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## THE WALKING DEAD: SUPERNATURAL ENCOUNTERS IN MEDIAEVAL ENGLAND

### Abstract

An examination of various supernatural manifestations recorded in texts such as William of Malmesbury's *De Gestis Regum Anglorum* (c.1125), William of Newburgh's *Historia rerum Anglicarum* (c.1198), Walter Map's *De Nugis Curialium* (c.1182) and the works of the anonymous Monk of Byland (c.1400). These writers recorded encounters with ghosts, revenants, vampires and other enigmatic figures. To the mediaeval chronicler, a ghost was not necessarily the traditional spectral figure clad in a shroud: they ranged in form from shape-changing, violent entities, to the sense of an unseen presence, an ill-regarded location, or were embodied in the strange behaviour of animals. I consider various texts, comparing and contrasting the mediaeval accounts, from the earlier material, betraying possible Scandinavian influences, to the later stories which suggest that the church was playing a greater role in combatting supernatural influences by the close of the Middle Ages. Additionally, the influence of the C12 Renaissance can be detected in some of the texts. I suggest methods of classification, and conclude by noting similarities between some of the mediaeval tales and later literature - works by the Brontës - and folkloric sources.

წინამდებარე ნაშრომში წარმოდგენილია უილიამ მალმსბურის (1125), უილიამ ნიუბურგის (1189), უოლტერ მეპისა (1182) და ანონიმი ბერის (1400) მიერ ჩაწერილ ტექსტებში ზებუნებრივ მოვლენებზე დაცული ინფორმაციის ანალიზი. ამ მწერლებმა შემოინახეს ცნობები მოჩვენებებზე თავდასხმის, ვამპირებისა და სხვადასხვა ამოუცნობი ფიგურის შესახებ. შუასაუკუნეების მიხედვით მოჩვენება არ იყო ოდენ სხვადასხვა სამოსში გამოწყობილი ფიგურა, არამედ ისინი მაქციობის უნარით იყვნენ დაჯილდოებულნი, იცვლიდნენ ფორმას, იყვნენ მოძალადეები, უხილავნიც, ამოუცნობი ადგილმდებარეობით ან უცნაური ცხოველების სახით გამოჩნდებოდნენ. ნაშრომში განვიხილეთ არა ერთი ტექსტი, შევადარე და გავანალიზე შუასაუკუნეების შეხედულებები მათ გარშემო. ადრინდელი მასალები აშკარად განიცდიან სკანდინავიურის გავლენას. გვიანდელი ეპოქის ტექსტებში აშკარად იგრძნობა ეკლესიის გავლენა, როგორ ებრძოდა ის აღნიშნული წარმოდგენების გავრცელებას. დამატებით შეიძლება ითქვას, რომ რენესანსის ეპოქის გავლენაც აშკარაა. წინამდებარე ნაშრომში წარმოდგენილია მათი კლასიფიკაციის მეთოდები. ასევე, წარმოდგენილია შუასაუკუნეების ზღაპრებსა და მოგვიანებით ეპოქის ლიტერატურულ ნიმუშებს შორის მსგავსებანი, განხილულია ფოლკლორული წყაროებიც.

**Keywords:** *ghost, vampires spirits*

Mediaeval historians and chroniclers often included accounts of prodigies, marvels and miracles in their works, what we would term ghost stories. But, as R. A. Bowyer notes,

‘the men of the Middle Ages did not share our concept of the “ghost”, and indeed there is no mediaeval word which means quite the same as our modern word’ (Bowyer 1981: 177). For my purposes in this paper, I will be following Bowyer’s practice to ‘includ[e] as “ghosts” any supernatural apparitions of the dead’ (Bowyer 1981: 177).

The Venerable Bede (c.672-735) records visions of the dead (Joynes 2001: 9-10), but it’s not until the C11 that accounts of supernatural encounters really start to appear in any significant number (Schmitt 1998: 35; Joynes 2001: 4). The ghosts could take many forms - among them, faeries, revenants, the Wild Hunt and vengeful daemons. It is the latter who come to carry off the Witch of Berkeley in the account by William of Malmesbury (c.1095-c.1143):

Nearing death, and fearing that she will be taken away by daemons as punishment for her sorcery, the witch asks that her body be sewn into the hide of a deer, and then placed into a stone sarcophagus that is to be sealed with lead and iron, and then bound with three heavy chains. Masses and psalms are to be sung every day for three days. Only then can the witch’s body be buried. While the masses are being sung however, the church is besieged by demons, and then finally they break into the church, remove the body from the stone coffin, and place the witch on a demonic horse, which has spikes along its spine. This brings the woman back to life, and she’s carried off; he screams and pleas for mercy could be heard up to four miles away (Joynes 2001: 56-8; Kors & Peters 1972: 32-5).

Such were the punishments for sorcery; the exemplary function of the story seems clear enough.

William of Newburgh, writing in the last decade of the twelfth century, also recorded a number of similar stories. His ghosts are frequently violent and vengeful and seem to exist with autonomy, behaving in death just as they had done in life.

One revenant comes back and resumes marital relations with his wife, who is not unnaturally horrified. A priest advises opening his grave, and placing a notice of absolution on the body. This solves the problem. (*Historia* V: 22.1)

Another revenant - a priest who loved hunting so much he was nicknamed the Hound Priest - comes back from the grave to terrorise his former abbey. His body is exhumed and burnt by the monks. (Exhumation, decapitation and burning are sometimes recommended as solutions in these stories; we can assume that notices of absolution in these cases were insufficient.) (*Historia* V: 24.2)

Sometimes, however, the pronouncements or actions of churchmen are ineffective against the ghosts and revenants. One of William’s revenant stories takes place at Easter. A man, something of an outlaw in life, returns as a revenant to terrorise his neighbourhood each night, accompanied by a pack of baying hounds. A pestilence spreads through the town, ‘by the vagaries of [its] foul carcass’ and ‘pestiferous breath’. Two brothers, who have lost their father to the contagion, take it upon themselves to destroy the revenant. The priest is too busy getting ready to celebrate Easter to be of any use. The brothers dig up the man’s body, dismember it and set fire to the remains. (*Historia* V: 24.5)

Is this an early example of satire? Given the tenor of William’s writing as a whole, probably not, but it makes for an interesting comparison. (Although there are good reasons for regarding Walter Map as a C12 satirist.) (Map 1983: xlii-xliv)

Around 1400, an anonymous monk from Byland Abbey, less than 2 miles from Newburgh Abbey where William was writing,<sup>1</sup> recorded a dozen tales that were first published in Latin in 1922 by M.R. James.<sup>2</sup> Among them:

I. Ryedale, Yorkshire. A man is leading a horse that is carrying laden with a sack of beans. The horse breaks its leg. The man carries on, carrying the sack himself. He sees another horse rearing up in front of him, and asks the horse not to harm him. It then changes into a rolling bale of hay with a light at its centre. The man tells it to be gone, and it then becomes a man, who offers to carry the sack. They get to a river, but the ghost won't cross. The ghost tells the man how it can be helped - masses need to be said - and the man agrees to get absolution for the ghost. (James 2006: 224-5)

VIII. A ghost follows William of Bradeforth on three successive occasions, shouting and shrieking. On the fourth night, William goes to Ampleforth, and the same thing happens again. Returning home, the apparently disembodied voice still feels very close, and then William sees a pale horse at the crossroads ahead of him. His dog becomes very scared. William commands the spirit in the name of Jesus Christ to get out of the way. At the mention of the holy name, the apparition fades, turning into a wine vat 'spinning at four corners', and rolls away. William realises that it was a soul seeking absolution, 'and thus to be helped in the most crucial way.' (James 2006: 238)

There is an ambiguity here as to whether the ghosts are physical or disembodied. As Bowyer notes, 'the Middle English word "ghost" means merely "spirit" (it translates and is translated by the Latin *spiritus*) and both the English and Latin words are of very general application' (Bowyer 1981: 177). The ghost in story I appears to be physical - it carries the sack of beans - but that in story VIII could be immaterial. However, some of the Byland ghosts do appear to be definitely physical - revenants - and interact with the living in a very direct way:

IV: Jacob Tankerlay, a former rector of the village of Kereby, returns as a revenant where he 'wander[s] abroad at night over the village' and 'on a certain night' gouges out the eye of his former mistress. (James 2006: 235)

XII. The sister of Adam de Lond lies buried in the graveyard at Ampleforth. Shortly after her death, she is seen wandering - having become a revenant - by William Trower, Sr. He swears her to confession, and she tells him she is wandering because of documents (presumably the title deeds to her house) she has unjustly given to her brother Adam. She had had a row with her husband, and gave the documents - which favoured her husband and sons - to her brother. Adam then threw the husband and sons out of the house and off the land. She begs William to ask Adam to restore the documents, and her family, to their property, otherwise she will not be able to rest until the day of judgment. Adam, on being told of my encounter by William, does not believe him and refuses to hand the documents over. William insists that it is true, and that Adam will hear his sister talk to him very soon.

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<sup>1</sup> William had connections with Byland Abbey, despite being a monk of Newburgh, writing his *Commentary on the Song of Songs* at the request of Roger, abbot of Byland (d. c. 1199). See <http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/staff/haywardp/hist424/seminars/Newburgh.htm> Accessed 15.1.15.

<sup>2</sup> M. R. James, 'Twelve Medieval Ghost Stories', *English Historical Review* 37 (July 1922): 413-22. A modern English translation, by Leslie Boba Joshi, is included in M. R. James, *The Haunted Dolls' House and Other Ghost Stories*, ed. S.T. Joshi (London: Penguin Books, 2006): 223-45. Hereafter, James (2006).

One night, William encounters the sister again, and takes her to Adam's room. He still refuses to hand the documents over, and she tells him he will become a revenant after his death, replacing his sister.

Adam's hand became dark black and dangled. He said this was due to fighting, but he was lying. Finally, the sister went to a different place, due to the night fears of the people in Ampleforth. The writer asks forgiveness in case he has made a mistake in recounting the tale. It is said that Adam's son rectified the situation after his father's death (suggesting that Adam too had become a revenant). (James 2006: 244-5)

However, in story V (the shortest of the Byland tales), the ghost seems to be both physical and immaterial at the same time:

V. A woman catches 'a kind of ghost' and carries it into her house on her back. Witnesses describe that her hands plunged 'deep into the flesh of the thing, as if its flesh were rotten and not solid, but like a phantasm.' (James 2006: 236)

The Byland stories are interesting in that they were written down by a monk, probably with an exemplary purpose in mind:

The ghost-story had an important role in the church's system of instruction - especially instruction of the populace, whose attention could more easily be caught by a good ghost-story than by a fine distinction from Thomas Aquinas. (Bowyer 1981: 190)

The ghosts therefore behave in ways that reinforce Church teaching, often seeking to right past wrongs, or asking the living to seek absolution for them; in contrast, the ghosts in William of Newburgh usually come back to resume their activities as they did in life without fear of punishment or damnation.

But the Byland stories have an ambiguity to them: the actions of the church seem sometimes ineffective or only partially effective, as in the story of Snowball the tailor (see below), suggesting that the older pagan influences evident in William of Newburgh's stories still persisted. M. R. James noted similarities with Danish stories (James 2006: 223; 299; 300; 301). Parallels between the Byland stories - and, indeed, those of William of Newburgh - and Scandinavian material are evident in the ghosts' geographical locations, and in their actions. Like the *draugar* of Scandinavian stories, the ghosts 'seem tied to the geographic areas of their burial sites and former lives' and return to the realm of the living to terrorize residents of their former communities (Sayers 1996: 243).

The longest of the Byland stories, that of Snowball the tailor, doesn't easily fit into the category of *exempla*:

II. Riding home one night, Snowball is accosted by ghost that manifests first as the sound of ducks splashing, then becomes a crow. Sparks fly off the bird. It attacks Snowball, knocking him off his horse. Snowball attacks the bird with his sword, but feels as though he's attacking a bale of peat moss. The ghost-crow flies away, and then comes back as a dog. Snowball asks what it wants, and it admits to being an excommunicate in life, and asks for absolution. Snowball is warned that if he doesn't do this, his flesh will wither and fall off. The ghost promises to heal the wounds Snowball has sustained in the fight. The ghost changes again, appearing to be on fire, and Snowball can see down into it, where it is forming words from its stomach, not its mouth. Two other spirits are lingering nearby, one in the form of a burning bush, the other in the form of a hunter, and both are dangerous.

Snowball goes home, and becomes ill for several days. When he recovers, he gets masses said for the ghost, and places a note of absolution in its grave. He goes back to meet the ghost again. Fearing he might be attacked, he draws a protective

circle around him on the ground with a cross, placing four further crosses at the edge of the circle. These crosses are adorned with saints' relics. He stands in the circle, clutching the gospels. The ghost appears, and Snowball asks whether his efforts in gaining absolution have been successful. The ghost replies that it has, and that it saw Snowball place the notice of absolution in the grave. The ghost adds that three devils were also in the vicinity, who had been tormenting it. But the ghost and 30 other spirits can now move into eternal joy. The ghost keeps its side of the bargain and tells Snowball how to heal his wounds.

It's at this point that we might expect the story to conclude, but it does not, suggesting it might be a composite, or even a fragment of something longer. It continues:

Snowball asks the ghost who some of the other 30 spirits are. One of them had been a belligerent layman 'not of this country', who had killed a pregnant woman. Snowball is told that a ghost will appear to him as a bullock with no mouth, eyes or ears, who is unable to be sworn to confession. Another ghost appears in the shape of a hunter, who has a chance at penance, but can only be sworn to confession by a young lad, 'according to God's plan'.

Snowball then asks the ghost about his own situation, and the ghost tells him to return the cape and tunic belonging to a friend from the 'war beyond the sea'. When Snowball says he doesn't know where this friend is living now, the ghost tells him he is near Alnwick Castle.

The tailor then asks the ghost what his biggest problem is, and the ghost tells Snowball that his biggest problem is 'because of me'. Questioned further, the ghost tells Snowball that men are deceiving him by lying, and that they are defaming other dead men, in the sense that they think Snowball is consorting with them. Snowball asks what is to be done, and whether he should reveal the ghost's name, but the ghost tells him not to. The ghost tells Snowball that if he lives in a certain place, he will be rich, if he lives in another, he will be poor, and that he has powerful enemies.

As they are departing, the spirit in the shape of the blind, deaf and mute bullock, follows them to the village of Ampleford. Snowball asks the bullock to tell him of his situation, but the bullock is unable (as the ghost had said it would be). The (first) ghost tells Snowball to put all his important documents under his pillow that night, and to go home looking at the ground, and especially not to look at anything burning. He also tells the tailor to not reveal to anyone what he (the ghost) has said. Snowball goes home and falls ill for several days. (James 2006: 228-33)

So here we have something that starts out as an exemplary story, but then appears to transform into something different: the ghost lingers, and not only that, but Snowball and the ghost seem to be on good terms. (Friendship seems to be too strong a word.) There is also a good deal of shape-changing - ducks, crows, bulls, dogs, barrels, bales of hay - warnings against the power of fire, the ghost's clairvoyant powers, and Snowball's illnesses.

Jacqueline Simpson remarks that the Byland ghosts are 'definitely odd' (Simpson 1998) and the story of Snowball is perhaps the oddest of the group. Simpson is right, I think, to draw attention to the shape changing, which has strong links to Norse sagas. The most common figures in the Norse material are berserkers, werewolves and bears, which have associations with warfare, cunning and strength respectively (Davidson 1978). The shape changing Byland ghosts, however, doesn't fit into these categories. It is, rather, 'insistent, repetitive, threatening [in] nature' (Joynes 2001: 87). Stronger influences on the shape changing could be folk traditions about magic and witchcraft (Simpson 1998). Joynes has argued that the revenants

(*draugar*) ‘of the Scandinavian tradition frequently seem to have an autonomous existence of their own, with the Christian writers providing merely a dutiful theological “gloss” on the narrative’ (Joynes 2001: 89). The ghosts in the Snowball story certainly seem to have a degree of autonomy, and there is a degree of Christian “gloss” in the getting of absolution for the ghost. But after the absolution is gained, Snowball’s dealings with the world of spirits continue, with no clear resolution, marking the story as ‘definitely odd’.

\*\*\*

In the works of William of Malmesbury, William of Newburgh and the Monk of Byland, we have a group of stories in which Christian and pagan influences appear. Their syncretic nature could be catalogued using some of the following criteria:

- Does the story contain shape-changing? If so, from what, and into what? How many times does the spectre change?
- If it doesn’t shift, what form is to be seen - or sensed - in?
- What is the attitude of the witness in the story?
- How local are the events of the story to the writer?
- Is the location within England - from the Danelaw, Wales, or further south?
- What are the demands of the ghost - e.g. absolution? Or does it continue to behave as it had done as in life?
- What are the actions of the witness? (Get absolution for the ghost, or take direct action, such as beheading the revenant, or casting it into a river?)
- Gender(s) of protagonist and ghost?
- If action is taken against the revenant, is it successful? Or does the ghost come back?
- Is there a resolution?
- Who is writing and why? A monk wanting to record *exempla* for preaching and teaching, or a historian like William of Newburgh, or a courtier like Walter Map?
- How Christian is it? Or Scandinavian? There are revenants in some of the sagas (Davidson 1981; Joynes 2001: 103-19).
- Are there any variations within northern Europe? E.g. Byland story XI, of the unbaptised, aborted baby rolling down the road in a boot, has variants found in the Isle of Man, Scotland and Scandinavia (Simpson 1998).
- What is the writer’s attitude to the events of the story?

Walter Map (c.1130-c.1209), for instance, expresses skepticism about the story of Gwestin of Ffestiniog:

Gwestin of Ffestiniog... sees some women bathing in a pond one night when he’s guarding his crops. The women are faery, and he manages to capture one, who becomes his wife, on condition that he never raise his bridle-rein against her. Needless to say, after they’ve had a family, he eventually does, and the faery wife disappears. Gwestin manages to save one of their sons from being taken into the lake; but the son, after defeat in battle, disappears. The story has it that he went to live in the lake with his mother, although Walter doubts this, saying ‘I think this is a lie, and a falsehood to account for his body not having been found.’ (Joynes 2001: 64-65; Map 1983: 149-55)

That Walter Map didn't believe everything he heard marks him out as a man of his time. Scepticism, dialectic, the need to point out the errors of received wisdom and to discover new certainties, were among the intellectual hallmarks of the C12 Renaissance. In addition, there was lively debate about the nature of miracles, marvels and prodigies - categories that included ghosts and revenants (Bartlett 2008: 1-33). Walter's contemporary, John of Salisbury (c.1120-80), for instance, was sceptical about witches' night-rides: 'Who could be so blind as not to see in all this a pure manifestation of wickedness created by sporting demons? Indeed, it is obvious from this that it is only poor old women and the simple-minded kinds of men who enter into these credences' (Kors & Peters 1972: 37). William of Newburgh found Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* (c.1135), a book full of legendary heroes, including Brutus, Arthur and Merlin, to be a work that had 'invented the most ridiculous fictions concerning [British history]' with 'unblushing effrontery' (*Historia*, Preface).

Concerning William's own accounts of 'certain prodigies', as he terms the revenants, William regards them as outside 'the regular thread of history' (*Historia* V: 24.7). He notes that it 'would not be easy to believe that the corpses of the dead should sally (I know not by what agency) from their graves, and should wander about to the terror or destruction of the living' were it not for the fact that 'there is abundant testimony' asserting that these things did actually happen (*Historia* V: 24.1). William reserves judgement, 'offer[ing] these prodigious events to his readers with questions, hesitations, and doubt - with, in short, all the confessions of a critical and honest mind' (Partner 1977: 115). The same could be said of William of Malmesbury, in regard to the Witch of Berkeley. (William of Malmesbury said he got the story from a 'man of such character, who swore he had seen it, that I should blush to disbelieve.' William could even date the events to the year 1065 (Kors & Peters 1972: 32)). William of Newburgh admits that he is writing these stories down 'as a warning to posterity' (*Historia* V: 24.1) - although this could be a warning to historians to exercise caution when writing of prodigies, wonders, marvels and miracles, rather than being a warning in the exemplary sense.

Far from being an age of faith, the C12 was a period where old certainties were no longer enough, a sense that writers like William of Newburgh and Walter Map are in intellectual *terra incognita*. Joynes, commenting on the growth of 'ghost stories' in the C11, attributes this to Christian fears and expectations surrounding the year 1000, arguing that the stories 'demonstrat[e] the apocalyptic quality of the times, symbolising the perturbation of the natural order which was anticipated by the... approach of the first Christian Millennium' (Joynes 2001: 4). I think the same could be said for the supernatural stories related by William of Newburgh and Walter Map, although in their case, the 'perturbation of the natural order' was not caused by Millennial anxieties, but by those of their own era, which could be symbolised by the emergence of the notion of purgatory. Jacques Le Goff has argued that the period 1170-1200 saw the 'birth of purgatory' (Le Goff 1984); it would eventually become church doctrine the following century.

There are links between purgatory and ghosts/revenants: the English cleric Gervase of Tilbury (c.1150-1228) recounts a story in *Otia Imperialia* (c.1215), a book of written for the Holy Roman Emperor Otto IV (1209-15). The account of the ghost of Beaucaire has been described as 'an important text for the history of the notion of purgatory' (Gervase 2002: 758):

The longest of the 'marvellous' tales in *Otia Imperialia*, it is set in Arles between July and Michaelmas 1211. The story concerns a young man, killed in a brawl, who returns as a ghost. The ghost appears a number of times to his cousin, an eleven-year old girl, to report on conditions in the afterlife. He confirms that prayers

said for him by the girl's parents are having a beneficial effect. Various people then use the young girl as a medium - only she can see the ghost - in order to ask it questions. When questioned by a priest, the ghost gives a description of its journey in the hereafter, a journey that ends in purgatory. The ghost confirms the power of prayer on souls there, and also reveals clairvoyant abilities. (Gervase 2002: 758-85)

Unlike the spirit in the story of Snowball the tailor, the ghosts uses its powers here are to warn listeners against any future wrong-doing. The ghost reveals a deep piety, being aware of the 'cult of the saints, of ex-votos, of guardian angels, of the apotropaic use of wooden crosses, and of holy water kept in houses' (Schmitt 1998: 91). The ghost also approves of the persecution of the Cathars (then at its height), saying that

'nothing that had ever been done in that region had pleased God so much... even the good who have not stained their faith with heresy have sinned if they have tolerated it; while those who are burned here in the body are burned more severely after death in the spirit.' (Gervase 2002: 779)

There are elements of popular religion in some of what the ghost says - the value of the young cousin's virginity, the fact that souls can wander after death - but in the main, the ghost is mouthing much that would become church dogma. As Finucane argues, ghost stories 'reinforced teachings about punishment and reward after death according to Catholic doctrine and dogma... and more specifically, ... clarified and nourished the belief in purgatory, especially from the twelfth century' (Finucane 1982: 85).

The ghost could be seen as representing the uncertainty, the liminality, of their times. If the ghosts in William of Newburgh and Walter Map are interpreted this way - recall the ghost in Byland story V, that is both physical and not, capable of being carried and of having its body pierced by hands - then they act as tricksters, intent on disrupting the realm of the living, pandering to their own desires, rather than seeking absolution; and perhaps even embodying the challenge that the new idea of purgatory represented.

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A few final thoughts:

- What similarities can be found with folklore motifs from places other than Scandinavia? E. g. Brooke and Mynors draw parallels between the story of Gwestin of Festiniog and swan maiden motifs (Map, 1983: 149, fn. 3).
- Can any of the stories be compared with folklore motifs from Aarne-Thompson? R. T. Christensen? Or could another system be applied, such as statistical analysis? Network analysis? Phylogenetic analysis?
- And have any similar stories been recorded since the Monk of Byland was writing?

In fact, similar ghosts have been reported in more recent times. Jacqueline Simpson notes a number of stories from Lancashire and Yorkshire. The Padfoot, from the Leeds area, was seen in 1860s by an old woman who 'often saw it on the road at night, rolling ahead of her like a bale of wool; others said it was invisible, though one could hear the soft padding of its feet, followed by an ear-splitting roar.' (cf Byland VIII's shouting and shrieking shape-changing ghost.) In other Padfoot reports, it appeared as a large black dog (Simpson 1998).

The Barghest of Lancashire and Yorkshire 'haunted stiles, dark lanes and churchyards, and portended death for anyone who met it. It could be invisible, or could appear in any shape it chose, most often a dog.' A report printed in 1827 told of a man who

heard on the road near Grassington, Yorkshire, the sound of chains, but could see nothing except a glimpse of its tail. Upon reaching home, the man sees the Bargest blocking the doorway to his home. The ghost is in the form of a large woolly creature ‘with glowering multicoloured eyes as big as saucers’. It moves away when the man’s wife opens the door (Simpson 1998).

Then there is the Gytrash,

‘described by Charlotte Brontë (*Jane Eyre*, 1847, Ch.12) as “a North-of-England spirit which, in the form of horse, mule or large dog, haunted solitary ways”. Her brother Branwell in his unpublished fragment *Percy* also mentions a Gytrash, explaining that it does not fit into normal categories - it is “a spectre not at all similar to the ghosts of those who were once alive, nor to fairies, nor to demons”, and appears mostly as “a black dog dragging a chain, a dusky calf, nay, even a rolling stone”, as well as “an old, dwarfish and hideous man, as often without a head as with one, moving at dark along the naked fields”.’ (Simpson 1998; Brontë 1999: 187)

Branwell's biographer, Winifred Gérin, confirms that this accurately reflects traditions about an ominous local apparition, noting that the Gytrash could also take the form of ‘a flaming barrel bowling across the fields’ (Gérin 1972: 136). This might suggest that these stories are part of a Yorkshire tradition - possibly originally Danish, possibly older<sup>3</sup> - that have links to folk perceptions of magic and witchcraft (the mediaeval stories) and also could be seen as being a form of nature spirit, or spirits of place (as described by Charlotte and Branwell Brontë).

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<sup>3</sup> Revenant stories seem to predate both the growth of ghost stories from the C11, and also their recording in Scandinavia: ‘Stories of “revenants”... were likely to have been a mainstay of the non-Christian culture of the Germanic tribes which over-ran Northern Europe from the fifth century onwards.’ (Joynes 2001: 3) See also accounts of various archaeological finds of so-called ‘vampire’ graves: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/shortcuts/2013/jul/16/meaning-vampire-graves-poland> (accessed 19.1.15.).

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## SYMBOLS OF ASTRAL BEINGS IN GEORGIAN FOLKLORE

### **Abstract**

The following article is about how the symbols of astral beings in folklore, in rituals, in myths, in omens were spread, to show the thinking, ideas about astral beings in Georgian folklore. What can inspire society to make some emblems, rituals, symbols and how much they are true and strong? As the folklore is the source of inspiration, spiritual life of society and lives in language, words can be the symbols. Words are signs themselves and they have meaning; sometimes they can make sense of inspiration. These are the main interest of work investigated on the base of astral beings and solar system as they were main inspiration for people to hope the sky will send to the earth warmth and cold, gay and sad, colours, light and darkness, fire, energy and thunder, life and death, thus the everything on the earth was connected to the sky and to the inhabitant of the sky.

წინამდებარე ნაშრომი ეხება ასტრალური მნათობების სიმბოლოების გავრცელების საკითხს ფოლკლორში, ამა თუ იმ რიტუალში, მითებში, რწმენა-წარმოდგენებში. ნაშრომში წარმოდგენილია ასტრალური ღვთაებები ფოლკლორში. რამ ჩააგონა საზოგადოებას შეექმნა ემბლემები, რიტუალები, სიმბოლოები და რამდენად არიან ისინი რეალური და მყარნი დროში? იმდენად რამდენადაც ფოლკლორი არის შთაგონების წყარო, საზოგადოების სულიერი ცხოვრების გამომხატველი და ცხოვრობს ენაში, თვითონ სიტყვაც შესაძლებელია იყოს სიმბოლო. სიტყვა ხომ თავისთავად ნიშანია და მათ აქვთ მნიშვნელობა. აღნიშნული ნაშრომი სწორედ ასტრალურ ღვთაებებზე დაყრდნობით ცდილობს გამოავლინოს სხვადასხვა სიმბოლო. ცა და ცის ბინადარნი იყვნენ უმთავრესნი ხალხისთვის, რამეთუ ისინი ფიქრობდნენ, რომ ზეცა აგზავნიდა დედამიწაზე სითბოსა და სიცივეს, სიხარულსა და სევდას, ფერებს, შუქსა და სიბნელეს, ცეცხლს, ენერგიასა და ქუხილს, სიცოცხლესა და სიკვდილს, ასე, რომ ბევრი რამ მიწაზე დაკავშირებულია ცასა და ცის ბინადრებზე.

**Keywords:** *symbols, colours, the sun, the moon, the stars, red, rainbow*

All societies have myths and that myths are beyond science, transcend history, may have truths which come in different forms and can be tested and that myths can enhance humanity. The main aspect of myths are symbols. To think about symbols something like to try to represent ideas. To give very easy explanation of symbols it is something that represents something else by association, resemblance, or convention, especially a material object used to represent something invisible. It is sign stands for something to known. Semiology, or semiotics, is the scholarly term for the science of signs indicating ideas or symbols. The Oxford English Dictionary defines symbols in two ways: one as “*something that stands for, represents, or denotes something else... esp. A material object representing*

*something...something immaterial or abstract...*” People have their own interpretation to symbols, also they can create personal symbols that represent their understanding of their lives, environment. As folklore is a imagination of different people from the different countries and environment, it is inspired of free emotions of people, never lies, very naive, sometimes strict, gay, colourful, always alive, never die without reason, belongs to society not only author, always easy to understand, difficult to imagine, very symbolised. Symbols can be born and die, change meanings time to time. Symbols can be international, national, ethnic, for each person. The fact that many symbols have more than one meaning in accordance with different kinds of experiences which can be connected with one and the same natural phenomenon. For example the fire in the fireplace is a source of pleasure and comfort, but when we see the building on fire it conveys to us an experience of threat and terror. Symbols aroused the admiration and interest of many scholars due to the very interesting points it contains and are very ancient. Now we will try to give some examples how the symbols of astral beings were been understood in Georgian folklore? In people’s life? Belief?

The poetry about the sun, the moon and the stars considered very ancient in Georgian folklore is:

*The sun is my mother, the moon is my father  
And the light stars are my sisters and brothers.*(Kipiani 1925, 392).

Thus it is considered as a very ancient one but always it remind me the Jacob and his twelve sons often represented on Christian churches from the Old Testament. Some figures from the church symbolism are given by F. R. Webber where is given the sun and the moon and twelve stars from the Old Testament to represents Jacob with his family (Webber, 1927, 31). *“It is well known that the ancients personified the sun female as well as male”* (Doane 1882, 486). In Georgian folklore almost the sun is the female and the moon is male. In every primitive culture they were very important as the sun was the source of life, light, warm and in every family in Georgian people the fire in the middle of the house has the same meaning as the sun for the world, even there were some charms to save and keep this fire because if the fire once would be blown down it was bad and people had even curses to will each other to be there fire blown down. These omens are spread in literary heritages of Georgians. Great Georgian writers of 20<sup>th</sup> century Konstantine Gamsakhurdia (3) and others. As the sun in the world, this fire in the fireplace just in the middle of the house is the mood of energy, lightness, movement, grace, gaiety. The sun is warm, life-giving, protecting, has loving power but in the same time the sun and the fire can be dangerous and even threatening from which man must protect himself. People worship both: the sun and the moon but they emphasize the love to the sun and they were afraid of this moon, of course, the reason of this their nature, the sun gives warm, life, energy and the moon for its changeable nature was considered as a magical ruler of the darkness but sometimes the moon is called as the sun of the night, in Megrelian language (1) white, light night is called as *Tutarchela* or white moon, or sunny moon (Tuta is the moon, Chela is white, Che=white). In one Georgian folk poetry morning is called as the *“morning like the colour of the moon”*. Here is the abstract from the poetry: *It was coming the morning of the colour of the moon, in that miracle Monday* (Gudava 1975, 23). Monday in Megrelian language is called as the moon day, *Tutashdga* or *Tuta* is the moon and *dga* is the day. (In Megrelian the word “Tuta” means the moon and the month too. *The common terms used for the moon are Menulis and menou. The word menou means at the same time the celestial body, the moon and the time period of a month. These names directly derive from the indo-European root “men(n)s-“*, “moon” and “month” and have a

more general meaning of me-“measure” (DSS 54). So in the past, the moon was used as the natural cosmic instrument of measuring time. (Jonas Vaiskunas, 2006, 157)

The main interest of our search are the symbolic meaning of the colours of inhabitant of the sky. Of course, they are field of interdisciplinary study. Colours are studied by different arts, psychologies, linguistics. To look after the history of research dedicated to the colours there are monographs, articles about basic colours and their explanations: Barbara Saunders, „Revisiting Basic Colour Terms“, Berlin, B.; Kay, P. 1969. „Basic Color Terms: Their Universality and Evolution“. „Magic, White and Black“, by Franz Hartmann, M.D, Virve Sarapik, 1997, „Red: The Colour and The Word“, Virve Sarapik, 1998, „Rainbow“, Colours and Science Mythology. All of them are familiar with the sense of basic colours: black, white and red. Some additional remarks about pink, green, blue and brown but some of them are considered as a mixture of basic colours.

Now I want to deal you through some Georgian experience how the basic, primary colours were given and how the Georgian language mark other colours? First look some interesting points: In Georgian the word colour is called as *Feri* and when you say the word *everything* you are saying *Kvela-feri*, (*kvela* means *every*) *Nothing* is *Araferi* (*ara* means *non*). It seems *Feri* emphasize the meaning not only the visual body, If we agree the fact that language, word is a sign of its meaning (but it is not always clear), we will notice the meaning of the word colour in Georgian language. The great Georgian writer Shota Rustaveli (2) in his classical poem “The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin” (XII century), in prologue gave interesting interpretation how the God create the world with the power of word and this creation was given to us: “*Has grunted us the mortals this world, with its endless diversity*” this abstract gives direct explanation what was said in the poem. Shota Rustaveli claims that the world given to us with its uncountable colours (endless diversity) and in this colours he means the whole world itself, the creation. The last creation of the God were human beings and after them the God stopped creation himself, because after him the man was the creation from the God with free spirit, to carry on the process of creation and make things spiritual, alive. Thus this colourful world given to us, must be changed by the human being, we must make this world spiritual, (In Georgian *world* called as “*Samkaro*” or “*Sa-mkar-o*”, “*mkari*” in Georgian means hard, only thing without spirit and prefix-suffix *sa-o* the place where this hard, only things are kept, situated or the world, the place for non-spiritual, only hard things). If the God is the first and the God is covered with light and kindness it seems the basic colour white comes from the nature of the God and white is the main basic colour from which comes others.

Now look after names of the colours in Georgia. The names of colours white (*Tetri*), black (*Shavi*), red (*Tsiteli*), yellow (*Kviteli*), green (*Mtsvane*), blue (*Lurji*) can have variety of embodiment, like: white- light, blue- light blue, red- pink- purple and so on but all other colours, in Georgian have the meaning of their sign. For Example: Pink is *Vardisferi*, *Vardi* is *Rose*, so *Vardisferi* is the colour of rose, as like rose, *Grey=Natsrisferi* is call like colour of ash, like *Ash*, *Ash* is *Natsari* and *Natsrisferi* is *Grey*, brown is called as a colour of coffee, *Kavisferi* = *grey*, *Kava* coffee. In Megrelian language green is called as blue. People in Samegrelo (west part of Georgia) do not differ them from each other, when they say green they mean even blue with the green. The idea about basic colour on the base of the folklore, white seems the first and kind and light non colour from which arises another colours. How does it happens? The white colour has meaning of light, kind, perfect and the opposite of white is black, which is mainly bad, dark, devil spirit colour connected with death and devil. In Megrelian language there is very interesting name for the black colour “*ucha*”, it comes from white and means not-white. For example white is *che*, the prefix-suffix *u-o* means *non*, in common Georgian languages and the black in Megrelian

language is called *u-ch-a*, which means *not-white*. The black, dark, chaos is the first form of the universe, before the God began creation, the world was covered with dark and it was not the devil spirit dark, it was chaos, non visible world from which the light was born. (Gen. 1:1, In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters). In some Georgian tales even chthonic greater like Devi, are called as black also white colours: „*You daughter is with black Devi and to kidnap her trying the white Devi from the underground world*” (Kifshidze 1994, 267).

**Red:** white, light colour has no visible sign, it is colour without colour and it emerge from fire. Fire like the sun makes warm and light for the earth. Red comes from white, when you lit the fire you will see the first invisible step of fire and the next stage is red which is the embodiment of the white, flame is the visible light. In folklore, in healing spells these three colours are main colours having magical power. The red branches of some plants (wild plum, apricot) at the gate of the houses are like amulettes, for keeping the family safe from the devil spirit and bad eyes. People wore red thread on their wrist to save their skin from the hot sun in spring and red is just to defeat the sun. To make a list of omens emphasize the Georgian attitude to red colour: It is the colour of fire, colour of blood, colour of gold (high quality gold), gold itself emphasized the money in Georgian past. In Shota Rustaveli classical poem *Avtandili* tells to Vizier of the king Rostevani to tell the King Rostevani that he wants to go to help Tarieli and bless him on this hard way: „*Now speak thus to the king till others come in to inform him, pleasantly entreat for me my congee, summon up thy courage, and a hundred thousand red pieces shall be bestowed on thee as a bribe.*” (Rustaveli, 739), These *hundred thousand red pieces* are gold as a present to the Vizier of the king. Gold and precious stones not only for money were used in the past, they were connected with happiness and there are several omens that make sure that the gold has magical function with connection the moon not only for Georgian but according to the world experience: *For the latter end it should be enough to jingle coins in the pocket upon seeing a new moon or show money to the moon.* (Ülo Siimets, 2006, 136). Georgian people belief if you touch the gold or coins when you see the new moon and say the magical rhyme: “*New moon, God you make me happy*” the happiness will come. By the healing customs, it is said that it is useful to heal when the moon is full.

Red colour has variety of expression: dark red, light red, purple, flame, pink and red colour has meaning of death, the red colour of the sunrise and sunset was considered as a prediction of death because of this no-one can be buried after sunset, everyone must be buried before the sun will go down for that reason that soul must be risen from the death to the heaven and the death sun will make die him/her. „*Hercules is torn limb from limb: and in this catastrophe we see the blood-red sunset which closes the career of Hercules*” (Doane 1882,485). In Georgian balad „*Tavfaravneli Chabuki*“ (The boy from Paravna), he was in love with the girl who lived in opposite seashore and to see her he must have swum along the sea but one witch will him to die and he was sink in the sea and the narrative tells „*Red silk shirt was upper him*“ which emphasize the death. Red sun and the red colour of the sky when the sun is goes down can predict the windy weather.

Especially the blood is connected to the red colour. The Christian eggs of Easter celebrity. People even contemporary belief took these red eggs to the cemetery in Easter and roll them on the ground under which the death body buried just they believe it helps to the spirit to raise from the death. When the very close relation die you must cut or scratch your face or hand and let the blood go out and it was omen which emphasize the blood help the death to raise from death to life. After christianity this omen has changed and people roll these red eggs with the same meaning. Carrying eggs to the cemeteries is not only Georgian

tradition: „For many countries there is usual on the day of pominoventia klast on am cemetery eggs, especially the red eggs, like blood colour, represented life: eggs \_ newborn life, resurrection of dieth body” (Freidenberg 1998, 185). In the very popular omen of fraternization the young people cut their finger and connect these bleeding fingers and after that they were brothers like from one mother. There is a very strange omen for pregnant lady in Samegrelo, If during her pregnancy she will touch the spleen of the animal (bloody spleen), no matter it will be bull or pig, and she will touch this bloody finger to any part of her body the baby will have red sign in the same place where the mother put the blood.

Red colour as a colour of fire was considered as a thunder colour, follow some parallels with world people imaginations of thunder stones “Thunder stones, stone axes and hammer have been considered thunder symbols not only in the prehistoric Indo-European religion but also in Proto-European religion. (Tarmo Kulmar 2005. 28). Within Georgian belief stones with the hole are magic things to defend people, house from devil, because such stones considered as a stones from the heaven, heavenly stones, as they have hole from the thunder, even they are called thunder stone.

**The yellow** colour represents the illness. Shota Rustaveli in his poem for the characters, heroes to show their bad mood and illnesses said that they have yellow, pale face. Even illnesses are shown in different colours in Georgian folk-lore. There are some kind of illnesses which comes from other world and have white, black and red colours. They are called as „Batonebi“ or Lords, even contemporary belief these „batonebi“ are coming to young people, especially to children and you must follow some rules to admire them, make all wishes of sick person, members of family must not drink, must not cry or go to funeral, they must give presents to sick, sing songs and after some times (it depends of illness, may be forty days or more and less) this illness will leave the sick happily and he/she will recover. In the room, decorated with pieces of coloured cloth and flowers, full of the fragrance of rose water, and beautiful chanting is aimed at pleasing, flattering and coaxing out the wicked spirits „batonebi“, that are nesting in the body of the sick child. This illness is called like „Tsiteli Batonebi“ Red Lords and for medicine they are some infection illnesses must be done vaccination. Even after recovering you must take red cock and go to the oak tree and sacrifice just to emphasize you are thankful to the „batonebi“ or Lords that they left you in peace and save.

Now after overviewing the matter of the colours it is obliged to talk about the rainbow with seven colours as it is believed in the world people. The rainbow is appears when it is the rain comes and the same time the sun shines. In the Bible rainbow is a sign of the covenant between Jehovah and Noah: „I do set my bow in the cloud and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and earth” (Genesis 9.13). Georgian writers in a very usual manner use the rainbow as a symbol of peace and hope the God will never leave the world in trouble. „The etymology of the Estonian word vikerkaar - 'rainbow' is rather ambiguous. Word viker has several derivation possibilities, it could have originated from the following meanings: from 'multicoloured', 'scythe' or 'thunder', as its name is in Livonian - a cognate language to Estonian - pit'kiz kor 'thunder bow'. In other Balto-Finnic languages the rainbow is usually connected with rain: Finnish, Ingrian and Karelian sateenkaari, Izhorian vihmakarDo. Swedish regnbåge, Old Norse regnbogi, Danish regnbue. Widespread is the connection with heaven - German dialectal Himmelring, French arc-en-ciel. In Latin there are several different expressions denoting rainbow: arcus pluvius 'rainbow', arcus caelestis 'bow of the heaven or gods', arcus coloratus 'coloured bow'. One can also refer to the Greek word **Ἥρα**. In Greek mythology Iris was

the daughter of Thaumias and Electra, the sister of harpies and a messenger of Olympian gods. Since Hesiodos she has been represented both as a goddess of rainbow and its impersonation. At the same time the rainbow could be the belt of Iris and a footpath between heaven and earth. The original meaning of the word iris is 'path, band'. Interesting is also the Latvian word for rainbow - varavīksne, meaning literally 'copperelm'. So is the Estonian word vikerkaar compared with other languages rather curious. It is not quite clear if the meaning of the word viker 'multicoloured' is secondary, derived from rainbow or vice versa, but nevertheless it is an unique word referring probably to the colours of rainbow. (Sarapik 1998,7-19). Thunder is associated with rainbow (modern Estonian word vikerkaar is derived from the word pikkerkaar, or „arch of thunder“), the belt of thunder god. (Tarmo Kulmar 2005, 26) According these examples about the etymology of the rainbows, Georgian name of the rainbow sounds like the belt of the sky. Tsisartkela is compose Tsa=sky and Sartkeli=belt. In Georgian folklore rainbow representation is the same as almost in the European cultural area, it is the version from the Bible. To talk about the number of colours of rainbow there was three-colours rainbow theory, four-colours theory connected with the four elements (earth, air, water, fire) but mostly seven colours for the rainbow I think comes from the meaning of number seven, which is believed to be the representation of perfection and plenty. “With the sun and moon were often associated the five visible planets, forming a sacred seven \_ a figure which is continually cropping up in religious emblems” (Thomas Inman 1884, 113). In Shota Rustaveli’s poem “The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin” seven represent the perfection of kingdom of the king Farsadani: THOU knowest, as every man knows, of India’s seven kings. (310). Seven stars to whom was talking Avtandili were the hope and faith of him who was going on his way to rescue friend Tariel. These seven kings do not represent only the number of kings, it is also the number which emphasize the heaven, perfection.

Folklore is not only myth, imaginations, it is also the fiction, poetry like literature. Fictions like “the sun of the night” can be seen by the new man with special spiritual energy in Georgian folklore, in Megrelian materials given like this:

*Have you ever seen the sun was sitting in the sky  
in the middle of the night?  
New man was pleased to see this,  
There were birds sitting and telling stories,  
Mother bird light the candle to the God for her children.  
There are too many miracles like this in the world,  
You must be the more than a man just to see this.* (Gudava, 1975, 161)

It is not usual for folklore to have such poem but it is not literary version. In Georgian literary heritage there are three examples of using the “sunny night” as a symbol of the God, in the Shota Rustaveli’s “The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin”, as a mystical-allegoric name of the God in Davit Guramishvili’s (4) “Davitiani” (XVIII century) and when it is said about David the Builder (5), the great king of Georgian state in the XII century, in the working of Petre Laradze (6) (XII century). By Shota Rustaveli and other philosophers the sun was called as the visible icon of the God. “Out of the Universal Logos proceeds the “invisible light” of the spirit, the truth, Law and the life embracing and penetrating the cosmos, while the visible light of nature is only its most material aspect or mode of manifestation, in the same sense as the visible sun is the reflex of its divine prototype, the invisible centre of power or the great spiritual sun” (Magic, White and Black, 2010, 7) which is the first lighter of the world. From the Bible: “16 God made two great lights --the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. 17 God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, 18 to

govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 And there was evening, and there was morning the fourth day". There are too many pagan rituals connected with the cult of the sun, with the victory of light over the darkness. There is one interesting myth about the sun and the moon: *According to Incan myths the Moon (Killa) was at first brighter than the Sun. The sun grew jealous and threw ashes on Moon's face, so that its brightness dimmed, resembling the moon of today (McKenzie & Prime & George & Dunning 2001. 129)*. To compare some Georgian examples about the sun and the moon: by Georgian mythology: why the moon is hidden and hiding his face? It was said: The Moon and The sun were couples and they were playing together and getting nerves of one lady who milks the cow. The lady took the droppings and threw to the sun and the moon. The sun managed to wash in the milk but the moon could not, so he is hiding his face and appears only nights. The sun and the moon were called as an eyes of the day and night. The sun is the source of sight and life and there is a very interesting word in Georgian for sight "mzera" mze or the sun and from this "mzera" or glance, able to see.

There are too many emblems of the sun in the world folklore.

**The Trees of the Sun.** The beginning of the New Year was depend on the sun. For very ancient people every the spring and the summer was the beginning of the year after long winter. There were too many rituals connected to the New Year and there are variety of belief for every people. In Georgia New Year three was „*chichilaki*” which is made from the nut tree and empasize the tree with cairly spiral hairs and on a top of the *chichilaki* there is a cross and limbs of the cross are of equal length. This *chichilaki* must be decorated with fruit and leaves of ivy and others. Why ivy? Thomas Inman gave very easy explanation why some trees were adored by people, some of them for their body, some of them for their nature and „*fig-tree, because its leaves resembles the male traid, ivy was sacred from a similar cause*” (thomas Inman 1884, XXII). For me this tree is symbol of the sun with her spiral, cairly hairs and for the nut was considered as a totem tree for the sun god this *chichilaki* was made from the nut tree. There are many interesting explanation about *chichilaki* and I will begin from the cross as a symbol of the sun. The esoteric meaning of the cross is very ancient and the cross has existed as a secret symbol probably thousands of years ago before the christian era. The edoration of the cross has been more general in the world than that of any other emblem:”*The cross, which was so universally adored, in its different forms among heathen nations, was intended as an emblem or symbol of the sun, of eternal life, the generative powers, to the Egyptian the cross was rhe symbol of immortality, an emblem of the sun and the god himself was crucified to the tree, which denoted his fruetifying power*” (Doane 1882, 351,484). The cross which is on a top of the *chichilaki* represents the movement of the sun in every side: North, East, West, South. With connection of the *chichilaki* there is very interesting omen killing the pig for cristmass in the west part of Georgia, in Samegrelo. In many countries it is tradition to have the pork for christmass. There is interesting parralel with this ritual and *chichilaki*. As I mentioned before the tree of the totem sun was nut, pig is eating the nut and for this pig was considered as an animal of totem sun and every summer to adore the summer must be killed the pig and its head must be given to the sun, thus the pork was not allowed to eat, but there is a legend among Georgian about allowance of pork eating after Christianity. New Year day in Georgia sometimes is called as a day of Saint Basili, for the church celebrate the day of Saint Basili in 1st of January. After christianity New Year is conneceted to the christmass but all ancient rituals connected to the sun transfered to the christmass and killing the pig or having pork on a Christmass table is still exist in contemporary.

## NOTES

- 1 Megrelian Language \_ sister language of Georgian, spoken in the west part of Georgia
- 2 Shota Rustaveli \_ Georgian writer XII century, author of wellknown poem „Koble in the Tiger’s Skin”
- 3 Konstantine Gamsakhurdia \_ Great Georgian writer, XX century
- 4 Davit Guramishvili \_ Georgian poet, author of poetry Davitiani
- 5 Davit the Builder \_ King of Georgia, David IV, known as David the Builder, Greatest and the most successful ruler in history
- 6 Petre Laradze \_ Georgian Poet, Calligrapher, XVIII century

## Conclusion

The above discussion and examples are about some symbols in Georgian folklore, in the article some examples are from the Megrelian folk materials, the colours of the sun and their meanings, derivation of the basic colours from the light, white colour. How the meaning of the crosses, new year trees and some rituals dedicated to them are given in people’s life, some colours as the meaningful existence and not only the variety of colours are spread in speech, language as the source of inspiration and the words are full of sense

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## THE ALLOMOTIFS IN FOLKTALES ABOUT FEMALE NATURE SPIRITS

### Abstract

This paper analyses several different memic topics and allomotifs of folk belief tales about female nature spirits which share an equivalent symbolic meaning. They speak of certain kinds of knowledge and skills that these beings convey to people and about their attitudes and characteristics. On the basis of the rich material about these supernatural beings from the regions where Slavic, German and Romance cultures have intertwined, are analysed different allomotifs connected with them. These motives are discussed in six chapters which present six characteristics of the female nature spirits. These features symbolically indicate what may be termed as universal human concept of the fairy world and of people's perception of its inhabitants. Proposed are new aspects on the research and understanding of this subject.

ეს ნაშრომი არის მდედრობითი სქესის ბუნებრივ სულებზე ზღაპრებში, რომლებსაც აქვთ თანაბარი სიმბოლური მნიშვნელობა. ამ ზღაპრებში გადმოცემულია განსაზღვრული ცოდნისა და უნარების შესახებ, რომლებსაც ეს არსებები გადასცემენ ადამიანებს და ასევე ის დამოკიდებულებები და თვისებები, რომლებსაც ისინი ავლენენ ადამიანების მიმართ. სლავური, გერმანული და რომანული კულტურის შეერთების ადგილებში მოძიებული უმდიდრესი მასალის საფუძველზე გაანალიზებულია ამ ზებუნებრივ არსებებთან დაკავშირებული განსხვავებული მოტივები. ეს მოტივები ნაშრომის ექვს თავშია განხილული, რომლებშიც ამ მდედრობითი სქესის ზებუნებრივი არსებების ექვსი განსხვავებული თვისებაა განხილული. ეს თვისებები სიმბოლურად აღნიშნავენ რაოდენ უნივერსალურია ადამიანის კონცეფცია ჯადოსნური მსოფლიოს მიმართ და ადამიანის აღქმის შესაძლებლობა ამ მსოფლიოს ბინადართა მიმართ. ნაშრომში ამ საკითხის კვლევისა და გაგების ახლებური ასპექტებია შემოთავაზებული.

**Keywords:** *fairies, folktales, nature spirits, supernatural beings, folklore, folk belief, folk narrative, allomotif, meme*

Different nations in different regions have various perceptions of female nature spirits with all kinds of names, but with similar characteristics. These nature spirits can appear in diverse types of narratives. The motifs in which they appear in folktales can be completely heterogeneous – but as Alan Dundes stressed – they can be understood as parallel allomotifs (Dundes 1962). These allomotifs have different contents but they have similar symbolical meaning.

Supernatural forest beings were in the 19<sup>th</sup> century considered as vegetational demons and personifications of the wild nature (Mannhardt 1874). Later they were perceived as the masters of animals (Schmidt 1952). According to Lutz Röhrich, the origin

of the beliefs about spirits of the forest – such as the wild men, the wild women, and the fairies – exhibit the relics of the veneration of the nature or the deities of nature, for example *Artemis* of ancient Greece, the *Dionysus* of ancient Mediterranean, the Italic *Silvanus*, and the Celtic *Cernunnos* (Röhrich 1976: 142-195), the Italic *Silvanus*, and the Celtic *Cernunnos*. Local beliefs in supernatural beings of the natural world were unquestionably based on these imaginations but have gradually faded and blended with more recent cultural and religious elements.

The Celtic-Roman and also the Slavic, mythology about fairies, which largely formed the basis of Slovene lore, arose from the fusion of different Indo-European beliefs in destiny and in the supernatural beings of nature. The concept of fairies was also a product of beliefs associated with the cult of fertility (Kropej 2012: 52-53).

In the Slovene popular tradition, fairies are depicted as invisible beings that occasionally, although rarely, allowed people to see them. In 1884, Josip Pajek wrote that in 1789 there were still people in *Štajerska*/Styria who were claiming that fairies, that is the white ladies, existed but were only rarely seen. However, people did hear them sing (Pajek 1884: 248). Mijat Stojanović described Balkan fairies as tall and slim ladies with white faces, long hair and with goat feet.<sup>4</sup> (Arkiv 1852: 380).

In Slovenian ethnical territory, fairies had a number of names. They were called the white lady, the black lady<sup>5</sup>, or *thematica*<sup>6</sup>. In Carinthia, people knew them as the *žalik žena*, *žal žena*, or *žalka*. In the vicinity of Kranjska Gora and in other parts of *Gorenjsko*/Upper Carniola the fairy was called *jebek žena*. The term *žalik žene* derives from the German *selig* (sacred, blessed), in Austria they were called the *Seligen Fräulein*, and in Slovenia the *svete žene* (sacred ladies). *Jebek žena*, on the other hand, has very likely acquired her name from the German *ewig* (eternal). Other beings that were equated with the fairies were called the *modre žene* (wise ladies), the *častitke* (the venerable ladies), the *božje deklice* (maidens of God), the *šembilje* (Sibyls). Reputedly they led a secluded life in remote places, and as such were depicted as priestesses and prophetesses, as for example the Sibyls and the Pythias of ancient Greece. They were interpreted as the original inhabitants who had withdrawn from human dwellings, and like the Fates foretold people's destiny:

*The Sibyls the soothsayers, the white ladies, the venerable ladies, the žalik žene, the maidens of God, or the Fates, were Slovene pre-Christian prophetesses and priestesses /.../ They knew everything. Standing on mountains and hillocks, they shouted loudly, advising people on when to plough and sow, and on which days to celebrate the festivals of that time. They also liked to come to the village, to visit people and do them a kind deed. Sometimes a white lady would take care of the animals in the stable even before the housewife arose in the morning. When a child was born into this world they were there, and this is why they were called the Fates. They would go and work in the fields, and in particular they loved to weed the millet. Every farmer was overjoyed to behold a white lady in his field, for afterwards everything grew abundantly, just like the hop plant. Happy was the house to which the white lady arrived! /.../ This was in the olden times. They were greatly honored by the Slovenes, and even though more than a thousand years have passed since their disappearance our people still talk of them a lot /.../.*<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Mijat Stojanović, Što puk naš pripovjeda o vilah? *Arkiv za povestnicu jugoslavensku* 2. Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski (Ed.). Zagreb 1852, 380–403. 380

<sup>5</sup>Kelemina 1930: 193, No. 132.

<sup>6</sup>Freuensfeld 1884: 298.

<sup>7</sup>Nekaj od Slovencev (Something about the Slovenes), *Novice* II, No. 40 (November 2, 1844): 169.

This brief quotation indicates that the lore about the fairies, or the *žalik žene*, was intertwined with the lore about the Fates, and simultaneously also with the lore of the so-called “sacred ladies” or the “venerable ladies”, who possessed certain healing and clairvoyant abilities. What all of them have in common is clairvoyance. They were able to foretell destiny, the future, the weather, and good or bad harvest.

In the Slovene popular tradition, the Fates<sup>8</sup>, also called the *rojenice*, *sojenice* and in Dolenjsko/Lower Carniola the *jesenice*, were the fairies who predicted the child’s destiny at birth. Matevž Ravnikar - Poženčan wrote about the Fates, or the Parcae following:

*When a child is born they come to the house to determine its’ fate. A loaf of bread must always be placed on the table on this occasion. The first Parka threads the thread of life, the second keeps spinning it, and the third cuts it when that person dies.*<sup>9</sup>

Many folk tales and legends narrate about the Fates, the *žalik žene*, and the fairies, who predict inauspicious destiny for the newborn child, for example that at a certain age the child will be struck by lightning (ATU 934 The Prince and the Storm) or that the child will kill his mother and father, just like in the myth of Oedipus or the folktale type ATU 931, where he accidentally kills his parents.

### **Fairies Teach People to Sing and Dance, and to Perform Various Chores**

It was believed that fairies gathered at dusk and at nighttime and danced, sang, or strolled through the fields. Wherever they lingered they brought fertility and prosperity. According to some tales, it was the fairies who taught people to sing and dance. This role was assumed also by the Fates. In the vicinity of Varaždin, Matija Valjavec recorded the following story:

*The Fates were three beautiful, tall, slender, and very strong women. They only seldom appeared at childbirth. Most frequently they let themselves be seen by girls they had taught to spin and sing. But when the girls started to whistle the Fates hid from them as well.* (Valjavec 1866: 24-25).

This example clearly indicates that there has been a transfer, or transmission, of the lore about the fairies and the Fates.

Among those who had taught people to sing were also the mermaids. This is evident from a tale recorded in Svetinje in Styria by Josip Frauensfeld.

*Mankind learned to sing from the mermaids. All the beautiful hymns that are sung in our churches are the work of mermaids, and they are also responsible for other pretty songs.* (Freuensfeld 1884, 297-298; Kelemina 1930: 211, no. 146/I).

The legends about Watersprite teaching people how to play the violin are spread also in Nordic countries, and Reidar Christiansen listed this type of the legend among migratory legends: “Watersprite Teaches Someone to play” (Christiansen 1958: 77)

In addition to singing and dancing, the fairies had also taught people to spin, launder, bake bread, and perform other domestic tasks. In a tale recorded in *Goriško* (in Litoral part of Slovenia) by Jožef Kragelj in 1862, the *divja žena* (wild lady) taught people how to tie the vine during plowing.

*Under the rocky mass live the wild women. When they see people are having a hard time they willingly offer their help. Once there was a wild woman who told a plower whose vine was always tearing in two what to do to improve his plowing. She stepped out from under the rock ontoit and cried out:*

*“Make the vine other way*

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<sup>8</sup>The name is probably derived from the term *jasnica*, meaning the soothsayer, and thus a seer.

<sup>9</sup>Ravnikar - Poženčan, manuscript from the National and University Library in Ljubljana: NUK, Ms 483, fascicle XI.

*So that it will be firm”*

*The plower followed her advice and from then on, his vine has never torn again.*<sup>10</sup>

In Rhaeto-Romanic and in Slovene popular traditions, the wild man had taught people how to make cheese (Grafenauer 1952-1953, 1954). And according to some tales, the blacksmiths had learned how to forge from *Šembilja*. One of such tales “How *Šembilja* Unintentionally Taught a Blacksmith to Forge” was written in Tolminsko in 1868 by Anton Pegan (Pegan/Černigoj 2007: 159-160).

The belief that fairies possess special knowledge about the healing powers of plants and objects, and can heal people and animals, is widespread not only in Slovenia but throughout Europe.

Their magical healing power is similar to the healing ability of the Illyrian mythological pair *Faunus* and *Fauna*, Celtic gods *Belinus* and *Belena*, or the Illyrian *Silvanus* and *Silvana*. In Slovene oral tradition, numerous tales have been preserved about the fairies who taught people to heal, frequently by taking them to their fairy world for some time.

Fairies could also bring about the rise of mineral springs such as the spring of *Gospodična* in the hilly area of Gorjanci in *Dolenjsko/Lower Carniola*.<sup>11</sup>

According to a folk tale from Srobotnik in the upper part of the Kolpa valley, fairies rewarded a young shepherdess who had found them sleeping in the scorching sun and built a shady protection for them with some branches. As a reward, she was taught various healing practices (Primc 1999: 121; reprinted in: Štefan 2011: 66-67).

According to Eva Pócs, the main indicator that a person has come into contact with supernatural beings is disease (Pócs 2009: 404). Such a person becomes weak or ill, either physically or mentally. If they survive they have the power of healing, soothsaying, and the ability to contact the afterworld. This motif may be found in a number of tales of South Slavic and the Balkan peoples as well as those from Central Europe.

**Fairies teach people to:**

sing and dance

spin, bake bread, and do other domestic and farm chores

blacksmith skills

tie the vine for plowing

heal

soothsay

**Disastrous Fairies and Fairy Apparitions**

Like most supernatural beings of nature, fairies can be equally terrifying and deadly. Their ambivalent nature is reflected, among other things, in the punishments that befall those who wander into their secret world. A logger who would try to cut down a tree in which fairies resided would not come out of the woods alive.

A similar fate befell those who observed fairies in places where they regularly came to sing and dance. This is confirmed in a tale from Svetinje in *Štajersko/Styria*:

*Mermaids rise at eleven at night from the sea and sing for an hour. But woe to those who would come to listen! Their songs are so beautiful that they lure anybody into the water.* (Freuensfeld 1884: 297-298; Kelemina 1930: 211, no. 146/I).

<sup>10</sup>Archives of the ISN ZRC SAZU: The Legacy of Karel Štrekel:ŠZ 7/43. Compare also manuscript by Fran Sreboški Peterlin, ŠZ 7/217,29 (Kropej 1995: 219-220) .

<sup>11</sup>Janez Trdina, Bajke in povesi o Gorjancih (Belief Tales and Folk tales about Gorjanci). Ljubljanski zvon, 1882-1888.

In Greek mythology, the mythological *Sirens* in the form of a huge bird with a woman's head lured to perdition anyone who sailed close to their island near Sicily. The same fate awaited mariners who were enticed to the sea by *Scylla* and *Charybdis*, the two beautiful nymphs from Greek mythology who were bewitched into sea monsters with six heads by the witch Circe. Each stood on an opposite cliff that formed a strait, and those who were lured there were usually doomed.

People who had joined fairies to dance in their fairy circle may have disappeared for as many as a hundred or three hundred years although for them, only one or three hours seemed to pass during the dance. In the fairy world years pass as fast as lightening (Hartland 1891: 161-254). But those who had joined in the fairy dance could nevertheless be saved if the rescuer came exactly a year later, to exactly the same spot and at the same time, and threw his coat onto his lost friend (Krauβ 1890: 80-91).

People used to recount that mermaids were just as dangerous during dancing as the fairies. Anton Mailly writes about the nymphs from the shores of Lake Bohinj who force a young man to dance with them until dawn. In the end, he is so exhausted that he falls to the ground and dies (Mailly / Matičetov 1989: 8, no. 30).

South Slavic folktale "Stanko and the Fairy" narrates about a shepherd named Stanko, who played beautifully on his shepherd's flute. When the Angelus bell tolled he did not start to pray but instead played the melody on his flute, and was punished. A Fairy appeared before him, and from that moment on he could not find peace any more. The fairy was following him like a shadow, even when he ate or slept. Neither the priest nor the witch doctor could help him. Totally deranged, he was finally found stabbed in a cave (Krauβ 1884, pp. 241-242).

People who had been lured to remote places by the fairies returned to their homes only with great difficulty, and were physically or mentally afflicted. Some of them returned only after three hundred years, thinking that only a day has passed.

Fig. 4: The apparition of the White Lady – *Bela žena*. Illustration by Felician von Myrbach (*Österreichisch-ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild*. Wien 1891).

Negative image of the fairy is metaphorically reflected in the image of the fairy temptress, or an illusion leading to perdition. Such is the origin of *Fata Morgana*, which became a synonym for a mirage that no one can resist, and which drives a person to destruction and ultimately death. The concept of *Fata Morgana*, originally the mistress of the kingdom of the dead, became increasingly similar to the concept of *Luxuria*, the ancient goddess of lechery and debauchery, until they amalgamated into the image of the fatal apparition. They were also linked with certain elements of the lore of witches. Specially in South Slavic tradition the attributes of the fairies were often transferred to the witches, as Eva Pócs has already established (Pócs 1989). Similarly to the fairies, witches lured passersby deep into the forest, or else disguised as small lights led them through shrubbery and thorns, where they wandered about, unable to find their way home (Mencej 2006, p. 195).



In Friuli in Italy people believed that the *angane* (mermaids) and the washerwomen strolled along river banks and torrents, waiting for their victims to drown them (Nicoloso Ciceri 1992: 430).

Fatal Fairies  
pull people below the water;  
lure passersby into the water to drown and sailors to wreck their boats;  
by tying their legs with their long hair, they drown the bathers;  
those who dance with them disappear and can be saved exactly a year later, in the same place;  
transformed into small lights or an apparition, they lure people into the unknown;  
lead people into their fairy world;  
pursue people until they go insane and die an unnatural death.

#### Fairies Bring Fertility to the Land

People often associated the appearance of fairies with fertility that they bestow upon nature. These beliefs probably derive from the association of the popular tradition on the fairies with fertility cults, for example the cults of Mother Earth or of goddess *Nerthus* (*Berta*, *Percht*), Slavic *Mokoš*, the Celtic goddess of motherhood and water *Modron*, the Greek *Artemis*, and the Roman *Diana*.

In the Valley of river *Soča*/Isonco, for example, people told of the *divje žene* (wild ladies) who had dug out a new riverbed for the river *Soča* (Kelemina 1930: 299, no. 216).

There are numerous tales of fairies creating different plants on the earth. In Istria, for example, fairies perceived that the land was not cultivated so they planted the vine and the olive trees, and brought salt from the sea (Mailly/Matičeto 1989: 75, No. 23).

According to some etiological tales, flowers grow on a rocky slope that was wetted by fairy tears; one of these flowers is the edelweiss (*Stella alpina*). People have interpreted the morning frost in meadows with the gems the fairies have lost from their dresses as they were returning from their nightly strolls at daybreak (Mailly/Matičeto 1989: 74-75, no. 21, 22).

According to oral sources, fairies made an appearance also on the eve of St. John. Anton Mailly writes that in the vicinity of Idrija, fairies and dwarfs danced together on the local hill *Pringl*, scattering golden sparks on the inhabitants. If a spark fell on a house its owner was blessed in everything he did throughout the following year. Couples who were engaged could expect soon to be married (Mailly/Matičeto 1989: 76, no. 24). These beliefs were also known in Italy, and were mentioned by the Slovene polihistor Valvasor who wrote about the popular tradition of *Lokve* near Trieste (II, 232 and IV, 597).<sup>12</sup>

Folk tales frequently mention that people used to leave in the fields and meadows milk, dumplings, and other food as an offering for the fairies. In return, fairies would do certain field chores for them. Sometimes they also took care of the cattle in the barn, and groomed horses.

Like the fairies, the wild ladies and the *krivopete* were friendly to those who left them food as offering. They protected their homes and children, reaped wheat, and helped in other ways. Sometimes they enticed a person to perform different chores for them but in return they taught them certain skills and revealed secrets. But if people divulged this knowledge to others, upon returning home, they were punished.

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<sup>12</sup>Published also by Kelemina 1930: 170, No. 115/I.

Wild ladies, the *duge babe* and the *krivopete* around Idrija, in the Tolminsko region, in Trenta Valley, and in Slavia Veneta, as well as the fairies and the wild ladies in other parts of Italy, in Slovenia, Austria, and Croatia, advised people on when to sow, for example horse bean, and when to reap wheat. And even when the time for that seemed completely inappropriate, like their recommendation that wheat has to be sown over the winter snows, or that it needs to be harvested when still green, their advice always brought prosperity and abundance, or else saved people from famine.<sup>13</sup>

Seated on high, steep rocks, they gave people advice for abundant harvest yet also took repayment by themselves, for example they stole the village children from their homes while everybody was working in the fields (Trinko 1884).

Reputedly the fairies also had their own livestock, for example the white ladies that guarded Goldenhorn's magical garden on top of the Julian Alps, where they also grazed their own herd of wild goats.

Tales from Bela Krajina mention that fairies would come at night to graze their red cattle on the banks of the river Kolpa. Occasionally they abducted a village boy so that he could graze their herds.<sup>14</sup> He could escape only by crawling through the forked branch of a bramble or another thorny shrub, fording a river, or crossing in time the border that separated the fairy and the human dwellings.

#### *Fairies Reward a Human for His Good Deed*

As already mentioned fairies in the Slavic and the Roman lore reward shepherds for their kindness, for example for building a shade over them while they are asleep; returning their clothes; or taking them home to their fairy mother. In a legend recorded by Anton Mailly, a young shepherd found in the Baška woods on the Croatian island of *Krk/Veglia* fairy's clothes. When he returned them to the fairy he was rewarded with a herd of goats that started to follow his sheep as he was returning home. As instructed by the fairy, he kept repeating to himself, "One white, and one black!" When he turned he saw a multitude of goats coming from the sea and following him. He became extremely wealthy and lived happily ever after (Mailly/Matičev 1989: 75-76, no. 23/II).

In another variant from the same island, the boy planted some branches in the dirt to protect a sleeping fairy from the sun. But when the fairy woke up the boy was so scared of her horse's legs and green hood that he ran home and died of fear.<sup>15</sup>

Tales of this kind abounded in Slovenia, Croatia, Slavia Veneta, and in northern parts of Italy.

A shepherd who provides shade for the fairies is sometimes rewarded with a small bell or a flute, which compels to dance anybody who hears its music. The motif of the flute that forces a gentleman to dance in the thorns is the so-called "ATU 592 "Dance in Thorns". It can be found also in Grimm's fairytales and in Basil's Pentameron (I, 3, "Pervonto").<sup>16</sup>

According to accounts from Primorsko, a wild hunt of some sort hurried across the vast plains and forests also in the early spring and late winter, particularly in February when the *vesne* stormed about. Inhabitants of Ročinj described this phenomenon with the following words:

*In this month (February), which is why it is also called the 'vesnar', they come from high mountains -, where they have beautiful palaces and discuss that year's crops, or who will die that year -they drive every evening between 11 p.m. and midnight low wooden carts*

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<sup>13</sup>See examples in: Dapit, Kropelj 1999: Nos. 12, 13, 15

<sup>14</sup>Samotar, Zalik-žene na Volinjaku pri Prevaljah. Mir 12/ 2 (Jan. 20, 1893), 5, feuilletton.

<sup>15</sup>Da Ive, Archivio 20, 294, No. IX; cited after: Mailly/Matičev 1989, p. 191.

<sup>16</sup>Mailly/Matičev 1989: 191-192.

close to the path. Since the carts are made from one piece their wheels squeak. Yet only those who have an innate ability to do so can hear this sound. But woe to those who are run over by their cart, for they shall die in a year and a day's time! This is why they are dangerous especially for drunks who stagger along the path for they may easily find themselves under the cart. (Pegan/Černigoj 2007: 151).

In the vicinity of Gorica, similar stories could be heard about the *vesle*.

They say that the *vesle* are mares who pull harrows between eleven at night and midnight. They are as fast, and perhaps even faster, than the wind. Their harrows strike sparks that are visible from afar. One cannot escape them, and those who are run over become so disfigured that they are unable to do much for the rest of their lives. (Pegan/Černigoj 2007: 153).

It was said that the *vesle* were similar to mares, which indicates that they had hooves. Hooves were an attribute also of the *farce* from the Bovško region:

*Farce* had hooves like horses. You couldn't see them, you just hear them trot by at night. But if you heard them you had to quickly lie down in the ditch, and remain quiet, very quiet. For if they caught you they could even tear you apart. Oh yes, people often heard them go through Nakel, on the road from Čezsoča toward Bovec. (Ivančič Kutin 2013: 14).

Similar to the *farce* are the *fate* (also named the *fadis* and the *krivopete*) of Friuli. These beings primarily revived the nature but also acted as a regulator of social and personal life (Nicoloso Ciceri 1992: 436).

The people of Bovško told similar scary stories also of the *pirte* (the *pehtre*) and the *fidinje*.

In one of the motifs about these female beings the *perice* (washerwomen), who resembled *Pehtra*, quietly laundered their clothes at night in ponds, water holes, and springs. An accidental observer received a blow in the face from their iron arm. An iron arm, leg, or nose is frequently an attribute of *Pehtra Baba*, *Jaga Baba* and *Bercht*, who are important female deities in Slavic and Germanic tradition.

The lore about the female supernatural beings of nature is extremely complex. It is evidently linked to the beliefs connected with midwinter deities, or even to the principal Slavic myth about *Perun*, *Veles*, and *Mokoš*.

*Fairies Cause Rain and Thunderstorms*

Similarly to the *Baba* and the *Pehtra Baba* the fairies, and especially the wild women, the *biele babe* (white women), and the *štrije* (witches), could produce thunderstorms and rain.<sup>17</sup> In addition to predicting weather, they could induce the gathering of clouds, thunderstorms, and hail. In Primorje/the Littoral part of Slovenia and Slavia Veneta, the wild women, the *dujačese*, and the *krivopete* appeared on mountain cliffs and peaks prior to bad weather and thunderstorms. People believed that they, like witches, or the *štrije*, bring hail. The same characteristics were ascribed to the washerwomen and the Fates.

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<sup>17</sup>More about this see: Hrobat Virgolet 2010.

Fairies bring fertility  
by driving through or dancing in the fields, forests, and meadows;  
on Midsummer Day they dance with dwarfs, sparking golden sparks that bring prosperity;  
digging the riverbeds;  
they plant or create plants and make the morning dew;  
they advise on when to sow and when to reap;  
they bestow the gift of a flock of sheep, a ball of thread, or a bell that fulfills wishes; they help with plowing and other farm chores;  
bringing food to workers in the field;  
causing rain or thunderstorms.

#### Fairy as Wife or Lover

The person who did a good deed for a fairy, for example untangled her hair from branches or provided shade for the sleeping fairy or her child, was rewarded with a flock of sheep or goats that started to follow until the moment that person turned around or reached home. If a shepherd wished so, the fairies repaid their debt by giving him exceptional physical strength.

According to some narratives, the fairy who wishes to repay his good deed fulfills the request of the young man and even takes him for her husband. The motif of the fairy wife (Mot. F.301.6), in the French tradition known as *Melusine*, is often the central motif of the stories about the fairies. Such relationships produce heroes, particularly in epic poems of the South Slavic nations. Occasionally the fairy acts only as a surrogate mother who has given the hero his exceptional strength or the ability to surmount obstacles or defeat an enemy. Among such heroes were knights *Lancelot*, *Wigalois*, and *Tristan de Nanteuil*; *Ljutica Bogdan*, *Zmaj Ognjeni Vuk*, *Peter Klepec*, *Bikec Markec* (Mark the Bullock), shepherd Mate<sup>18</sup> and *Kraljevič Marko* (Prince Marko)<sup>19</sup>.

People recounted that the family of Polhar was descended from a fairy. Once a handsome young man from this family beheld beneath Mt. Učka a beautiful young girl dressed in white asleep on a lawn. In order to build a shade to protect her from the sun he cut a large branch and placed it over to the girl. In return, the fairy granted his wish and married him. Years later, she left him because he told her that she was a fairy, but she continued to raise their daughter. This daughter was the ancestor of the Polhar family.<sup>20</sup>

The Fairy wife  
agrees to a marriage when a young man proposes;  
the fairy becomes his wife after a young man creates a shade for her;  
the fairy gets married because acting upon the advice of a priest, a young man puts a stole around her;  
the fairy gets married because a youth stole her fairy dress.

In Resia, Milko Matičetov recorded a belief tale about a young *dujačesa* who fell in love with a man from Resia, married him, and gave birth to their child. But when he called

<sup>18</sup>Bošković-Stulli 1959; No. 108, pp. 131-132.

<sup>19</sup>Šmitek 2005: 24-38, No. 16, 17, 18.

<sup>20</sup>Novice 11, No. 76 (September 21, 1853), 303.

out to her in anger: “The wild woman – the wanderous – save yourself”<sup>21</sup>, she left him (Matičetov 1968: 21).

Such lore is widespread also among the Croatians, Serbians, and Italians, and was collected also by Maja Bošković-Stulli (1959: 131-132; 197-199), Branislav Krstić (1937), Tihomir Đorđević (1953), and Milovan Gavazzi (1951).

However, the conjugal bliss with a fairy, the *žalik žena*, or the *krivopeta* lasts only until the husband violates the taboo, for example when he calls her by her real name or else hits her, calls her names, utters the wrong words, divulges their children her secret, etc. At that moment, the fairy vanishes.

When the fairy mother abandons her children, she either allows to live only the children who will be honest later in life; or the fairy mother divides the children precisely in half; if she has three children one is torn in half; or the fairy mother takes good care of her child even after she leaves her husband, and the child is always tidy and well behaved.

Fig. 6: The woman cuts off the braid of a sleeping fairy. Illustration by Franjo Stiplovšek (V. Möderndorfer, *Koroške narodne pripovedke*. Celje 1946).



Also in Carinthia the *žalik žena* was said to visit a farmer and share his bed, thus bringing prosperity to his home. The *žalik žena* left if the lady of the house or another member of the household chased her away, cursed her, or cut off her hair. Sometimes she presented the lady of the house with thread that had no end. But the moment anybody uttered the words “When will this thread end?” the thread ended (Jarnik 1813). Matija Majar Ziljski published already in 1847 in *Kolo* the passage below:

*Fairy Presents a Piece of Thread*

*White ladies would also come to farmhouses. - On this particular morning, when the housewife rises from her bed, which she shares with her mate, and wants*

*to get ready to start her daily chores, a white lady enters the room. She candidly lies down on the still-warm side of the bed, next to the farmer. This occurred (as they say) in a house in Rožje. The fairy's long blonde hair were hanging to the floor. When the farmer's wife returns to the room she sees the hair on the floor and replaces it on the bed so it will not get dirty. Just before leaving the house, the white lady presents the woman with a bit of thread: “This is in return for what you did for me,” she says, “But you shouldn't wonder about it at all.” The woman starts to wind the thread into a ball. She winds it and winds it, and already has several balls. Then a neighboring woman comes for a visit. Seeing the ball of thread, she hits her knees with her palms in wonder, and exclaims: “Oh, my god! What kind of thread is this?” And at that very moment the thread ends. (Majar 1847: 14-15).*

According to popular tradition, the Fates may also become wives to young men. Matevž Ravnikar Poženčan recorded a story about a young apprentice to a cobbler who marries one of the three Fates, the one who had helped him and his master to clear an

<sup>21</sup>“Dujina – potočnica – šalvadi!”

alpine meadow. She gave him a ball of thread that lead him to the other two Parcae, who gave him money for the dowry.<sup>22</sup>

The motif of the fairy wife also occurs in fairytales, for example in ATU 313 “The Magic Flight” and in ATU 400 “The Man on a Quest for His Lost Wife”. It can be also found in folk songs, particularly in Croatian, Serbian, and Macedonian folk songs.

Fairies and other supernatural beings of nature are representatives of another, parallel world - it may be named the “Fairy world”. According to Claude Lecouteux (2003), folk lore does not refer solely to a single world, namely the afterworld; there is also a world of fairies and phantasms, and these worlds are different from the world of the dead.

The Fairy leaves, and with her prosperity  
if a wrong word or phrase is uttered (when her name or origin is uttered);  
if her husband is haughty;  
if the housewife cuts off her hair while the fairy is sleeping;  
if somebody says “When will this thread finally end?”;  
if people curse or yell at cattle;  
if people crack their whips;  
if people ring bells;  
if the house has not been swept tidily;  
if the husband destroys the fairy dress;  
if the fairy finds her original dress.

#### Fairies and the Inverted World

The fairy beings whose very name suggests that something on their body is inverted are the *krivopete* (fairies with feet facing backwards). Ivan Trinko published in *Ljubljanski Zvon* one of the very first articles about the wild women who possessed knowledge about the powers of nature and knew secrets. They prophesied bad weather for the farmers, warned them of danger, and frequently taught them various things. In return, they chose their own repayment (Trinko 1884: 229-230).

According to some descriptions the *krivopete* had long, messy hair and feet facing backwards; sometimes even their hands would be turned backwards. People also said that they have horse’s hooves. Legs facing backwards were also said to be the trait of the *žalke*, or the *žalik žene*, in Gailtal in Austrian Carinthia (Graber 1914: 53-56, No. 63). Similarly disfigured were allegedly *Willeweis* and *Bilweis*, the white fairies in Austrian Carinthia, as well as the Anguanas in Friuli in Italy.

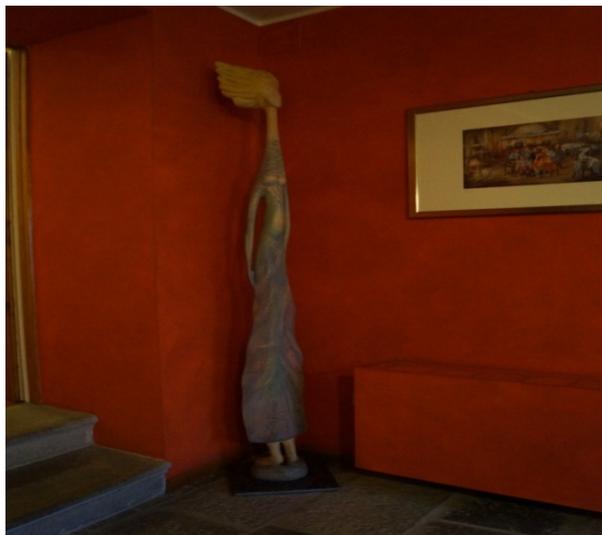


Fig. 7: Krivopeta in the restaurant *Sale e pepe* in Srednja/Stregna in Wenetia Giulia, Italy.

The ‘Dialas’ of Engadine were

<sup>22</sup>Matevž Ravnikar - Poženčan, manuscript in the National and University Library in Ljubljana: NUK, Ms 483, fascicle XI.

beautiful maidens with goat feet.

People living in the hilly region of Gorjanci in *Dolensko*/Lower Carniola told of the fairies named *pogorkinje* (the mountain women), who hid in underground caves and forests and took care of the game in the forests of Gorjanci. They had goat legs and horse's hooves. They sang so loudly that the echo was heard throughout the *Bela Krajina*/White Carniola, played their flutes, and danced. Those shepherds and hunters who had been enticed (attracted) by the Kolpjanke fairies into their dancing midst but never asked them about their legs were richly rewarded (Zupanc 1956: 29-31).

Hooves and feet or palms facing backwards can be seen as parallels to the goat legs of the ancient Mediterranean god Dionysus, the Italian Silvanus, and the Celtic Cernunnos who had stag antlers. Similarly, the Russian Lešij had goat horns, ears, and legs (Röhrich 1976).

Inverted body parts, clothes turned inside out,<sup>23</sup> and branches that have been twisted in the wrong direction are all signs of the fairy world. The Resian *kodkodeka*, or *korkodeka*, denoted the wild woman. *Kodkodeka* was always doing everything differently from others. At the time of acute drought, when everybody yearned for rain, she went to the river to launder her clothes, and loudly begged for the sun to dry the feathers in her pillows. Perpetually on bad terms with everybody else, she finally got tired of everything, set Stolvizza on fire, and left across the Kila mountain (Matičeto 1968: 222).

Old sources from Goriško have preserved the belief that the wild women do not speak to each other during the day but only at night.

*But where they (the wild women) live on their own they don't talk during the day but at night, when everything goes quiet. Each has a husband who prepares her food.*<sup>24</sup>

Inverted legs and feet faced backwards, an iron nose which is reminiscent of German *Bercht* (*Percht*), or a leg of bone or iron which characteristic for Russian *Jaga Baba* – all that stress the htonic character of these supernatural beings. Already Propp interpreted the iron leg of *Jaga Baba* with the concept of the world of dead. The fairy tale heroine who comes to *Jaga Baba* comes to the world of the dead (Propp 2013: 65–67).

#### *The Changeling (Podmenek)*

It was namely believed that the wild woman can change a human infant in the cradle for her own child. This child was called changeling (*podmenek*, *obranov otrok* or *odmenik*). Changeling has a large head, black complexion, is covered in scabs, has enormous appetite and is never satiated, and cries extensively. This lore is widespread throughout Europe. In Germany, the changeling is known as *Wechselbalg*, and in England the *changeling* or *bytting*. Numerous scholars have written about this topic, notably Edvin S. Hartland (1891: 93-134), Lutz Röhrich (1967), and Kathrine Briggs (1979: 69-72).

This motif has been preserved in the folk song “The Devil Carries off St. Lorenzo”, or “A Child Substituted in the Cradle” which originates from an apocryphal legend. According to the legend, St. Lorenzo, or occasionally St. Benedict or St. Stephen, was still an infant when he was substituted by a changeling. It was believed that the human child could be returned to the parents if the changeling was exposed and given a bowl of porridge and a spoon so large that it was impossible to eat the food with it; or if he was whipped with a hazel switch until the human child was returned to the cradle. Equally helpful were prayers and supplications. The lore about the changeling is widespread not only in Europe but also

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<sup>23</sup>Clothes that have been turned inside out protect humans from being seen by the witches (Kropej, Dapit 2006, p. 28, No. 15).

<sup>24</sup>Archive of the ISN ZRC SAZU: The Legacy of Karel Štrekelj: ŠZ 7/43, recorded by Jožef Kragelj in 1862.

beyond. Its origin lies in the belief in a malicious spirit that possesses a human and in exorcism, as well as in an attempt to explain the birth of abnormal children that were thought to be the offspring of supernatural beings (Matičetov 1974).

In some of the tales, the fairy would steal a child that lay unprotected in his basket in the field. Sometimes the mother manages to get the child back but when not, she goes insane.

The inverted world, which so frequently characterizes the female supernatural beings of nature, is therefore the world of the dead. Central European and South Slavic tales about female supernatural beings are often linked with the notions of *Pehtra Baba*, *Jaga Baba*, or *Mokoš*, who was the central Slavic female deity (Kropej 2008a). Female naturespirits are therefore frequently an extension of the female deities which is further confirmed by the “allomotifs” in these narratives.

Fairies and the inverted world  
fairies have legs or feet that face backwards;  
they have arms or palms facing backwards;  
they have goat legs;  
They have horse’s hooves;  
they have an iron arm, leg, or nose;  
they have a double fish tail;  
what people do during the day they do at night;  
if you don’t want the fairies (witches) to see you turn your clothes inside out;  
if you want to escape the fairies twist some branches in the wrong direction to entangle them.  
leaves, coal or excrements which they give to a person, turn into gold when he arrives home.

### Conclusion

Female supernatural beings of nature may occur in different narrative types and genres, and the motifs in these tales are frequently quite heterogeneous. However, despite the fact that their subject matter may vary considerably, they may convey a similar symbolic message and share motifs with identical meaning. Alan Dundes classified these motifs with the same meaning as parallel “allomotifs”. Dundes stresses that “allomotifs” with the same meaning may be established for each of the 31 functions that had been defined by Vladimir Jakovljevič Propp in his book *“Morphology of the Fairy tale”* (1928). Dundes has named these functions the *motifems* (Dundes 1962). He has based the difference between fairytale “motifs” and fairytale “allomotifs” on Kenneth Pike’s theory of “etic” units (from “phonetic”) and “emic” units (from “phonemic”) (Pike 1954: 74, 99, 150). Thus he distinguishes between the analysis of “etic” elements (motifs) in fairytale types and the analysis of “emic” elements in fairytale functions (motifemes). In his opinion, this method enables symbolic equivalence of “allomotifs” (Dundes 2007). Dundes had been looking for the symbolic equivalence of “allomotifs” that correspond to a specific fairytale *motifeme*, in the psychoanalytic meaning. But fairytale motifemes also have their cultural, historical, and social contexts. Already Propp in his book *Historical Roots of the Fairy Tale* (1946) established the corresponding “subjects” to the 31 functions of fairytales, and applied them to the historical and anthropological material.

Jack Zipes, who has adopted Richard Dawkins’s (1976: 192) concept of the “meme”, defined it as the “gene” of a fairytale. Like the “gene” in biology, fairytale subject determines which fairytales will be handed down from generation to generation more

frequently. Fairytale “memes” have a significant impact on the process of cultural evolution. They help the fairytales, folktales, fables, and legends construct tradition by creating stories all over the world. These stories are based on human communication and dictated by experience and human practices (Zipes 2012: 17-19).

In this paper I have presented the “memic topics” and “allomotifs” of folk belief tales about Fairies. Discussed were six main characteristics: 1. fairies teach people various skills; 2. fatal fairies; 3. fairies bring fertility to the land; 4. fairy as wife or lover; 5. fairy leaves and with her prosperity; and 6. fairies and the inverted world.

“memic topics”	“allomorifs”	folktale type
Fairies teach people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sing and dance</li> <li>- spin, bake bread, other domestic chores</li> <li>- blacksmith their skills</li> <li>- how to tie the vine for plowing</li> <li>- how to heal</li> <li>- soothsay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Šembilja and the blacksmith</li> <li>- Fairies teach a shepherdess healing skills</li> </ul>
Fatal fairies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- pull people below the water;</li> <li>- lure sailors to wreck their boats;</li> <li>- drown the bathers;</li> <li>- lure people into the unknown;</li> <li>- lead people into their fairy world;</li> <li>- pursue people until they go insane.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sirenes</li> <li>- Scylla and Charybdis</li> <li>- Fata Morgana</li> <li>- Stanko and the Fairy</li> </ul>
Fairies bring fertility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- by driving through fields;</li> <li>- by dancing and sparking;</li> <li>- dig the riverbeds;</li> <li>- create plants;</li> <li>- advise on when to sow and when to reap;</li> <li>- bestow the flock of sheep;</li> <li>- help with farm chores;</li> <li>- bringing food to workers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Fairies planted the vine and the olive trees</li> <li>-From fairy tears edelweiss spring</li> <li>-Herd of goats follow the shepherd from the sea.</li> <li>-Wild hunt</li> </ul>
Fairy wife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- becomes his wife after a young man creates a shade for her;</li> <li>- gets married because a young man puts a stole around her;</li> <li>- gets married because a youth stole her fairy dress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Melusine</li> <li>- The fairy and Prince Marko</li> <li>- The magic flight ATU 313</li> </ul>
Fairy leaves and with her prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- when her name is uttered;</li> <li>- if the housewife cuts off her hair;</li> <li>- “When will this thread end?”;</li> <li>- if people curse or yell at cattle;</li> <li>- if people crack their whips;</li> <li>- if people ring bells;</li> <li>- if the house has not been swept;</li> <li>- if the husband destroys her fairy dress;</li> <li>or if she finds it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Selige Fräulein and the farmer</li> <li>- The fairies of Vilenica</li> </ul>

Fairies and inverted world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- they have legs, feet or hands facing backwards;</li> <li>- they have goat legs or horse's hooves;</li> <li>- they have an iron arm, leg, or nose;</li> <li>- they have a double fish tail;</li> <li>- they work and talk at night;</li> <li>- they don't see you if you turn clothes inside out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Faronika the Fish</li> <li>- Krivopeta</li> <li>- Changeling</li> </ul>
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This are only some examples of the memic topics with adequate allomotifs and folktale types which appear in belief narrative about nature spirits. There are many more, and to define them would be interesting for our understanding of human perception of nature and cosmos, and for better understanding of human mind. These features symbolically indicate what may be termed as universal human concept of the fairy world and of people's perception of its inhabitants.

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#### **Abbreviations**

GNI ZRC SAZU – Institute of Ethnomusicological, Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Ljubljana

ISN ZRC SAZU – Institute of Slovenian Ethnology, Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Ljubljana

## THE LITHUANIAN WATER SPIRITS REVISITED

### ABSTRACT

The article discusses supernatural beings associated with water in Lithuanian folklore. The Lithuanian folk tradition mainly deals with the inland water bodies, any reflections of the sea-related mythology being practically absent. In Lithuanian folk narratives, miscellaneous water-related creatures can be encountered, yet such classical ones as mermaids or water lords (guardians) are mentioned only in a handful of texts. Water perceived as part of the chthonic world is associated with danger, fear and death in Lithuanian folk belief. As such, it increasingly falls under the rule of the devil – the most diversiform image of the vernacular tradition, who easily usurps the functions of the putative earlier water spirits. Besides, certain activities mainly associated with the female nature are performed by *laumė* in Lithuanian folklore. However, the images of both the devil and *laumė* are much broader than water and comprise also other elements of nature and various areas of social life.

სტატიაში განხილულია წყალთან დაკავშირებული ზებუნებრივი არსებები ლიტვურ ფოლკლორში. ლიტვის ფოლკლორული ტრადიცია ძირითადად იცნობს შიდა წყლის ბინადრებს. ზღვასთან დაკავშირებული მითოლოგიური არსებები პრაქტიკულად არ არსებობენ. ლიტვურ ფოლკლორში შესაძლებელია უამრავი გადმოცემა იყოს წყალთან დაკავშირებული არსებების შესახებ, მაგრამ ისეთი კლასიკური ფორმის, როგორცაა წყალთევზა და წყლის ბატონები (მცველები) მხოლოდ რამდენიმე ტექსტშია მოხსენიებული. წყალი აღიქმება როგორც ხთონური სამყაროს ნაწილი და ის სახიფათოა. ემშაკი ფოლკლორში ყველაზე მრავალსახოვანი არსება იყო. სავარაუდოდ, ის წყლის ბინადართა ფუნქციებსაც ისაკუთრებდა. ლიტვურ ფოლკლორში ძირითადად მდებდრობითი სქესისაა ზებუნებრივი არსება „ლაუმე“, თუმცა ლაუმესა და ემშაკის გარეგნობა უფრო ფართო მასშტაბისაა, ვიდრე მხოლოდ წყლის ბინადრისა და მოიცავს სხვა ელემენტებსაც ბუნებიდან და სოციალური ცხოვრების ასპექტებიდან.

**KEYWORDS:** *Lithuanian folklore, folk narrative, nature spirits, water spirits, the devil (velnias), laumė*

Written historical information regarding special veneration that Baltic peoples in general, and subsequently Lithuanians in particular offered to water (usually – to the clean and running waters) reaches quite far back – to the 11<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> century. Unfortunately, this information is of a very general kind, leading to a conclusion that veneration of water could have been part of a broader nature cult. At best, the historical sources from the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards list certain names of the water bodies that had allegedly been considered sacred; giving offerings and performing other rituals in relation to these waters is also described. First data regarding proper names of the Baltic water deities can be found only as late as the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Apparently, the ancient belief system must have had its impact on folklore and popular traditions, the bulk of which was recorded as late as the 19<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> century. Water is rather prominent in Lithuanian folklore and popular tradition (how could it be otherwise?). Nevertheless, certain specific aspects of its role may be discerned. E.g., it must be noted that folklore quite clearly testifies that Lithuanians can hardly be considered a seafaring nation<sup>1</sup>. The folklore recorded and stored in our archives is basically the legacy of the peasant society, therefore water bodies that have significant role in it are mainly the inland ones: lakes, rivers, ponds, swamps, etc. Sea is rather seldom, if at all, mentioned in Lithuanian folk narratives; its poetic image being more likely to occur in lyrical folksongs, but again – mainly as certain mystified and faraway or irrelevant reality, or in a general sense, as a kind of “big waters”, semantically interchangeable with other water bodies – lakes or rivers (Stundžienė 1999: 87). Therefore such mythical images as the sea god *Antrimpus / Autrimpus* and its counterparts, occurring in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and subsequent historical sources (Vėlius 2001: 143 ff.), can essentially be ascribed to the legacy of the extinct Baltic tribe – the ancient Prussians, who used to inhabit the nowadays Kaliningrad region and the neighbouring seaside area of the Lithuania Minor. The Lithuanian folklore data, recorded in the modern times, however, hardly contains any sea-deities or supernatural “saltwater” beings at all. Only mermaids (*undinės, narės*, sirens) are encountered in a handful of folk stories, mostly being referred to as “half female, half fish”. They are described as unbelievably passive and inert, their only function being singing; they sometimes get caught by humans and then can be displayed to viewers, being able only to cry and evoke pity. A typical example reads as follows<sup>2</sup>:

#### Siren and Her Baby

A man once caught a siren and her baby. He brought them home and put them into a tub. The siren kept crying for having been caught. Finally the man took pity on her, so he brought her back to the sea and set her free. But he wanted to keep her baby. Therefore siren stayed by the shore, crying for her baby. The man felt pity and set her baby free. Then she happily swam away into the sea with her baby (recorded in 1970, published in Vėlius 1979: 29–30).

Apparently, involvement of the traditional Lithuanian folklore bearers with various inland water bodies was much more active and multiform, and consequently, the supernatural beings related to these waters seem much more colourful and ambivalent. Quite a host of miscellaneous water-related creatures, spirits, ghosts or enigmatic entities can be encountered in the corpus of Lithuanian folk legends. These beings are the subject of two perhaps the most exhaustive, although essentially descriptive treatises dealing with the Baltic and Slavic water spirits, published by a Latvian-born historian Andrejs Johansons in the 1960s, namely: *Der Wassergeist bei Balten und Slaven* (1965) and *Der Wassergeist und der Sumpfgeist* (1968). Dwelling on the extensive comparative materials from the traditions of the Baltic peoples and the Eastern Slavs, A. Johansons defined the water spirits as “poorly individualized beings, characterized by a limited sphere of activity” (*schwach individualisierte Wesen mit begrenztem Tätigkeitsfeld*), albeit adding that these beings used to be worshiped even more than a number of “high deities” (Johansons 1968: 17). According to him, the origins of these spirits were related to the archaic images of the “lord of the animals” (*der Schirmherr der Tiere*) and the trickster, which got “contaminated” with other mythical beings due to the Christian influence and “diabolized”, thus acquiring a number of negative traits and becoming adverse to humans (Johansons 1968: 29–33). Generally, A. Johansons discerned three essential moments in the Baltic and Slavic “water mythology”: 1) the impact of Christianity, affecting the earlier pre-Christian

beliefs in such a way that all the household, forest and water spirits were turned into “fallen angels”; 2) close connection with the cult of the deceased and the animistic view of the nature; 3) the effect of transition from hunting and fishing to agriculture and stock-raising, which resulted in spaces of forest and water becoming alien to humans, therefore mythical beings residing there got “diabolized” (Johansons 1965: 34-5).

It may be added, however, that several varieties of the “ideal type” of the water beings, defined by A. Johansons as related to the “lord of the animals”, may be discerned in the Lithuanian folklore. These include anthropomorphic “water kings”, which can also be depicted as old men; the waters guarded by each of them do not mix with the waters of the others (Slaviūnas 1947: 177, Balys 1948: 35). Also, there is “a king of the fish”, depicted in a zoomorphic form, of which only three variants of folk narratives have been recorded. One of these stories reads as follows:

#### King of the Fish Set Free

Fishermen were at work on the Dusetos Lake. Suddenly, it felt very difficult to draw out the net. There were lots of fish in it, and among them one was very beautiful, with a crown on its head. When everyone examined this fish, the owner of the boat ordered to set it free, because[as he said,] the king had to rule its kingdom (recorded in 1940, published in Vėlius 1979: 30).

The third variety of this guardian image is the likewise obscure anthropomorphic image of the “shepherd of fish”, also encountered only in a couple of texts. The origins of this image may be related to the folkloric image of fish as “pigs of the lake”.

#### Pig of the Lake

Before the war, when I was still little, my Dad used to go fishing on the Juodeikiai Lake not far from Šiauliai. Once he caught such a huge fish, that he had to harness a horse in order to draw the net out. When he brought that fish home, we cut it to pieces and salted it. It almost filled up a big vat.

But ever since, something started throwing my Dad out of the bed at night, screaming, ‘Give me my pig back!’

We saw him being thrown out of the bed and onto the floor with our own eyes. So finally, we had to throw pieces of that fish back to the lake. Only afterwards my Dad could sleep peacefully again (recorded in 1939, published in Vėlius 1979: 31).

Unfortunately, this lord- or guardian-type of the nature spirits seems to have been as good as extinct from the living Lithuanian folk tradition for several decades already (the few available texts of the Lithuanian folk belief-legends depicting this type of beings have all been recorded and archived no later than the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century); and furthermore, judging from the relatively small number of the available archived recordings, it could hardly been particularly popular even earlier – just like the twisted, distorted and not life-like images of the mermaids, mentioned above, which seem to be quite rough translations from the romantic German literary tradition. So much for the “pure” types of the water spirits advertised by the classical folklore research of the 20<sup>th</sup> century!

Certainly, the Lithuanian folklore archives contain quite a number of other texts depicting mysterious or scary things happening to people by the water, but the supernatural powers acting in those cases are rather obscure and cannot be with any certainty ascribed to some more or less coherent entity that could be labelled as some type of the “water spirit”. E. g. humans in those texts may spotsome “green horns floating over water”, or somebody “black jumping out of the boat”, or hear something laughing ominously in the lake, or a fisherman may catch some “black hassock with horns”, etc. (Būgienė 1999a: 42). Otherwise it is told that people are drawn into the depths by some enigmatic invisible

force; or something encourages them to go swimming, and if they do, they are bound to drown, and so on. Here are a couple of examples:

The Time Has Come, but not the Man!

A priest [was walking once by a pond and] saw a man rising out from the pond and shouting, ‘The time has come, but not the man!’

The priest looked around and spotted a boy of about 12 years of age running towards the pond. The boy intended to go swimming. The priest did his best to bring him around: he asked the boy to go to his house and fetch him a book. Meanwhile the man from the pond ceased his shouting and said to the priest, ‘You did a wrong thing!’

Afterwards, when the boy returned with the book, he had forgotten all about swimming. But the next day a grown up man drowned in this very place in the pond.

On the way to Priekulė there is a lake close to the river. A labourer once working near the lake heard a voice saying, ‘The time has come, but not the man!’

The labourer could not make out either where the voice came from or what it meant. But in an hour a man came and drowned himself in the lake. Another one passing by spotted his hat floating on the water. The passer-by summoned the neighbours and they fished the drowned man out. Now the labourer understood what kind of voice he had heard and what that voice meant (both stories were recorded in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and published in Basanavičius 1998: 477).

If purposefully questioned, the narrators of such stories would usually say something like “nobody knows what it was”, or “it was something unholy”, or just state that the ominous entity seen, encountered, heard or felt in the proximity of the water was the “devil”. Similar interpretation is also as a rule given to the supernatural power acting in, from, or by the water in the numerous texts of the Lithuanian legends discussing breaking of certain taboos: i.e. fishing or swimming during inappropriate time, e.g. on Sunday, during the Mass, etc. The purpose of these texts is usually warning against breaking of the taboos (Būgienė 1999b: 214-5), and as such, water functionally seems secondary in them (quite similar stories exist about offenders being punished for hunting or picking berries in the forest during the prohibited period). Yet it is obvious that in folk-belief legends water as an element is mainly associated with threat, darkness, and death. These chthonic aspects of the water symbolism all fall under the rule of the folkloric devil (*velnias*) – perhaps the most colourful, diverse and multifunctional figure of the Lithuanian vernacular tradition. As already proven in an exhaustive monograph by Norbertas Vėlius “The Chthonic World in Lithuanian Mythology: Analysis of the Devil in Folklore” (1987), this supernatural character of the vernacular tradition has got not so much in common with the church image of it – except for some external traits perhaps and the common name, – yet it has been turned into a full-force actor / agent in folklore, who inhabits various natural and cultural environments in close proximity to people, actively affecting human everyday life and asserting its influence in all kinds of the human endeavours. No wonder that devil in Lithuanian folklore exhibits really close connections with water too, particularly in relation to its chthonic side. It is precisely the devil that could reasonably be compared to such figures in the other national traditions as the Swedish *näcken* (Stattin 1992) and others, both in terms of popularity, diversity of functions and the roles played in the culture and the social structure of the community. As pointed out by N. Vėlius, the devil enjoys extreme popularity if compared to any other supernatural being of Lithuanian folklore: devil has been mentioned in over ten thousands of the recorded folk narrative texts altogether, let alone other kinds of folklore, such as proverbs, riddles etc. Apparently the devil has usurped a number of roles and functions, and obliterated a variety of names perhaps belonging to other supernatural beings, which now turned obscure (Vėlius 1987: 275). Here

are a couple of typical examples of the devil adopting the role of the fish guardian (although he is obviously not very good at this job, being way too busy with other things):

#### Devil – the Guardian of the Lake

On Sundays, during Mass, it is a very good time to go fishing. You see, the lake is guarded by a lame devil. When people gather for the Mass in the church, they often start sniggering or frolicking, which is sinful. The devils' duty is to record those sins. <...>The lame devil also limps over to check on the sinners. The lake is then left unsupervised, and therefore it is very easy to catch a lot of fish (Būgienė 1999a: 51).

#### The Guardian of Fish at the Šauliukas Lake

There is a village called Bachmatai, not far from Zarasai town. And close to that village there is a small lake called Šauliukas. If someone planned to go fishing on that lake, they had to keep quiet about their business, if they wanted to catch anything. But if people started bragging to each other and talking loudly about going fishing there – no fish was to be caught!

Once there was a dance party in the village nearby Šauliukas Lake. And during this time, some people went fishing onto the lake. Oh, my, didn't they catch a lot of fish! The whole boat was overflowing! So the fishermen could not carry these entire fish home at once. They took some, and on their way back they stepped into the house where the party was. They saw young people dancing and said, 'Ha, you keep dancing here! And we caught such a lot of fish in the lake!'

Immediately the firewood that was stored inside by the stove fell down onto the floor with a big racket. And when the fishermen returned to the lake to fetch the rest of their catch, they found the boat empty: all the fish had been poured out back into the lake (recorded in 1959, published in Vėlius 1979: 31).

Such possible "contamination" and "diabolization" of the Lithuanian water spirits was already pointed out by A. Johansons, and this seems rather obvious when reading the archived texts of the Lithuanian folk-belief legends. The "devil" not only seems to be the first denomination that slips from the tongues of the storytellers whenever they feel at a loss as to how to define the "creature" or "power" that they talk about: be it a story of someone making people go astray in the wilderness, or punishing fishermen or hunters for practicing their trade on holidays, or even attempting to drown people, etc. The devil's name is carved in the Lithuanian landscape as well, a number of natural landmarks bearing toponymic associations with him, water bodies (particularly swamps, bogs and marshes, but also lakes) presenting no exception (Vėlius 1987: 60).

Thus, the devil in Lithuanian folklore obviously performs functions similar to those of the water spirits in other national traditions, yet in general, the origins of the devil's image cannot be reduced to mere reflections of the mythologized element of water, because, as also noted by N. Vėlius, this image embodies and symbolizes a large variety of other personified natural and social powers that may have seemed relevant yet incomprehensible to humans (Vėlius 1987: 62). Therefore the devil cannot be considered as an exclusively water-related figure. Still, this supernatural being must have been imagined to be so powerful, and its functions so diverse, that it eventually incorporated roles and images of the other mythical water beings, or spirits. Everything that could be considered potentially harmful to humans in relation to the water was increasingly associated with the devil. Besides, considering the complicated development of this image due to the influence of Christianity, it could also be said that supernatural beings identified with him have experienced something like second stage of demonization, as all of them got labelled "wicked spirits", "unholy", etc. True, decline of the mythological beings may be regarded as a dominating tendency in the history of religions (Valk 1994: 312). Essentially

it is justified to say that chthonic water spirits in Lithuanian folklore have been turned into mere aspects of the devil's activities (Būgienė 1999a:41).

Quite similar observations are true in case of the female supernatural beings associated with water. The most prominent water-related female being in the Lithuanian vernacular belief is definitely *laumė* (fairy). As regards her activity, ambivalence, popularity and importance both in the natural and cultural world, *laumė* is indeed a fair match to the devil. *Laumės* (pl.) are depicted as women or girls, usually engaging in various female activities: laundering clothes, spinning yarn, weaving, bathing children and taking care of them, flirting with men and even marrying them, dealing with livestock, etc. They are asserted to have been very numerous:

Some time ago, whenever one stepped out at night, one was bound to encounter *laumė*.

There were lots of *laumės* around! People used to hear them laundering during the warm summer evenings...

Sometimes *laumės* helped the women, who used to work hard in the fields: in the meantime, *laumės* would come to their homes, bath their children, spin, or weave their linen. <...> But there were also wicked *laumės*. These would kidnap human children (see Būgienė 1999a: 54-7).

*Laumės* also have some trickster features, and human encounters with them can end up both positively or negatively, depending of the capacity of the humans to handle these beings. *Laumės* are quite akin to the nature spirits of other national traditions, but their precise affiliation is difficult to establish: they are close to forests, waters, and stones; associated both with the earth and the sky (the rainbow in Lithuanian folklore is called *laumėsjuosta* 'laumė's sash'). About 17 percent of the stories about *laumės* describe their activities taking place nearby or in the water: they are likely to be washing, swimming, laundering, or singing; some storytellers even assert that *laumės* live in the water and sometimes attempt to drown humans (Vėlius 1977: 111-7). Besides, *laumės* are very fond of visiting people's saunas.

Gifts from the *Laumės*

A woman learned that *laumės* started frequenting her sauna. "Well, let them do, they are living creatures anyway, so let them bath", she thought. Afterwards, whenever she heated her sauna, she would leave some hot water to *laumės*. They must have appreciated her goodwill, and rewarded the woman. Each time they would leave her some gifts in the sauna: a nice piece of linen, a towel, or something else – all very skilfully made (recorded in 1926, published in Vėlius 1979: 23).

Here Is the Steam!

*Laumės* were bathing in a sauna once. They kept shouting, 'We need more steam! More steam!'

A man was passing by and heard them. He opened the sauna door and farted inside, saying, 'Here is the steam!'

*Laumės* got mad with him, and one of them told another, 'You hold the poker, and I'll chase that fart!'

The man ran for his life, but happened to head straight into the thicket of willows, and had to stop. The *laumė* was after him, and she sent a huge wheel rolling at the man. But he saw the wheel coming and dodged it. The wheel rolled past and broke an opening in the thicket. So the man escaped through this opening, and *laumės* could not catch him (recorded in 1940, published in Vėlius 1979: 23).

But just like in case with the devil, *laumė*'s sphere of activity is much broader and encompasses much more than just water. Some authors (e.g. Иванов, Топоров 1974, and

especially Судник, Цивьян 1980) have attempted to derive *laumė* from the putative image of the Indo-European mythology – the Thunder-god’s wife, who had been kidnaped by the Devil (or banished from the sky) and ever since cannot find her proper place on earth. Anyway, it is pretty obvious that *laumė* stands in the centre of a rather complex system of beliefs. Although water also plays an important role here, it still can be concluded that *laumė*, viewed as a water spirit, is essentially in the same situation as the devil: on the one hand, both these beings have accumulated the majority of aspects attributed to the water spirits in other national traditions, yet on the other hand, both of them are much broader, complex and related not only to the water. Both the devil and *laumė* are perhaps the most ambivalent and colourful figures of the Lithuanian vernacular tradition in general, characterized by particularly active involvement with humans. No wonder that their activity incorporates a number of functions ascribed to the individual supernatural water beings in other national traditions (like the “water man”, mermaid, or water spirits).

Thus, the “existence” of water spirits in Lithuanian folklore entirely depends upon the definition of the concept itself. If we understand the spirit as a certain symbolically meaningful role or performance of certain functions, then both the devil and *laumė* can be considered as water spirits in Lithuanian folklore. But if we search for a clearly discernible individual mythical image of an exclusively water-related being, we have to admit that Lithuanian tradition inhabits no such ones.

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### Notes

More on the problematic relationship of Lithuanians to the maritime culture, seafaring, and general attitude of the population (both historical and contemporary) to the sea in Būgienė 2005.

All translations from the Lithuanian language are by the author of the article.

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## **EVIL SPIRITS IN GEORGIAN EPIC FABLES**

### **Abstract**

In epic fables, where "the other world" and trips to the world of the dead occupy an important place, we encounter quite a number of evil spirits. In Georgian fairy tales, these are: Eshmaki (Demon), Kaji, Chinka, Devi, Devi's Mother, Devi's wives, Snake, Gveleshapi (Dragon), Kondriskatsi (Dwarf), Kudiani Beberi (Tailed Old Woman, who is accursed enemy of the soul), and Rkinis Katsi (Iron Man). Before pagan deities acquired the shape of humans, they were represented in a zoomorphic shape and continued to bear totemic signs even after they started resembling humans. This can also be seen in their metamorphoses and the fact that they ride specific animals for the same reason. In our work we focus on those devil spirits and their genesis.

ზღაპრულ ეპოსში, სადაც ადგილი უჭირავს „იმ“ ქვეყანას, მიცვალებულთა სამყაროში მოგზაურობას, ცოტა ავსულს არ ვხვდებით. ქართულ ზღაპრებში ესენი არიან: ეშმაკი, ქაჯი, ჭინკა, დევი, დევის დედა, დევის ცოლები, გველი, გველემშაპი, ვეშაპი, ქონდრის კაცი - ერთი ციდამტკაველა კაცი, კუდიანი (წყეული, სულის მტერი) ბებერი, რკინის კაცი. სანამ წარმართული ღვთაებები ადამიანის სახეს მიიღებდნენ, ზომორფული სახით იყვნენ წარმოდგენილნი და ისინი განკაცების შემდეგაც ატარებდნენ ტოტემისტურ ნიშნებს. წინამდებარე სტატიაში სწორედ მათ შესახებ ვისაუბრებთ და მათი გენეზისის საკითხებს შევეხებით.

**Keywords:** *Evil spirits, Gveleshapi, Devi, Beberi, Eshmaki, Kaji.*

Mzia Chachava, Phd Philology, studied evil characters in Georgian magic tales (Devi, Gveleshapi, Eshmaki, Kaji). She has published the main results of her studies in Vol. 4 of *Georgian Folklore* and relevant volumes of *The Georgian Soviet Encyclopaedia*.

In epic fables, where "the other world" and trips to the world of the dead occupy an important place (Ипони 1946:329), we encounter quite a number of evil spirits. In Georgian fairy tales, these are: Eshmaki (Demon), Kaji, Chinka, Devi, Devi's Mother, Devi's wives, Snake, Gveleshapi (Dragon), Kondriskatsi (Dwarf), Kudiani Beberi (Tailed Old Woman, who is accursed enemy of the soul), and Rkinis Katsi (Iron Man). Before pagan deities acquired the shape of humans, they were represented in a zoomorphic shape and continued to bear totemic signs even after they started resembling humans (Shengelaia 1970). This can also be seen in their metamorphoses and the fact that they ride specific animals for the same reason.

Representatives of "the other world" - that of the dead - are Satanic forces defending the world and acting as deadly enemies of the main characters of fables. As soon as they appear in this world from "there" - the "external" world (from the back of beyond, sea, forest, and so forth) - they become engaged in a life-and-death battle with the main characters of fables. Snake, Veshapi, Kaji, Devi, Gveleshapi are functionally the same (according to 17th century lexicographer Sul Khan-Saba Orbeliani noted). Ilia Abuladze

(researchers in Old Georgian literature) noted the functional sameness of Devi, Eshmaki, Veshapi, Boroti, and Snake. Heroes of fairy tales achieve a desirable victory, which is inevitable and final, only after they defeat these evil spirits three times.

It is noteworthy that evil spirits in Georgian fairy tales are powerful, but they are nevertheless quite cautious. They (particularly Devis) do not carry their own souls, minds, or health wherever they go, but keep them hidden at the back of beyond or in the shape of three birds in a box kept in the stomach of a small animal (for example, hare) embedded in the body of a bigger animal (for example, deer or hog). In the meantime, positive characters of magic fables always carry their souls about.

The list of evil spirits mentioned in fairy tales can be expanded. For example, Kosa (man with no facial hair) is the most recent character among the evil spirits listed here. He tries to defeat main characters with lies and riddles, but, as any other evil character, is ultimately defeated. Maidservant, Journeyman, Mentor, Vizier, who betray the hero and advise the king to give him complicated tasks in order to see the person with many excellent features dead, emerged even later than Kosa. Stepmother is also an evil character, as she makes her husband kill his child or resorts to some other methods to achieve the same goal. There are some other negative characters: Black Arab, elder sisters and brothers, and elder brothers-in-law. Very seldom, mothers and fathers are also negative characters, as they sometimes give preference to their lovers instead of the well-being or lives of their children.

The image of heroes of this world in fairy tales is genetically rooted in mythos and has divine origin. Therefore, it is natural that they are always victorious over the Satanic forces that fight against them. At the same time, positive characters sometimes manage to pacify and win them over due to their force (by defeating their enemies or saving their children) and obtain information about the whereabouts of those, who they killed, and ways for reviving them. They may also find eyes gouged out and methods to cure them. In such cases, evil spirits ask heroes to become their sworn brothers, promise to help them, and keep their word too. In more recent fairy tales, heroes even receive gifts from "the other world" for the good they have done to negative characters (for saving their children). The gifts enable them to revive the dead, receive a big fortune, learn the language of animals and plants, and obtain objects - a sword, cudgel, tablecloth that can produce food in exhaustible amounts, flying carpet, and cap of invisibility - that enable them to defeat anyone. Heroes sometimes manage to get hold of the aforementioned objects by cheating their owners. Although the latter are extremely reluctant to give the objects and the knowledge they have, they prefer to surrender rather than allow their children to die. It is also necessary to have special knowledge to correctly choose a gift from "the other world", as everything there looks good to the eye, but the jewellery found there is just dust in this world, while a rusty iron box is able to give rise to excellent cities. A simple quern, donkey, or cudgel found there may win a fortune in this world and become guarantors of prosperity and invincibility. The same is true of the pumpkin that gives birth to numerous soldiers. A mangy foal there becomes a flying horse in this world and so forth. It is necessary to have special knowledge to make use of all these. In the other word, even the language is overturned and they speak like Kajis do. For example, it is impossible to understand what they say in the country of Kajis, if you do not have special knowledge. You will do something that is contrary to what was said, exposing yourself, as they will realise that you do not belong to that world and the result will be lamentable.

It follows that in more recent fairy tales, it is no longer necessary to kill evil spirits, as the heroes take away from them the objects or knowledge, which determined their force,

and the heroes become their owners. That is why evil spirits find it very difficult to part with them and they do all they can not to lose them.

It follows that the evil spirits mentioned here are necessary in epic fables. Without defeating them, main characters would be unable to become renovated and reinforced, show their potential to the full, and achieve the desired goal of obtaining a fiancé of divine origin, who they have to kidnap from "the other world". And without marrying such women, they would be unable to bring into flower and renovate the sleeping universe. It follows that epic fables are an arena of confrontation between the forces of this world and the other world - good and evil spirits. Good spirits of this world are always victorious in epic fables and they are always singular like God.

The other world has guardians. For example, the Horse tells the Boy about Kajeti (the country of Kajis): "When we get closer, you must buy sheep and oxen. ... When we are there, you will see lions, tigers, and wolves they have placed at the gates. Give the oxen to the lions and tigers and sheep to the wolves. They will let you enter, without saying anything". (Ghlonti 1964:51).

Both Devis and Kajis are surprised at seeing human beings in their domain: "What an animate being are you to be so bold with us?.. Birds cannot appear in the sky and ants on the land, because they fear us!" (Virsaladze 1958:98). The enemies of main heroes, evil spirits, can feel human beings or animates by smell and the former can escape death only if the mothers or wives of evil spirits help heroes to hide.

Deadly enemies of main heroes of fairy tales - evil spirits, who make main heroes face a lot of trouble before they achieve their goals and win a victory - are dealt with very cruelly at the end of the tales: They are tied to horses' tails and ripped into pieces or transformed into dust. Such endings of tales look like administrating justice and upholding laws, but the main idea is that in order to make a hero's victory full and eternal, his rivals should no longer exist. They should be eliminated and deprived of the opportunity to revive. Heroes of fairy tales - good or evil - can never change their nature. They should either exist or not exist. Fairy tales are optimistic, because they end in the final and divine victory of main heroes, which would be impossible without complete destruction of evil spirits.

In early fairy tales, their heroes could be perceived as a result of the metamorphosis of the heroes of the other world (Gveleshapi, Devi, Snake, Fish, Bird) and the images of heroes in this world and the other world. However, in a later period, when those in the other world acquired the shape of Chinka, Eshmaki, Kaji, Ali, and Jini (and it seems that this period coincides with the strengthening of Christianity in Georgia), the perception of these images as a metamorphosis of main heroes is ruled out. Christianity implied being more cautious in this period and the attitude to everything that reminded paganism was stricter and was regarded as an evil spirit. Here is a piece of folk verse to support the idea:

"Up to now, our prayers  
For gold, silver, and wood have been bad.  
The Devil has emerged in them.  
Hence our problems".  
(Kotetishvili 1961:389)

### **Gveleshapi (Dragon)**

Gveleshapi is the main, most ancient, and most powerful evil spirit in Georgian epic fables. It is in constant confrontation with the main heroes of fairy tales and their encounter always takes shape of a deadly confrontation.

"Gveleshapi (Avestian *Aži-Veshap*). A popular character in Georgian fairy tales that embodies evil roots. It is a monster that has many heads and sharp teeth and shoots out flames. It is linked to the element of water. It often takes away drinking water, demanding human victims (virgins) in exchange for it. In Georgian fairy tales, we encounter white, red, and black Gveleshapis, of which black is the most powerful. In addition, it can fly" (Chachava 1974:97-98). Gveleshapis live both in the mountains and in the sky.

This fabulous being is a result of the ancient manner of thinking and exists only in the imagination of human beings. People are not free in their fantasies (Мертелидзе 1973:334) and there are certain regularities that produce the results of their imagination. A peculiar perception of the universe by humans was of major importance in shaping the image of Gveleshapi. Humans viewed the universe as three-dimensional: Underworld, Middleworld, and Skyworld. People also found a means to unite them: Branches of a tree reaching the sky, the roots going into the earth, and a powerful trunk. It is known that all the three parts of the tree have their own living beings: Birds and the branches; snakes, fish, and frogs and the roots; and hooved animals and the trunk. This means that the tree unites the whole universe, including living beings. Magic creature Gveleshapi is better at uniting the living beings of the whole universe than the tree, as it comprises prominent signs of all the three parts of the universe: It has wings and claws like birds; the body and tail like a snake, and the muzzle and horns like hooved animals, which means that it is a fantastic creature bearing the signs of the beings of all three worlds and embodies the unity of all worlds (Cholokashvili 2004:39).

It would be unfair not to note here that there is another opinion on this issue. For example, according to Vladimir Propp, it is a mechanic merger of several animals like Greek Sphinx, Centaur of antiquity and so forth (Пропп 1946:226). He regarded snake as a unity of two creatures embodying spirit - snake and bird. Wilhelm Wundt held the same opinion on this issue (Пропп 1946:227). As regards Z. Gamsakhurdia, he concluded that "its form amalgamates various dangerous and aggressive animals (snake, crocodile, lion, tiger) and pre-historic animals" (Gamsakhurdia 1991:191). Gveleshapi as a symbol of the unity of the world has another sign that makes it similar to the tree of the world. Like a tree with branches and roots, it has numerous heads and sometimes tails in world mythology, which means that the hybrid image of Gveleshapi has assumed the function of the unity of the three dimensions of the world, uniting the forces of the sky, land, and underworld. It follows that Gveleshapi is powerful, as it has the force of the whole universe; it is rich, as it owns the treasury of the whole universe; and it embodies the origin of both the good and evil of the universe. We expect horrible things from it and at the same time, we get from him the water of immortality, the apple of fertility and all other good. The unearthly creature that encompasses everything is omnipotent. It is one of supranatural forces embodying entirety.

### **Devi**

Devi is an anthropomorphic image of Gveleshapi and presumably belongs to the period, when man also started to be regarded as a being in the tree of the world together with hooved animals. It follows that like Gveleshapi, Devi unites the forces of the sky, land, and underworld. He is also powerful and rich and he mostly embodies the origin of evil. However, he is often presented as someone, who does good (Cholokashvili 2004:40). This popular character of Georgian fairy tales is a fantastic being similar to man with build of body of a giant. There are Devis with one, three, seven, nine, forty or hundred heads. In addition, Devis sometimes acts as a group, which is a replacement for their multiple heads. His being evil is expressed in his constant confrontation with heroes of fairy tales. Devi

kidnaps a hero's fiancé (Mzetunakhavi, a woman of outstanding beauty in Georgian fairy tales) and hides her in the underworld or in the sky. Devi "is the generic name of god in Sanskrit and Latin. It is a synonym of demonic force and vice in Persian... He lives in the underworld, caves, or, as others, on the land. In Georgian fairy tales, we encounter Devis of three colours - white, red, and black" (Chachava 1974:131-132).

### **Beberi (accursed enemy of the soul)**

There are two types of Beberis in fairy tales: One is kind and supports main heroes and the other is the heroes' enemy. Beberis are marked with mythic signs. We are going to focus on Beberis of the second type.

A meeting between wicked Beberi with a tail and the hero of a fairy tale is a critical episode in the folklore of any nation (Abzianidze, Elashvili 2011:20). However, it is not necessary for wicked Beberi to always have a tail, as she is dangerous even without it. In fairy tales, she lives in the forest, which she dominates, and she has mythic capabilities. Correspondingly, it can be said that she dominates "the other world". Beberi is the antipode of Mzetunakhavi. She is old and infertile. She bears ill will to others and is ready to follow any evil desire and fulfil any evil task. She is an enemy for both Mzetunakhavi and the male hero of fairy tales and cases when they escape her are quite rare. Heroes who confront her can reach their objective only if they receive support from others. She uses a snake as a whip and can easily fly sitting on a broom, a jar, or a pig. She can also allow others to fly. She can petrify or swallow others. Here is a description of a Beberi: "One Beberi was sitting in the room (guarding a Mzetunakhavi - R. Ch.). She had one of her teeth set against the sky and the other against the underworld. She was sitting there naked, trembling" (Virsaladze 1958:175). There can also be a Beberi without teeth - "little hunched and buck-toothed old woman" (Old Georgia, Vol IV, Part IV:1).

In one fairy tale, a many-coloured deer enabled a hunter, who had killed an excessive number of beasts, to catch it. The deer transformed into a Beberi and took the hunter to her home. "They started playing backgammon... The Beberi said: "If I win, I will petrify you... If you win, I have three whips: One of them petrifies, the second revives, and the third fulfils a wish. I will give all the three to you. The young man won the first game, but the Beberi finally defeated him and petrified him. The man's brother learned that his brother was dead. He travelled the same road, but he did not hunt. This is probably the reason, why he defeated the Beberi. He revived his brother and killed the Beberi" (Virsaladze 1958:185). The Beberi/deer bears signs of a beast deity in this fairy tale. As Heinrich Heine noted, it was Christianity that transformed pagan deities into evil spirits (Shengelaia 1972).

In another fairy tale, Ghvtisavar roasted meat. Suddenly, a toothless Beberi appeared and asked Ghvtisavar: "Give me some meat to eat". And he invited her. He ate, but the Beberi ate ten times as much. The Beberi finished eating and threw a pebble on Ghvtisavar's bow and arrows and petrified them. Then she threw a pebble on his dogs and petrified and swallowed them. She threw a pebble on Ghvtisavar, too, and weakened and swallowed him. Ghvtisavar's brother felt what was happening. He came to the place, cut the Beberi's belly and released his brother and his dogs. He killed the Beberi and smeared her blood on his brother, dogs, and the bow and arrows and revived them. The bow and arrows became usable. Such stories are frequent in Georgian fairy tales. Hair is sometimes used instead of a pebble. A hair of an evil spirit can petrify both animate beings and inanimate objects. For example, a Beberi petrified Alexander's Haram, Hurun, and Gishera (dogs - R. Ch.), horse, sword and dagger, and bow and arrows. When the man found himself facing a problem, he failed to use any of these, as they were chained (Tsanava

1994). In other fairy tales that tell similar stories, a man can be encountered in place of Beberi. The man's brother made his Asal-Masals (dogs - R. Ch.) tear that man to pieces.

In yet another fairy tale, the Stepmother called a Tailed Old Woman and ordered her to poison Aghratia. She first gave her two pieces of gum - one poisoned and the other not poisoned. In that case, the girl escaped death. Then she gave her a pomegranate cut in two - one poisoned and the other not poisoned, but the prince revived the girl with the help of the water of immortality. In the third attempt, Beberi cut the throat of the girl's child and put the knife in her pocket. According to her advice, they poked the girl's eyes out and threw them in a field together with her child. However, Aghratia finally survived. An old man found her, returned eyesight to her and gave her a house and a source for income (Virsaladze 1958:89-93).

Beberi hunts adolescents too. Prince was pursuing an Old Tailed Woman. Another Beberi saw this, pitied him and shouted: "You are not going to escape alive" (Aghniashvili 1979:62-64). In another episode, three sons were born to the king due to the apple she gave him under the condition that she would take the youngest son. She indeed found the boy hidden in a room with nine locks and took him to her home in a cliff. Her three daughters there liked the boy very much and decided not to allow their mother to eat him and helped him escape. When Beberi realised that her dinner was no longer there, she started pursuing him, but the boy won a victory over her thanks to a comb, scissors, and a lump of salt. Beberi drowned in the sea (Aghniashvili 1979:62-64).

In the fairy tale *Kokrochina (Pretty Little)*, Beberi takes a child to her home in the forest and told her daughter-in-law to make a dinner of it. However, the boy managed to boil her in the cauldron. Then he gave such advice to Beberi, who was about to jump to the ceiling to punish him, that she, too, fell into the cauldron and was boiled there. In the fairy tale *Tsikara (Red Ox)*, Beberi acts as an enemy of a boy, who is in a tree and the latter found himself in the king's prison.

In another fairy tale, cursed Beberi harmed a family. She took a spinning wheel (a sign of the birth of a girl), destroyed it, and displayed a yoke, pretending that the tenth child in the family was also a boy. As agreed, it was because of this that nine brothers did not return to their homes and got lost (Razikashvili 1951:121).

Beberi immediately came to the king with a wine jar and said: "There is a man in our village. If you kill him, his blood will definitely cure you" (Virsaladze 1958:48-49). Beberi takes a boat and travels across the sea to harm a happy couple and take the beautiful woman to the king of another country for profit (Virsaladze 1958:99). The woman realises the treacherous aims of the visit, but the man pities "poor" Beberi and allows her to enter their home. Beberi achieves her goal and kills the husband (Chikovani 1938:130). She kidnaps the woman and takes her to the king of another country (Virsaladze 1958:105, 160-161).

Beberi also gives advice to the king on how to take a woman from her lawful husband (Lomtadze 1992:272). In another fairy tale, the king himself tasks his Beberi with bringing a girl to a specific place. Beberi took her daughter, too, to the place. When the king's girl asked for some water, Beberi gave it to her in exchange for her eye and took away her second eye for the same reason on the next day. She dressed her daughter in beautiful garments and got rid of the blind girl. As it usually happens in fairy tales, justice was restored at the end (Ajarian 1973:79).

There are Beberis, who help people and take them wherever they want if they are given a small amount of money, but if they are not, they swallow people. Indeed, Beberi flew a boy to a city in the underworld (Aghniashvili 1979:54). To learn news about Gulambara and Sulimbara, the hero of a fairy tale "mounted Beberi's back. Beberi flew up and then in a second, she flew to the underworld".

Jazi Nene (Tailed Old Woman - N. Tskitishvili) is the owner of this garden of roses. If she is awake, her eyes are closed and if she is asleep, her eyes are open. A girl seized a rose sapling, tore it off, and jumped over the fence. Nene woke up and cursed her: "If you are a boy, let God turn you into a girl and if you are a girl, let Him turn you into a boy". And she turned into a boy.

Beberi is even more cunning than Eshmaki, who spent 15 years trying in vain to sow strife between a man and his wife, but Beberi said smiling that she could turn them against each other in one day. Eshmaki promised her his soul in exchange. At the beginning, Beberi hinted her husband's betrayal to the woman and then told him that his wife was betraying him. Beberi also promised help. She told the woman to cut several hairs of his moustache for incantation and warned the man that his wife intended to kill him. When it came to action, the husband started shouting and people separated the couple. Victorious Beberi demanded from Eshmaki his soul, as he had promised to give it to her, but Eshmaki ran far away, fearing some cunning actions on her part (Ketelauri 1977:183-186). When Eshmaki found himself in a hole together with Beberi, he asked for help, but when he emerged from the hole and learned that Beberi had come up from the hole and was heading in his direction, he ran far away and disappeared.

Eshmaki can sometimes be a female. She saw the fiancé of a young man left alone on the road. She took her to the top of a cliff, took off her wedding party, cut her gold hair, took away her rings, and put on everything herself. She then pushed the real fiancé and threw her into the sea (Umikashvili III:50).

Finally, it is a fact that Georgian magic fairy tales describes such Beberis as cursed (Razikashvili 1951:121; Virsaladze 1958:186) and enemy of the soul (Razikashvili 1951:122).

### **Eshmaki**

Eshmaki (Old Iranian *Aishma* - evil spirit) is an evil, vicious, and harmful spirit that is faceless and hairy and has bloodshot eyes, horns, and a tail. It also has long ears and sharp claws. Old magic fairy tales almost never mention Eshmaki, but it becomes a popular character in Georgian folklore later (Chachava 1979).

The ability of transformation is common among the inhabitants of the other world. They give lessons in such matters and they are experts, who hand over their knowledge to their apprentices. At the same time, they never want to part with those, who have the knowledge. Eshmaki is usually seen as such an expert. He becomes engaged in a fierce battle with the one, who leans his skills, to protect the knowledge of that world and make it unavailable for this world, because he is going to lose his force, if someone gets his knowledge and takes it to this world. Eshmaki does all he can to prevent this from happening and falls victim to his struggle. After the last apprentice manages to escape the master and returns to his father in this world, bringing the knowledge and using it too by helping his father to earn money, a deadly battle between the master and the apprentice takes place. Of course, the battle ends in the victory of the apprentice and the representative of that world is finally defeated and annihilated. For example, a peasant took his son to learn crafts. When they stopped at a spring, Eshmaki with the shape of a man spoke to them and promised the father that he would teach his son during a year and he would be able to take him home, if he recognized him after that. The year passed and the son gave a sign to his father to enable him to recognize the son and take him back home. On their way home, the son changed his appearance several times, enabling his father to sell him and earn some money. Later, Eshmaki found his apprentice and took him back, but the apprentice escaped again. Having undergone several transformations, the boy turned into a

needle, rushed into a fire and burned the master transformed into a thread. Thus, the boy finally escaped his master (Aghniashvili 1979:5-9).

In *Fairy Tale Eshmaki-Style* (Mskhaladze 1973:103-107), a peasant took his son to find a job. A man with a white beard came to them at midnight, when they were at the seaside. "It is Eshmaki". He told the father to let him hire his 18-year-old son as a labourer for seven years. "Eshmaki went along the seashore and said his magic words and was transformed into a ram. He put the boy on his back, jumped into the water, and swam in the sea. He swam for several hours until he reached an island. There, he said his magic words and turned into a man again. He took the boy to his daughter, who pitied him and told him: 'Your work is to study Eshmaki's skills'. There was a building made of human skulls outside. It lacked one skull. 'Don't be afraid. My father will teach you Eshmaki's skills, but you must not give correct answers to him to survive,' the daughter said. 'I must teach you Eshmaki's skills, so that you will be able to see people, but they will be unable to see you,' Eshmaki said. The seven years passed. Eshmaki decided that the boy was stupid and let him go. He turned into a ram, put him on his back, swam across the sea and took him to the seaside. The boy started using what he had learned (his skill of transformation), helping his father to earn money. But one day, the father made a mistake and the boy fell in Eshmaki's hands again. The boy turned into a dove and flew away and Eshmaki turned into a hawk; the boy turned into millet and Eshmaki into a broody hen; the millet turned into a fox, caught the hen and wrung the broody hen's neck".

According to the fairy tale, Eshmaki confronts humans, because he belongs to the other world, that of the dead. "Small Eshmaki touched the cliff with his finger and a twisted, hairy, horned, and hoofed Eshmaki emerged from the cleft" (Old Georgia, Vol IV, Part IV:6). This means that Eshmaki has a zoomorphic appearance and lives in a cliff or ruins. That is why it is possible to find many unusual things in the place where he lives. These things may be, for example, a key that can produce food and drinks without fire; a quern or donkey that produces gold and silver; or a pumpkin full of armed people. All these help the main hero to achieve what he wants. In the fairy tale *Eshmaki and the Key* (Razikashvili 1951:130-131), the ruins of Eshmaki's home are not in the place where the hero is. He is "outside" as opposed to the "inner" world.

Eshmakis are ruthless to the people of this world. For example, they can poke out the eyes of an elderly couple and take them away. Their son made Eshmakis put their hands into a tree rift. Embittered Eshmakis gave him his parents' eyes and their claws that were necessary to heal the eyes. However, the son did not deem all this sufficient and cut the Eshmakis' hands off (Virsaladze 1958:60-61).

Although Eshmaki feels something of himself, his defeat is inevitable as well as that of other evil spirits. For example, the king decided to test a thief and tasked him with stealing first his horse, then his ox, and finally his wife. The thief was successful and, having stolen the king's wife, he sold it to Eshmaki, demanding in exchange a hatful of gold. The thief dug a hole under the hat and Eshmaki found it difficult to fill it. Finally, the king ordered the thief to return his wife and promised to give half of his kingdom in exchange. The thief tasked Eshmaki with doing this, but Eshmaki offered to compete in running, shouting, and wrestling. The thief won the competitions. He defeated Eshmaki with the help of hares, a stick, and a bear and its cubs. He remained in possession of the king's wife and the gold and made the king renounce his kingdom, too (Virsaladze 1958:369).

Eshmaki has a specific method for annoying people. For example, in the fairy tale *Eshmaki's Bridle* (Ghlonti 1964:15-17), there is a very rich but extremely mean man, who had numerous cattle and a lot of sustenance at home, but he always walked around hungry

and unclothed and his family were also always hungry. He never hired shepherds, being afraid that they could kill one of his animals and eat it. He would never allow his neighbours or any visitors enter his house.

This mean man once rescued from a wolf Eshmaki's son, who had no name. Small Eshmaki told him: "I will take you to my parents and they will pay you for the good you did. They have a lot of wealth and they will offer you much gold and silver, but you must reject all that and tell them to give you your property". Eshmaki found it hard to satisfy the mean man's request, but finally they came up to him and tapped his head and a bridle fell out of his mouth. The mean man saw only at that moment that he was almost naked and dressed in rags and "loathed" himself. And he recalled his wife and children, who were also hungry, badly dressed and pitiable. He had a good sheep killed and sent it to his home and bought many other things for his family. The family rejoiced, seeing that their property had not fallen into the hands of Eshmaki.

In the fairy tale called *Peasant, Mullah, and Eshmaki* (Ghlonti 1964:90-91), a peasant prevented a wolf from catching Eshmaki. And the latter decided to repay by good and told him that he would turn into a donkey in the bazaar and the peasant was to sell him at no less than 10 tumans. A mullah bought the good donkey, took it home and took care of it personally. One fine day, the donkey started jumping and got into a wine flask and kept getting into and out of it. It would also stick its ears out. The mullah started shouting that his donkey got into the flask. Everyone thought that the mullah had gone crazy and started treating him by putting ice on his head. They nearly killed him. The mullah was forced to say that the donkey was in the stable, although he was sure that it was in the flask and sometimes made itself seen.

In *Arabzanginisa Fairy Tale* (Virsaladze 1958:342-349) the king learned that his son was going to marry two beautiful women and "somehow Eshmaki exerted influence on him, he became jealous, and decided to ruin his son in order to get hold of the women". They tied the young man's hands with strings, poked out his both eyes and put the right eye into the right pocket and the left eye into the left pocket. They took him to a remote countryside and left him there, hoping that he would die. However, a kind Beberi restored his eyes. The young man returned to his home. In the meantime, the women defended themselves courageously and killed all his army and the young man killed the evil king and became king himself.

In the *Paskunji* fairy tale, Eshmaki is presented as more powerful and he is made of iron. He kidnapped the wife of the younger brother. As it often happens with Devis, his health, reason, and soul were hidden in a special place, but the evil spirit is not invincible, so he was killed (Virsaladze 1958:22-34).

## **Kaji**

Kaji is a magician of terrific appearance. It is an evil creature. There are Kajis, who live on dry land, and those, who live in water. He is hostile towards humans. Kajis living in water are not so harmful. Female Kajis are beautiful (Chachava 1986:196).

Yet another evil spirit - Kaji - looks like humans, but it is harmful. It has big force and can sink ships and kidnap children. There are Kajis, who live on dry land and those, who live in water. Kajis have their own country - so-called Kajeti, which is the world of the dead, where they speak in the Kajuri language, which ordinary mortals cannot understand, but if they want, they can learn it. This happened in the fairy tale *Three Sisters* (Ghlonti 1964:12). Kajis had a king, who had proud children. They offered the hero, who had defeated them, to marry their sister, as they had beautiful women. However, the marriage did not take place, because the young man was in love with another woman. Kajis also

have a beautiful garden, but humans have no right to appear there. When Kajis saw that the son of the king of another country was grazing his horse in the garden and the prince himself was lying on the ground, they rushed to him one after another, asking him how he could be so bold. (In the meantime, the sister of Kajis warned the visitor to go away, as her brothers could come and they would be dangerous for him.) They started fighting and some time later, the prince threw to the ground first the younger brother and then the older brother, but helped them both to their feet. They became brothers and Kajis invited him to their palace. Both gave him their hair and told him that he could call them by burning the hair if he found himself in trouble. The prince had to fight against the armies of his rivals twice and used the hair to call them (Virsaladze 1958:97-103).

In another fairy tale, a young man came to Kajeti to marry a woman. He was taught in advance how to behave and "he cut off her long plait of hair and went back. The daughter of the king of Kajeti caught up with him and asked him: 'Was it you, who cut off my hair?' She was happy to receive a positive answer and followed him (Ghlonti 1964:51-54). Yet another fairy tale says that the king of Kajis had a good daughter and "if you marry the daughter of the king of Kajeti, there will be no one happier than you are" (Virsaladze 1958:51). Gveleshapi did not want to cede his wife to the hero until he brought him Kaji's daughter (Chikovani 1963:269). It is also noteworthy that despite all similarities between Kaji and Eshmaki, there is no one who would like to marry Eshmaki's daughter.

Not everyone thinks that Kaji's daughter is good. When the prince told his parents to prepare for a wedding party, his mother and father were offended, as a woman raised in the forest could be either Ali or Kaji (Ghlonti 1964:269).

Kaji is believed to be the most powerful creature in fairy tales. The king said that he would give a person a difficult task that even Kaji would not be able to accomplish (Ghlonti 1964:95). In another fairy tale, "women made a bridge and a female Kaji became part of the bridge. The king came together with his noblemen and viziers and strolled on the bridge... When they reached the middle of the bridge for a third time, the female Kaji raised the bridge, turned it into her hair, folded it, and threw the king and his noblemen and viziers into the water" (Tsanava 1994:235). In the fairy tale called *Black Bird*, Kaji is a Devi-Kaji - the Kaji wife of the king of the sea. Like Eshmaki, Kaji takes children to his home to eat them (telling their fathers to give him their "ignorant sons"), but Kaji's child helps them. There is another plot, according to which the Sea Kaji caught a ship and refused to let it go. "Give me your ignorant son and I will immediately release the ship," the Devi-Kaji shouted from below. "He must be with me in a year. Otherwise, I will make the sea sweep away the whole of your country," Kaji said in a threatening tone. The boy, however, married Kaji's younger daughter (after taking away her clothes), who helped him to perform the four tasks the king gave him. Finally, the Kaji wife of the king of the sea chased the fugitive couple, but she died when absorbing a lake. The boy took his sword and cut the female Kaji into small pieces (Ghlonti 1964:72-81). It is necessary to cut a dead body into pieces to prevent it from resurrecting like the beauty resurrects from a fish bone or turns into a woman again from a chip.

The plot is the same in the fairy tale named *Bolola*. Kaji took the child and put him under nine locks and told his mother to kill him. The boy asked Kaji's mother: "What is going on, mother?" "Had you not called me mother, I needed this knife to kill you," the female Kaji said. She released him, gave him food, put him on horseback and gave him a comb, a glass of oil, and a whetstone. Bolola (the youngest of three brothers) rescued the ship, too. Then he went to the prison under nine locks to see Kaji. He saw an old man coming. "You must be the cursed Kaji," he told him, hit him and turned him into dust (Ghlonti 1964:130-135).

In the fairy tale called *One Boy's Story* (Tsanava 1962:169), blood was pouring from the king's spring. Kaji told a vizier to give his word to fulfil any of his wishes in exchange for clean water. He gave him water, but took the vizier's son. Kaji got into the sea and the sea became firm, so that they did not even wet their feet. After the boy returned the woman's clothes, she helped him perform three most complicated tasks and received a purse as a present.

Kajis as representatives of the other world also have sacral knowledge and can help decent people. In the fairy tale entitled *Deceitful and Honest*, the honest man, who was deceived and stricken blind by a deceitful man, climbed a tree. Three Kajis happened to come and sit down under the tree. Being aware of what was going on, one of them said that there was water nearby and the blind man in the tree could go and wash his eyes with the water to have his eyesight back. Another Kaji said that there was a plane-tree in a specific place and the person, who uprooted it, would get a lot of money. And the third Kaji said that a king's daughter was dying and it would be impossible to cure her without killing a frog sitting under her bed. The blind man did all he had heard. He regained eyesight and became rich too. The deceitful man heard what had happened. He climbed the same tree, but when the Kajis came, they caught and killed him and cut him into pieces (Ghlonti 1964:413-415).

This means that Kajis not only have secret knowledge, they can also pass a just sentence and execute it too. All this points to their being from the other world.

The fact that Kajeti is equal to the underworld was noted by K. Gamsakhurdia (1963:107), M. Karbelashvili (1983:116), and Z. Gamsakhurdia (1991:214) when they wrote about *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*.

The three sisters, who were also Kajis and who troubled people, told a boy that they were orphans and Kajis had taken them to a thick forest. They taught them for five years how to become Kajis and how to fly and when they learned how to fly, they escaped, built a tower and started killing travellers, living on stolen things (Tsanava 1992:151).

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## **LION SYMBOL IN FOLK TRADITION AND SHOTA RUSTAVELI'S „THE KNIGHT IN THE TIGER'S SKIN“**

### **Abstract**

Scientific Literature notes that lion symbol in the ego world might be entered from Asia. In old Mesopotamian, the Hittite-Iberian, Egyptian, Persian, Greek and Roman art the lion symbol is very common and actual. Sometimes it was perceived as a pagan deity. Result of the lion's symbolic understanding should be the lion's image on the flag of Georgian Tribe Svan which reflects the traditions revealed in the life of Georgian tribes. In our work we concentrate on the lion symbol in wellknown Georgian poem (XII century) Knight in the Tiger's Skin by Shota Rustaveli and represent the examples from the poem with comparison of world experience.

სამეცნიერო ლიტერატურაში აღნიშნულია, რომ ლომის სიმბოლიკა ეგეოზურ სამყაროში აზიიდან უნდა შეჭრილიყო. ძველ შუამდინარულ, ხეთურ-იბერიულ, ეგვიპტურ, სპარსულ, ძველბერძნულ და რომაულ ხელოვნებაში ლომის სიმბოლო ძალზე გავრცელებული და აქტუალურია. ზოგჯერ იგი წარმართული ღვთაების დონეზერც აღიქმებოდა. ლომის სიმბოლური გააზრების შედეგი უნდა იყოს ქართველური ტომის \_ სვანების დროშაზე ლომის გამოსახულების არსებობა, რაც ქართველურ ტომთა ყოფაში გამოვლენილ ტრადიციებს ასახავს. ჩვენს წინამდებარე ნაშრომში ძირითადად განხილულია ლომის სიმბოლიკის ძველი ქართული ტრადიციები მეთორმეტე საუკუნის ქართული კლასიკური ნიმუშის შოთა რუსთველის „ვეფხისტყაოსნის“ მხატვრული პარალელების გათვალისწინებით.

**Keywords:** *Lion, myth, cult, Bible.*

Scientific Literature notes that lion symbol in the ego world might be entered from Asia. In old Mesopotamian, the Hittite-Iberian, Egyptian, Persian, Greek and Roman art the lion symbol is very common and actual. Sometimes it was perceived as a pagan deity. Ir. Surguladze who was studying zoomorphic symbols, emphasized the fact that lion is placed in the animal Asabi accompanying Asian and Caucasian Goddesses. (Ir. Surguladze 2003: 33) Also was mentioned that in the whole Asia, especially in the art monuments of Iran and Middle-Asia lion is reflected by a bright sun symbol -Borjgali on the shoulder, which might be the sign of the part. We should mention the spreading of lion's motive in the territory of old Georgia. Here on the materials obtained by the archeological excavations particularly, on the belts there is depicted lion's figure, with the head of man who throws an arrow; Result of the lion's symbolic understanding should be the lion's image on the flag of Georgian Tribe Svan which reflects the traditions revealed in the life of Georgian tribes. According to Ir. Surguladze , the lion is an animal which is full of shine, fire, and symbolizes the sun. He is the part of the sun and all other characters as a symbols of him are sunny heroes like: Gilgamesh, Herakl, Amirani, those are the heroes being couples of the deities of fertility. It as an animal embodies shining sun and symbolizes the warrior

wicked sun. (Surguladze 2003: 34-35). These facts indicate that the lion and the sun are linked to each other, which became one of the bases of the zodiac perception.

Lion symbol and motive was more common in the ancient world countries. In the old Mesopotamia Lion was considered as the animal of God Ningirus. It was viewed as the animal of the war, death, hot sun, revival and the dying God, Nergal, it was mentioned among Ishtari's lovers. (Surguladze 2003: 34; Myths I, 2000: 41). The Epic of Gilgamesh says that the lion's skin, as the mourning robes, sackcloth, was worn by Gilgamesh who into the field after the death of Enkidu and only after finishing mourning and obtaining plant of immortality took it off (Epic of Gilgamesh), his garment has a mourning function. In Aegean world, in the old countries on the territory of small Asia and Creta lion was considered as a cult animal of Fertility Goddess.

In an old Greek Methology, well-known mythological sunny heroes - Heracles and Belerofonti were wearing garments with lion's leather as a symbol of heroism, courage, strength and bravery. (Muths I, 2000: 41-42). Lukian Samosatel described medical properties of lion. (Muths I, 2000: 41-42), and Herodote indicated that young lions were perceived as protecting force. (Muths I, 2000: 41-42). In Egyptian Muths function of lion as a defender takes great place which is confirmed by the ancient cultural traditions, architecture, visual arts. In the old Egypt on the both sides of the roads along the Pharaus Palaces were the statues of lions. Eg. On the roads of Karnak Palace in Luxor, as well as, Assyrian, Babylonian temples were decorated by lions' images which has the aesthetic meaning at the same time with the symbolic explanation having the function of guardance and power.

Heads of lions and its body was used as an architectural element of palaces, religious buildings, tops and bottoms of the columns. In the old Egypt Osirisi, Ra, Hori were related to the lion. (Muths I, 2000: 41; Matie 1956: 52-63; 89; 99). In mythology and ancient belief lion had the function of time – past and present (yesterday, today). Lion symbolism is also proved that accompanying animals of Hittite Goddess were lions and panthers. Exactly they are tied on Rea Cybele's chariot, when Rea Cybele is seeking his sweetheart Atis (Muths I, 2000: 41). By analyzing materials containing lion symbols Ir. Surguladze came to the conclusion. The process of syncretism of cult of the mother of the nature the lion become as a partner of the diety. Sunny heroes are the adequate symbols to lions (Surguladze 2003: 35).

It's important to take into consideration Georgian folk data, according to it lion, tiger and tur are cult animals and their killing must be followed by confession and mourning of it as we meet into the legends. Otherwise, God does not forgive hunters.

Thus, according to old cult and ritual beliefs, mythopoetic view, lion is a symbol of sunny hero, an expression of the solar forces and paternal sources. Hence, lion as the sun related cult animal has two symbols, like a tiger and the sun it has dual- artistic and aesthetical functions: On the one hand like the sun which shines all around and gives everything life and power, the lion - king of the animals is a symbol of force, invincibility, nobility, royal zeal, courage, symbol of spiritual victory to materiality. On the other hand as the shining and burning rays of the sun embodies the destroying power, because too sun causes fading and burning as the lion is the symbol of royal arrogance, haughtiness, pursuit for power. In this case, main thing is that, the negative features of lion should be overcome, positive sides should be won. According to the oldest beliefs, mythological and folk facts, on the one hand lion symbolizes the understanding, wisdom, generosity, virtue, justice, courage, vigilance and success. On the other hand it reveals arrogance and predatory nature. On the mythopoetic standpoint, special importance is given to symbolic understanding of lioness, because it symbolises maternity and is the

attribute of different Goddesses. In particular, Leo is associated with Artemis Ephesus, Cibebe, Hecate, Atalanta, Rea and others. (Muths I, 2000: 41).

According to old cultural traditions, powerful kings, heroes, mythological and Biblical characters are called lions. Deep symbolic understating of lion is suggested by Bible and Theology. The oldest beliefs mythical and prechristian cultural data give us possibility to analyze one aspect of imagining „The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin” characters as the sun and the lion because comparing Avtandili to the lion, Nestan-Darejani and Tinatini to the sun is not simple poetic image.

Here it is about deep perception of subjects and objects of comparison, that’s why using of lion and the sun together for reflection of poem’s characters gives them metaphoric, symbolic, allegorical, enigmatic, and allusive meaning. If we take into consideration the oldest beliefs and the area of spreading mythopoetic when we investigate the genesis of meeting and parting of the sun and the moon fiction we find that there is the combination of history and spiritual life of ancient Georgian and other countries culture. It is the meeting of different cultures. That’s why the metaphor allusion of the sun and the lion is twomarked: 1. It reflects the immemorial and distant past, which is reached to the reader by the repetition of knowledge in itself 2. It provides a retrospective of writer’s contemporaneity which shows the eternity of this information or code, on which was allusion based.

According to foresaid in „The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin” the sun –Netsan Darejani and the sun Tinatini are inspirers and motive powers for their lovers, they are giving light and revive around everything.. Lion Tarieli and Lion Avtandili are expressing solar powers and male basics of the sun, the lion is the accompanying cult animal of the sun, which has a function of sun defender. It is also noteworthy that, according to Rustaveli's poem, state and social status of sweetheart knights are lower than sweetheart women. I reckon that in the metaphor- allusion of meeting the lion and the sun was reflected level of experience and knowledge in the XII century about the oldest beliefs and mythical thinking. This one of the most important fiction from “Knight in the Tiger’s Skin” assume the fact that the poem belong to Renaissance. Methaphor- alusion of meeting the lion and the sun has another side too. It is an astrological view. The lion as a symbol paved the way to astrology from the oldest folk beliefs and mythology, where the lion as a distinguished animal met the sun. In zodiac system the sun and the lion meet each other, when the sun is at the zenith, comparing with other months on 23 and 22 August it is the brightest, shining and burning. The sun sat on the lion or entering it into lion fulcrum has different symbolic meaning. Obviously it gave to fiction possibility to show a rich fantasy. Astral symbolism and deep knowledge of astrology assumed a base for the comprehension of lion’s various artistic images, which was shown in „The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin”. G. Imedashvili noticed that in general astral symbolic of the sun, particularly metaphor of meeting the lion and the sun was known for Rustaveli not only from scientific literature but from fiction too and indicated the place from „Virsamiani” where the whole picture of zodiac is described. (Imedashvili 1989: 147-148).

In Shota Rustaveli’s artistic-aesthetic concept one of the main poetic image, metaphor-symbol is a lion, which has multilateral artistic functions.

„The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin” deeply expresses the oldest cultural traditions, existing experience and knowledge of modern epoch. At the same time analyzing each artistic-aesthetic image has his individual view, which in the most cases leaves the impression of original. Lion as a fiction has variety of faces. Lion is the fiction of comparison, symbol, allegory, which shows the nature of enigmas. In the “The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin” lion is the methapor. Sometimes instead of character’s name Rustaveli

uses the lion, calls he/she lion. In these cases lion is a trope and using it in a context aims esthetic perception of hero man. Lion in „The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin” is mostly metaphorical, its comprehension is wide and author gives it a function of depicting character’s internal nature and spiritual world. From this standpoint, metamorphic, allusive, symbolic and poetic image of meeting the lion and the sun is especially important. In the scientific literature significant views are expressed about it. According to the recent surveys problem is examined in a new manner and the metaphor of meeting of the lion and the sun has further origins than it was known before. That’s why the lion of „The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin” is a symbolic and allegoric image too which has its origins in the past. Like the tiger it has mythical, ritual, religious and artistic origin. All the context in which lion’s artistic function is beyond epithet and comparison needs symbolic comprehension. In some context in the lion’s artistic image of obviously seen the socio-political view too.

In the Rustaveli’s poem Tarieli before wearing tiger’s skin and after that too is constantly related to the lion and the tiger, they express the external features of Tarieli’s personality his internal world. From the first appearance of Tarieli - artistic - aesthetic image of both animals are shown.

All at once they saw by the stream a stranger sitting and weeping.  
 He held a black horse by the bridle and looked like a lion and a hero.  
 His armour, saddle and bridle were thickly studded with pearls.  
 The rose was frozen by tears that welled up from his grief-stricken-heart.

In the mentioned context strange knight is a hero, who is compared with the lion and is wearing a garment and shawl made from the tiger’s leather. Both symbols of lion and the tiger reveals his internal and external condition: appearance, heredity, the grandeur-grandiosity of internal nature-, advantages, nobility and determination characterised for the royal which is mainly, presented in the form of a lion's fictional image; As well as the tiger’s garment indicates the Tariel’s tragic psychosomatic condition, spiritual and intellectual expectations of winning, beauty. The lion is one of the most important mythological religious literary folk and art esthetic symbols. It is the symbol of male aspects which always means male beauty, power, courage and solidity. But it is distinguished with it’s binary symbolism, because it has not only positive characteristics but the negative ones too, such as pride, arrogance, striving toward authority, that’s why the lion in the mythopoetic mentality system has dual artistic and aesthetic functions.

Angriness, lonely life, not having contact with others like him, said by St. Basil of Caesarea about lion is important to explain the characteristics and mood of Knight Tarieli who is the resident of cave and desert, because while his being in the cave and during the, he should suppress negative nature and characteristics of the lion in himself, which is implemented after meeting Avtandili. It is the person in Tarieli’s life, when the lion is metaphorically far from the sun. The lion with its deep metaphorical essence is related to the sun, which is reflected in „The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin” with its rare artistic and aesthetic colourfulness. Relationship of the sun and the lion and metaphoric image directly refers to the main characters of „The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin”: Tarieli, Nestan-Darejani, Avtandili and Tinatini. The lion and the sun sometimes describe the same person. (When I was five years old I was like an opened rosebud; to me it appeared no labour to slay a lion-it was like a sparrow....), and mostly they express two people Tarieli-Nestan-darejani and Avtandili-Tinatini, which has astrological grounds. In the „Interpretation of the poem The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin” by Teimuraz Bagrationi is firstly mentioned a central ground of this Rustaveli’s metaphor. Artistic image of meeting the lion and the sun expresses the expectations of meeting Avtandili and Tinatini. The lion is personified as Avtandili and The

sun as Tinatini. Meeting of Avtandili and Tinatini in the hall is expressed by hyperbolic methaphor, in which Tintini is Sun of the Suns, Avtandil is lion of the lions, (687/685); Same methaphor is used in the words of Tarieli too, when Rostevani agreed the marriage of Tinatini and Avtandili. Some citation from the poem give the basis of two kinds of interpretations: 1. The lion and the sun methaphorically express distinguished appearance, characteristics and status of Avtandili and Tinatini. 2. Meeting of the lion and the sun has deeper symbolic meaning. It has trace of the oldest believes, mythological thinking and astrological knowledge and experience. As much as without taking into consideration these two phenomena, interpretation and explanation of this methaphor will be difficult. Metaphor-alusion of meeting the lion and the son is moore deeply expressed in Avtandili's words; Nestan-Darejani, who is away from Tarieli is compared with the sun who is divorced with the lion. Avtandili who is happy and excited by the finding the place of Nestan- Darejani writes to Pridoni:

I have truly learned the story of that face likened to a sun,  
the sustainer of that lion who was buried under the earth. (1319).

The metaphor of the lion is symbolic in terms of artistic time because in this cotext is meant both separation of the characters and the neccessity of their fiture meeting , which was promised by Nestan- Darejani in her first letter:

'O lion! let not thy wound  
appear. I am thine. Die not, but I hate vain fainting

Let's recall the letter in which Nestan Darejani asked winner Tariel veil, an at the same time swore fidelity. The sun – Nestan-Darejani prepares her beautiness for the lion-Tarieli, which is expressed by transparent metaphors.

We meet the metaphor-allusion in the talkings about meeting of Nestan Darejani and Tarieli after invading „Kajeti” castle, when Fridoni is condoleced because of died heroes, which resulted the meeting of Tarieli and Netsan Darejani. G. Imedashvili asked the question, what does the going of the lion for seeking the sun, meeting of the lion and the sun, sitting of the sun on the lion mean and he said that here lion is not an ordinary lion and the sun is not an ordinary sun. In this and other similar talkings they are zodiacal sun and the lion. Their true meaning becomes clear only after meeting the lion and the sun. They in a certain sequence sometimes separate and meet each other which with its context is entering and coming out of the sun in its zodiac sign. This means that the sun during a year passess twelve signs, in which one is exactly the lion – Zodiac sign of July, the solar month. Also it is meant that because all luminay has its own place, where it feels the best, in other months being under different signs, they are separated from their own signs, as well as the sun is separated from its sign- lion- July during eleven months, so it is alone missing the meeting of its own month. Thus its understandable why is the lion constellation dwelling of the sun, it is its real flat- month July, where it feels beatitude. Entering of the sun in the phase in astrology is called sitting of the lion in the cab or in sitting in a pier, which is same as the meeting of the lion and the sun. When the sun sits in its sign, in July phase, it is usually more brilliant, which has more and more significance for the metaphor. (Imedashvili, pp. 137-138).

In the „The Knight in the Tiger's Skeen; the sun and the lion are separated, sometimes the sun seeks the lion, sometimes the sun sits on the lion, which is defined in the scientific literature with an astrological standpoint ( T. Bagrationi, Z. Avalishvili, G. Imedashvili, G. Nadiradze, V. Nozadze, E. Khinitbadze).

When we are describing the metaphors expressing the interdependence of the lion and the sun, together with astrological data we should take into consideration the oldest. During talking about methaphors of the relationship of the sun and the moon it is important

to take into consideration with astrological meaning the rituals connected with the sun and the moon, also the ancient attitudes which show the fact with new thinking. These are the rituals, faiths and cult events, which come from a thousand years and create mythopoetic world. Their foresee clearly shows the genesis of metaphor-allusion of meeting the sun and the lion, its gradual transformation, gradation, which eventually got esthetic value.

According to old cult and ritual images, mythopoetic point of view, the lion is the symbol of sun which shows the power of solar beings and base of male gender. Therefore, the lion, as the sun related cult animal, like a tiger and the sun, has two symbols, it is equipped with dual aesthetic functions: On the one hand, as the sun shines all around and gives vital energy and sheds light on everything, also the lion named as a king of animals is a symbol of power, invincibility, nobility, royal inspiration, courage, victory of spiritual to material. On the other hand as the burning and shining sun rays embodies the destroying power, because too much solar activity causes burning and fade as the lion is a symbol of royal pride, arrogance and longing for power. In this case, main thing is to overcome the negative qualities of a lion and the winning of the positive ones. According to the oldest beliefs, folk and mythological data of different countries, the lion on the one hand symbolizes intelligence, wisdom, generosity, virtue, justice, courage, vigilance and success.

In one rhyme of „The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin” is used an unexpected metaphor for expressing the beauty of Avtandili: “starts to become beauty, the sun was looked like the lion” (1256). For describing the characters in the poem are often found alongside the lion and the sun, in order to express beauty, strength, courage, spiritual greatness and positive characteristics in but it should be noted that the sun is superior epithet, metaphor and symbol rather the lion, which is proved by the prehistoric mythopoetic understanding, the oldest beliefs, which is moved to the middle ages and the subsequent period of artistic thinking. Remember the context: In Gulansharo Avtandili, which was waering the merchant’s clothes heard from Patman: “I have truly learned the story of that

face likened to a sun, the sustainer of that lion who was

buried under the earth” (1319). and freed from merchant’s clothing after expiring its artistic function. He put on youth, chivalrous wearings which closely resembles the lion Avtandili to the sun, he surpassed the condition in which he appeared in the city of merchants and front of its inhabitants.

Thus the metaphor allusion of the sun and the lion comes from the depth of centuries and has passed several levels of gradation. It has origins in the oldest beliefs, the which reincarnated in the mythopoetic thinking and at the same time acquired astrological understanding. All of them are reflected in „The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin”, which is one of the reasons to comprehend it as a renaissance work. Characters’ poetic image is reflected by the relationship of the lion and the sun, which in some cases considered as an artistic comparison, epithet, metaphor, symbol and allusion. In Rustaveli’s Poetic imagination the Leo Tariel and Avtandil will not be consummate without the sun Nestan Darejani and the sun Tinatini; The sun Thinatini and Darejani represent a rich incoative, they are the hypostases of fertility goddess, who constantly have to be accompanied with the characters represented by the zoomorphic form of a lion. Using of the sun and the lion as a metaphor and usage of the sun on the base of zodiac is conditioned by the advantage of the sun which focuses on the predominance of the woman, as the heir of the throne. Therefore, metaphor allusion of the lion and sun, together with artistic and aesthetic purposes, it is gaining a political and social purposes too.

Life, relationship, future, love victory of the characters of „The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin” is led by the allusion of meeting the sun and the lion, which is based on Christian ken but at the same time it keeps the trace of the oldest beliefs and reflects an

astrological knowledge. This metaphor is a simple of how was the poetic image taken from the nature gradated and merged.

For the understanding of the Lion, as a metaphor, which is associated with the divine origin, it is necessary to take into account the biblical and theological teachings. It is known that in the Old Testament the sons of Jacob Dan and Judah, Saul-the first king Israel's, Jonathan, Daniel, Samson and others are linked to the lion. The holly Prophet David has noted several times the lion's uniqueness and binarity. According to his teaching, the lion in itself combines the strength, anger, rancour, death, which can be resisted only by the humility of a person. Book of fables deems the lion as the most powerful animal. In order to understand the lion's symbolic image it is necessary to remind the falling of Prophet David into the lion's mouth and his survival, biblical Samson and David's battle with a lion, which symbolized the overcoming of angriness, rencour and other negative traits.

In this respect, the killing of lion and tiger and then the killing of lion by Tarieli before the third meeting with Avtandili has a deep symbolic meaning. By killing it, Tarieli has factually killed his and Netan Darejani's difficult and troubled past after which must be shown the way to Nestan-Darejani. Killing of lion symbolizes the overcoming of negative traits in Tarieli. With the mythopoetic point of view one of the symbolic functions of lion is that it symbolizes the renewal of consciousness and pouring of the blood by Avtandili on an unconscious Tariel has a deep purpose. It is no coincidence that Avtandili recoverd Tarieli by pouring the lion's blood on him, who is unconscious because of seeing the letter and veil sent by Nestan-Darejani. Lion's blood returned her consciousness back:

"Avtandil sprinkled the breast of that lion with the lion's blood. Tariel started up, the ranks of the race of India moved, he opened his eyes, he received power to sit up; blue seems the ray of the moon diminished in ray by the sun"

Killing of lion by Tarieli is motivated; consciousness of Tarieli should be recoverd by the lion's blood The lion as it was noted above, has positive and negative traits. By killing the lion, Tarieli overcame the negative traits in himself, after the pouring of blood and recovering, Tarieli acquired the positive features of the lion, he was equipped to defeat the evil force.

Killing of lion by Tarieli was given a political function by Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Fighting with lion and defeating it is related with the fight of Gilgameshi, Heracle and Sampson with the lion. It is the main way for the royal blood generation. It must overcome in itself the negative traits of reign: anger, tyranny, despotism, harshness. In the external historical background it's a conflict with political tyranny. For example we can recall the seizure of the Prophet Daniel into a lions' den (the Bible) and his miraculous survival (here lions symbolize tyranny of Babylon), Samson's attack with lion and etc. Trace of fighting with the lion is shown into David the Builder's work 'The canon of repentance' where the negative sides of reign, the lion are condemned. They are overcome by David with the help of humility, praying and repentance '(str, 1991: 198), which, we think, is motivated by the the above-quoted article from Psalm (Ps. 21, 22) . We come across with the episodes of fighting against lions in "Poetry of Regret" by davit the Builder where negative sides of lionship and reign is denounced. David beats all these negative sides with baseness, benediction and feeling of regret (Gamsaxurdia,1991: 198). We assume that all these items are motivated by (with) the quotation that's given above the psalm (psalm 21,22).

The symbol of lion is remade and activated in Christian literature positive features are prioritized there and is related with Easter, spiritual renovation. It becomes the emblem of Jesus Christ, Our Savior, on the one hand it points out about Judas posterity, on the other hand, the title Lion as the son of God has the symbolic function of vigilance and

awakening (Works of Saint Basil "Mkhecatvis"). In V. Ivanov and Toporov's encyclopedic letter (Lev-Myths, 2000) Lion is regarded as the symbol of Saint Markoz herald, Saint Ieronime, Saint Egnate and others. Hence many times in Georgian hymns Our Savior is depicted as a Lion and this gives aesthetical values to Hymns. Internal characters and nature of lion were described by St. Basil of Caesarea in his exegetic work "for genesis", the symbolism of the lion is more fully displayed in his second work "for the nature of the animals". Vision of St. Basil of Caesarea's in terms of expressing lion's theological symbolism is clear but at the same time has the signs of covering some details. Symbolism of the lion is revealed differently. The Christ who came from Biblical Judah, suppressed death and gave possibility to mankind cover with the light garment of first sin. In turn, for the Georgian royal politics and ideology consideration of lion as a symbol of Judah, is related to the issue of Georgian kings Biblical biblical origin, as a basement for the royal ideology, the ideology of the dynasty and state.

One of the reflection of lion's metaphor allusion is an aphorism related to the accession of Tinatini "No matter for the kids of Lion is it male or female". She had the right to throne. In this case should be paid attention to the relationship between the prince and the daughter in the mythical, religious and literary traditions, because the model of father and daughter's relationship is atique, it comes from mythos and Bible teaching. There are two models in mythos: 1. The king himself agrees on her daughter's accession to the throne and finds fiancée inside the country, accordingly he himself hands over his royal power to the daughter and the betrothed; 2. The king doesn't admit her daughter as a heir of the throne, accordingly he doesn't ascend her to the throne, cares about marriage of her and looks for a fiancée outside the state. He couldn't tolerate her accession because he loses his power, because the fiancée is a potential owner of his state, that's why is decision-making so difficult.

In Bible we meet two models of the king: 1. Kind king who acts kindly in front of God and as a model is named the Prophet David; 2. Not obeying the king, trying to rule the kingdom against the God's will. According to Bible teaching, the king must obey the words of God during his life which is a warranty of must be protected, which he and his successors and the reign svianobis duration. That is why I bought a kingship eschatological and messianic activity. By the Bible King must follow the God's rules all his life, why the King has the meaning of the God at the same time.

There is an interesting version in terms of heritage transmission, which was also revealed in the Bible. In the mythos and the Bible interests of the king's son and king's brother are opposite. In particular in and old Egyption myths brother of Osirisi Serim had a claim on heritage. Son of Osirisi Horu (Horus) was taking part into the argument. Isis convinced Seti that he must have been a successor and not a brother of the deceased man. (Matie, 1956: 103-110).

These mythical models are partially intersected into „The Knight in the Tiger's Skin” We can say that two models of father and daughter's relationship can be seen, on the one hand, Rostevan and Tinatin and on the other hand, examples of Parsadani and Nestan-Darejan. Quiet and dynastic life goes on in Arabia, but not in India because legitimate rule of giving a throne has been violated. Ascend of Tinatini on the throne as a single daughter of her father is conducted by the Bible particularly the Old Testament and historical allusions. According to new principles of Bible teaching when a father has got an only daughter she must be recognized as a successor. The book of numbers tells us a proverb about daughters of Zelophehad. (Number. 27, 1-11), They demanded the throne like the son successors. They have undertaken the mission of the successor sons in order to carry on their father's memory and name. According to II Law, not having the son

(means having only daughter) daughters should marry into their ancestral, thereby inheritance remained in their family.

Hence Tinatini was legitimately given royal authority by her father with the motif that all father must be changed by the son. In terms of allusion and symbol she is a descendant of Judah, Jesse, the Prophet David and Solomon.

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## CHANGING DISCOURSES ON GETTING LOST From Supernatural Misleaders to Medical Explanations

### Abstract

Situations in which a person is not aware of his/her whereabouts are most likely to be recognised in every part of the world and within every human culture. However, the explanations for getting lost and the means of finding one's way again are culture-specific. Furthermore, also widely recognised is the difference between ordinary and extraordinary ways of getting lost and the different factors causing this undesirable, and in most cases unpleasant, situation. We may talk about getting lost in an ordinary way, when a person loses direction for example because of their lack of knowledge of the terrain or insufficient skills in orientation. The person who has lost his/her way may solve the problem by observing more closely the surrounding landscape, or he/she may take fright and panic. The incident may end up fatally even, but in any situation, the person is the *subject* of the situation. Cases of *going astray* are considered to happen in everyday reality and for ordinary reasons. (Cf. Wikman 1961: 11.)

დაკარგვა, მხარის აქცევა – სიტუაცია, როცა ადამიანმა არ იცის თავისი ადგილსამყოფელი – ცნობილია მსოფლიოს ყველა ხალხისთვის, თუმცა აღნიშნულის ახსნა და გზის პოვნა უკვე კულტურათა თავისებურებაზეა დამოკიდებული. ფართოდაა ცნობილი განსხვავება გზის არევის, დაკარგვის ჩვეულებრივ და უჩვეულო სახეებს შორის. გზის დაკარგვას შესაძლოა ჩვეულებრივი ვუწოდოთ, როცა ადამიანი კარგავს ორიენტაციას გზის არ ცოდნის გამო. ასეთი ადამიანი გამოსავალს პოულობს გარემოში ადაპტაციის საშუალებით ან, პირიქით, მას პანიკა მოიცავს. ხანდახან უბედური შემთხვევა ფატალურიც ხდება, მაგრამ არის სხვა შემთხვევაც, როცა ადამიანი გარემოების მსხვერპლია და იკარგება თუნდაც თავისთვის ნაცნობ გარემოში. ეს შესაძლოა მოხდეს ყოველდღე ჩვეულებრივ პირობებშიც კი. დაკარგვის, მხარის აქცევის ფოლკლორული მასალები თემის უმთავრესი საკითხია.

**Keywords:** *getting lost, supernatural, forest cover.*

Getting lost in an extraordinary way involves an experience or interpretation that the incident is caused by some external force, which at least in some respects is more powerful than human beings. In such cases the lost person is the *object* of the non-human entity, which acts to serve its own will and intentions. In traditional agrarian folk cultures, folk belief traditions have been used as an interpretive framework for explaining such incidents. Getting lost other than in the “usual way” is considered as being caused by some supernatural being or supernatural force. In this kind of case, the human is typically taken to a realm not belonging to the scope of everyday experience and/or the person's state of mind is somehow altered. The expression *being spirited away* characterises this way of getting lost. (Cf. Wikman 1961: 11.)

Folk narratives and folk beliefs on getting lost reinforce the idea that, in principle, any living creature, be it human or animal, is in danger of being misled by a supernatural agent and forced to stay in a supernatural realm for some period of time or even for good. The belief tradition also equips people with tools and means to defeat the supernatural antagonist. On the basis of archived folklore materials, people had various means to protect themselves magically from getting lost. It has also been a common belief that the lost person may have been released from the supernatural enchantment by self-administered magic, or magic practised by searchers or by a specialist, like a seer or a sage.

In the archived materials of Finnish tradition, it is possible to define at least three different ways of getting lost supernaturally. The first is that an essentially non-instinctive natural agent, like a mountain or a forest can “take”, “swallow” or “hide” a person. The lost person just suddenly finds himself in a strange environment and loses contact with other people.

The most typical and well known of this type of getting lost is *forest cover* (Fi. *metsänpeitto*), which means that a person or animal is located in the wilderness and hidden from human society, and cannot be found even if located near the searchers. The second is when a person enters a dwelling or realm of some supernatural beings, communicates with them and is forced to stay with them for some period of time. The third is when weak and short-term contact with certain supernatural beings is enough to make a person lose sense of their time and place or otherwise change their psycho-physical state.

These three types of getting lost are in many respects overlapping and share many common features. One recurring motif has to do with supernatural routes. The forest cover tradition, as well as traditions connected to different kinds of supernatural beings, upholds an idea of paths and trails that are possessed and controlled by nonhuman agents. Crossing or marching along such a path leads a human astray. (Jauhiainen 1998: 131, 251, 255, 271; Sarmela 2009: 384; Tarkka 2013: 376.) Another common factor is the blurriness of images. The interpretations of the supernatural cause of the event waver between more or less abstract entities and identifiable or personified beings. For instance, the state of forest cover can be thought to be caused either by the forest itself or some supernatural being dwelling in the forest. The very concept of ‘forest’ may refer to the forest itself as an entity or to various natural or supernatural beings and agents, such as the bear, the forest spirit, forest maiden, or the dynamic power substance, *väki*, of the forest (Tarkka 1998: 97–99; Sarmela 2009: 383–385). In the narrative tradition on being spirited away, the roles and actions of different supernatural beings and powers may vary, but *supernatural misleader* is a usable hyponym covering them all.

In the following paper I will first present some examples of supernatural misleaders known in older Finnish folk tradition. Then I will continue to the present-day discussion about the topic of getting lost in an extraordinary way, focussing on the exchange of views on some Finnish Internet forums. In conclusion, I will outline the variety of discourses and frames of reference in which getting lost is discussed and interpreted among commentators and those who have actually experienced it.

### **The forest cover in Finnish folklore**

The phenomenon of forest cover has been known in most parts of the Finnish cultural area (Sarmela 2009: 384–385 and maps 53 & 54). It is associated with both people and livestock. A person trapped in the forest cover becomes invisible to the searchers, but may be able to see and hear them. Sometimes it is told that the lost one is led and fed by some anthropomorphic, zoomorphic or undefined supernatural creature. It has been possible for the covered person to break free by turning all his clothes inside out, thus

manipulating the reversed reality of the forest cover. The community members can release the covered person for example by ringing the church bells. (Jauhainen 1998: 255; Stark 2006: 359–360; Sarmela 2009: 385.) Christian symbols and acts have in general been strong resources against hostile supernatural powers.

Once a child got lost in the forest cover by his own home wicket. He was searched and shouted for, but he was not to be heard or seen. Then his grandmother recited the Lord's Prayer and Blessing, and the child came suddenly from an alder bush growing at the mouth of the alley. He told that he had seen the searchers and heard them calling for him, but a grey friendly being held him back and prevented him from expressing himself. It brought him strawberries to eat.

(SKS KRA. Mikkeli, Vanhala. Jaakko Valkonen TK 111:196. 1961.)

A common idea is that the forest or the forest spirit is an active force and causes the incident, but it is also possible that a person gets lost while accidentally walking on or crossing the forest spirit's path (Holmberg 1923: 17; Sarmela 2009: 384; Tarkka 2013: 376).

In experience narratives about humans in forest cover, the main point seems not to be where the lost person ends up and what happens there, but from where the person is absent. In forest cover a person was excluded from human society and unable to communicate with other people. As Laura Stark has argued, in the early modern society people were not individuals in the same sense as in the modern world, but strongly connected with and dependent upon the inner circle of the farm household of which they were members. In the Finnish source material, which for a great part consists of first-hand and second-hand memorates, the most consistent and prominent features concern changes in the person's capacity to sense, move and communicate normally. Descriptions of the supernatural agents and the belief content in general are more miscellaneous and obscure. (Stark 2006: 364–367.)

It is worth noticing that individuals trapped in the forest cover are always women, youngsters or children alone in the forest pastures, picking berries or herding livestock, but not hunters well acquainted with the forest environment (Stark 2006: 366–367; Tarkka 2013: 374). The archived material also sometimes reveals explicitly that getting trapped in the forest cover has been preceded by some episode detaching the person from the society. For instance, a child may have been scolded or cursed and then sent to herd cows in the loneliness of the forest. A low social status seems to correlate with the risk of ending up in the forest cover. (Stark 2006: 367–371.)

An animal (a cow, a sheep, a horse) in forest cover is often told to look like a stone or a hummock in the eyes of the searchers. A quite common explanation is that a malicious neighbour magically causes the forest cover of livestock. The animal may also be set free magically, e.g. by "binding" the forest, that is to say, causing physical pain to the forest. (Holmberg 1923: 28–47; Sarmela 2009, 383; Tarkka 2013: 374–376.) Thus, within folk belief tradition, even the forest is understood as a sentient and vulnerable agent.

Uno Holmberg, who was the first Finnish scholar to write about the topic, equated the state of forest cover with the realm of the dead. In Holmberg's time, the realm of the dead had more salience and a wider applicability in scholarly thought. Kaarle Krohn, for example, argued that forest spirits were originally souls of the dead. (Holmberg 1923, 53–60.) Laura Stark in turn stresses the forest cover as a condition in which the human self loses its identity and dissolves in the counter world of the forest; sometimes the dissolution can be seen as concrete embodiments such as being covered by moss or having one's mouth and ears filled with moss. According to her explanation, in early modern culture the forest was understood as a specific space; she interprets the forest as a *heterotopia*, representing an anomalous and dangerous space outside the human society. (Stark 2006: 371–374.)

### **Different kinds of supernatural misleaders**

The personal supernatural misleaders are solitary or social beings, such as rulers of natural places, collectives of different kinds of dead-beings, fairies, or the Devil. The ways of misleading humans differ between beings and are manifold, from inviting, tempting and cheating, to forcing and violent capturing.

My first example of personal supernatural misleaders is the *earth dweller* (Fi. *maahinen*, Northern Saami, *gufihtar*). Earth dwellers are most widely known in the northern parts of Finland and they play an important role, especially in the belief and narrative traditions of the Saami people. They are social, anthropomorphic beings, living human-like life under the ground. When moving about on the ground they are usually invisible, but can become visible if they wish. They are thought to live on the fells and near houses and farms as “neighbours” and have reciprocal relationships with people. The earth dwellers are potentially friendly (e.g. they ask for or offer help, donate cattle and goods) or hostile (e.g. they capture people, mislead humans or livestock, or cause diseases). (See Pulkkinen 2005b: 87–88; Enges 2012: 133–136.)

According to traditional knowledge, it has been possible to detect living places of the earth dwellers in the landscape. Exceptional types of terrain like rocky areas and areas of soft sand have been thought to be favourable places for the beings. Likewise round-shaped mounds and hillocks are understood to be earth dwellers’ houses. Springs, round-shaped ponds and exceptionally shaped or big stones have been interpreted as passages or doors to the earth dwellers’ underground realm. (Enges 2014: 98.)

A human may end up in the earth dwellers’ world voluntarily, by mistake or impulsion. Usually their underground realm is described as a single room or dwelling, but sometimes also a total otherworld. Accepting to eat earth dwellers’ food forces the human to stay in their world, and correspondingly, refusing to eat or drink anything sets the person free. The next example is an archived text, written in the northern Finnish parish, Muonio, at the beginning of the 1950s. It is a report of the narrator’s personal visit to the earth dwellers’ world and a quite abundantly detailed and realistic description of the setting and the thoughts and feelings of the experienter.

*I had been sleeping until the afternoon and I woke up and left to find reindeer calves, it was July. I felt very brisk and cheery as I walked. The summer was very hot; the calves were languishing.*

*So I am walking along the heath. Suddenly I feel a kind of weightiness, I don’t have the strength to walk after all. So I halt and light my pipe, taking care that the fire will not spread.*

*Well, then I started to walk and managed about ten metres. There was something like a bed, heaped up with stones. I thought that the old Saami people had built it in their time. It was old.*

*As soon as I started to lie myself down, I became stuck on my back and at that very moment I was taken to a room, and I could not realise how it happened.*

*I was standing on the left side by the doorframe. A dinner table sprang up and food was brought to it. And in that room there was a big woman, dressed in black, wearing earrings with stones as thick as a finger hanging down to her shoulders. And the one who was cooking, she was dressed in grey, and she was smaller. And she keeps saying: “Eat now my boy! Eat now my boy! Will you not eat?”*

*Then I knew where I was and kept on looking straight ahead. You must just keep staring into space but not look around, no eating, talking.*

*[- - The experiencer refuses three times to eat the food offered to him - -]*

*So I am waiting for the last portion of food. When I was a child, the late Brita of Mattila had instructed me. Then I was given a bowl filled with fried blood. [- -] I did not eat that either and I did not say anything, just glanced sideways at everything.*

*Then suddenly I was frozen stiff and I was back on the ground, but I could not see how I'd come to be on the ground. Only after that could I really feel myself again. - And it is not a dream. I was about twenty-one years old then.*

*(SKS KRA. Päiviö Alaranta 715. 1951. < J. H. Alamattila, s. 1873, Muonio.)*

Although told in first-person singular, as a personal experience narrative (memorate), this example represents one of the most common, constant and widespread narrative plots about human contacts with the earth dwellers (Enges 1991: 68–69, 72, 129). It is evident that ideas and images of the underground realm have a strong background in belief legend tradition. In many narratives told as first-hand or second-hand memorates, the plot and content correspond with established legend types. Finnish earth dweller tradition also shares many similarities with the belief traditions of Scandinavia, where besides living under the ground, the beings also live in the mountains, and the lost person is “taken into troll mountain” (Klintberg 2010: 188–192).

### **Seeing and hearing is dangerous**

The next two examples concern cases of being spirited away, which do not carry the idea of ending up in some other sphere or realm. In these cases, getting in touch with supernatural beings may cause remarkable changes in a person’s psycho-physical abilities and behaviour, but the incidents happen in everyday reality.

The *hiisi-folk* (Fi. *hiidenväki*) are a crowd of human-like, but physically deformed, headless, small, dark or invisible beings known in a quite restricted area in western Finland. Phenomenologically, *hiisi-folk* are related to social dead-beings. The *hiisi-folk* move about together in large numbers along certain invisible tracks, the *hiisi-paths*. When the *hiisi-folk* are on the move, jingling of sleigh bells and/or humming, buzzing or whirring is heard. A person getting in their way loses his way, loses consciousness or gets paralysed. (Jauhiainen 1999: 131.)

If someone by accident came upon a *hiisi-path*, he could possibly walk the whole day in the woods in a state of enchantment. In our fence there was such a place. The master of Koitta house had walked there all day, he had moved in the same circle over and over again. He was sweaty and tired when he came to our house in the evening. (SKS KRA. Merikarvia. L. Laiho 2691. 1936 < Lydia Lahtinen, 52 v. Kasala.)

In Finnish there is a specific dialectal verb *hilvasta* to describe the experience: literally translated the expression means ‘to cause mental confusion’ or ‘to paralyse’, but it implies a difference from paralysis as it is understood and diagnosed medically (Suomen murteiden sanakirja 1992: 524).

When caused by the *hiisi-folk*, the abnormal condition is temporary and even the affected person may break the spell e.g. by turning his clothes inside out. It has also been maintained that the beings do not harm a person who is pretending to be asleep (Jauhiainen 1999: 131).

*Eáhparaš*, the dead-child in the Sámi belief tradition of northern Finland, is an illegitimate child, killed or left to die before it is baptised. It is invisible or in the guise of a

naked newly born child, a willow ptarmigan or a hare. *Eáhparaš*-beings are met on fells, riverbank thickets and ravines. The being cries and mourns and is considered to be extremely dangerous: it may cause a state of *raimmahallan*, characterised by restlessness, anxiety, anguish, listlessness and loss of sense of time and place. The state is a consequence of an unexpected, frightening meeting with the being, and especially of talking to the being or getting circled by it. (See Pulkkinen 2005a: 65–66; Pulkkinen 2005c; Enges 2012: 131–132.)

*I have been advised that you must not allow the eáhparaš to overtake you and you must not look behind at it. If you keep it behind you, it will stay there. If you start to run, the sound will follow you and it will make you drowsy or sick. In Saami language that is raimmahallan. It means that one becomes somnolent and may sleep for many days. Or one may lose consciousness or something else. (TKU/A/70/71: 31. Ilmari Rasmus.)*

In several different interviews the same narrator talks about an incident he has heard from the experienter himself:

*There, in that specific place a Norwegian reindeer herder got frightened. The eáhparaš had started to cry and he started to talk to it, started to chat with it. It was in the springtime. “Why are you crying and what are you mourning for?” So it had answered that its mother had moved to the Finnish side and left it here alone. He asked nothing more, he did not ask the [mother’s] name or anything else, and he got frightened, because he had started to talk to the being. Then he started to run. He escaped, of course. When he came to Valjok, he fell asleep and slept two and a half days in a row. (TKU/A/75/163: 27.)*

*[A]nd then he rushed away. He was running and there is a thicket, trees of all kinds, willows and like that. So he came to Valjok and the people saw that he was not well, he was not sweaty at all but he was extremely pale. He fell asleep immediately. (TKU/A/67/74: 18.)*

A temporary amnesia is certainly the most typical consequence of encountering the *eáhparaš*-being. In the example above, the symptoms of *raimmahallan* were easily noticeable to the others. They understood that the man was not himself at all. He was not sweating, which would have been normal after a long and exhausting run, and at that moment he was not able to tell others about his shocking experience. Instead, he slept for an exceptional length of time. When he finally awoke, he reported his experience and could but wonder how he had been able to fly home through the rough terrain. (Enges 2012: 201–206.)

### **Cultural and experiential interpretations**

The four examples above, from different parts of Finland, show that being spirited away is a regionally varying phenomenon. There are many specific features, depending on area and on the supernatural creature in question. Still the experiences, mediated through narratives, have also much in common. The same types of features indicate that there might be a causal relation between the experiences and certain types of human psycho–physical conditions.

‘Being spirited away’ is a phenomenon known also in modern times. Seppo Knuuttila, who has analysed present-day narratives about getting lost, has discovered the remarkable similarity between old and new narratives; there seems to be a recurring script that the incidents follow:

“[- -] in the beginning everything is fine: the forest is familiar, it is gracious and becalming in matters for which one has set out into the forest. But the situation changes rapidly. When the berry-picker raises her head, a child glances around or a wanderer lost in thought comes to, the forest has become strange, even though it looks the same as just before. The unknown pushes aside the familiar and the surroundings issue threatening messages: nothing holds true, previously friendly trees are now hostile, the sun shines from the wrong direction.” (Knuuttila 2005: 5.)

The settings of incidents may be different, but descriptions of the experience, the human feelings and reactions, as well as depictions of the upside-down world where the lost one ends up, are to a great extent analogous to those represented in old archive materials on the forest cover (Knuuttila 2005: 8). Considering also the obvious similarity between getting misled by the above-mentioned supernatural beings, this fundamental similarity suggests some connective factor behind the phenomenon.

A widely accepted explanation for supernatural experiences has been the so-called *cultural source hypothesis*. According to the hypothesis, supernatural experiences “are either fictitious products of tradition or imaginary, subjective experiences shaped (or occasionally even caused) by the tradition” (Hufford 1982: 14). The prescience of experiencing and explaining is a vital prerequisite for new experiences. The folklorist Lauri Honko was a well-known supporter of this opinion. (Honko 2013: 140–147; Ward 1977: 214–215, 218.) Relying on this hypothesis in a sense “explains the experience away”; the experiences are real only from the subjective viewpoint of the experiencer, but objectively untrue and may be explained e.g. as illusions or hallucinations. (Honko 1991: 103–108; Honko 2013: 143–146; Hufford 1982: 12–15.)

David J. Hufford proposes in his study, *The Terror That Comes in the Night* (1982), another theoretical premise. His *experiential source hypothesis* suggests that many types of experience are independent of explicit cultural models. According to his hypothesis, “[t]he experience itself has played a significant, though not exclusive, role in the development of numerous traditions [of supernatural assault]”, and “[c]ultural factors determine the ways in which the experience is described and interpreted.” Hufford analyses the *Old Hag* tradition of Newfoundland and interprets it as a culture-bound explanation of the medical state called *sleep paralysis*. The physiological symptoms of sleep paralysis are widely, probably globally known, but the names and reasoning for the phenomenon varies from one cultural tradition to another. (Hufford 1982: 15–16, 245–246, 251.)

In the case of being spirited away, conditions known in psychiatry as *dissociative disorders* seem to be appropriate in explaining the phenomenon. Dissociative disorders are conditions that involve disruptions or breakdowns of memory, awareness, identity or perception. In a dissociative state a person “is unable to connect his thoughts, emotions, perceptions or memories into a meaningful entity. Dissociative symptoms are for instance psychogenetic amnesia, feeling unreal and alien to one self (*depersonalisation*), perceiving familiar people and environments as strange and weird (*derealisation*), losing sense of time and space, distortion of perceptions, and difficulty of seeing the difference between imagination and reality. Sometimes dissociation may manifest itself as physical symptoms, like spasms, loss of speech, numbness, aches and pain, blindness, other sensory distractions

and loss of consciousness.” (Huttunen 2014.) In its weak form, dissociation is considered to be a common and normal way of reacting. It is regarded as a defence mechanism occurring involuntarily in mentally stressful situations.

Indeed, there is a prominent correlation between many of the symptoms of dissociative disorders and the variety of experiences reported in belief legends and personal narratives. On the other hand, it is of course arguable whether dissociation – even with its diversity of symptoms – can sufficiently explain the wide geographical and being-specific variety of experiences of being spirited away. I would still argue that the cultural and experiential source hypotheses are not necessarily as contrary as one could think at first glance. In situations where an individual is in a stressful situation – like a cursed or punished child alone in the forest – the frightening images of traditional lore may not only actualise in the person’s mind, but cause a real change in his/her psycho–physical condition. This acute state is deeper than just an illusion or some other type of erroneous perception. Fear is undoubtedly a universal constituent of eerie experiences (cf. Hufford 1982: 15).

### **Forest cover: continuity and change**

The forest cover, as well as other types of being spirited away, is an interpretation of getting lost, made in a *supernatural frame of reference*. Folk belief tradition (experience stories, belief legends, belief statements, magical practices, etc.) can be considered a specific and culture-bound framework for discussing and interpreting out-of-ordinary experiences of getting lost. Among the researchers of folk belief, it has been a common assumption that the supernatural frame of reference and consequently *supernatural discourse* have been prevalent in agrarian communities of the past. This assumption, not unknown even today, is nevertheless distorted and one may justly ask how long and how widely accepted the supernatural discourse really has been. In Finland, the church, public school system and newspapers forcefully rivalled it and offered alternative authority against it already during the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Rural peripheries were the longest-standing bridgeheads of the discourse based on a supernatural worldview. (Koski 2011: 84–85.)

Today the experience of getting lost is dealt with and interpreted within some parallel and competing frames of reference and discourses. I use here three Finnish-language Internet discussion threads as examples of present-day views. The first and longest one, labelled “Oletko kokenut metsänpeiton?” (*Have you experienced the forest cover?*) took place on an unrestricted forum, *Suomi24*, where in principle it is possible to debate on any topic. This discussion (here referred to as OKM) was placed under the subtopic Parapsychology, which most likely had the effect of attracting participants by the subtopic heading. It has affected the tone of discussion. It is worth noticing that only one of the commentators considered the subject to be pure nonsense (OKM 17.1.2010).

The discussion thread was opened by the pseudonym “E.Nigma” in 2006:

*Old folk tradition knows the term metsänpeitto (forest cover). Sometimes e.g. a mushroom picker can experience strange things in a forest very familiar to him/her. The forest starts to look uncanny. If the wind is blowing, if there is sound and movement in the forest, it all ends suddenly. The person feels strangeness and cannot make a move or let a sound. Later, the state of enchantment disappears. This all could be explained psychologically. But the strangest thing is that if the lost person has company, he/she will disappear from the sight of the others. They don’t notice him/her at all. (--)*

This text started a discussion lasting, although randomly, for several years (2006–2014). Altogether 62 messages were sent by 37 different discussants. In the discussion thread many people responded by reporting their own experiences or experiences heard from their parents or grandparents. Somebody had heard the term but had not known what it meant; some others had had this kind of experience but had not earlier known a proper name for it. On the site, participants asked for acceptable interpretations and answers were given.

*I thought this was just nonsense until it happened to me. I was riding a horse and I saw a lovely path by the road. I started to follow it. The grove is just a small area, surrounded by a few houses. It forms a square. On the other side there is the road, on both sides and at the end a little further again, a house.*

*Well, I was riding ahead and found that the path suddenly ended. I turned around and, being born in the country, I always look around me to find landmarks in order to DEFINITELY find my way back. And I have a good sense of direction. I have strolled in that wood since I was a child. When I turned around the path had vanished. It was simply not there! When I came the path was not very obvious, but still clearly distinguishable and the forest animals had trodden it. Of course I looked around to find my landmarks but I felt kind of foolish. I really could not see them and I could not perceive anything anymore. It was like I was moving in a circle with my eyes shut and then I tried to orientate myself. And the strangest thing was that there was neither wind nor “life” of any kind. The birds were not chirping or anything else. Although when I started out the sun was shining and the wind was blowing nicely and there were really a lot of birds in that forest.*

*All I could do was try to move approximately in the same direction I came from. When I came I had passed two slopes but when I returned there was only one. Then suddenly I came to a bog, although in that forest THERE ARE NO bogs. Then I ended up in a very dense clump of spruces, from where it was really difficult to continue. The spruces had apparently been planted there once, because between them there was always a grove. Luckily I was riding a small horse. On some other horse I would not have been able to go anywhere. Usually a horse finds its way back home, but not this time. I almost panicked already, but then at last I saw a red house and found myself in my neighbour’s backyard.*

*I guess things like this should not happen at all?  
(OKM 21.8.2006.)*

This text corresponds to a great extent with the script known in both old and present-day materials on getting lost in an extraordinary way (cf. Knuuttila 2005). The narrator emphasises his/her excellent skills in orientation and knowledge of terrain that is very familiar. Moreover, even if a human could for some reason get lost, an animal should not. The essential anomaly of the incident is indicated by the sudden and inexplicable silence surrounding the experiencer; the total silence seems to be the most powerful and recurring evidence of the abnormality of the experience.

The second discussion is actually a set of comments (altogether eight, published from 2012–2013) on the blog “Metsänpeitossa – siis missä?” (*In forest cover – what does it mean?* referred to here as MSM). The text is an essay pondering over the essence of the phenomenon and it refers to old archival sources as well as to some results of scientific research. The blogger has a university education and presents himself as the founder of the

“School of esoteric geography” and the developer of “periphery therapy”, based on Jungian psychology (Esoteric geography 16.4.2015). The overall tone of the text, as well as that of the comments, is positive towards the subject, and its existence even in the modern world is not questioned.

The third discussion thread, “Metsänpeitto” (*Forest cover*, referred here as MPR), turns up on the forum *Rihmasto (Mycelia)*. It consists of 15 messages from seven discussants from 2006–2009. The forum is maintained by the *Global Ecovillage Network Finland*, which is a parent organisation for communities looking for an alternative, sustainable way of life. The discussion was launched by the pseudonym Kääpä (*Shelf fungus*) who wrote: “Could somebody tell me beautiful things about the forest cover or about how one ends up in it or is permitted into it” (MPR 3.6.2006). This invitation receives for the most part positive responses.

The three forums mentioned above are practically everything there is to be found on the Internet concerning the forest cover phenomenon in today’s Finland. Admittedly the material is small and restricted, and also biased on esotericism and alternative ways of thinking. Yet it is multifaceted enough to illustrate the main vernacular angles and stances on the matter. On the basis on my material, the present-day discussion on forest cover is founded on four different, though often intertwined discourses: *popular scientific*, *Christian*, *traditional-supernatural* and *neospiritual*.

### **Forest cover: present-day attitudes and discourses**

On the Internet forums, discussants invoking scientific evidence may speak either in favour or against the reality of the phenomena. There are basically two opposite attitudes: the phenomenon does not really exist at all, or it exists and can be explained rationally by science. The discourse is based on a scientific worldview and the debate is conducted using scholarly terminology, absorbed from scientific or popular scientific sources. The arguments refer to science in general, or more precisely to a branch of science, like medicine or psychology.

*Such things do not happen at all. Not according to science. (OKM 20.7.2013.)*

*A sudden decrease of blood glucose level may cause symptoms like that for diabetics, but this was not known in the bygone days. (OKM 9.6.2006.)*

*A weak sense of direction and dementia are rational explanations for this. (OKM 19.1.2010.)*

The references to science on the general level indicate the writers’ faith-like trust in science as the most trustworthy authority in explaining the world. The more specific arguments also reveal that the discussants have at least some expertise in the field, possibly acquired from popular scientific sources. Within popular scientific discourse, forest cover experiences are explained physiologically (exhaustion, drunkenness, misuse of psychopharmaceutical and other drugs), psychologically (panic, claustrophobia, suggestion, bad sense of direction) or medically (diabetes, epilepsy, dementia, mental illnesses). Also dissociation is put forward as a noteworthy explanatory alternative:

*Could dissociation be the modern medical term for forest cover? (MSM 12.10.2012) → Indeed, forest cover seems to resemble many symptoms of dissociation (MSM 12.10.2012) → We are certainly talking about dissociation. I*

*myself have, in a stressful and difficult situation, had an experience comparable to forest cover. During it I felt I was lost in the centre of Helsinki, although I am very well accustomed with the neighbourhood (MSM 17.10.2012).*

Altogether, a common feature in the popular scientific discourse on forest cover is a strong endeavour to find a material and thus reasonable explanation for the phenomenon. Today laymen invoke the same kinds of rational explanatory models prevalent amongst folk belief scholars of the past (see Ward 1977: 213–218).

The Christian discourse also upholds two parallel – though in my Internet material not very clearly expressed – attitudes: the phenomenon of forest cover cannot be real at all, because God would never allow such a thing to exist, or it may be real but it's sinful and against God's will, so people should not interfere in it at all (OKM 1.6.2010). In the traditional-supernatural discourse, arguments are put forward on the grounds of traditional folk belief. Supporters of this view suggest that various beings of old belief lore really exist and are still active in causing cases of getting lost. For instance, forest spirits, fairies and earth dwellers are suggested as causes for forest cover. Interestingly, the role of malevolent individuals and witchcraft practiced by them, well known in the old materials, is taken into account both in Christian and in traditional discourses. The difference lies in attitudes. While from the Christian point of view witchcraft is unambiguously wrong and a sin, the traditionalists take a more neutral or even a positive stance: witchcraft is interpreted as a significant part of Finnish folk tradition. The debate on this topic concerns benevolent and malevolent magic and the roles of different experts of magic, like wise men, seers, shamans and wizards. (OKM 17.6.2006, 21.6.2006, 22.6.2006, 1.6.2010; MPR 11.2.2009.) Altogether, the discussants seem to take seriously the possibility that even today witches do exist and harmful magic is practiced.

The neospiritual approach offers more explanations for the phenomenon of forest cover. One of these is connecting forest cover with UFOs and extra-terrestrials, which have become a significant part of Western esotericism (see e.g. Partridge 2005: 165–206). The concept, *Oz phenomenon* or *Oz factor*, coined by the British UFO activist Jenny Randles, refers to an altered state of consciousness, in which a person is in close contact with extra-terrestrials, but unable to see or otherwise sense them. Inability to hear sounds and see other people, as well as a feeling of extreme loneliness and a sense of time stopped, characterise the experience. (See Randles 2004.)

*[- -] in some cases connected with UFOs there has been something like this, that one is suddenly like in another dimension, the birds are silent, and so on. To my opinion this resembles to some extent this 'forest cover' (OKM 21.6.2006).*

*The contemporary name for forest cover is Oz phenomenon, and it is expressly associated with UFOs (OKM 24.7.2006).*

Another explanation of forest cover is the existence of other realities, parallel to ours.

*Open your eyes people and realise that there are also other levels than this earthly one of ours... You could not hear the birdsong, because at that moment you were on a different level than the birds. I cannot tell how you ended up there; everything is relative... (OKM 14.10.2006.)*

*Yes, it [the experience of forest cover] may be a case of a parallel reality, some other dimension or even another era where one, for some reason and in*

*certain circumstances, ends up. The possibility of parallel realities has been proven theoretically, at least mathematically, I think. (OKM 12.9.2009.)*

The third explanation is the idea of different levels of human awareness and possibility of spiritual development.

*The materialistic life we live today has caused immunity to phenomena like this. This is not a positive thing at all, because the human consciousness remains on the lowest level; the level of physical existence, which we should escape from. Earlier people were more sensitive and able to sense energy and astral beings/spirits/creatures and so on. Their consciousness was not so sadly confined [like ours]. (OKM 13.6.2012.)*

The neospiritual discourse utilises different traits of present-day esoteric and New Age-related thinking. It also discloses an alternative viewpoint to the whole phenomenon of forest cover.

### **Forest cover as an eligible state**

The forest cover experiences in the old days were as a rule undesirable and at many times quite frightening. Within the neospiritual discourse we find a precisely opposite opinion: the actions of the forest are regarded as intentional, but fundamentally friendly and caring. Getting trapped by it is more like a blessing, not a curse. The neospiritual discourse stresses the profound human relationship with nature.

*The forest cover means that the forest adopts me and leads me wherever I wish or where my inner Self wants to lead me, so I learn something important or find something valuable; seldom something of material value, but most often an understanding or an answer to some difficult problem. In the forest cover, appreciating the spirits of the forest and, most of all, responding to them with love, is beneficial. (MPR 3.5.2006.)*

An organic relationship between human beings and nature is one of New Age's pivotal ideas. The holistic view on reality, interpreting principally everything as interconnected, gives nature an authoritative status (Heelas 1996, 33–35). On the other hand, equivalent to the external authority of nature is the inner authority of the individual spiritual self, maturing by time, exercise and learning (Heelas 1996, 18–20 & passim). In nature the Self can feel interconnection and seek guidance. Consequently, the forest cover may not at all be interpreted as a state of being lost:

*When you are in the forest cover, you can never go astray. The forest will lead you wherever you wish. Of course it seems strange that the trees of the forest are no more the familiar trees you used to know, but they manifest themselves more like psychic–neospiritual beings of the forest. They certainly have a physical essence, too, because they may cause scratches. The most important thing is confidence: you will be given what you wish for. The forest will always take care of its own [--]. (MPR 31.1.2009.)*

The same discussant writes that, “[f]orest cover is a State of existence, comparable to Heaven, Hell and falling in Love” (capitals original; MPR 29.1.2009). For this writer the forest cover represents a higher level of consciousness.

In the context of neospiritually-attuned discourse the very concept of forest cover has found a new meaning: it refers not to anything unpleasant or frightening, but to a state worth achieving and getting into. The forest is seen as a safe hiding place and a source of power and wisdom. As an intentional agent, however, the forest demands proper behaviour and attitude from the human party.

*Once, when I was trying to find mystical mushrooms, the forest led me astray. My inner voice warned me that it was not the right time to look for the mushrooms but I did not listen, just continued searching. [- -] It felt like the forest had deliberately hidden the path from me, because I was looking for mushrooms with the wrong attitude and at the wrong time. (MSM 29.6.2013.)*

As a comment to this the blogger writes:

*That is a downright classical case of forest cover: the traveller's attitude is in some way inappropriate and the forest reacts by throwing obstacles in his/her way – what this entails is a bizarre case of getting lost, a moment of being imprisoned by the forest and, finally, a humble return out of the there. (MSM 1.7.2013.)*

Appreciating the forest as an intelligent and purpose-oriented agent can be seen as part of the wider eco-spiritual movement, which has been spreading over the Western world since the 1960s (see e.g. Partridge 2005: 42–81; Lynch 2007: 35–38, 53–55, 156–157).

### **Conclusion**

“Being spirited away” is a phenomenon that comes out in many forms and varies vastly according to different geographic areas. Traditionally it has been explained as an act of some impersonal or personal supernatural agent dwelling in the natural environment. Above I have sorted out three basic – albeit in many respects overlapping – types of getting lost in an extraordinary way. In the Finnish context, the forest cover tradition is the most apparent example of crossing the border between the human sphere and potentially hostile nature. In forest cover experiences nature appears as a strange counter world, where a human being is isolated from the community and totally unable to communicate with his/her own kind.

The personal supernatural misleaders and their deeds in the area of Finland vary geographically. The geographical distribution of different beings has been explained by ecological, economical, societal, tradition–historical and tradition–psychological factors (e.g. Sarmela 2009: 18–56 & passim). The examples presented above, the earth dwellers, the *hiisi*-folk and the *eáhparaš*-dead-child of the Saami each represent a specific form of being spirited away.

Yet, the many common features in different kinds of experiences suggest that it may be possible to explain the phenomenon by certain psycho–physical conditions and to interpret different local traditions as cultural responses to the same type of human experience. The symptoms of dissociative disorders seem to correspond to a remarkable extent with the descriptions of getting lost, both in archived folklore materials and in present-day narratives. Still it must be emphasised that finding a physiological cause for a recurring type of experience does not erase or decrease the meaning and scholarly attractiveness of cultural explanations. Even if we take the experiential source hypothesis as a starting point, the belief tradition is still there, depicting local culture and vernacular ways of thought.

The experience of being spirited away in natural environments turns out to be a phenomenon well known even in today's world. We can distinguish a popular scientific discourse, leaning mainly on medical science and its language. The second type of discourse is Christian: arguments both for and against curious phenomena are drawn from Christian doctrine, using religious vocabulary. The traditional–supernatural discourse, taking seriously different nature-related supernatural beings and powers of traditional folk belief, also has its devoted supporters. Others rely on neospiritual discourse and associate the odd experiences for example with extra-terrestrials or with the existence of parallel realities and levels of consciousness.

A common quality for all interpretative frameworks and discourses is seeking authority from literature. Scientific and popular scientific literature is referred to within medical, psychiatric and psychological approaches, but also among people focussing on traditional–supernatural discourse. Theses and excerpts originating from works of folklorists and folk belief scholars may be brought into discussion as arguments (e.g. MPR 11.2.2009). The Bible and other religious texts as well as esoteric and New Age publications obviously have the same standing on other sides of the debate (OKM 1.6.2010; MPR 12.2.2009).

There appears to be an evident continuum of getting lost in an extraordinary way from the early modern agrarian culture to the modern urban Finland. Although the interpretative frameworks and discourses have become more diverse, unconditional conviction seems to finally play a minor role on the discussion threads. The participants ponder over and try to make sense of a phenomenon they find enigmatic and disturbing. Finally, the experiences themselves may not self-evidently be considered explainable at all. Some participants on Internet forums discussed here do not invoke any authority, but emphasise as a fact that there are mysterious things that human reasoning cannot decipher.

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## MYTHOLOGICAL ROOTS OF THE TRADITIONAL GEORGIAN LULLABY

### Abstract

Georgia is a part of ancient civilization. It is here, where the remains of the first primitive Eurasians-Homo erectus, dating back 1.6 - 2.2 million years, were discovered. Situated on the juncture of Europe and Asia, it is one of the most invaded nations on earth though retaining its original language and culture distinct from the East and the West. The traditional Georgian religion was polytheistic until the adoption of Christianity (IV c AD) after which many pagan spirits and deities took on Christian names. Ancient Georgians believed in nature spirits and spirits of the naturally occurring phenomenon, seen or unseen affecting their lives in both subtle and dramatic ways, residing in three realms: Zeskneli (the upper world), Shuaskneli (the middle world) and Kveskneli (the world below). Diversity of the Georgian folklore and traditions gives opportunity to restore the genetic roots of the Georgian mythological spirits, to investigate the continuity and the change they have undergone. This process can be clearly demonstrated on the example of the traditional Georgian lullaby "Iavnana" ("Violet Nana").

საქართველო უძველესი ცივილიზაციის ნაწილია. სწორედ აქ აღმოაჩინეს პირველი ჰომინიდების ნაშთები, რომლებიც ევროპაში 1.6 – 2.2 მილიონი წლის წინათ გადასახლდნენ. ევროპისა და აზიის გზაჯვარედინზე მდებარე ქვეყანა საუკუნეების მანძილზე გარეშე მტრების მუდმივი თავდასხმის ობიექტი იყო. მიუხედავად ისტორიული კატაკლიზმებისა, ქართველებმა შეინარჩუნეს სახელმწიფოებრიობა, თავიანთი ენა და კულტურა. ქრისტიანობის მიღებამდე (მე-4 ს.) ტრადიციული ქართული რელიგია პოლითეისტური იყო. მოგვიანებით ქრისტიანობის გავლენით წარმართული ღვთაებები თავიანთი ფუნქციით ქრისტიანულ წმინდანებს შეერწყნენ. ქართველებს სწამდათ ბუნების სულების არსებობა, ხილულისა თუ უხილავის, რომლებიც მათზე როგორც დადებითად, ისე უარყოფითად მოქმედებდნენ. ისინი სამყაროს სამ სკნელში ბატონობდნენ: ზესკნელში, შუასკნელსა და ქვესკნელში. პერიოდულად, ან დანიშნულ დღეებში ისინი სტუმრობდნენ ადამიანებს ან დაუსახლებელ, გაუვალ ადგილებში ხვდებოდნენ. მრავალფეროვანი ქართული ფოლკლორი და ტრადიციები გვეხმარება აღვადგინოთ მითოსური სულების, ღვთაებების ისტორიული ფესვები, თვალი მივადევნოთ მათ მიერ განვლილ ცვლილებებს. ამ პროცესის თვალნათლივ წარმოდგენა შესაძლებელია ტრადიციული ქართული აკვნის სიმღერის "იავნანას" ისტორიული ფესვების, მისი შესრულების ტრადიციების შესწავლის მაგალითზე.

**Keywords:** *Mythological Spirits, Contagious, Lords, Lullaby*

Georgia is a part of ancient civilization. It is here, where remains of the first primitive Eurasians – Homo erectus, dating back 1.6 – 2.2 million years, were discovered. Situated on the juncture of Europe and Asia, it is one of the most invaded nations on earth,

though the country has retained its original language and culture distinct from the East and the West.

Traditional Georgian religion was polytheistic until the adoption of Christianity (IV c. A.D.) after which many spirits, deities took on Christian names, thus the cult of a saint was founded upon the worship of a pagan deity.

Ancient Georgians believed in nature spirits and spirits of the naturally occurring phenomenon, seen or unseen, affecting their lives in both subtle and dramatic ways, residing in three realms: Zeskneli (the upper world), Shuaskneli (the middle world) and Qveskneli (the world below). In the Georgian tradition mythological spirits, divinities are of local and of all the Georgian origin. Occasionally or at the fixed date they visited human habitations, some of them used to live with the families for a period of time and vice versa or used to meet people in uninhabited places.

Diversity of the Georgian folklore and traditions gives opportunity to restore the historical roots of the Georgian mythological spirits, to investigate the continuity and the change they have undergone. This process can be clearly demonstrated on the example of the traditional Georgian lullaby “Iavnana” (“Violet Nana”).

The tradition of the folk treatment of the infectious diseases included rhymes in the form of ritual songs, which can be divided into two groups: the first, eloquent description of the spirits of the infections, their outward appearance, the process of paying visits on mortals. This group of the texts is called “Iavnana” (Violet Nana”) existing in various versions and spread all over the Georgian provinces. The texts of the Iavnana have a common musical form, it is a two-voiced ancient song performed by two alternating soloists on the bass voice background sometimes accompanied by the panduri - three – stringed lute or the chonguri - four-stringed lute (Donadze, Chijavadze, Chkhikvadze 1990:13). The Iavnana was sung at the bed of the diseased. The ritual texts of it are well preserved until today. Later the modern versions of the Iavnana have been created transforming the Iavnana into cradle song – lullaby, only the musical form has not undergone the change. The modern texts have kept traces of the pagan beliefs in the form of the song refrain: “Iavnana, Vardo Nana” (“Violet Nana, Rose Nana”).

The second group of the ritual songs is “Batonebo” (“Lords”) or “Sabodisho” (“Apology”). Georgians called the spirits, the deities of the contagious diseases “Batonebi” (“Lords”). The musical form of the “Batonebi” differs from the “Iavnana”, it is a three-voiced ancient Georgian chant (Donadze, Chijavadze, Chkhikvadze 1990:13). Unlike Iavnana the texts of the “Batonebo” have not undergone changes in content. Supposedly they were prayers to the Lords, asking them for grace, for imploring their protection, for giving the diseased relief:

“The Lords, nobles, violet Lords,  
Show respect and sit down, violet Lords,  
Don’t leave on a blemish, violet Lords,  
Don’t look towards mother and father, violet Lords,  
Grant us their life,  
Violet and rose are spread out  
On your way and at your door, violet Lords,  
My dear Lords, violet Lords,  
The Lords, nobles, violet Lords, grant me my child,  
You like dancing, you like singing,  
Let’s greet with applause the Lords, violet Lords,  
Bring relief, heal up, violet Lords,  
Violet and rose on your way,

The door is opened for you violet Lords,  
Lords, noble violet Lords.”

(Georgian Folk Poetry 1979:130-131; Translated by M. Khukhunaishvili-Tsiklauri).

By the folk imagination the deities of the diseases looked like mortals. They had families and social and confessional structure. Everybody submitted to the senior who governed their affairs. According to the Georgian mythological narrative from northwestern highland – Svaneti (recorded in 1887) smallpox and measles are brothers. Their mother is alive and lives in a remote place atop of a high rock by the sea-shore. The mother from time to time sends her children to people. A long time ago one man saw the habitat of Smallpox and Measles. In olden times one family travelled by ship on the sea. Terrible storm rose and the family died in the shipwreck. Only one member of the family was thrown by the waves to the foot of the rock and survived. The man went up the rock and with great difficulty made an ascent of the rock. On the top of the rock he saw widely stretched meadow, there was flowing a pure spring. A naked woman was standing at the spring and washing. The woman was as white as snow, her breasts were thrown over her shoulders. The man crept and put the teeth on the breast as a sign of becoming relatives – mother for the man. The woman was startled and surprised. She asked the man how he had managed to come there. She told the man that she had sent her children to him and she was interested if they had visited his family. The man told his story and asked the woman to show her house. The woman took him into the house. There was a pillar in the center of the house encrusted with human eyes. The man asked the story of the pillar. The woman told that her child Smallpox brought all of the eyes he had ruined and they fastened them to the pillar. Her son ruined human eyes when in the house of the diseased the water was poured over the fire or dust was cleaned (people were cautious of such action). While they were talking Smallpox and Measles returned. The mother implored them to take the man home unharmed. The Smallpox said that they had just visited God, the following day God was sending Black Death to the man’s neighbor and they would send the man to accompany the Black Death. On the top of the rock except Smallpox and Measles other diseases inhabited, too. In some places black smoke was rising up out of the earth. The mother of the Smallpox and Measles named the habitat of each illness, among them the habitat of Black Death, the place from where the black smoke was coming up. Only the cold did not have permanent place of living there. At night they entrusted the man to the Black Death and the Black Death took him home in peace (Nizharadze 1962:147-148; Translated by M. Khukhunaishvili-Tsiklauri).

According to the texts of the ritual song “Iavnana” deities of the infectious diseases were dressed in white silk shirts girdled around with the crescent moon, for buttons they had stars and stands of rubies around their necks (An anthology of Georgian Folk Poetry 1994:63-65). Sometimes they were accompanied by their aunt-mamida - father’s sister (Georgian Folk Poetry 1979:124). Under the influence of Christianity the aunt was substituted by John the Baptist’s aunt (Georgian Folk Poetry 1979:127). Some people called the spirits John the Baptist’s flowers (Georgian Folk Poetry 1979:355) or relatives of Kviria (Georgian Folk Poetry 1979:126) of the pagan deity of the highlands of the eastern Georgia who stood by the supreme god – “Morige Ghmerti” i.e. Moderator God. Kviria was a governor of the middle world.

The mother of the Lords was sitting at the golden cradle inside which golden hair lordling was sleeping in the brocade blanket (Georgian Folk Poetry 1979:125). At the hearth of the house there were roses, the lordling was covered with roses, too. Violets and roses were spread out on their way while visiting people (Georgian Folk Poetry 1979:124).

As we see violets and roses are symbolic flowers of the Lords. Georgians called scarlet fever “Vardkokha” (“Rosekoha”), first part of the word is a rose and the second “Kokha” means a fire-proof stone, thus “Rosestone”. In the Georgian tale of magic “What Did the Violet Say to the Rose and What Did the Rose Say to the Violet” the violet is associated with the queen of the underworld and the rose with its king (Kotetishvili 1961:324).

The Lords were seven lordly sisters and brothers settled in seven towns, where they pitched out seven tents and had great feast there (Georgian Folk Poetry 1979:124). The number seven in the world tradition is a sacred number. In ancient Babylonia “Seven” was the number of the low world, it was considered to be a bad number but could turn into a good one. There were seven evil spirits that influenced on a person’s health that could be avoided using definite magic formulas (Kotetishvili 1961:324-325). In healing formulas of charms Georgians used the number “seven” together with violet and rose, for example, in the charm against hiccupping:

“Violet – who speaks about me,  
Rose – who remembers me,  
Seven Year’s fever  
To the person who says  
Bad words about me”.

The charm was pronounced three times (Tsiklauri and Hunt 2009:268-269).

When the Lords visited human habitat, they were met by a person (a man or a woman) so-called “Lords’ Servant” who had withstood the infection, he/she had to be an affectionate person, speaking eloquently, having artistic talent to entertain the Lords, to tell rhymes and stories, to sing the songs dedicated to the Lords, to play on the panduri (a three-stringed lute) or on the chonguri (a four-stringed lute), to dance. People believed that the Lords get pleasure from these kinds of actions, they liked compliments. It can be assumed that the “Servants” were one of the important contributors to the Georgian folk treasury.

The family for searching the Lords’ servant were ready even to take long journey. The servant brought a present in the Lords name. The same action was performed by neighbors, but it was forbidden to pronounce the name of the neighbors not to harm them. The words “throat” and “eyes” were also under a taboo. If the words were slipped out of the tongue the Lords would descend on the diseased person’s throat and eyes.

The diseased was dressed for outdoors, precious objects and expensive cloths were set out. The family and the servant permanently kneeled submissively to the south without making the sign of the cross as they thought that Lords were of the Islamic faith.

The Lords liked the odor of violets and their infusion was sprinkled on the floor of the room where the diseased was lying, the infusion was sprayed on the rubbish and on the trees in the yard, too. They put under the pillow of the diseased violets and roses, the Lords’ flowers (Georgian Folk Poetry 1979:349). Each performed action was for asking the spirits grace, not to harm the diseased. In the province of Kakheti (east-central lowland) there was a tradition of taking off the clothes and throwing them up in the ceiling with the words “Be delighted the Lords” (Shioshvili 1994:204-205). In Samegrelo people believed that the Lords were moving on mules. They visited the diseased after sunset, the door was opened and the corner of the room prepared for the invisible mules: mule’s rope was hanging on the wall, maize straw and basin with water was put down on the floor. The Lords relaxed in the body of the sick up to the morning and in daylight they left the diseased, after which the person was getting better (Sakhokia 1956:35).

The Lords hated smokers and the smell of tobacco. They disliked some insects, such as silkworms. Sericulture was widely spread in Georgia but during the epidemic sericulturists abandoned the breeding of silkworms. The family did not light a kerosene lamp at home, they only used candles, believing that a kerosene lamp was brought in use by filthy spirits. Gun shooting, shrieking of the animals and slaughtering of pigs was not allowed.

During contagious disease any kind of house work, cooking, washing etc. was forbidden, family promised the Lords a white lamb, a white goat or a white goat kid, a silver coin was hung on the neck of the diseased. In Samegrelo (west - central lowland) on the neck of the sick person they hung holed stone symbol of obedience. The tradition of wearing stone on the neck is an ancient tradition of Georgians used after defeat in the war showing to the conquerors their obedience (Sakhokia 1956:29). The family set a banquet for the Lords, they put candies and pastry on the table, baked dove-form cakes, brought white chicks having beaks and nails dyed in red colour (Georgian Folk Poetry 1979:355-356; Sakhokia 1956:31). When the diseased recovered the “servant” was given a present for the service. If the infection took away eyesight or hearing of the diseased the deaf or the blind person visited the houses where the Lords resided asking for returning eyesight and hearing. When the effort did not succeed he/she addressed to Saint Barbara a fertility deity and healer of illnesses. The cult of the Saint was founded upon the worship of the pagan Georgian deity of the Sun-Barbal/Barbol.

In the case of death of the diseased the family did not perform traditional funeral rites for the deceased, they didn’t reveal sorrow and anguish, didn’t cry, didn’t put-on mourning black garment considering that they didn’t fulfill something that the Lords demanded and the Lords got angry.

In the course of time to the first group of the ritual texts of “Iavnana” were added the new texts having social-patriotic content. Instead of the Lordling inside the cradle mortal’s baby was lying and sleeping, the mother/the grandmother was singing for him/her about living problems of the family, about social injustice, on the future of the child whom the mother compared with the Georgian epic hero Tariel and said that when her son grew up he would sacrifice himself for his motherland’s freedom:

“Violet nana, rose nana,  
Violet naninao,  
Sleep my dear child,  
I ask Virgin Mary to help me  
To be the witness of your heroic deeds,  
When you grow up”.

Or:

“Nana, nana, nanina,  
Have sweet dreams,  
Your heart will be blessed,  
You are the Morning Star  
And the apple of my eyes.”

(Georgian Folk Poetry 1979:116,115).

Thus the traditional ritual song “Iavnana” was transformed into ordinary cradle song, lullaby and during singing the text of the rhyme was improvised according to the life condition. The only part of the rhyme which has not been changed is the refrain word “Nana”. It must be noted that the refrain “Nana” is used in Abkhazian lullabies, too:

“Khukhv naani, va naani,

Shish naani, va naani,  
Don't cry, mother will come,  
Sleep, father will come,  
Shish naani, va naani,  
Khukhv naani, va naani,  
Child's sleep is forest's sleep,  
Its heart is forest's heart,  
Duck is flapping the wings in the forest,  
Khukhv naani, va naani,  
Shish naani, va naani."  
(Zukhba 1988:99).

"Nana" is widely spread proper name of a female person in Georgia. In colloquial Megruli it means mother, in Guria "nena" is mother, Kabardian – Circassians call mother "ane", grandmother – "nane", Chechens call mother "nana, nanai", grandmother "den nanai", in Azeri mother is "ana", grandmother "nene". In colloquial Osetian "nana" means grandmother.

The name "Nana" as a name of a grandmother, as a lullaby and as a refrain crosses the Caucasian border and is met in the Spanish culture. Spaniards call grandmother "nana", lullabies "nanas" and use the word as a refrain:

"Nana, nanita,  
Nana, nana,  
My child is going to sleep,  
Until morning."  
(Celaya 1972:251).

"Nanita, nana,  
Sleep my child,  
Your eyes are half closed,  
You want to sleep."  
(Celaya 1972:254).

Georgian ethnographer Vera Bardavelidze considered that the rituals and the traditional songs "Iavnana" and "Batonebo" dedicated to the spirits if the contagious diseases kept the relicts of the cult of the Supreme Goddess (Magna Mater) Nana and her assistant deities "Batonebi" ("Lords"). Folklorist Ketevan Sikharulidze assumes that the name "Nana" is derived from the common Caucasian root (nan/an) and means "mother". Taking into consideration the Spanish example and the fact that in the Sumerian mythology "Nanna" or "Nannar" was the God of the Moon, "Ninazu" ("the Lord Healer") represented the God of the underland, we can suppose that the name "Nana" passed the Georgian-Caucasian border and its historical roots are more global, hence strengthens the point of view that Georgia is a part of ancient civilization.

Thus on the example of the Georgian lullaby "Iavnana" ("Violet Nana") we tried to study its genesis, connection to the worship of the pagan deities, spirits of the contagious diseases called "Batonebi" ("Lords"), revived the tradition of their adoration that involved the song "Iavnana". We observed the historical process of transformation of the ritual song dedicated to the pagan spirits, deities into ordinary cradle song, lullaby.

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NATURE-RELATED SPIRITS OF THE BRU  
(Central Vietnamese Highlands)

**Abstract**

The Bru, an ethnic minority in the Central Vietnamese Highlands divide their pantheon into two opposed groups: “spirits in the house” and “spirits in the bush”, i.e. spirits of the inhabited cultural sphere and that of/in the nature. According to widely held opinions about “animism” amongst Southeast-Asian hill tribes, the number of these latter is unlimited, anything animate or inanimate may have a “spirit” influencing its proper functioning. However, the other side of the coin is that spirits have to be fed, appeased, entertained, i.e. a sacrificial relationship exists between the world of the humans and that of the superhuman entities. When seen from this angle, a hierarchy of the spirit world may be outlined: Bru “yiangs” may be aligned along a scale at one end of which there are recurrent “spirits” that feature in many sacrifices, while at the other, “yiangs” that receive offerings only occasionally. Thus, the theoretically unlimited list of virtual possibilities narrows down to a list of a few dozen important “nature spirits”. In my paper based on one and a half year long participating fieldwork, I shall present a detailed account of Bru nature-related spirits and powers, their places in the landscape and the vernacular discourses they inspire.

ცენტრალური ვიეტნამის ეთნიკური უმცირესობის ნაწილი, სახელწოდებით ბრუ, ყოფს თავის პანთეონს ორ დაპირისპირებულ ჯგუფად: „სახლის სულები“ და „ბუჩქის სულები“. მაგალითად: გარკვეულ სფეროში დასახლებული სულები. ანიმიზმის ფართოდ გავრცელებული მოსაზრების მიხედვით სამხრეთ-აზიის მთიან ტომებში, მსგავსი სულების რაოდენობა დიდია. მონეტის ორი სახის მსგავსად ეს სულები შესაძლოა გამოკვებო, დაამშვიდო, გაწვრთნა და ასე შემდეგ. ადამიანურ სამყაროსა და ზებუნებრივ სამყაროს შორის არსებობს გარკვეული ურთიერთობა. თვით სულებს შორის იერარქიული საფეხური დაცულია. ქვემოთ ნაშრომში მოცემულია საკმაოდ გრძელი სია ზებუნებრივი სულების, რომელთა შესახებ ცნობები მოპოვებულია საველე მუშაობაში გატარებული წელიწადნახევრის შრომის შედეგად და აქვეა მოწოდებული დეტალური ინფორმაცია მათი ძალაუფლების, გავლენებისა და მათზე ხალხური წარმოდგენების შესახებ.

**Keywords:** *bru, spirits, domestic, soil.*

The Bru, one of Vietnam’s 54 ethnic minorities or “hilltribes” whom I shall be discussing here, live in the Central Vietnamese Highlands, on both sides of the Vietnamese/Laotian border, around the 17<sup>th</sup> parallel (former demilitarized zone between North and South Vietnam), mostly north of the Route Nr. 9. that joins Savannakhet (in Laos) to Dong Ha (on the sea side in Vietnam; province of Quang Tri). Their area of greatest concentration is in the district of Huyen Huong Hoa (Khe Sanh) in Vietnam where I had studied them. They belong to the ancient Austro-Asiatic linguistic stock of the

Indochinese peninsula and are, just as their neighbours, slash-and-burn dry-rice (and nowadays also wet rice) cultivators.

According to Bru conceptions, every living and/or inanimate being or thing possesses a “divinity” or, to use the local language, *yīang* which, residing in that creature or thing, controls and directs its life and embodies its essence. These *yīangs*, imagined in a non-specified (male or female, old or young, attractive or repulsive and/or both) humanized form, are neither positive nor negative, they are ambivalent. If humans get their good-will, benevolence and help, they are positive. But a forgotten duty, a breach of a taboo or anything else, e.g. the sheer fact that the *yīangs* are “hungry” because they have not received a sacrifice since long, is enough for them to afflict humans with illnesses, misfortune or death. Maintaining everyday contact with *yīangs* is in that way inevitable, moreover vital for the Bru, and the most common way of that is blood sacrifice or, in lesser cases, sacrificial offering or a simple vow. My approach to this pantheon will consequently be “ritualistic”, too: I shall try give an overview of the *yīangs* of the nature departing from rituals organised for them. This is because, according to the rule well known to anthropologists working in the fields, there are no local informants who could or would be able to present a clear cut and precise, abstract idea of the system enumerating all its supernatural entities. They know it from experience and, just as the ethnographer, deduce it from everyday practice.

The Bru divide these divinities (emic view!) into two great distinct groups: on the one hand, *yīang tâng dǒng* (“the household *yīang*”), who inhabit “cultural” or domestic places built or used by men; and, on the other hand, *yīang tâng nsák* (“*yīang* in the bush”), living in the forest, in “natural”, non-inhabited and non-domesticated surroundings. While the first category has basically five fixed divinities and a few other occasional ones, the number of forest deities is potentially infinite, although some recur more frequently than others during rituals. I had dealt with the first category extensively in my earlier papers. For our purpose here, we are interested in the second category.

Given the short time at my disposal, it is impossible to go into every detail of such a vast category of divinities let us to enumerate all of them and the ritual events associated with them. For the sake of an example, I have taken a period of 1 month, from mid-January to mid February, 1988, the year which I spent wholly amongst the Bru in a village in the high plateaux of Central Vietnam. Here is a list and a short description of rituals in honour of nature related spirits, taken from my field notes: 1) January 17, 1988: a blood sacrifice to a strange forest divinity whose status I was not able to understand fully, associated with a great agrarian ritual, *ntoang* [a sacrifice accompanied by prayers] *prong savenh*. This ritual is performed by each lineage on its own, lineage being amongst others a corporate landusing unit, the ritual agent of which is the head of the lineage. 2) January 21, 1988: *Ntoang sarai – nia*. The reason for the organisation of this sacrifice was the transformation by the members of one specific lineage of an earlier swidden (slash and burn field) into an irrigated wet-rice terrace. As the great earthworks connected with it had a bearing on the total natural environment, the ceremony was in honour of all the nature spirits, in particular *yīang Su*, the divinity of the soil and of the land and of the natural environment, to whom I shall return soon. As wet rice fields are in personal possession, but the lineage always acts as a corporate ritual unit, the ceremony was performed by the lineage concerned, its ritual agent being the head of that lineage. 3) January, 29. *Ntoang yīang sarlok*, ceremony organised in honour of a small, black sort of ant living on some special trees - associated with the inflammation of the testicles and the skin disease of a man in my neighborhood, *mpaq Tatyun*. The ant was thought to have caused his illness, and the ceremony, accompanied by a small offering aimed basically at its elimination or chasing away, i.e. it

was a kind of an exorcism. Apart from the ill person and the invited religious specialist, the shaman, there were only a few family members (mostly children) present – and the anthropologist. 4) January, 31.: *Ntoang nia*. This was a great agrarian ceremony associated with all the wet-rice fields in the village, and involved, as a rule, honoring *yang Su*, the divinity of the soil and of the land. Since it concerned the whole village, all its constitutive lineages took part in it, the religious leader being the head of the village. 5) February, 1.: *Ntoang peh vil*. Probably the most unique and most grandiose of all religious events within this one month period was associated with the killing of a tiger within the confines of several villages including ours. The place and role of tiger in Southeast- and East-Asiatic, Chinese, sinicized, tribal etc. cultures and religions is surely well known to all the participants of this conference. Be it enough here that the Bru fear and esteem tigers very high, they never kill them unless for self defense – be it in defense of themselves or of their domestic animals. In this case a tiger started to decimate the troupe of buffaloes of several villages which meant a “just” reason for turning against it. The united villages having killed the tiger with machine guns and hand granates (! yes, we are after the Vietnam war...), an appeasing ceremony had to be organized in which they asked ritual pardon for the sin they have committed against this most revered lord of the animals. The name of the ritual means in literal translation „weeping out the village” – in general terms an appeasing and cleansing ritual with a cow sacrifice in honour of *yang Su* and the *yang* of the tiger, offered by 4 villages in order to ward off the anger of the tiger, thus protecting their villages from further such instances. Let us not forget to mention that the village in which the ritual took place, was moved from its original place to some hundred meters further: ritual pollution is best escaped with a completely new start in every respect. 6) February, 8: *Klái preng* in a neighbouring village *Sabai*. This ritual brings us back again to the times of Indochina war. Since it ended in 1975, several campaigns have been launched by Japanese and Vietnamese authorities in order to gather all the metallic leftovers of the war. Knowing by heart the forest, many Bru succeeded in getting some extra money from collecting rests of war materials: kerosene tanks, bomb shells, rusty trucks, mines and the like. However at one such occasion a friend of mine from our village, *mpaq Mun*, did have bad luck: the mine he was trying to pull apart, exploded in his hands. I do not want to go into the details here: a week later, he died. His death falls typically into the category of what the Bru call “bad death” (every type of death that is accompanied by the flow of blood). This way a purification ceremony had to be arranged in order to remove pollution resulting from his bad death. Since the accident took place on the territory of a neighbouring village, the ceremony was organized by them (but paid by *mpaq Mun*’s relatives) in honour of *yang Su* again, and the ritual agent was the head of that village. 7) February, 11.: *Nguaiq doq teeq* – another absolutely unique and grandiose ceremony organized in an other village near to us, Labuiq. In this relatively great and busy village near to the only road in the area, there were several shamans amongst whom there was hard competition and concurrence. One of them was accused by most of the villagers and also his fellow shamans to use black magic against them. The only traditional and ritual way of challenging this very dangerous and harmful accusation was to arrange a public oath ceremony in which everybody took part, accusers and accused, shamans and village people under the guidance of the village chief and the authorities of the police. In this oath everybody in a row has sworn that he/she does not practice black magic and if he/she would commit such a sin he/she should die immediately. As here the most revered and very rarely evocated Bru divinity, *yang Sorsei*, a type of a Deus Otiosus, was implicated, the ritual was performed by the village chief. 8) February 18. *Loah doq*: This is the habitual ceremony at the beginning of the agrarian cycle before clearing the bush. (Let me remind you: the Bru are slash and burn agriculturalist.)

Its name in literal translation means “let the water and the roads to come!” - which is a symbolic hint to forest clearing and to the nearening rainy season. The village being the landowning unit, this ritual is organized in the village sanctuary by all the inhabitants of the village. Its ritual specialist is the head of the village, and as it is usual in cases of the agricultural cycle, the sacrifice is offered to *yang Su*. 9) February, 21. *Ntoang sari + Su*. This small family ceremony was again organized in connection with the illness of my neighbour, *mpaq Tatyun*, described above, for whom the sacrifice for the *yang* of the ant had been performed weeks earlier. As he did not get better, he performed (“tried”) another sacrifice. This time the name of a huge wild tree, the Sari tree had come out from divination as a possible agent causing his illness. He performed himself the ceremony, offered the sacrifice without the help of the shaman, both for the Sari tree and *yang Su*, the divinity of the area in presence of some family members and myself. As his illness has not ceased after it, his story does not end here, but given the fact that it falls outside of the time limit I have set to myself (mid-January – mid-February, 1988) we shall leave him now.

I gave you a sample of 1 month of rituals organised for and, in association with, nature-related spirits. As it is plain from this enumeration, it is impossible moreover meaningless to force all of them and the events related to them, into any clear cut scheme or cataster. We have seen that the number of them is quasi unlimited, that their properties and qualities are vague and general, that the events associated with them are manifold. Beside the sheer fact that they are all “nature related spirits” (“*yīang táng nsák*” i.e. “*yīang* in the bush”), practically only the religious praxis behind them (sacrifice and prayers associated with them; specific places, “sanctuaries” and different types of altars for the sacrifices, etc.) gives them coherence. In this way, it can be argued that the Bru panteon of “nature-related spirits” will never be fully known or “complete”: any unforeseen event or an unpredictable circumstance may bring forth the name of some new divinities. In other terms: Bru religion is an “open system” in the state of constant becoming.

There are, however, some focal points within this system, and before closing my paper we shall turn our attention to one such focal point: *yang Su*, the divinity of the soil and of the land, and master of the entire natural space controlled by the local community. We have seen that many of the enumerated rituals implied in one way or an other this divinity: from the nine cases presented above only two (nr 1. *ntoang prong savenh* and 3. *Ntoang yang sarlok*) were not associated with his/her name. True, in many of these cases *yang Su* is implied only secondarily, so to say, implicitly (in fact very much explicitly as in each case a sacrificial animal on a sacrificial plate is destined specifically to him/her), because every nature-related spirit is situated somewhere in/within the nature. Thus a sacrifice to the *yang* of the tiger necessarily implies an other sacrifice to *yang Su*, the divinity of that area; similarly, any agricultural ritual necessarily has to do with *yang Su*, too, as the swiddens are made within the confines of the village; and eliminating ritual pollution from the area is inevitably a matter of *yang Su*, master of the natural space, both inhabited and uninhabited. In this way, just as in the case of “domestic” *yiangs* in the case of which I was able to narrow down their number to basically five fixed divinities and to a few other occasional ones, I think it is not impossible in this case either to pinpoint at least some categories of “nature related spirits” whose name recur in practically most if not all the ceremonies.

All this brings us back to the question of praxis. My point of departure was, as we have seen it, ritual praxis from which or, with the help of which, I abstracted the Pantheon. This is because in the case of the Bru, at least, there is a strong connection between “nature related spirits” and religious-ritual life. The one is not comprehensible without the other, they mutually suppose each other.

## **A Naplóból**

### Február 19. péntek (kasai liak 2)

Este újabb dühroham: Tyue Hoá megy el Tyue Beért, hogy csináljon *sarakot* Pi Tatyünnék. Tyue Hoára várok, eszünk - majd mondja, menjek egyedül...[de addigra már] lekéstem az egészet. A guta üt meg! A szomszéd házban történik, és nem látom. Mi mindent nem láthatok, ha az egész falut számítom! De mégis jó, hogy átmegyek, mert hallom, ahogy Pa Tatyün felkéri Tyue Be-t *mul rakaura*, illetve elmondja neki, hogy *partoangban* mit ajánlott fel. És ez fontos!

### Február 21. vasárnap (kasai liak 4)

11-ig a házban, majd ki Pa Tatyün *nia*-jára, újabb *tatoangra*: *yang Sari + ntoang nia (yang Su)* együtt. Esőben, sárban, piócában. Csak tisztességből megyek ki rá: fáradt vagyok, koszos és kedvetlen. Köhögök, fáj a fejem, 1 hete nem mosdottam.

GYűjtőfüzetből

Összegzem, amit tudok. 1) Mpaq Tatyün heréje begyulladt. 2) Először csak kis betegség → azt hiszi, yang Sarlok tette → *tatoang yang Sarlok*, elhívja *achuaih Be-t*. 3) nem javul → újat próbál (ld. „gyógyszer” hasonlatát) Abon *ngin loih Erre* nem hívja *achuaih Be-t*.

## PHENOMENON OF „OCHOKOCHI“ IN MEGRELIAN FOLKLORE

### Abstract

Georgian epic-narrative tradition has had its difficult but diverse way to develop. Mengrelian spiritual culture is impossible to examine without considering it along with ancient Georgian traditions. Mengrelian ethnography and folklore offers an opportunity to study pagan pantheon alongside and in relation with Georgian, in general, and world pantheon. Mengrelian fairy tales along with rich motives and themes are very diverse in characters. These are specific folkloric fantasy characters such as: Ochokochi, Tkashmapa, Mesepe etc. It is the main characters we focus in our work.

ქართული ეპოსი რთული და მრავალფეროვანია თავისი განვითარების თვალსაზრისით. ვერც მეგრული სულიერი კულტურის გააზრება იქნებოდა სრული ქართული ტრადიციების გათვალისწინების გარეშე. მეგრული ფოლკლორი და ეთნოგრაფიული მასალები თავისთავად უმდიდრესი განძია, როგორც ქართული, ისე მსოფლიო წარმართული პანთეონის შესასწავლად. მეგრული ჯადოსნური ზღაპრები თემითა და პერსონაჟებით საუცხოოდ მრავალფეროვანია და შესასწავლად საინტერესო მასალას წარმოადგენს. გვხვდება ისეთი სპეციფიკური პერსონაჟები როგორიცაა: ოჩოკოჩი, ტყაშმაფა, მესეფი და ასე შემდეგ. სწორედ მათ გარშემო ვისაუბრებთ და ვიმსჯელებთ ჩვენს წინამდებარე ნაშრომში.

**Keywords:** *Ochokochi, tales, narrative.*

Georgian epic-narrative tradition has had its difficult but diverse way to develop. Mengrelian spiritual culture is impossible to examine without considering it along with ancient Georgian traditions. Folklore gives an unique opportunity to observe the rituals having been played a significant role in mythology pantheon from paganism to Christianity. Folk arts have always been the inexhaustible source of spiritual culture (Essays of Georgian History 1973: 361). Every new phase in society development enriches the folk arts with new themes (Georgian Folk Poetry 1973: 230)

Mengrelian ethnography and folklore offers an opportunity to study pagan pantheon alongside and in relation with Georgian, in general, and world pantheon. Ancient stories and legends on mythology creatures are very important but because of absence of literary historical records the stories and legends exist in people's everyday life in form of cultural relics and are crucial to picture the scopes which fed the imagination of our ancestors. In every part of Georgia can be found tales and legends on a pagan god "Georgian tribes along with their own community gods had common religious beliefs, common Georgian paganism" ( Iv. Javakhishvili 1960: 115). Above conclusion was based on deep scientific analysis.

In Mengrelian folk narrative can be observed the presence of all main genres of folklore. Epical traditions in Mengrelian folk narrative is shown in fairy tales. Mengrelian

fairy tales along with rich motives and themes are very diverse in characters. These are specific folkloric fantasy characters such as: Ochokochi, Tkashmapa, Mesepe etc.

Fantasy epic ( fairy tales) is a distinct genre within the larger category of folk tales which "roots in ancient times and reflects the beliefs and aspirations of tellers having invented them. It passed the centuries –old way of evolution and appeared today as highly developed piece of literature. This genre is popular in every cultural nation and primitive tribes" ( Cholakashvili 1998:6)

In Mengrelian the fairy tales are called " ariki" ( compare with "araki" in Georgian language means speech), in Khevsureti – "hambavi" means story, in Svaneti –"arkali" or "tsigin" in Mtiuleti – arek". In Mengrelia any type of fairy tale is referred as "ariki". ( Georgian Folk Narratives 1991: 509).

Mengrelian magic tales involve significant motives describing the local way of life. In this essay we will speak about mythological creatures, gods of hunting which have been preserved in Mengrelian folk narratives –Ochokochi, Tkashmapa and Mesepe.

Ochokochi occupies an important role in pagan pantheon. Referring to ethnographical and historical data we may conclude that in ancient Georgia ..." definitely must have been common gods for all tribes but also every tribe had its own tribal gods. Through the times during the process of unification and domination of various tribes some tribal gods became the collective ones" ( Javakhishvili1960:39).

Based on above stated Javakhishvili considers the gods of hunt and wilderness: Anator, Ochopintre and Boch. The god of wilderness and animals is called Ochopintre among Khevsurians. It is invisible (Tsanava 1990:72). Having revised an existing scientific data and historical references and based on ethnographical and folklore materials, Javakhishvili concludes: the fact that Ochopintre as a character is preserved in beliefs of Khevsurians and Kakhetians occupying the far north and far east parts of Georgia, on the other hand this character presents in beliefs of Taoians, a South-West community, and in Mengrelians known as Ochokochi, does not it give us right to state that it is a common pagan belief of all Georgian nation?" (Javakhishvili 1960: 115).

Existed folklore materials do not enable us to insist that Ochokochi was a patron god of hunting as it was Dali, Mesepe, Tkashmapa or saint George. There are no tales or legends on Ochokochi defining him as a patron of wilderness, like we have on Mesepe and Tkashmapa. Ochokochi belongs to pagan pantheon. This mythology character was described by Sergi Makalatia: Ochokochi is perceived as a man carrying a big axe on his shoulder and using it against humans. He is hostile to people and eats what they harvested. It is big and tall covered with fur. It lives in old castles and caves. Ochokochi watches the passers and tries to catch the victim. He is hostile, kills the people with his axe. Then goes and eats their harvest. He is afraid of fire only. Those who are aware of this fear of his start fire in the forest or a cave during the night and thus scare away Ochokochi from coming nearer and murdering someone. (Makalatia2006:405).

Tedo Sakhokia gives very interesting reference in his essay: If Ochokochi catches a hunter the latter is not going to survive. Even if the hunter manages to escape he will go insane by all means ( Sakhokia 1956: 9). The Ochokochies are very few. To procreate Ochokochi copulates with a forest king. If Ochokochi manages to make the forest king pregnant, the latter kills herself (commits suicide) after she gives birth. That is the main reason behind the everlasting hatred between Ochokochi and the forest king ( Sakhokia 1956:8)

Ochokochi has a large field of action. He helps the fishermen to catch the fish which they share it later between themselves. He as well destroys the hunting guns to hunters, throws them in the fire.

Intimate relationship of Ochokochi with Tkashmapa is very interesting . It describes how a hunter named Makhutela saves Tkashmapa ( “forest king”, in fact a queen-female ) from the outrage of Ochokochi wounding him to death with the help of Tkashmapa ( she advised to shoot only once). As a gesture of gratitude Tkashmapa granted him a good fortune in hunting. (Georgian Folk Narratives 1991:521).

In Mengrelian texts exists a fairy tale telling a story of an ordinary mortal defeated Ochokochi. The fairy tale recorded by Ioseb Kipshidze and Alexander Tsagareli reads the following: Sanartia, who is a son of a king, was put in castle where lived Ochokochi. He was supposed to be killed by Ochokochi “ate Ochokochi “doviluncia ate boshis”( this Ochokochi will kill this boy). The boy was so strong that he overcame Ochokochi, threw him on the floor and beat severely. After that he ordered Ochokochi to guard him while the boy was sleeping “ molarti do kars qigedirti matxilarova” ( come and guard me). Sanartia fell asleep and Ochokochi had to guard him. When the king sent his servant to bring some news about his son, the latter came to the castle and started to shout. The voice from inside the castle answered: “patons lurs do vagakurtskhinua vara goblakhunsia “(The master is sleeping. Don’t wake him up or he will beat me). The servant tells everything to the king and the king not believing in what he heard, comes to Ochokochi’s castle himself and tells him (Ochokochs utsu):

-kargomjia( Open the door)!

Mara Ochokoch utsu (Ochokoch told him)

-Paton dopilnsia ( the master will kill me)

Ate dros gokurtskhu Sanartia do utsu Ochokochs (And then Sanartia woke up and told Ochokochi )

Qargunjia (open the door)!

Iq khate kar guunju do gammaashq mepe ( he immediately opened the door and let the king in) ( Kipshidze 1994:253, comp. Tsagareli 1880:41-42).

The above given text shows clearly that Ochokochi was defeated. In general the gods of pagan pantheon are invincible but in this fairy tale tells the story how a primitive thinking human being broke the line of invincibility, fought against the invincible mythology creature and finally vanquished it.

It is worth to review the etymology of the word “Ochokochi. Ivane Javakhishvili defines it as “ he-goat man” e.i the mythical creature and god who is partly goat and partly human. (Javakhishvili 1960:39).

Tedo Sakhokia describes Ochokochi’s appearance: it has a human face of very terrifying look. He is three times bigger than a human being. His body is covered with black hair, almost no forehead. Ochokochi has strong prognathous jaws with long teeth. Under the shaggy eyebrows can be seen two frightening bloody eyes. Instead of nails and toenails he has claws like a beast. ( Sakhokia 1956:7).

By Kalistrate Samushia Ochokochi in old Mengrelian means big, huge. For example: “ocheyvana’ ( big field) . the word “Oche” in figurative sense , even if not followed by the word “yvana” ( field) means “big field”. This word lies in a labor song “ Ocheshkhve do khvavrieli” which means : may you have the luck of owning a big field= rich harvest) (Samushia 1979:19).

The song describes all aspects of human economic activity: cattle breeding, agriculture, hunting, and sailing. The researchers recorded a large number of labor verses ( Chikovani 1952:247). The labor song “ocheshkhve do khvavrieli“ was sung by “nadi” while harvesting and storing corn ( Samushia 2001:33). It’s interesting and significant the root of the word “ocho” –ochopekhi preserved in Georgian language which means “ (someone) with big feeted” . In figurative sense these are wooden foot wears for walking in swampy and muddy soil.

The opinion given above is supported by living words still existing in the language, which points out that “ ochokochi “ unnatural, nonstandard appearance, like: “ mu ochokochs qoguqia” or “ mu ochokochis tor gighunia qinmotakh kidiria”- you stroke me so forcefully like Ochokochi.

Therefore Ochokochi is perceived as huge, invincible creature who occupies an important role in the pagan pantheon.

Apolon Tsanava draws very interesting parallel between Ochokochi and Greek god Pan. In particular he sees similarities in tragic love of god Pan to nymph Syrinx with Ochokoch's unrequited and passionate love to Tkashmapa.

The twin image of Ochokochi can be traced in Caucasian people's mythology. By I. Dakhkilgov Ochokochi is the same character as KhuSag (forest man) in Vainah people mythology (Dakhkilgov 1978:68). Khun Sag carries an ax on his chest and uses it against humans. Vainah twin image of goddess Dali –Diala and Ochokochi are identical images of Khun Sag. The similar characters exist in Adigey people and other Caucasian people's mythology. According to the scholar, this character of Ochokochi is can be considered as an unique phenomenon for Caucasus people (Georgian Folk Narrative. Mengrelian texts 1991:522).

In conclusion, Mengrelian folk narratives and ethnographical and folklore materials enable us to say that Ochokochi does not have to be considered as patron god of hunting and hunters only but very titled mythology character occupying a decent place in Georgian pagan pantheon.

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## VISIONARIES AND NATURE SPIRITS IN SCOTLAND

### Abstract

Numerous visionaries in early modern Scotland reported encountering nature spirits, usually fairies. These were not “stories”, but experiences that were felt as real. The encounter tended to be traumatic, but visionaries were often able to negotiate a working relationship with the spirit or spirits, and even to gain special knowledge from the relationship. This paper discusses the ways in which the visionaries themselves understood their relationship, and outlines phenomenological and psychological interpretations of their experience.

შოტლანდიის უძველესი სინამდვილე არა ერთ ბუნებრივ სულს ითვლის, ძირითადად ფერიების სახით. არ არსებობს თხრობითი ჟანრი მათ გარეშე და ისინი რეალური სურათების სახით გვევლინებიან. ისინი უმეტესად წარმოსახვითი არიან, მაგრამ ხშირია შემთხვევები, როდესაც მათთან რეალური კავშირის დამყარება შეიძლება, როგორც მუშაობის თვალსაზრისით, ისე, ხშირად, მათგან გარკვეული ცოდნის მიღებაც დასაშვებია. წინამდებარე ნაშრომში ძირითადად წარმოდგენილია ის თუ როგორ ხედავენ თვითონ ფერიები რეალურ სამყაროსთან ურთიერთობას და ხაზგასმულია ის ფენომენალური და ფსიქოლოგიური განმარტებები რაც თან ახლავს მათთან ურთიერთობის გამოცდილებას.

**Keywords:** *fairies, nature spirits, visionaries.*

### Introduction

Nature spirits have had numerous social and cultural functions. For instance, people could tell entertaining stories about nature spirits, or could explain landscape features by reference to them. They could use nature spirits in healing or divinatory rituals. These uses of nature spirits did not necessarily rest on personal experience; the shared knowledge of the community was enough to validate nature spirits as part of their cultural discourse.

However, in perhaps the most remarkable mode of engagement with nature spirits, some people reported direct encounters with such spirits. They had visions in which they “saw” a spirit, or at least experienced an encounter with a spirit. In this paper I will ask what such an encounter meant to them. I will use the example of Scotland in the period between about 1500 and about 1750, when there is relatively good primary evidence, and when accounts of popular beliefs are less likely to have been influenced by the Romantic movement of the nineteenth century. The focus of study will not be on nature spirits conceived as independent entities, but on the humans who used and envisioned nature spirits and formed relationships with them (Harte 2004).

### Scottish nature spirits

The most common nature spirits in Scotland were fairies. The terms “fairy” and “elf” were both used, and seem to have been interchangeable with each other. Fairies were often mentioned in the plural, and were thought of as having their own society, often with a

queen and sometimes a king. Encounters with fairies could be with just one fairy – such as the fairy queen – or with “the fairies” generally.

Other nature spirits, less commonly mentioned, were brownies and trows. Brownies were thought of as individuals rather than as a society. They were believed to live in people’s houses and help with housework. A common theme in later brownie stories was the departure of the brownie after the householder broke a taboo. Brownies are rarely if ever mentioned in visionary reports, however. As for trows, they were known in Orkney and Shetland, islands with Norse traditions. Trows seem to have been functionally similar to fairies, and there are some reports of “the trows”, though the idea of them as a separate society is less well developed in the sources.

People who encountered a spirit did not always know what kind of spirit it was. They sometimes spoke simply of “spirits”, or of “wights” (a word meaning “beings”). In an investigation of nature spirits, we need to bear in mind that early modern Scots also believed in other types of spirit, notably ghosts, and also the angels and demons of Christianity. A few encounters with “spirits” were in fact encounters with ghosts, angels or demons. However, there were overlaps between these categories in practice; in particular ghosts could associate with fairies (Goodare 2014).

The words “fairy”, “elf”, “brownie”, “trow” and “wight” were used by the majority Scots-speaking population. However, about one-third of the population spoke Gaelic in early modern times. The Gaelic word for “fairy” was “*sith*”. There are fewer sources for popular belief in Gaelic-speaking regions, but the indications are that matters were usually similar there (Henderson 2008). Belief in fairies was reported by women and men equally (Willumsen 2013, p. 96).

#### Sources and methodology

How do we know that people “had visions”? In some ways, all we can say is that people have been reported as saying that they had had visions. Our evidence has been transmitted in indirect ways, and requires careful evaluation. Most of the evidence comes from witchcraft trials, in which a person suspected of witchcraft was interrogated about their relationship with the Devil. Scotland prosecuted witches intensely, and the authorities were particularly interested in the witches’ relationship with the Devil (for a recent overview see Goodare 2013a).

Our most characteristic kind of evidence is the confession of a witchcraft suspect who was asked something like “When did you meet the Devil?” Many suspects answered this question in stereotyped ways, but some responded with information about nature spirits. For instance, when they were asked about meeting the Devil, they replied that they had met the queen of the fairies. The interrogators often wrote this down; they assumed that fairies were really demons, so statements about fairy encounters could be evidence of guilt.

The interrogators’ interests, and the fact that interrogations often used torture, mean that we cannot take suspects’ statements about the Devil at face value. Many suspects, probably most, will have been coerced into making statements about the Devil. But statements about nature spirits are more reliable, because the interrogators had no motive for writing down that a suspect had met the queen of the fairies unless the suspect had really said this. They assumed that they were interrogating a person who had really met the Devil, but that the Devil was a master of deceit and could easily deceive an ignorant peasant into thinking that he was a fairy.

The Devil, in demonology, was also a spirit, but could make himself a physical body out of condensed air. The Scottish authorities tended to assume that the witches’ relationship with the Devil was a physical one. In particular, female witches were assumed

to have sex with the Devil. These preoccupations may have distorted the way in which statements about nature spirits were recorded, but the distortions seem minor in practice. Most of the statements about nature spirits in witchcraft trials have a believable individuality, and are not simply stereotyped responses to leading questions under torture. To that extent, therefore, the evidence is reliable.

The evidence is harder to interpret on the nature of the suspect's encounter with the fairies. Was this really a "visionary" encounter? And what do we mean by a "visionary" encounter anyway? The authorities did not always ask helpful questions here. However, this paper hopes to indicate that some answers may be found. The individual cases discussed below are all of people for whom there is good evidence that they had visionary encounters with spirits – mostly nature spirits, plus some ambiguous spirits that are likely to have been nature spirits. What did their spirit encounter mean to these people?

#### Recent scholarship

Older scholarship on nature spirits often relied on nineteenth-century primary sources, and assumed that they represented ancient popular beliefs relatively unmediated by elite culture. However, the recent turn towards a literary and print-based understanding of folktales has undermined older notions of lengthy oral transmission (Bottigheimer 2009). This is a good reason for taking a historical approach that relies on dated documents and considers the people in those documents as the owners of their own culture in their own day, rather than merely as the latest bearers of an archaic "tradition". There were popular traditions, of course, but they were mutable and subject to interchange with the culture of the elite.

The study of pre-modern Scottish nature spirits entered a new era around the turn of the present century, with several works all approaching the subject in fresh and complementary ways. The most wide-ranging and accessible of these was an overview of fairy belief by Lizanne Henderson and Edward J. Cowan (2001). Henderson and Cowan surveyed the whole field of Scottish fairies from the fifteenth century (when the word "fairy" was first recorded) to the early nineteenth century. As historians they focused on contemporary documents, making particularly innovative use of witchcraft trial records in which suspects mentioned fairies. Their other sources were folkloric ballads and stories – though these were less securely datable, and may be open to criticism using more modern methods. Finally, they used Robert Kirk's treatise *The Secret Common-Wealth* that had discussed fairies (on which more in a moment).

The next study to examine, that of Emma Wilby (2000), was innovative in considering the function of Scottish fairies. She pointed out that a number of Scottish witches described relationships with fairies, and compared them with English witches who described relationships with "familiars". The English familiar, usually a toad or cat or other small animal, had often been thought to be unusual in a European context, but Wilby argued that there were functional similarities between Scottish witches' relationships with their spirit-guides and English witches' relationships with their familiars. She also probed the experiential nature of the visionary encounter – a project that has continued in her more recent work (Wilby 2005, 2010).

The relationship between the witchcraft suspect and the fairy received different treatment from the literary scholar Diane Purkiss (2000, pp. 85-115). Purkiss examined two cases in which a person seemed to have formed a relationship with a fairy in connection with some trauma that they had suffered. She argued that these people were telling stories to the interrogators, using folkloric material. These stories formed a symbolic way for people to cope with trauma and express their feelings about it.

The final scholarly work of this era was an edition by Michael Hunter (2001) of *The Secret Common-Wealth*, a treatise of 1692 about “elves, fauns and fairies” by the minister Robert Kirk. This treatise linked fairies with a discussion of “second sight” – prophetic divination, mainly in the Highlands. Previous scholars, up to and including Henderson and Cowan, had treated Kirk’s treatise as a source of “folklore”. But Hunter, an intellectual historian, showed that it should instead be read as an intellectual enterprise. Kirk worked partly in London and was associated with a circle of intellectual luminaries, notably Robert Boyle. Besides *The Secret Common-Wealth* itself, Hunter’s edition gathered together several other treatises and collections of correspondence. He argued that the London-based intellectuals around Boyle in the later seventeenth century developed a view of the Scottish Highlands as an “occult laboratory” where unusual phenomena could be investigated. As for Kirk himself, his treatise was an attempt to put fairy belief on a scientific basis, arguing that reports of fairies could be explained by positing the existence of a race of intelligent spirit beings in between humans and angels. In the process he departed considerably from popular belief, for instance by combining ideas about fairies with ideas about second sight; usually these were considered separate topics. Kirk’s project has its own interest as an unusual example of intellectual history, but it is only indirectly “folklore”. Probably Kirk is most useful as a source of “folklore” when he distances himself from a popular belief that he reports, saying that the common folk believe it but he himself does not. The work of re-evaluating Kirk’s treatise in order to separate out its most likely folkloric material has barely begun, but the present paper cites a few instances where Kirk presented material relevant to visionaries.

#### Modalities of the relationship

In theory, there were several possible experiential modalities of a human visionary’s encounter with a spirit. Either the human could see the spirit, or they could hear the spirit, or both. The human might also experience being physically touched by the spirit. The relationship might be unidirectional, in which an active spirit communicated with a passive human, or bidirectional, in which the human also spoke to the spirit or otherwise communicated with it.

In the sources, encounters are usually described with unremarkable terms: the person “met” the spirit, or the spirit “appeared” to them or “came” to them. Sight, rather than hearing, is usually implied; specific reports that someone “heard” a spirit are uncommon, and descriptions of appearance are more common than descriptions of voices (Wilby 2005, pp. 61-63). Robert Kirk mentioned that fairies “are sometimes heard to bake bread, strike hammers, and to do such like services within the litle hillocks where they most haunt” (Hunter 2001, p. 79); but this is not a report of a specific visionary experience. More typical is the report of Stephen Maltman, in Leckie in 1628, who reported dealings with fairies “quhom he had sein in bodilie schapes” (whom he had seen in bodily shapes) (Hall 2006, p. 15). As we shall see, there are also numerous reports of two-way conversations between the visionary and the spirit, and of physical contact between them including sexual relationships. The visionary encounter could involve several different experiences. When Janet Boyman (Edinburgh, 1572) summoned a spirit, first a “blast” like a whirlwind came, then the “shape” of a man [1].

Some visionary encounters were with unknown spirits. People sometimes reported meeting a spirit and being uncertain what kind of spirit it was (Goodare 2014, pp. 153-58). Most visual hallucinations today are of people or of human-like spirits. People experiencing such hallucinations have to make appraisals of what it is that they are seeing and to what extent it represents a threat to them (Dudley et al. 2012). The modalities of the

visionary experiences seem similar to those reported by people experiencing hallucinations today (de Leede-Smith and Barkus 2013).

It was normal, but not universal, for visionaries to have two-way relationships with their spirits. Grizzell Love, in Paisley in the late seventeenth century, had numerous “visions” of witches, angels and portentous occurrences. These seem to have been visual and not aural. Not only did the visions not speak to her, she did not speak to them (Yeoman 2009, p. 35). However, Love was a literate member of a radical religious group, and her account, written by herself, may have been influenced by the biblical Book of Revelation.

It seems plausible to suggest that some people went into trances as part of the process of encountering spirits. There is some direct evidence of this, though the process is not well understood. The synod of Aberdeen in 1675 complained that some people, “under pretence of trances or familiaritie uith spirits”, were “goeing uith these spirits commonlie called the fairies”. These people were clearly visionary magical practitioners, as they had “spoken reproachfully of some persones”, presumably accusing them of some offence which they had detected with the aid of the fairies (Stuart 1846, p. 306).

There are occasional mentions of public performance of trances, in ways characteristic of shamans. The traveller Thomas Pennant, visiting the island of Rhum in 1772, described magical practitioners with “second sight” giving them prophetic ability: “These pretenders to second sight, like the Pythian priestess, during their inspiration fall into trances, foam at the mouth, grow pale, and feign to abstain from food for a month, so over-powered are they by the visions imparted to them during their paroxysms” (Pennant 1998, p. 280). But Pennant did not mention nature spirits here, and further study of trances is required. More often we hear only of a person’s location, not their state of mind, when the spirit encounter occurred. Thus Isobel Haldane, in Perth in 1623, reported that she was carried away by a spirit when “lying in hir bed” (Hume Brown 1908, p. 352).

#### What people were encountering

Visionaries typically encountered just one spirit. However, encounters with plural spirits were also fairly common. These tended to be “the fairies” as a generalised plural group. Alison Pearson, in Boarhills in 1588, associated with “the gude nyctbouris” (good neighbours – usually a euphemism for fairies). She also “had freindis in that court quhilk wes of hir awin blude, quha had gude acquaintance of the Quene of Elphane” (had relatives in that court who were of her own blood, who were well acquainted with the Queen of Elfame) (Pitcairn 1833:i:II, p. 162). This also illustrates a pattern in which nature spirits like fairies also associated with ghosts. However, those who had visions of plural spirits usually had a particular association with an individual as well; in Pearson’s case, as we shall see, this was a ghost, William Simpson. A visionary who formed an association with an individual spirit would tend to use the spirit as a guide to action; throughout this paper the term “spirit-guide” will be used for such a spirit.

Most nature spirits were humanoid, but Robert Kirk reported an old woman in Colonsay who had a large animal as a spirit-guide. Her practice in prognostication was to put three crosses of straw on the palm of her hand, whereupon “a great ougly [i.e. ugly] Beast sprang out of the Earth, neer her and flew in the air”. If her enquiry was to have a successful outcome, the beast would “descend calmly, and lick up the crosses”; if the outcome was to be unsuccessful, “the Beast would furiously thurst her and the crosses over on the ground, and so vanish to his place”. Kirk’s account may be considered more reliable because he himself regarded it as an “exceptione” and so was not adapting it to support his preconceptions (Hunter 2001, p. 88).

People did not keep their visions to themselves, but discussed and used them in various ways. Janet Boyman has been argued to be part of a “cult” concerning the “seely wights” (a phrase meaning “magical beings”). These were a category of fairy-like nature spirits, and the cult itself was similar to the better-documented Sicilian *donas de fuera* cult (Goodare 2012). These “cults” were networks or cultural traditions, not organised groups. Individual visionaries drew on, and contributed to, looser but wider traditions of visionary practice. Wilby (2010, pp. 518-20) gives several instances of visionaries who discussed their visions with others.

The cultural familiarity of visions in early modern Scotland emerges particularly in the way in which visionaries engaged in magical practice. This will be discussed further below, but an example is relevant at this point. The magical practitioner Christian Livingstone, in Leith in 1597, told a client that her powers came from her daughter, who “was tane away with the Farie-folk ... all the knowlege scho had was be hir dochter, wha met with the Fairie” (was taken away with the fairies ... all the knowledge she had came from her daughter, who met with the fairies) (Pitcairn 1833:ii, pp. 25-26). Thus Livingstone’s daughter was the visionary, and the two worked in partnership. When a visionary shared her experiences and practices with others, she was transmitting a tradition.

#### The arrival of the spirit

How did the spirit arrive and manifest itself? Did the visionary experience repeated encounters with it? Could they summon the spirit when they chose? Several accounts elucidate these questions. Alison Pearson described a pattern of repeated encounters with fairies in which their arrival was distinctive. Having described her spirit-guide William Simpson, who was evidently a ghost with a fairy connection, she continued:

And that Mr William Sympsoun is with thame, quha haillit hir and teichit hir all thingis ... and that he will appeir to hir selff allane before the Court cum; and that he before tauld hir how he wes careit away with thame out of middil eird: And quhene we heir the quhirll-wind blaw in the sey, thay wilbe commounelie with itt, or cumand sone thaireftir; that Mr Williame will cum before and tell hir, and bid hir keip hir and sane hir, that scho be nocht tane away with thame agane; for the teynd of thame gais ewerie yeir to hell (Pitcairn 1833:i:II, pp. 163-64).

(And that Mr William Simpson is with them, who healed her and taught her all things ...; and that he will appear to her by himself before the [Fairy] Court comes; and that he told her before how he was carried away with them out of Middle-Earth; And when we [i.e. Simpson and Pearson] hear the whirlwind blow in the sea, they [i.e. the good neighbours] will usually be with it, or coming soon thereafter; that Mr William will come beforehand and tell her [about it], and bid her keep herself [safe] and bless herself, so that she is not taken away with them again; for one-tenth of them go every year to Hell.)

Thus, on some previous occasion, Simpson had been carried away out of Middle-Earth by the fairies, and still lived with them. Pearson herself had been taken away by them at some point in the past, but had returned to the everyday world. Now, each time Pearson encountered the fairies, they were preceded by a warning visit from Simpson. Both of them heard the whirlwind blowing in the sea. The fairy court appeared, either in the whirlwind or soon afterwards. Pearson blessed herself, as advised by Simpson, to avoid being taken away by them again. Every year, a tenth of the fairies went to Hell (presumably without returning), implying that there was a danger that Pearson, if she were to be taken by the fairies again, might be one of those selected for this fate. Although Pearson was unable to choose the time of her encounter, she received some forewarning of it.

Janet Boyman, in Edinburgh in 1572, had more control over her spirit-guide. On one apparently typical occasion she took a client's shirt to Arthur's Seat, the hill near Edinburgh, and summoned the spirit:

Ye past thairwith to ane well under Arthours Saitt thatt rynniss southwert, quhilk ye call ane eldrich well and thair maid incantatioun and invocatioun of the evill spreitis quhome ye callit upoun for to come to yow and declair quhat wald becum of that man and thair come thaireftir first ane grit blast lyke a quhirill wind and thaireftir thair come the schaip of ane man and stuid on the uthir syde of the well foiranent yow. [1]

(You went with it to a well on the slopes of Arthur's Seat that flows southwards, which you call an eldrich [i.e. spooky] well, and there made incantation and invocation of the evil spirits whom you called upon to come to you and declare what would become of that man; and there came after that, first, a great blast like a whirlwind, and then there came the shape of a man, which stood on the other side of the well facing you.)

The prior arrival of the "blast like a whirlwind" seems similar to Pearson's report of the warning whirlwind, although Boyman was able to take the initiative in summoning the spirit. However, Boyman did not always take the initiative. On one occasion she refused to help a client because it was after Hallowe'en, a time when she no longer expected to be visited by the "good neighbours."

The ability to summon a spirit also appears in the testimony of Elspeth Reid, partner of Thomas Leys in Aberdeen in 1597. Leys told her that he knew a hill at which he could "gar ane man ryse and plene appeir to hir, in ony likenes scho plesit" (cause a man to arise and appear plainly to her, in any likeness she pleased), whereupon she should "becum that manis servand" (become that man's servant) and he would ensure that she should "newir want" (never lack anything). Reid, however, refused, "fering that it was ane ewill spreit" (fearing that it was an evil spirit). Reid's relationship with the spirit was more extensive than she admitted here, since she was also overheard talking to Leys in prison about it. The couple had apparently visited the hill, and Reid had put her foot on Leys's foot to enable her to see the spirit; but when she inadvertently said "God saiff me" (God save me), then "that ewill spreit vaniest away withe ane rwmleng" (that evil spirit vanished away with a rumbling noise) (Stuart 1841, pp. 98, 100). The spirit sounds like a fairy in that it lived in a hill, although the word "fairy" was not mentioned. The fairy or demon that vanishes at the mention of the name of God sounds like a folkloric motif, and is not necessarily an account of lived experience. The idea that the spirit would ensure that she should "never want" is also similar to many accused witches' descriptions of their relationship with the Devil (Larner 1981, p. 148).

#### Involuntary and traumatic encounters

People's encounters with nature spirits often seem to have begun involuntarily, and in some cases remained unwelcome and traumatic. John Ben's account of the Orkney islands in 1529 included a report of a trow that sexually abused a woman over the course of a year:

Troici [trows], under the name of a marine monster, very often cohabit with women living here, which, when I lived there, a beautiful woman was there married to a sturdy farmer; she was tormented with a great spirit, and was seen against the husband's will lying in one bed, and he cohabiting naturally with the woman. This woman at length became emaciated from sorrow: I advised that she might get free by prayer, almsgiving, and fasting, and which she did; she was thus troubled during a year. The description of this monster is this. He was covered with marine plants over the whole body, he was similar to

a young horse covered with hair, he had a member similar to a horse and large testicles (Mitchell and Clark 1908, pp. 304, 315).

The remarkably detailed description of this trow does not seem to be stereotyped, and Ben makes clear that he heard it from the woman herself. This is surely an account of visionary experience, although Ben, as a priest, may have incorporated some of his educated assumptions about “incubi” into his account. He was also uninterested in any attempts the woman may have made to negotiate with the spirit or reach an accommodation with it during the year in which she experienced its assaults. Ben’s stress on the way that she was “tormented” is worth noting; he was not recording a witchcraft trial, and witchcraft trial documents may omit this point because it was not necessarily of interest to the interrogators.

Some traumatic encounters with nature spirits developed into longer-term two-way relationships. The spirit, though it might in some ways be an unwelcome presence, nevertheless gave the experient some positive benefits in the form of magical powers. Interrogators seem to have encouraged witchcraft suspects to tell stories of their motive in making a pact with the Devil – and this motive was often expected to include a story about the suspect’s troubles at the time of the initial encounter (Larner 1981, p. 148). Although this might make the stories suspect, the stories in this paper have a believable individuality about them, unlike some of the stereotyped material about the Devil.

Elsbeth Reoch, in Orkney in 1616, is a good example of a traumatised visionary. Her first visionary encounter, at the age of 12, occurred when she met two “men” by the side of a loch, one dressed in black and the other in a green tartan plaid. They do not seem to have been ordinary humans. One of the men told her to visit a house in which a young woman lived, and to accuse her of being pregnant by a married man. Reoch induced the woman to confess her pregnancy, thus proving that she had gained power “to ken and sie ony thing she wald desyre” (to know and see anything she would desire). However, Reoch two years later had an illegitimate baby of her own; this birth, and the breakdown of her relationship with the father, was evidently a traumatic event. Soon after this the man in black returned to her. This time he “callit him selff ane farie man quha wes sumtyme her kinsman callit Johne Stewart quha wes slane be Mc Ky at the doun going of the soone And therfor nather deid nor leiving bot wald ever go betuix the heaven and the earth” (called himself a fairy man who was formerly her kinsman, called John Stewart, who had been slain by MacKay at the setting of the sun, and was therefore neither dead nor living but would always wander between heaven and earth). This famous passage illustrates the connection between fairies and ghosts. John Stewart was clearly a ghost, but was still a “fairy man”, perhaps associating with the fairies as other ghosts were known to do.

At this point, Reoch’s traumas worsened. Stewart, her spirit-guide, troubled her for two nights, demanding to have sex with her, and “wald never let her sleip” (would never let her sleep). He warned her that once she yielded to him she would lose her power of speech, but would “sie and ken ony thing she desyrit” (see and know anything she desired). On the third night she experienced having sex with him – he “semeit to ly with her” (seemed to lie with her) – and “upoun the morrow she haid no power of hir tounge nor could nocht speik” (next morning she had no power of her tongue, and could not speak). She began, mute, to travel around making a living by magical fortune-telling – “foir shawing” (fore-showing) people what they had done and should do. She had sex with the “fairy man” on at least one further occasion before her arrest, and also had at least one further illegitimate child. The vivid details in Reoch’s confession indicate that she had recovered her speech by the time of her interrogation (Black and Thomas 1903, pp. 111-15).

Human encounters with fairies sometimes entailed ritual mutism that extended beyond cases of trauma. Bessie Dunlop's spirit-guide told her not to speak when she was with the fairies (Henderson 2009, p. 141). This may be an extension of the way in which magical practitioners sometimes remained silent, or instructed their clients to remain silent, during a ritual (Miller 2002, p. 102). Purkiss (2000, pp. 89-96) has offered an insightful literary-symbolic interpretation of the mutism in Reoch's case, though her conclusion that Reoch experienced her trauma as "incest" seems unlikely (Dudley and Goodare 2013, p. 138). Psychological studies certainly support a link between trauma and hallucinations (Kluemper and Dalenberg 2014). What we need now is more analysis of this and other cases of mutism from a psychiatric point of view, as has been sketched for medieval Spain (Gondim et al. 2015).

Alison Pearson also encountered her nature spirit at a traumatic period in her life. She described a visionary occasion when she fell sick on a moor and encountered a "man" who turned out to be a fairy:

Scho being in Grange-mure, with the folkis that past to the Mure, scho lay down seik alane; and thair come ane man to hir, cled in grene claitis, quha said to hir, "Gif scho wald be faithfull, he wald do hir guid;" and that scho seing him, cryit for help, bot nane hard hir; and thane, scho chargeit him, "In Gods name and the low he levit one," that if he come in Godis name and for the weill of hir saull, he sould tell; Bot he gaid away thane, and apperit to hir at ane uther tyme (Pitcairn 1833:i:II p. 163).

(when she was in Grangemuir, with the people who went to the moor, she lay down sick by herself; and a man came to her, dressed in green clothes, who said to her, "If she would be faithful [to him], he would do her good"; and that when she saw him she cried for help, but nobody heard her; and then she demanded to him "In God's name, and by the law he lived by", that, if he came in God's name and for the good of her soul, he should tell [her]; But he went away then, and appeared to her at another time.)

The encounter was clearly distressing, since Pearson cried for help, and then asked the spirit directly whether he was benevolent towards her. His statement that "If she would be faithful [to him], he would do her good" sounds like an offer of help, but it could also be a threat. The fairies assaulted her physically the first time she visited them; she was "sairlie tormentit with thame" (sorely tormented by them), and she experienced receiving a painful blow, leaving a disfiguring mark, that took the power from her left side. After another visit she was bedridden for twenty weeks.

Thus, some of the magical practitioners with spirit-guides may have been making the best of the situation, rather than simply welcoming the power that the spirit brought. Harry Wilson, in Duns in 1669, was a male visionary with a woman spirit-guide, presumably a fairy. He had initially been with the fairies for nineteen days. The woman would come to him at night, and advised him in his magical practice. He stated that "he could not be rid of her" (Maxwell-Stuart 2005, pp. 112-13). Although the interrogators no doubt construed the woman as a demon, they would have been unlikely to ask a suspect about wanting to be rid of the demon, and Wilson's statement makes sense as an account of his reluctant relationship with a nature spirit.

A spirit might appear at a traumatic time without itself contributing to the visionary's suffering. Janet Rendall alias Rigga, in Orkney in 1629, formed a relationship with a spirit-guide called "Walliman", who was "claid in quhyt cloathis with ane quhyt head and ane gray beard" (clad in white clothes with a white head and a grey beard). She first met him twenty years previously, on a hill. She was evidently destitute – "having soucht charitie and could not have it" (having asked for charity and not having received it) – and presumably desperate for assistance. Walliman had aided Rendall in curing human

and animal illnesses ever since. Whether he was a nature spirit is not entirely clear, possibly because the interrogators were keen to construe him as a demon (Black and Thomas 1903, pp. 103-11).

#### Power dynamics of the relationship

Did the visionary feel in control of the situation, or were they at the mercy of a capricious spirit? The cases discussed above, especially those involving trauma, indicate that visionaries' power was limited, and that they had little choice. However, it was sometimes possible to negotiate assertively with one's spirit-guide. Bessie Dunlop more than once argued with Thom Reid, a ghost associated with the fairies, angering him when she refused his demands (Henderson 2009, pp. 141-42). Further study might elucidate the perceived character and motives of the spirit-guide in more detail. Some nature spirits were inscrutable and remote, while others were more rounded personalities with individual motives. Some seemed interested only in the visionary, while others interacted with more than one person. Some were omniscient like a deity, knowing all about the visionary, while others asked for information, treating the visionary in a more equal way.

Some visionaries experienced having sex with nature spirits, and this can help to clarify issues of power. The evidence is particularly at risk of contamination here, because the interrogators often sought a confession of sex with the Devil. However, some of the accounts they received seem unlikely to have been answers to leading questions. This is particularly so for Elspeth Reoch, discussed above. Another distinctive account is that of Isobel Strachan, in Aberdeen in 1597, who said that "quhat skill so ever scho hes, scho hed it of hir mother; and hir mother learnit at ane elf man quha lay with hir" (whatever skill she has, she had it from her mother; and her mother learned it from an elf man who lay with her) (Stuart 1841, p. 177). There is also John Ben's account of the woman in Orkney, quoted above, which is not from a witchcraft trial. Women were assumed to wait for men to make sexual advances to them, so it is not surprising that they were assumed to have the same passive relationship with male nature spirits. Andrew Man, in Rathven in 1598, had a less subordinate sexual relationship with the queen of the fairies, fathering children upon her while recognising that she could also have sex with other men (Cowan 2008, pp. 83-85).

The experience of flight with the fairies is another motif that raises questions of power. A recent study of ideas about flying witches has indicated that people generally regarded the motif of flight positively, as an exhilarating expression of magical power. However, the study noted some exceptions to this positive pattern. In particular, there were some people who feared being carried away by the fairies, often in whirlwinds (Goodare 2013b). Being carried in a fairy whirlwind was essentially a visionary experience. An example has already been given above: Alison Pearson, who awaited fairy whirlwinds with dread. Fairies also used whirlwinds to harm people, according to the visionary Janet Morrison in Bute in 1662: "that blasting is a whirlwinde that the fayries raises about that persone quhich [i.e. which] they intend to wrong" (Macphail 1920, p. 27).

Some visionaries had experiences that they could construe as flight, but that seem more like episodes of sleepwalking. The essential point of the experience was that they woke up in an unknown place. Alison Pearson was often taken physically to visit the fairies and the fairy queen, and did not return home afterwards: "scho wald be in hir bed haill and seir, and wald nocht wit quhair scho wald be or the morne" (she would be in her bed whole and secure, and would not know where she would be by the morning) (Pitcairn 1833:i:II, p. 162). Andrew Man said that the elves would make him appear to be in a fair chamber, but he would find himself "in a moss on the morne" (in a boggy moorland next morning)

(Stuart 1841, pp. 121-22). The fifth, sixth and seventh charges against Janet Cowie, in Elgin in 1647, were:

(5) having been for a whole night out of her own house from her husband and returning in the morning when her husband was 4 or 5 hours in the morning her husband demanded her where she had been, answered the fairies had taken her away to Messindiu where she slept all night; (6) she was several times found half dead lying in the Grayfriars and other places nearby; (7) her husband was hard ordinarily challenge her secretly for rising in the night and going forth and tarrying all night out (Cramond 1908, p. 357).

(having been for a whole night out of her own house, away from her husband, and returning to her husband at 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning, her husband asked her where she had been. [She] answered that the fairies had taken her away to Messindiu where she slept all night. She was found several times half dead, lying in the Greyfriars [churchyard] and other places nearby. Her husband was usually heard to reproach her secretly for getting up in the night and going out and staying out all night.)

Thus Cowie sometimes came home in the morning saying that the fairies had taken her to "Messindiu" (an unexplained name) at night; at other times people found her lying in various places out of doors.

These wanderings were evidently unexpected, and probably unwelcome. They may also have been accompanied by trauma or mental disturbance. Robert Kirk related the case of a visionary woman he himself had interviewed:

I saw a woman of forty years age, and examined her (having another Clergie man in my company), about a report that past [i.e. passed, circulated] of her long fasting, her name is [blank] McIntyre, It was told by them of the house as well as herself, that she took verie little, or no food for several years past, that she tarried in the fields over night, saw, and convers'd with a people she knew not, having wandred in seeking of her sheep, and slept upon a hillock, and finding herself transported to another place before day, The Woman had a Child since that time, and is still prettie melancholious and silent, hardly ever seen to laugh (Hunter 2001, p. 89).

The "people she knew not" were evidently nature spirits of some kind, and it was probably they who "transported" her. Her eating disorder, "melancholy" and reluctance to speak are indicative of mental disturbance.

As well as being taken by the fairies, some people were rescued from them. Margaret Fulton, one of the Bargarran witches of 1697, said that "her husband had brought her back from the fairies" (*Account of Two Letters*, appended to the *True Narrative*, 1698, p. 7). We have a more detailed account from Isobel Haldane, who was "askit if scho hed onye conversatione with the farye folk" (asked if she had any dealings with the fairy folk). She told a story of abduction by an unknown being who took her to a fairy hill from which she was rescued three days later:

ten yeiris syne, lying in hir bed, scho wes taikin furth quhiddir be God or the devill scho knawis not, wes caryit to ane hill syde; the hill oppynnit and scho enterit in, thair scho stayit thrie dayis, viz., fra Thursday till Sondag at xij houris, scho mett a man with ane gray beird quha brocht hir furth agane (Hume Brown 1908, pp. 352-53).

(ten years ago, lying in her bed, she was taken forth, whether by God or the Devil she knows not, [and] was carried to a hillside; the hill opened and she went in; she stayed there three days, from Thursday until Sunday at 12 o'clock, [when] she met a man with a grey beard who brought her out again.)

She never explained the nature of the "man with the grey beard", but she later referred to him as "he that delyverit me fra the farye folk" (he who rescued me from the fairy folk). He was evidently a spirit. The time of 12 o'clock (noon) was a recognised fairy

time. Rescue from the fairies was also a recognised folkloric motif, with datable evidence from the medieval period onwards (Lyle 2007, pp. 131-40).

An important and more positive aspect of the relationship, for many visionaries, was magical practice of one kind or another. They learned to use their spirit-guide to give them special powers, which they shared with their neighbours. The power to heal illnesses was common, as was the power to foretell the future. Several of the visionaries discussed in this paper used their spirit-guides in this way – Boyman, Dunlop, Haldane, Rendall, Reoch and others. There is no space to discuss this magical practice fully here, but it has been investigated by other scholars (Henderson and Cowan 2001, pp. 74-105; Wilby 2005, pp. 77-91). Two examples may be given, however, of magical practice that entailed the exercise of power.

Walter Ronaldson, in Dyce in 1601, was visited by a “spirit” that gave him a distinctively masculine project: it encouraged him to search for treasure. Originally he only heard a voice, but later “he saw the forme of it, quhilk wes lyke ane litill bodie, haiffing a scheavin berd, cled in quhyt lening, lyk a sark” (he saw its form, which was like a little body, with its beard shaved off, dressed in a white linen garment like a shirt) (Stuart 1846, p. 184). This was evidently a nature spirit, though its precise nature was unspecified.

Finally, Janet Boyman’s magical practice contained particularly remarkable elements that took her high into the masculine realms of political power. As well as being a healer, she was employed in a political conspiracy by Sir William Stewart of Luthrie in 1568. She provided Stewart with political prophecies, notably about when the imprisoned Queen Mary would escape, and about what Stewart’s own fate would be [1].

### Conclusions

This study has taken a broadly phenomenological approach, in that it has attempted to investigate the nature of visionary encounters as they were experienced, understood and reported by the experient (Smart 1996, pp. 166-95). This approach can be distinguished from the perhaps more common historical tendency to concentrate on the social function of visionary encounters: what someone *did* with a spirit-guide. I have said relatively little about the use of the spirit-guide in magical practice, for instance, as this topic has been more fully discussed elsewhere.

The phenomenological approach may also be distinguished from the symbolic approach, taken in this field by Purkiss (2000), in which attention falls on the symbolic meaning of the motifs and topics in the visionary’s report. Thus, for instance, an encounter by the side of a loch symbolises liminality or transition. Such an approach can be valuable, but it has its limitations. In particular, Wilby (2005, p. 170) has objected that it may appear to marginalise the lived reality of the experience itself.

Ultimately, the reality behind spirit encounters, if there was such a thing as “reality” here, may be sought by correlating historical reports of visions with present-day psychological studies. Some people today experience hallucinations, often in the form of hearing voices speaking to them; this is currently experienced by about 5 per cent of the population. Visual hallucinations – seeing things that are not there – also occur. Some “fantasy-prone” people have difficulty distinguishing fantasies from reality. Finally there is the sleep disorder known as sleep paralysis, in which the sufferer wakes up unable to move, and often feels a strange presence threatening or assaulting them (Dudley and Goodare 2013). These encounters, sometimes vivid and terrifying, demand explanations, and people interpret them in terms of the culture with which they are familiar; sleep paralysis today gives rise to reports of abduction by aliens.

Thus, visionaries seem to have carried out a process of creative reinterpretation of anomalous experiences. We know less than we might like to about the relationship between the initial experience and its cultural articulation. People who experience auditory or other hallucinations today have to make sense of their experiences (Faccio et al. 2013). Moreover, anomalous experiences are not restricted to people with psychological problems that are apparent to others; some bizarre experiences are also reported today by people who are otherwise functioning normally in society (Pechey and Halligan 2011). When people in early modern Scotland heard a disembodied voice, saw an unusual sight or experienced a threatening nocturnal presence, they often turned to ideas about nature spirits.

#### Notes

[1] All information about Janet Boyman derives from a manuscript source: National Records of Scotland, Edinburgh, JC26/1/67, indictment of Janet Boyman, 1572.

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**DALI, TKASHMAPA AND RELATED BELIEFS ON THE BASIS OF  
PRESENT-DAY MATERIALS RECORDED IN UPPER  
SAMEGRELO-SVANETI**

**Abstract**

The role of hunting is reflected in a specific way in folk beliefs.

There are a number of ethnographic materials and researches about the hunting Goddess Dali in Georgia.

There is an assumption that characters of Megrelian mythology Tkashmapa is the variation of Svanetian Dali. They have similar features but Dali retains features of the mythological goddess more than Tkashmapa.

According to the materials recorded by us in Upper – Samegrelo and Svaneti, analyzed mythological characters are quite similar in appearance, but their dwelling places are more – or- less different. The goddess Dali lodges in the cliffs where aurochs live, as for Tkashmapa or Ali (Siren), she lives in impenetrable forests and thorny places. Dali is considered as a wrathful deity by our respondents, while Tkashmapa is identified with the evil spirits, however both are tempters, seducers, who want to test hunters, which leads to the death of weak hunters.

Today, according to the survey of respondents, none of them met Dali or Tkashmapa, however, the old hunters believe that the legends or stories about them are true, they can name the old hunters, presently dead, who had met these mythological characters and some of them had even been driven mad.

They answer our question - why don't these creatures exist today? - the paved roads, street illumination, networks and the Internet had banished and exiled them from the people's dwelling places and may be they had moved to some inaccessible vicinities.

Young respondents consider Dali and Tkashmapa only as fairy-tale characters.

ნადირობის როლი თავისებურადაა ასახული ხალხურ რწმენა წარმოდგენებში. საქართველოში არაერთი ეთნოგრაფიული მასალა და გამოკვლევა არსებობს ნადირობის ქალღმერთ დალიზე. არსებობს მოსაზრება, რომ მეგრული მითოლოგიის პერსონაჟი ტყაშმაფა სვანური დალის ორეულს წარმოადგენს. ჰგვანან ერთმანეთს ატრიბუტებით, მაგრამ დალი უფრო მეტად ინარჩუნებს მითოლოგიური ქალღმერთის თვისებებს, ვიდრე ტყაშმაფა.

ჩვენ მიერ სვანეთსა და ზემო სამეგრელოში ჩაწერილი მასალების მიხედვით საანალიზო მითოლოგიური გმირები ერთმანეთს ვიზუალურად გვანან, მაგრამ მათი საცხოვრისი მეტ-ნაკლებად განსხვავებულია, ქალღმერთი დალი სალ კლდეებში ბინადრობს, სადაც ჯიხვთა სამყოფელია, რაც შეეხება ტყაშმაფას ანუ ალს, იგი გაუვალ ტყეებსა და ძეძვებში ცხოვრობს. ჩვენი რესპოდენტები დალის მრისხანე ღვთაებად მიიჩნევენ, ხოლო ტყაშმაფას ავსულთან აიგივებენ, თუმცა ორივე მაცდურია, მონადირეების გამოცდა სურთ, რის გამოც სუსტები ხშირად იღუპებიან.

გამოკითხულ რესპოდენტთა მიხედვით, დღეს არც ერთი მათგანი არ შეხვედრია დალისა თუ ტყაშმაფას, თუმცა ასაკიანი მონადირეები მიიჩნევენ,

რომ გადმოცემა მათ შესახებ ჭეშმარიტებაა, ასახელებენ მათზე უფროს აწ გარდაცვლილ მონადირეებს, რომლებსაც მითოლოგიური პერსონაჟები შეხვედრიან და ზოგიც ჭკუიდან შეშლილა.

ჩვენს კითხვაზე თუ რატომ არ არიან ეს არსებები დღეს? – გვპასუხობენ, რომ გზების გაყვანამ, ქუჩის განათებამ და ინტერნეტ ქსელების ჩართვამ ისინი ხალხიდან გააქცია და შესაძლოა, კაცთაგან მიუვალ ადგილებში გადავიდნენ საცხოვრებლად. ახლაგაზრდა რესპოდენტები კი დალისა და ტყაშმავას მხოლოდ ზღაპრის პერსონაჟებად მიიჩნევენ.

**Keywords:** *Dali, Tkashmapa, Beliefs, Statistic Data*

Hunting plays considerable and characteristic part in folk traditions and beliefs. We have a number of ethnographic or folk materials and researches in Georgia about the Goddess of hunting, Dali. (Javakhishvili 1979, Tsanova 1992, Ochiauri 1954) There exists a theory, that a character of Megrelian mythology, Tkashmapa (Ruler of Forests) is an analogue, a variation of Svanetian Dali (Lady of Cliffs). They have some common characteristic features-both are beautiful, fair-haired, passionate, Dali kills the man he loves, Tkashmapa drives him mad.Both can turn into other beings..Still, Dali maintains the characteristics of a mythological Goddess more, than Tkashmapa.The first is a haughty ruler, the other is a seductress, a siren. (Shengelia 2012, Lortkipanidze 1975, Sikharulidze 2006, Katsitadze 2010...)

We see images like these in mythologies all over the world-though they bear different names (Latin-Diana; Greek-Artemis; Russian- Deanna; Palest. – Anat; Egyptian-Neath.. ) Their dwelling places also differ, according to the landscape and flora of their particular country. (Энциклопедия мифологии- <http://godsbay.ru/antique/diana.html>; Мифы древней Греции-<http://zaumnik.ru/mifologija/mify-ob-artemide.html>).

Today, we are not aimed at making comparisons and contrasts between Dali and Tkashmapa. We are conducting a research of statistics on the basis of present-day beliefs in the above- mentioned mythological characters.

The data, recorded by us in 2013 in Svaneti and Upper Samegrelo confirms the visual, physical resemblance between the analyzed mythological characters, but highlights the difference of their dwellings- Dali lives among steep cliffs, where the mountain goats abide, whereas Tkashmapa, or a siren lives in thick forests. Our respondents regard Dali as a strict and dangerous goddess, and associate Tkashmapa with an evil spirit. Still, both are seductive and tend to test the hunters. As a result, the weak ones perish.

Our respondents have never met either of the mythological creatures, but the elderly hunters believe that the myths and legends about them are based on truth. They even name the older hunters, dead by now, who met Dali and Tkashmapa. Some of them even lost their mind afterwards.

We will quote some of the stories:

Ms.Eter Oniani from the village of Sasashi, Lentekhi Region recalls that in her childhood, Dali fell in love with her neighbor and turned him into a lunatic. The man used to sleepwalk at nights, go to the forest and get back with his clothes torn and himself scratched all over, though he remembered nothing about it. When he died, terrible screaming and wailing was heard from the graveyard. The appalled villagers went to his grave number of times, but never found anybody there. Finally, they concluded that it was Dali, mourning over her deceased lover.

Our respondent shared with us, that in case of Dali's lover's marriage, to avoid the revenge of the goddess, the man's wife had to give her husband's underwear to their male guest. In this case, Dali would choose that man as a lover.

As for Tkashmapa, according to the words of our respondent, 80-year-old Salome Imedadze, these creatures live in deep forests and thickets, termed as "wrong places". They offered their love to all good-looking males and wrestled with the human beings. Tkashmapa wrestled with Salome's brother, Gerasime, who returned home with his clothes torn over and a specific smell of a siren.

The man, who entered in an intimate relationship with Tkashmapa, was termed as "enslaved", they returned home speechless and needed special prayers to get back to their normal state. According to the legends, The Lady of Forests was scared of fire, so a person, walking in the vicinity of a "wrong place", usually took a torch (zhinzhgili-in Imeretian dialect) with him, to safeguard himself against the siren.

The 50-60-year-old people of the regions of our research are not precisely sure of the existence of the named mythological creatures. Still, they cannot completely deny this fact. We asked them, why these creatures are hardly seen today and they answered that street lights and internet cables made them run away from people's dwelling places. So they have moved to some uninhabited parts of the region.

Young respondents regard Tkashmapa and Dali as fairy tale characters and only smile, hearing the stories of the elderly.

A representative of village Muzhava of Tsalenjikha region, a 70-year-old Ozbek Arqania told us a story of totally different perspective. His father, as an old hunter believed in the existence of Tkashmapa. Returning home from the forest late at night, he frequently encountered a beautiful blond, bathing in a river, or under the waterfall, luring and beckoning him, scaring his horse and so on. The hunter knew that he could not talk to this seductive creature and tried to pass her as fast as possible. Once, when he was carrying wood from forest, he had to pass the "wrong place", where he usually encountered Tkashmapa. The creature was there again, bathing in the river. Her beautiful white body and golden hair shone under the moonlight. While seeing him, she started to beckon him. The frightened man hastened his pace, but the seductress started to whistle. The man heard her whistle all the way back home. When he finally arrived home and took off his rubber boots, he noticed that there was a hole on the heel of his boot, made by a thorn. So he guessed where the sound of whistle came from in reality. According to Mr. Ozbek, his father completely lost his faith in Tkashmapa after this occasion. And he never encountered her any more, though he worked as a forester until his death.

There is also one noteworthy observation - people with higher education tend to disbelieve in Tkashmapa despite their age. For instance, our respondent from a village Etseri of Mestia Region, Zhenia Gurchiani, a 78 year-old retired teacher mentioned that these stories are just tales, but in every fairy tale we can see some human dreams or experience depicted. The magic mirror can be analogous with modern internet and Skype, flying carpet resembles airplane and so on. In this perspective, we can see Dali and Tkashmapa, as symbols of great passion, hidden in the depth of human soul. If you surrender to passions, they might become a destructive force, if you avoid them, you'll be saved. This is the wisdom of these tales, according to the old teacher. Our respondent used to go to the forest number of times, but never encountered anything extraordinary.

The quoted examples enable us to conclude, that nowadays people have lost the sense of mysticism. As Grigol Robaqidze, an eminent Georgian writer wrote: "Human reason, distorted by ratio, sees the visible world as a realm of material, area of things. There is no room for mysticism. Only the bare reality- this is our modern young generation" ("Slain

Soul”, from the book “Condemned”, 1990): Still, human beings found enough forces in themselves to overcome fear. Mr. Shalva Nutsubidze, a great Georgian philosopher and psychologist said: ”One day, human beings will believe in their own forces. Those, who can overcome fear even once, are released from it till the end of their lives, as fear is substituted by clearness, which leaves no space for fear” ( Sh. Nitsubidze 1926).

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## THE FOREST: RELIGIOUS AND NARRATIVE SYMBOL OF A DISINTEGRATING SOCIETY

### Abstract

In my lecture I focus on the forest. I consider it as an ethnic landscape, an ethno-cultural marker, i.e. a boundary forming symbol that expresses cultural identity, and as an instrument that we invest with meanings and utilize in the arenas of politics and identity<sup>25</sup>. Forest as an ethnic landscape evokes emotions in the person facing it. His/her feelings might be negative (e.g. fury, demarcation, shame) or positive (e.g. pride), and because of this emotional over load it fulfils a normative function: it contributes positively or negatively to the formation of social self-image. In other words, as Réka Albert<sup>26</sup> points it out, it belongs to the toolkit of national symbols. The first questions to be raised then are, on the one hand, when and in what social contexts these notions appear, and on the other, what their role is in social practice. In my lecture I shall mainly concentrate on this latter problem.

წინამდებარე ნაშრომი ძირითადად ტყეს ეძღვნება, მივიჩნევთ რა, რომ ეს არის ეთნიკური ლანდშაფტი, ეთნო-კულტურული ნიშანი, საზღვრის ფორმირების სიმბოლო, ის გამოხატავს კულტურულ იდენტურობასაც. ის ასევე არის ინსტრუმენტი, რომელსაც მე ვიკვლევ პოლიტიკური იდენტურობის თვალსაზრისითაც. ტყე, როგორც ეთნიკური ლანდშაფტი, მნახველის ემოციას იწვევს. ხანდახან მისადმი დამოკიდებულება შეიძლება იყოს ნეგატიური (მაგალითად: რისხვა, დემარკაცია, სირცხვილი) ან პოზიტიური (მაგალითად: სიამაყე), და ამ ემოციების გამო ის ნომინანტის ფუნქციას იძენს. ის დადებითად ან უარყოფითად მოქმედებს სოციუმის ფორმირების პროცესზეც. ტბა ალბერტი ეროვნულობის სიმბოლოს წარმოადგენს. არის რიგი კითხვები, რომლებიც ჩნდება მსგავს სიტუაციებში: პირველი, როდის და რა სოციალურ კონტექსტში ჩნდება ეს ცნებები? და მეორე: რა არის მათი როლი სოციუმის ცხოვრებაში? წინამდებარე ნაშრომში ამ საკითხების გარშემო გავამახვილებთ ყურადღებას.

**Keywords:** *symbol, forest, cult.*

### Main part:

The symbolic evaluation of the forest, of the taiga, is not obvious. It cannot be described in simple oppositions, it is a system that often seems to be controversial. It has diverse interpretations: its utilization is situational, i.e. depends amongst others on the context and the goal to be reached, the dynamically understood ethnicity, the attitude, the relationship of the participants, etc.

I made my fieldwork in Western Siberia in the area of Tomsk county, all along the Vasyugan River. The Tomskaya Oblast is above all not known for its small northern nationalities, though southern Selkup groups live in a relatively big number on this territory

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<sup>25</sup> Cohen 1993.

<sup>26</sup> Albert 1997.

and, on the place of my fieldwork, lives the most southern group of Eastern Khanties, too<sup>27</sup>. The area of the former Narimskiy Krai became known moreover notorious as one of the biggest destinations of tsarist and stalinist deportation politics.<sup>28</sup> In the 1930s the riverside was the scene of permanent political colonization: from 1931 onwards, within a couple of years, Khanties who had amounted to 95% of the total population shrunk to a less than 10% minority among deported Russians. This tendency only escalated by further deportations in the 1940s, primarily from the Baltics and, from the end of the 1960s, after the discovery of crude oil fields when economic immigration started. As a result, the Vasyugan Khanties practically dissolved among the deported and immigrated Russians and/or non-Khanty populations.

Local society certainly reflects on these historic processes. Based on the two ways and reasons of presence of people in this region, they classify everybody into two, by no means homogeneous groups: one of them are the Khantis, called in the local idiom Ostyaks, and considered to be „autochthonous”; the other are the immigrated non-Khanty population, called by the unifying name „Russians”. In the following I shall use these words according to these emic categories.

Forest and taiga have an extremely important role in the ethnic self-definition of both parties. In Russia, the endless forest is a symbol related not only to specific ethnicities, it is connected to the entire population, it is the unifying marker of 'Russians' (*россиянин*). Local Russian-россиянин population has a continuous relation to the forest; they utilize it, highlight its particular elements, at the same time they miss, skip and pretermit some other characteristics of it.<sup>29</sup>

The attitude of local Ostyaks is significantly different from that. The Ostyaks, according to both parties, are not just „inserted” into the taiga but are considered to be its immanent parts, creators.<sup>30</sup> This represents two different attitudes to the forest: Ostyaks are inseparable parts of the taiga, they are practically identical with it. Non-Ostyaks are on the other hand intruders and may easily be separated from the woods. Considering the demographic proportion of Ostyaks, it is by no means accidental that for them the definition of ethnic affiliation represents a daily problem in which 'originality' is defined through geneology and locality. The 'real, original' (*настоящий*) Ostyak is either a 'pure blooded Ostyak' (*чисто кровный*) whose ancestors are considered to be Ostyaks on all the ascendent lines by the community, or the one who has stayed in the forest or whose living is related at least to it. Thus a 'real Ostyak man' hunts and fishes, 'real Ostyak life' can be imagined only in the forest, 'to live a real life' means to live on hunting and fishing in the woods. This dichotomy is reflected in the individual life-stories of the elderly, in which immigration into the villages is understood as a cataclysm, break or trauma. In fact, the term 'Ostyak' is a life-style category and represents a way of life that is strongly connected to the taiga. It is mostly not ethnic-based since sometimes a descendant of a Russian settler who immigrated to the Vasyugan in the 19th century may be called an „Ostyak”, or an Ukrainian who was born in Ukraine and speaks the characteristic 'Khokhol' dialect but has a Khanty wife and has been living for a very long time among 'Ostyaks', is considered an „Ostyak”, too.

Russians on the other hand want to conquer the forest; it must be occupied, it has to be made habitable for humans: the forest is understood as the opposite of civilization. This

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<sup>27</sup> Nagy 2011b

<sup>28</sup> Krasilnikov 2009.

<sup>29</sup> Nagy 2014.

<sup>30</sup> Kulemzin – Lukina 1992.

is how it appears in the memory of many deported persons: the first years of deportation were about creating civilization just as about deforestation (*корчевание*); practically every one named these two issues as key moments.

Immanent belonging to the woods, tight relationship between the forest, the landscape and the society on the one side, removal of the woods on the other can be demonstrated on the ideological level, too. In Ostyak religion the world of the humans may hardly be separated from the world of the forest. The divinities of the Ostyak pantheon, the ones who live in a close everyday contact with men can be divided into two sharply different groups: the divinities of the nature, and the ones that have a strong relationship with the kinship groups. The nature gods are inseparable from the place where they live, what they embody or symbolize, although each of the woods, rivers or river sections located along the Vasyugan have their own water or forest spirits; this is why most of the time they are used in plural form in the local language. If a person enters the territory of a given divinity, he/she must get in touch with it, needs to gain his/her favour, in other words the relation between the hunting area and the divinity inhabiting it is tight and intimate. In the same way, the divinities of the kinship groups are closely connected to the given family group's hunting and settling area, too. Thus the principles of locality and genealogy go hand in hand in the Ostyak pantheon, just as they are complementary principles in Ostyak social structure. Locality and genealogy are not mutually exclusive principles, but complete each other; they prove the affinity and interdependence of forest and people, kinship group and landscape.<sup>31</sup>

We may even venture stating that forest as a symbol will nowadays become more important than society as a symbol. By to-day, traditional kinship organization along the Vasyugan has practically collapsed the former social structure disintegrated. This is reflected in symbolic forms, too, since religious cults uniting different social groups just as folk genres expressing social relatedness disappeared. There are no more traces of the once extremely vigorous domestic and clan cults which were at their height at the turn of the 19th - 20th centuries. Nowadays domestic spirits do not represent more than child-threatening creatures; stories about them are mostly funny and entertaining. The names of the former clan divinities have already been forgotten, I have no information whatsoever of any kind of ritual related to them. However, the cult of the so called general divinities, and amongst them the nature spirits developed in a different way. The forest-spirit – or sometimes in plural – the forest-spirits are still remembered and recalled. There is an example even of an Ostyak man who, having occupied a new hunting territory, established a sanctuary there. He brought the unnamed divinity into connection with that particular territory, with the forest, and this divinity was responsible for the luck of fishing and hunting just as it was the case previously for the forest spirits. The creation of this sacred place was an experiment even for the man in question. He chose the place according to his best knowledge, based on his grandfather's stories and developed ritual practice there according to his own insights: as sacrificial items, he mostly brings linen, pieces of cloth and fur to the sanctuary.<sup>32</sup> The driving force of the cult is his wife, who is obviously a Russian, but who believes that everything must be done in the forest as it used to be done long ago by the Ostyaks. The rules of the cult are continuously developing, they are the results of conscious decisions: the host of the territory was for instance hesitating for a long time whether I as an outsider could or could not make a sacrifice at the sacred place. The

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<sup>31</sup> Nagy 2011a

<sup>32</sup> Karjalainen 1922.

experimental character is proved furthermore by the funny way he talks about the 'spirit' whom he calls 'my naughty little ghost'.

The only still known and named local patron spirit is *Päi Imi*, who has been the most important divinity of the Vasyugan area. On the one hand, *she* is the mythic progenitor of a particular village: the stories of the sacred peninsula bearing her name are usually connected with the birth of the village, moreover, in some cases, even with that of the earth; on the other hand, she is the most important divinity since today she has the most diverse functions, people turn to her with various requests. The belief in her is still active, furthermore her complex is definitely expansive, as she is assimilating other mythical creatures in her personality. To this date she is apparently identified with the female mythical creature living in the forest, taking mortal men as husbands who even abandon their families for her. Through her intervention men become successful hunters, every game gets in front of their knees. The older generation of Khanties call this female forest spirit *Won junk*, 'forest spirit', but translate it into Russian as *urmannaja zhen'shina* (урманная женщина), „forest woman”, whereas the younger generation obviously identifies her with *Päi Imi*; the two mythical creatures have become blurred. According to a story, local Russians identify her with *Marusja* (Маруся), the mythical well-intentioned creature living in the forest, too. To sum it up, though the cult of *Päi Imi* has simplified, its name and significance still remained intact, and the divinity has assimilated some particular Ostyak moreover Russian mythical creatures.<sup>33</sup>

We may raise the question why nature spirit cult could remain active while local patron spirits, furthermore domestic spirit cults have practically disappeared. Or why did just *Päi Imi*'s cult stayed so strong? The fact that pravoslavian religion or modern myths could take the role of the Ostyak divinities the least in the forests, might be an important reason. This function is relatively far from Christianity, and as for the Khanties themselves, they did not consider the new god or gods (saints) strong enough for controlling their economy even if their role in Russian religion was exactly this. At the same time local and domestic spirits ensuring good luck were totally replaced by saints while their idols replaced by icons since local believers are free to choose anything for themselves from the shelves of modern „religious supermarkets”. Thus the forest symbolically remained under the authority of Ostyak divinities while their significance in private and village life is nowadays negligible.

Similar changes occur in the realm of folk genres. The ones constituting kinship groups like origin myths or heroic songs or their prosaic versions, have already disappeared. Instead, the only remaining narrative form in Ostyak folklore practice is the hunting story, just as the only identifying force is the forest.

In the short time at my disposal I could not go into every detail of such a vast and complicated topic than the role and symbolic use of the forest. I could only dwell upon one determining aspect of the discourse accepted by both Ostyaks and Russians in particular situations: Ostyaks are part of the forest and Russians are aliens to that; Ostyaks live in and with the forest while Russians live against it, they clear their habitat out of that. In order to put all this into a simple metaphor let us think of a coin. For the „Vasyugan Russians”, human society and the forest are two different coins; for the Ostyaks they are the two sides of the same coin and none of them may be described without the other.

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<sup>33</sup> Nagy 2003.

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**THE OWNER OF THE PLACE AND WATERSPIRITS IN THE TURKISH  
CULTURE**  
**in the Context of Continuities and Changes**

**Abstract**

This work is an exploration of the themes, symbols and extraordinary creatures called as nature spirits of Turkish mythology, folk religion and spiritualism. These themes, symbols and extraordinary creatures were exist in Turkish culture since in the preislamic period of Turkish mythology (Çobanoğlu 2001) which were known as “ıduk-yir sub”, (sacred places and waters) and “the owner of the place spirit” or as named in Turkish dialects such as “eezi, iyesi, issı, sahibi”.(the owner). These nature spirits of Turkish culture are water, forest, and the owner of place spirits. The owner of the place spirits easily can change their appearance and wearings even their age, gender or existence as from stone to human.

წინამდებარე ნაშრომი არის ახსნა იმ თემების, სიმბოლოებისა და არაბუნებრივი არსებების, რომლებსაც ვუწოდებთ ბუნებრივ სულებს თურქულ მითოლოგიაში. ჯერ კიდევ წინარეისლამურ ეპოქაში არსებობდნენ ეს არსებები თურქულ მითოლოგიაში (ჩობანოღლუ 2001), რომლებსაც უწოდებდნენ საკრალურ ადგილებსა და წყლებს ან ამ ადგილების მფლობელებს, თურქული დიალექტის მიხედვით კი უწოდებდნენ „მესაკუთრებს“. ეს ბუნებრივი სულები არიან: წყალი, ტყე ან ადგილის პატრონები. ისინი ადვილად იცვლიდნენ გარეგნობასა და სამოსს, ხანდახან ასაკსაც კი, სქესსა თუ ბუნებასაც.

**Keywords:** *forest, water, owners.*

**Main part:**

For instance, one of the spirit of place and water called “al karisi”. (red woman)”, “al anasi (red mother)” or “albasti (red raided)”. This creature that carries the word “red” in all variations of her name and always related to the “color red” spreads everywhere in the Turkic world, and in the cultures of Armenian, Georgian and other Caucasian folks (Kalafat 2000) that share the Turkic socio- cultural ecology. Even though Albasti usually is depicted as a blond and tall woman, it is believed that it may appear in different forms as well. Among them is the description of a creature that appears like a human-animal mixture, tall, with long fingers, untidy hair, oily body, small hands and feet, long teeth, sometimes a black face, an eye on her brow, that may hang her breasts backwards over her shoulders and that wears a red shirt (Acipayamli 1961). People consider sheep sheds, straw houses, water shores, rocks, fountains and spring water sources as the places where alkarisi hides herself; and approaches such places with the words of besmele (the opening Formula of Holy Kuran) and “destur”<sup>34</sup> (Ornek 1977: 145)

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<sup>34</sup>This word means as a formula of getting permission from the spirit of the place to do something there.

It is believed that she especially disturbs ladies that have newly given birth in her first forty days, and killed them or their children pulling their lungs out –in order to feed herself and her children-. That is why the people usually try to make the new mother drinks liquids in red color, to cover her with a red blanket, to put a red turban or a ribbon on her head, not to leave her alone and make sure to have something iron in her room, in order to protect the mother and her newly born baby. According to the tradition, alkarisi can not enter where there is a male. Besides, it is a very common belief that shooting will protect the mother and her child when it is decided that alkarisi started to torment her.

Other than the mothers in confinement, alkarisi is believed to be disturbing the horses, knotted their faxes and tails, and wore them out riding them all night long.

There are very common memorates and legends that narrate that alkarisi is caught by the owner of the horse or the relatives of the mother by means of putting dark gum or fixing a needle on her, then released after serving for long years in the house where she was caught, or ran away by the help of a child or a woman that doesn't know her, taking the needle out.<sup>35</sup>

Among the other supernatural creatures related with places, believed to exist in the Turkish folk culture are “Agirlik, Karabasan, Congoloz, Erkebit, Hirtik, Kul, Hinkur Munkur, Cadi (Jade, Witch), Carsamba karisi (Wednesday woman), Yol Azdiran (Road Crazy), Kara Ura” and “Demirkiynak”. Even though probably they were totally different creatures in the past, in terms of their roots and functions, they seem to appear as the local variants of the same creature in our days, because of the localization of the traditional frames in one hand and their functions as well, in the other hand.

It is observed that the official religion or the religion by the book has cleaned many facts of the folk religion within the Turkish socio-cultural structure, on the contrary to the common idea, as a result of the novelties in the epistemical changes in the religious societies, in parallel with the illumination provided by as a result of the regular and common education of the new republic. In other words, it can easily be observed that the traditional frame of the folk religion and folk believes that are qualified as “superstition” and harshly attacked by the religious service, as a result of the spreading the orthodox Islam among the large masses of people, commonizing the education and mass communication devices, and the increase in the religious education level along with the republic. On the other hand, it is observed that the newly occurring blanks are filled by the Orthodox Islam. For instance, we are assured that the belief of “genies” and the “haunted” which are confirmed by the Qur'an have replaced the supernatural creatures that used have a great diversity and function in the past. As easily observed in the memorates provided in the related topics, it is observed that even the creature called “al karisi” or “al basmasi” that has no relation with the tradition of genies is commonly being assimilated within the “genie tradition”.

To summarize, there is a centrifugal relation between the believes accepted by the Orthodox Islam, and the folk believes qualified as heterodox as well, and as a result of this relation, the genies tradition enlargens its coverage by means of either assimilating the other supernatural creatures or replacing them day by day.

In this context, “kara basmasi” (Kalafat 2000: 159) or “karabasan” that we see as a private *sui generis* in the other Turkish folks has almost become identical to another creature called “agirlik basmasi” among the Turks of Turkey and, its frame of function and

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<sup>35</sup> Regarding the “Al, Albasti, Al karisi or Albiz” that is an extremely common cult among the muslim, christian, karay and shamanist societies in the Turkish world, see (Acipayamli 1961; Cobanoglu 2001; Gungor 1998; Kalafat 2002).

tradition is narrowed receiving some motives and duties that belong to al basmasi which is the most different identity from the tradition of genies. The same thing may be valid for the creatures such as “Carsamba karisi, Cadi, Yol Azdiran, Kara Ura” and “Demirkıynak”. Moreover, the creature “Yol Azdiran” that looks to have mythological roots have gained totally a new function and a motive in today’s oral tradition and almost turned into an expertized “genies type”.

In fact, as can easily be seen in the sample of “Demirkıynak”, a creature that has mythological features in many aspects has lost the wide range of its traditional frame and became very much localized. Most probably he is going to leave its place to the genie tradition and totally diminish. On the other hand, we can say that the “spirit calling seances” that occurred in the beginning with an anti-function among the crowds that were educated by the knowledge produced by the western epistemological society for the genie tradition, may have secret functions of revitalizing the genie tradition among the civilians with a high education, stepping up with the traditional structure.

It is observed that supernatural creatures of which the traditional frames are extremely narrow anymore such as “Congoloz, Erkebit, Hirtik, Kul, Hinkur Munkur”, are exposed to the genie tradition in a very quick way, and our day’s society slowly assimilates them, or with a better expression, transfers them with general expressions like “five minutes” or “three letters”. Hence, in our day, memorates related with the contacts established with Congoloz, Erkebit, Hirtik, Kul, Hinkur Munkur and other creatures as listed above still keep their existence in our oral tradition.

Legends and memorates about the busting of Alkarısı by the owners of horses or the acquaintances of lochia women by placing black gum on horses or pricking safety pins and freeing them after busting they serve in their homes for years or taking out the pin with the help of a child or a woman who are not aware of the situation when they are on a fountain are very common.

Let me give one example of those memorates. Beings called Alkarısı or Alkızı which was mentioned above, haunt lochia women kill the women by ripping their lungs out or their babies by choking them. “This my grandfather, this hodja grandfather went to fountain of village to ablute for Morning Prayer call because there was no fountain in the house. When he went he came across two houris in form of human. He waited aside to let them finish their work. One of the houris was washing lung. The other one asked the washing one “What is that?” It replied “It’s the lung of a bride of an agha, she gave birth and I ripped her lungs out.” That agha was my grandfather. He approached them with praying and caught them from their ankles. He told “She was my bride” In order to escape houris’ swore “Let us go; we will not haunt the women that gave birth which has a relation close or distant.” (Çobanoğlu 2003).

After that promise my grandfather freed them. After a few steps houris told “If you didn’t let us go for more we would tell you the ease of that namely how to die easily.” And they disappeared. After this event there is no albasti event among our relatives. Also close or distant, people around us who give birth take my grandfathers “prayer cap” or another item and put it under their pillows and save themselves from albasması.” (Çobanoğlu 2003).

As a result, presence of superficial Islamizations such as prayer caps is seen in this memorate. In the places where Kitabi Islam and Orthodox Islam become common, “the owner of the place and water spirits as well as the other supernatural entities resulting from this kind of Turkic mythology and shamanist world view become djinn basing upon the reasons given above. Because “djinn” is placed in Quran. Disbelief in an entity in the Quran makes a person infidel. Due to this reason, supernatural entities approximately in the amount of one hundred such as “sacred water and place’s owners” (iduk yir-sub), “ alkarısı,

sarıbastı, karabastı, hınkur mumkur, demirkıynak, Carsamba karisi, agirlik” lose their Turkish names, qualities they possess and transform into djinn and their traditional Turkish shamanist cultural heritage weakens and loses each day. The loss of these thousands of belief and behavioral codes related with them, means a decrease in our national identity.

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## **FICTIONAL MODEL OF MYTH RECONSTRUCTION IN NODAR DUMBADZE'S SHORT STORY „IMPS“**

### **Abstract**

During 1960s in Georgian Literature starts the active process of remythologisation that is vividly realized in one of the realist writer's, NodarDumbadze's short story "Imps". In Georgian pagan pantheon imps are mentioned as the third category of demons, after "Als" and "Kajs". Researchers consider that they are sort of Gins. In folklore the origin of the imps is related to angels' damnation. Imps are invisible creatures, but in some tales and myths could be found their visual portraits.

In the short story "Imps" the author addresses mythology to develop his fictional text and by aggregating mythological and realistic passages creates interesting characters in order to achieve desired effect of literary artistism.

1960-იანწლებში ქართულ ლიტერატურაში იწყება რემითოლოგიზაციის აქტიური პროცესი, რაც თვალსაჩინოდ აისახა ერთ-ერთი ყველაზე რეალისტი მწერლის \_ნოდარ დუმბაძის მოთხრობაში „ჭინკები.“

ქართულ წარმართულ პანათეონში ჭინკები განეკუთვნებიან მესამე კატეგორიის ავსულებს ალებისა და ქაჯების შემდეგ. მკვლევარები თვლიან, რომ ისინი ჯინების მსგავსი არსებები არიან. ხალხური ცნობიერება ჭინკების წარმოშობას ანგელოზის წყევლას უკავშირებს. ისინი უჩინარი ქმნილებები არიან, თუმცა ზოგიერთ მითსა და ზღაპარში მათი ვიზუალური პორტრეტებიც გვხვდება.

მოთხრობაში „ჭინკები“ ავტორი მიმართავს მითის რეკონსტრუქციის მხატვრულ მოდელს, იგი მითოლოგიური და რეალისტური პასაჟების შერწყმით ქმნის პერსონაჟთა საინტერესო სახეებს, რითაც სასურველ მხატვრულ ეფექტს აღწევს.

**Keywords:** *evil spirits, imps, myth, reconstruction, ManavelaTsintsade, Shalikashvili brothers*

### **Main Part**

Chinkas (Imps) are popular evil spirits in geographical area of West Georgia. People still believe in the existence of imps subconsciously or instinctively. It is likely due to this fact that Nodar Dumbadze, the most outstanding realist writer of the twentieth century, depicts these invisible creatures as archetypal characters in one of his best stories.

According to traditional reference guides: "an imp is a harmful dwarf, creature of the night, "Kaji" (goblin), air guard, "peasants call imps cunning creatures, seducers" (Saba). This evil spirit occupies a significant place in Georgian mythology. Imps are similar to Scandinavian trolls, German gnomes and Latin mormilacs. They are seducers of Empusa's rank. Their number and evil are dangerous. Chinkobistve (Imp Month) –September-October-November was deemed the month when imps attacked people. Akaki Tsereteli mentioned: "Let's keep our fingers crossed. Small imps like human beings start walking on land." On December 7 Michael Gabriel ties and throws them into the water" (Gelovani1983: 555). I

would like to mention that in my native village – Gogoleisubani, Guria there is a cave in the mountains called “Imp Stone” that is considered to be a dwelling for these harmful creatures. People refrain from going there especially in Imp months. I cannot exclude that NodarDumbadze knew this cave due to the fact that he grew up in the adjacent village.

In Georgian pagan pantheon imps are mentioned as the third category of demons, after “Als” and “Kajs”. I. Javakhishvili in his well-known research “Georgian Paganism” indicates similarities and differences between these types of evil spirits: “people in West Georgia, namely, Imereti and Samegrelo, believe that Kajs and imps exist. Kaj’s hair shines at night. They are large and strong creatures. Moreover, their claws and pointed breasts are so sharp that can split a human being into two parts. Imps are smaller, which are clawed and hairy like Kajs. Both of them live in forests” (Javakhishvili, 1973: 136).

According to encyclopedia imps are smaller than Kajs, although imps are “clawed and hairy” like them. Folklore had more unceremonious attitude towards them. Today the term “imp” does not have negative meaning and denotes a mischievous and naughty creature (Abzianidze, Eloshvili 2011:19–20).

In folklore the origin of the imps is related to angels’ damnation. According to the legend, one woman had many children. An angel came to her house. She hid her children behind the bodywork and showed the angels only three of them. The angel said: God grant long life to your three children. Let the hidden children stay hidden in order no one could see them. When the angel left the house, the woman moved the bodywork aside and saw that children turned into imps had disappeared (Kiknadze, 2007: 244; Tsanava, 1994: 313–317).

NodarDumbadze wrote one of his best stories – “Imps” based on legends and folk imagination. He offers original fictional pattern of modernist update of the current model of myth. In this case elements of the myth system are based on new dominants that ensure shifting purposefulness of fiction from “archaic” to “contemporary, modern”. The writer thinks about this process that: modernity of Biblical and mythological topics should be explained not by their attractive subjects, themes and plots but stability of human nature and character since the day a human being was born. Prof. A. Tsanava considers that “N. Dumbadze often uses mythos in his stories, although contemporaneity, especially issues related to humaneness and humanity are always projected in them” (Tsanava, 1986: 178). The above-mentioned story serves to reveal human dignity. Correspondingly, the form and contents of the text openly demonstrate innovative fictional model created through realization of reconstructed myth. Due to this fact architectonics of the story “Imps” has the ability of self-modification that means constructive displacement and not eradication of old methods within the frameworks of new fictional norm. Modernization of mythical elements of the above-mentioned story are in accordance with modern tendencies through some literary devices. N. Dumbadze mentions it at the end of the story: “Grandpa starts the story of imps from the very beginning. He has no idea that I have my own imp sitting on the glass, which is laughing at my grandpa’s stupid talk and telling me the truth. Then, after the midnight my imp goes back to the jar and all of us – imps–grandma–grandpa go to sleep in front of extinguished fireplace”(Dumbadze, 2008: 303). This passage is associated with Ana Kalandadze’s poetic lines:

“Here the sunburnt hand is holding a glass of wine  
And over there an imp is hiding in the empty pitcher.”

Pitcher, jug and wine are magic elements for Georgian men and the imp mentioned alongside them emphasizes their sacred mystery.

The author begins the narration by visual characterization of imps without any introduction. Folk imagination merges with the writer’s fantasy and fictionally stylized portrait of imps are painted.

“There are three types of imps:

One type of imp has pointy ears, goat’s hooves, beard, thumbnail-size horns and thunderstruck and squint eyes. It looks like a goat but in fact it is an imp who speaks with woman’s, man’s, child’s and animal’s voice, let alone bird’s voice.

The second type of imp is witchy and mischievous, which has feet that face backward, hooked nose, one tooth, the only emerald green eye on the forehead and body covered with hair.

The third type of imp has four hands and four legs with six fingers and six toes, two faces and four eyes with no back. The imp had two abdomens, two navels, which can see objects from front and back, run forward and backward. In short it looks like two imps joined at the back” (Dumbadze, 2008: 287).

Such beginning arouses feeling among readers that these harmful creatures called out from mythos will have a significant function in plot development. It is noteworthy that in this case the author uses mythos as a literary device and creates interesting characters through concentration of mythical and realistic passages that helps him to achieve artistic effects.

According to the story relationship between imps and the main character is proscenium of struggle between good and evil, the process replete with dramatic collisions told in narration and dialogue form. Therefore, mythological background of the story also represents fictional model of reconstructed reality shown in narration and dialogue form. Moreover, the author’s phenomena is also noteworthy. He is perceived as ideological and fictional center standing apart from all characters. N. Dumbadze offers us different model of thinking or drawing. We may say that this fictional text embodies unordinary combination or symbiosis, integrity of confrontations that merges and combines real and imaginary, mythical and real, fantastic and vital. Meanwhile, mythical area is grown on the basis of people’s consciousness. It reveals dualistic nature of existence by reconstruction of literary devices and opposes violence and fight depicted in the story against truth, kindness and nobleness.

The story tells us about Shalikashvili brothers, whose hypostases are imps, oppose the main character – ManvelaTsintsadze. The death of brothers homogenous to evil spirits is the most important moment in the story needed for the victory of truth and completion of the story.

An interchange of good and evil is symbolically reflected in the story, although the mechanism that ensures its functioning at the text level is accurately and comprehensively described by the writer. In this case N. Dumbadze completely reconsidered symbolic transformation. The triad of evil spirits – “imp like goat”, “witchy and shaggy”, “double-faced imp” corresponds to triune “society” of felon brothers – PridonShalikashvili, MamiaShalikashvili and KatsiaShalikashvili. One of them (“like goat”) meets ManavelTsintsadze in the Datvi ravine, the second brother (“witchy and shaggy”) in Lashi ravine and the third brother (“double-faced imp”) on the Sataflia Mountain. The important value of this episode is that Manavela tells his grandson this story. He narrates it like a real story in an interesting and dramatic way. It was fatal for Manvela to charm and kidnap beautiful TinatinNakashidze in his youth due to the fact that she was engaged to the Shalikashvilis’ younger brother –Katsia. The brothers took revenge on him. Prof. A. Tsanova mentioned about this episode: “the old man does not want to shake his grandchild’s faith in humanity and says that he was crucified by evil spirits - imps and not the immoral and cruel Shalikashvilis; i.e. grandpa Manavela provides a paradigm of the Shalikashvilis through telling the story of meeting imps in the Datvi ravine, Lashi ravine and on the Sataplia mountain.”(Tsanava, 1994: 313-317).

We think that in all fictional texts and especially in literary work related to mythos there are places containing something untold, symbolic and hidden, which play an essential role in the structure of fictional text. The following episodes that describe fate of ManavelaTsintsadze tortured by the Shalikashvilis in the story – “Imps”: “ManavelaTsintsadze stayed in bed for a

half year. He did not emit a moan or say even one word during this period of time. After six months when villagers saw tormented and dragging Manavela in the narrow street, they called him “immortal Manavela”.

One year later Pridon Shalikashvili was found dead in the Datvi ravine by Tavberidzes who lived on the other side of the ravine. He had neither signs leading up to the shooting nor signs of stabbing. He died from heart attack brought on by fear.

One more year passed and Mamia Shalikashvili was found dead cut from shoulder to navel with one swing of the sword. There was no doubt that “immortal Manavela” was drinking the Shalikashvili’s blood who became forest brigand.

Katsia Shalikashvili who wanted to take blood revenge for his brothers was found dead with bullet hole in his forehead. He was under the very linden-tree where “a double-faced imp gouged out Manavela Tsintsadze’s eye.” (Dumbadze, 2008: 301–302).

As a result of analytical observation of the story, the unnoticeable moments were cited that is useful for the text. Characters of the story: Manavela Tsintsadze, Tinatin Nakashidze, Shalikashvili brothers and imps represent plenipotentiary subjects of the narration. In “Imps” thematic classification is based on character classification: bravery, beauty, spite and evil spirit. Each character acts only according to his/her features. The difference between their perspectives is symbolic. Rene Guenon refers to this issue: “synthetic symbolism enables boundless cognition and the language permanently impedes this process through fixed and closed locked meanings. Symbolism is equally useful for everyone because it helps people in accordance with their intellectual abilities to perceive the truth presented symbolically more or less completely and deeply.” (Guenon, 1992: 83).

Finally, it should be noted that the presented discourse shows us the basis of development of fictional model of myth reconstruction according to N. Dumbadze’s story “Imps” that is fairly considered as one of the progressive and qualitatively new methods in myth reconstruction history in relation to Georgian reality. N. Dumbadze successfully inherited myth reconstruction systems from previous writers and reflected it at highly artistic level in the above-mentioned text.

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## VISUAL NARRATIVES OF THE MIDSUMMER NIGHT IN THE 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY'S SCANDINAVIAN ART

### Abstract

Midsummer is a celebration of “spirit night” for the Norse when fairies, magic, and mischief abound on this bewitched night, and the future can be uncovered for enchantment. Scandinavian artists in the 19<sup>th</sup> century took this festivity as a means of National Romanticism, in order to find their identity. Bergh’s *Nordic Summer Evening* (1899-1900) shows the mystical power of natural phenomena of light and landscape to heighten reality, while Zorn’s *Midsummer Dance* (1897) has a wealthy tradition of the midsummer festival where villagers flocked to dance around the maypoles. The famous Norwegian Munch used this mood for *The Dance of Life* (1899-1900), in which figures symbolize the eternal cycle of life and love. Krøyer’s *Summer Evening on the South Beach at Skagen* (1893) provided a northern equivalent to the misty nocturnes. My paper discusses of visual narratives directly-indirectly on the Midsummer through seven artistic images, to trace the flavour of Scandinavian National Romanticism.

ზაფხულის ღამეები ნორვეგიელი ხალხის ფოლკლორში „სულების ღამის“ დღესასწაულია, როცა ჯადოქრები, მაგიური ძალის მქონენი და ბოროტი სულები იკრიბებიან ამ ღამეს და შესაძლოა განჭვრიტოთ მომავალი. მე-19 საუკუნის სკანდინავიელმა მხატვარმა ეს დღესასწაულები აიღო ეროვნული რომანტიზმის საფუძვლად, რათა მთელი რიგი საკითხების იდენტურობისთვის მოეფინა ნათელი. ბერგის „ნორვეგიელების ზაფხულის საღამო“ (1899-1900) გვიჩვენებს ცეცხლის მისტიკურ ძალას და რეალობას ამკაცრებს თავისი გავლენით. ზორნის „შუაზაფხულის ცეკვები“ (1897) მდიდარი ტრადიციებით სავსე დღესასწაულია, როცა სოფლის მკვიდრნი ცეკვავენ მაისის ხეების ირგვლივ. ეს სცენა გამოიყენა ცნობილმა ნორვეგიელმა მხატვარმა სიცოცხლის სიმბოლოდ (1899-1900). წინამდებარე ნაშრომი განიხილავს შვიდი ნახატის მიხედვით ზაფხულის ცეკვების პირდაპირ და არა პირდაპირ ფიქრებს როგორც სკანდინავიური რომანტიზმის საფუძველს.

**Key words:** *Midsummer, Scandinavian Romanticism, Visual narratives, Edvard Munch*

### Scandinavian Romanticism

Around 1880s, dominated by the conceptual-stylistic framework of Realism, Scandinavian artists were encouraged to learn the techniques of the Parisians as well as to depict the local circumstances of people and landscape in their Northern homelands. In this way, urban internationalism and Realism led to a focus on the characteristic qualities of Scandinavia, enforcing its nationalism which was in progress. The fishing village of Skagen on the very northern tip of Jutland in Denmark would be a haven, because isolated folk life there could characterise the depiction of fishing families and anticipate the later direction of Nordic art as a characteristic of this epoch.

Consequently, Scandinavian artists gave new attention to indigenous traditions after their home coming. For them, Scandinavian landscape art evoked the blue mood of forest and water nocturnes, monumentalizing rugged places to show its history. Moreover, symbolism was found in the Nordic summer night with traditional overtones, as the night was attractive to those who searched for connecting inner psychological forces with nature's scheme, and to those who pursued to argue nationalism in the series of the seasons and its accompanying folk rituals. This magic and ephemeral night of sensuality fused shifting ideas of the self and state, reflecting the complexity of this moment in Scandinavian art.<sup>1</sup>

Fig. 1. *Nordic Summer Evening* (1899-1900), Göteborgs Konstmuseum



**Richard Bergh: *Nordic Summer Evening* (1899-1900)**

To begin with, Richard Bergh (1858-1919) was a well-known Swedish painter, and his artwork deals with landscapes and portraits largely. His *Nordic Summer Evening* (See Fig. 1)

was started in Assisi of Italy in 1899 when the artist made an oil sketch of the singer Karin Pyk. Later that same year, he sketched his friend Prins Eugen on the second-floor veranda of a house on the island of Lidingö in his home country. Bergh incorporated both studies into this canvas of 1900. *Nordic Summer Evening* reveals the spiritual power of natural phenomena, light and landscape in order to intensify actuality.

In fact, during his stay with Prins Eugen in Italy (1897-98), Bergh developed a new appreciation of the unique Swedish landscape, believing that Scandinavia's midsummer night cause to happen primitive emotional responses in its people. To his mind, it was a novel Eden, which is capable of inspiring poetry and art in those who want to search for it. The emotional experience of the Nordic summer evening also contains a sexual vigilance, indicated by the self-conscious attitude of the female and the vague psychological tension in a pervading scene. It is the lack of interaction between man and woman as well as the correlation between figures and landscape. The veranda functions as analogous to that of the windows which open out to the outdoors, while the couple in the foreground meditates the nearer and far space. For Bergh, Nordic world is "here and now", pointing its origins – Swedish and foreign, and nationalism and internationalism through *Nordic Summer Evening*.

Fig. 2. *Midsummer Dance* (1897), Nationalmuseum, Stockholm



**Anders Zorn: *Midsummer Dance* (1897)**

The Swedish painter Anders Zorn (1860-1920) spent his childhood in Mora on his grandparent's farm. In 1896, the summer after Zorn's return to his native province of Dalarna, Prins Eugen attended the local Midsummer festival and suggested Zorn to describe the subject. Zorn's reaction was a rapid oil sketch of horizontal format, but the following year he executed this version, which brought him the Medal of Honour at the 1900 World Exposition in Paris. The subject of *Midsummer Dance* (See Fig. 2) is part of a rich tradition in Scandinavian art and literature of the Midsummer festival. Celebrated on or around June 23, the longest days of the year, people flocked to the villages in rural areas to dance around the maypoles in the bewitching light of the summer night.

Although careful consideration was given to details of costume, foliage, and buildings, Zorn was captivated by native peasant costume and its local variations. Moreover, he was more concerned with conveying the marvellous light and atmosphere of the festivity, instead of recording complexity of embroidery or leaves on the maypole decoration. And the position of the central couple calls the viewer's appreciation in the dance with a different aim, compared to Munch's Midsummer festival as the eternal cycle of life and love.

Historically in the 1890s in Sweden, a concern for the safeguarding of the fading peasant culture appeared in the wake of the rising industrialization and the dislocation of the population to the cities. Zorn's rooted awareness in his native culture prolonged to encouragement, support, and management of the local arts and folk actions. The custom of setting up a maypole had apparently lapsed in this area, and Zorn persuaded the villagers to set up it for the 1896 celebration. The couple in *Midsummer Dance* are said to be the winners of a dance competition sponsored by him.

Fig. 3. *Summer Night's Dream (the Voice)* (1893), Munch-Museet, Oslo



**Edvard Munch: *Summer Night's Dream (the Voice)* (1893)**

In 1893, Edvard Munch (1863-1944) had started the series of *The Frieze of Life*, which was exhibited at 1902 Berlin Secession. Its individual painting is composed of a succession of psychological levels, linking to the mysteries of life, love, and death. *Summer Night's Dream (the Voice)* (See Fig. 3) was the first painting of the series, displayed in December 1893 in Christiania, now Oslo. The painting deals with the puzzling blue twilight of the Åsgårdstrand shore on the Christiania fjord, which Munch considered to be a unifying component in his series. Particularly, the painting's theme triggers associations with the Midsummer night, the Nordic festivity foretelling the homecoming of summer and light, a moment of wild celebration and denial of social norms and behaviour, etc. The wooded beaches of the Norwegian fjords were classical meeting places for lovers on this night, while boats accommodating celebrants filled the water. The poet Franz Servaes described the setting in 1894,

“Here the sexual will rise stiffly for the first time during a pale moonlit night near the sea, the girl roams among the trees, her hands cramped together behind her, her head tossed back and her eyes staring wide and vampire-like. But the world is a mixture of the misty and the glaring, of sexual fantasy and revulsion.”<sup>2</sup>

It is said that the theme is drawn from Munch's own experience, recalling the moment before his first kiss when he stared to his partner's beckoning eyes. The eager pose of the virginal figure is broken by the terrifying force of a sexual desire. She looms vehemently in the foreground, requiring a personal reaction - awakening, expectation, or the reaction of Munch and his contemporaries to her. The geometric regularity of the trees and the glimmering beam of the moon's reflection on the water echo her rigid domination of the canvas. She is integrated into the firm landscape, partaking in the vivacious, erotic mood of the summer night.

Fig. 4. *The Dance of Life* (1899-1900), Nasjonalgalleriet, Oslo



**Edvard Munch: *The Dance of Life* (1899-1900)**

*The Dance of Life* (See Fig. 4) was Munch's last major contribution to his series, summarising its subjects into a monumental metaphor of human life. The painting depicts the temporal progression of woman's sexuality. In composition, at the centre, a red-dressed female freely dances with a young man whom Munch recognised as a priest. To the left, a virginal figure stands on the edge of her sexual arousing, while an exhausted woman wears the black dress of widowhood to the right. The background is a crowd of rotating people: fat men biting women on the neck under a captivating full moon dazzling on the water of the Åsgårdstrand shore. The setting is a series of hope, completion, and misery in the Midsummer night, the blend of Nordic religious and secular celebrations marking the summer solstice. *The Dance of Life* concretises the spirit of this century's end in Europe. An impulse to create panoramic narrative cycles and to reflect a utopian search for universal truths came to realisation. As love and death were central, inter-reliant roles in Munch's pessimistic religion, the painting symbolises the earthly life through the love and its repetition.

Fig. 5. *Summer Night* (1899), Nasjonalgalleriet, Oslo



**Harald Sohlberg: *Summer Night* (1899)**

An immense and still landscape painted from the house balcony on the Nordstrand ridge to the south-eastern Christiania was the peak of Harald Sohlberg's (1869-1935) dream in the 1890s. *Summer Night* (See Fig. 5) describes the power and intensity of the Nordic summer night, hidden worlds and unfolding mysteries. In the painting, the empty party table for two is set within a frame of flowers behind which the opened veranda door reflects the infinite panorama of forest, fjord, island, and hills. The tension between the careful details in the foreground and the broad washes of the huge landscape beyond betrays the principal separation between two dissimilar realms of experience - the intimate and the transcendental.

Although *Summer Night* is devoid of human presence, the table set for two and a woman's abandoned hat and gloves serve to an atmosphere of silence in which the presence of the departed lovers still echoes. The painting resounds with a solemn ritual just done, and is thought to celebrate the evening of Sohlberg's engagement. The details of the hat and gloves deepen the summer night's touchable sense of mystery and its relation with love, courtship, and sexual awakening. Their leaving suggests the culmination off the evening as well as a memorable feeling of transience. The undertone connects this painting with Munch's *Summer Night's Dream (The Voice)* of 1893. However, Sohlberg underlined the decorative potential of his subject differently from Munch.

Fig. 6. *Summer Evening on the South Beach at Skagen* (1893), Skagen Museum



**Peder Severin Krøyer: *Summer Evening on the South Beach at Skagen* (1893)**

*Summer Evening on the South Beach at Skagen* (See Fig. 6) painted by Peder Severin Krøyer (1851-1909) is representative of landscape painting in vogue between the late 1880s and early 1890s. Called “Blue Painting”, this genre is distinguished by its unreal mauve-blue palette and flowing composition for capricious Scandinavia. Primarily, the style was based on the artwork of James Whistler and the French Synthetists, but it was also encouraged by the specific atmosphere here. In the long Nordic midsummer evenings, the twilight forms are known as the blue hour, roughly at 10 p.m. when the low sun dissolves the surroundings into a blue mist.

Krøyer painted many scenes in this way, because they satisfied both his need to be a part of the cosmopolitan mainstream and his preference for outdoor painting in Skagen. He painted his first variations of a woman to the strand in 1891 and continued to rework the composition up to his death in 1909. The models are his wife Marie Krøyer, and the painter Anna Ancher. Krøyer photographed their pose on the beach and later copied it in the studio. Here, the women dominate the scene, their summer white dresses draped with Art Nouveau elegance.

**Conclusion: Midsummer**

The celebration of Midsummer is a worldwide custom, and at a certain point in its history, each culture held this time of year to be delighted. According to the Celts, the Norse, and the Slavs, there were three “spirit nights” in the year when magic abounded, and the other world was closer. On Midsummer Eve, fairies are most vigorous, and the future can be exposed. As the solstice sun rises on its day of utmost power, it pulls up almost everything in nature, even supernatural energies. It is no wonder why William Shakespeare had do capture all the magic in his *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (c.1590-96), where fairies, magic, and mischief thrive on a bewitched night in the forest.<sup>3</sup>

There are a number of customs associated with Midsummer, such as bonfires to defeat over darkness, or circle dances to worship the sun god. Originally Midsummer was a tribute to the pagan sun god until it was replaced with the feast of St. John the Baptist during Christianisation in Scandinavia in the tenth century. At any rate, in Norway, the fiddler sits near the warm fire and plays for the six couples in folkdance. Its objective is

man to impress the woman, and flirting is essential in the couple's in-out of arms each other. Moreover, the energy of the sun infuses the whole of nature, thus it is a time for gathering plants, seeking healing, or practicing divination. For maidens, their collected special herbs and plants allow them to see their future mates; for farmers, it is a favourable date to observe for an abundant harvest and fertility. In a word, the Midsummer celebration is directed towards the present and the future.

A question arises: What does this relate to my paper topic?

My first answer is the value of the Midsummer feast as a tangible-intangible heritage, because it attracted Scandinavians to gather in unison with the same wishes. The second: the pagan-Christian Midsummer distinguished Scandinavia from other nations. The last is the most crucial. The tradition of Midsummer contributed to shape Scandinavian national identity, encouraging artists to search for their ambivalent emotions at the crossroad of nationalism-internationalism in the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Regardless a Midsummer day or night, a day before or after it, or the entire sunny summer, it seems to me that Midsummer as a whole has been a universal mediator between the tradition and the future. Particularly, at that time, it was a group of artists - Bergh, Zorn, Munch, Sohlberg, and Krøyer who completed this secret mission through their artwork.

#### **Endnote**

1. Varnedoe (1982)
2. Heller (1973:46)
3. Franklin (2002)

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## **TRANSFORMATION OF COSMOGONIC NARRATIVE IN SVANETIAN MYTH-RITUAL SYSTEM**

### **Abstract**

The Biblical episode of Genesis in Georgian folklore is chiefly based on the Biblical text, although we come across a different version in a Svanetian narrative according to which the Father-God is cosmogonically weak and creates the universe together with archangels Michael and Gabriel based on the directions of Satan – **Samal/Samoel**. Due to this, Father-God is obliged to fulfill every wish of the Satan, make friends with him and yield human souls to the latter. The only power opposing and defeating Samal is Jesus Christ who travels to Hell in order to free human souls. This text is not found in other regions of Georgia. However, the importance of this myth in Svanetian culture can be proved by the ritual described in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In general, there is no name for Satan in Georgian folklore, and it is chiefly referred to as devil Eshmaki” (comp. Iranian Aêschmô-daêva). The demiurge in the Svanetian myth – Samal – bears the same function as Samael mentioned in Coptic texts. Interestingly enough, this name is not found in Georgian apocrypha and can be observed only in the work of 12<sup>th</sup> century Georgian Patriarch – Nikoloz Gulaberisdze – “Svetitskhoveli Readings”. In this work the Patriarch expresses gratitude to the Enlightener of Georgians – St. Nino - for saving the Georgian nation from the slavery of **Samoel**.

Comparative analysis of the Svanetian text and Coptic gnostic apocrypha, as well as Talmud and Kabbalistic texts, has revealed that the function of Svanetian Samal and Coptic **Samael** is identical, although the Svanetian narrative is original and is not analogous to any of the analyzed Coptic texts. The name of Satan retained in the Svanetian myths – Samal – may be a result of the Coptic influence. This opinion is confirmed by the fact that Svanetian iconography is analogous to the Coptic one, whereas the Svanetian and Coptic holy crosses are absolutely identical.

Based on the parallel Slavic and Eastern European folkloric materials, the given paper aims to explain the process, causes and purposes of folklorization of the apocryphal knowledge.

ქართული კოსმოგონიური მითოსი ძირითადად ბიბლიური შესაქმის მოტივებს ემყარება, ცხადია, გარკვეული ხალხური ინოვაციებითა და ინტერპრეტირებით, თუმცა განსხვავებულ, დუალისტურ ვერსიას ვხვდებით ერთ სვანურ მითში, რომლის თანახმად, სამყაროს შექმნაში ბიბლიური მამა ღმერთი კოსმოგონიურად უძლურია და ის სამყაროს მიქელ და გაბრიელ მთავარანგელოზებთან ერთად სატანის – სამალის მითითებების თანახმად ქმნის. მამა ღმერთი იძულებულია, სატანის ყველა სურვილი აასრულოს, დაწყებული ეშმაკთან დამოზილებიდან, დამთავრებული მისთვის ადამიანთა სულების გადაცემით. ერთდერთი, ვინც სამალს უპირისპირდება და ამარცხებს, ქრისტე ღმერთია, რომელიც საგანგებოდ მიდის ჯოჯოხეთში ადამიანთა სულების გამოსახსნელად. სვანურ ყოფაში ამ მითის ცხოველმყოფობას მე–19

საუკუნეში აღწერილი საადდგომო რიტუალიც ადასტურებს: რიტუალი ასახავს დაპირისპირებას ორ ანტაგონისტურ ძალას შორის, რომლის თანახმად სამაელის როლის შემსრულებელს ამარცხებს ქრისტეს განმასახიერებელი (როგორც წესი, სვანეთში ეს ფუნქცია პაპს ეკისრებოდა) და გამოდევნის ეკლესიიდან.

საკმაოდ ვრცელი ნარატივი კოსმოგონიური თხრობით არ შემოიფარგლება და ესქატოლოგიური თხრობით გრძელდება, რითაც, ფაქტობრივად, ერთ მთლიანობაში მოჰყავს ძველი და ახალი აღთქმა. სამაელი, როგორც კოსმოგონიის აქტიური მონაწილე, მხოლოდ სვანურ მითოსში გვხვდება, მაგრამ სხვადასხვა კუთხის ფოლკლორში, ძირითადად, პასიურადაა წარმოდგენილი, ისიც მხოლოდ ესქატოლოგიურ ტექსტებში (მაგ.: ლექსი „ჯოჯოხეთში ვინ არის“, რომელიც მრავალი ვარიანტით გვხვდება, ჯოჯოხეთის სურათების წარმოდგენით, ქრისტეს მიერ ჯოჯოხეთიდან მართალთა ხსნას და ცოდვილთა დასჯას გვაუწყებს). ამასთან, სამაელი ყოველთვის მოიხსენიება სატანის გვერდით და არა დამოუკიდებლად(!); მითოლოგიური წარმოდგენის თანახმად, სამაელი ჯოჯოხეთის მფლობელია, რომელსაც ქრისტე ანგრევს, რაც ასევე გამოსახულია სვანური ადდგომის იკონოგრაფიაში: მე-14 საუკუნის ლაშთხვერის თარინგზელის (მთავარანგელოზის) ეკლესიის ჯოჯოხეთის წარმოტყვევნის ფრესკაზე გამოხატულ ეშმაკს ასომთავრულით აწერია „სამაელ“.

როგორც ჩანს, ქართულ ტრადიციაში იცნობდნენ იუდაისტური და კოპტური აპოკრიფების ერთ-ერთ ყველაზე უფრო პირქუმ დემონს და მის სახელწოდებას, მაგრამ სვანურ ფოლკლორში მან გარკვეული სახეცვლილება განიცადა: სამაელმა შეინარჩუნა მამა ღმერთთან დაპირისპირებული სახის ფუნქცია, აგრეთვე თხის ზოომორფული სახე, მაგრამ ჩაერთო კოსმოგონიურ მითოსში და, ფაქტობრივად, დუალისტური კოსმოგონიის პრეცედენტი შექმნა ქართულ სივრცეში, კერძოდ კი, სვანურ მითო-რიტუალურ სისტემაში.

**Keywords:** *Cosmogony, Genesis, transformation of the biblical Episode, Georgian Folklore, Svanetian Folklore, Samael.*

### **Transformation of Cosmogonic Narrative in Svanetian Myth-Ritual System**

Up until the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, a special ritual had been performed in Svaneti to mark Easter holiday. Two men were selected to represent Christ and Samael and the fight between them as between two confronting powers. Samael (one of the main evil forces) used to enter the church before everyone else and closed the door from inside. Congregation, headed by Jesus Christ pushed to door, opened it forcedly, beat Samael in the head and kicked him out from the church (Nizharadze 1962: 144-145). The ritual depicts confrontation between two opposing forces, in result of which the man representing Samael (Devil) is defeated by the man representing Christ (usually in Svaneti this function was assigned to the Pope - the elder leader of the community) who kicks Samael from the church. This Easter ritual is accompanied with the respective narrative in Svanetian folklore and it is associated with cosmogony:

**Narrative.** The land is covered with water. God lives in the rock of the universe. God falls down into the water; feels cold, and two tears are falling down from his eyes,

turning into archangels Michael and Gabriel. All the three of them are blowing on the water to remove it from the land. Finally a trace of land is seen; accompanied with the archangels, God follows the trace and finds the blue stone, which falls apart and Samael jumps out. Samael tries to strangle God and is about to win in the fight but at the last moment he offers God to become his sworn brother. God has nothing else to do but agree, thus making deal with Devil. Together with the archangels, God tries to free the land from water. After several failed attempts, he turns to Samael for help. In result, God is following Samael's advice: archangels Gabriel and Michael blow the trumpet (for empowering the universe – E.I.); finally God will shout aloud and land will be separated from water. Afterwards, God is creating universe in seven days: he creates Adam and Eve from the ground. Samael turns into the goat and tempts Eve. This is followed by the fall from grace; Adam and Eve are punished by God and expelled from the Garden, etc. Samael who is God's sworn brother, asks for the share and manages to get 'Sapitsari' (human souls) from God; he swallows the souls and descends to Hell.

Long after that Christ is born; accompanied with every living soul on Earth, he goes down to Hell to see Samael and makes him spit 'Sapitsari' up from his mouth. Samael covers Hell with dark, were Christ wanders around for two months, and finally finds his way out together with souls of Christians.

Georgian myths and rituals hardly ever know the case when a myth is preserved in complete form (composed of a mythological representation, a narrative and their accompanying ritual). Presence of all of these three components makes the above-mentioned myth especially popular, while the information derived from the complex of those elements serves as a ground for fewer suggestions and more arguments in folklore studies.

According to Besarion Nizharadze, the above-mentioned ritual had been performed in Svaneti „up to recent times until the Popes lost their significance and influence in the society and the government forbade this service“ (Nizharadze: 144). Assumingly, from the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century the ritual has not been performed anymore; accordingly, the annual re-cyclization of God's challenging by Devil could not take place. Hence, despite the fact that a chronological range of folklore records covers the period from 1890 to 1977, the main collection of the records is made of those dated 19<sup>th</sup> century. The texts dated 20<sup>th</sup> century (there are just a few of them) almost completely copy old texts, so they do not offer anything new in this sense.

The above-mentioned narrative comprises number of important issues. We will study only some of them:

**Agreement concluded between God and Devil.** In Svanetian narrative, the cosmogonic helplessness of God creates logical grounds of his engagement into the Devil's cosmogony<sup>36</sup>; and this compromise provokes in Devil the feeling of ownership of the universe, since God is compelled to make a deal with Satan and, in many cases, even turns to his sworn brother. In this sense, the Svanetian myth carries the signs of dualistic cosmology. The Devil's wish - **make a sworn brother with God** - has its own explanation and basis in Svanetian beliefs and is substantiated by resembling, similar origin of God and Devil: In Svanetian legend God lives in the rock and Samael also appears by turning over the stone. Apart from that, in one of the versions Devil says to God: „You and me – we

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<sup>36</sup> In Central Asian and Eastern European myths a legend describing God unable to create anything without the help of Devil is quite frequent. This legend can be found in Siberian folklore as well: God turns for help to Devil once realizes that is unable to create the universe alone (Eliade).

both were in the middle of the rock. We both have the same origin. Like you, I was in the heart of the stone, that's why you've made a deal with me" (Margiani 1890: 249). It should be noted that this resemblance does not mean the sworn brotherhood, since according to Svanetian beliefs, Devil and God do not only have a shared origin, but were created at the same time. This makes them equal and points to the dualistic concept of creating the universe.

According to more widespread versions of the legend, Devil do not ask God to be his sworn brother but directly requests to divide up the universe between the two of them. This is clearly articulated at the very beginning: „Samael told Him: Give me either the life on earth or eternal life. God gave Him eternal life“ (Nizharadze: 142). Devil's claim for the part of the universe is motivated by the fact that at the beginning of its creation he also was there along with God.<sup>37</sup>

**Agreement 'Sapitsari'**. Collaboration of God and Devil in Svanetian myth is confirmed by making an agreement between them. In number of versions Devil is asking God to give him 'Sapitsari', meaning that after a man dies, his soul becomes possession of Devil.<sup>38</sup> True, 'Sapitsari' isn't presented in the records in any material form but as it's said Devil swallows it and descends to Hell. (Nizharadze: 140).

A transformed version of swallowing 'Sapitsari' can be found in the next version of the Svanetian myth, which is mentioned by Besarion Nizharadze: When Samael threatens God with strangling, in order to save himself God is forced to give Samael eternal life. (Nizharadze 1962: 142-143). As agreed with angels, eternal life will be back to God when he will have a child: „If Lord let have a child, he may have eternal life back, said Samael“ (Nizharadze 1962: 143). This version of Svanetian myth says nothing about the fall of grace of Adam and Eve and biblical story of losing Heaven. Narrative is directly followed by Holy Virgin's giving birth to Christ and crucifixion: „After he died, Christ went to Samael and saved all souls from Hell“ (Nizharadze 1962: 143).

'Sapitsari', which is a metaphoric image of the deal concluded between God and Evil represents at the same time the main pillar of the composition of the folk text, which unites both parts of the text and in fact, represents Old and New Testaments as one whole.

**Text Composition**. There are four characters in the text depicting the Svanetian dualistic cosmogony (God being helpless in his cosmogony, archangels Michael and Gabriel, Samael equipped with knowledge / power of creating a universe and son of God who descends to Hell to defeat the Devil and succeeds in his endeavor<sup>39</sup>), and only two subject heroes – God and Satan. The story of descending into Hell, which in Svanetian folklore is linked with the name of Jesus Christ, has a book origin: the apocryphal text „Traveling of Holy Mother“, i.e. „Seeing Human Sufferings by Holy Mother“ preserved in 13<sup>th</sup> century manuscript and representing an apocryphal-eschatological monument of the New Testament, portrays Holy Virgin's entering Hell and gives a descriptive picture of

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<sup>37</sup> According to Bulgarian legends, Devil who was created by God from his own shadow, asks the latter to divide the universe once he appears. Heaven goes to God, while the Earth goes to Devil. All living things belong to God; all dead belong to Devil. (Eliade: 383).

<sup>38</sup> As explains the narrator: „This („Sapitsari“) was a very special thing: anything a man sacrificed to God or sanctified on the name of deceased would go to the owner of Sapitsari. God gave Sapitsari to Samael. (Nizharadze: 140).

<sup>39</sup> Samael depicts an evil demiurgic force. In gnostic teachings, Samael confronts God from the Old Testament but is helpless when faced by Christ who is the son of the 'Supreme God' and not that of the God from the Old Testament.

suffering of sinful souls. At the end of the text Jesus Christ turns to those who suffer in Hell and in fact unites both Old and New Testaments by his address: „I created Heaven by my hands and man on my own image; I set man as the owner of Heaven and gave him eternity. But he rejected my teaching and became mortal. I took flesh from my holy mother, came to earth as a man and was crucified; I went to the grave to free you from the initial curse. **I went down to Hell**, beat my enemy and saved those who believed in me“ (Kubaneishvili 1946: 19).

We will highlight the following two issues from this manuscript: 1. Jesus Christ is talking in the name of God who created man on his own image; 2. Jesus Christ descends to Hell to free sinful souls. In the myth Jesus Christ and God are two correlates of one subject, where the Christ does not repeat the „weakness“ and „helplessness“ of the Father, but to the contrary, comes to help him overcome his weakness (in this sense, he stands close to the image of Jesus Christ as described in the gnostic philosophy). The function of the Devil, according to the folk narrative, is clear: In order to reveal the true image of God, his challenging force is needed to be present. It seems that the human consciousness, familiar with different public or social confrontations and knowing the main axis of societal existence to be the concept of confrontation, rejected the biblical monotheist cosmogony. According to the human world vision, confrontation is a necessary component for creating unity and therefore it creates the principles of dualistic cosmogony. The Svanetian folklore represents the confrontation between God and Satan along with all its dialectics and development, which can be represented by the following formula:

$$\text{fxa} : \text{fyb} \longrightarrow \longrightarrow \text{fyA} \quad \bigcirc$$

Here fxa represents the „cosmogonically helpless“ God, while fyb represents Samael equipped with the knowledge of creating the world. Their confrontation / fight (marked with division sign) continues in Hell (marked with circle), where Christ will intentionally go to visit Devil (b), and returned from there as fyA, meaning that he is enriched with the initial knowledge of creating the universe (y), not in his former image (a), but in his real, complete form (A). The confrontation described in the myth (God / Christ and Devil) serves to create a unity. The folk text, I believe, depicts the superiority of Christ not only over Samael-Satan but over his Father from the Old Testament, and thus vaguely but nevertheless repeats the main provision of gnostic religion, according to which God, as creator of the universe (i.e. God from the Old Testament) is but one simple archon, as it is Samael – the dark force, challenging him; while Jesus Christ, as the son of the invisible supreme Father, stands higher than the biblical creator of the universe.

**Transformation of Samael in Svanetian Folklore.** Samael - a popular demon in Judaist mythology and gnostic literature is a proper name of Satan, angel who became proud and challenged God. It can be suggested that Georgian tradition was familiar with one of the dreariest demons and with his name known from Judaist and Coptic apocryphs. However, in Svanetian tradition it had been modified in certain way: Samael preserved the image of the subject who confronted God as well as he kept a zoomorphic image of the goat; however, having been engaged into the cosmogonic myth, Samael in fact created the precedent of dualistic cosmogony in Svanetian myth-ritual system. In general, the Georgian folklore preserves the book and folk image of Samael, although as expected, it has been transformed in a certain way and so is his name (Samael / Samal / Samoel), while his function persists and represents Evil, a personified image of Satan in Georgian written

manuscripts (12<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> centuries) and in Georgian folklore in general.<sup>40</sup> As usual, it is rarely connected with the narrative (Svanetian cosmogonic myth, which repeats the initial function of Samael and resonates with some widely known motives is an exception since it does not have an analogue in Judaist and gnostic texts and narratives that we studied); and basically is found in folk texts of eschatological character in passive form; and only together with Satan, and never on its own. In traditional perceptions, Samael is a king of Hell, which Christ destroys - and this fact is depicted in Svanetian Easter iconography; namely, the Harrowing of Hell Icon found in Svanetian Lashtkhverdi community Taringzeli (archangel) Church (14<sup>th</sup> century) is captioned 'Samael' in old Georgian (Asomtavruli) alphabet (Kenia 2010: 239).

In Georgian folklore (and not only in this Svanetian myth) Samael is seen in both the genesis and the folklore version of Easter. In people's perceptions Samael's place is more enlightened (Cf. 'Lucifer' means 'angel of light') than that of the Christ, therefore men are reaching out to Samael's place more willingly: „Samael's place is brightly lit, it's much lighter than the place of Christ, so the human souls are willing to find themselves with Samael, they prefer to be with him.“ (Nizharadze: 144). The presence of Samael, his function (to create a confrontation) is necessary for the folk narrative in order for Jesus Christ to fulfill his function as the Messiah. By merging the two central episodes of the Old and New Testaments – cosmogony and Easter, thus creating a precedent of dualistic cosmogony, the Svanetian folk text in fact defines the nature of Georgian folk Christianity.

There is a perception that under the name Samael some pagan idol of Svans is hidden (Shamanadze: 144). Although the confrontation between Samael and Jesus Christ may depict the process of changing the pagan culture with Christian religion. The fact that God did not even know where the Devil had been originated from, was consolidating the human belief that evil exists in the universe independently from God and the latter is not accountable for the former.

However, the Svanetian myth reveals not only the superiority of Satan's creative power over God (which runs counter to Christian doctrine) but is considered to be a ruling force (Cf. Bogomil beliefs: Existence of evil on earth is caused by the fact the universe is created by Satan). Moreover, despite at the first look the Svanetian legend is based on biblical genesis (God, archangels), in reality it spreads a diametrically opposite knowledge, the exact analogue of which is hardly found in the gnostic and Judaist literature, however it pertains the function of „dark angel“ – Samael. Therefore it is questionable to attribute the function of Samael only to folklore. It is clear that the necessary element of Devil's existence in the process of creating the world preserved in Christianized religious folklore is associated with heretic folklore, which despite its book (elite) origin, was deeply rooted in the local community and had been passed on from generations to generations.

These myths responded to an unspoken wish of ordinary people to discover the mystery of incompleteness of evil and divine powers existing in the world (Eliade 1998: 382). For shepherds and peasants representing the principal audience of these religious narratives, these myths did not carry any philosophical and theological value at all; however, to argue that they served the only purpose to entertain the audience would not be correct since an educational element is always a leading one in religious folklore. The listener to the myth is fully involved in the narrated story; it's difficult to say how consciously aware, but he remembers and passes on the knowledge further.

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<sup>40</sup> See our article on transformation of Samael's image in folklore: *Transformation of Samael's Functions in Oral Folk Literature and Writings*, annual magazine Tselidtsseuli, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, Kutaisi, 2014.

The reason why in these myths God and Satan end up to be sworn brothers is not as important as the fact that such beliefs find the place in Svanetian mythology, meaning that this discourse was resonating with the considerable demand from the audience up until the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Hence, the fact that tracing old Svanetian beliefs takes us to the heretic folklore (i.e. they have their own, book origin) but the fact that they were easily spread and were rather popular in ordinary people (these myths and corresponding rituals persisted through more than one century despite church had been fiercely fighting with heretic sects and teachings). These beliefs, along with other mythological perceptions lost their pagan essence, and having absorbed Christian religious motives, became a part of Christian folklore. It's even more important that people let the idea of God and Satan being sworn brothers to exist; the same way as they let the Satan be the God's chief adviser. For this purpose (or reason) Satan was believed to have a divine origin (they both come out of rock, they are brothers, etc.) and was domesticated“ and brought closer to humans' lives. These perceptions are both pagan and Christian; they are both archaic and new, since they contain both aspects.

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## FOLKTALES GATHERING AROUND THE FIRE AND FIREPLACE CULT IN TURKISH CULTURE

### Abstract

Fire that is deemed sacred is believed to have a soul in Turkish beliefs. As the fire is accepted as a cleaning and protective material from evils and illnesses, it is known that it is presented religious offerings and throw things upon it. In the shaman prayers' descriptions of Altai Turks and Mongols, soul of the fire is depicted as a female soul with thirty feet.

Fire cult in the Turkish culture is always evaluated together with the fireplace cult. Also fireplace cult is always thought together with the ancestors' cult.

თურქული წარმოდგენების მიხედვით ცეცხლი მიჩნეულია სიწმინდედ და მას აქვს სული. იმდენად, რამდენადაც ცეცხლი მიჩნეულია გამწმენდ და ავისგან დამცველად, ის რელიგიური მნიშვნელობისაა. შამანის ლოცვებში, ალტაის თურქებსა და მონღოლებში, ცეცხლის სული წარმოდგენილია მდედრობითი სქესის არსებად, რომელსაც 30 ფეხი.

ცეცხლის კულტი თურქულ კულტურაში ყოველთვის დაკავშირებულია კერიის ცეცხლის კულტთან, ხოლო ბუხრის, კერიის ცეცხლი ყოველთვის იყო დაკავშირებული წინაპრების სულთან.

**Keywords:** *Fire, Fire Place, Cult, Shamanism, Turkish Mythology, Tradition.*

From past to present, beliefs and practices related with them and products have been important factors affecting the nations' lifestyles and conceptions of world and steering nations. "Cult" term including a lot of belief patterns is used in the sense of respecting and worshipping things believed to have natural and supernatural powers. Belief patterns related with the cult mean avoiding, protecting against godlike powers believed to be well or evil; approaching to them and all of the beliefs or actions like mass/rituals and signs and thoughts of the group that is in contact with them to get help. Items and issues like water, fire, mountain, soil, sky, tree and ancestors have become cults in the universal level. In Turkish mythology like all the other mythologytraditions, there are lots of cults most of which are established on the basis of animism depending on living and nonliving items, abstract ideas and entities (Çobanoğlu 2013: 61-62). Historical resources and available ethnographic equipment have showed that shamanist world conception surrounded by totemic beliefs, ancestor cults, animal cults, natural cults has been prominent in Turkish lifestyle since ancient times.

As it is known, air water soil and fire are four indispensable elements of life. Turkish belief system is perceived as the coexistence of the God/ Turkish God/Sky God in the center; evil underground souls created by Him and additionally protective and assisting souls named as ground-water souls consisting of these four elements around Him. One of the most important ground-soul gods deemed very sacred among Turks is related with fire and

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fireplace cult. For Turks, fire is invented by an ancestor of Turks named “Turk” or it is sent by the God (Ögel 2002:496).

The main functions of fire-fireplace cult which has different variants in the Turkish mythological system are protecting people against diseases and trouble and ensuring animals’ proliferation and abundance in the house. Fire is conceived in the form of woman in early periods of mythological consciousness; however, it converted into man form in the following period. Turks respect the existence of soul of fire that is very strong and effective in addition to fire owner/keeper in every house/tent.

According to an Altay myth, after first man landing on the earth, pointing herbs and fruits the God says him “Try them, eat whichever you like!” First man named Targın Neme tries herbs and fruits; he understands that all of them are nutritive foods. He spends his first summer eating herbs and fruits; he is healthy and strong. When winter comes after summer, Targın Neme suffers much and hardly endures until summer. Then he learns to prepare food supplies for winter. But in the winter some animals bother him infesting the food supplies he has gathered. Targın Neme dismisses them by stick. Animals inform God against him. The God announces his judgment: “Animals will eat herbs and human will eat their meat and make their leathers cloth”.

First men have not needed fire as they eat fruits and herbs. After the God orders them to eat meat, the need for fire arises. Ülgen God brings two stones one white one black from sky. He crushes dried plants; puts them on a stone and hits on it with the other stone then it catches fire. Hence, Ülgen God teaches them how to make a fire for the first time and says them “This fire is the fire fell to the stone from the power of my ancestor”. So, only fire made by flint is deemed to be sacred by Altay and Yakut Turks (İnan 2000: 66; Çoruhlu 2000: 67).

The origin of the fire is described as follows in another myth from Mersin-Taşeli Plateau in the South Anatolia: Allah orders angels to bring fire from hell to the earth after creating Adam. Angels asks Hell for fire. Hell doesn’t give fire to angels saying that his fire will ruin the earth. Allah sends angles again ordering them to bring fire as much as a palm. Hell declines angels again saying that even that much fire will ruin the earth. When Allah sends angels for the third time, he orders them to bring a bit of fire. Angels bring a bit of fire to the earth from the hell. They put this fire which is brought from hell on a mountain. The mountain melts and sparkles. Fire proliferates from these sparkles. According to the variant of this story told nearby Ayvalık, Balıkesir in the West Anatolia, a bit of fire taken from hell is placed on the mountain after washed seventy times at the bottom of seas. Even hell fire washed seventy times melts the mountain down and it is the origin of fire we use today (Çobanoğlu 2013: 61-62).

Fire is sacred in the life of Turks. Turks melting the iron mountain and reaching to the earth by making a fire in order to step out of Ergenekon (Ögel 1989: 59-77) have kept this memory alive until now. In ancient times, Turks performing a religious ceremony by gathering around the fire, forge a piece of iron on the anvil after heating it inside the fire of fireplace. With these practices, Turks offers their gratitude to fire leading them to come again to the earth (Kalafat 1990: 50-51). Altay, Shor, Teleut and Saha Turks offered foods and beverage to the soul of fire until recently. Not to hurt the soul of fire considered to be alive, they have been careful not to put wounding tools such as knife and needle. Teleut Turks are called the soul of fire “Mother Fire”. Consecration part of a Shaman drum is as follows:

Thanks, thanks, thanks  
Thanks to white sky, to fire  
Lord of the Sky’s pure beneficence  
My snow white horse with six humps  
My tabby tiger with six eyes

Mother Fire having thirty heads  
 Virgin mother having forty heads  
 Making raw things meal  
 Defrosting iced things  
 Delighting with green flame  
 Wearing green rustling robe  
 Delighting with red flame  
 Wearing red rustling robe  
 Coming from seven hills  
 Dancing the seven dances  
 Having seven attractive plays  
 Coming from nine hills  
 Having nine attractive plays  
 The mother of triple flames, you  
 Your horn with braids and pearl pendant  
 Holding the stone fireplace  
 With pillow of ashes  
 Swinging beside the flame  
 With curved cane ears  
 Mother fire having thirty heads  
 With cut cane ears  
 Virgin Mother having forty heads  
 Oymok purer than anything  
 Oymok knowing more than anything  
 Kayrakan  
 Our eyes don't see the evil  
 Our hearts don't consider the evil  
 Come holding the white fire!  
 Come spraying the blue flame!  
 Be our father, return!  
 Be our mother, return!  
 Shaman Drums make sound... (Hoppál 2012: 120)

Fire has extremely important place and role in Turkish culture due to its unique feature of purifying and dismissing evil souls. In 568 AD, Zemarkos sent to Gokturk State as the envoy of Byzantine State was purified from evil souls he brought and they dismissed back luck he carried by making him jump over the fire and passing through a ring of fire before coming into Kagan's presence. Within this context, fire is considered as a superior soul helping people; they pray for it and sacrificing for it. Today, the practice of getting purified by fire still exists in Anatolia in the form of getting some ill people pass between two fires and weak children turn around the fire and jumping over the fire in Nevruz/New Year ceremonies (Çobanoğlu 2013: 61-62; Roux 1994: 185).

Fire cult is always considered together with fireplace. Fireplace cult is related with ancestors' cult as well. Fireplace represents the family and ancestors. Initially, every family was believed to have a fireplace. As we see in the Gokturk creation myth, "Family fire was found for the family by the ancestor of the family. Likewise Ulgen God sent fire for fireplace that is trivet/tripod". Hence, the family fireplace was attached great importance. This belief still exists in Anatolia. Phrases such as "fireplace of the ancestor" and "fireplace of the father" are traces of these ancient beliefs reaching today.

“Continuity of fireplace” is also important. “Dead fireplace” means the end of the family.

“One son or dead fireplace” proverb in Anatolia means “If you don’t have a son, then your fireplace is dead.”

“Fireless, Fireplaceless” phrase means both being poor and having no home and family (Ögel 2002:502).

In ancient Turks, when siblings got married and left the house, the youngest son got the family fire. Titles like “Price of the fireplace” were used for young sons. In reigning families, when younger sons can’t become ruler after their father, they take on the duty of protecting the sacred fire and become the younger son of the God. That is why Yakut Turks consider the soul of fire as the younger son of the God. The main reason why younger sons or brothers of rulers are described as smart, wise and brave in tales is the fact that they are associated with soul of fire in mythology and “prince of the fireplace” in cultural thinking (Ögel 2002: 504; Bayat 2007: 123 Roux).

A shaman prayer that shows the sacristy of fire-fireplace soul described as the part of moon and sun is as follows:

“Stone fireplace with three corners, my red fire with flames!

May our stone fireplace not move away, burn forever!

May our fire flame.

May ashes of our fireplace cooking “tarhana” soup be plenty!

May our generation not end; continue; may one come if one passes away!

Oh fire! Share of Abukan Mountain, part of moon and sun!

May we be in abundance, may we have plenty grants.” (Inan 2000: 70)

Tacks of this belief are encountered among Muslim Turks. Bashkirs and Kazakhs fire an oiled piece of rag and carry it around the sick people saying “alas alas”. They call it “alaslama” (alas-ing). This word is preserved in Anatolian Turkish as “alazlama”. It means cleaning by fire (Inan 2000: 68). Making prophecies looking at fire is an pretty old practice among Turks. The knowledge that we have, shows that on an identified day of Turkish ruler a big fire is made for him and prayers are made and offered sacrifices to this fire. Huge flames rise over this fire. If flames are green like it means plentiful rain and good harvest; if it is yellow, it means illness and epidemic, but if it is black, it means death of ruler of epidemic (Inan 2000: 67).

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**Lecture**

**GEORGIAN RELIGION**

God acted in every nation: Georgians, Indians, Iranians, Sumerians, Egyptians, Jews, Greeks, etc. Christ has acted in Georgian people since ancient times. The Georgians had their own Bible called Ephuti. But the book is considered lost. The Georgian genial poet Galaktion Tabidze once wrote about this book:

“Tempests whirled away and this Book is not known today,  
And this Book of Heaven and Earth is covered with dust of ages.”

ღმერთი ყოველი ქვეყნის კულტურაშია წარმოდგენილი: ქართულ, ინდურ, ირანულ, ეგვიპტურ, ებრაულ, ბერძნულ და სხვა კულტურებში. ქრისტე ქართველთა წარმოდგენებში უძველესი დროიდან წარმოჩნდა. ქართველებს თავიანთი ბიბლიის წიგნი ჰქონიათ, სახელწოდებით „ეფუთი“, თუმცა ეს წიგნი ჩვენამდე არ მოღწეულა. ამ წიგნის შესახებ წერდა გალაკტიონ ტაბიძე, ცნობილი ქართველი პოეტი.

It is assumed that the ancient myth of Amiran is one of the books of Georgia Bible, since it has preserved the ancient history of Georgian religion and it demonstrates the action of Christ in Georgian people.

The ancient books provide key to mystery of the past. The myth of Amiran contains materials paving the way for a more detailed exploration of the ancient civilizations.

First of all, it should be noted Georgian people have special love for Amiran. As a result there are various versions of the myth maintained in different parts of Georgia.

It is interesting to observe how Georgian people, with its 2000 year-history of Christianity, has so deeply embraced and absorbed the prehistoric hero Amiran. But this can be easily explained if we compare the lives of the Christ and Amiran. Namely, both Jesus and Amiran were born in a cave from the virgin. In both cases real Father is invisible and both were attended in one case by Magi and in another by a hunter.

In both instances the plots develop coherently, defined by similar spiritual order. The analysis of the spiritual order of New Testament and the myth lead us into a very deep spiritual world with inexhaustible wisdom and spiritual treasure. Perceiving mythical world is possible for everyone. However, it depends on purity of our heart and closeness to the Lord. “If you desire wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord will furnish her abundantly to you” (Wisdom of Sirach 2.26). “The root and beginning of Wisdom, its fullness and crown, are the fear of God” (Sirach 1.14). We have digressed though, as we don’t aim to explain allegorical symbols but to identify parallel facts.

Both the New Testament and the myth assign merciful, righteous and devout men for bringing up Jesus and Amiran. In one of the versions of Amiran’s myth (from the region of Racha) Mother of Amiran asks hunter Yaman to bring up her son, as he is truthful person. According to the New Testament, righteous Joseph was told by the Angel in his dream: “Joseph, Son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 1.20)

Attention should be paid to the genealogy as well. Both Mary and righteous Joseph were the descendants of David, the King i.e. they are of divine-royal origin. Amiran's mother isn't also mortal, she is goddess.

In both cases the selection of the names is of great spiritual significance taking place before their birth. An angel of Lord said to righteous Joseph: "... You will call him Immanuel--- which means Lord with us." (Matthew 1.23). In Amiran's myth, it is Amiran's mother who tells the hunter name of the son before his birth. "He is destined to be Amiran" ("Free Amiran", version of Racha; p. 125).

Moreover, prophecy on coming of Messiah exists in both cases long before their births. The New Testament says: "...because he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1.21). The Myth of Amiran characterizes the Messiah in the aspect of power: "No one will be able to defeat Amiran."

A unique vision of the truth is manifested in the epithets comparing and identifying both newborns to the Sun. The Svanetian version of the Myth says: "The boy resembling the Sun was born."(p.140). The Nativity Troparion says "The Sun of Truth, rose to shine from the East".

Not only the Magi, the hunter and other religious people got a word about descending of Messiah on Earth but also evil forces, thus both newborns are persecuted upon birth. An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream: "... Get up," he said "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt." (Matthew 2.13). Likewise in the Myth of Amiran: "...Forced by Monster, we fled and became refugees far from our homeland." (p.51). The persecution is also depicted in the book of Revelation: "...persecuted by the Red Monster is who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron." (Apocalypse 12.5) Jesus is persecuted by the king Herod and Amiran by monsters. At the time of Amiran's birth, the country was ruled by monsters. Israel was also under foreign rule. Both Monsters and Herod were ruled by evil forces. The scriptures say that evil will also rule during last time personified by Antichrist, who will be overthrown by Jesus Christ will.

Jesus and Amiran had demonstrated supernatural skills since their childhood. Amiran was growing much faster than normal children. Jesus' profound preaching at the age of 12 was amazing for His age. So both were ready to meet their missions triumphantly.

In the Myth monsters subordinated, oppressed and even devoured people, while evil spirits seduced men and suckered them to the underworld. People's existence was unbearable until Amiran devoted himself to annihilate the evil spirits and set the people free, thus giving an example of noble and self-less fight for the goodness. Jesus has power over death, over evil and the natural world. He heals the ailed, exorcises demons and teaches people how to be salvaged from sins, acquire true freedom and immortality. He shows them true friendship and love.

Amiran fought against evil spirits together with his friends, while Jesus together with his apostles. In the Myth defeated monsters begged Amiran to spare them. In the New Testament demons act likewise: "If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs." At first, they both satisfied the request of evil spirits. But with the time going by, the final battle took place between Amiran and the king of demons whose saber was hissing like a snake when touching Amiran's dagger.

Comparing the king of demons with serpent highlights that king personifies universal serpent. The reference to the universal serpent is also given in the Georgian poem "The Knight in the Panther's skin" (written by Shota Rustaveli). When depicting liberation of lady Nestan, the poet says: "They saw the moon was freed from the serpent to meet the

sun” (line 1420,2). Georgian religious reality depicted in “The knight in the Panther’s skin” would be an interesting subject for research.

Both the New Testament and the Myth mention the phenomenon familiar to the spiritual world: “under the cloud passing through the sea”. “And I don’t wish to be ignorant, brethren, that all our Fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. ---They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea” (I Corinthians 10, 1-2). According to the Christian Fathers, crossing the sea led by Moses was the prelude to Baptizing. As for the Myth, Amiran and Kamar were “under the cloud and crossed the sea”.

Descent of Messiah into the hell is depicted in both books -- the New Testament and the Myth and both use the same symbol of Dragon-Serpent. By descending into hell the Savior defeats Evil-Serpent-Dragon. “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of God will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matthew 12.40). Jesus’ descent into hell lasting for three days is compared to Jonah’s being in the belly of whale. Defeat of the universal Evil is followed by Resurrection of Messiah in both cases.

Amiran was also devoured by dragon, spending some time in his womb. The myth does not specify the number of days spent in the womb. However, it is mentioned that before being devoured, Amiran fought three monsters ----white, red and black. Mentioned number three might not be accidental. It might be depicting number of days spent by Messiah in the dragon’s womb. And if this is the case, we can detect eternal regularity of the world common for both cases. The issue may deserve further research.

It is interesting to focus on the appearance of Monster on the earth. The Book of Revelation states that after Michael Archangel along with angels defeated dragon, there was no place left in Heaven for the dragon. “And he was thrown down, the great dragon, the ancient serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan: he who deceives the whole world was thrown to the earth, and his angels were thrown with him” (the Book of Revelation 9.12).

Georgian word used in the Myth, which denotes the monster (“gveleshapi”) is a combination of 2 words: serpent (“gvel”) and whale (“veshapi”). Is it possible that this monster is Leviathan? Especially that the word Leviathan means “whale“ in Hebrew and it is only the Messiah who defeated him. It is noteworthy that Leviathan depicted on the engraving of famous French artist, Gustav Dore, “Destruction of Leviathan” is similar to the Georgian meaning of the monster, since the depicted monster has head of serpent and body of whale. “Leviathan looks on everything that is high; he’s the king over all the sons of pride. He dooms everybody to death” (Job 41.26). All sons of pride are ruled by Leviathan, which implants evil thoughts in humans and leads them to perdition. To save these sinful sons the Messiah descends into hell to overthrow horrible creature (“gveleshapi”), which combines both serpent and whale. Thus, universal serpent-Devil-father of lies is destroyed by the Messiah and by Amiran in the Myth.

Saint Gabriel states about the last times: “The Antichrist won’t be able to ascend the throne in Georgia and all the souls to be rescued will gather here.” We know three facts of apocalypse: the first is advent of Messiah in Georgian reality in the face of Amiran in prehistoric time; second is the advent of the Lord in Israel 2000 years ago and the third one is second coming of the Christ in glory at the end of ages. But the world witnessed more apocalypses than widely known. The priests of Ancient Egypt once called the Greeks infants, since the latter remembered only three apocalypses, while in fact there have been seven. The Koheleth says: “So I reflect on all this and concluded that the righteous and the wise and what they do are in God’s hands, but no one knows whether love or hate awaits them” (Ecclesiastes 9.1). “Whatever is has already been, and what will be has been before, and God will call the past to account” (Ecclesiastes 3.15).

One of the versions of the Myth of Amiran from Mtianeti region provides description of petrified dragon that can lead researchers to the astonishing analysis of apocalypse. Researchers interested in this topic are welcome to contact us.

One of modern religious thoughts suggests that we are at the end of ages. "It is much later than you think," (Hieromonk Seraphim Rose). Saint Gabriel taught us how to be saved during Apocalypse. "Kindness, humbleness and love are the main spiritual tools that will help us survive. Kindness will open the Paradise door, humbleness will allow entering it and finally love will help you feel and see the Lord."

Jesus Christ was laid into the tomb after Crucifixion. And in the end Amiran was chained in the cave. Jesus Christ rose after his death triumphing over death. Some versions of the Myth suggest that Amiran revived after his death. In one of the versions Khamar brings Amiran back to life by pouring water over him. "Khamar had brought water, she poured it over Amiran and his brothers and they soon returned to life". The idea of Amiran's revival is also demonstrated in the poem of Galaktion Tabidze:

"The mighty titan,  
Body of Caucasus,  
Chained to it and liberated  
Was the hero Amiran"

Resurrection of Christ is celebrated once in a year. According to many versions of the Myth, one day of the year is the most important, associated with celebration. In some of the versions, the door of the cave, where Amiran is chained, opens at the New Year's Eve, in other versions the chain, which was about to crack, regains original shape on Good Thursday. These celebrations contain the memory of old resurrection. Especially that the Javakhetian version of the Myth states that the door opens on Easter (p.94), though the door opens once in three days. Again reference is made to number three, which might suggest that the Myth contains ancient knowledge on the Messiah's descent to the hell and resurrection.

Chained Amiran has been deeply kept in the memory of Georgian people. And one of the strong feelings of Georgian people is to give him freedom that will be the triumph over evil followed by rising of Lazarus and the reign of sons of Lord.

The Myth says about Holy Fire too, which brings parallel with the miracle of the descent of Holy Fire on Jesus' tomb every Orthodox Easter in the hands of Orthodox Patriarch. Amiran helped people grow spiritually, he brought them fire from heaven. One version of the Myth says: "Man and his life will advance rapidly". Bringing fire from heaven associated humans with real love and truth, divine light and wisdom.

Amiran sacrificed himself to bring fire to people from heaven. This is the main reason why he is beloved hero. His life is similar to that of Jesus. Every person who has perceived and cognized Messiah, became alike with him by nature. As the famous German poet, Friedrich Hölderlin, has put it: "Only those believe in divine, who are close to the divine themselves".

Or as Dante Alighieri states (Paradiso):

"We have tasted nectar of eternal life,  
Which can be perceived only by those who tasted it"

But despite the spiritual knowledge Dante Alighieri acquired after going through Hell, Purgatory and Paradise, he was stunned at the sight of the shadow of Argo:

"One moment is more lethargy to me,  
Than five and twenty centuries to the emprise  
That startled Neptune with the shade of Argo!"

As it is known, the Greeks stole Wisdom from Georgia in the form of the Golden Fleece.

This might clarify the words of the famous German philosopher Hegel: “Caucasian race embodies the natural spirit most apt to determine and transform itself. ... then, it eventually brings forth world history” (Hegel’s “Phenomenology of Spirit”)

Long before Son of Man was sent by God in Israel, Christ was acting in Georgian people. The Jewish priests didn’t recognize Christ due to the Leviathan’s rule over them. The real truth will be revealed soon. The Georgian race is one of the oldest nations; it is older than Adam’s generation. Georgian Martyr Patriarch Kirion wrote in 1904: “Our ancestors Kaldu/Kartu (Georgians call themselves “Kartveli”) had lived on Earth as early as 6000 BC between the rivers of the Tigris and the Euphrates. Therefore, the first man Adam created in 5058 BC, cannot be considered even as our grandson”.

The Lord says “I was earlier than Abraham”. It is interesting to explore in which nations, apart from Georgians and Jews, has Jesus acted. The Egyptian God, Khnum, created people too. Khnum is assumed to be older than YHWH. Different systems of religious thought existed before Adam’s existence that need to be studied. Ancient church of Jesus Christ located in Ushguli, at the head of the Enguri gorge in Upper Svaneti, Georgia, is known for its unique frescos. There are scenes depicting the battle of Amiran and his brothers along with their friends against evil spirits. While the facade of the Archangel’s Church of Lashtkhveri depicts Amiran’s battle with monsters; also depicted are friends of Amiran: Badri, Sephedavla and Usup in armors.

Our ancestors and Sainly Fathers knew about the mission of Amiran as the Messiah and even illustrated him on the facades of Orthodox churches. Georgian people showed unique martyrdom for Christ to the world. In one day of 1227 hundred thousand Georgians sacrificed their lives to venerate the Holy Icons. In 1616, six thousand monks were tortured because of Christian religion at the Gareji Monastery. Saint Ilia Chavchavadze has noted on Georgian people: “Jesus Christ was crucified to save us and we were crucified for him. Having used our bones for bricks and our blood for lime we erected such a powerful Christian faith and its church in the heart of Georgia that no evil spirits sprouting from hell could destroy them. We sacrificed not only ourselves but also our families and we, so tiny nation, did our utmost to defend and save our faith, Christianity.”

Also according to the Sainly Fathers the Georgian Christian Church is identified with the Church of Philadelphia from the Book of Revelation. “I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and haven’t denied my name” (Revelation 3.8). “I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews through they are not, but are liars, ---I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have love you” (Revelation 3.9)

A lot more parallels can be drawn from the Myth and the New Testament and more symbols and allegories can be identified, which require further research. Both the Bible and Georgian Bible Ephut consists of many books. But unfortunately all of Georgian Bible’s books are lost except for the mythological story of Messiah - Amiran. However, we hope that other books of Georgian Bible will be discovered. Concluding with Galaktion Tabidze’s words on the Georgian Bible (Ephuti):

“Under harshness hidden from us  
They had gone and never had come.  
But hope forever exists within us,  
They’ll come and never be gone.”

## WORSHIP OF “DEDAUPALI” IN GEORGIA

### **Abstract**

After the reconstruction of antique Georgian mythological pantheon it is obvious that here existed the cult of Dedaupali - female goddess, mother of nature and place. She was considered to be the guardian of the wild animals. She lived far from the society in dark and dense forests, maybe in water and owned these places. She had solar and supernatural power in her golden hair which was spread on the rock. If hunter managed to cut her golden hair, she would lose her magic forces and hunter could subordinate her. She became similar to biblical Samson, Abesalom and other heroes from different countries with her hair. She was a werewolf. She could get the face of animal or bird. She chose the hunter who had fallen in love with her and helped her till he could keep the secret about their love. The hunter breaking this rule lost the life. Such is the image of mythological Dedaupali.

*Georgian hagiographic work “Saint Nino’s life” tells us how she converted Georgia to Christianity in the IV century. It is important written source for the reconstruction of ancient Georgian mythological pantheon because here we can find the process of reincarnation and adaptation of mythological mentality to Christian mentality. Information in our article is based on this source. Of course, together with archeological material, oral narratives, folk poems and songs, fairy tales, monuments of material culture and toponyms.)*

უძველესი ქართული მითოსური პანთეონის რეკონსტრუქციის შედეგად აშკარაა, რომ აქ არსებობდა მდედრობითი ღვთაების, ბუნებისა და ადგილის დედის, დედა უფლის - (დედუფლის) კულტი. დედაუფალი// დედოფალი (დედა -mother უფალი - მფლობელი, პატრონი - owner) მიჩნეული იყო *ველური ცხოველების მფარველად*. ის ცხოვრობს ადამიანთა საზოგადოებისგან, სოციუმისგან მოშორებით, ბნელ, დაბურულ ტყეებში, მიუვალ კლდეებზე, შესადლოა, წყალში და მოიხსენება როგორც მისი პატრონი (ადგილის დედა). მისი სოლარული, ზებუნებრივი ძალები მის ოქროს თმებშია, რომლებიც კლდიდან *არის ჩამოშვებული*. თუ მონადირე მოახერხებს და ძილში მას თმებს მოკვეცავს, მისი ძალა იკარგება და მონადირე შეძლებს მის დამორჩილებას. (თმებით დედაუფალი გარკვეულწილად ემსგავსება ბიბლიურ სამსონს, აბესალომსა და მსოფლიოს სხვა ხალხთან გავრცელებულ მითოსურ გმირებს). ის მაქციაა, შეუძლია ადამიანს გამოეცხადოს ცხოველის ან ფრინველის სახით. მის რჩეულ მონადირეს, რომელიც მასთან სიყვარულს გაიზიარებს, ეხმარება ნადირობაში მანამ, სანამ მონადირე მათი სიყვარულის საიდუმლოს ინახავს. ამ პირობის დამრღვევი მონადირე აუცილებლად იღუპება. აი, ასეთია დედაუფლის მითოსური ხატი, რომლის ნიშნები აქვს სხვა ლოკალურ ქალღვთაებებს საქართველოს სხვადასხვა კუთხეში: სვანეთში - დალი, მეგრულში - ტყამ მაფა, წყარიშ დიდა და ა.შ.

ქართული ჰაგიოგრაფიული ძეგლი „წმინდა ნინოს ცხოვრება“ მოგვითხრობს საქართველოს გაქრისტიანების, მონათვლის ისტორიას წმ. ნინოს მიერ მეოთხე საუკუნეში. ძეგლი არის უმნიშვნელოვანესი წერილობითი წყარო უძველესი ქართული მითოსური პანთეონის რეკონსტრუქციისათვის, რადგან ამ ძეგლში კარგად არის ასახული მითოსური მენტალობის ქრისტიანულად გარდასახვის, ადაპტაციის პროცესი. ჩვენს სტატიაში ძირითადად ვეყრდნობით მის მონაცემებს (არქეოლოგიურ მასალასთან, ზეპირ ნარატივებთან, ხალხურ ლექსებსა და სიმღერებთან, ზღაპრებთან, ნივთიერი კულტურის ძეგლებსა და ტოპონიმებთან ერთად).

**Keywords:** *Georgian mythology, Dedaupali, Saint Nino's life'', Worship of the tree, Chichilaki.*

Our goal is to compare beliefs and rituals in “Saint Nino’s life” to the material which was found in Georgia, particularly in the western Georgia - **Samegrelo** and show with diachronic method how these beliefs and rituals related to the “Dedaupali” have changed during the centuries.

Dedaupali has material equivalent which is image of her female incarnation. This is “the tree of life”. Worship of the tree is one of the ways of adoration of Dedaupali. Connection between female goddess and the adoration of the tree is not only local phenomenon. It is also known in other nations. (English scientist J.Frezer mentions that the Great Mother of Nature-the cult of Kibela was in Rome and it was brought from Frigia, in Asia Minor.) There was a ritual in Kibela temple: people brought fir tree and worshiped it.

Tree is considered as female incarnation and visual correlation of the goddess in many cultures. People identified the tree to the most wonderful creatures because of its immensity, beauty and sacral nature. Georgia isn’t an exception. In Georgia, we had iconic trees which were thought to be able to heal people and solve the problems of productivity, reproduction and sterility.

*“I entered the garden in the king’s palace and there was the place for flowers. This place was under the fir trees and vine which was on the tree. I took the soil from there and then I had a baby”*(4: 123)

*“St.Nino’s life” tells that in the IV century, there was a fir tree in the garden (paradise) of Georgian king, Miriani and the ground around this tree had supernatural force and this soil healed the childless people.*

*We have found material, basically microtoponyms from Samegrelo. It consists of the names of the trees and the territory around them which are considered to have force to heal childless people.*

*Here is the list of some toponyms which are thought to mean the territory around the magic trees and can heal childless people.*

Zhini Esqeda - District in the village Fakhulani, Tsalenjikha, where stood the oak tree and childless women prayed under it (3:128). This district has the other name, too.

Isqedachkoni-chkoni-oak.

Chkonmiokhvamuri-oak of Kortskheli-Zugdidi-Territory of the Virgin church.

Tsiona-Ts in Mengrelian language-Elm;(Elm forest); The same names have several toponyms in Muzhava, Tsalenjikha, Uchashona-Zugdidi.

Tsioni-The Elm near the church of Misaronkari on the side-hills of Urta mountain, Zugdidi.

Take the child with whooping cough under the nut-tree, near its roots.

*Praying of fevered person near the oak tree during three saint days.*

*“There stood the nice tree. It was high and had many branches. I stopped under this tree and made the symbol of the cross “, said St.Nino (4: 122).*

*“St.Nino’s life” describes how was collapsed the heathen idol Armazi.This meant that it would start new age. Saint Nino made the cross on the tree to show this fact.*

*In Samegrelo, there are many trees with crosses.*

*Here is the list of the trees with symbols of crosses:*

Najvartsifuri (beech with cross on it) is in the forest in Tsalenjikha where there is carved the cross on one beech.

Jvaramchkoni (oak with cross on it)// Najvarchkoni-is the field on the left side of Rukhtskari, near the border of Rike where was the oak-forest and place for praying of oak, Zugdidi.

Qejvari-hill in Leakhale, Chkhrotsku.Under the linden,there was the icon of St.George owned by Nachkebias.

Jvarishi-western part near school where stood linden and the whole district gathered here, Nagvazao,Martvili.

Gilakhvamu- This name has several hills in different places in Samegrelo. For example, hill with yew-trees where people bring the icon under the tree on the day of St.Barbare.

Jegesh Miokhvamu// Gilakhvamu//Jegeferdi (Saint hill)- hill with beeches where people put the icon of Saint George(Jgege) under the tree, in Zhin Obuji, Tsalenjikha.

Kvantish Miokhvamu- Yew-tree on the way from the villages of Lakada side in Tsalenjikha to the sources of the river Khobitskali. Herdsmen rested there.

Alertkharchile// Gitsakhvamu-hill on the left bank of the river Chanistskali,in Tsalenjikha. There is the iron cross and an arrow. It is said that there were three lindens there.

Mantskhvari(Our Savior)- Several hills have this name and there were churches and holy trees.

Okhvamekari-1. Hill with beeches in Kirtskhi, Chkhorotsku. 2.Hill in Nakiani, Chkhorotsku where was the main linden. People donated changes and that’s why they called it Shaurkari.

*Chkonjinji-Arable land where stands the oak tree today.*

*Such samples are not few, but we think above mentioned places are enough to illustrate the fact.*

*Ritual cut of the tree.*

*“St.Nino’s life” describes the process of cutting down of the tree as the sacral ritual. The date is written.*

*Cutting down of the tree has ceremonial and ritual meaning today as well. It has special time: when the moon is the smallest and the darkest, (Geukmelafa in Mengrelian), or on Great Monday,(Chvenieroba in Mengrelian. Etymology of this holiday is not known.). This ceremonial was called “Tearing down of the tree”.*

*Specific of mythical mentality means that visual grandiosity and beauty make belief that they have supernatural forces. In Christian religion, things are changed into symbols and we mean abstract idea beyond them. After spreading Christianity, the cult of Dedaupali changed into worship to the Mother Mary and female saints, like St.Nino. Trees were replaced with the cross and church, but the ritual of worshipping of the tree remained. Vine has the iconic status in Georgia today as well. Georgia considers to be the country of vine. Vine is very special in Georgia because it has solar power. It tries to go to the sun*

with great energy and its fruit saves solar energy which moves to the person and makes him drunk.

Saint Nino, who converted Georgia to Christianity, made the first Christian symbol from the plant which was loved most by Georgian people and adored it. This cross is in Tbilisi Sioni cathedral.

Vine ornaments are the parts of the decoration of Georgian churches.

In Georgian hymnographic work of the X century, in Georgian "Ave Maria", the Virgin Mary is called as the Vineyard.

"You are a vineyard newly blossomed!

Young, beautiful, growing in Eden

A fragrant poplar sapling in Paradise.

You yourself are the sun, shining brilliantly."

Georgian Ethnologist S. Makalatia in his work "History and Ethnography of Samegrelo" mentions the public ritual, so called "Jash qecheri" (Tuft of hair). It was held on the August 28, the day of Saint Mary near the tree with the vine on it (1: 319-320). During the pray, they addressed the Virgin Mary and stood near the tree which had vine on it.

In this ritual, the vine means the Mother Mary, it's her incarnation. Mythological heathen Dedaupali is replaced into the Mother Mary. Vine has the same function as the icon in the church. Icon is the symbol and in this case, we have natural symbol, the iconic vine which is created by the nature and means the same as the Mother Mary.

In the folk version of "St.Nino's life", cross of the vine was tied with her hair. The motive of hair is decisive in the face of Dedaupali. (In canonical version, this passage is not shown because, as R. Siradze mentions, despite converting to Christianity, they knew the mythological and sacral meaning of hair and tried to avoid.

From the ethnographic reality of Samegrelo we know some beliefs connected to hair. It would be interesting to name them:

Mourning people didn't cut hair for 40 days, then they chose the person who replaced the dead person. He/she was called "Chapili". Chapili cut hair of the closest relative of the dead person and saved it as an argument (1: 289).

Let one's hair down while mourning.(1: 321)

Sister of the dead person cut one of her plaits, fixed on the stick and put it in the grave or coffin.(1: 289)

Widow cut her plaits and put in the husband's grave (1:108).

When nanny lost her child, she put her plait in the grave (1:108).

Hair is the symbol of the sun and light in Georgia and also in Samegrelo. It isn't unexpected that the sun and light are connected to the Mother Mary.

Chichilaki (New Year Tree)

New Year Tree Chichilaki is identical to the sun. It has coils like the letter S and they are called "Basilish bzhake" which means Basili's beard (Basili the Great and his day is celebrated on January 14). We can see that saint's hair and the sun are identical, the letter S expresses solar power and it's the graphic symbol of the sun in folk ornaments, too. Such decorations are on the king David the Builder's clothes on the fresco of Gelati Monastery.

Conclusion:

1. Adoration of the goddess is confirmed in the hagiographic works in the IV century and nowadays we can also see the different ways of adoration.

2. The equivalent of the Goddess is the tree which is connected to the supernatural forces and is worshiped.

3. One of the main attributes of the Goddess Dedaufali is the golden hair with supernatural mystery.

4. Sacral beliefs seem in folk rituals today as well.

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**NATURE SPIRITS IN CONTEMPORARY ART PRACTICE:  
Photo Performance *Look into the Interworld* by Tajči Čekada and Interactive  
Ambience *Mirila* by Josip Zanki and Bojan Gagić**

**Abstract**

In this article, I first introduce Croatian multimedia artist, fashion designer and performance artist Tajči Čekada or, more precisely, her unconventional fashion exhibition, the photo performance *Look into the Interworld* (2011), as an illustration of the connection of the sacred, *archaic myth* with design.

In the second part of the article, I refer to another art project that performatively interprets an Old Croatian belief in the departed soul – the interactive ambience *Mirila* presented by Josip Zanki and Bojan Gagić in 2001.

On the basis of these two examples from contemporary Croatian art practice, I intend to examine the role and meaning of nature spirits; in the case of Tajči Čekada, they are primarily female mythical beings observed by the artist in relation to nature, sacral landscape, and in the case of the interactive ambience *Mirila* by Josip Zanki and Bojan Gagić, the “mirila” phenomenon is presented, within which the soul of the departed is placed in relation to sacral landscape. In short, on the basis of these two examples I will examine the relation of myth, i.e. nature spirits, to present-day art.

წინამდებარე სტატიაში, პირველ რიგში წარმოვადგენ ხროვატი მხატვრის, დიზაინერის ტაიჯი ცეკადას წარმოუდგენლად მდიდარ გამოფენას, ფოტოს სახელწოდებით: მზერა მიღმა სამყაროში (2011), რომელიც წარმოდგენილია არქაული მითის საილუსტრაციოდ.

ნაშრომის მეორე ნაწილში, მე ყურადღებას ვამახვილებ ხელოვნების სხვა ნიმუშზე, რომელიც წარმოადგენს უძველეს ხროვატულ რწმენას, მიღმა გადასული სულის შესახებ და ეს ნიმუში ეკუთვნის იოზეფ ზანკისა და ბოიან გაგიკს (2001).

ამ ორი ნიმუშის საფუძველზე თანამედროვე ხროვატიულ კულტურაში, მე ვცდილობ ვაჩვენო ბუნებრივი სულების როლი და მნიშვნელობა. პირველ ნიმუშში ისინი ავტორის მიერ წარმოდგენილი, ბუნებასთან დაკავშირებული, მდებარეობითი სქესის მითოსური არსებები არიან. მეორე შემთხვევაში კი „მირილას“ ფენომენია წარმოდგენილი, როცა გარდასული სული საკრალურ გარემოშია მოთავსებული. მოკლედ რომ ვთქვათ, ამ ორი ნიმუშის მაგალითზე მე შევეცდები წარმოვადგინო მითი, ბუნებრივი სულები და თანამედროვე ხელოვნება.

**Keywords:** *female mythical beings, Interworld, Mirila, nature, soul, death, nature spirits in contemporary art practice, Tajči Čekada, Josip Zanki*

In this paper, I first introduce Croatian multimedia artist, fashion designer and performance artist Tajči Čekada<sup>1</sup> or, more precisely, her unconventional fashion exhibition, the photo performance *Look into the Interworld* (2011), as an illustration of the connection of sacred, *archaic myth* with design. She is a fashion designer who rejects the dictates of fashion industry and conventional catwalk. As she herself once pointed out – the role of myth and the use of different archetypes is a prominent characteristic of the majority of her works. In the photo-series/photo-performance titled *Look into the Interworld* (2011), Tajči Čekada presents mythical beings such as fairies, elves, nightmares (*Moras*), werewolves (*Kudlaks*), and water nymphs *Naiads* and *Rusalkas*. However, her starting point are not the existing archetypes of these mythical, supernatural beings, but rather her own experience with them.

Addressing this phase of fascination with mythical beings from ancient Greek and Slavic ethno-tradition, Tajči Čekada points out:

*"I found Rosicrucian philosophy, which argues that people are responsible for all life forms, even for mineral ones, quite interesting. I believe that this idea is logical. For a long time, I have had an idea about the existence of Gzmauts, a hybrid species with Sumerian eyes, whose existence is void of purpose. They are usually sexless, and they like to drink and have fun. They appear when you least expect them, alone or in a group, and they ask no questions. There are two sub-species: soft and hard ones. I often depict their figures in my creations. Each new emergence strangely amuses me."* (Tajči Čekada, cf. Marjanić 2014)

So, each garment in the collection *Drive Me to the Adriatic Sea* (2004) was ornamented with a figure of a Gzmaut that the artist drew by hand.

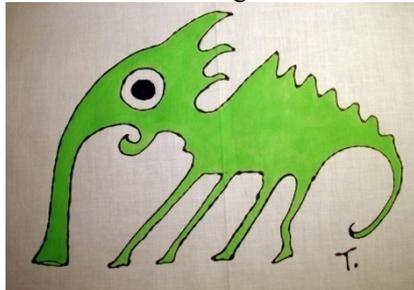


Figure 1: example of a Gzmaut from the collection *Drive Me to the Adriatic Sea* (2004) by Tajči Čekada

In this sense, the artist especially stresses the fashion collection *Still Life*, on which she started to work in 2006/2007 and which she exhibited publicly for the first time in 2009. Later, in 2011, the artist utilised photography to transform the fashion collection into a series of photographs, a photo-performance artwork titled *A Look into the Interworld* (2011). In this collection and photo-performance, she presented – as I have already mentioned – mythical beings such as fairies, elves, the *Mora* incubus (nightmare), werewolves *Kudlaks*, and water nymphs *Naiads* and *Rusalkas*.

Specifically, while interviewing the artist I learned that she felt something was missing having completed the collection – a specific aura of space. So, she decided to photograph these models at locations that were especially meaningful to her; those were the spaces in which she had come to the idea of making such creations and at which she collected the greater part of the components-materials that she later glued to the fairy garments. The artist decided that the collection should be dedicated to the medium of photography so as to imbue the aura of the models and space.

In short, the models in her above collection have a fairly demanding structure; they are sometimes of monumental form, and while some consider them to be sculptures instead of costumes, the designer herself considers them to be wearable costumes. The specificity of these surreal structures is that they are denoted by natural mosaics found in Nature in fragmentary form such as animal hair, bones, snails, acorns, dried orange cores, dried palm leaves, other kinds of leaves, dried and fresh grass, flowers, ivy, moss, pinecones, feathers,

sea sponges, shellfish, sea urchins, beans and pasta, tiny pebbles, etc. The process of gluing these onto the selected base required extraordinary dedication and patience, both of which are more than present in Tajči Čekada's work.

These are monumental costumes with demanding pattern construction, largely laden with natural mosaics made up of a combination of organic and inorganic natural materials patiently glued together fragment by fragment, often with the use of tweezers. The artist's basic motivation was to create forms that, when placed in a particular ambience, would induce associations to mythical forest beings.

Furthermore, she finds inspiration for her numerous other collections in the recycling of material, which she points out as "the sole response to any of the more aware approaches to life, with the final objective being an increase in the ecologically pure spiritual and material space of our existence".

When addressing the *send-off* ritual, which she performed at a mystic location near the entrance to the Tramuntana Forest near the village of Beli (on the Island of Cres)<sup>ii</sup> in 2012, the author said that she literally performed the *send-off* ritual for an entity with which she had had a long-term collaboration. She considered the Forest to be the ideal location for the farewell, as the former has been known since ancient times as a mystic dwelling place of fairies and elves, *Macmalićs*<sup>iii</sup> and *Kudlak* werewolves. Apart from being a send-off to all those mysterious beings, with that performance the artist also solemnly brought to an end her long-term creative phase that relied on Slavic mythology, mysticism, her fascination with forests, tales, legends and various borderline interworlds.<sup>iv</sup> In short – with regard to the relationship of myth and art, i.e. of nature spirits and art – in the case of the aforementioned works of Tajči Čekada, we are primarily speaking of female mythical beings observed by the artist in relation to nature and sacral landscape.

To conclude this brief presentation of the anti-fashion design by Tajči Čekada, I would like to add that in 2013 Tajči Čekada participated in the exhibition *Myth and Art* (Kaunas, Lithuania; Zagreb, Croatia)<sup>v</sup> that was dedicated to the fascinating personality of Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis (1875-1911), Lithuanian composer and painter, and to Natko Nodilo (1834-1912), Croatian historian, politician and mythologist. And while Čiurlionis sought to achieve unity of fine arts and music within a single artistic medium, Natko Nodilo unified historiography and mythological research. For example, his study *The Old Faith of Serbs and Croats*, published from 1885 to 1890, is considered to be the first study on the reconstruction of pre-Croatian mythology.



Figure 2: *Naiad Before the Drought*: "The Naiad costume was not planned as such. It started out as a model that was part of a series, and I singled it out from the documentation as a brilliant costume for a Naiad, and not just any Naiad, but a Naiad facing a drought, as I named the photograph. There had been a drought in our part of the world when I shot that model. The location at which I took the photograph is one of my favourite places in the forest, the waterfall on Učka Mountain. At that time, the waterfall had almost dried up and the atmosphere in the area was sorrowful. According to the legend, when the body of the Naiad water nymph dries up completely, she dies. The model (Andrea Knežević) stands in front of the parched waterfall and looks mournfully into the distance as she

blows the ritual horn to invoke the rain that will save her and us from the drought." Tajči Čekada

Figure 3: *Mora*: "The photograph of a pale model with black ceramic horns combined with a shaggy, almost blood-coloured dress gives me personally the impression of maliciousness with which my staging of the *Mora* with that model and photograph was complete. When I had become certain that I wanted to embody the *Mora* in a photograph, I started to look for an exceptionally pale girl and an adequate location, and with the make-up finish, the hairdo and the subsequently created photograph, I sealed forever in my own mind the *Mora* personage as such." Tajči Čekada<sup>vi</sup>



of snail shells I found, and small shells plaited into threads of hemp, which – as hemp is very light – float and appear as hair under water. The dress is ethereal and looks as though it is under water. The Rusalkas were water nymphs who were often described as mermaids, although not all of them, of course. In the majority of legends, the Rusalkas are pale, decrepit and evil. My Rusalka is joyful and sweet like the Rusalkas from the Danube, Sava and Dnepr Rivers. I gave the photograph the title *The Betrothed Rusalka* because of the girl's expression and appearance that indicated a bride-to-be and, truth to tell, she indeed got married very soon after the photograph was taken." Tajči Čekada

Foto 4: *The Betrothed Rusalka*: "The Rusalka model is covered in a dense mosaic

of snail shells I found, and small shells plaited into threads of hemp, which – as hemp is very light – float and appear as hair under water. The dress is ethereal and looks as though it is under water. The Rusalkas were water nymphs who were often described as mermaids, although not all of them, of course. In the majority of legends, the Rusalkas are pale, decrepit and evil. My Rusalka is joyful and sweet like the Rusalkas from the Danube, Sava and Dnepr Rivers. I gave the photograph the title *The Betrothed Rusalka* because of the girl's expression and appearance that indicated a bride-to-be and, truth to tell, she indeed got married very soon after the photograph was taken." Tajči Čekada



### **The *Mirila* Performance: The Grave of the Soul**

In the second part of this paper, I refer to another art project that, in contrast to the aforementioned one, performatively interprets an Old Croatian belief in the departed soul. The performance in question is the interactive ambience *Mirila* presented by Josip Zanki and Bojan Gagić in 2001. The work consists of a site-specific installation that represents a replica of the *Mirila* monument itself, and an interactive performance that allows visitors to directly experience an ancient ritual and their own – for the time being – metaphorical death.

First, let me briefly explain the meaning of *Mirila*. Zanki's intimate, autobiographic story of funeral customs related to the *Mirila* begins deep in the Velebit Mountain region. The *Mirila* custom of said region ritually unfolds in the following manner: after customary weeping and mourning beside a raised platform upon which the body was laid out, it was wrapped in a coverlet and carried on a wooden stretcher to the graveyard before sunrise. During the process, the cortege would stop at a particular place, usually at a bend in the path. Then, flat stones would be placed on the ground and the body of the deceased would be laid on them. A more symmetrical stone would be set vertically by the head and a smaller stone at the feet. These two stones took the *mira* of the dead body, that is, its *mjera* i.e. measure, that made up its *mirila*. It was considered important that the head faces the

East, the rising sun, so that the deceased's face would be caressed by the sun one last time. After taking the measurements, the body was carried to the graveyard where it was buried with Church ceremony; a few days later, a more symmetrical or cut stone with a carved symbol would replace the stone that had been at the head of the *mirila*.

Thus, as we are told by ethnologist and art historian Mira Trošelj, the *Mirila* was the resting place of the departed soul, the grave of the soul. It was from that stone that the soul finally left the body. The body was buried in the grave, whilst the soul remained at the *Mirila*, and *miruje*, or rests there, made peaceful by the rituals performed according to the legends.

In short, the origin of the word *mirilo* can be explained in two ways. The first explanation is that it derives from the word *mir*, or peace, that the now-peaceful body found; from the word *miriti* (to appease), as the place at which the soul was appeased. The second possible origin is derived from the word *meriti* (to measure), which is pronounced *miriti* in the local Ikavian dialect (Trošelj 2013:39-40).

As Mira Trošelj states further, the drystone wall stones are rural art memorials that marked the deceased's last resting place on Earth, with a last farewell to the sun, before the body was buried in the graveyard. The living soul separated itself from the body to tie itself to those stones, the *Mirila*, and then to move on to the other world, so that the body of the deceased could be measured with these two stones. They were placed by the paths along which people passed every day, and were usually located halfway from the settlements on Velebit to the graveyards, not far from the sea (Trošelj 2013:31).

With regard to Velebit, ethnologist Tomo Vinšćak once stressed that what Olympus is to the Greeks, Kailas to the Tibetans, Triglav to the Slovenians – that is what Velebit is to the Croats (Vinšćak 2013:11).

A variation of the performance *Mirila* was presented by the artists at Zagrebi!EkoFestival at Bundeck Lake in Zagreb in 2008. It took place in early morning. Specifically, it was presented as a living sculpture at 5:30 a.m. in one of Bundeck's groves in which seven *Mirila* stones had been placed the day before. These funeral piles evoked the ritual measurement of the deceased in the Velebit Mountain region. As this performance ritual was modified for the living, the artists sought to introduce the living sculptures to the experience of death, or more precisely – the experience of *laying* in a prostrate position in an attempt to touch death. Apart from the authors and the seven *prostrate* performers placed on the *mirila*, only three visitors were present at that long-forgotten archaic funeral or, in this case, at the performance. Just a reminder: the *Mirila* performance was the joint project of Josip Zanki and Bojan Gagić, who had first presented it at the Scardavilla Monastery (near *Forlì*) in Italy in 2001. They performed it again several times – in Trieste, Bologna and Boston. The Bundeck performance was the first in Croatia, and was followed by the performance at *Klovićevi Dvori* [the Clovio Court Gallery] in Zagreb in 2013. Josip Zanki took part in the research project *Mirila – Intangible Cultural Heritage* at Klovićevi Dvori Gallery in Zagreb in 2013. Zanki's comment on the *mirila*, "*Any stone can become a Mirila, whilst the Mirila can never again become an ordinary stone,*" was the exhibition's motto.<sup>vii</sup> Zanki recalls his first encounter with the *Mirila*:

*"When I first came across Mirila in 1997, I just stood there and listened. It was late spring, May. I felt as a stranger on unknown territory, as a white man in an American Indian cemetery. I stopped, closed my eyes and listened. I realised that I can pass through since the transition from my own time to the time of Mirila is in my consciousness. It creates everything and is created by everything. A faraway goal, I thought, for many and for me, too far away. I looked at the peaks disappearing into the distance. The blue is the darkness in which everything dissolves."* (Zanki, [http](#)).



Figure: Josip Zanki and Bojan Gagić: *Mirila*, at the Scardavilla Monastery (near *Forlì*) in Italy in 2001



Figure: Josip Zanki and Bojan Gagić: *Mirila*, Zagrebi!EkoFestival, Bundeck Lake in Zagreb in 2008



Figure: Josip Zanki: *Mirila* – drawing-print. Taken from the book *Mirila*. ed. Mirjana Trošelj. Drawings-prints by Josip Zanki (2012)

Otherwise, Zanki's father is known as the author of the last *Mirila* at the settlement where he grew up and, while still a child, this multimedia artist became acquainted with the funereal custom practice on Velebit of placing the dead body on a stone plate and taking its measurements. Since he frequently visits Velebit, he himself

started to visit the *Mirila* locations and to collect the material related to these funeral commemorations that resemble graves. The ecological matrix of the performance in question tells us that the *Mirila* custom has died out completely with the advent of roads, the development of tourism and the change in lifestyle, and how the archetypical Velebit landscape has been modified into national parks that have become polygons for companies and political team-building, and even places of meditation for certain, sometimes self-proclaimed, gurus (Zanki, cf. Marjanić 2014). However, since 2007, the *Mirila* has had the status of intangible cultural heritage, although its protection is not practised – as was shown by the blowout of the gas pipeline route through the Bukovica area towards Zadar, at which certain localities were destroyed (Katić 2013:29).<sup>viii</sup>

This is precisely the critical matrix that should be the subject of all *land art* practices, since it is never redundant to repeat the words of Ulrich Beck – that one of the characteristics of globalisation is also the global destruction of the environment.

As we are talking about the nature spirits in various ethno-traditions today, in a few years we will consider the nature to be a ghost because 150 species are destroyed each day!<sup>ix</sup>

Translated by Nina H. Antoljak and Mirta Jurilj

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<sup>i</sup> Tajči Čekada (Rijeka, April 27, 1979) works in the field of fashion design, costume design, performance and photography. In the late 1990s (1998-2008), the beginning of her artistic work was connected with the Palach Club in Rijeka, i.e. the former art organization M.M.C. "Palach" that was also a platform for actionists and performance artists in Rijeka. In 2004, Tajči Čekada started to work in her own studio, located within the Palach Club, in which she, apart from designing costumes and clothes, also held sewing and tailoring workshops, as well as workshops in fabric painting techniques. In 2006, in cooperation with M.M.C. she initiated a series of fashion manifestations titled *Fashion News*. From 2004 to 2013 she was actively involved with the activities of M.M.C and O.K. Gallery – especially in the field of performance art – often collaborating in joint projects with artists gathered around "Palach", and later in K.U.N.S. In her first solo performance, titled *Post Mortem High Fashion* (Varuna Gallery, Veprinac, 2011), she combined all of her previous works.

Her recent works have been closely involved with photography; she has had four solo exhibitions: *Look into the Interworld* (Gallery – Atelier Lokvina, Kastav, 2011), *Still Life* (Museum of Lošinj, Fritzy Gallery, Mali Lošinj, 2011), *Fashion Photographs and Practical Dresses* (O.K. Gallery, Rijeka, 2013), *Self-portraits* (Mali Salon Gallery, Rijeka, 2013).

She designs and makes costumes for numerous concert performances and music videos of various bands, for film, theatre, TV shows and for numerous performances. Her website can be found at <http://www.tajcicekada.com>

<sup>ii</sup> "The wooded area of Tramuntana, spanning across app. 5500 ha, represents an exceptional value of natural heritage. The regional flora consists mainly of high oak, hornbeam and chestnut forests. The oldest oak tree, found at the entrance to the village of Sveti Petar, was proclaimed a protected monument of nature in 1997." Cf. <http://ineco.posluh.hr/pgz/cres/etramun.htm>

<sup>iii</sup> *Macić, Malik, Massariol, Macarol, Tintilin* is a young boy of small stature (not a dwarf) with a red hat. According to some sources, he was born already wearing said hat. "He is a child, a lost soul of an unbaptised infant or a small devil. Some of these boy-devils were never even born, but were hatched by a black rooster or hen. Some are the souls of aborted, killed or unbaptised infants. Some were born as the tenth son of the same mother. They are all hiding underneath the same hat." (Lozica 1995:20) Maja Bošković-Stulli points out that they are sometimes demons of mountains, forests or fields, or souls of dead children, or devils hatched from a rooster's egg, but she concludes that the border between the aforementioned modes is definitely blurred. (Bošković-Stulli 1959:209)

<sup>iv</sup> Here I would like to mention the project *The Secret of Macmalics* with which the Ruta Association seeks to educate children and youth in ecology, teaching them to protect the nature and the tradition of their homeland. Legends of a dwarf – Macmalić – are widespread on the island of Cres. With a picture book, the legends from Tramuntana highland, the northern end of the island – in which he is called Masmalić, the forest ghost

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– are revived. During the two-year project duration, the children knit sheep wool, created an entire tribe of Masmalics, made brooches, tapestry and red hats... Behind every detail, made with plenty of curiosity and love, is the teaching of Masmalics: “Honour the nature and cherish it for your grandchildren!” (Cf. <http://ruta-cres.hr/o-ruti/>)

<sup>v</sup> With this selection, we consider myth to be a sacred and true story on the one hand, and on the other hand – we view the myth as a made-up and ideological, ethno-national story. However, with this exhibition we also opened the third, anarchic meaning of myth as resistance to cynical politics, as resistance to cynical governments and as the alternative to the world order that only leads to the free flow of capital, but not to the free flow of people. (cf. Marjanić 2103)

<sup>vi</sup> Certain characteristics of the *Mora* and the witch can be defined within the concept of *zoopsychonavigation*, that is, navigation of the soul in animal form. In this process, we can differentiate three phenomena within the framework of zoopsychonavigation – *zoometempsichosis*, *zoometamorphosis*, and *the witches’ flights* or *flying on astral animal vehicles*. Specifically, by the term zoopsychonavigation (psychonavigation in animal form) I denote the separation of the soul from the body during the *temporary death* of supernatural individuals and mythic creatures, which can be referred to as catalepsy, or cataleptic *trance*.

<sup>vii</sup> Josip Zanki also made his own prints – depicting the resting place of the soul – for two monographs on the *Mirila* (2012, 2013). For more information on Zanki’s art projects related to the *Mirila*, cf. <http://www.zankijosip.com/art-work/projects/mirila.html>

While the ethnologists examine the *Mirila* from the perspective of belief and “grave religion,” as Natko Nodilo named the anthropology of death in his study *The Old Faith of Serbs and Croats (Stara vjera Srba i Hrvata)* (1885-1890), the archaeologists consider the *Mirila* to be sacred objects suitable for researching the *archaeology of death*. Katja Hrobat and Benjamin Štular (2010) metaphorically described the interdisciplinarity as a Rubik’s Cube: each discipline can act on one side of the cube, but each movement on one side causes changes on all sides. To quote this fantastic duo: “In order to achieve the final solution, the aforementioned requires harmony on all sides.”

<sup>viii</sup> Furthermore, as stated by ethnologist Mario Katić: “The custom of the *Mirila* has been completely abandoned with time, and its locations were destroyed by paving new roads. In the early 2000s, the Tourist board of Starigrad in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture put some of the *Mirila* sites under protection, renovated them and presented them to tourists. There was a need for expansion of tourist attractions in terms of cultural heritage, and *Mirila* served as a good example. Since then, the *Mirila* has become a recognizable tourist attraction and was given the award for 'the most original tourist attraction' in Zadar County for 2011. Performance artist Josip Zanki, inspired by the ritual, built the *Mirila* with living people resting on them from 2001 to 2008, and the performance was presented in Croatian and European museums, as well as in natural surroundings.” (cf. Katić 2013:29, 74)

<sup>ix</sup> I would like to mention here the North American Natives who, in their numerous messages, warned about the danger of leukocentrism (reducing other skin colours to white) and who supported the theory of animism, in which anything that is alive is also sacred: “The Great Spirit is present in all beings. He is the God of all people and His Mercy includes both the white and black man. To hurt the earth, nature, any creature, is to hurt the Creator.” (cf. Babić 2013:154)



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