defined in many texts as 'white', it is almost certainly identical to the 'marble stone' on which the characters of English charms typically sit. Can the word possibly be a misheard *altar*? Given that many charms were transmitted through non-Russian speakers (the Olonets Codex contains 9 texts in Karelian, which bear much resemblance to the Russian ones), this is not improbable. In a case like that, there are good reasons to leave the word untranslated.

A specific problem is the scribal lapse in '74 veins'. The Russian text has '74 жилы' (*жила* in colloquial Russian is either 'vein' or 'sinew', yet the context related to bleeding allows us to render the word safely as 'veins'). Normally, charms of this type refer to 72 veins, joints or organs, so this must be a scribal mistake. While 72 is of clear numerological significance ($2^3 \times 3^2$), 74 is not. The scribe could probably have copied the text from another written source where the difference between the Cyrillic *в* (standing for 2) and *д* (standing for 4) was blurred. By the 16th century, majuscule (uncial) writing had died out in Russia and was replaced either by minuscule (semi-uncial) or secretary-hand. This particular kind of scribal mistake could well have emerged from a preceding manuscript, given the fact that the secretary-hand writing of the 17th-century North Russia was particularly tricky. I, however, chose to preserve this particular mistake, giving it a necessary comment.

Yet another mistake in this text, if not corrected, would ruin its sense hopelessly: the original text has *лечит* ('heals') instead of some other word, possibly *ловит* ('catches'). While the whole charm is healing, the particular phrase about 'healing the needle by its thread' makes no sense, so in the translation it must be amended.

> No. 90, Folio 32r (Against babies' rupture):
>
> There is a holy sea of ocean, amid the sea of ocean there a white stone, on the white stone there are two rowan trees, two leafy ones, between the two leafy rowans there is a gold cot, in the gold cot there is a babe lying, ruptured by a rupture. And thou, rupture, don't rupture this babe, [*the name of the baby*], the servant of God, rupture, thou rupture, mare's bone and dog's bone, and go, rupture, away from this babe [*the name of the baby*] to the dark woods, beyond moors and marshes impassable. Our merciful Lord Saviour and His Mother the Ever-Virgin, and St. Nicolas, and all saints, cling,

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our lords, to these good words and relieve the babe from the evil, from the rupture.
Say this thrice upon seed oil or tar.

The charm is intended against *грызь* that might be either hernia or any sharp pain. The original charm is based on word play between the noun *грызь* and the verb *грызть* ('to gnaw'). The only possible variant of translation is 'rupture', though it does not render the pun perfectly. The white stone and the rowans strikingly parallel English charms of the same era: a 'marble stone' is present in many English texts (for examples, see Forbes 1971) and rowan traditionally bore magic connotation (for the use of rowan, see, for instance Wright 1912). Though English sources mention it as a magic item only, rather than part of the mythical landscape, there are other Russian charms where the function of rowan is quite consistent with the English tradition.

The 'cot' in this charm is what is more correctly called a bassinet, a swinging bed for babies (presumably suspended between the rowan trees in a hammock manner). The Russian words *колыбель* (in this text) or its synonym *люлька* are commonly mistranslated as 'cradle' which is confusing, since an English-speaking person would imagine a rolling cradle rather than a suspended thing. Yet the most accurate 'bassinet' has an improbable French flavour, so I preferred 'cot' which is more neutral.

'Seed oil' must be hempseed oil used as food or a cosmetic. Saying the charm upon substances like oil or tar implies that the baby is subsequently anointed with them, so the link between the text and the corresponding actions is quite clear.

My personal experience shows that, while translating folklore texts is hardly an easy task, it is still not impossible. Any translation begins in fact with comparative work: the translator seeks some points where the two cultural systems bear similarities. Our challenge is to encourage the further exploration of these parallels.

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Benediction of a New Nave in the Klimantović's Glagolitic Miscellany from the Year 1512

An increasing influx of the vernacular into the Croatian liturgical texts and translations occurred in the 12th and the 13th centuries, and it became the dominant idiom in the religion and private legal documents of the 14th c. The translation of rituals was left to individuals due to the lack of unification in the Glagolitic area.

This miscellany (MS) was a handbook for Glagolitic priests and a guide for the common people. MS records several benedictions, all in Church Slavonic (CS) language: of the table, new home, various kinds of food, lentils on St. Barbara's etc. and of a new boat as the sea was one of the most significant factors of life on the Adriatic coast. This article describes the lexis of the *Benediction of a New Nave* (209v–215v).

The same prayer form is used in benedictions of homes and in one benediction of a new nave. *Benediction of a New Nave* can be found in Klimantović's MSS I and II, in Tkon MS, and in Kožičić's Missal.

Alterations in liturgy introduced the dramatic element and the elongation of prayers and rites. Here necessary allegories were brought in:

– a reminder of the duty to pray humbly;

– an interpretation of the Old Testament through the Gospels, allusions to God's benedictions which resulted in salvation (of Noah, St. Peter, St. Paul, etc.);

– admonitions about the coming of God's glory (see Adam 1983:36).

Water appears as a motif of benediction in this MS a number of times, especially in the act of christening by water in the Gospel of Mark. Other rituals are also mentioned, such as sprinkling with water, incense-burning and bread-cutting. All of these allude to the main Church sacraments and further the people's faith.

The benediction (means of communication between the priest and the people), here takes the established form: note of a solemn mass, with established formulas evoking God's glory, might, power, greatness and mercy, and including a prayer for God's protection of the boat. The same content is repeated a number of times in order to leave a stronger impression. They are made symbolic through connections and comparisons with Biblical motifs, thus making

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them more powerful and impressive for the listener – by using the motif of Noah's arc and the mercy God showed him, the benediction creates an impression that this occasion will bring forth an analogous show of God's mercy and the same protection for the blessed boat.

Since the language of the ancient Christian community was colloquial Aramaic – the gospel of Matthew was originally written in it (Adam 1993:71) – subsequent Christian communities introduced vernaculars into their liturgy in order to make it closer to the people – a practice evident in this benediction. It was the easiest way of achieving an understanding between the priest and the people, i.e. between success and the rite's fruition. The practice was particularly promoted by the Franciscans. A lexical analysis will show that the text, even though a ritual one, had been rejuvenated, whereas its Biblical parts and prayer forms remained traditional. This is most noticeable in the lexis (but also in morphology and syntax).

Inside the Proto-Slavic (PS) layer we can distinguish, as the most numerous, domestic words and loanwords from the Gothic and Latin. The collective PS noun *bratiê* 'brothers' is one of 34 gender nouns well-substantiated in canonical texts (Cejtlin 1986:79). PS noun *črêda*, archaic shepherd's term, appears in the part which retells the Gospel of Luke (Skok 1971:337). The same text is noted in the Zograf Gospel. Countable nouns, e.g. 'flock', 'herd', 'group', are here used meaning 'tribe'. Slovník records a confirmation of the meaning 'flock' in *Supr*, and its meaning 'group' in: *Zogr Mar As Ostr Nik Bes*. *Vino* 'wine', a loanword from the Gothic, is explained by IE linguistic devices deriving from the root *vi-ti* with a *-no* suffix (Skok 1973:594–595) and has not been recorded in Slovník. This is because its derivatives developed more within canonical texts, while the noun *vino* mostly lost its original meaning (Cejtiln 1986:164). Rječnik confirms *vino* in: *M; Br; Ps; Rit; CPar Pet Oxf Bč Tk Grš Žg; FgMih Epist Lab$_2$; RegBen*. Another Gothic noun, *mečь*, well-substantiated in canonical texts, is connected by some to the Greek, i.e. Latin, noun for 'battle' or 'sword', 'knife' or 'sabre' (Skok 1972:346). *Carь*, a loanword from Latin mediated through the Gothic (Got. *kaisar* < Lat. *Caesar*), is, according to Cejtlin (just like *cêsarь* and *kesar*) considered a Graecism in canonical texts (Cejtlin 1986:167). In Croatian Glagolitic texts, as well as in the *Benediction*, the noun *cesarь* generally means 'ruler', while the noun *kesarь* is used when mentioning the roman emperor. Slovník does not mention the noun *kesarь*. Auty (1976:174) believes the Balkan-Latin loanword *kr'stь* 'cross' to be a loanword from Old High German (OHG) of the Moravian period, while Skok disagrees (1972:197). Slovník confirms this lexeme in: *Zogr Mar As Sav Ostr Euch Bes VitGlag Cloz Pochv Sam Fris*.

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Within dialectal PS layers we can distinguish South-Slavic dialectisms (Ohridisms and Preslavisms), and Turkic as loanwords and West-Slavic dialectisms – Moravisms. Ohridisms keep Moravisms well, and the latter are considered the oldest lexical layer of CS. They are predictably well-substantiated in this benediction written in CS. Among the Ohridisms, found in canonical texts as well, the adjective *veli* is singled out. It is polysemic ('ripe', 'endless', 'divine', 'lavish', 'strong'; 'heavy', 'deep', etc.) just like its PS synonym *velikъ* ('ample in girth', 'of great importance'; 'powerful') (Ivanova-Mirčeva 1984:493). Both Slovník and Rječnik list a number of its examples. The great frequency of the noun *dos(ь)toênie* 'permission', 'heritage', 'dignity', 'merit' has also been confirmed in canonical texts. Most Paleoslavists classify the noun *životь* 'life' as a Moravism (L'vov 1965, Šimić 2008). However, its West-Slavic origin is questionable. Because it is present today in contemporary Croatian we can consider it South-Slavic and classify it as an Ohridism (Mihaljević 2007, Gălăbov 1973:50). Slovník confirms this lexeme in: *Zogr Mar As Sav Ostr Kij Cloz Sin Lob Par Pog Bon Euch Christ Slepč Šiš Eug VencNov Supr Bes Ben Pochv Vit*. A lexical archaism – the Ohridism *radi* 'for' – is confirmed in Slovník.

Among Preslavisms, this benediction contains the adjective *velikь* 'big'. Slovník confirms it in: *Ev Supr Psalt Euch Cloz Prag Eug Apost Apoc Parim Const Nom Vit Ryl Gl Clem Ben Fris CMLab Bes*. Rječnik confirms it in almost all manuscripts. Besides the Ohridism *život*, Preslavism *žitie* is recorded and well-substantiated in Slovník. The noun *pečalь* 'sadness', 'concern', 'sorrow', with 3 synonyms in the MS, is also recorded. The verb *poslušati* from the verbal noun *pos'luhь* went through a semantic shift. It no longer means 'witness' but 'obedience'.

Among Turkic, the noun *k'niga* 'book' is a direct translation from the Greek. Its polysemy had been present for a while reaching South-Slavic languages as well. The word was brought to the Balkans by Turco-Bulgarians, who had borrowed it from the Chinese between the 2nd and the 3rd centuries AD (L'vov 1973:218). In the time of Cyril and Methodius the words *buky*, *kъnigy*, and *pismę* were not synonymous. Naturally, the meanings could be interchanged depending on the context (Marti 1994:34). It is well-substantiated in Slovník.

It's assumed that the West-Slavic dialectisms (Moravisms), entered CS already in Moravia and Pannonia. The verb *v'niti* 'enter' is also well-substantiated in Slovník. Rječnik records evidence of *vsemogi*, *vsemogućь* 'almighty' in: *M; Br; Ps; RitAc Segn; CPar Ivan Pet Oxf Ac Tk Žg; FgVind Lond Nov; Amul*. As with the noun *zakonь*, words of the same root in canoni-

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cal texts have numerous forms and meanings: 'one who makes laws and regulations'; 'one who breaks the law, order, or rules set by God'; 'one who knows laws well (i.e. who can interpret them by heart)' (Cejtlin 1986:237). Mareš and Ribarova consider this word a Czechism, while Reinhart and L'vov reject this view (Ribarova 2005:369). The noun *korabalь,* with its forms *korabь* and *korabьnikъ,* is considered a PS loanword from Greek (Cejtlin 1986:38) as well as the original Slavic word (Etymologický 1996:337). Slovník records evidence for this lexeme in: *Ev Psalt Supr Chil Apost Apoc Parim Clem Const Vit*. As an adverb of continuous action, Moravian suffix *-kratь*: *trik'ratь* 'three times' is recorded. Slovník notes evidence of this lexeme in: *Ev Psalt SinSluž Euch Supr Apost Apoe CanMis Const Bonif VencNik Bes*. Another archaism, the adjective *nebes'ki* 'heavenly', is very well recorded in Slovník (*nebesьskъ*): *Zogr Mar Sav Ostr Deč Kij Euch Cloz Supr FragZogr Christ Hilf Ochr Slepč Mak Rumj Lob Par Parim Gl CanMis Praef Hom Nom CMLab*. The verb *otpustiti* is rather frequent and it has many meanings: 'to allow', 'to leave', 'to forgive', 'to miss', and in the greatest number of cases it means 'to release', 'to let go' (Cejtlin 1986:111). The noun *popь* 'priest', according to Auty, can be found in almost all Moravian texts (Auty 1976:171). The majority of Slavists consider this noun a loanword from OHG, and a minority, from the Greek *papâs*. Balkan and Western Latin tradition was familiar with the Vulgar Latin word *praesbyter,* hence *popь* could not have arrived via Balkan Latin; it was introduced by the Holy Brothers in Moravia (Skok 1973:8–9). Its more significant presence is expected in canonical texts: *SinSluž Euch Supr Apost Služ Clem Consl Meth Sud Nom Bonif Venc VencNik Bes Ben Zap As*. The verb *prositi* 'to beg' appears as a partial synonym of the verb *moliti*. It is well-substantiated in Slovník. Jagić considers the Czechism *račiti* 'to want' to be a South-Slavism as well (Reinhart 1980:47). Slovník notes its confirmation in: *Euch Fris Supr CanMis Const Meth Sud Nom Venc VencNik Bes Ben CMNov*.

Among the loanwords of a later period in CS we can distinguish Graecisms, Semitisms, Latinisms and Italianisms. The noun *anĵel* 'angel' is a Graecism which entered the Slavic system via Latin and it is well-substantiated in Slovník. Rječnik confirms evidence of *anĵelь* in: *M; Br; Ps; Rit; C; FgGrš Vind Lond Vb Hom Nicod; Amul*. The noun *dêmunь* 'devil', 'demun' is a direct Graecism. Slovník records its evidence in: *Psalt Euch Apoc Parim Vit et in cant. Pog Bon Lob Par* (*demunъ – Hval*). The noun *evanĵelie* 'Gospel' entered the Slavic system via Latin, too. Slovník records it in: *Ev Euch Cloz Supr FragHilf Apost Apoc Eug Vind Pochv Napis Const Meth Chrabr Sud Nom Progl Venc Bes Vit*. The noun *kitь* 'whale' is a true,

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direct Graecism. Slovník records it in: *Supr Parim Gl VencNik et in Cant, Pog Bon Lob Par*. Slovnik records the noun *tam'ênь* 'incense' a Pseudo-Graecism that entered the Slavic system via Latin, in: *Hval Gl*; for lexemes *thŷmianъ, timianъ, tьmianъ, thimianъ, thьmianъ* in: *Zogr Mar As Ostr Nik Supr Apoc Parim Gl Const Nom Bes*. The interj. *amenь* is a frequent Semitism, sometimes listed as a Graecism. However, Greek was only one of the intermediary languages. It is well documented in Slovník. Rječnik records evidence of *amenь* in: *M; Br; Rit; C; FgSpal Kuk Pass Eust Apost; RegBen*. Latinism *misa* meaning 'central act of liturgy' has been considered a Latinism since the 13th century (Mihaljević 2007:265), while Auty considers it to be a word from OHG (Auty 1976:172). Slovník records it once in *CanMis* and twice in *Venc*. The loanword *ol'tarь* 'altar', which is considered an archaism by Bauerova (2001), is very old, but it was borrowed later, during the spread of Christianity, and is well-substantiated in Slovník. Budja derives the etymology of the Latinism *prud'no* 'profitably' from an unconfirmed noun **ud* meaning 'damage' (Budja 2004:4). Slovník does not confirm it, and there is no evidence for the adjective *solêmanь* 'solemn', which also appears only once here.

Italianisms, as more recent loanwords, which entered the system directly through spoken language, are not found in Slovník. The noun *berašь* is more frequent than the Italian *verso* ('verse') along other betacisms in Glagolitic texts, as a more recent loanword. Italianism *perikulь* 'danger' (Ital. *pericolo*), appears once as does *tem'pešta* (Ital. *tempesta*). Similarly, one finds its incomplete synonym *fur'tuna* meaning 'storm', 'sea storm'; 'destiny' and the verb *navigati* (Ital. *navigare*) meaning 'to sail'. We can notice they all substituted CS lexemes and we can thus consider them as a younger lexis.

Among Croatisms that stress the rejuvenation of language, meaning younger Croatian lexical innovations, we find the frequently found pronoun *ča* 'what' (CS *čьto*), adverb *vaz'da* 'always' (CS *vъsьgda*), synonym of the adverb *prisno* in CS texts and the linking word *ako* 'if' (CS *aĉe*).

The synonyms *korabalь*, *navь*, *plavь* and *drivo* are singled out because they most clearly indicate the imperative to become closer to the people and to make the ritual text comprehensible. They are all used fairly evenly in the text. The exception is the noun *korabalь*, a part of the oldest lexical layer, which is reserved for Noah's arc, i.e. Biblical content. Its synonyms, the noun *navь* (Ital. *nave*) 'boat', 'ship with three masts', the noun *plavь* 'a boat made out of a hollowed tree trunk' (CS *plavati*) and the noun *drivo* 'wooden boat or ship', a translation from Ital. *legno*, all of them younger lexemes not confirmed in Slovník, are interchanged in the text as partial synonyms.

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We conclude that the *Benediction of a New Nave* contains a lot of lexical archaisms, which corresponds with its content. However, we also note a linguistic rejuvenation resulting from an attempt to reach out to the people using the vernacular, even though we are here dealing with a strict form of the ritual. Additionally, the influences from Greek, Latin and Italian confirm that the Mediterranean environment also left a trace in people's speech and thus in the writer's freedom to depart from the original CS lexemes when transcribing the text, substituting them accordingly.

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Aspect in Middle Hittite Charms

1. The object of this paper is the use of aspect in two genres of Middle Hittite discourse which constitute the nearest Hittite equivalents to charms – curses and benedictions.

The Hittite aspectual system consists of two forms – unmarked perfective and imperfective most commonly (but not exclusively) marked by the suffix *-ške/a-*. The imperfective aspect in Hittite demonstrates a cross-linguistically standard array of functions – durative, iterative, habitual, distributive (Сидельцев 1999; Hoffner, Melchert 2008:317–322).

2. I will attempt to show that in addresses to gods (benedictions and curses) aspect is pragmatically conditioned: aspect marks connotation of the corresponding discourse fragment. The imperfective aspect codes positive connotation, the perfective one – negative.

2.1. As this aspectual coding in many cases coincides with lexical coding of positive and negative connotations, I will list lexical means of expressing connotation. Positive connotation is marked by such words as *aššu* 'good; good word(s); good things/weal'; *nahšarattan* 'fearsomeness', *huišwatar* 'life', *hattulatar* 'health', *innarawatar* 'strength', *mayandatar* 'youth(ful vigour)', *miyatar* 'growth', MU$^{HI.A}$ GÍD.DA 'longevity', IGI$^{HI.A}$ *uškiyawar* 'the eyes ability to see / eyesight", GÚ-*tar šarā appātar* 'holding up of the neck (= stamina$^{?}$, pride$^{?}$)', DINGIR^{MEŠ} *aššiyawar/ aššiyatar* 'gods' love', DINGIR^{MEŠ} *miu(m)mar* 'gods' gentleness', ZI-*naš duškarattan* 'joy of the soul', DUMU.NITA^{MEŠ} 'sons', DUMU.MUNUS^{MEŠ} 'daughters', *hāššuš hanzaššuš* 'grand- and great grandchildren', GU$_4$ UDU 'cattle and sheep', KASKAL 'way', ^{GIŠ}TUKUL *parā neantan* 'weapon pointed forward', *tarhuili* ^{GIŠ}*tūri* 'victorious spear', etc.

Negative connotation of a discourse fragment is normally marked by *idālu* 'evil'; *ēšhar* 'blood'; *harātar* 'offence'; *idālu hinkan* 'evil death/plague'; *hullātar* 'infliction, defeat'; (*idālu-*) *hūrtāi-* '(evil) curse'; *idālu inan* 'evil illness' (with various concrete specifications, e.g. *tapašša-* 'fever'); *karpi-* 'wrath'; (*idālu-) kardimiyatt-* 'anger'; *kāšt-* 'hunger'; *kūrur* 'hostility'; KUR.KUR $^{LÚ.MEŠ}$KÚR 'enemy countries'; (*idālu-*) (*alwanzena-*) *lāla-* '(evil) (sorcerous) tongue'; *lingāi-* 'perjury'; *paprātar* 'defilement'; *šāuar* 'fierceness/rage'; *idālu* (*hatuga*) *uttar* 'evil (terrible) word'; *wašdul* 'sin/despoliation', etc.

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Discourse fragments with lexically marked positive connotation denote positive situations, discourse fragments with lexically marked negative connotation – negative ones. In the rest of the paper I will operate with positive and negative situations for brevity sake.

2.2. As for aspectual marking of positive and negative contexts, imperfective aspect codes positive connotation, perfective – negative one. Most probative in this respect are minimal pairs with the most common verb *pai-* 'give': in positive situations this verb is employed as imperfective *pi-ške/a-*, in negative situations – as unmarked perfective *pai-*. Thus in Hittite addresses to gods two forms are contrasted in imperative: imperfective *aššu pi-ške/a-* 'give good things (regularly/periodically/for a long time)' (EXAMPLE 1) vs. perfective *idālu pai-* 'give evil things (once)' (EXAMPLE 2):

EXAMPLE 1. (CTH 483.I.A) KUB 15.34+ Vs. II 40
nu=šma[*š* ***pi***]***škitten*** TI-*tar haddulātar* MU$^{HI.A}$ GÍD.DA **EG[IR**$^{?}$**.UD**^{MI}]
give-2 PL IMPER IMPERF
'[G]ive them (i.e. the king and the queen) life, health, longevity in/for the f[uture]'.

EXAMPLE 2. (CTH 376.C) KUB 24.4+ Rs. 15
idālu=ma hinkan [*idālawaš*$^{?}$/ *apēdaš*$^{?}$] *utney*[*aš* ***p*]*iš<te>n***
give-2 PL IMPER PERF
'[G]ive terrible death/ plaque [to the bad$^{??}$/ those$^{??}$] countries'.

2.3. The fact that it is the genre of addresses to gods that is significant is demonstrated by EXAMPLE 3 where imperfective and perfective forms do not correlate with connotation: both positive and negative situations are coded with perfective forms:

EXAMPLE 3. (CTH 324.1.A) KUB 17.10 Rs. IV 25-26
1. GU$_4$ AMAR=*ŠU penništa* #
2. ^{D}*Telipinuš=a* LUGAL MUNUS.LUGAL <KI.MIN> #
3. *nu=uš=za huišwanni innarawani* **EGIR.UD**^{MI} *kappuwēt* #
'(1) "The cow looked after her calf, (2) Telipinu <looked after> the king and queen. (3) He provided them in respect to life, vigour for the future'.

2.4. The reason for the use of aspect in addresses to gods described in section 2.2. should be pragmatics.

The use of perfective aspect in negative situations is conditioned by the wish to limit the contact with a negative substance: if the imperfective aspect was used, it would denote not only continuous/habitual *removing* of evil things, but it would also automatically imply continuous/habitual *pres-*

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ence of evil things. This discourse strategy must have been understood as undesirable in addresses to gods – one of the few discourse genres which influence reality directly. Thus the perfective aspect was employed because it does not have this implication.

The use of the imperfective aspect in positive situations was conditioned by the wish to generate *multiple* positive situations or multiple participants of these situations: with this aspectual marking good things should appear regularly or in big numbers. Notice that I deliberately restrain from determining which exactly imperfective meaning is at work in discourse fragment coding positive situations.

3. The fact that many positive situations are coded with imperfective -*ške*-forms testifies that positive situations by themselves automatically cause the use of the imperfective aspect.

There is only one verb (*gulš*- 'determine') which is employed in the perfective aspect in positive situations with very concrete localization in time. Such a concrete localization is not attested for other verbs in benedictions.

Thus I would suppose that the positive situation causes the use of imperfective aspect by itself.

Unfortunately, explanatory force of this supposition is not absolute. Positive situations by themselves bring about the use of the imperfective aspect only in slightly more than half of the attested cases (52%). Even this statistics clearly sets aspectual marking of positive situations apart from the aspectual marking of negative situations because in negative situations the imperfective aspect is employed only in 19 (8%) of all the attestations. In 209 contexts (92%) perfective forms are used.

In any case, I would like to increase the explanatory force of the correlation between positive situations and the use of the imperfective aspect by introducing some additional parameters regulating the use of imperfective forms in positive situations: (1) formulaic character of the benediction: the more common and stable/fixed the benediction is, the more probable is the use of the imperfective aspect; (2) lack of negative implications.

Now I will consider the parameters in more detail.

3.1. The first parameter, formulaic character, consists in the the fact in the majority of cases Hittite benedictions (positive situations in addresses to gods) are represented by only two fixed expressions: (1) *pi-ške-* 'give' + enumeration of positive substances, (2) *memi-ške-* (or synonymous *tar-ške-*) 'speak' in the formula 'speak good things/well about the king and queen before the gods'. EXAMPLEs 1 and 4 illustrate the point:

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EXAMPLE 1. (CTH 483.I.A) KUB 15.34+ Vs. II 40
nu=šma[*š* ***pi***]***škitten*** TI-*tar haddulātar* MU[HI.A] GÍD.DA **EG[IR**[?]**.UD*****[MI]***]
give-2 PL IMPER IMPERF
'[G]ive them (i.e. the king and the queen) life, health, longevity in/for the f[uture]'.

EXAMPLE 4. (CTH 330.1.T) KBo 15.31+ Vs. I 13`-15`
ŠA [D]IM [URU]*Kul*[*i*]*wišna* DINGIR.LÚ[MEŠ]*-eš š*[*umeš*] *n=ašta parnaš išhūš ANA* [D]IM [URU]*Ku*[*liwišna piran*] *āššu* ***memi*****[*****š*****]*****kiten***
speak-2 PL IMPER IMPERF
'Y[ou,] male deities of the Stormgod of Kul[i]wišna, spe[a]k well (about) the lords of the house [before] the Stormgod of Ku[liwišna]'.

3.2. The second parameter, lack of negative implication in a positive situation, considerably limits the number of positive situations coded by imperfectives. Thus in EXAMPLE 5 'take into a good place' implies previous negative situation: the object was in a bad position/place:

EXAMPLE 5. (CTH 374.2.A) KUB 36.75+ Rs. III 11'–12'
nu=mu SIG_5*-uwanti pēdi QAT*[*I=YA*] ***ēp***
take-2 SG IMPER PERF
'Take me by m[y] han[d] into a good place'.

This implication is rather explicit in some cases:

EXAMPLE 6. (CTH 371) KBo 7.28+ Vs. 13`-14`
1. *n=an=kan i*[*dālauwaz*] [*d*]*ā* #
2. [*n*]*=an āššawi pēdi* ***tittanut*** #
put-2 SG IMPER PERF
'(1) [T]ake him out of the e[vil] (2) and p[u]t him into a good place'.

Positive situations with negative implications were consistently marked by perfective forms, i.e. positive situations with negative implications were understood as more negative than positive.

4. It follows from the discussion in section 3 that aspectual marking of positive situations has centre and periphery. Prototypical positive situations marked by imperfective forms attest both parameters from section 3, peripheral positive situations marked by imperfective forms attest only one parameter. Prototypical situations are marked by imperfective aspect in the majority of cases, peripheral ones – much less regularly.

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The centre is constituted by the use of the imperfective aspect in formulas describing positive situations without negative implications. *Piške-* 'give' and *memiške-/tarške-* 'speak' – these three verbs are employed in imperfective – *ške*-forms in 69% of positive situations. They also demonstrate the most consistent use of the imperfective aspect: they attest imperfective aspect to code positive situations in 89% of all the uses whereas other verbs demonstrate imperfective forms in positive situations only in 30% of all cases. With them simple forms clearly dominate (70%) in positive situations.

The rest of uses of imperfectives to code positive situations represent the periphery demonstrating only part of the core characteristics. Two groups are most notable: (1)-imperfective *-ške*-forms in non-formulaic benedictions which describe the positive situation without negative implications. Here belong 8 verbs which are employed only in 31% of all positive situations (*hulališke-* 'surround', *mieške-/maiške-/miišša-* 'grow', *haške-* 'bear', *uppiške-* 'send', *wemiške-* 'find', *wewak-* 'ask'). If we combine this and the core group, the statistics will be very impressive: 80% of all (not only formulaic) positive situations without negative implications are marked with imperfective forms. (2) Formulaic positive situations with *pai-* 'give' are marked with the imperfective even if there is a negative implication in the positive situation. In this case the parameter [+formulaic] is stronger than [+negative] implication.

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How Miina Huovinen's Incantations Are Structured

My paper focusses on the charm repertoire of a single charmer. My case study is the well-known male *tietäjä* – the highest level ritual specialist who possessed specialized knowledge and know-how that others did not – from Hietajärvi, Archangel Karelia. His name is Miina Huovinen. He was born in 1837 and died in 1914. Miina was a merry, playful, helpful, hospitable, and talkative man. He did not hesitate to discuss his charms with the collectors. While healing his patients in the sauna, he was, however, firm, loud, and even scary. He was self-confident and performed his duties 'with sincerely' (Haavio 1948:86–90).

Laura Stark points out that compared to ordinary people the knowledge of the tietäjä was more detailed and his powers greater. The tietäjä was seen to have the ability to staunch flow of blood from a wound, to force thieves to return stolen goods, to send predatory animals back home to the witches who had originally summoned them to attack (Stark 2006:177–180, 287). The majority of the tietäjä's duties were linked to healing and prevention of illness. The aspiring tietäjä did not merely learn illness diagnostics, charms and magic procedures by heart. Instead, he/she internalised and organised knowledge concerning the other world, its denizens and topography as an organic part of his world view. Miina learned his skills primarily from his grandmother. Being a tietäjä appears to have been passed down generations within some families in Archangel Karelia. However, being chosen for the job required a certain aptitude (Siikala 2002:80–84; Tarkka 2005:84). The tietäjä's innate qualities – strong or hard *luonto*-force, strong nerves, the ability to enter altered states of consciousness, and the ability to make their bodily boundaries hard, among others, – were even more important than learned knowledge (Siikala 2002:84; Stark 2006:262–269, 287–314).

The present paper deals with Miina Huovinen's healing charms. I try to show which kinds of elements construct the healing charms of Miina Huovinen.

Miina Huovinen's repertoire

At least 117 charms have been recorded from Miina Huovinen in the years 1872–1911. These charms have been published in the series 'Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot' ('Ancient Poems of the Finnish People'; abbr.: SKVR) in

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1921[1]. The vast majority of Miina's charms are connected to healing. Miina also specialised in ensuring prosperity in cattle husbandry and hunting. Miina also knew charms dealing with love, relationships, good luck, and marital harmony. He functioned as a *patvaska*, a marriage spokesman and master of ceremonies skilled in magic. In the role of patvaska, Miina protected the bridal couple against possible injury from hostile or envious persons. Miina served as a patvaska at numerous weddings per year. However, only a few charms recited at weddings have been recorded from him. It should be noted that Miina could also do harm: he knew charms for severing relationships. Besides above-mentioned charms, Miina mastered charms dealing with other areas of life such as weather-working and house-building (see Haavio 1948:88–90; Siikala 1983:62–63; Siikala 2002:81–82).

Miina's healing charms, a total number of 47, include charms for healing injuries and wounds from stone (SKVR I_4 51), tree (SKVR I_4 92, 92a, 93), iron (SKVR I_4 153, 153a), and fire (SKVR I_4 266, 267), charms for staunching flow of blood (SKVR I_4 152, 154), for healing snakebites (SKVR I_4 398, 398a, 398b, 398c, 399), illnesses from water (SKVR I_4 1011, 1014, 1027, 1062), abscesses (SKVR I_4 566, 567, 567a, 1073). Miina knew charms for healing illnesses caused by *kalma*, which was the contagious, contaminating force of death (SKVR I_4 599, 599a, 599b, 599c; Stark 2002:46, 49). He also knew at least two charms dealing with well-being of children (SKVR I_4 661, 684). Miina Huovinen mastered healing charms of various length. The longest charm is composed of 103 lines whereas the shortest charm consists of only three lines. The majority of his healing charms are accompanied by varying descriptions of healing acts.

Miina Huovinen's healing charms have been recorded by five collectors. The majority of Miina's charms has been recorded by Sakari Jouhki who interviewed Miina several times over the period of more than ten years. For example, he recorded three charms for healing snakebites, the oldest one in 1904 (SKVR I_4 398b) and the last two in 1910–1911 (SKVR I_4 398c, 399), and four charms for healing illnesses caused by kalma in the years 1897–1911 (SKVR I_4 599, 599a, 599b, 599c).

Narrative and communicative episodes

My point of departure is that most of Miina Huovinen's healing charms are varying combinations of narrative and communicative episodes. I have di-

[1] References to my source texts begin with the acronym SKVR, followed by the volume and sub-volume number and the number of the text.

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vided Miina's narrative episodes into three groups which deal with the origin of the opponent, the origin of an instrument of healing, and actions of the speaker of the charm. Huovinen's communicative episodes can be divided into two groups based on who he communicates with. He calls to his aid divine helpers such as God, the Virgin Mary, the Water Mistress and the Sauna Maid. His charms also include demands for help addressed to mythical animal helpers such as an eagle, a swallow and a burbot-fish. The second group include the opponents, that is to say, all of those who have caused ailments, injuries and wounds. This group include fire, iron, kalma, the steam of sauna, actual animals, among others. In the sections which follow, I introduce above-mentioned episodes briefly.

In 15 charms Miina explains the birth of the opponent and the problem at hand at the beginning of the charm (SKVR I_4 153, 267, 398, 398a, 398b, 398c, 399 566, 567, 567a, 832, 832a, 832b, 832c, 1073). This means that he had the knowledge of opponents' true origins and essences. By means of this knowledge, he was able to control and dominate the opponent in question (Siikala 2002:86). In some cases, Miina describes at length the events and actions that finally caused the problem. Miina also names mythical actors who were involved with the birth of the opponent. For instance, in the charm for healing burns, Miina explains the birth of fire and burn in 74 lines (SKVR I_4 267). In five charms for healing injuries from snakebite, episodes telling of the origin of the snake take the form of questions and answers (SKVR I_4 398, 398a, 398b, 398c, 399). Also in these charms, Miina demonstrates his knowledge concerning the origin of his opponent.

Miina explains the origin of an instrument of healing only in three charms for healing wounds from tree branches (SKVR I_4 92, 92a, 93; Siikala 1983:73). In practice this means that Miina explains the origin of the ointment with which he soothes the pain in nine lines at the beginning of the charm. These episodes link up with episodes dealing with the opponents.

Finally, Miina describes what he does himself. This kind of episodes occur rarely, altogether in four charms (SKVR I_4 567, 567a, 599, 1073). In every case, Miina solves the problem at hand, that is to say, he heals. For example, in charms for healing abscesses, Miina describes how he pushes the abscess with his ring-finger (SKVR I_4 567, 567a, 1073). These episodes link up with episodes dealing with the opponents as well. It must be stressed that the speaker of the charm is also strongly present in communicative episodes. They include expressions such as 'I command', 'I have a black dog', 'Before I seek your mother'.

As noted earlier, Miina turns to divine helpers. However, Miina calls for help quite rarely. Requests for help occur, for example, in charms for healing

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illnesses caused by kalma (SKVR I_4 599a, 599b, 599c) and charms for stopping bleeding (SKVR I_4 152, 154). Only charms dealing with the steam of sauna are constructed almost entirely around the episodes invoking helpers (SKVR I_4 699, 699a, 699b, 699c). In charms recorded by Sakari Jouhki in 1904 and 1910–11, Miina turns to the Sauna Maid, God, the Virgin Mary and the swallow (SKVR I_4 699, 699a). Miina asks the last-mentioned assistants to bring ointments to soothe the pain. Miina describes in detail the ointment, its origin and powerfulness. A repeated emphasis on the ointment, especially its origin, can be found in Miina's healing charms.

In simplifying Miina's requests for help, they begin with naming the assistant followed by demands such as 'come here', 'bring something' and 'do something'. In many cases, Miina also explains the call for help in a few lines. It should be noted that Miina does not necessarily name his helper. For example in charm for healing illnesses caused by kalma, Miina orders the nameless helper to bring the patient's pain away (SKVR I_4 599). Miina may also ask his helper to bring here tools with which he can crush the opponent by himself. The tietäjä and the helper work in close connection with one another.

While communicating with his opponents, Miina Huovinen uses four strategies. He banishes, forbids, threatens, and, last but not least, demands the illness agent to restore the patient's health to its former state. I take a closer look at these strategies in the next section.

Orders addressed to the opponents

Commands addressed to various opponents can be found in almost every healing charm of Miina's repertoire. Strategies such as banishing and threatening are also repeated within the text of a single charm. By means of these strategies, Miina solves the problem at hand. These strategies usually link up with narrative sequences referring to the origin of the opponent and calls for help.

Miina banishes and removes his opponent especially in charms healing illnesses caused by kalma and curses (SKVR I_4 599, 599a, 599b, 599c, 622, 622a, 622b; Siikala 1983:77). In his charms, an illness is most often sent back to where it came from. In other words, there is a clear link between the opponent and the banishment site to which the opponent is supposed to go. Miina sends his opponents home, 'run to your home', to an actual place or element of nature, 'if you may come from the ground, go back to the ground', and to the home of the dead, 'you may come from the abode of the dead, go to the home of the dead'. It seems that Miina does not know for sure who his opponent really is or, what is more important, where it came from. He must ask and speculate. Miina also sends his opponents, for example, to the mouth of an

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iron burbot or to the mouth of a raven. The opponent is also asked to take a horse from the Hiisi[2]. These animal helpers carry the illness as far as possible from all human habitation. Generally speaking, Miina's banishment strategies consist of a order, usually 'Go there, where I command you', an act of naming of the place to which the opponent is banished, and a description of the place in question. Banishment strategies also include inquiries into the origin of the illness and naming the opponent (see Siikala 2002:87, 178–195).

Miina demands the opponent to restore the patient's health to its former state. Lines such as 'come and recognise your doing, lick up your pains, cure your evil' and 'if you have done evil, then come to recognise your deed, undo your evel-doings' are typical of Miina's healing charms. They occur particularly in charms for healing concrete injuries and wounds. Before abovementioned orders Miina names his opponent and explains its origin. In other words, he knows for sure whom he talks to.

In Miina's charms, threatens are often linked up with other strategies, 'Come and recognise your doing... Before I seek your mother, dredge up your mighty ancestors' and 'If you do not obey this, go to a place to which I command you'. Miina also uses the Black Dog motif as a threat, 'If you do not obey this, I have a black dog...' (see Siikala 2002:107–108). Miina describes how the dog has eaten hundreds and thousands of men. If the illness does not obey, he simply feeds the opponent to his dog. He also threatens to burn the opponent.

Finally, I focus on charms for healing illnesses caused by kalma (SKVR I_4 599, 599a, 599b, 599c). These charms are constructed almost entirely around the episodes dealing with the opponent. The first one was recorded in 1897 and it consists of 103 lines. Others are considerably shorter than the first one. They consist of 66, 43, and 23 lines. They were recorded in the years 1904 and 1910–11. On the basis of these charms, it seems that Miina favored four strategies: he banishes, threatens, demands the opponent to come and restore the patient's health to its former state, and calls for help.

The charm from 1897 (SKVR I_4 599) begins with inquiries of the origin of the illness. Miina names several possible sources of contagion, kalma among others (see Stark 2002:91). He sends all of them back to where they came from. All in all, this charm is constructed around the banishments and threatens. The charm from 1904 (SKVR I_4 599a) begins with a similar way. In this case, Miina both demands his opponent to restore patient's health and ban-

[2] Kind of tutelary spirits in mythologies of the Baltic Sea area, especially in Finland. Most often considered to be malicious or at least horrifying. – *Editor's note.*

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ishes it. In addition to these demands, he begs help from the Water's Mistress. The charm from 1910–11 (SKVR I_4 599b) also begins with inquiries of the origin of the illness. However, this charm differs from the above-mentioned charms in that it is constructed entirely around the demands addressed to the opponent to come and recognise its doing. The charm ends with the call for help addressed to the Water's Mistress. In the second charm from 1910–11 (SKVR I_4 599c), Miina banishes his opponent again. As Anna-Leena Siikala points out (2002:112), the variants recorded over an period of more than ten years show evidently that Miina varied his charms.

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Charms as a Vehicle for Political Messages in Communist Romania

After the World War II, a pro-Soviet government (in which Petru Groza was the prime-minister until November 30, 1946) was installed in Bucharest, on March 6, 1945, being followed by the forced abdication of the last Romanian King, Michael, in December 1947, and the declaration of Romania as a People's Republic with a new constitution starting from April 13, 1948. All these events briefly stated above marked the beginning of the communist regime in Romania which meant aggressive, violent and intrusive changes at all social and cultural levels which led to altering people's very manner of relating to each other and to their set of values, customs and beliefs which were considered obsolete and even dangerous by the new political regime. The decade following the installation of the communist party in Romania brought about major drastic changes driven in two directions: on the one hand, forcefully ***imposing new structures*** (either social and economic ones, such as the collective farms, or political – for example, the organization of communist children or young people, etc.) meant to support and legitimize the new regime, and, on the other hand, trying ***to eliminate the old constituents*** (starting with institutions, former political parties and their members, and going further towards people's traditional practices, folk-literature categories, etc.) in a thorough attempt to purge an entire society of 'hostile' elements and to rebuild it on completely new ideological grounds.

Having concisely described the historical and social context of the 1950s, we intend to further focus on the special situation of Romanian traditional folkloric culture of that time which did not remain untouched by the official politics. The most acute symptom of the ideological intrusion in this area was the creation (directly done by cultural activists and then performed in folkloric shows or dictated/written down by good versifiers in villages under direct guidance of some officials) of a new category of versified texts, following the traditional pattern but conveying political messages, namely *the new folk songs* or *folk songs on contemporary themes*.

We should mention here that these were not the only folk facts that were produced, performed and even researched (although with a lot of precautions from the folklorists) during the 1950s. The genuine esthetic and ritual needs of rural communities had their real manifestations within the functional contexts of everyday life.

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Unlike the traditional folk creations, the new texts were meant to cover ideological themes and motifs used in the official discourse of the communist regime, i.e. the (Communist) Party, the Republic, the antifascist struggle, the socialist transformations in agriculture (having sub-themes which tried to cover all segments of a collectivized village – the collective farms, the mechanization in agriculture, the electrification, literacy among peasants, etc.), life in the new village, the satisfaction due to having abolished the exploiting classes (the class struggle), working in factories and on building sites, etc. In fact, they can be seen as metatexts that reshape and alter reality to offer a fabricated image of life, attuned to the demands of official ideology. In James C. Scott's terms, these texts can be considered as part of *public transcript* (Scott 1990) imposed by the dominant group on its subordinates, used by the latter to adjust and to fit into the new political context and the new social reality. These creations are generally referred to as *folk lyrical poetry on contemporary themes* (Coatu 1984), *new folk songs* (Cernea et al. 1966, 1986)*, new creation of folk songs* (Bărbulescu 1952).

The constant element in the phrases that denominate them is the fact that these creations *newly* appeared as a response to the need of reflecting the *current* changes in the socialist Romania. Yet, they embody only a distorted, deceptive image of the socialist society, namely the one promoted by the Party policy, being mainly oriented towards the process of collectivization. But the meaning and the value of agricultural transformations found in these texts are totally different from the actual ones. The official versified structures do not mention the deportations of those peasants who did not want to join the collective farms, or the peasants' rebellions, or the police and Securitate's abuses. The *new* literary compositions gathered in anthologies represent the official folk creation which emerged in response to political command. This literature took the form of contests (whose purpose was the creation, collection, and performance of folk compositions) or of imposed performances, officially organized by village-propaganda brigades. These new forms of poetic manifestation did not belong to the traditional, natural creation process within the rural community. They had a propagandistic purpose representing a way of legitimizing the Communist leadership by constructing a fictitious reality. These creations did not appear spontaneously but as a result of the political command. The fact that the new popular texts were performed only in a fabricated context – that of the stage – is significant. Staging created opportunities for the emergence of a new category of performers – the artistic-brigade members. The language used in the new folk lyrics was adapted to the information conveyed by official propaganda and its intended purpose. Thus, it was

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an imposed linguistic, thematic, and cognitive model the analysis of which may clarify, to a certain extent, the nature of some of the new folk creations. Although they were officially considered *the new folk creation*, the situation was somehow paradoxical as the texts genuinely created during that period, the texts which emerged from the very needs of the rural communities and reflected the reality in the village were the ones talking of the abuses of the authorities and of taking away the land peasants had owned before. However, such texts (the anticommunist creations) could not have either been performed or published, being caught creating or uttering them would have meant deportation, imprisonment or even the death of the ones involved in producing and spreading them. Consequently, they were hardly collected by researchers during field campaigns. The Archive of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore in Bucharest shelters very few such texts.

Apart from creating a category of folk texts meant to convey the ideological message, one should mention the tendency towards eliminating certain folk categories, such as charms, considered to be the expression of an obsolete mentality, an ineffective old practice against which the peasants should fight under the direct guidance of the officials. Even the very research of this segment of folk literature being considered a drawback in building the *new person* was banned during the 1950s. The research plan did not include superstitions, charms, carols, funeral rituals and any religious texts (Eretescu 2007:240). Folklorists preferred songs and short stanzas (traditionally chanted during dances) as they were more permissive to ideological intrusion, their structure being used as a formal pattern, a vehicle for political purposes.

Yet, the charms' pattern was used by the propaganda brigades for what they called 'didactic purposes', that is to eradicate this practice and to teach the people in the villages the ineffectiveness of such beliefs. Anyway, they still were an important landmark in the folkloric oral culture.

I am referring next to a couple of texts I have found in an anthology published in 1956–1957, two volumes containing texts performed by groups of peasants at the fourth national contest organized by the Central House of Folk Creations (Niculescu 1956–7). It is not very easy to find in the politically oriented anthologies of the time charm patterns or even words/phrases referring or related to this category. Yet, there are two texts in the first volume of this book which mockingly paraphrase the folk category of charms: 'A Charm for a Lazy Man' (the brigade in Dărmăneşti, Bacău, takes an old charm which 'used to be performed in our villages when superstitions ruled the darkness of the illiterate minds' and gives it 'a new and militant content in order to ridicule those lazy people who still believe in superstitions') (Niculescu 1956:27)

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and 'The Choir' (the brigade in Brăneşti, Ploieşti, 'satirizes the indolence of some cultural work bodies – who did not find a conductor for the choir of the village club – using for this purpose the paraphrased text of a charm *against snake-bites* and, thus, reaching a double educative goal: to fight against the old practice by proving its ineffectiveness and to criticize people's unjust attitudes, in order to improve them') (Georgescu 1959:108).

Both texts have a double purpose emerging from the very manner of creating them: the form (the pattern resembling the charms) aims at eliminating the belief of the village community in this folk practice and in its both performers and beneficiaries, while the content clearly states the 'sins' of certain real people in the village.

'A Charm for a Lazy Man' uses some elements characteristic to the practice against evil-eye in order to criticize a peasant, named Ilie Suman, who was sleeping instead of working the field: 'You, Sandman, come to the lashes, / To the eyes, to the eyebrows / And cast away Ilie Suman's / Fatigue, / Ennui, / And make him sleep in his bed / The sleep of a baby. / As for the reaping, he hasn't reaped, / As for the threshing, he hasn't threshed, / As for the plowing, he hasn't plowed, / And yet having lain in his bed / Exhausted him / And made a fool of him in the eyes of the village' (Niculescu 1956:78). Although the role of the helping being invoked here is a little confusing (Sandman is called to put the man to sleep even if this is what he does instead of working), the second half of this text makes use of another element belonging to traditional charms, the place where the illness is conjured to go to after leaving the body of the 'sick' person.

However, in folk tradition this place is described as a deserted, isolated, remote area, to which human beings do not have access: 'Get out, evil-eye, / Between the eyes, / And go, / And run / To the place where the roosters do not crow, / Where the woods do not turn green, / Where the shepherds to not sing, / Where priests do not read the Holy Book' (Teodorescu 1982:425) or 'Where the grass is not trod / Where the spring is not muddled' (Gorovei 1985:322) and where there are special conditions for the pains/illness: 'Go to the daughter of Emperor Ler / As that is the place for you, / A place with tables laid / With torches lit / And with glasses filled' (Teodorescu 1982:423) or 'And you will live there, / You will rule that place, / 'Cause there aren't any people there / Any people who could charm you. / As there lives the Great Mother, / The Great Lady. / She had a great wedding / And invited all the pains / And fed all the pains, / And they would scorch from the top, / And they would scorch from the roots' (Gorovei 1985:322).

The brigade text shapes two types of such places: one where the laziness is sent ('Hurry up, laziness / Leave Ilie Suman and go away / To a deserted

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country / At the back of beyond / Where the hungry are rulers') and another place where Ilie Suman himself is sent ('Come you winged dream / And take Ilie Suman on one of your wings / Take him away from his bed / To the land of wonderful dreams / Where one receives everything for free, / Where wind itself reaps the crops, / Where land plows itself, / Where bread bakes itself, / Where your spoon is always full, / Where everything is godsend, / Where you are the king of the world, / Where baked pies are flying around you, / Where there is never day, always night. / Take him to this country / To the country of the idle, / Take him away from us / And don't bring him back'). The 'sinner'/'sick' is expelled from the community. It resembles the mechanism of deporting people considered undesirable or dangerous for the new regime.

In this case the one whose name appears in the text – i.e. Ilie Suman – is not the beneficiary, as it happens in the traditional charms, but the very source of trouble and is treated in the same manner as this folk practice treats the illness/pains – he is sent away as he does not or will not fit into the community of working people who were supposed to build the socialism in the villages. In fact, the beneficiary of the text is here the whole community considered an entity acting collectively. The brigade is thus one of the agents meant to maintain and preserve the unity of action and the collective character of the community's deeds as there was no other option or alternative to what was stated as right or fair by the authorities. Nothing was negotiable or interpretable.

Apart from conveying political messages the artistic brigade played the role of stating and criticizing on the stage the ideologically incorrect behaviour. It was thus a part of the political authority which decided what was correct or not and conveyed the norms and rules of 'proper conduct' through different channels. The shows of the artistic brigades represented one of these many channels of expressing and legitimizing the newly installed regime. First, these performances used the authority of the stage, then, the authority of the people coming from the centre, namely Bucharest, from the Central House of Folk Creation, to organize such contests, and, finally, had the authority of the origin of the 'actors', as they were peasants just like those watching these shows.

The second parody text mentioned above has only the first line in common with the traditional charms against snake-bite: 'Venomous snake'. Then the text goes on as follows: 'if you are spelled / and if you have scared / our conductor away, / go to a deserted place / and bring me / another conductor / to organize the choir'. It goes on in a dialog changing the addressee, from 'venomous snake' to 'bad' or even 'black' basil which is asked to bring certain different people to fulfill the conductor's task. All of them answer with declining the offer. All these refuses lead to the conclusion of the staged dialog:

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'You, basil, / The charm does not work. / And if the only thing / we could do is to leave this thing to you / we would never have a choir'. The basil, an important plant in the religious ritual and always positively connoted in the traditional culture, may stand here for the whole system of ritual practices. Hence, the failure of finding a conductor for the choir is in fact the failure of all religious practices and beliefs.

Except for their claim of using the pattern of charms against snake-bite, no other elements remind us of the traditional practice. In many variants the helper is usually Virgin Mary who hears the whines of the bitten person and tells the beneficiary or the performer all the gestures to be made, all the words to be uttered, and all the objects to be used for healing the patient. ('Don't linger here! / Go to Jordan's fountain / And take untasted water, / And say the charm / And use a knife / That was found / And pour water on you / As this is your cure') (Teodorescu 1982:462). Other variants are focussed on the very spot of the snake-bite, the text containing the description of the venom first on its way from the snake to the bone and then reversely from the human body back to the snake, the healing being concluded at the verbal level with a final formula: the beneficiary is left 'clean, bright and cured' (Teodorescu 1982:460). There is also another category of charms against snake-bite which use mainly meaningless words relying on the force of rhyming unintelligible structures, e.g. 'Meletică / Peletică / Pog conopag / Cara gana carga / Cross in the sky / Cross on the sky / Cross on the earth / The snake's venom / Be defeated' (Gorovei 1985:400).

In the case of the traditional charming the meaning of the words and phrases used is carefully picked in order for them to best mirror the entire practice (namely the whole complex context: people, gestures, objects, time and place) and to serve the final purpose (therapeutic, love-related, etc.). The most important is the belief in the power of language spoken out loud, whispered, or just resting silent to carry out the message from the performer towards both the beneficiary and the higher sacred beings which are asked for help. Thus, words are perfectly fit into the whole context of the traditional practice being directly related to all the elements needed to ensure the effectiveness of the charm. Using Edward T. Hall's words we can consider it a *high-context message* as it is efficient only in relation to the context 'which carries varying proportions of the meaning. Without context, the code is incomplete since it encompasses only part of the message' (Hall 1976:86–87); 'A high-context (H-C) communication or message is one in which most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message' (Hall 1976:74).

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On the other hand, the latter category of texts we have mentioned, those performed by artistic brigades, were not and could not have been performed outside the context of the stage. They were created specifically for being staged and do not need certain elements of the context to ensure the efficiency of the message. These texts can be considered 'low-context (L-C) messages' as 'the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code' (Hall 1976:74). Obviously, they do not have any ritual function.

Their main function was not only to criticize but also to eliminate the genuine traditional practice of charming and to vilify those who believed, practiced, or benefited from it. Thus, mockery was one method used in their attempt to eradicate what did not fit into the pattern of the utopian land projected by the communist ideology. The result was a category of texts which paraphrased as metatexts the existing genuine creations and which had the role of usurping them. Consequently, the communist authorities constructed some versified dummies meant to replace the oral culture, especially the ritual segments, in order to control and manipulate people's way of relating to human beings and to the sacred, as part of the complex plan to create what was called the 'the new person'.

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