Demons, Spirits, Witches/2

Christian Demonology and Popular Mythology

Edited by
Éva Pócs and Gábor Klaniczay

CHRISTIAN DEMONOLOGY AND POPULAR MYTHOLOGY

Demons, Spirits, Witches

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GÁBOR KLANICZAY and ÉVA PÓCS

Volume II

CHRISTIAN DEMONOLOGY AND POPULAR MYTHOLOGY

Edited by

Gábor Klaniczay and Éva Pócs
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C E U PRESS

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Evil Magic and Demons in East European and Asian Folklore

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INTRODUCTION

GÁBOR KLANICZAY and ÉVA PÓCS

The most important ordering principle of our first volume[1] was that of
the communication with the supernatural: the relations of the human
world with the domains of the spirits, a set of relationships which con-
stituted an important part of the mental universe of medieval and early
modern Europe. As shown by several articles in the volume, in some
traditional village communities on the margins of Eastern, Southern
and Western Europe, such archaic religious manifestations could play a
considerable role—classified as Christian visions, shamanism or belief
in diabolic possession—even in the twentieth century. These studies
could indicate a renewed interest in this subject, and a new dynamism
of research, relying upon novel insights into the vast source material.
The most important outgrowth of these new interpretations is the en-
richment of the traditional methodologies of ethnology, the history of
religion and folklore by an anthropological approach that examines the
mental phenomena in their social contexts and communal functions.

 The same could be said in connection to our present volume. Like
the previous book, the essays published here also originate from pre-
sentations at the Budapest conference on "Demons, spirits and witch-
es," which took place in Budapest in 1999 (though, in the time elapsed
since, they had been considerably reworked). Those common discus-
sions allowed the authors of this volume, coming from nearly the
whole of Europe, and also from Asia and America, to harmonize their
research interests and their strategies for analyzing this complex mate-
rial. Though the setting of the problematic is again medieval and early
modern Europe, the focus of the studies this time is centered on pres-
ent-day traditional communities and living folkloric traditions exam-

ined, above all, by Russian, Macedonian and Slovenian anthropologists and folklorists.

The central idea of the present volume is the manifold presentation of the interchanges between learned and popular culture. When choosing these two concepts for framing our studies on medieval, early modern and contemporary demonology, we were aware that they had been considered controversial within historical research for quite some time. In the 1960s and 1970s, the originally somewhat condescending category of popular culture prompted a set of heated methodological debates and opened stimulating new fields of analysis related to the development of historical anthropology (Mandrou 1964; Bollème 1971; Davis 1975; Le Goff 1977; Burke 1978). Absorbing and critically adjusting the emancipatory messages of Mihail Bakhtin (Bakhtin 1984; Ginzburg 1976; Klaniczay 1990), historical research became ultimately skeptical as to whether "popular" could really serve as a useful delineation of a specific cultural level or form of expression (Kaplan 1984). Yet, in the analysis of medieval and early modern Christianity, the distinction between a learned, ecclesiastical level of religiosity and a broader set of lay, popular, folkloristic beliefs (as well as the study of their interchanges and conflicts) remained indispensable (Schmitt 1988; Gurevich 1988). The historical evolution of the beliefs related to demons, spirits and witches, in particular, constitutes a field wherein this dichotomy remains one of the useful starting points of inquiry; this is what the studies collected in this volume hope to demonstrate.

Two clusters of essays (Parts I and III) present the variety of demonological concepts, respectively, in the spheres of medieval and early modern learned traditions, and in the world of modern folkloristic culture, while the central cluster (Part II) presents some meeting points of these two cultural domains. The principal theme of the analysis is the world of spirits and demons in European culture: the world of spirits in pre-Christian cultures and in the elite and popular culture within Christendom. The general picture that can be discerned from the studies is that of a syncretistic pagan and Christian universe peopled by demons, protecting, escorting, harming, possessing, and healing spirits, and the figure of the ever-present Christian devil that is, in many respects, related to all the previously mentioned beings. In the religious worldview, mentalities, and religious movements of medieval and early

modern Europe, the central role of the towering figure of Satan is well-known (Graf 1889; Russell 1977, 1981, 1984). The already richly documented picture of the history of the devil could, however, be complemented in these studies by several texts and images unpublished thus far, and also by adding the presentation of the colorful universe of demons from Central and South-Eastern Europe to European research in this field. This set of popular beliefs in spirits and demons, most vigorous perhaps in the regions where Orthodox Christianity prevails, has always been a challenge for learned, theological reflection on demonology, and certainly requires systematic scholarly scrutiny as well—a common task of the studies collected in this volume.

The studies in the first chapter on *learned demonology, images of the devil* draw their material from Central and Northern Europe, two areas hitherto less explored by researchers. Their rich documentation and new approaches provide ample material for the increasing scholarly interest in these matters.

Benedek Láng presents a hitherto unknown Polish magical handbook from the early fifteenth century. He points out, that, although the magic it contains is not explicitly demonic—so, in the strict sense of the word it is not necromantic—this handbook could still count as a typical example of its genre. Situating the contents of this codex preserved in Krakow within the broad medieval history of magical handbooks, he also attempts to find specific Polish and Central European traits in this collection of magical texts.

Anna Kuznetsova deals with the confrontation of saints and saintly recluses with demons who try to divert them from their holy enterprise with ruses. Her examples come from Slavic orthodox Christendom: the impact, for example, of the model of the Byzantine "fools for Christ's sake" in translations (such as the Slavic life of Andrew the Fool) in inspiring followers at the Kievan Caves monastery (such as monk Isaac, whom the demons tried to seduce), or of religious writers such as John of Ephesus in spreading this spirituality. The stories are instructive as to how demons can triumph if the saintly person—hermit, recluse, exorcist—falls prey to his pride, but they are powerless before the „wall of bronze" of humility.

Erzsébet Tatai analyzes the iconography of the devil in medieval Hungary. In order to situate it in a general context, she provides an

overview of the evolution and varieties of the representation of the devil from the Old Testament to the end of the Middle Ages, from the chaos dragons and monsters to the tiny medieval animal-shaped devils, or those who took on human shape with or without some animal-like members. The Hungarian iconographic material is extant from the eleventh century on; the devil was depicted on frescos, panel paintings, and manuscript illuminations. The author pulls this broad set of sources together in her analysis, characterizing each type of representation in turn. Besides devils, her analysis also extends to other "devil-like" demons and fiends.

György E. Szőnyi analyzes the learned tradition of the magic arts, principally related to the *Corpus hermeticum,* cultivated by no lesser figures than Ficino, Trithemius, Cornelius Agrippa, and Guillaume Postel. In the footsteps of Lynn Thorndike, Aby Warburg, and Frances Yates he gives an overview of the most popular magic books, such as *De figura Almandel, Clavicula Solomonis, Ars Notoria Solomonis, Liber sacer*, and *Liber juratus* of Honorius, with particular attention to the changing shapes of the devil and the varieties of demons in these writings. On the other hand, he also reveals another typical trait of these writings: the desire for deification and the drive for *exaltatio*, which have never ceased to be major ambitions of humankind.

The study written by *Éva Szacsvay* is a kind of early modern continuation of, and complement to, the essay by Erzsébet Tatai: she here analyzes the representation of the devil in Hungarian Protestantism. This subject's interest relies on the fact that we find no frescos or panel paintings in the row of devil depictions by Hungarian Lutherans and Calvinists, as is generally the case with any Protestant confession; we must therefore be satisfied with the symbolic devil-figures used for decoration. Yet, from this type of source the author provides us with extremely rich material, consisting primarily of the painted decoration of the wooden ceilings of Protestant churches, which is virtually unknown in European research.

Ulrika Wolf-Knuts provides a selection of Swedish and Finnish devil legends and a most interesting analysis of the devil as "helper" at childbirth. She clarifies the relationship of these legends to the myth of creation in the Book of Genesis, and calls our attention to the trickster features of medieval devil figures. As a consequence, she observes that

the medieval devil type has a dual character, that of a trickster and culture hero at the same time, whose actual face changes according to the various phases and contexts of the transformation of its myth into mythological stories and, subsequently, legend.

The second part of the book, entitled *Exchanges between elite and Popular Concepts,* gathers studies dealing with the relations of the popular universe of spirits and demons with the recording of all this in written culture and the evolution of the ecclesiastical concepts of the devil.

The essay written by *Karen P. Smith* approaches the world of demons, represented by dragons or by the devil taking the shape of a dragon, from the perspective of dragon-slayer heroes; among them, she deals principally with the legends of St. Margaret of Antioch. The folkloristic analysis of the narratives in the hagiography of St. Margaret shows several traits in common with magical beliefs and saintly figures associated with childbirth in European popular religion. One can also discover traits of the "divine midwife" or of goddess-like demonic creatures such as Berchta, Frau Percht and Frau Holle in her figure.

Studying archival documents pertaining to Polish witch-trials, *Wanda Wyporska* asks herself how judicial narratives are related to learned demonological concepts and to popular devil-beliefs in local folklore, which had been the soil from which the witchcraft accusations sprang. She examines the printed source material, which mediated elite demonology: Latin treatises or Polish translations of Latin demonological writings. On this basis she can present a selection of the ideas and images of the devil prevalent in the Polish lands during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Jonas Liliequist analyzes the relationship of elite demonology and folkloristic devil concepts, also on the basis of witch-trial documents, in his case those from Sweden. His analysis focuses on narratives speaking of sexual contacts with the devil. He also discusses demonic figures of folk-belief, such as female water spirits or forest nymphs. Analyzing the testimonies of the accusers and the witchcraft confessions in the trials, he traces what changes occur in these beliefs during the two centuries of witchcraft prosecutions in Sweden. He observes the "bestialization" of the figure of the demons, the "demonization" of folk-belief, and the gradual appearance of naturalistic and rationalistic explanations for these phenomena.

Soili-Maria Olli also deals with the figure of the devil in Swedish witch-trials, and her inquiry is centered on the problem of the devil's pact. There have been considerable changes both in the concepts of the devil in Lutheran demonology and in folkloric devil-beliefs, and several of these changes could be ascribed to the exchanges and intermingling of these two mythologies in the course of witchcraft prosecutions. Nonetheless, important differences persisted. According to Lutheran belief the devil is by definition nothing but evil, whereas the devil of the folk beliefs is closer to humans and also appears as a helper figure. In light of this difference, the concept of the devil's pact acquires a different meaning in different contexts.

Part III, dealing with *evil magic and demons in East European and Asian folklore,* provides inquiries from a very broad geographical spectrum: along with studies on Slovenian, Macedonian, Bulgarian, Greek and Ukrainian Jewish folklore, there is even a study on demon beliefs among the Mongols. This final essay, a kind of external confirmation, sheds light on some generally valid characteristics of the relationship of dominant ("official") religion and popular beliefs in demons. As to the lively variety of all the folkloric demon figures and diabolical creatures presented in these studies, one might still add that even this sample is only a small fraction of the extremely rich demon-mythology of Central and South-East European folklore.

Ilana Rosen deals with Jewish folklore, based on the once-existing mystical and magical world of the Hasidic Rabbis in Carpatho-Russia (or Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia). He collected his material in Israel, from immigrants having memories of the 1920s and '30s. The narratives reflect the historical changes in Hasidism, the mixed attitudes of these communities in face of modernization, and the real life history of the wonder-maker Rebbe in Hust. At the same time, they contain a large portion of the mystical and magical legacies of Hasidism as well. In the hagiography of the Rabbi, an episode related to a dog provides the author with a mystical and realistic interpretation, as well as with an opportunity to show the relationship of an individual protagonist and a storytelling community.

The study by *Monika Kropej* provides a brief overview of Slovenian folk belief: mythical beings, magic, witchcraft and healing; she also presents the world of folkloric demons. In the second part of her es-

say she examines, on the basis of her fieldwork, the belief systems of Rosental, a Slovenian village in Carinthia. The bulk of her material comes from the repertoire of a 76-year-old woman healer.

Ľupcho S. Risteski's paper takes us to the world of folkloric demons in Macedonia. His central theme is provided by the 'evil,' 'unclean' dead, hostile to human communities, and the demons that issue from these monstrous dead. The most important of these beings is the vampire. The author's experience confirms that the vampire beliefs—with all the paraphernalia of preventive and protective rites against them—still constitute a live and vigorous part of Macedonian folklore. Along with a systematic description of vampire beliefs and related protective rituals, the author also discusses the myths concerning other hostile dead in the Balkans: the unbaptized, the unmarried, the suicidal, the drowned, etc.

Anna Plotnikova provides a panorama of Balkan demons protecting places according to Slavic, Albanian and Greek folklore. The variety of these beings spreads from the *genius loci;* it lives in houses, especially fireplaces, protecting spirits, patronizing humans, families, villages, forests, lakes, sometimes bearing the traits of the "Lord of the animals." One of their interesting features is that they protect their communities from hail, as do the patrons of the sorcerers living there, bearing the same name. The author provides a classification of these beings—appearing in the shape of ghosts, humans, animals and dragons—named *stikhio, stihia, stopan* or *lamia.*

Vesna Petreska again examines an aspect of Macedonian demonology: the case of the fate-women, a type well-known all around the Balkans. Defining the fate of the newborn is the principal function of the Greek *moiras*, and the related Roman *parcae,* those mythical beings who always come in groups of three. The belief in their workings is still well alive in Macedonian village communities. The author presents their roles in our day, and depicts their principal mediator and "representative," the figure of the grandmother/midwife.

In the article by *Zmago Šmitek* the typical demonic creatures of Slovenian folklore, the dog headed—*psoglavaci*—are analyzed in the context of the late antiquity Romance of Alexander the Great. The literary and folkloristic remnant of this legend-romance can be traced through medieval and early modern Slovenia up to the present. One of the belated folkloristic episodes of the Alexander the Great cycle shows Alex-

ander near the Great Wall in China, which is taken to be the camping place of Gog and Magog; this is analyzed by the author from a literary and folkloric point of view.

Ágnes Birtalan describes the various forms of the representation of "evil" in Mongolian folk religion, relying upon her own fieldwork. Her classificatory system reaches back to religions before the advent of Buddhism and also explores Buddhism from this vantage point. The duality of non-Buddhist and Buddhist worlds of spirits and demons and the myths of origins related to certain demons provide a useful reference point for all who strive to situate the findings of European demonology or angelology in a world-wide, cross-cultural comparative context.

Note

1 The contents of this first volume, entitled *Communicating with the Spirits* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2005) have been reproduced above, before this Introduction at pp. IX of the present volume.

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PART I

LEARNED DEMONOLOGY, IMAGES OF THE DEVIL

DEMONS IN KRAKOW, AND IMAGE MAGIC IN A MAGICAL HANDBOOK

BENEDEK LÁNG

*Qui celum et terram creavit,
quibusdam creaturis super alias
creaturas potestatem donavit.[1]*

Introduction

The curious genre of medieval magical handbooks has been researched for many decades. Already Lynn Thorndike, in his famous *History of Magic and Experimental Science,* gave a typology and an exhaustive description of magical practices, including the relatively innocent methods connected with the secrets of the natural world, and the explicitly demonic or angelic procedures. Although Thorndike gave a thorough characterization of the sources, read and listed the most important Western manuscripts, it is still possible to go deeper into the topic, the field is left open for further investigations.

Today magical handbooks are again the focus of scholarly interest. The last decades have provided us with studies and books on medieval practical magic by Richard Kieckhefer (Kieckhefer 1989, 1994), who has even published one representative piece of the genre of ritual magic (Kieckhefer 1997). Established by himself, Claire Fanger, and Robert Mathiesen in 1995, the *Societas Magica* focuses on the study of medieval, antique and early modern magic, including the sociology of magic, magical practices and theories of magic. As a fruit of these investigations a collection of studies was published, edited by Claire Fanger (Fanger 1998) that—far from limiting its interest to the field promised in the title (that is, ritual magic)—includes basic papers on non-demonic magical texts as well.

Moving from West to East on the map of scholarship, we can mention the works of Charles Burnett[2] (Warburg Institute) and David Pingree (Burnett – Pingree 1997; Pingree 1986, 1987, 1994). The real-

ization of the editorial plans of Brepols on medieval Hermetism (*Hermes Latinus*), directed by Paolo Lucentini, will also be of great help, when, together with the books already published, it will cover all the basic texts of hermetic magic. Two more basic works, two recently finished and not yet published doctoral dissertations deserve mention here: Sophie Page's work on codices of magical content in the library of St. Augustine at Canterbury (Page 2000), and Frank Klaassen's overview on magical manuscripts of British origin (Klaassen 1999).

As a result of these and many other scholarly enterprises—which would require too much time to list completely—this field of study is certainly not neglected or forgotten in the tradition of Western history of science and anthropology. However exhaustive these works may be, the topic itself is far from exhausted. As for our narrower geographical context, namely Central Europe, virtually no systematic studies have been devoted to this question (for two exceptions, see Kowalczykówna 1979 and Zathey 1972).

In this paper I aim at giving a short classification of magic first, then I shall raise some questions not yet sufficiently answered, and finally I would like to show one Central European (namely: Polish) handbook. The examination of this manuscript will not enable me to answer definitively any of the questions raised, but I will be able to demonstrate at least how our own Central European sources can provide research strategies, and how they supply new details even to Western scholars. Furthermore, as far as we—native Central Europeans—are concerned, it is not without interest to what extent the tendency of conjuring demons and angels was present in our countries.

Demons in and around Handbooks: the Notion of Magic

The history of handbooks containing magical practices is not closely related either to the evolution of archaic witchcraft beliefs, or to the domain of politically motivated courtly accusations. It is far from being a "popular" phenomenon, nor is it a subclass or precedent of the intellectual magic of medieval Neoplatonism. Although it is connected to the tolerated and encouraged astrological and astronomical research which was carried out in courtly and university contexts, it has its own history.

As a result of the necromantic or divinatory content of such books, they have never been officially tolerated (as opposed to astrology that could be practiced, taught and studied at universities, for example in Bologna, in Montpellier and in Krakow). They belong to the field of learned magic, which presupposes written culture (obviously, since we are speaking about books), though they may inherit some elements of oral tradition as well. The actors of this story are not illiterate midwives, living in a village and accused of social tensions, but neither are they kings, popes, or aristocrats charged with magical practice and thus brought under suspicion for political reasons. One of the most serious tasks in this field (both in Western and Eastern scholarship) is to explore and characterize the circle of those persons who wrote, copied, used, and read these demonic manuscripts. In many cases, however, this task cannot be carried out due to the lack of evidence. Still, if not the name and the concrete career, at least the practical or theoretical interest of the owner or the social strata to which he belonged can be researched on the basis of the codicological context of the specific genres of magical treatises. The historian's work is then to identify which texts travel alone in the manuscript tradition, and if they find themselves bound together with other magical texts, what characteristics of theirs made the collector select them together.[3] Even the manuscripts without identified possessor "give us access to the world view of their authors, scribes and collectors, and frequently betray a great deal about these individuals their professions, names, education, status, or relative wealth" (Klaassen 1998, p. 3).

In the context of necromancy, magic is the object of the book and the book is an object of magic. Books do not simply contain secret studies and the ancient wisdom; in their physical existence they are regarded as magical objects, amulets or relics and, consequently, as dangerous entities (Ganz 1992; Klaniczay – Kristóf 2001). The book itself possesses a sinister power—malign demons are its residents. Various descriptions have come to us reporting that when such books were burned, some of the people standing around heard the voices of escaping demons. Opponents ascribed to these books a kind of personality, and they viewed them as human subjects. The debate on magic is a battle of books in which they succeed, or fail and perish. Nicolaus Eymeric, the famous Catalan inquisitor (who had a close acquaintance with nec-

romantic books, since he read, condemned, and burned many of them), handled them as if they shared the numinous qualities and powers of the rites they contained (Kieckhefer 1997, Introduction). The burning was perceived as an exorcism, as well as an imitation of the punishment the magicians deserved.

Not every handbook is, however, explicitly demonic. Magical handbooks comprise a wide variety of divinatory practices from the comparatively innocent field labeled as "natural magic" through those more problematic types that are classified under the term "image magic," arriving at the dangerous area of ritual magic.

Before continuing with the catalog of the subclasses of magic, the reader can expect the author to give a concise and exact definition of what he means by the term "magic." Recent scholars emphasize various components of medieval magical practices. While Valerie Flint— following some anthropological traditions—sees magic as a non-rational way of thinking, a symbolic system, the methods of which have rather expressive, psychological and sociological efficacy than instrumental rationality and truth value (Flint 1991, pp. 12, 83, 203, 406), others disagree with the statement that magic expresses hopes and wishes, and attribute to it an alternative rationality. In the interpretation of Bert Hansen "magic is characterized by the utilization of 'occult forces' (that is, forces either supernatural, or natural but hidden) to accomplish specific desired ends, often by means of words or symbols." Instead of hope and desire, he speaks about technology and a special kind of instrumentality (Hansen 1978, p. 484). It is worth adding to his point that on the north transept fore portal at Chartres Cathedral, magic appears indeed as one of the four mechanical arts (Camille 1998, p. 135). Richard Kieckhefer follows a parallel way, and argues that in the Middle Ages magic was considered a "rationally explicable practice with objective rationality" (Kieckhefer 1994, p. 822, 1989, pp. 8–17; Jarvie – Agassi 1970).

The notion of magic with all its historical, psychological, ethnological, sociological, and scientific aspects and modifications escapes every attempt at giving one final and exact definition. Instead of defining sharply what is and what is not magic, I would rather describe some concrete cases of magical practice, and would call the similarities relating them "family resemblances," in a Wittgensteinian way (Wittgenstein

1992, 66§–67§). Instead of finding one common thing in every instance of magic, we see a complicated network of various resemblances which "overlap and criss-cross" linking various examples. These examples form a family. Therefore, I will approach magic through its various forms of manifestation, describing first its three main subcategories (natural, image, and ritual magic) which are nor sharply distinct categories (Kieckhefer 1989, pp. 8–13) (because it is hard to find the borderline between image magic and natural magic, not mentioning the latter field and the area of natural science), nor do they cover all the occurrences of magic, still they help us understand what texts were considered magical in the Middle Ages.

A Typology of Magic

The practices of natural magic are based on the conviction that different parts of the world are in occult correspondence with other ones. Thus, through these secret relations between the various items of the nature (that is, the celestial configurations, the days of the week, the parts of the day, the members of the human body, and their possible illnesses), instructions can be given for the use of the marvelous properties of these objects. This genre of magic finds its sources in the Greco-Roman tradition of notions of occult powers and processes in the natural order, and it occurs in encyclopaedias, works of natural philosophy and medicine, lapidaries, bestiaries, books of marvels, books of secrets, and weather predictions. As a rule, we can say that natural magic is rather connected with the natural world then with demonic forces.

The other extremity of magical practices is the use of ritual magic. An important example of this genre is the so-called *ars notoria*, the secret and dangerous science of attaining absolute knowledge, moral perfection and unlimited memory with the help of the invocation of angels. Medieval theurgy, the pseudo-Solomonic *ars notoria* is predominantly a manuscript phenomenon; the first printed piece of this art is an English translation by Robert Turner published in 1657.

Ritual magic has two subdivisions: necromancy (demonic magic) and theurgy (magic practiced in a Christian framework) (Fanger 1998,

vii–ix.). Both refer to the art of obtaining hidden knowledge with the help of spiritual beings, but necromancy involves the invocation of demons, spirits of the dead, and uses magic circles, written or uttered words, characters, suffumigations, sacrifices, and conjurations in order to obtain a wide variety of benefits, to cause harm or disease, and to manipulate the emotions of others, while theurgy or angelic magic tends to bring divine entities down to earth with the help of holy prayers to God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the order of benign angels. This practice presupposes various ritual preparations, confession, periods of silence and meditation, and it claims to involve holy procedures and not to use demonic help.

The texts of ritual magic are generally anonymous or pseudonymous, attributed to various oracles. Solomon's reputation as a magician has already been referred to, while some further names that played a similar role were Euclid, the Apostle Paul, Apollonius, or Honorius (considered to be the son of Euclid).[4] As far as their codicological context is concerned, they either occur by themselves, or they are bound together with other texts of the same genre (Klaassen 1998).

At halfway between natural and demonic magic, between tolerated and illicit practices, we find the methods of image magic (Thorndike 1947; Klaassen 1998). The most typical works of this genre are the *Picatrix,* Thebit ibn Corath's *De imaginibus*, Pseudo-Ptolemy's *Opus imaginum*, and a range of hermetic texts. Again, the targets of author-attribution are well-known—mythical or real—authorities, like Ptolemy, Hermes, Belenus, and Albertus Magnus. Interest in image magic is inseparable from natural philosophy, astrology and alchemy, indeed, the chief texts of image magic travel together with treatises of these genres (Klaassen 1998). The works devoted to magical images make use of magical characters, figures, powerful talismans, seals, combinations of letters, strange circular and quadrangular figures, triangles, numbers—depending upon astrological theories of celestial influence—and sometimes incorporate suffumigations (the ritual burning of various substances) and invocations addressed to spirits. Hence, in the medieval interpretation of the term necromancy, image magic finds itself called necromantic (Burnett 1996b). The most systematic medieval taxonomy of magic, the mid-thirteenth-century *Speculum astronomiae* (in earlier times attributed to Albertus Magnus), distinguishes several

subclasses of image magic. One type is abominable, that requires suffumigations and invocation (the images of Belenus and Hermes are mentioned here), another one is still detestable, though less unsuitable, which is effected by means of inscribing characters and exorcism by certain names (the rings of Solomon belong to this category), but the last one, containing only two texts, *De imaginibus* of Thebith and the *Opus imaginum* of Pseudo-Ptolemy, is acceptable, because this type does not involve exorcism, nor the inscription of characters, its talismans obtain their virtue solely from the celestial figure. If the conditions are secretly necromantic, the practice is intolerable, but as far as demons are not involved, the methods may be seen as natural (Albertus Magnus, *Speculum Astronomiae* in Zambelli 1982, pp. 240–47; for the threefold division, see also Weill-Parot 2002).

A further category of learned magic is divination, that is, the art of foretelling the future and discovering hidden knowledge through the interpretation of signs. These signs might be at one's disposal in several ways. In many cases, they are written somewhere in the natural world; most often they are located on various zones of the body. Thus, among the popular divinatory techniques, we find the reading of the lines, marks and other patterns on the palms of human hands (this art being called palmistry or chiromancy), and the interpretation of the signs occurring in particular divisions of the shoulder blades of a sheep (scapulimancy) (Burnett 1996a, XII). The justification of such procedures is that God created a world of universal correspondences, in which, through the interrelation and necessary connection of all things, future events and secrets might be revealed by means of various indications. In other cases, the signs are induced artificially by the enquirer himself (or herself, since we are speaking of widespread techniques that are also present in folk beliefs) as in the art of *sortes* literature and geomancy, where the signs to be interpreted were not placed in nature by the creator but are drawn by human interaction. Halfway between the natural and artificial realms we find a form of divination that operates with the numerical value of names—that is, signs that are rooted in the human will (that of the name giver) but are independent of the actual conditions of the enquirer. Usually, gazing into crystal balls (crystallomancy) and other ways of scrying (such as catoptromancy, that is, divination by means of a mirror) are also listed as branches of divination.

While the early Middle Ages (namely Augustine) condemned the whole spectrum of magical procedures, due to the impact of the transmission of Arabic works on natural and image magic, the condemnations became more differentiated, and the classifications got more elaborated. Thus, every magical text had the opportunity to pretend to be less demonic and less necromantic than it was in reality, and consequently to find toleration in some calm area of the complicated typologies.

The question of helping or cheating demons was always a neuralgic point in the discourse on magic. Magicians, especially in the *ars notoria,* emphasized the importance of the mental and physical condition of the practitioner. He must be well confessed and fast on bread and water for three days, and he must not eat until all the stars were in the sky. That is, confession, fasting and also chastity are prerequisites for successful invocation. Having fulfilled these requirements of ascetic preparation, he cannot be deceived by demons.[5]

This optimistic conviction of conjurers provoked a vast debate in theological and scientific discourse on the power of demons, on the possibilities of compelling them, on the dangers threatening the practitioner, and on the reasons why this art should be rejected absolutely. In the seventh century, Isidore of Seville warned his reader that demonic magic should be avoided, precisely because demons were efficient agents. Iohannes de Francofordia, when treating the subject of whether demons could be coerced, compelled, or forced by the magician, with the help of characters, figures, or with divine help (*Questio, utrum potestas cohercendi demonis fieri possit per caracteres, figuras atque verborum prolationes*) made an interesting point, namely that the demon—because of his knowledge of nature—was the best physician.[6] But even if they acknowledged the competence of demons, the consensus of theologians can be summarized in Jean Gerson's negative sentence: demons cannot be compelled by magic arts, they only pretend that they are compelled so that they will be adored like gods, and will be able to deceive their invocators: *Addens daemones non cogi per artes magicas, sed ita fingere se cogi ut colantur sicut dii et hominis fallacia multiplici decipiant.*[7]

This debate developed between two competent actors: the magician—who was an expert in invocations, and the opponent—who was careful enough not to try it, but who analyzed the handbooks accurately before burning them. The issue they were discussing played a crucial

role in the life of magical manuals, since not only the content of the handbooks served as a soil for the arguments, but the controversy itself also influenced the texts. A handbook can disguise itself if it does not want to become a victim in the fight of opinions, it can appear more innocent than it is in reality.

Interestingly, in the libraries of Central Europe very few of the available manuscripts are explicitly demonic, generally they do not contain invocations to malign spirits. Is this a sign of the caution of the readers and collectors in this part of the world, or did the necromantic handbooks perish? Three answers present themselves. Either the possessors did not dare to include open necromancy in their handbooks, or this genre did not really appear in these countries, therefore they could not be collected, or—finally—such texts existed in a greater quantity than it is known to us, but they had to remain unknown by the wider public, and hence they disappeared. In any case, the scholarly debate on the efficacy of demons influenced the chances of birth and survival.

Western and Eastern Usage

One of the most exciting and most enigmatic questions of Western scholarship regarding magical books concerns their authorship and usage: what were they used for, who copied them, who wrote and read them and for what reason. Only in some exceptional cases are we able to give precise answers to these questions, and to identify the specific persons, but we can at least identify the social strata to which they may be related. This genre obviously belongs to written culture, and presumably to clerical culture. Kieckhefer employs the expression "clerical underworld" when referring to the group of the users, while others attribute this demonic practice generally to the low clergy (Bylina 1990, pp. 301–13). Referring to R. R. Bolgar (Bolgar 1978, p. 178; Murray 1978, chap. 9), William Eamon speaks about the rise of an "intellectual proletariat, a group composed of university-educated laymen who had failed to find useful or permanent employment" (Eamon 1994, p. 69). An "underworld of learning," clerics—either anonymous or known otherwise through other contexts, medical doctors, and members of universities could have been the real necromancers and practitioners

of magic. Their curiosity in experimental and occult studies, their education, profession, background, convictions, and wishes can be disclosed with the help of the books they collected, considering the selection of the texts, the tables of contents, and the indices and marks they left in the margins.

The same questions are to be asked again in a Central European context. What do we know about those persons who wrote, copied, and used necromantic manuals? Did Central Europe have its own magicians or was the presence of necromantic handbooks due to the simple curiosity of well-known intellectuals at the universities and courts? In other words, in what stratum of the society should we look for the readers: in that of anonymous clerics or in that of university masters? Did they add their own inventions to the field of magic, or were they mere followers of the Western practice, importing its manuals? Did they belong to the local "clerical underworld"? Were they trained in Polish, Czech, or Hungarian universities? Did they possess such handbooks for use or out of pure curiosity? To put it in a general way: what was the place of the necromantic books on their shelves?

A great deal of manuscripts in Central European libraries are to be examined before we can provide sufficient answers to these questions. There are fortunately several concrete examples where we have some knowledge about the specific persons who can be regarded as magicians.

Starting with the relatively well-known cases, we can mention the famous case of Conrad Kyeser, the German mercenary captain, trained physician and engineer, who—living in exile in Bohemia after 1402—wrote the *Bellifortis*, a treatise on magical warfare (Eamon 1994, pp. 68–71; Kyeser 1967). Kyeser was not a nobleman, he was born of burgher parents, he got university education, and his profession was originally medicine. The exceptionally illustrated *Bellifortis* lists methods of military technology, magical recipes and formulas, and necromantic amulets. One should not get surprised by the mixture of such remote interests, in the late Middle Ages and in the Renaissance, the combination of medical astrology, engineering and magic (which is a branch of technology according to Kyeser) was rather natural. Kyeser, having lived in several courts (including that of King Wenceslas of Bohemia), and having enjoyed his informal power as a free intellectual and a prac-

ticing engineer and sorcerer, for political reasons, and possibly accused of sorcery, was forced into exile in a small community in the Bohemian mountains. Thanks to his luck, some unemployed German illuminators passed his mountain village, and hiring them, he could prepare his beautifully illustrated work (that was published by Götz Quarg in two volumes together with the fascinating pictures, see Kyeser 1967). Its first chapter starts with symbolic astrological planet pictures, and these pages are exactly those that survived in a fragment (kept in Budapest at present) choosing the emperor and King Sigismund as the knight symbolizing the Sun. The book that originally contained the eight extant folios was probably copied for Sigismund and was kept later in the Corvina Library of King Matthias (Csapodi 1966, 1974).

The most curious source relating to the field of magic in the Polish Middle Ages is undoubtedly a peculiar magical book containing instructions on pursuing crystallomancy, prayers and a number of miniatures, known as the *Modlitewnik Władisław Warnenczyka* (Władisław Warnenczyk's prayer book) (Bernacki – Ganszyniec 1928; Korzeniowski 1928; Borkowska 1999), held at present in the collection of the Bodleian Library (its signature: Rawl. liturg. d. 6). The owner of this prayer book was most probably Wladislas I, King of Hungary who died in the battle of Varna in 1444, though this attribution is not completely certain; the book has also been linked with Wladislas II, King of Bohemia and Hungary. In the center of the practices described by the prayer book, there is a crystal, a rather unusual one, however, because it is of quadrangular shape and bears (if the text is well understood) engraved names of God and angels, such as Agla, Sabaoth, Tetragrammaton, Emanuel, and Messiah. The text is a typical case of the angelic type of ritual magic presented in a Christian framework. With the crystal and with the advice of the helping angels, all the secrets of the world are to be revealed. The angels invoked through the prayers enter the crystal, which gets clarified, enlightened and illuminated, and at the end of the preparatory stage for the vision, they open it. The author, who was rather a compiler, relied mainly upon orthodox prayers of common use. Thus, he constructed the appearance of a regular prayer book, making use at the same time of the ritual character of this genre (Ganszyniec 1928, pp. 78–82). However, he also included a number of magical elements in his handbook. One of the prayers (Bernacki –

Ganszyniec 1928, pp. 13–16) comes definitely from the tradition of *ars notoria* indicating that the author knew and used Solomon's art, but he left out the methods of fumigations and the most explicit rubrics of magic. According to a very recent discovery (made by Claire Fanger with the modest involvement of the present author) the source of almost all the formerly unidentified prayers (approximately one third of all the prayers) is a basic and most famous text of ritual magic, the *Liber visionum* of John of Morigny (Fanger – Láng 2002). This finding changes completely our previous picture on the intentions of the compiler of the prayer book (for further details on this source, see Láng 2005).

This is not, however, the only trace of the crystal-gazing tradition in Krakow from the first half of the fifteenth century—as the acts of the trial of Henry the Bohemian (Henricus Bohemus) accused of conjuration of demons, necromancy, and the propagation of Hussite ideas, testify (MSS Biblioteka Jagiellońska 2513 and 2014; Zathey 1974, 1966, Birkenmajer 1936, 1972). Henry, a distinguished member of the royal court of Wladislas Jagiellon, was accused in 1429 with three different charges: inclination to the ideas of Hussitism, astrological and magical practices accomplished for finding treasure hidden in the earth, and keeping forbidden necromantic books (Birkenmajer 1936). The "Hussite necromancer" avoided capital punishment, he was finally jailed, and from recently found documents we learn that he managed to leave prison; in 1440 he lived free in Krakow (Kowalczyk 1971). We learn from the documentation of the trial that Henry possessed heretical and magical books containing invocations of demons, and that together with other university masters and a boy medium he used crystallomancy and invoked demons in order to find hidden treasure (Wielgus 1988; Láng 2005).

A lot of information can be gained from the other side: the examination of confession manuals, and the theoretical treatises by Stanisław of Skalbmierz (Chmielkowska 1979; see also Wyrozumski 1995), the first rector of the renewed university of Krakow. He was the abovementioned lawyer involved in the trial of Henry the Czech, he also participated at the council of Constance. He devoted one of his many sermons (*Magistris non inclinavi aurem meam*) (BJ 192 f. 104r–106r; BJ 193 f. 118v–121v) to the question of superstitions, magic and advanced

some original theological arguments against magic (Kowalczykówna 1979). From other sources written at the time in Krakow (that is confession handbooks and lists of questions to be put at the visitation of the bishop) we find questions about the magical application of pictures, about the use of amulets,[8] and about the invocation of demons, which indicates that all these practices were a crucial issue at the time (Kowalczykówna 1979).

This sporadic list of the examples of the (real and suspected) Polish practice of magic could be continued with fragments found in the binding of medieval codices, such as a one-page fragment of an *ars notoria* text (BJ 2076; Zathey 1972, p. 102) listing a great number of demon and angel names, and another piece of parchment that gives formulae to protect from bad luck and to achieve prosperity (BJ 2288; Zathey 1972, pp. 103–4). There are also intact codices with various practices (palmistry, geomancy, use of Scandinavian runes for naming demons, magical orations, experiments, amulets, love magic, use of stones, alchemy and magical recipes) that deserve much more investigation[9] than is possible here, therefore I will concentrate on one single magical handbook that will betray "*pars pro toto*" a great deal about the methods, problems, and findings of such research.

A Polish Handbook (Ms BJ 793): Description

Codex No. 793 held in the Biblioteka Jagiellońska is a typical handbook. It contains a selection of practically oriented texts, supplied with many charts, figures, indices and cross-references on the margins as well as with special green (a rather rare color in codicology) and red notes helping the reader to find what he is looking for. Due to the variety of strange circular and quadrangular figures, mystical characters, and letter-combinations, the handbook is visually exciting as well. Big geomantic charts composed of point-diagrams help the user to find answer to his questions, and concentric movable wheel systems (borrowed from the Lullian and the Cabbalistic tradition) provide combinatorial and mnemotechnic methods for remembering the truth once learned.[10]

This selection comprises both average astrological texts and treatises of magical nature belonging mostly to the area of divination and image

magic.[11] The long list of the works bound together around 1460 (see the Appendix) starts with texts on nativities and astrological medicine (*De urina non visa*, *De aegritudine*) and goes on with considerations on the nature of the zodiac signs and the effects of the moon on human life. So far nothing is exceptionally magical; the codex is one of the many astrological and medical items held in the Biblioteka Jagiellońska compiled or written in the fifteenth century. The following set of texts, however, is devoted to the practices of image magic.

In the first of them (*De septem quadraturis planetarum seu quadrati magici*), we find magical squares composed of three times three, four times four or more small squares, each containing a number. If we add up the numbers in any direction (horizontally, vertically, or diagonally) we obtain the same amount. Each of these larger squares corresponds to a planet and represents its secret qualities. Now and here comes the magical procedure, having inscribed each magic square on a thin metal plate or coin, all kinds of aims can be attained, including harmful ones as well as those of love magic.[12] The figure of Mars, for example, is made for war and battles and destruction. It is to be sculpted on a thin piece of copper in its hour and day (i.e. Tuesday), then some menstrual blood or the clothing (*pannus*) of a man hung or killed with a sword, or (in case the previous items are not available) mouse or cat excrement is needed, and the talisman is ready for work. "If you put it in a building, it will not be inhabited but be left deserted. (…) And if you place it over a business (*super mercaturam*), it will be utterly destroyed. And if you share the aforesaid figure in the name of two merchants who are fond of each other, hatred will fall between them." (Lidaka 1998, p. 67). The figure of the moon written on parchment and prepared according to the instructions is appropriate against evil and thieves, and it is good to expel somebody whom you hate, provided cucumber and watermelon seeds were used in the process of preparation.

The following text, the *De imaginibus* by Thebit ibn Corath is not less ambitious regarding practical goals. Referring to Aristotle, it claims that the "science of images" is higher and more precious than geometry and philosophy.[13] In accordance with this statement, the author gives the procedures as to how (under what constellation, with what words uttered) the magical images, or rather statuettes, are to be prepared and

used. The images serve to drive away scorpions, to destroy a city, to find missing objects, to influence a king, and to stimulate love or hatred between two persons.

This classical example of image magic (which occurs twice in the codex) is followed by the *Secretum de sigillo Leonis* attributed to Albertus Magnus, and a set of descriptions of geomancy (Charmasson 1978; 1980; Thorndike 1923–1958, 2. vol. pp. 110–123). Some of them are anonymous (Bolte 1903, p. 289), some attributed to Albedatus (*Geomantia*) (Thorndike 1923–1958, 2. vol. p. 119; Bolte 1903, pp. 299–300), Socrates Basileus (*Prognostica*) (Thorndike 1923–1958, 2. vol. pp. 116–17; Bolte 1903, pp. 296–98), and rex Amalricus (formerly called *Experimentarius*) (Burnett 1977; Brini Savorelli 1959; Bolte 1903, pp. 298–99).

In this context, the term "geomancy" has nothing to do with earth. As is well-known, the tradition of magic, from Varro and Isidore onwards, throughout the Middle Ages, makes geomancy correspond to divination by the element of earth. In this case, however, it refers to a divination in which, by marking down a number of points, and then connecting them by lines, a set of figures is obtained which serves as a key to obscure tables.

Our texts, however, do not belong to the main tradition of geomancy, they are simple books of fate, lists of questions and tables using geomantic methods.[14] They are less complex than the genuine techniques of geomancy on which they are based. By arranging the points in a special order of pairs and single points, we receive graphical figures which can be represented numerically as sets of four binary elements. The result, therefore, can be 1111, 1212, 2212, etc. There are sixteen such lists of digits, eight of which are favorable, and eight unfavorable. Having learned this complicated process, the operator is able to answer special questions concerning life, death, imprisonment, marriage, and enemies, such as whether one should join the clergy or remain a layman, whether a rumor is true or false, whether to buy a certain thing or not, whether a journey will be dangerous, whether a child will be born or not and of which sex it will be. For final answers, the reader is directed in these manuals either to the kings of the Turks, India, Spain, Babylonia or Romania, or to the so-called "Judges of the Fates." There are twenty-eight such judges corresponding to the divisions of the

Zodiac or to the mansions of the moon, and although this is not an explicitly demonic treatise, these answer-giving "Judges of the Fates" play an analogous role to that of the omniscient demons in ritual magic.

The compiler of the book was also interested in the preservation of youth (*De consideratione quintae essentiae* by Johannes Rupescissa), in the water of life, in the secret power of stones (*De lapidibus* attributed to Ptolemy and *Lapidarius Mercurii*), in various experiments for producing a mixture for secret writing which is invisible for the average reader[15] (*De nonnullis experimentis*) and for finding hidden objects (*De re certa vel desperata*). Such a collection would have been incomplete without the greatest work on talisman magic, the *Picatrix* (text edition: Pingree 1986), and this is indeed the closing text of the codex. This version is unfinished; it contains only the first two parts of the *Picatrix*, including the theoretical chapter on the meaning of necromancy, the description of images serving various magical purposes (causing long-lasting love, destroying cities, expelling snakes, and separating friends), and the chapters on how one can learn the science of images. This copy deserves every scholarly interest, first because it belongs to a small group of Latin *Picatrix* texts dating from before 1459 (the majority comes from sixteenth–seventeenth centuries), and second because it contains pictures of the planetary and decanic figures, and is the only illustrated *Picatrix* known to us. The rich illustration of the text also helps with dating; the clothes in the pictures point to the fourth decade of the century, and they are in the Bohemian style of these times (Ameisenowa 1958, pp. 180–84). And this observation leads us to the next question: Where was the manuscript copied from, and what purpose did it serve?

A Polish Handbook (Ms BJ 793): Context

The codex must have been written in Krakow; it contains texts of Polish origin, such as the work on the disposition of the airs by Petrus Gaszowiec, a Polish astronomer-astrologer, and it also contains a sentence by the Polish-speaker scribe in the second treatise of the book (f. 38v; Rosińska 1984, p. 616). Although the beginning of the codex is missing, and we do not have any indication on its possessor, on the ba-

sis of the character of the texts collected we can conclude that he was a learned person. David Pingree, the editor of *Picatrix*, supposes that the codex was copied from an Italian version (Pingree 1986, xvi).

The identification of the owner of this book may shed light on the above questions concerning the clerical underworld. If Pingree's assumption is right, and the codex is a copy of an Italian book, it might have been brought to Poland by a master of the university of Krakow, Petrus Gaszowiec (Wlodek 1996, "*codicis origo et fata*"). Gaszowiec (before 1430–1474) was an astrologer, astronomer, physician, and the Rector of the Jagiellonian University on three occasions (Birkenmajer 1972, pp. 457–59, 527–29; *Polski Słownik Biograficzny.* vol. 7, pp. 294–95; Markowski, 1990, pp. 161–82; Pelczar 1887–1904, vol. 2, pp. 114, 178–79, 198; Muczkowski 1849, pp. 40, 43; Keussen 1928, vol. 1, p. 570). He came from a noble family and was one of the many wandering students of the fifteenth century.[16] He returned to Krakow from Italy and Cologne in 1456, just before the creation of the manuscript. In Perugia he was probably a pupil of Nicolaus Rainaldi de Sulmona and received a doctorate in medicine (1452–54); at the University of Cologne he continued his medical studies under Gerardus de Hamont until 1456. On his travels, he was accompanied by two copyists, what helps us to understand how the contents of such a handbook could have been transmitted.

The book itself, as an object, was not a simple import from Italy or Germany. It was bound in Krakow around 1460, and written by Polish hands. However, most of the texts are undeniably reproductions of well-known Western writings. The whole book seems to be a selection of Gaszowiec's favorite treatises, either on account of their connection with his own writing *De mutatione aeris*, or simply because he found them stimulating.

Though the problem of ownership cannot be solved decisively, and Gaszowiec's role in the history of the codex is only a supposition, the intellectual circle to which such a book belongs can be identified. Some of the texts contained in BJ 793 are identical with parts of some other codices of the Jagiellonian Library (BJ 566, 805, 813) that belong together and witness a similar interest in magic, medicine, and astrology, and such "inter-codical" relationships turn our attention to the content and history of these books.

BJ 813 is a handbook of medical and astrological texts composed of two parts, the first is rather a curriculum handbook, serving the studies of a student of medicine (Hippocrates: *Liber Aphorismorum,* Galenus: *Ars parva,* Philaretus: *De pulsibus, De aqua ardente, De cursu Lunae*), while the second involves some classical texts of magic and medicine (Ps. Aristoteles: *Secretum secretorum; Interpretationes somniorum*; Arnoldus de Villanova: *Introductio in iudicia astrologiae*; Messahala: *De occultis*; Dorotheus Sidonius: *Capitulum de occultatione annuli*) (see also, Zathey 1966).

BJ 805 contains among other pieces the *Centiloquium* of Hermes (which was also included in BJ 793), a geomantic treatise,[17] and the *Experimenta* (later known as *Liber aggregationis*) attributed to Albertus Magnus (which is again identical with one part of BJ 793). This last item is one of the most respectable compilations on secrets and experiments in the Latin Middle Ages, it describes the marvelous virtues of plants, stones and animals, explains how they can be used with malicious intent, but claims at the same time that "the science of magic is not evil, for by the knowledge of it evil may be avoided and good followed" (Eamon 1994; Thorndike 1955).

Both BJ 813 and 805 are the fruits of the first golden age of the university, they were collected around 1364 and owned first by professor Herman z Przeworska. These highly respected medical books were later bought by Andrzej Grzymala, and when he died in 1466, his older fellow, Jan Oswiecim (d. in 1488) purchased them (Zathey 1966, pp. 106–7). We know Oswiecim originally as a professor of theology, but his later acquisitions (after 1466) show rather medical interest. He received, for example, the BJ 830 a medical codex from Gaszowiec. Among those ancient and precious books which came from Grzymala and arrived to Oswiecim we find also the BJ 839, which contains the *Liber geomantiae* of Hugo de Santalla and another *Experimenta Alberti*. It is worth mentioning that Oswiecim prepared a table of contents in both BJ 805 and 813, and in these lists he neglected the geomantic text, the *De occultis* by Messahala, the *De occultatione annuli* attributed to Dorotheus Sidoneus, and the *De aqua ardente*. Therefore, I am convinced that it is not an over-interpretation to suppose that the magical content of these medical codices reflects rather the interest of Grzymala than that of Oswiecim.

Andrzej Grzymala de Posnania (ca. 1425–1466) (*Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, 9, pp. 114–16; Markowski 1990, pp. 25–27) graduated from the Krakow University, and just like Gaszowiec, he spent some years in Italy (1460–61), partly in Rome and perhaps also in Perugia. In 1453 and 1458 he was the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, in 1464 the Dean of the Medical Faculty, and finally in the winter term of 1456/66 the Rector of the university. Taking into consideration that Petrus Gaszowiec was the Dean of the Medical Faculty in 1459 and 1462, and the Rector of the university in 1464 and in the summer term of 1465, it is plausible to suppose that they knew each other quite well.

One more person can be related to the group of Grzymala, Gaszowiec and Oswiecim: Mikołaj Wodka de Kwidzyn or Nicolaus Marienwerder[18] (ca. 1442–1494), doctor of philosophy and medicine (Birkenmajer 1924; 1926; Markowski 1990, pp. 158–61). He started his studies at the University of Krakow in 1462, mainly in astronomy and mathematics. The fruit of these studies was a little astronomical treatise, the *Calendarium cyclicum* composed in 1464. Around 1468, he—supposedly—went to the new Hungarian university in Pozsony (Bratislava in today's Slovakia), the *Academia Istropolitana* (Domonkos 1969; Gabriel 1969; Klaniczay 1990) where he met Johannes Regiomontanus. In the following decades we find him in Bologna where he studied medicine, later in Urbino, and finally again in Poland where he supposedly taught Nicolaus Copernicus. From our point of view, his early years are the most interesting, because there is a codex owned by him at that time, partly written by his own hand, containing his *Calendarium* and a treatise on chiromancy (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod Lat. 4007 (1449) f. 73r–77r: *Introductio in chiromantiam*; f. 77v–128r *Calendarium Cyclicum*. Csapodi 1984, p. 24; 1981, pp. 121–27; Unterkircher 1976; vol. 4, p. 189; Markowski 1990, p. 320; Birkenmajer 1926, pp. 232–36). Taking into consideration both his interest (testified by his codex and his curriculum) and chronological data (i.e., Marienwerder was a student at the Krakow University when Gaszowiec and Grzymala were professors) Marienwerder's biographer makes it likely that there was a connection between them (Birkenmajer 1926, pp. 129–34).

We have therefore a group of university persons related in some ways to handbooks containing magical practices. The evidence available does

not enable us to draw more conclusions, to determine to what extent they were interested in image magic, and to decide whether they simply read or even practiced the talismanic techniques. We can say for sure, however, that such handbooks were present on the bookshelves of some important doctors of the Krakow University in the middle of the fifteenth century. Considering them together with the earlier described circle using crystallomancy and invoking demons, it is understandable how the limit between tolerated and illicit magic became less and less clear, and why such a question *"Utrum futurorum divinacio, ex genere suo illicita, in aliquo casu sive eius specie determinate ab ecclesia, licite sit toleranda"* moved to the center of interest (BJ 2070 f. 150r–181r; Kowalczykówna 1979, p. 15). Though this specific *quaestio* condemned even the seemingly non-demonic procedures (among them the use of amulets, and other magical images) in medical practice, as practices leading to forbidden magic, the effect of such condemnations remained of limited efficiency.

I hope to have clarified some points in the area of late medieval practice of learned magic. While in the Western scholarship sufficient evidence is at the historian's disposal when characterizing the intellectual circles involved in image and ritual magic (for example Page 2000), in Central Europe the facts known to us are too sporadic to construct a full picture. Still, a close reading of the texts, an inquiry in the background of the handbooks, however indecisive and tentative it may be, and some hypotheses concerning the affiliation and the connection of their authors, scribes and collectors may shed more light on what the "underworld of learning" in Central Europe was.
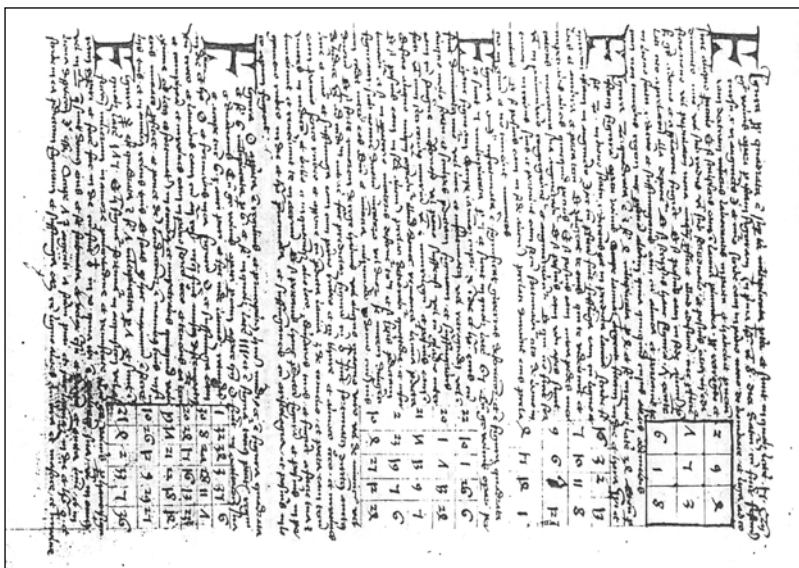
Appendix

Biblioteka Jagiellońska 793
1458–1459, Krakow

1) Albubather, De nativitatibus a Salone de Padua e lingua Arabica in Latinam translatus
2) Tractatus de nativitatibus
3) Guilelmus Anglicus, De urina non visa cum tabula
4) De aegritudine
5) Ps-Alkindus, De planetis sub radiis
6) De potestate planetarum
7) Introductio in astrologiam medicam
8) De signis et planetis
9) De naturis planetarum
10) De divisione signorum
11) Albumasar, Electiones planetrarum
12) f. 60r–61r De septem quadraturis planetarum seu quadrati magici
13) f. 61r–63r Thebit ben Chorat, De imaginibus ab Joanne Sevilla e lingua Arabica in Latinam liber translatus
14) f. 63r–v Ps-Albertus Magnus, Secretum de Sigillo Leonis
15) f. 63v De figura Leonis
16) f. 63v–67r Sortilegium geomanticum
17) f. 67v–69r Sortilegium geomanticum
18) f. 69v–71r Sortilegium geomanticum
19) f. 71v–73r Sortilegium geomanticum
20) f. 73v–81r Socrates Basileus, Prognostica
21) f. 81r–85v Albedatus, Geomantia
22) Figurae astrologicae cum canonibus
23) Sortes regis Amalricic
24) Tabula aequationum duodecim domorum caeli
25) Ps-Hippocrates, De medicorum astrologia
26) Alkindus, De pluviis epistula
27) Nota de dispositione aeris
28) Tabula mansionum planetarum
29) Petrus Gaszoviec, De mutatione aeris, Regulis (Absque fine)
30) De nonnullis experimentis
31) Ioannes de Rupescissa, De consideratione quintae essentiae
32) f. 138r De aqua ardenti seu Excerpta De aqua vitae
33) Ps-Ptolemaeus, Opus imaginum
34) Ptolemaeus, De lapidibus pretiosis
35) Lapidarius Mercurii
36) Thebith ben Chorat, De imaginibus
37) Ps-Albertus Magnus, Experimenta
38) Hermes, Centiloquium a Stephano de Messana e lingua Arabica in Latinam translatum
39) Albategni, Centiloquium
40) Leopoldus de Austria, Compilatio de astrorum scientia
41) De mutatione aeris
42) De re certa vel desperata
43) De pestilentia
44) Petrus Gaszowiec, De mutatione aeris, Regulis
45) Robertus Grosseteste, De impressionibus aeris seu de prognosticatione
46) Nota de aspectibus
47) Messahala, De revolutione annorum mundi
48) Secreta astrologorum
49) Notae ad astrologiam spectantes
50) De coniunctionibus planetarum
51) De proprietatibus duodecim signorum zodiaci
52) Introductio in astrologiam medicam
53) Alexander, De quattuor complexionibus hominum
54) Picatrix, Versio Latina, cum figuris

De septem quadraturis planetarum
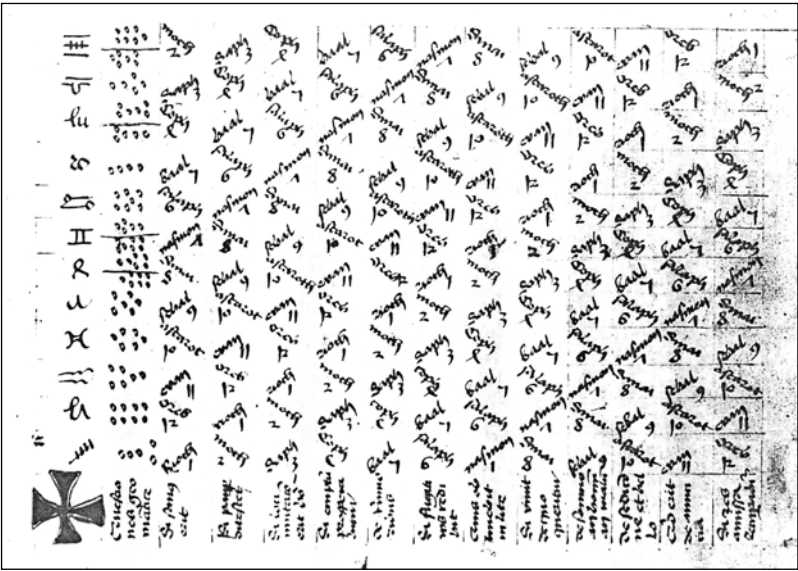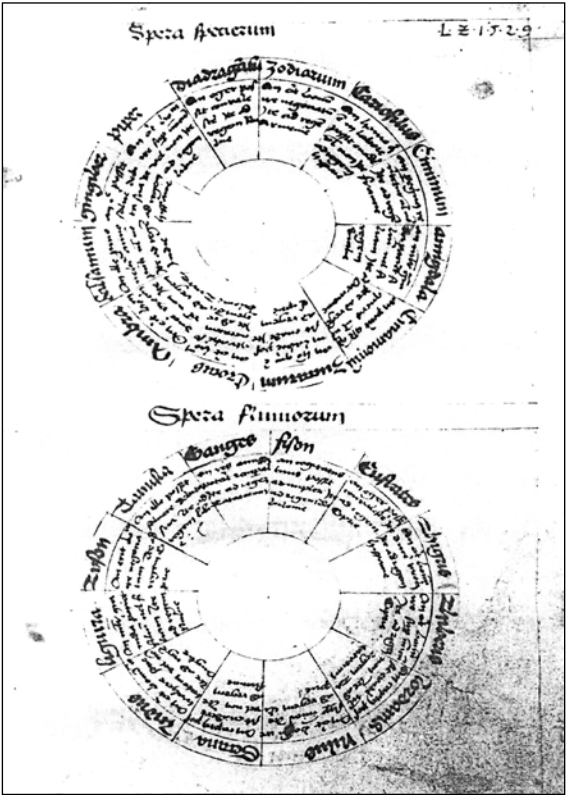

Geomantic divination

Geomantic divination

Geomantic divination

Picatrix: decanic figures

Picatrix: decanic figures
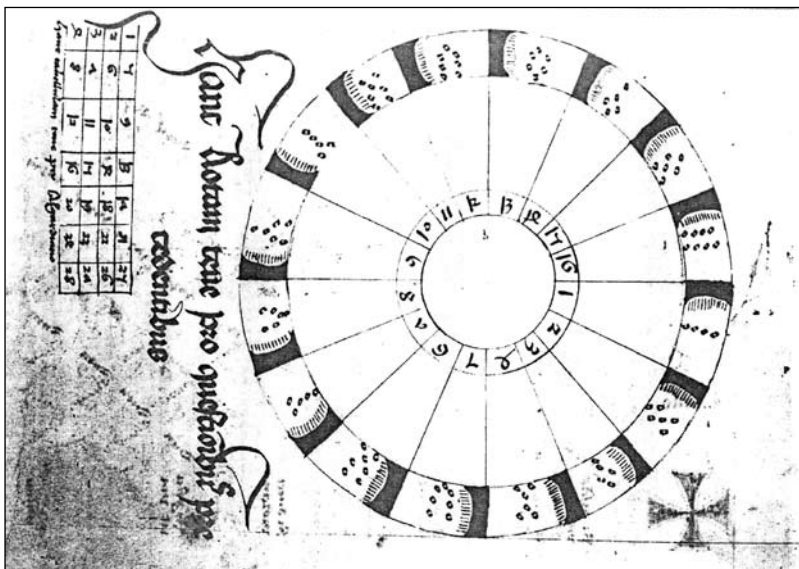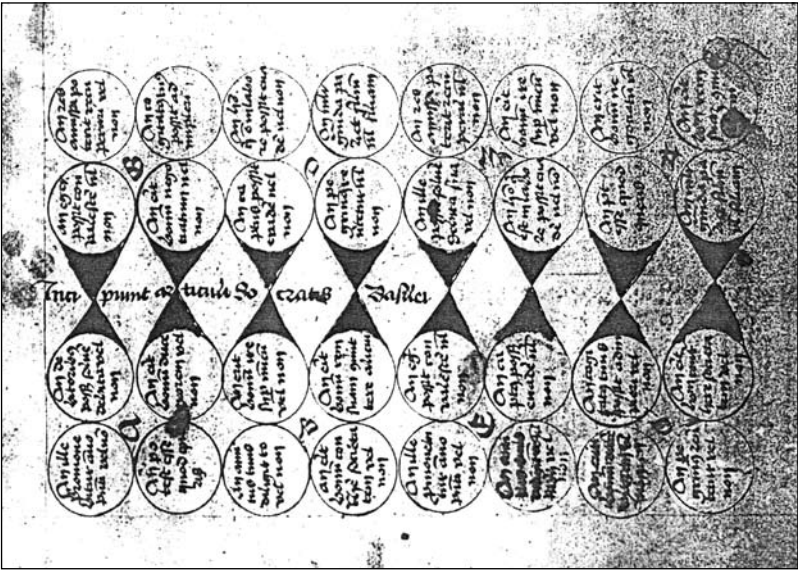
Geomantic divination

Notes

1 Brini Savorelli 1959, p. 312.
2 For a list of Charles Burnett's publications (updated in July, 1998), see http://www.sas.ac.uk/Warburg/cburnett.htm; from my point of view (Burnett 1996a) is the most essential of his works.
3 This is one of the main focuses of Frank Klaassen's study (Klaassen 1998).
4 Among the titles of these texts we find the following ones: *Liber Consecrationis, Flos Aureos, Liber Virtutis, Liber Cephar Raziel, Ars Notoria, Ars Paulina, Ars Almadel, Clavicula* or *Clavis Solomonis, Lemegeton, Liber Sacer* or *Sacratus, Ars Notoria,* and *Liber visionum Marie* which is the only text with a real and identified author (John of Morigny).
5 Kieckhefer 1997, pp. 256–257. *... opus istum (...) dei nominibus est consecratum et confirmatum ne aliquis operator falli possit, si spem et fidem bonam habeat et certam in domino Ihesu Christo (...) Sic ergo fideliter credere unicuique operatori est necesse, ne fallatur. (...) In primis, quicumque hoc opus sit facturus ad quod vocatur liber consecrationum, ab omni pollucione mentis et corporis se debet abstinere in cibo et potu, in verbis ociosis sive inmoderatis, et sit mundis indutus vestibus, novem diebus ante opus inceptum.*
6 Hansen 1901, pp. 71–82. *Ex quo sequitur quod demon est optimus medicus valde cognoscens rerum naturas scilicet herbarum lapidum et huiusmodi.*
7 "Trilogium," Prop. 14. in Gerson, 1706, col. 195; see also "De erroribus" 17us articulus "Quod per tales artes daemones veraciter coguntur et compelluntur et non potius ita se cogi fingunt ad seducendos homines: error."
8 BJ 2397 f. 279v: "Ad episcopum mittuntur ... maiores sorciarii maxime qui baptizant ymagines et qui ymolant demonibus." BJ 2415 f. 232v: "Item an sunt aliqui sacrilegi, incantatores vel divinatores cum invocacione demonum, aut aliorum nominum, aut aliquas supersticiones facientes et servantes."
9 In my forthcoming book, I attempt at giving a general picture of the use of magical handbooks in Central Europe giving detailed description on the sources.
10 For the presence and the use of Lullian wheels in magical handbooks, see Wade 1998.
11 For the list of the texts and for their sources, see Włodek 1996. vol. 6. pp. 120–137.
12 For a study and a publication of another—though very similar—version of the text, see Lidaka 1998. In this *Liber de Angelis* (Cambridge University Library MS Dd. Xi. 45 F. 134v-139r) the text on magic squares can be found together with texts of different origin: several *experimenta*, a treatise on the secrets of the planetary spirits, another one on the images of the planets and several invocations of spirits. The use of magic squares is not unique though not very frequent in the Middle Ages (Thorndike, "Traditional Medieval Tracts" pp. 259–260).
13   MSBJ 793 f 61r: "pretiosior geometria et altior philosophia est imaginum scientia." For an edited version of the text, see Carmody 1960, pp. 180–194.

14   Examples for real geomancy can be also found in Krakow: BJ 805 f. 405r-409v; BJ 839 f. 23rb-36vb, *Liber de Geomantia*, tr. Hugo de Santalla; Dresd N 100 f. 203. For the difference between geomantic treatises and the *sortes* literature, see Charmasson 1980, p. 222.

15   121v: "si vis habere scripturas in aliquam corporis parte invisibilem"; "si vis in die scripturas invisibiles nocte vero visibiles habere"; see also Friedman 1998.

16   For the relationship of the Krakow and other universities, see Byliński 1967; Gabriel 1980; Markowski 1973.

17   f. 405r-409v, identified by myself, because the catalogue of the library, following Rosińska, gave it the title *De constellationibus* which is false.

18   Kwidzyn is a town situated on an island of Vistula, called in Latin Insula Mariae. Hence the name Marienwerder.

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"A WALL OF BRONZE" OR DEMONS VERSUS SAINTS: WHOSE VICTORY?

ANNA KUZNETSOVA

Barbara Newman, in her study of devout women, demoniacs, and the apostolic life in thirteenth-century Europe proposed that in her material (thirteenth-century *exempla*) the demoniacs "played a necessary part on the stage of the evangelical drama—so necessary, indeed, that if they had not existed, clerics would have had to invent them" (Newman 1998). I believe this is also true of the importance of demonic presence in Christian literature in times earlier and later than the thirteenth century and in places other than Western Europe.

Demons as the counterparts of saints appear in many contexts in Byzantine and ancient Russian literature. There saints fight demons[1] that seduce and compromise them, exorcise demons from those possessed by evil spirits, but are also seen as possessed by demons. Some saints, mainly the "fools for Christ sake," were themselves perceived as demoniacs. The hagiographers of the first, Byzantine, holy fools were aware of this popular perception. In the Lives of the Symeon the Fool (seventh century) and Andrew the Fool (ninth and tenth century) it is recorded that the communities not only regarded them as mad, but tended to explain their prophetic abilities by their ties to demons. In the story of Andrew the Fool, when the saint tells the man in a tavern who refused to give him alms, how much money he had spent during that day and where, the wine-dealer explains such a revelation by stating that "demons know all the deeds of men and reveal them to their friends and mad people are, of course, friends of theirs" (*Žitije Sv. Andreja* 1897, p. 33). However, the problem of the *popular* perception of demonic presence in individuals or the discernment of spirits (see

Caciola 2003) in a wider sense is not my subject here, since it does not really belong to the group of questions concerning the actual fight between demonic and saintly powers.

In the early Eastern Orthodox literature the interaction between demons and humans seems to be closely connected to their lifestyle. While an ordinary man, "living in the world," could be possessed by unclean spirits, an ascetic could only be seduced by them. As far as I can see, a demon could not enter the body of an ascetic.[2] Yet, as it is well-known, demons caused plenty of trouble to monks as early as the times of the desert fathers. I intend to select and analyze some episodes from two collections of saints' lives and monastic stories: the *Lives of the Eastern Saints* by John of Ephesus (sixth century) and the *Paterikon* of the Kievan Caves monastery (compiled in the thirteenth century.). Both contain rich material on the diverse forms of the saints-demons interaction, many of which are well-known in other, *Western,* sources as well. It seems to me that they, however, emphasize an aspect less widely treated in studies about the struggle against evil spirits, addressing as they are the issues of ascetic purity being challenged in different ways, and the instruments, performers of these challenges are seen as of demonic nature.

The danger coming from demons was one of the major concerns of John of Ephesus. In his narrative, the fight between demons and saints takes various forms. Demons could, for example, scandalize ascetics; compromise them in the eyes of the community. In the *Life of James Metropolitan of Edessa,* we come across a story in which a fiend goes out of a monk's cell in the form of a laughing young woman. Surely, this episode would have caused serious harm to the ascetic's reputation in the eyes of the community. James prayed, breathed upon her, made the sign of a cross, and she turned into smoke (John of Ephesus 1923–25, 19, pp. 250–51).

Another way of demonic assault, also well-known in other hagiographic sources, was to cause bodily sickness to saints. The blessed monk Habib fell ill some years after he had expelled demons from two possessed women. His disciples convinced him to suspend the inhibitions he laid on demons to save his own life. As soon as Habib released the demons, they went back into the women. The saint was right away healed, and then drove the demons out of their victims again.

Unfortunately, John of Ephesus does not report on the blessed Habib's health after the second exorcism, thus we do not know whether the demons finally gave up or not (John of Ephesus 1923–25, 17, p. 12).

The most serious threat that demons caused to saints was, however, related to the sin of pride, and this is the aspect I wish to dwell upon. Ascetics were in danger of committing this mortal sin by their success of driving demons out of possessed people or fighting demons trying to seduce them in their cells. Both narratives contain stories where saints risk falling into vanity because of being provoked by demons in two ways: when a holy man performs successful exorcisms and thus allows himself to be proud of his achievements, or when an ascetic is convinced that he can get fame by being in reclusion. In both cases, the indication of the sinfulness of a "proud ascetic" is very frequently their conviction that the divine persons appear to them when in fact those are the demonic ones.

John of Ephesus emphasized that only a highly spiritual and ascetic person could gain power over demons. Yet, this power appears to be highly ambiguous. On the one hand, it is a holy ascetic who can receive the gift of performing successful exorcisms and thus win over demons. Yet, on the other hand, this victory can turn into a defeat, as success can lead to the sin of pride.

The blessed virgin Susan, who lived in the desert near Alexandria and did not talk nor laugh, was given the gift of healing. She also received power over fiends, who were convinced that she was made of iron. Once a blessed man came to her to confess that demons had defeated him. "The fiends have been mighty and have taken away my wits, since the whole week we have been […] fighting, and this night and day they have shown terrible sights of fear […] and I fled, and I am afraid to enter my cell." Susan chided the man saying that "Christ now seems to be a runaway and one that can be overcome by demons, and they are found to be strong and vanquishers of the power of God. But for my part I know that the Lord's power surrounds my weakness like a wall of bronze, and there is no other power that can resist it" (John of Ephesus 1923–25, 18, p. 558). This wall of bronze seems to be precisely humility: the perception by the ascetic that the miracles or the victories over the fiends are due to God and not to him or her. (By the way, John of Ephesus may be seen as one of the first feminist writers, since it

was a woman whom he made an example to be followed by a man less successful in resisting demons.)

The wall of bronze that protected Susan was her belief that her strength and her power over demons is God's protecting power and not hers. By denying her own merits in this fight with demons she avoided the sin of pride. The same lesson is to be learned from the other story of John of Ephesus, about Paul the Anchorite, who practiced "for many years heavy and severe labors of asceticism and great abstinence." Finally, he became strong enough to fight malignant fiends who lived in a certain cave. In order to drive them out, the saint went into the cave and was immediately surrounded by demons in all forms and shapes. He prayed for seven days. On the eighth day "he erected the cross in the middle of the cave and hung a bag of saints' relics at the east end of it." Then he prayed more and demons left the cave, telling Paul that it was not he but the cross that drove them out. To that the saint only agreed (John of Ephesus 1923–25, 17, pp. 111–14). In this story the *wall of bronze* was the ascetic's awareness of the power of the cross and the relics that protected him from demons and in turn saved him from the sin of pride. Both the exorcist and the exorcised believed that it was due to divine power mediated by its symbol and the relics which led to the saint's victory. His belief in the success of the fight being due not to him, but to the powers above made this victory not being reversed into defeat by falling into the sin of vanity.

In cases when the *wall of bronze* of humility is missing, ascetics are easily tempted by demons. The author of the Kievan *Paterikon* emphasizes the importance of perfectly abstinent life as a precondition for a recluse, but demonstrates that that is not enough. The monk Nikita is reported to have desired fame of holiness and to have pleaded with Abbot Nikon to let him become a recluse. Nikon did not consent and reminded him of the experience of Isaac who was seduced by demons in his cell. Yet Nikita insisted and "closed the doors behind himself." In a while the Devil seduced him. The monk was praying and heard that someone else was praying with him. He smelled pleasant essences and decided that an angel was present. So, he appealed to this *angel* that Christ should appear to him. The Devil—who had disguised himself as an angel—promised Nikita that Christ would appear to him if he stopped praying and only kept on reading. Soon after this "pact with

the angel" the monk became known for his ability to foretell the future since the Devil retold him all his deeds. The author of the narrative stressed that demons had had no power over future; they could only describe what they already have done. Nikita became also famous for his knowledge of languages.[3] The monks figured that their brother had been seduced by demons: "because […] he knew only the Old Testament and never wanted to talk about the New." Then the igumen and all the blessed elders came to him and prayed and chased out the demon of him so that Nikita never saw him again. But he could never read again and showed no sign of knowing the Old Testament (Kievo-Pecherskii Paterik, "Slovo" 25, 1980, pp. 517–21).

Isaac of the Kievan Caves monastery, who was mentioned by Abbot Nikon as a warning example to Nikita, has attracted considerable interest by scholars.[4] Yet, some points in his story still deserve study like the one related to his experience as a recluse. After having spent seven years in the monastery, he was shamed by demons while being in reclusion. He had a vision of two beautiful young men who said that they were angels and came to tell him that Jesus Christ is coming to see him: "You must greet him and bow to him." Isaac did so and at the same moment fiends unveiled themselves, saying: "You are ours, Isaac, dance with us." After they danced, Isaac was left half dead in his cell and recovered only thanks to the loving care of the monks. Later he entered a strange way of behaviour, *jurodstvo* or holy folly, as a way to overcome demons. (For that he was given the title of the "first holy fool" in medieval Russia, but that is not our concern here.) He succeeded in defeating the fiends and returned to his cell (Kievo-Pecherskii Paterik, "Slovo" 36, 1980, pp. 607–15). The message of the first part of his career, when he was seduced by demons, is that the true ascetic cannot be convinced that he can see Christ himself. Isaac believed that the one who entered his cell is Christ and thus fell into the sin of pride, for which he was duly punished. It was no coincidence that the abbot used his story as a warning to monk Nikita: Isaac was seen as the one seeking fame by the life of a recluse.

A very similar story that suggests that conviction of ability to have visions of divine persons was in itself considered to be a part of a sin of pride, is contained in the *Life of Two Monks* by John of Ephesus. A certain monk James, who became famous as an exorcist, used to gather demoniacs in a chapel, where they had to stay for two days, be-

fore exorcism could take place. The number of demoniacs grew and that caused disturbance to the other monks and the rest of the community. Therefore, James had to leave and he went to reside in another monastery. And again, he expelled demons in masses. But demons in their turn decided to mock him. They dressed a certain young woman—a demoniac who was waiting for the exorcism in the chapel—in "awe-striking forms of phantasmal rays," placed her on the bishop's throne and lit the martyr's chapel with rays so that they were seen as angels of God. And when James and another monk entered, they said to them: "We are angels, this is the Virgin Mary—bow to her." And as soon as they did so, the demons showed their real nature. The shamed monks had to leave and never exorcised demons again (John of Ephesus 1923–25, 17, pp. 220–24).

Both the *Lives of the Eastern Saints* and the *Paterikon* of the Kievan Caves monastery emphasise, just as other texts, the power of *askesis* in the fight against demons. But they are very much concerned that ascetics may gain fame by exorcising evil spirits. One way to overcome the sin of pride caused by a recluse deciding that he (or she) could acquire power over demons was that the demoniacs (or, in fact, the demons) named their exorcists themselves even if the latter did not know that they are capable of driving out demons. Two typical examples of this are the case of a demoniac from the *Paterikon* and the story of monk James from John of Ephesus' narrative. In the first, a demoniac was shouting that he is afraid to go to the Kievan Caves monastery as there are thirty monks (and he named them all) whom he is afraid of. The sign of his possession was again his ability to speak many languages, which vanished as soon as he approached the monastery and the monks whom he named came out to him. Nor did the ex-demoniac know the names of these thirty monks-exorcists any more, thus proving that it was the evil spirit's knowledge (Kievo-Pecherskii Paterik, "Slovo" 26, 1980, pp. 521–23).

The already mentioned monk James, the one shamed by demons, did initially not know that he had the gift as an exorcist. Demons named him speaking out of the possessed by telling: "James can drive us out." And when he was persuaded to come out to the demoniacs, they started to foam as soon as they saw him and James healed them with the sign of the cross (John of Ephesus 1923–25, 17, p. 220).

The motive of demons knowing the names of their exorcists is mentioned in the Bible. Yet, it is a slightly different message that the episode from the Acts of Apostles (19, 13–16) suggests. There, certain Jewish exorcists came to the city of Ephesus and said they could drive out evil spirits using the name of Jesus Christ, about whom Paul was preaching. But the demon was not as optimistic as they were: "I know Jesus, and Paul is also familiar to me. But who are you?" With these words, the demoniac attacked and bit the exorcists. So, they had to leave.

In the two cases from the monastic narratives knowledge of the exorcists' names by the demons was a way to solve the controversy between holy power and the sin of pride, while the Biblical concern was rather that of "all rights reserved" for using the name of Christ for driving out demons.

I do not want to by-pass a counter-example, in which mass exorcism is performed, so to say "officially." In the last story of the *Lives of the Eastern Saints,* James, the metropolitan of Edessa is called upon to stop the demonic possession that came upon people as a punishment for their sympathising with Nestorianism. This *political* demonic possession demanded *political* exorcism: the ambiguity of the ascetic–demons conflict is irrelevant here. The *public* holy man has to deal with the case in a public manner. James had to drive demons out of the almost entire population of four cities in Mesopotamia, where "God had sent on account of the sins of men raging madness and blindness of heart, and the population became possessed by demons, except a few. Men wailed and jumped and were mad and ran as if horsemen were riding after them, and they barked like dogs and howled, and in their madness they bit their flesh." James was asked to visit the city of Amida, where the madness prevailed. After the people promised to become Orthodox, the metropolitan exorcised them successfully (John of Ephesus 1923–25, 19, pp. 259–61).

Besides this exceptional case of "ecclesiastical politics," we have seen that the fight against demons functioned in an ambiguous way. In our narratives, evil sprits acted as both the instruments for the demonstration of the saint's God-given powers but also as challengers of ascetic purity. In a most radical way, some saints entirely refused to drive demons out of possessed humans to avoid falling into the sin of pride. The best known example of this escape is that of the stylite Maro, who

chased away demoniacs from his side by saying: "To me, the madman and man of evil life, why do you come?" He was convinced that would he agree to perform exorcisms, demons would at once size many persons just to mock him (John of Ephesus 1923–25, 17, p. 65). His humility went so far as to abstain from fighting demons, even though his holy life might have given him the power to do so.

The issue of pride, which most of the stories I quoted are concerned with, has been succinctly summarised by the famous Jesuit theologian, Karl Rahner (1904–1984), when he stated: "The Devil has all what we have, but he has no humility" (Viller and Rahner 1939, p. 48. quoted by Dinzelbacher 1989, p. 662). As we have seen, in the eyes of Eastern hagiographers it is precisely the presence or absence of humility, this *wall of bronze* built by holy men around themselves, by which the battle against the Devil can be won—or lost, as the case may be.

Notes

1 On the problem of fight between demons and saints see Dinzelbacher 1989, pp. 647–95. In the saints' fight with demons he sees three main ways: holy men resisting temptation and exorcising demons during their lifetime; doing the same after their death; and assisting believers in their resistance to the demonic assaults. His examples are very much paralleled in Eastern and Russian saints' lives, though he does not mention cases of doubtful outcome for the saints.
2 Dinzelbacher 1989, pp. 659–60. lists *askesis* as an actual fight against demons: ascetic life in itself is seen in his material as a weapon against evil spirits.
3 The problem of knowledge of languages as being divine or demonic goes back to the Bible. On different ways of treating this question see Uspenskij 1979, pp. 79–82.
4 An extensive bibliography on Isaac can be found in my colleague's M. A. thesis Kuzmenko 1998.

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AN ICONOGRAPHICAL APPROACH TO REPRESENTATIONS OF THE DEVIL IN MEDIEVAL HUNGARY

ERZSÉBET TATAI

Discussing representations of the devil is at least as complicated as discussing the devil itself. The appearances of specific forms of the devil are closely related to the evolution and changes of the notion of the devil. The more "good" and "evil" begin to polarize, the more their representations begin to differentiate; evil gradually evolves from the notion of chaos (Ricoeur 1998, pp. 175. ff.; Cohn 1994, pp. 78–89).

The creature incarnating chaos is an adversary of creation in ancient eastern myths and in the Old Testament (McGinn 1995, pp. 36–40; Léon-Dufour 1987, cols. 1149–1150; Vanyó 1988, p. 135). Usually, a dragon, some other monster, or an unknown creature represents chaos. "...the dragon is a sea monster, the representation of the old serpent symbol of cosmic water and of night and death, briefly, that of the unformed, the virtual, everything that has not yet taken 'form'" (Eliade 1987, pp. 42–43).

The beasts represented are horrific mixtures made of familiar elements because fantasy is nourished by what is already known and things are imagined according to definite parameters. Moreover, the image of the mixed creature evokes chaos, the mixing of the elements, disorder, or order that has to be created (Wittkower 1942).

In the New Testament evil appears as a more serious adversary (Léon-Dufour 1987, cols. 1150–1153): dragon and Satan are used alternately in many instances. "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." (Rev.12.9)—this image was then also used in Old Testamental contexts.[1]

However, these monsters also prevailed in Christian iconography resembling, e.g., the Christian initiation ceremony, baptism, which also followed archaic patterns. Above all, baptism is regarded as a descent into the depths of water to fight the sea monster. The model of this submersion is Christ submerging in the Jordan River, which, at the same time, means a submersion in the water of death. "As Cyril writes: 'Jesus, when submerged in water, tied up the mighty monster so that we would be able to tread on scorpions and serpents.'"[2] According to medieval Christian typology, Jonah was swallowed for the same reason, so in this respect he became the archetype of Christ. He spent three days in the belly of the whale as Christ did in the underworld. Both events anticipate Christ's descent to Hell and this analogy makes it possible to represent the gate of Hell as a "Hell-mouth," the mouth of the beasts Leviathan or Behemoth.[3]

The fight with the dragon is also an initiation, a trial of strength for Christian saints like Saint George, Saint Margaret of Antioch, Saint Philip, and Saint Sylvester (Jacobus de Voragine 1990, pp. 40–41, 103, 109, 147).

When talking about the history of the portrayal of the devil, it is important to emphasize that neither verbal nor visual representations follow immediately the change of notions. However, certain parallels and interactions may be observed between changing notions and images. In earlier times it had been considered enough to put the devil in the skin of a creature (like a serpent or a wild ass) or to apply a more general image of the chaos (a dragon). For example, the second-century *Physiologus* (Evans 1896; Rowland 1973) attributes human characteristics to animals, real and imaginary alike, which, supported by passages from the Bible, served as moral parables. However, in later times this practice proved less and less satisfactory for unambiguous representations of the evil, which in the meantime became more and more definite. Evil's special manifestation is the devil. As the depraver of creation and the main cause of chaos, the devil is akin to the creatures of chaos. Like the dragon and its teriomorphic hybrid cognates, the devil itself is also a mixed creature with the following difference. Whereas animal forms evoke the worlds of the instincts and the unconscious, the devil is an anthropomorphic creature (van Gelder 1972; Koch 1965) that clearly implies deliberate wickedness.

In European art the earliest "devil forms" date from the sixth century but "real devils" appear only around the 800s, in representations of the "Descent to Hell." The army of devils in full attire was complete by the thirteenth century and later variations were mainly products of the development of late medieval style.[4]

Christian iconography in medieval Hungary existed from the eleventh century until the middle of the sixteenth century. The wars with the Ottoman Empire and the long period of occupation in the sixteenth and seventeenth century is the reason why most relics come from areas which, unlike the central part of the country, were not too much effected, and which are now part of Slovakia and Romania.

In studying representations of the devil in medieval Hungary, I have examined wall paintings (Marosi 1987; Radocsay 1954, 1977; Drăguț 1970; Dvořáková – Krása – Stejskal 1978), altarpieces, carvings (Marosi 1987; Kampis 1940; Rados 1938; Radocsay 1955, 1967; Glatz 1983), and the *Hungarian Angevin Legendary* from the second quarter of the fourteenth century, the fullest pictorial version of the *Legenda Aurea* in Europe. Parts of it are now kept in the Vatican Library, the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, and the Hermitage in Saint Petersburg.[5]

The earliest representations of saints killing a dragon date from the thirteenth century but representations of actual devils became widespread only in the fourteenth century. Iconographically, representations of the devil in Hungary fit organically into European art, though there are some, mainly stylistic, differences (Dömötör 1986).

When discussing representations of the devil, distinction should be made between *pictorial representations of the devil* (where the devil is present but not necessarily visible), *pictorial representations of the devil's appearance* (where the devil appears to someone in a not necessarily obvious or recognizable form), and *devil-like pictorial motifs* (where not the devil itself but some other evil figure is represented). These categories often merge or overlap morphologically, though with a considerable difference in their meaning. From the perspective of my subject the main characteristic of the devil (as a special manifestation of evil) is that it may assume any form, though even "its own form" shows certain variations. It may take on the form of actual living beings (in this

case its strength lies in the form that deceives) or may appear as a hybrid creature, i.e., in "its own form."

I. The Devil in Its Own Form

Pictorial representations of the devil and representations of the appearance of the devil in "its own form" are similar. They are both composite anthropomorphic creatures. Medieval representations of the devil show a remarkably great variety and cannot be traced back to one single model or source. Also, there is no single definite type. Devils may be human-sized, giant or tiny, sometimes impish or goat-faced. They may have horns, long or trunk-like noses, bat wings, and long or short tails. Their limbs may be saw-like or jagged with spurs, their fingers claw-like, and their legs usually resemble those of birds, sometimes those of humans, and less often they may be hoofed. Devils may be blue, black, grey, red, or even white, but their color always differs from that of the humans appearing in the same picture. The image of the hoofed devil, the most widespread representation today, occurs very rarely in medieval representations. The highly variegated medieval appearances of the devil were replaced by more uniform representations only in the seventeenth century.

Different representations of the manifest devil, that is, "the devil in its own form", might be grouped either according to function or according to formal characteristics. Typologically, the "real devil" may be 1) manifest Satan, or the Lord of Hell; 2) a common devil in different functions.

1. Manifest Satan, or the Lord of Hell

There are only a few medieval Hungarian representations in which the devil's size suggests a serious adversary. However, this is the case in the following pictures: Christ descending to Hell, depicted on the high altar of the church of Saint Elisabeth in Kassa (Košice, Slovakia) (Radocsay 1955, p. 335), and a panel from Szepeshely (Spišská Kapitula, Slovakia).[6]

Christ at the Gate of Hell
Szepeshely (Spišská Kapitula), 1490–1510. Hungarian National Gallery,
Budapest. Photo: Miklós Sulyok.

That Satan has many faces is a pictorial hint to its chaotic charac-
ter. Many-faced Satans appear in a picture of the *Hungarian Angevin
Legendary* (Levárdy 1975, p. 14. M: XI), which shows the fastened
Satan at the gate of Hell, and in a panel showing Archangel Saint
Michael fighting Satan in the high altar of Németlipcse (Partizánska
Ľupča, Slovakia).[7]

Satan fastened
Hungarian Angevin Legendary, 1330s, Pier-
pont Morgan Library, New York (M: XI.)

Saint Michael
Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia, Romania)
13ᵗʰ century.
Photo: National Protectorate of
Historical Monuments, Budapest.

2. Common Devils

Many different types of common devils survive. Their functions vary: they may act as tempters, as *psychopompos*, the assistant of the Angel of the Last Judgement, or fighting for the soul of the dead, etc.

In addition to those that tempt, there are devils that hurt. The altarpiece of the Hermits Saint Paul and Anthony in Zólyomszászfalu (Sásová, Slovakia) depicts man-sized devils beating Saint Anthony (Radocsay 1955, p. 462; Divald 1909, p. 134. Fig. 17).

The common devil may be huge. In the *Angevin Legendary* it appears in front of Saint Anthony: "Dyabolus magne longitudinis erat de celo usque ad terram" (Levárdy 1975, p. 140. V:87r).

Last Judgement
Velemér, 1378.

Last Judgement
Kassa (Košice, Slovakia) about 1400. S. Elisabeth Church, North Portal.
Photo: National Protectorate of Historical Monuments, Budapest.

The devil may be tiny as in the altar-piece by Tamás Kolozsvári, "Saint Benedict and the Miracle of the Easter Food." A tiny devil crushes the bell to signal the arrival of a friar bringing food; its machinations fail, though (Mucsi 1978).

Devils assisting Saint Michael, the "Angel of the Last Judgement," are usually small, as in wall paintings in Cserkút (Dercsényi 1984, pp. 10.ff) and Velemér (Radocsay 1954, pp. 172.ff).

Death of Judah
Almakerék (Mălâncrav, Romania) 1380–1400.
Watercolour copy of the wall painting, National Protectorate of Historical Monuments, Budapest. Inv. No 44.602.

Private judgement of Becsei Vesszős György (Detail)
Zseliz (Želiezovce, Slovakia) around 1390.
Photo: National Protectorate of Historical Monuments, Budapest.

Common devils escort evil souls to hell above the north gate of the Church of Saint Elisabeth, Kassa (Marosi 1987, II. fig. 1062).

A wall painting of the "Death of Judah" in Almakerék (Mălâncrav, Romania) shows devils tugging the suicidal Judah for his soul.[8]

A wall painting at Zseliz (Želiezovce, Slovakia) showing the private judgement of György Becsei Vesszős is especially interesting iconographically. The composition derives from the Last Judgement. A detail represents an angel fighting the devil for the soul of a dying man in the moment it leaves his body in the form of a child. The devil has customary bat wings and ass-ears and quite unusual hoofs (Végh 1984, pp. 373. ff).

II. The Devil Appearing in the Form of Someone Else

In cases where the devil's presence is less manifest, e.g., when it appears in the form of an animal (a frog, a cat, etc.), the context of the image or other texts may be of help. The devil may appear in the form of an animal, a human, a dead person, or a dragon.

3. The Devil as Dragon

As has already been mentioned, the devil's ordinary (and atavistic) form is the dragon. Two reliefs at Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia, Romania) show Archangel Saint Michael defeating a dragon-shaped devil. The Romanesque carving shows no sign of a fight; the dragon is almost a mere attribute here.[9]

The most popular saints fighting the dragon are Saint George and Saint Margaret. Many representations of Saint Margaret have survived but, apart from a few exceptions like the one in Nagytótlak (Selo, Slovenia), the dragon appears as a mere attribute of the saint (Mojzer 1984, fig 8. Inv. no. 52.657).

4. The Devil as Animal

When it appears as an animal, the devil is most often represented in the form of a serpent, a pig, an ape (Janson 1952), or a goat.

Demones in forma canum
Hungarian Angevin Legendary,
Bibliotheca Vaticana (V: 18v.)

Saint Michael puts the souls on the scale
Kassa (Košice, Slovakia) around 1330.
Saint Michael Chapel. Photo: National
Protectorate of Historical Monuments,
Budapest.

Demons can take on the form of dogs as in the pictures of the *Angevin Legendary* depicting the story of Andrew: "Demones in forma canum devorabant hominem" (Levárdy 1975, p. 38. V:18v).

Pictures of the apostle Andrew exorcising Nicea in the *Angevin Legendary* (Levárdy 1975, p. 37. V:17r) depict demons in the form of goats.

On the portal of the Chapel of Saint Michael in Kassa, where Saint Michael weighs the souls in a scale, the devils are depicted as ape-like creatures.

5. The Devil in Human Form

When the devil appears in human form, it usually features various give-away "clues" like horns or hoofs. The devil often tempts people (espe-

Temptation of Saint Anthony the Hermit
Szepesdaróc (Dravce, Slovakia) Altarpiece, 1450–60.
Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest.
Inv.: 55 899. Photo: Miklós Sulyok

Temptation of Saint Martin
Cserény (Čerín) Altarpiece, 1483. Hungarian
National Gallery. Inv.: 3279. Photo: Miklós Sulyok

cially monks) in the form of a beautiful lady but it may also appear in the form of a child as in the Saint Anthony altarpiece of Szepesdaróc (Dravce, Slovakia) (Mojzer 1984, fig 29. Inv. no. 55.899).

In the picture of Saint Martin's temptation in the altarpiece of Cserény (Čerín, Slovakia) (Mojzer 1984, fig 53. Inv. no. 3279) the devil appears in human form (that of Christ). Apart from the ass-ears, the cloven hoofs that can be seen under the cloak are give-away clues helping viewers to properly identify the character. According to the Legenda Aurea, Saint Martin of Tours had an especially great ability to recognize the devil.

The arsenal of the devil's tricks is vast. In one case it takes on the physical appearance of the apostle James the Elder—as in the *Hungarian Angevin Legendary* (Levárdy 1975, p. 58. V:34v)—and succeeds in persuading a young man, who thinks that he is guilty of fornication, to commit suicide. However, James and the Holy Virgin raise him from the dead.

The devil may also take on the shape of a dead man as in the story of Saint Ladislaus (*Hungarian Angevin Legendary*). A "dyabolus in forma mortui" (Levárdy 1975, p. 134. V:81v) attacks Saint Ladislaus while he is praying in the church.

III. Devil-like Figures

It happens that a devil-like figure in a picture does not designate the devil at all. It could also represent an evil soul, a demon, an idol, or the Antichrist.

6. Evil Soul or Demon

In the *Hungarian Angevin Legendary* (Levárdy 1975, p. 29. V:24r) the magician Simon collapses as a result of Saint Peter's prayer and the evil soul leaves the wicked dying man.

Demons taking hold of humans are also represented as small devils in some cases. The altarpiece of Nedec (Niedzica, Poland) depicts Saint Bartholomew exorcising Polemius' daughter. Here the demon leaves the girl's body in the form of a small devil-like figure (Csánky 1938, fig. 9, 11; Marosi 1987, I. pp. 711, 715).

Fall of Simon Magus
Hungarian Angevin Legendary, Bibliotheca Vaticana (V: 24r.)

7. Idols

The figure of a small devil standing on a column is an idol.

Apostle Andrew has a dispute in front of idols (Levárdy 1975, p. 9. V:19r) and Mary Magdalen breaks the idols in the *Angevin Legendary* (Levárdy 1975, p. 168. V:103v).

In studying artistic representations of the devil in medieval Hungary, we find that the devil appears in the same context as in the artifacts in other Christian countries: the Fall, the Crucifixion, the suicide of Judas, the Descent to Hell, the Last Judgement, St Michael's fight, the souls in the scale, the Woman clad in the Sun, also in allegorical scenes, scenes from the life of saints including, e.g., exorcism, temptation, or the demolition of idols.

However, two typical scenes are "missing": no artistic representation of the Temptation of Christ or of Christ practicing exorcism is extant from medieval Hungary.

It is true that the lack of these themes should not necessarily be construed to mean that they have never existed (consider that the country was devastated several times in the course of its history). Nonetheless, such representations should have been rare and uncommon. Further research should reveal the possible reasons for that.

Mary Magdalen breaking Idols
Hungarian Angevin Legendary, Bibliotheca Vaticana (V: 103v.)

Notes

1 Fabiny 1988a, pp. 9–15. Von Rad 1988, p. 149; Markus 1988, p. 169.
2 The baptism of Christ around 1065. Wooden portal of the Sta. Maria im Kapitol, Colone. Eliade 1987, p. 124.
3 Psalter of Henri de Blois, Winchester, middle of the twelfth century, London, British Library, Cotton Ms. Nero C. IV, fol. 39. Coulton 1958, pp. 297–98.
4 Brenk "Teufel" in Kirschbaum 1968–74, 4.cols. pp. 295–300; Russel, 1984, pp. 129–58, 208–44; Sachs H. – Badstüber E. – Neumann H. 1998, pp. 339–40.
5 Levárdy 1975 (Vatican Library=V, Pierpont Morgan Library=M, Hermit-age=H).
6 Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest. Inv. no. 3182.; Radocsay 1955, p. 452.
7 Slovakian National Gallery, Bratislava. Inv. no. O 317; Glatz 1983, pp. 69, 293.
8 Radocsay 1954, p. 109; Watercolour copy of the wall painting, Collection of the National Protectorate of Historical Monuments Inv. no. 44.062.
9 Collection of the National Protectorate of Historical Monuments, Inv. no. 45.002, 45.003.

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TALKING WITH DEMONS. EARLY MODERN THEORIES AND PRACTICE[1]

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Although half a century ago it may have seemed surprising, by today we are quite used to the idea that early modern Humanism was by no means the enlightened and rational period as some interpreters of the Renaissance wanted to see and to have it seen. Decades of research in science-and cultural history as well as in historical anthropology has made it manifest that many brilliant minds of the great generation of fifteenth and sixteenth-century humanists not only believed in astrology, alchemy, and in a host of demons and spirits surrounding them, but quite often they even engaged in sometimes grotesque, sometimes frightening ceremonies and rituals in order to communicate with the spirit world or even to exercise their will over the demonic beings.

We find Ficino engaging himself in pious incantations, holding out a carefully constructed talisman, with the ambition of draining the celestial energies into his mortal body (cf. Allen 1994; Walker 1958; Yates 1964).[2] We know about the Abbot of Sponheim, Trithemius, conducting experiments with magical prayers and with manipulations of ciphers in order to send angels with his praise to God (Baron 1978; Brann 1999).[3] The bulky book of Cornelius Agrippa, *De occulta philosophia*, abounds in anecdotes and recipes how to invoke spirits and gain information from them or to make them serve us (Agrippa 1997; Keefer 1988; Müller-Jahncke 1979). Guillaume Postel, one of the best linguists of the sixteenth century, through his transactions with spirits succeeded in finding the incarnation of the Virgin Mary in an elderly Italian nun and he considered this encounter a special grace of God through which he thought to have gained confirmation of his visionary

plans about the general political harmony of the world (Bouwsma 1957; Kuntz 1981; Margolin 1985). John Dee, the excellent mathematician gave up his scientific ambitions and for thirty years tried to communicate with angels in order to validate his visions about the general reformation of the world that he tried to sell to the rulers of Europe. He also engaged into learning the prelapsarian *lingua adamica* from the angels, hoping to acquire the perfect knowledge lost with the expulsion from Paradise (Clucas 2006; Clulee 1988; Harkness 1999; Szőnyi 1998, 2004, 2005). The Enochian language he learnt from the angels, in fact became the cornerstone of modern occultism, as it can be seen in the magic of the Golden Dawn movement around the turn of the century, later further modernised by the notorious Aleister Crowley and finally turned into Satanism by Anton Szandor La Vey in the 1960s (Crowley 1912; King 1989; La Vey 1969). How can we account for these ideas and practices, seemingly so strange to our modern worldview?

To begin with, we should not be so surprised by this phenomenon, enough to think of our own near-contemporaries, such as a Rudolf Steiner who, starting his career as an excellent scientist and philosopher in the late nineteenth century, turned into a visionary who propagated his own occult perceptions transformed into a fairly coherent system of alternative reality (Shepherd 1983). One might also recall Béla Hamvas, cult figure of today's Hungarian intellectuals, who established himself in the 1930s as a brilliant classical philologist but ended up as (or, as one might want to say: further developed into) a scribe of the ancient, mystical, occult philosophies (Szőnyi 1996).

My paper examines the early modern traditions concerning the possibilities and purposes of communicating with the spiritual world. In this context I am primarily interested in those 'white' magical practices which were propagated and conducted by distinguished humanists with—at least in their own interpretation—most pious intentions, normally in hope of getting nearer to God and accomplishing the religious exaltation. Consequently, I am going to explicitly disregard satanic demonology, such as the Faustian pact or necromancy involved in witchcraft. This survey necessarily includes historiographical considerations, too, since the phenomenon under discussion has been for

decades associated with the so-called 'Hermeticism debate' and propositions made by the representatives of the Warburg school, primarily by the late Frances Yates.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

It has always been known that the possibility of divination, talking with angels and demons and thus obtaining information about the past, the future, or other unknown phenomena have intrigued mankind since the earliest times of cultural history. It is relatively recently, on the other hand, that 'professional scholarship'—such as science history, anthropology, religious and cultural studies—have started taking seriously those ambitions, which earlier had been labelled superstitions or delusions.

Although nineteenth century positivism unearthed a lot of facts about classical and early modern magical practices, the researchers themselves could not help thinking otherwise of these as abhorring follies which were to be studied only to demonstrate how far the enlightened human rationalism got from the primitive beginnings. Such notions characterise the early anthropologists, such as Tylor (1871) or Frazer (1911–16) as well as the early science historians, such as Lynn Thorndike who wrote a monumental *History of Magic and Experimental Sciences* (8 volumes, the publication started in 1923). This self-congratulatory rationalism tints even the early writings of Aby Warburg, who otherwise discovered the importance of magical ideas in the background of the greatest Renaissance artworks (1922); and even such historians were not free from this attitude who at the same time were closely associated with the modern occult movements, like Karl Kiesewetter (1893) or Arthur E. Waite (1961).

It was the late Aby Warburg (especially in his cultural-historical picture album, *Mnemosyne*) and his followers in London, D. P. Walker (1958) and especially Frances Yates (1964, 1968) who discovered such aspects of Renaissance magic which could buttress to the stunning individuality and admirable self-confidence of fifteenth and sixteenth-century Europeans, even fertilizing in some respects the developing sciences and the epistemological revolution of the early modern era.

The changing attitude of intellectual and science history was not in-

dependent from changes in anthropology and in those other fields of study which directly focussed on magic and tried to approach it in its own right. As E. M. Butler in 1948 claimed: she did not want to define magic in any restrictive way such as 'pseudo-science,' or 'pretended art,' or 'debased religion' (Butler 1980, p. 2), instead, she approached magic as an independent, self-contained discipline which naturally connected to other areas of human intellectual activities.

The 'Yates-thesis' was proposed from a somewhat different standpoint, since it offered an 'alternative' science history based on contextual considerations rather than on an insulated story concentrating on the inner development of science. If one tries to summarise that 'thesis' in a few sentences, the following model emerges: as Ernst Cassirer had already stated in his groundbreaking study about the Renaissance (Cassirer 1927), the most important philosophical innovation of that period had consisted of the redefinition of man's place in the universe. The basic framework—the 'great chain of being'—remained more or less the same until the late seventeenth century, however, man's place was not seen as fixed any more, he was imagined to be able to move along the chain of being, either ennobling and elevating himself to the level of God, or degrading and associating with the brute beasts. An eloquent explanation of these neoplatonic ideas was exposed in Baldassare Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano*, published in 1528 by the famous Aldus Press in Venice. In the concluding pages of Book Four, Pietro Bembo leads the discussion which treats the fabric of the universe and the questions how physical beauty can exalt the human soul to reach out for angelic beauty and perfect harmony.

Following the footsteps of Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller and others, Frances Yates came to the conclusion that the neoplatonic philosophers of the Renaissance developed the idea of man's elevation not only from the works of Plato and the Hellenistic Neoplatonists, but also, in fact primarily, from the hermetic texts, attributed to the 'thrice great' Hermes Trismegistus. The Yates-thesis also implied that the Renaissance magus was a direct predecessor of the natural scientist because the *Corpus hermeticum* presented such a mythology that promised the magus to (re)gain the ability to rule over nature and become the master of the world as God's equal partner. While the magi of the fifteenth and

sixteenth centuries were mostly individual researchers, their seventeenth century followers, as Yates proposed, came to the idea of collective work and formed secret societies, such as the Rosicrucians (cf. Yates 1964, 1968, 1972).

For a while these ideas seemed to revolutionize our understanding of the early modern age and the birth of modern science. In such a context the magical ideas which had previously been discarded by intellectual historians now appeared to be important ingredients of human ambitions aiming to understand and conquer nature. The theses of Yates generated a long-lasting debate beginning in the mid-1970s, during which almost every distinct suggestion of Dame Frances was questioned (for arguments pro and contra see Copenhaver 1990; Curry 1985; Garin 1977; Metaxopoulos 1982; Schmitt 1978; Vickers 1979; etc.), however, her most general conclusion has never been doubted, namely, that early modern magic has to be taken seriously, either as a special epistemological system related to the rise of modern science, or as a mental attitude which formed a conceptual framework around the lives of our early modern ancestors.

As far as I see today, after the most heated anti-Yatesian arguments of the 1980s, recently the pendulum started to swing back, finally to find some balance of evaluation, validation, and falsification. The task is not to refute Yates any more, rather to complete and enhance the rough picture she drew in her enthusiastic books back in the 1960s and 1970s (Yates 1964, 1969, 1972, 1979). It seems safe to claim that the Hellenistic *Hermetica* and its tendentious reception by the Florentine Neoplatonists, such as Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, formed a central ideological backbone behind the concepts of the dignity of man and the possibility of magical exaltation. The purpose of the latter was to actualize the potential also established in the Bible: Man had been created after the image of God (for the doctrine of *exaltatio* see Trinkaus 1970 and Szőnyi 2004b).

Acknowledging this ideological grounding, however, by no means exhausts entirely and explains away the infinitely more complex and heterogeneous system of Renaissance magic. If only we observe the narrower field of 'divination' which intended to contact the spiritual world, we see that while the hermetic ideas encouraged man to engage

in such practices, the very concrete concepts of demons, spirits and angels were taken from different sources, partly from the Bible, but mainly from the Hellenistic platonic philosophers such as Plotinus, Iamblichus and Proclus (Copenhaver 1988). Their ideas, in turn, were again recycled by early Christian Platonists, primarily by the pseudo-Dionysius (Gersch 1978; Völker 1958). The platonic concepts of demonology were also often mentioned in the works of the church fathers and the scholastic philosophers, hardly ever approvingly, however often included into intricate classifications and typologies of magic and other human activities.

If the concepts were mainly platonic, the actual practices had a much more dubious origin. We gather more and more evidence about the existence of a complex magical lore during the Middle Ages which in certain respects reached back to the Hellenistic period or even earlier, without having much in common—at least admittedly—with the more conceptual ideas of Hermes Trismegistus or the 'Platonici.' Another component of this type of medieval magic might have come from Jewish cabbalistic-mystical literature crystallized about the first millenium (Scholem 1974). Arthur Waite called this lore 'ceremonial magic' (Waite 1961) and recently it was Richard Kieckhefer who did the most to examine this textual heritage (Kieckhefer 1989, 1997, 1998).

An interesting feature of this corpus is that among the medieval documents of ceremonial magic many treatises survived under the name of Hermes—some of them alchemical, others directly dealing with conjuration's and divination by means of manipulations with angelic names—which were dismissed by the early students of hermeticism. Festugière called these writings 'popular hermetica' (Festugière 1950–54, 1, pp. 1–85; 1967, pp. 59–60), thus consciously trying to separate this bogus literature from the more 'elevated' treatises of Hermes Trismegistus. More recently this literature has been renamed 'technical hermetica' (Copenhaver 1992, pp. xxxiii; Fowden 1986, pp. 57–75), because there is no firm ground for a social differentiation concerning their use. Before touching upon more on these various sources, let us summarise how we see today the complexity of the magical traditions having been proliferating in the Renaissance:

The Hermetic Tradition   The Medieval Tradition

Theoretical Hermetica   The Christian Platonic Tradition
Hermes Trismegistus   Dionysius Areopagita

          The Classical Platonic Tradition
Technical Hermetica   Plato, Plotinus, Iamblichus, Proclus   Scholasticism
Magical spells, prayers   definitions, typologies

                                           Medieval Magical Techniques
                                        early Cabala, Picatrix, Ars Solomonis

          Renaissance Divination & Magic

          The Humanists: Ficino, Pico, Trithemius, Agrippa, Postel, Dee
          Popular practices: scrying, Arbatel, Ars Solomonis

Because of the limits of this paper I can only briefly comment on each of the main traditions. As I have already mentioned, the theoretical *hermetica* served as an ideological backbone by advocating a mythology according to which Man, elevated to the rank of a *second Demiurgos*, had been the partner of the ranks of governing demons and decans in the work of creation. As we can read in the first tract of the *Corpus hermeticum*:

> The man was most fair: he had the father's image; and god, who was really in love with his own form, bestowed on him all his craftworks. And the man [...] also wished to make some craftwork, and the father agreed to this. Entering the craftsman's sphere, where he was to have all authority, the governors loved the man, and each gave a share of his own order (CH 1.12—13, translation in Copenhaver 1992, p. 3).

Although there is little direct information about divination or magical techniques in the *Corpus hermeticum*, recently it has been suggested (by William Grese and others) that there must have been a closer connection between the 18 treatises of the *Corpus* and that complicated body of magical literature called the 'technical hermetica' than previously allowed: "It is not known when the collection was made, why it was made, or what was excluded. The lack of more references to magi-

cal practices may reflect more the selection of texts that have survived than the actual situation in antiquity" (Grese 1988, p. 49). The 'technical *hermetica*' certainly offered a great deal of practical information from alchemical operations to various ritualistic spells, conjurations, enumerations of demons and the like. Their contents has come only recently in the focus of studies (Greek-Egyptian *papyri* and Coptic texts), and although most of them were unknown to the Renaissance magi, it is also true that—as I have mentioned—many similar texts did circulate in the Middle Ages as a rather more than less secret and illegal body of literature associated with the name of Hermes.

Already Waite noticed the relationship between these two groups of texts: "Between the most ancient processes, such as those of Chaldean Magic, and the rites of the Middle Ages, there are marked correspondences and there is something of common doctrine. The doctrine of compulsion, or the power upon superior spirits by the use of certain words, is a case in point" (Waite 1961, p. 9). Then he added: "The Ceremonial Magic of certain Greek-Egyptian papyri offers the closest analogies with the processes of the Cabbalistic school" (Waite, 1961, p. 9).

Lynn Thorndike, in his *History of Magic* described the scope of popularity of this literature and summarised their main contents. He identified a large number of thirteenth to seventeenth century manuscripts which contained alchemical and magical treatises associated with Hermes (*The Book of Hermes on the Six Principles of Nature, Book of Propositions ... said to be by the Philosopher Termegistus*, etc., cf. Thorndike 1923–58, 2, pp. 214–29). It is interesting to notice that these writings enjoyed a partly positive reception, for example Robert of Chester's Latin translation (from the year 1144) of an Arabic alchemical treatise under the name of Hermes described the supposed author as one of the three 'Hermeses,' namely Enoch, Noah, and himself, the Triplex, who was at once king, philosopher and prophet (op. cit. 215). Another fifteenth century manuscript, containing a treatise on the fifth essence ascribed again to Hermes, characterised the author as "the prophet and king of Egypt, [who] after the flood of Noah, father of philosophers, had [the text] by revelation of an angel of God to him sent" (op. cit. 219). This is reminiscent of the Enochian legends, suggesting that some privileged men after the Fall or the Flood were entrusted by God to

possess divine wisdom and teach mankind the skills and technologies of survival.

Thorndike also mentions specific treatises of theurgy and necromancy under the name of Hermes, which treated magical images, incantations and spells with the names of God. These were strictly condemned by the scholastic philosophers and scientists: Albertus Magnus included them in his list of evil books on necromantic images of which Christians were to beware, and Guillaume d'Auvergne, bishop of Paris, although mentioned Hermes and Asclepius approvingly, generally considered this necromantic-hermetic literature as dangerous (op. cit., 220f).

The above scholastic authors condemned even stronger another group of similar literature which survived under the name of Solomon, legendary king and savant of the Jews. Treatises entitled such as *De figura Almandel*, or *Clavicula Solomonis*, or *Ars Notoria Solomonis* circulated in great number from the thirteenth century till the seventeenth century and contained invocations of angels in order to seek communion with God, also mystic figures and magical prayers (Thorndike 1923–58, 2, pp. 279–90; Clucas, 2006; Fanger 1998). They often stated that the Creator revealed this art through an angel to Solomon, and it was useful for acquiring all the liberal and mechanical arts in a short time. In fact, the Solomonic art is more than that. In the *Liber sacer*, or *Liber juratus of Honorius*, which consists of 93 chapters and is supposed to have derived from a conference of magicians who decided to condense all their knowledge into one single volume, one learns about a variety of topics, among others the composition of the great name of God of 72 letters, how to redeem the soul from purgatory, how to get your wish from any angel, how to learn the hour of one's death, how to control spirits by words or seals, and many more mundane skills, such as how to open closed doors, catch thieves, find lost treasure, etc. Interestingly, two chapters, 91 on the apparition of dead bodies and 92 on the creation of animals from earth, were omitted, as contrary to the will of God. In spite of this tactful caution of its authors, Roger Bacon classified the Solomonic literature as something that "ought to be prohibited by law" (Thorndike op. cit. 279), Albertus Magnus automatically included them in his famous list of evil books, and Guillaume d'Auvergne called them "cursed and execrable" books (cf. his *De legibus*, quoted by Thorndike op. cit. 281).

One cannot fail to notice that this illicit literature in many respects points back to the technical hermetica (Fanger 1998), however, they also reveal a more immediate source-model, namely the early cabbalistic literature with its concentration on characters and magic names (Kieckhefer 1998). Gerschom Scholem provided us with a full account of the development of this early medieval literature (Scholem 1974) and it was also him who gave illuminating hints about the continuous popularity of this kind of magic, in spite of and against the development of rationalistic philosophy, throughout the centuries. As he suggested, mystics and philosophers were "both aristocrats of thought; yet Cabbalism succeeded in establishing a connection between its own world and certain elemental impulses operative in every human mind. It did not turn its back upon the primitive side of life, that all-important region where mortals are afraid of life and in fear of death, and derive scant wisdom from rational philosophy. Philosophy ignored these fears, out of whose substance man wove myths, and in turning its back upon the primitive side of man's existence, it paid a high price in losing touch with him altogether" (op. cit. 35). One could complete this concept with two elements: to begin with, Scholem's above-established dichotomy between rational philosophy and the cabbala could be applied to other forms of mystical wisdom, such as Pythagoreanism, Gnosticism, Hermeticism, etc. My second remark is that beside the fears and anxieties of "the primitive side of life," as he calls it, which were better answered by mysticism than philosophy, one should also take into account the desire for deification, the drive for *exaltatio* which has never ceased to be a major ambition of humankind. Moreover, this ambition characterised certainly not only the popular register of culture but caught the highest minds, too.

Returning now to the mixed textual lore of medieval ceremonial magic, by observing that these works were in constant use in the form of manuscript literature as late as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, one can see a continuity between the medieval and the Renaissance traditions of divinatory magic. One can also easily come to the conclusion that the great Renaissance magi, a Trithemius, an Agrippa, or a John Dee did not model their magical practices only on the venerable philosophical sources of the Neoplatonists, or that of the 'real' Hermes Trismegistus, they also must have tried out the 'illicit' methods

at their disposal, either by extracting from medieval, or from contemporary 'popular' sources.

As opposed to the medieval teachers, what encouraged them to do so? On the one hand, undoubtedly their increased self-confidence, catalysed by the rediscovered hermetic tradition, on the other, the complexity of the traditions. In spite of the condemnations of the medieval authorities, tracts of ceremonial magic all claimed to be pious and aspiring to magical exaltation. The Solomonic *Liber juratus*, for example, described itself as follows:

> This is the book by which one can see God in this life. This is the book, by which anyone can be saved and lead beyond a doubt to life eternal. [...] This is the book which no religion possesses except the Christian, or if it does, with no advantage. (Sloane 313, late fourteenth century, quoted by Thorndike 1923–58, 2, pp. 281, 285.)

With their enlarged self-confidence, the Renaissance magi could see and acknowledge Christian piety there, where their medieval predecessors were abhorred and disgusted to do so. In this attitude the Renaissance magi were, of course, also encouraged by their extensive classical learning, whether Christian or pagan. They could take courage from the Christian concept of the angelic hierarchies elaborated by the pseudo-Dionysius, who also spoke much about the possibility of religious *exaltatio* and a union with God still during the earthly life. He wrote about the souls that

> by means of angels as good leaders, they can be uplifted to the generous Source of all good things and, each according to his measure, they are able to have a share in the illuminations streaming out from that Source." (*The Divine Names* 696c, in pseudo-Dionysius 1987, p. 73.)

The Renaissance humanists who became interested in one or another form of magic, could turn to Ficino, who combined the various classical traditions into a common lore of spirits and demons by means of compiling a reader, an 'anthologia esoterica' which brought together a remarkable mix of magical texts and became an important theoretical

handbook of Renaissance magic through its lavish Aldus edition (Venice 1516) as well as through Ficino's *Opera* which was several times reprinted throughout the sixteenth century. This volume started with the pseudo-Dionysius, an unquestionably acceptable Christian source, then included Plato, Plotinus ("Mercurii Trismegisti Pymander, de potestate ac sapientia Dei item Asclepius de voluntate dei"), Iamblichus ("De mysteriis Aegyptiorum, Chaldeorum, atque Assiriorum"), Proclus ("De anima & daemonum" and "De sacrificio & magia"), Porphyry ("De animi ascenta & descenta"), Psellus ("De daemonibus"), and finally Pithagoras ("Aurea verba & symbola"). Considering such a venerable philological and philosophical project, we should not be surprised that his followers were also busy validating the most heterogeneous amalgamation of magical traditions.

Unfortunately on this occasion I cannot revisit the theories of *daemons* as developed by the pagan Neoplatonists. As recent research has emphasised, this lore has to be examined with much greater accuracy while assessing the ingredients of Renaissance ceremonial magic (Allen 1994; Copenhaver 1988; 1990). In order to show the importance of this aspect, as a temporarily closing statement, I only would like to cite Plato's *Symposium,* where he attributed a whole system of demonology to Socrates' teacher, Diotima (202e–203a). It is worth quoting from these passages because the wise woman gave quite an extended classification of spirits with functions that have important resonances in the history of magic, too. As we know, in the dialogue Plato has Socrates speak, in fact he recollects what Diotima once had said:

> [Diotima] ... spirits, you know, are half-way between god and man. [...] They are the envoys and interpreters that ply between heaven and earth, flying upward with our worship and our prayers, and descending with the heavenly answers and commandments, and since they are between the two estates they weld both sides together and merge them into one great whole. They form the medium of the prophetic arts, of the priestly rites of sacrifice, initiation, and incantation, of divination and of sorcery, for the divine will not mingle directly with the human, and it is only through the mediation of the spirit world that man can have any intercourse, whether waking or sleeping, with the gods. And the man who is versed in such matters

is said to have spiritual powers, as opposed to the mechanical pow-
ers of the man who is expert in the more mundane arts. There are
many spirits and many kinds of spirits, too... (203a, quoted from
Plato 1963, p. 555.)

Furthermore, in Plato's dialogue Diotima is said to have accomplished
such a magical act that would fit Agrippa's description of the mighty
magus, who has a full command over the powers of nature: "[She was]
a woman who was deeply versed in many [...] fields of knowledge. It
was she who brought about a ten years' postponement of the great
plague of Athens on the occasion of certain sacrifice..." (201d).

The humanistically trained Renaissance *magi*, with their enthusiasm
for the classical authorities, no doubt, found such references with ex-
plicit approval and were ready to incorporate this lore in their syncret-
istic system of magic. With these considerations in mind, I suggest, we
ought to proceed with the revaluation of the magical beliefs and exper-
iments of the early modern humanists and practitioners.

Notes

1　Collecting the materials for this paper was made possible by a state grant
(OTKA, T/022 409 – *A kora újkor szemiotikája és ikonográfiája* [The semiotics
and iconography of early modern Europe]) and my scholarship at Collegium
Budapest in 1998–99.

2　Because of the nature of this publication—essentially a conference proceedings
where the essays are based on orally presented papers the size of which has also
been severely limited—I am not going to give extensive and exact citations. The
purpose of my references is to orient the reader in the scope of literature I was
using when preparing this article.

3　There has been a continuous scholarly debate about the use of the term 'popu-
lar.' By employing it I by no means refer to any 'low class' or 'folkloric' culture,
rather a mixed register which was practiced by intellectuals (often *declassées*,
expelled clerics, rebel scholars who were not content with dealing only with ca-
nonical materials and often became attracted to materials and practices of spu-
rious origin).

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PROTESTANT DEVIL FIGURES IN HUNGARY[1]

ÉVA SZACSVAY

Protestant church art is decorative art and, as in Europe in general, it has had a big influence in Hungary on shaping festive and everyday objects. This "revolution in the decoration of objects" occurred in Hungary in the seventeenth century, unimpeded even by the confusion and sufferings of the period (Turkish wars, occupation by the Turks, the state divided into three). The Protestant denomination became dominant with a share estimated by some at 60–70%. The decorative objects with inscriptions were used by the upper strata of society, but their appearance in urban public offices in the churches (furniture, chests, christening and communion vessels, textiles, printed books, and handwritten registers of births, marriages and deaths) must have influenced the common people's use of objects. The congregation used the songbooks and even donated funds to order such books. The Protestant devil figures, whose former existence among the peasantry or common people we are investigating here, can be sought on the one hand in the ornamentation, the depictions on objects, and on the other hand in the mediating material preceding or existing parallel with the folklore genres: the reading matter, catechisms, rules, sermons, moral teachings and parables.

This research began with attempts to interpret the various visual depictions. The figures examined can be seen mainly on the painted interior fittings, furnishings and ceiling panels of reformed churches, set in an extremely harmonious and rich plant ornamentation. The church furnishings made by carpenter-painters—pulpit, abat-voix, minister's chair, communion table, choir, the front of pews and the entire wooden ceiling—were decorated with floral patterns. The frescoes in churches

taken over from the Catholics were at first left untouched, then from the late seventeenth century (because of an investigation linked to certification of the origin of churches) were whitewashed, creating a distinctive Calvinist church interior with whitewashed walls and wooden furnishings with colourful floral ornamentation. The figural depictions known from these church furnishings are rarely found in the decorative pattern or are scattered, suggesting that they must have special significance.

A number of periods are known in the appearance of figures (Boros 1982, p. 122) but they occur in two of these in larger numbers: in the first half and end of the seventeenth century and then in the second half of the eighteenth century when greater use was made of illustrations. The illustrations were perhaps preceded and/or accompanied by decorative inscriptions which in the case of the Protestant churches, in contrast with the iconographically determined image and replacing it, appeared as a summation of the current theological message of the Reformation or as a quotation, as a manifestation of the transition from the Catholic visual path of sacral communication to the linguistic, auditive path.[2] In Lutheran churches in Northern Hungary and elsewhere, inscriptions and passages from scripture on stone or wooden escutcheons and medallions richly decorate the choirs, the upper parts of columns and the walls, in harmony with the internal structures, as ornamentation.[3] The earliest program for the decoration of Protestant churches seems to have been to present the voice or message of the Lord which, in keeping with the dogmas, made it possible to communicate directly, without intermediaries, with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit with the help of the biblical text. "Protestant church art is preaching art," in which the biblical inscriptions appear as characteristic ornamentation; they are the vehicles of the theological program. As an interpretation of the process, scholars refer to Luther's hallucinations which occurred after periods of strict fasting and self-mortification: "… he hears the merciful word of the Saviour. His faith in this period is drawn from hearing the Word; with this the Reformation broke away from the religiosity of the Middle Ages" (Révész 1944, p. 255).

The search for devil figures must not be limited to the iconographically elaborated types (since Protestantism rejected the use of "images") but must examine all the surviving depictions in order to select

from their meanings those that, in keeping with Protestant mentality, can be attributed to the devil, identified with the devil, or as figures, things and symbols identifiable with the devil. Devil figures having a (schematic) iconography appear only exceptionally in the Protestant material. Tekla Dömötör (1986) wrote about their absence, attributing it in part to the taboos concerning portraying the devil (cf. the common saying: "don't paint the devil on the wall because he will appear"), but she also pointed out that this could have theological origins. Tekla Dömötör dated the first occurrence of this type to the early nineteenth century (Komárom Almanac 1811) (Dömötör 1986, pp. 296–309), but the title-page of the register of deaths of the Kisújszállás Calvinist Church (1728–1769), for example, has a schematic depiction of a corporal devil with horns and hoofs, wrestling with a putto-like angel for

Schematic devil
Title-page of the Kisújszállás Register of Deaths, 1728–1769.

the soul of a dead person (drawing by Calvinist minister János Püspöki Süllye).[4] In Western Europe the *Ludus de Antichristo* played a decisive role in the popularization of this type (corporal anthropomorphic figure); it became a folk play from the twelfth century and the actors developed this form of the devil as a costume (Daxelmüller 1999, p. 7).

An extraordinary or unusual depiction can be seen on a contemporaneous portrayal: the ornamental frame on the title-page of the register of the Debrecen Calvinist College has an angel on the right and one on the left. They are entirely identical, both are depicted with hoofs, one holds a burning torch in its hand and the other bearing a caduceus, clearly indicating that one is the "angel of light" and the other the "angel of darkness", thus in reality a devil figure.[5] The notion behind this depiction is the "fallen angel" held by Calvin's orthodox followers in the second half of the eighteenth century (in their schools). Calvin laid the dogmatic foundations, supporting the notion with biblical passages (Mt. 25:41, John 8:44, 2 Pet. 2:4, Heb. 6, 1 Tim. 5:21) (Kálvin 1910, pp. 147–68), and this is the basis of the formulations in modern Protestant dogmas concerning "intermediaries" (e.g. Török 1985, pp. 218–27). The focus of the idea is a neutral or good attribute and its *metamorphosis*, fall, decay or transformation. This is confirmed by the sixteenth-seventeenth century sermons, writings and literature of Protestant theological debates where we find a form of belief in the devil which regards the devil not as a being with a body, a visible and tangible Antichrist, but as only its *spiritual* reality which is hidden and appears in various guises and so is impossible to recognize because of its constantly deceiving and misleading properties. György Verestói wrote in a funeral sermon (1733): "Fairy magic is an evil wonder wrought by Luciper, it is dissimulation or, as the Greeks say, hypocrisy, just as Luciper, true to his illusory nature, often makes himself appear as Luciper, and as the angel of Darkness often changes himself into the angel of Light" (Verestói 1783, p. 106).

The notion of fallen angel also appears in twentieth century religious folk belief: a) "there were angels then too,…" "then God cast them all down. All down, every one of them, and they became the devils" (Székelykeve, Skorenovac, Serbia). b) "The angels rebelled and he cast them down into hell," "The angels became very puffed up… God cast them down" (Velem, Vas County). c) "The right half is a guardian

Angels of light and darkness
Debrecen College, Matricula, title-page, 1760.

angel, the left half a devil" (Gajcsána/Găiceana, Romania) (Lammel – Nagy 1985, p. 567).

The variants of the Faust legend organized around the figure of Professor István Hatvani, natural scientist and rector (in Debrecen, the centre of theological orthodoxy) can be dated to the second half of the eighteenth century and stands alone in Hungarian folklore. According to the legend, the devil once appeared in the figure of Hatvani and entertained the students with false talk; the students recognized the devil from the hoof-prints and drove it away by singing hymns and praises. The depiction of the two kinds of angels with hoofs originates from this time and place.[6]

Countless examples could be cited from sixteenth–seventeenth century Protestant church literature in Hungary to show that the idea of struggle against the devil was present. The lengthy work of Péter Bornemisza *Ördögi kísértetekről* (The Temptations of the Devil, 1576) was originally written as a single sermon for the fourth volume of his five-volume collection of sermons, and gradually became a separate book and secular reading expanded with earlier readings and experiences (it can be shown that he borrowed "On the Power of the Devil" from Johannes Brent: *Hiob in commentariis* Johannis Brentii, Hagenau, 1529, In Nemeskürty, ed. Note 998),[7] addressed to all strata of society and drawing above all on his own experiences. "I learned from hundreds of troubles of my own, from harsh and fatal illnesses, from the deaths of my three wives and five children, from harsh sufferings, from the many troubles of my servants, seven of whom died in 1577, […] some of them also recovered". What he most strongly recommends against the devil is prayers written and placed on the wall, as well as frequent and continuous prayer (indicating that the texts placed on the wall are intended to ward off the devil). Preachers in later periods made similar efforts to preach struggle "with the angels of darkness" and encouraged the simple believers to show resistance, to recognize and defeat the devil.

Depictions of the devil can be seen on the ceiling panels of the seventeenth century (1676) church of Tancs (Tonciv, Romania), the work of János Parajdi Illyés, a carpenter-painter, who worked on the painted ceilings of a number of churches. In this case there are an unusually large number of figural portrayals, found on 19 of the 65 panels, and

most of the figures also have inscriptions. Many are biblical quotations including the place in scripture. For example, beside a Turkish figure we find the text Isaiah 58:1. "Cry out… tell my people their sins and the sins of the house of Jacob," evoking the period of warfare, the plundering and cruelties of the Turks, the faith of the Calvinists and the explanation that God was using the Turks to punish his chosen people for their sins. The devil appears as a Turk in other places and depictions, too.

Turk as devil
Church ceiling panel, Tancs (Tonciv), 1676.

Beside the Turk, the two-headed eagle and Alexander the Great flying on a raven can also be seen: the former might reflect that Hungarians who embraced Calvinist religion in their struggle with the Habsburgs could see their enemy as a devil; while the figure of Alexander the Great represents the victory of death over the worldly power of the victorious conqueror (as was written in a piece of popular printed literature dating from the same time). This is followed in the same row by the portrayal of an angel bearing a sword and a palm branch, with the inscription "ANGAL" (angel), and "BAKUS" (Bacchus) standing on a vine representing drunkenness, the siren figure of the Babylonian harlot as a warning against the sins of lust; the inscription also refers to the text, but the attributes precisely evoke the passages in the Revelation: two swords referring to the two deaths, wearing a crown (ruling as a queen), adorned with pearls and jewels as a sign of temptation, fully matching the biblical text. Her form as a siren with the tail of a fish could be a literal portrayal of the text: "sitteth upon many waters, […] peoples and multitudes" (Szacsvay 1999, p. 201). Another, male siren stresses the crime of lust (a portrayal of mediaeval origin with a double fish-tail) and there is a similar "JÓNÁS" (Jonah), also depicted

Siren

Church ceiling panel,
Tancs (Tonciv), 1676.
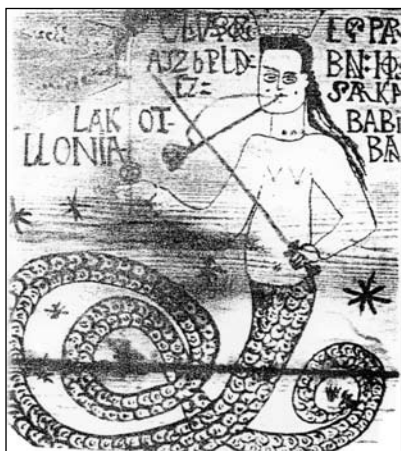
Siren

Church ceiling panel,
Bánffyhunyad (Huedin), 1780.

schematically, with a double fish-tale. Adam and Eve are a reminder the of original sin; Noah's ark with the dove, and Jonah also refer to the Old Testament apocalypses, while the Sun and the Moon are symbols of life and death. All of these images are linked to apocalyptic thinking, to the apocalyptic fears that were widespread in that period. All of János Parajdi Illyés's known portrayals can be placed in this context. These portrayals have no value as visual images; the master who did the drawings was guided solely by the desire to make the figures identifiable and to make the connection between the biblical text and the figures clear (in many cases the precise location of the text is shown beside the figure).

Portrayals drawn from a different group of symbols can be found on the fittings of other churches from this same period. These are generally fewer in number; it was customary to place an occasional figure among the floral ornamentation. The snake and the dragon are quite clearly portrayals of the devil (Székelydálya/Daia, Romania, 1630; Bánffyhunyad/Huedin, Romania, 1780; a one-headed dragon with dual character blowing a trumpet, Csengersima, 1761).

The body of the snake is the frame in which the most important exorcising text is inscribed: "The seed of the woman bruises the head of the serpent", from Genesis. The variants of the seven-headed dragon have their origin in Dürer; this variant appears more often in the eighteenth century figural portrayals (e.g., Kraszna/Crasna, Romania, 1736, János Pataki Asztalos.) A variety of meanings may be associated with a particular symbol. Ten figures can be seen on the ceiling of the church at Gogánváralja (Gogan-Varolea, Romania) (1503–1519). They can all be interpreted iconographically and were done by a painter. The meaning of the rabbit painted at the end of the spear of the bare-footed warrior (Samson) is not certain (Wilhelm 1975, Fig. 10). The rabbit can be a symbol of cowardice, of fertility or lust; a rabbit running towards a hill is known on depictions as a symbol of the Christian fleeing from the devil to Christ. This symbol was still used in the late eighteenth century; one example from 1780 can be seen on the ceiling of the church at Bánffyhunyad (Huedin) where in the foreground a human figure is fleeing from the mouth of a wild beast and in the background a rabbit is escaping to a hill (Wilhelm 1975, Fig. 32). Shown at the end of the spear it may mean that evil can be defeated with its help (as the symbol of

Dragon blowing a trumpet
Church ceiling panel, Kalotadámos (Domoş), 1774.

Rabbit at the end of a spear *(Samson?)*
Gogánváralja (Gogan-Varolea), 1503–1520. (work of a painter)

Seven-headed dragon
Church ceiling panel, Kraszna (Crasna), 1736.

Rabbit among its many meanings here used to show man fleeing from
the devil to Christ
Bánffyhunyad (Huedin), 1780.

Christ). With this symbolical supplement (the rabbit clinging to the spear) it is a transition between the image that can be described iconographically and a depiction having symbolic meaning. In this way the rabbit may have a negative, demonic form (lust, cowardice) and may appear in a Christian, positive sense (man fleeing to God, a person capable of driving out the devil).

The Counter-Reformation (from 1680) that marked the "flowering" of Calvinist art brought another 100 years of persecution, the apocalyptic fears continued to exist and although the current of pietism[8] that added to them did not become really strong, the thought of the Last Judgement aroused fear in the reformists of theological rationalism too, in connection with the harrassment of their fellows, their condemnation to death, the confiscation of churches, the ban on the practice of their faith, the loss of schools, etc. It was in this period that large numbers of inscriptions were placed in the churches, some of them guided by apocalyptic fears and referring to the devil and his deeds, that is, to sins and the struggle against the devil, while others are quotations calling for prayers to be heard; continuous prayer is the only effective procedure against the devil.[9]

Relief, romanesque times, Last Judgement composition with Saint Michael, Luxuria (one of the seven deadly sins) and the lions of Judah Magyargyerőmonostor (Mănăștireni).
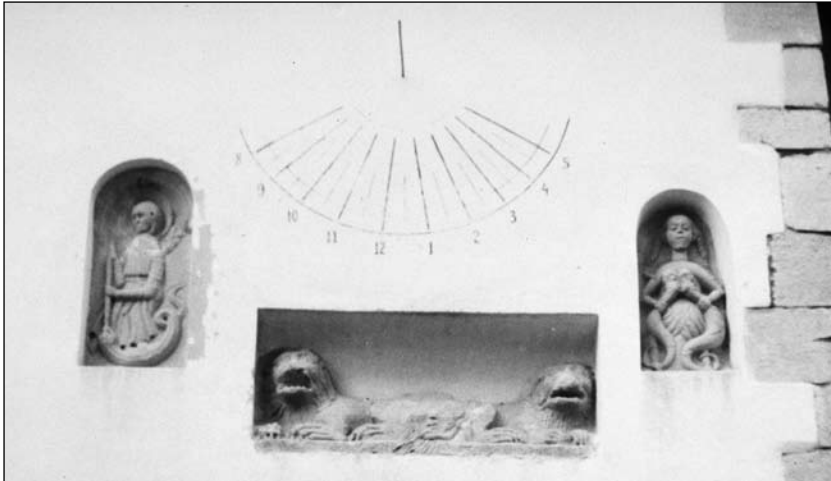
János Somorjai devoted the last two chapters of his statute published in 1636 to the devil and exorcism, citing the passages which can be used, either to recognize or to drive out the devil. (He draws only occasionally on the Old Testament, e.g. on Genesis, and more frequently on the New Testament.) "... the devil is like a spirit hiding his visage and appearing in different forms […] even as a shining angel" according to Matthew 4. "… the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour"; "the serpent (in which was the devil) went to Eve," and "when the body of Saint Job was full of boils, he (the devil) was around him but was not in him. When Simon Peter denied our Lord the devil was around him: sometimes he enters and possesses a person, and guards it like a strong soldier defending his palace," etc. (Somorjai 1636, p. 201). The description and explanation give a quite precise definition of the belief in the devil at that time: the devil is a spirit in nature and hides through *metamorphosis*, it appears in various human and animal forms and has various relationships to man; it can live in man (as in a house) and act in place of man, or is around him and influences him and his actions. In the eighteenth century too, orthodox Calvinism returns again and again to the original formulations of Calvin. In this period, a struggle was again waged against the manifestations, forms and acts of the devil. This can be seen in the depictions known from this period: the dragon and the lion on the ceiling of the church at Magyarcsaholy (Celahuţ, Romania); in the works of the Umling family (1740–1780) active in Kalotadámos (Domoş, Romania), the dragon blowing a trumpet refers to the dual nature of the devil and angel. János Pataki Asztalos was especially fond of figures (Kraszna/Crasna, Romania, 1736); among his rich patterns we find the seven-headed dragon and the two-tailed lion which are quite clearly imitations of the devil. The lion also appears in the early (fourteenth-fifteenth century?) relief in the Magyargyerőmonostor (Mănăştireni, Romania) church, but here the two lions of Judah can be seen guarding the kingdom of Christ. In the composition Saint Michael and the siren (the figure of beautiful Melusina) refer on the one hand to heaven and on the other to hell, that is to what belongs to the devil, with the sin of lust. The composition placed on the wall of the church tower facing the cemetery (with a sundial in its centre) evokes the Last Judgement.

Serpent with inscription
Church ceiling panel, Csengersima, 1761.

There are only two panels with figures on the ceiling of the Maksa (Mocşa, Romania) church (1766): the lions of Judah standing guard on either side of the column of fire and on the other panel four mermaids and four fish (dolphins) are joined in a circle, the latter as a symbol of sins and lust forming a counterpoint to the other depiction evoking the world of Christ. Distinctive meanings can also be seen on the ceiling of the church at Dicsőszentmárton (Târnăveni, Romania) painted in 1769 by Sámuel Kolozsvári Asztalos Kövendi: the Moon and Sun, the church building itself, then the serpent, beside it the lamb, at the top of the scales crouches a devil figure, an animal with a long tale, then a bird feeding its nestlings, and the head of a Turk holding a yataghan in his

Owl, among its two meanings here used as a symbol of Christ
Church ceiling panel, Bánffyhunyad (Huedin), 1780.

mouth, an image portraying the devil in the form of a Turk evoking the symbol familiar from the sixteenth century; this appears to be reinforced by the portrayal of a cannon and cannonballs in the next panel and beside it a soldier with a drum, drumstick and trumpet. The series of images, representing the allegorical and the real, calls on believers to wage a constant battle against the different deeds of the devil. A chessboard and violin opposite a field of wheat and a sickle contrast time spent on idleness and merrymaking (the work of the devil) with time spent on diligent work (the time of the Christian). The distinctive and clearly dual structure of this visual material is a vehicle for moral teaching with its subjective message and epic depictions reminiscent of church drawings and texts found in the first third of the nineteenth century.

The eighteenth century portrayals go beyond the system of apocalyptic portrayals of the seventeenth century because they have been expanded with other meanings to represent other Calvinist symbols as well. The black birds pecking grapes are symbols of the longing of the Christian for Christ, the stork with a snake in its beak is a symbol of Christ defeating the devil, the crane is the symbol of vigilance, the deer symbolizes baptism or the longing for Christ, the peacock immortality, the unicorn innocence, the owl is a mediaeval symbol of Christ (as songbirds attack a tethered owl when hunting), in the system of Protestant symbols the fox signifies the deceiving friar (as it preaches to the geese and hens); in short the symbols continue to convey the spirit of Protestant teaching, they have moved beyond the scope of apocalyptic thinking but still preserve some of its elements.

Notes

1   With financial support of the Hungarian Scientific Research Found TO26586.

2   "As a general conclusion it must be said that Lutheran church art drew this depiction of the word from early Christian and universal church art, especially from the early Christian symbolical and iconographic portrayals and the "biblia pauperum" which grew out of them. The art of the Reformation inevitably returns to this source, continuing from it to develop its own style of preaching the word" (Gyimesy 1944, p. 446).

3   Eg. the interiors of the Lutheran churches of Csetnek and Schweidnitz (Silesia) (Gyimesy 1944, p. 268).

4   On the subject of Calvinist graphic art, see Verebélyi 1988, pp. 479–97; Gulyás 1994, pp. 313–19.

5   Registers of the Debrecen College, 1760. Archive of the Calvinist Church Diocese of Eastern Hungary TtREL.16.b.3. title-page.

6   On the Hungarian Faust legend, see Ortutay 1968.

7   Nemeskürty 1980, Note 998, p. 1210.

8   On the eschatological apocalyptic belief of pietism, see Ravasz 1915, p. 115.

9   Iván M. Balassa cites one referring to the devil from 1734: "Rejoice not that the devils are subject unto you" Lk. 10:20–22. Others include "He raises my head above my enemies," 1752, Fülpösdaróc; "Lord, hear my voice as I cry out to Thee," etc. Some of the inscriptions on the ceilings are quotations referring to the house of God and others are passages calling for prayer and asking that it be heard. "May the Lord pay you for your deeds" (Balassa 1995, p. 114).

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THE DEVIL AND BIRTHGIVING

ULRIKA WOLF-KNUTS

Background

In Swedish folklore in Finland the devil was regarded as a helper when a woman was in pain giving birth to her child. Alternatively, he helped a mother to make her unwanted baby disappear. In this paper I shall consider the folklore texts as complements to the creation myth in Genesis. My inspiration comes from theories on intertextuality. I combine these thoughts with studies of tricksters and culture heroes. Although the Finland-Swedish folklore records do not refer to the Bible *expressis verbis*, I find it possible to understand them as inverted extensions of the Judeo-Christian creation myth.

The regions from which I have chosen the texts to be studied here are Munsala and Vörå, two Ostrobothnian communities on the west coast of Finland. The inhabitants' main language is Swedish. This part of the country has had a multifaceted economic system. People earned their living mainly as peasants who also had other professions, such as commerce, sailing or fishing.

Several revival movements were well-known in these regions. Pietism and some Evangelical movements were kept within the Church. The Baptist movement, Pentecostalism and Methodism may represent movements outside the Church. A Christian world view was certainly the foundation of religiosity there (Näsman 1979, passim).

Apparently all the storytellers had had formal schooling and were confirmed, which means that they had a basic knowledge of Church teachings. The communities were literate to some extent (Wolf-Knuts 1991, pp. 65ff).

The Texts

I have picked out two folklore legends. The first one tells of how a woman fears the pain of birthgiving. A foreign man, the devil, offers to assist her if he is given the object she carries under her apron. She thinks that he is referring to her key and accepts his offer. He helps her, but disappears with the baby:

> There was a woman, she walked around and was sick with child and carried the key of the barn under her apron. Then she met a man, who was none other than the devil. Then he asked her what was wrong. Then she answered that she was sick with child. Then he said: "If you give me what you have under your apron, I'll deliver you of the child." She promised to do so, she thought that he meant the key to the barn, which she had under her apron. They went to the sauna, and quite right: he delivered her of the child. When the child came out he took it and went out of the sauna hatch, leaving blue flames behind him, and after that she never saw her child, but she got well (Wessman 1931, p. 99).

In the second text we learn about a girl who plans to kill her newborn, but unwanted child. Her sister prevents this by praying to God. From the sauna the devil says in disappointment: "I would never have backed you up (that is, freed you from pain) if I had expected this":

> Once upon a time there was a pregnant girl who thought that she would kill her child when it was born. But her sister noticed that everything was not quite right with her. When the time to deliver had come she hid her child so that nobody would see it; but her sister thought: "She is going to kill her child," and started to keep an eye on her and said: "If you are going to kill your child, tell me as soon as it has been born, and I'll help you." Then she confessed to her sister that she had had a baby and that she was planning to kill it. "Let us go to the sauna and take a pail of water and drown it," the sister answered. Off they went. She took a pail and took the baby into the sauna. When she entered there her sister asked her to pray "Our Father" and say "Lord bless us" over it first. She did as her sister

asked. But when she had prayed "Our Father" and said "Lord bless us" over her child, she no longer had the strength to kill it. When her sister asked: "Are you going to kill it now?", she answered: "Oh no, God bless me, it is such a wonderful baby!" As this happened, the old man (the Wicked One) under the sauna bench answered: "I would never have backed you up (that is, freed you from pain) if I had expected this" (IF R II 8).

Methodological Issues

According to theories of intertextuality every text is dependent on other texts. This relationship can be expressed through obvious quotations, but it might also be seen in allusions, travesties, negations, questions and answers, transgressions or mere associations. The opportunities more or less explicitly to tie texts to each other seem to be very rich. Every text can be regarded as a palimpsest or a montage of preceding or parallel texts (Tarkka 1993, p. 171; Geier 1985, p. 11, 97f).

These thoughts are inspirational for the student of folklore. They allow me to maintain that every text a person reads or narrates is related to other texts. These, however, do not necessarily have to be written or told, printed or read. Also pictures or even just a motif, which can be highlighted on special occasions, would do. This suits folklore very well, because of its volatile character. We have to keep in mind that folklore records on tape or paper are just coincidental variations of a widely spread tradition, that has no constant form nor any constant content. The motifs exist in people's minds, in "a pool of tradition" (Honko 1998, p. 92) to be used, transformed and added wherever needed. This means that inversion of motifs could also be accepted as a means to create an intertextual relationship.

Most of the archive material from rural Finland lacks strict contextual information. This fact complicates the analysis of the texts on a micro-level. Still, students of history and ethnology have facilitated the interpretation and understanding of archive material by creating a general cultural context for it. Thus, we know that people in nineteenth-century Protestant Finland went to church and to school, they were confirmed, they read devotional books, hymn books and the cat-

echism. People widely knew who the central Christian figures were. We also know that in Finland, at that time, people had connections with foreigners at market places, as sailors or soldiers, or when walking long distances to find work. Many impressions were added to people's minds and influenced their narratives when they had returned home. A strict historically traceable, physical connection between two individuals is not necessary when folklore or other general ideas spread.

This happens in an extremely complicated mental process. Thus, the context for any archived text is very complicated. It is probably impossible to explain it in every single case. The study of folklore texts is even more many-sided. Not only do we lack a "correct original" or "master form" (Honko 1998, pp. 92–99. Cf. also Steinitz 1955, p. XXV), but we also have to regard the fact that all narrators, listeners, archivists, scholars and consumers of studies of folklore are allowed to do their own interpretation with the aid of their own frames of reference (Skjelbred 1998, pp. 20ff). All these interpretations are actually incontrovertible.

Genesis and the Folklore Legends

In Genesis, Chapter 3, the cunning snake tempts Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit. She shares it with Adam. They hope to be able to distinguish between good and evil and be as wise as God is. This had the result that the two first human beings were thrown out of Paradise. And God said to the woman: "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Gen. 3: 16). In this text the devil is evil, he is the actor that interrupts man's peaceful and untroubled life in Paradise. This image of the devil is, I would say, normal in Protestant Christianity. However, parallel to this devil there is also another conception in Protestant tradition. That is the devil of folklore, where he is also regarded as a helper and supporter. I remind you of Dähnhardt's studies of the devil as the helper or partner of the creator (Wessman 1931, pp. 622ff; Dähnhardt 1907–1909). The devil's products are ridiculous fiascoes. The devil's creative skill, be it successful or not, allows me to allude to studies of creation myths.

The Trickster

Franz Boas related the devil of the European Middle Ages to the trickster of North American Indian tradition. He regarded the trickster as a mythological figure, sometimes appearing as an animal or a stupid glutton whose behavior is the reverse of human behavior (Boas 1898, p. 7). Åke Hultkrantz refined the picture and demonstrated that the North American trickster actually has a double character, the trickster and the culture hero: "As trickster he is a mischievous, stupid, immoral and egotistic glutton, as culture hero he appears as a more serious figure, a divine being who at the beginning of times ordered the world and created or brought institutions to the benefit of mankind" (Hultkrantz 1984, p. 113). The folklorists have concentrated on the trickster side, whereas the students of religion examined the culture hero side. Both sides must be combined by the scholars. Only in this way can we reach a correct understanding of the figure, according to Hultkrantz.

The *trickster–culture hero* is the actor of creation myths. Hultkrantz, however, demonstrates how thoughts that are formulated in myths also can be referred to in mythological stories "due to more or less free play of imagination manifested by the storytellers." Not only the form, but also the function of the text and sometimes even parts of the motif change (Hultkrantz 1984, pp. 119f). An intertextual relationship has been established.

The Devil as a Trickster–culture Hero

Inspired by Boas, I let the Finland-Swedish devil take the role of the *trickster–culture hero* in Hultkrantz's model (cf. Wolf-Knuts 1991, pp. 268ff). The devil is twofold. He is the keeper of order and the revolutionary. The latter trait is very obvious in folklore: notwithstanding, he is a mythological figure, but he is also mischievous, animal, stupid and ridiculous. But what about the devil as a culture hero?

The Bible, in the creation myth in Genesis, Chapters 1–2, describes how heaven and earth were created, and how all living creatures including man came to be. However, it would not be correct to stop the reading here. Actually, Genesis, Chapter 3, tells how the creation pro-

cess was finished. There we learn how the conditions for human life were initiated. In Eden Adam and Eve led a comfortable life in peace and harmony. They were unaware of their sexual roles; they did not know pain or fear. This ideal life was interrupted by the snake, which has been associated by long tradition with the devil (Ginzberg 1961, p. 95; 1955, p. 121). The Fall leads to many institutions that are central in human life. It was not until the Fall that man acquired his intellect, that is, that he obtained the most important prerequisite for life outside Paradise. Because of the Fall man realized that he was naked, that is, sexuality came into his mind and clothes suddenly became necessary. As a contrast to paradisiacal peace, Adam was scared when he heard God wandering in the garden and fear was brought into human life. Fear is one of man's most important weapons against danger and, thus, a life-maintaining power. The living conditions of women were created, that is, motherhood. Since that time women have given birth to children. It is painful but, nevertheless, she cannot avoid her husband's will. He is the one to decide over her. This order of society has been general in the Western world for centuries. Late efforts to disturb this order have been met with doubt. Also, the living conditions of man were established. Although the earth is not fertile, man has to cultivate it with great hardships. That is the only way to obtain food. The snake has ever since been a reviled animal. And last but not least, the Fall led to death.

In this way it is possible to tell that the creation of man was finished when Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise. God created his part, but without the efforts of the snake-like devil, Adam and Eve would still be together in Paradise and nobody else would exist. Thus, the devil was the originator of human life like we lead it today. If one regards the myth of the Fall as a part of the creation myth, the devil is a culture hero, and the devil's evil is relative. Genesis explains why human life to such a great extent is pain, toil, fear and death.

Myth and Legend—an Inverted Intertextual Relationship

Using the thoughts from intertextuality and Hultkrantz's studies on how myths change into mythological stories, or even legends, I maintain that the myth of how man was created has changed its form and function

and become an echo in folk legend material from the end of the nineteenth century. From an intertextual perspective the two legends of the women assisted by the devil can be regarded as a continuation of the creation myth. They are about man's life on earth as a prolongation after the mythical time in Paradise. The folklore texts are intelligible with knowledge of the Bible text. God expelled man from Paradise to live on earth in hardship. This life is an inverted paradisiacal life. The women in the legends have submitted to God's will, that is, they give birth in fear of the pain they know belongs to birthgiving. In neither of the legends a man, a husband, or a father is mentioned. This allows the statement that the women continue Eve's disobedience, when they give birth to children who will not belong into a decent community, i.e. a family in which there is a husband or a father to obey. Furthermore, when God expelled Adam and Eve from Paradise he put an end to their idyllic life and that of mankind. So he also initiated earthly life.

The Fall is thus a turning-point not only in the biblical variant of the story of the life of mankind. It is also a turning point in the tradition of mankind's living conditions. When God sent those two away, man's life changed completely: what was then ignorance is now consciousness, what was then accepted is now rejected as shameful, security and confidence gave way to suspiciousness and fear, harmony and peace became pain and toil. Finally, the reward for one's pains is death. This is, quite clearly, how life is described in the folklore discourse. My two texts underline this. Birthgiving is not an easy, automatic, desirable activity. The woman in the first legend was afraid of giving birth. She was ready to receive any help provided the delivery was painless. She even accepted help from a quite strange man. In nineteenth-century Finland-Swedish society this must have been regarded as an infringement of the norm, birthgiving being almost completely a feminine matter. In the second legend, the woman had already received the help of the devil to relieve her birth pangs, but she still feared the social marginalization that she would meet with not being able to appear with a father for her child. She would rather murder the baby. The baby would have been the price that the woman had to pay to the devil for his help. For both of these girls, according to the legends, it was quite possible to utilize the skills of the devil to reach appropriate human, although short-term, goals. The motif of Faust is well-spread.

According to the New Testament the devil is always present. He did not stay in Paradise, but moves among us (1 Pet. 5:8). It is, thus, not at all surprising that the devil comes to the pregnant women in folklore. The fact that he is always said to be around makes the relationship between him and them equivalent to the one in the Old Testament. Once in Paradise, he saw that the woman Eve found a short-term solution when she took what she wanted to have, that is, the fruit from the tree of knowledge. No more than Eve was content with her somewhat restricted conditions of life in Paradise are the women in the legends happy with their lots, which they have inherited from Eve after her death on earth. As she did, so they make use of the devil in order to change their situation. As in Genesis, the folklore devil is again engaged in connection with birthgiving. Now, after the turning point in mythical history, he tempts the women in reverse. In Paradise Eve did not have to feel pains, but when thrown down to earth she is punished with them. The folklore legends, however, show that in nineteenth-century Finland people imagined that the devil could give women a repeated semi-paradisiacal condition: he is both able to help them deliver without pain and to make the child disappear in order not to be a disgrace to their mother. He finds pregnant women and tempts them on their sore point by referring to painlessness and social status.

Conclusion

It has not been possible to relieve birth givers' pains until the late twentieth century. During the same time it became accepted to have children without being married. Today, in the Western countries, having children is more or less a deliberate choice. This liberty was of course not introduced without discussion. There has been resistance to analgesics at delivery, to contraceptives and to extra-marital children (who were even called illegitimate children). This resistance can be interpreted with regard to the creation myth in Genesis and its extensions in folklore. According to the Bible, God has put the woman to submit to the will of her husband; God has put her to give birth in pain. When people in a community start to accept opportunities to evade these fundamental conditions for female life more conservative fractions of

the population react. If children can be born without pain, if a woman can feel lust without getting pregnant, if a woman can get around on her own without her husband, it is near at hand to say that modern women are opposing the word of the Bible and giving in to the devil's temptation. The real danger here, however, is her freedom: it is no longer possible to tie her to marriage and thereby she is a danger to the complete order of society. The devil is still active and maintains his own system: he attacks man's most sore points when he creates a longing for inverted values related to man's lot since the Fall. According to Genesis, he himself took part in creating the conditions for interrupting life in Paradise. Now on Earth, according to folklore, he is present all the time and helps to create the conditions for dissatisfaction in life. In this way he causes a longing with paradisiacal ingredients. Man never seems to be free from the devil.

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PART II

EXCHANGES BETWEEN ELITE
AND POPULAR CONCEPTS

SERPENT-DAMSELS AND DRAGON-SLAYERS: OVERLAPPING DIVINITIES IN A MEDIEVAL TRADITION

KAREN P. SMITH

St. Margaret of Antioch, best known for defeating the dragon who tries to swallow her, is associated with later medieval fertility and childbirth beliefs in a set of cultic practices that emphasized her divine powers of protection. Contemporaneous narratives of maidens who change into serpents may have influenced the way this virgin saint's legend was received by its audiences. The hagiographic accounts, the local legends and the fertility and healing traditions served as intertexts to each other in a way that contributed to the creation of a saintly virgin-hero who could intervene in women's everyday lives.

This saint's life, with its elements of Christian doctrine, popular religion, folktale and moral instruction, generated hundreds of medieval Latin and vernacular prose and poetry versions.[1] The narratives emphasize her as a hero whose saving task is to keep her own virginity. Loyal to her bridegroom, Christ, she keeps faith with him in the face of many terrors, not least of which is being swallowed by a dragon— from which she escapes unscathed. As viewed by a purported eye-witness narrator, Theotimus (who watches it all unfold from outside the dungeon and who says he bought books to learn about her), the narrative refers to events that allegedly happened to Margaret, or Marina as she is also called.[2] References to Asia Minor, and to the anti-Christian persecutions, place the time of the action in the early fourth century.[3] Though its tone and doctrinal aims change, and the figure of Margaret is given different personalities to serve different purposes at different times, the narrative maintains its central story line and key dramatic episodes.[4] By the later Middle Ages there were so many examples of

this narrative in poetry and prose, as well as in serial wall painting images, that it is reasonable to attempt a generalized summary:

In the city of Antioch, Margaret is born to noble parents, to whom it has been prophesied that this daughter will become a Christian. From her pagan-priest father's point of view, this is reason enough to kill her, so her mother arranges for Margaret to live with her nurse, 15 miles away. The nurse is a Christian, and at the age of seven, Margaret is baptized in defiance of her father's wishes.

As an adolescent girl tending the nurse's sheep, Margaret is spotted by a Christian-persecuting official who desires to "possess" her. His messengers seize her, but she refuses his offer, having already promised herself to Christ, as his bride. The official is enraged and throws her into the dungeon.

After a first round of torture, a terrible dragon appears. The monster tries to swallow her up, but she escapes by making the sign of the cross, and the dragon bursts in two (or, in some versions, spits her out). Then the devil himself attacks her, but she subdues him, both physically and verbally. He goes away, complaining that it is not fair to be beaten by a mere girl.

She promises that invoking her name in prayer will insure successful childbirth (that is, live babies with a minimum of pain for the mother). She is beheaded, and carried off by angels to Christ in heaven.

The narratives are significant texts in the literatures of several medieval European languages, and have been interpreted in terms of the theological and psychological meaning they had for their readers, who were women engaging in various forms of religious practice, both in and out of convents. Most of these interpretations, both literary and historical, have not taken more than superficial account of the influence of oral tradition and popular belief in the development of the Margaret narratives.[5] For example, Echevarria Arsuaga acknowledges Margaret's popular role as patroness of childbirth, and asks how this is possible for a virgin, but then admits she finds, in the narrative versions of the saint's legend, no convincing connection between the saint and motherhood (Echevarria Arsuaga 1987, p. 43). Since elements of Margaret's life appear in such a wide range of late medieval popular beliefs and devotional practices centering on fertility and childbirth, it is important to clarify just how she did assume this function. To ex-

plain the way Margaret goes beyond being a saintly model to become a popular deity who can affect both human and agricultural health, I will analyze structurally comparable "secular" legends that place Margaret in a wider late medieval context of healer and mediator.

Folkloristic analysis of the Margaret narratives reveals structures and motifs that are cognate with serpent-maiden transformation legends.[6] Particularly striking parallels can be found in the snake-maiden local legends popular throughout Central and Northern Europe.[7]

A typical snake maiden narrative contains these themes: a princess, or maiden in white, has been transformed by an angry woman (for example, a wicked step mother) into a white snake (E425.1.1), often wearing a gold crown and/or carrying gold keys (D1011.3.1 and F886.1), and bound to guard a treasure (H335.3.4). She will give up the treasure, and be liberated from the serpent *gestalt,* only if the seeker kisses her three times (D735). Local versions collected in the nineteenth century in Germany by the Grimm Brothers and others, as well as the ballad versions collected in England and Scotland by Child, reflect the same themes found in a medieval Icelandic saga of serpent-maidens, treasure guarding, and transforming kisses.[8]

It can be demonstrated at several points in the story that the St. Margaret narratives and the snake-maiden legends are cognate and interrelated.[9] In addition, the saint's legend represents a reversal of the traditional "hero's love and/or courage frees heroine" story line of the narratives. Briefly, in the dual role of hero and heroine, Margaret herself is a serpent-bride whose reptilian form is also the monster she must slay. Both play on the theme of refusing offers of advantageous marriage, but in the snake maiden legends, the girl (in her hideous serpent form) is refused by her suitor and depends on him for salvation. St. Margaret, on the other hand, does the refusing in her narratives: refusing her father, her suitor, the dragon and the devil. Far from depending on a mortal hero to save her from possession by other-worldly demons, she saves herself heroically from both the dragon's engulfing jaws and from the dragon's "Ethiopian" brother, who is defeated in his attempts to "attack […] the virtue of [her] virginity."[10]

The snake-maiden local legends suggest supernatural meanings and associations with underworld magic that were outside of Christian doctrinal limits. These associations were part of the saint's appeal and

contributed to the metamorphosis of a virgin saint into a fertility patroness. As such, Margaret gets the best of both the lower and the upper worlds: as snake-maiden Margaret is a female with other-worldly connections, and as a virgin-martyr she is independent of a mortal hero for her salvation. Replete with a heavenly spouse and supernatural powers over life and death, the figure of St. Margaret was more than just an inspiration for religious women; she signified a fertility goddess in the popular imagination. The worldviews expressed through these late medieval fertility and childbirth customs associated with Margaret suggest that concerns about spiritual salvation and bodily health, and their remedies, were shared by religious and lay women across vocational, economic and geographic lines.

The interrelationship between the two ways the St. Margaret legend functioned (as hagiographical narrative and as background text for popular beliefs) reflects the overlapping of faith in clerical authority, secular literature, church tradition and folk beliefs, and the influences they had on the devotional aims of religious women.[11] Margaret's connection with the snake-maiden gestalt of medieval legend and literature adds supernatural powers to her other intercessory attributes. In addition, the snake-maiden is related to divinity itself in the form of Old European goddess figures.[12]

As a snake-maiden, St. Margaret's supernatural ability to change forms reflects a sort of divine pedigree inherited—according to Vaz da Silva—from traditional European female mythical beings, such as *Berchta, Frau Percht*, and *Frau Holle,* who are in turn related to earlier bird/snake goddesses.[13] Legends of Frau Percht, or Berchta, describe her white dress, her singing, her wandering; aspects that are also common features of the snake maiden legends.[14] The confusing interchangeability of Margaret and Marina in medieval manuscripts and calendars points to their watery connection: *pearl (Margarita)* is related to *sea (Marina),* while both saints share similarities with other early virgin martyr legends such as *Pelagia (sea)*.[15] It has been suggested that these reflected meanings may in turn point to a connection with an older goddess tradition in the form of *Aphrodite,* since both *pearl* and *sea* are among her names.[16] Clearly, St. Margaret belongs in a long lineage of female serpent-tamers, intervening deities who were also employed as divine mediators between the living and

the dead, and between the living and their ancestors, functioning as guardian and helping spirits.[17]

Several things about St. Margaret made her a good candidate for this kind of divine mediator in Central Europe. Her name contains the word *mar,* with a *death* connotation,[18] and a popular introduction to her life ascribes to her name the meaning "pearl… [thus] St. Margaret was shining white" (just like a snake-maiden) (Jacobus de Voragine 1993, p. 368). In one example from the Graubünden in Switzerland, her name has been grafted onto a *Rätoromanisch* ballad that blends a goddess's supernatural powers over life and death with motifs of initiation, seduction and retribution characteristic of the snake-maiden legends.

The *Sontga Margriata*[19] ballad opens with Saint Margaret, who has been "up on the Alp" as an apprentice cowherd for "seven summers minus 15 days." She trips on an outcropping, and this displacement makes clear the appearance of her maidenly bosom, which either has not yet been apparent, or has been deliberately hidden by her to disguise her gender. The shepherd boy is surprised, and threatens to tell the Senne (Alpine herdsman) what a "lovely young maiden we have here."[20] Because she has been "on the Alp" for seven years, and traditionally that kind of apprenticeship would start at about seven years of age, it is to be assumed that she is now fourteen years old, or "marriageable."[21] She is willing to do anything to keep the Senne from knowing her secret. A dialogue between Margaret and the shepherd follows, with her offering him a series of magical (and mostly white) gifts in return for not telling the Senne about her. When the offer of gifts does not convince the shepherd boy to keep silent, St. Margaret buries him in the earth up to his neck. This punishment briefly convinces him to keep silent, but as soon as she takes pity on him and lets him up, he goes back to his insistence that the Senne "has to know."[22] She finally gives up her attempts to change his mind, and gathers her helpers around to say goodbye: the milk kettle, the butter churn, the little oven. She also says goodbye to the cows, who follow her down the mountain, and as she goes she bids goodbye to the stream, the spring, the grasses. But each one dries up as she passes by; she announces that they will never again be green. We learn that in an outpouring of sympathy for all this disaster, the church bell "rang such loud peals as [Sontga Margriata] passed, that the clapper fell out."[23] Because clappers were used as a remedy to heal infertility,

it appears that Sontga Margriata left a possibility for hope even as she dried up the land and abandoned her agency in its fertility (as symbolized by leaving her kettle, her churn and her oven).[24]

This ballad demonstrates the overlapping of Christian saints and supernatural earth spirits.[25] Songta Margriata can both give and take away; like other local supernatural beings and magicians, her presents are practical, such as getting three times as much milk as usual out of a cow.[26] Her actions in relation to the shepherd boy's threat connect her to other "women in white" such as *Nemesis,* who was the embodiment of the gods' resentment over humankind's insults.[27] This ballad also recalls the snake-maiden *Melusine,* mentioned above: a shape-shifting woman who imprisons her father in a mountain to avenge the departure of her fairy mother.[28] Similarly, Songta Margriata buries the Senne's representative deep in the earth.

The differences between miracles and magic were not stressed by later medieval Christian missionaries to the outlying regions of Europe; they were happy to have the saints seen as masters of supernatural power (Ward 1982, p. 10). The serpent-maiden theme connects St. Margaret to the divine and gives her in-built powers, and in rural medieval Europe, an in-built constituency for her patronage. These miracles almost all involved visions or cures, and miracles and magic overlapped in a middle ground between the danger of invoking demons on the one hand, and active liturgical devotion on the other; a ground occupied by the "natural" healers who used plants, gems and saints' relics.[29]

For example, Margaret was often part of a medieval triad of saints that included both *Barbara* and *Katherine of Alexandria.*[30] This combination reflects the Indo-European belief in a trio of supernatural helpers such as the Scandinavian *Norns,* who, like the human godmothers who succeeded them, helped with childbirth, decided life and death, protected mother and child and determined fate.[31] These traditions were so old, and so much part of everyday life, that they were taken for granted, and easily transferred to the *Three Maids* (Katherine, Barbara and Margaret) (Loimer-Rumerstorfer 1941, p. 82). All three were originally virgin martyrs of late antiquity whose cults persisted throughout the Middle Ages and early modernity; all three survived as icons of both Christian religion and of powerful magic. The function of these

saints as role models in the medieval context is complex, with theological indoctrination and clerical exhortation to pursue the life a female religious existing in tension with the popular pressure to solve conflicts, cure disease and find true love.[32]

The life and death narratives of St. Margaret are typical of the other two saints in terms of the structure of both the folk legend and the hagiography. Because of her heroic biography and her divine powers, especially regarding childbirth, many women, both religious and secular, were devoted to her in the late Middle Ages.[33] Also, the life of St. Margaret is often part of collections intended for home reading.[34] The early episodes of Margaret's life present a kind of female genealogy of learning: the young maiden learns Christianity from her nurse; she becomes part of a troop of girls who tend sheep together by the crossroads; finally she passes the learning on to thousands of others when, in her martyrdom, she converts her many onlookers.[35] This expresses a female tradition of education like the one indicated in another late medieval iconographic tradition, that of St. Anne standing or sitting behind, and/or reading to, her daughter, the Virgin Mary (see Kack-Brice 1999). Margaret's function as role model is partly due to her heroic behavior, in the narratives and in practice, as a woman who holds knowledge.[36]

Added to her virgin-hero qualities, the association with traditional Old European supernatural mediators helped turn St. Margaret into a fertility-childbirth deity in the popular imagination.[37] Practices undertaken in her name reinforced belief in those powers, which included oracular ability to predict the right spouse, protection from infertility and unsuccessful childbirth, and protection from the damaging effects of storms on home and field. In the German language, over fifty medicinal plants are named for Margaret, among them, the *marguerite (daisy)* (Loimer-Rumerstorfer 1986, p. 96). The usage reflects the belief in St. Margaret's divine/magical authority: the marguerite daisy is an oracle for divining true love ("he loves me, he loves me not"). Marriage prediction was also accomplished by maidens who circled St. Margaret's chapel on their knees in order to get a glimpse of their future husbands (Loimer-Rumerstorfer 1986, p. 100). Girls went on pilgrimages to her shrines to beg that their future husbands' identities would be revealed (Bálint 1972, p. 333). Following proper marriage, successful childbirth

was the next priority: offering prayer to Margaret, touching the book of her legend or the touching the relic of her belt to the woman's belly, burning candles that were the same length as the mother was around: all these practices eased labor.[38] After a birth, the dried umbilicus was brought to a Margaret chapel to be blessed, ensuring the survival of the infant, just as Margaret survived (Hoffmann-Krayer – Bächtold-Stäubli 1987, 5, p. 1635). St. Margaret's association with cosmic powers isn't limited to childbirth. Evil spirits were kept away by ringing the death-bed "Margaret bells," while circlets of marguerites protected houses from being struck by lightning (Hoffmann-Krayer – Bächtold-Stäubli 1987, pp. 1634–35). The days surrounding her feast day (usually July 20; a few days earlier in some traditions) are especially important for agricultural success, and in the thirteenth century Saxon legal code the harvest of a field went to whoever claimed it by St. Margaret's Day (Loimer-Rumerstorfer 1986, p. 100). To ensure good luck of all kinds, the following was suggested: at the height of summer, within eight days before or after St. Margaret's Day, under the light of a waxing moon, dig up the root-ball of a marguerite daisy; if there's a red worm in there, keep it with you for luck (Hoffmann-Krayer – Bächtold-Stäubli 1987, p. 1637). Sometimes her magic turns dark: a series of proverbs asserts that rain on her feast day brings poor harvest, or rotting nuts; and in some of these sayings Margaret is invoked in her malignant form of Black Greta (Loimer-Rumerstorfer 1986, p. 101. See also Hoffmann-Krayer – Bächtold-Stäubli 1987, pp. 1635, 1637–38).

Sándor Bálint reports on a Hungarian village where Margaret and her dragon are depicted on a field-post that is meant to keep storms away. In an interesting appropriation of the saint's legend for "secular" purposes, the post is associated with a Hungarian legend that tells how, in the time of the sixteenth–seventeenth century Ottoman occupation, a girl was watching her cows there, with no men around to protect her. When a dragon attacked her, she stomped it into the ground with her feet. According to Bálint, people in that part of Hungary still be-lieve that bad weather and hail storms are a result of the difficulties the saintly girl had to endure (Bálint 1972, p. 335).

Belief in Margaret's ability to intercede in matters of plant, animal and especially human fertility is exemplified by popular medical and

oracular beliefs that hinged on plants named for her, and by the medical use of her relics or copies of her life story to guarantee successful childbirth. The narrative structures and motifs that came from the serpent-maiden legends were foundational to the saint's legend in the first place, but more significantly they were then embedded in the oral telling of the narratives of Margaret, adding to her potential as a figure of divine intercession.

The tough, successful hero of all these St. Margaret texts gained divine, supernatural, earth-magic powers through her thematic and structural association with the snake-maiden.[39] These associations contributed to her becoming a cult heroine for women in religious institutions throughout the late Middle Ages, as evidenced by churches dedicated to her, girls and churches named after her, and wall paintings that depicted her life.[40] They also contributed to her being a deity to whom women could pray for their special concerns such as childbirth, and who, by extension, could be invoked by the general populace on related matters of agricultural fertility.[41]

The evidence of fertility practices associated with Margaret suggests that women who engaged in them participated in overlapping layers of cultural assumptions and beliefs.[42] The knowledge of the written, clerical narrative tradition that was read in a religious context provided the textual frame for belief in the saint as a protective figure, a belief influenced by and perhaps even founded upon a much older tradition of devotion to deities who controlled the elements and held sway over life and death of plants, animals and people. Margaret and her sister-saints represent women who were already divine long before Christianity was adopted by European peoples. Taking on the mantle of ecclesiastical culture without losing their physical intactness or their divine powers, these saints' stories and images functioned as figures of divine benevolence who cared for, inspired and protected those who called on them. The two traditions impacted each other, and the saint who had in the twelfth century inspired girls to guard their virginity and win salvation performed, by the fifteenth century, the role of magical godmother and divine midwife.[43]

Notes

1 For the purposes of this discussion of the main narrative themes, the most significant Latin printed versions are "De Margarita seu Marina: Virgine et Martyre – Antiochiae in Pisidia [Rebdorf]" in the Bollandists' *Acta Sanctorum,* 24–45; "Passio a Theotimo" in Boninus Mombritius 1910, pp. 190–96; and "De sancta Margareta" in Jacobus de Voragine 1846, pp. 400–403. Some of the more useful printed vernacular versions are "The Old English Life of St Margaret in Cotton Tiberius A.iii, (composite text)," in Clayton and Macgennis 1994, pp. 112–39; "Proposition d'une Reconstructin du Poème Original [du Wace]" in Wace 1990, pp. 97–115; "Seinte Margarete" in Millet and Wogan-Browne 1990, pp. 44–85; and the Mittelniederdeutsche versions studied by Gerrit Gÿsbertus Van den Andel 1933.

2 See Orywall 1968, pp. 27–29, for a discussion of the Margaret/Marina confusion, originating with the Greek versions in which Margaret is called Marina.

3 A typical reference in the main Latin tradition of the narrative is translated by Clayton and Macgennis as, "the prefect Olibrius was travelling from Asia to the city of Antioch to persecute Christians" (Clayton and Macgennis 1994, p. 197).

4 For example, the seventh century "Rebdorf" manuscript version of Margaret's life conveys a very human heroine whose difficulties in overcoming her spiritual weakness the reader can identify with. This older text suggests that her success in overcoming the obstacles exemplifies moral restraint more than powerful resistance. In contrast, in the "Mombritius" tradition (originating in the ninth-tenth century) the heroine tends to be a more powerful figure symbolic of the Church itself. Wolpers 1964, discusses this comparison, pp. 170–77.

5 The importance of the narratives for medieval women is suggested by Echevarria Arsuaga 1987; Fox 1993, pp. 133–42; Gravdal 1991; Lewis 1998, pp. 129–42; Petroff 1994, pp. 97–109; Postlewaite 1996, pp. 115–30; Price 1985, pp. 337–57; Robertson 1991, pp. 268–87.

6 Useful folkloristic analysis of religious texts has been done by Boureau 1983, pp. 41–64; Burrus 1987; Dundes 1999; Milne 1988. This kind of analysis illuminates among other things the way Margaret, like any great hero, leaves home, kills a dragon and gets the right spouse. (See Dundes 1980, pp. 223–61 for clarification and summary of the paradigm.)

7 Serpent damsel (F562.1). This and the parenthetical designations below specify motif categories from Thompson, 1955–58. She is also called *Die weisse Frau* (The White Woman), *Die Schlangenkönigin* (The Snake Queen), or *Die Schlüsseljungfrau* (The Key Maiden). For regional examples of the legend see *Die Schlangenjungfrau* in Grimms 1994, pp. 46–48; see *Kemp Owyne* in Child, 1962, 3, pp. 502–505; and see Lynn Harris, 1970, for a translation and commentary of the Icelandic saga. For local German versions see, among many others, Jegerlehner 1909, p. 180; Diederichs 1926, pp. 62–65, 69–71,

83–84; Kühnau 1910, 1, pp. 236–94; Kuoni 1902, pp. 95–96, 122–23, 184–85, 223–33, 253–54; Schwebel 1878, pp. 186–99; Pröhle 1886, pp. 171–72; Vernaleken 1858, pp. 242–66; Zingerle 1859, pp. 223–33. The theme of snake-kissing has been investigated by Frank, 1928. I have tried to demonstrate the case for Margaret as snake maiden in Smith 2002.

 8 Such as found in Boberg 1966. These are: Princess abducted by monster (R11.1); Princess transformed into ogress (D47.3); Man disenchants loath-some woman by embracing her (D732); Suitor task: to kill treasure-guarding snake lying around the princess's chamber (H335.3.4).

 9 See Smith 2002.

10 See Millett and Wogan-Browne 1990, 63. This phrase is an English translation of a Middle English version of the narrative.

11 The Arthurian romance tradition where the hero disenchants a cursed animal/maiden through a heroic fight (or erotic kiss) with a witch or a dragon em-phasizes the hero's prowess and rank. These qualities fade in the local legend, where it is his ordinariness and rather passive ability to let himself be kissed (or wrapped around) by the snake that ultimately frees the maiden from her curse. See Harf-Lancner 1984, for the high-culture version of the snake maid-en. Evidence of the clerical-secular-folk overlap is suggested by the finding that the antecedents of Jean d'Arras 1387 version of Melusine can be found in earlier clerical writings. See Le Goff – Le Roy Ladurie 1971, pp. 587–622; d'Arras 1979.

12 Gimbutas discusses the abundance of "Snake and Bird Goddesses" in Europe as late as the Iron Age. See Gimbutas 1982, pp. 132–50.

13 This relationship to folklore heroines is demonstrated by folklorist Vaz da Silva 2002. He clarifies the relationship between the shape-shifting folktale heroines and the serpent-bird divinities who help and hinder them, and points out the recurring assimilation of brides to serpents in folktale legends.

14 The *Weisse Frau* of the Hohenzollern is a form of *Berchta,* and ultimately of the goddess *Hel,* source and destroyer of all life. (See Schwebel 1878, p. 195.) Medieval reports of ghostly apparitions that are precursors to a death in the family also suggest Frau Percht. Lecouteux cites Caesarius von Heisterbach's report of a narrative that recounts an apparition of a woman in snow-white clothing (*species quaedam mulieris in veste nivea*). See Lecouteux 1987, p. 162. *Frau Holle*, too, can act like a snake-maiden: every night between eleven and midnight, she comes to the Three Bread Stones and sits and cries. If someone comes by, she jumps upon his back and he must carry her to the water, about seven minutes away. If someone can turn the stones back into bread, he can disenchant her. In the same area a black dog appears, with a key in a basket in his mouth. (See Pröhle 1886, pp. 171–72.)

15 See Graesse's edition of Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda aurea* (1846) for the motif-sharing lives of two different St. Margarets, as well as St. Pelagia and St. Marina (Jacobus de Voragine 1993).

16 Orywall 1968, pp. 27–29. Though Orywall cites Delehaye's (predictable) rejection of this connection, it seems reasonable that Margaret, a divine fertility figure with roots in Asia Minor, and associated with a dragon (symbolic of the watery realm), could be seen as inheriting some of Aphrodite's qualities.

17 See Pócs 1999. Pócs describes intertwined medieval and early modern belief systems in which the guarding and helping functions of older deities were attributed to Christian saints. (Pócs 1999, pp. 29–36).

18 Althochdeutsch *mara* (*ghost*). Noted by Pócs 1999, p. 32.

19 Collected from a female singer in the region in 1931, and translated into German by P. Maurus Carnot. See Caminada 1986, pp. 253–56. I am indebted to Dr. Margareta Schaaf-Scholl for introducing me to this ballad. I also owe gratitude to the late Rätoromanisch scholar, Tista Murk, for his encouragement in pursuing Sontga Margriata's divine qualities.

20 Caminada 1986, p. 253. It would have been exceptional, if not impossible, for a girl to work in that role, so it is assumed she was in disguise. Since she was a goddess, she could have disguised herself as a boy, echoing the cross-dressing theme central to the *Margaret-Marina-Pelagia* cluster discussed above. Caminada asserts that the shepherd is surprised because Margaret is masquerading as a boy, which would have made her liable for the death penalty in medieval Graubünden. (Caminada 1986, p. 276).

21 The implication is that the head cowherd (*signun,* translated by Caminada as *der Senne*) will in some way violate her if he finds out she is a young maiden. (Caminada 1986, pp. 246, 253).

22 "Das muss unser Senne wissen, Welch glückselige Jungfrau wir besitzen" (Caminada 1986, p. 255).

23 Caminada 1986, p. 256. (My translation of Caminada's German translation of the original Rätoromanisch he collected).

24 In late medieval France, when the clappers fell out of a church bell they were taken up by women "as a recourse for the barren, who must touch or grasp them and utter a prayer or incantation" (Hufton 1995, p. 179). The bell is also used to protect agricultural fertility; in late medieval Europe the ringing of holy bells was a general remedy against storms brought by thunder (Thomas 1971, p. 73).

25 Caminada has interpreted this ballad in terms of a prehistoric "fertility cult" *(Fruchtbarkeitskultus)* whose traces are still visible in the landscape of Eastern Switzerland (Caminada 1986, pp. 245–300).

26 Caminada 1986, p. 273. He also notices that the "little shepherd" of the song is the same as the pure young hero of the snake-maiden (*Weisse Frau*) narratives (275).

27 Caminada 1986, p. 272.

28 Melusine's father breaks the lying-in taboo, causing her supernatural mother to return to her fairy home in Avalon. Later Melusine imprisons her father in a mountain, for which her mother decrees she must become a serpent from

the waist down every Saturday, unless she can find a husband who agrees not to see her on Saturdays. See Harf-Lancner 1984, pp. 85–117.

29 Ward 1982, p. 84. The "ground" was literally the forest where the healers practiced (and to which the snake-maidens were banished). As a place where the natural/supernatural fused, the forest imagery is a common thread in English and Scottish ballads of childbirth, "accentuating the scene of fertility and procreation" (Wood 1981, p. 25). And describing sixteenth and seventeenth century practices, Keith Thomas notes the ubiquity of fertility and childbirth cures that involved both saints' relics and less explicitly Christian medicines (e.g., "spawn of a trotter" to cure infertility) (Thomas 1971, p. 188).

30 Loimer-Rumerstorfer 1986, p. 81. Sometimes Juliana or Dorothy was substituted for Barbara. And see Orywall's suggestion, noted above, that Margaret was one of a threesome of watery virgin saints, along with Marina and Pelagia, a group that was possibly connected to the goddess of love and fertility, Aphrodite.

31 Loimer-Rumerstorfer 1986, p. 81. The virgin/mother/crone tradition exemplifies this grouping. Snake-maiden triads have been identified by Spiez 1941, p. 33.

32 A good example of how these influences are brought to bear is the case of fourteenth-century holy woman and candidate for sainthood, Dorothy of Montau. See Marienwerder 1997; Stachnik 1978; and Kieckhefer 1984. A few years after Dorothy's death, people began to be interviewed to back up the clerical version of her saintly life. But while her confessor had emphasized the "illumination and hot desire" at the center of her mysticism, lay witnesses emphasized her curative apparitions to them and their families. (Marienwerder 1997, p. 178). In the large amount of testimony collected from interviews during the century following her death, there are many stories of apparitions and miracles at her grave—the cultic healing site associated with her. See Stachnik 1978. Her posthumous effect on the laity was not so much an inspiration to mysticism as an icon of healing (Kieckhefer 1984, p. 150).

33 For evidence of the proliferation of English churches named after her in the Middle Ages see Pearce 1994, p. 70. Some versions of Margaret's life were written explicitly for women, and their convents decorated with scenes from her life. See Lewis 1998, p. 130.

34 Lewis 1998, p. 135. Lewis' exploration of Margaret's life from a feminist standpoint leads her to suggest that many elements of the narrative expressed both in the written lives and in pictorial representations could have been interpreted by late medieval women across cultural lines as validating their own experiences (Lewis 1998, p. 129).

35 This image of a group of girls under a wise mother also recalls the Greek tradition in late antiquity (where the Margaret narrative appears to have roots) where groups of women stayed together in caves sacred to the goddess. (Kraemer 1988, p. 38).

36 This behavior is expressed in relation to her enemies: not her father, nor the pagan official, nor the devil can win an argument with her.

37 Pearce notes her popularity in Bulgaria where she is associated with healing springs and worshipped as "sovereign of snakes and animals," and asserts that "her cult may overlie that of the Mother Goddess" (Pearce 1994, p. 76). Following Gibson's assertion that childbirth practices were consistent throughout Europe "from Norway to Italy" from the early Middle Ages to the seventeenth century, the use of Margaret's manuscript for childbirth help can be assumed to be widespread. See Gibson 1999, p. 10. For other examples of childbirth practices that relate to Margaret's cult see Gélis 1991, pp. 146–49 and Albert 1988.

38 Bálint 1972, pp. 331, 332. And for an example of a fourteenth century childbirth protection amulet containing the St. Margaret narrative, and an image of her emerging from the dragon, see Albert 1988, p. 33.

39 As I have argued in "Transforming Virgins: Serpent-kissing and the emergence of the female hero," paper presented to the California Folklore Society, Berkeley, April, 2000.

40 For discussions of the historical and cultural relevance of the wall paintings see Bálint 1972; Lewis 1998; Pedros 1986, pp. 127–57; Jékely 1995, pp. 181–87.

41 The wealth of visual representations of Margaret from this period demonstrates her popularity as a model. Margaret's ascendency to patroness of women in labor is complicated by the fact that representations of virgins triumphant, though heroic role models, can also implicitly downgrade the role of mothers, who after all can never aspire to intactness as defined by the Church's value system.

42 Gibson notes that by the fifteenth century the power of the English midwife had come close to that of the clergy, and midwives were specifically instructed to baptize, though they were enjoined to keep to canonical formula and avoid any extraneous "wymenes lore." See Gibson 1999, pp. 15–16.

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JEWISH, NOBLE, GERMAN, OR PEASANT?
—THE DEVIL IN EARLY MODERN POLAND

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This study will discuss a selection of the ideas and images of the devil prevalent in the Polish lands during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, through the prism of Polish witchcraft trials in opposition to early modern Polish literature. The literature includes *belles-lettres,* encyclopedias, legal treatises and other works, dominated by eighteenth century Polish clergy, of which a brief selection will be examined. In the first part, the ideas evinced by examples of printed sources representative of elite culture will be presented, whilst the second half of the study will be concerned with details extracted from witchcraft trial records in the Polish lands. The confessions found in the trial records reflect both the possibility of the filtration of high culture concepts through the questions posed by the judges, and possibly characteristics of the general folkloric beliefs of those accused, which appeared in the confessions.

Since portrayals of the devil are often linked with the phenomenon of witchcraft, and it is through this conceptualization, in part, that ideas about the devil will be discussed, a general background to the subject of the witchcraft phenomenon in Poland is necessary. Unfortunately, few serious scholarly works have been published on the subject. Bohdan Baranowski, considered to be the leading expert on this theme, produced a comprehensive book entitled *Procesy czarownic w Polsce w siedemnastym i osiemnastym wieku,* 'Witchcraft Trials in Poland in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.' Although this work provides a comprehensive introduction, it deals with the subject in a rather more sensational manner and has been the subject of doubt by authors writing recently such as Karpiński, Pilaszek, and myself.

According to Baranowski, the first death sentence for witchcraft in Poland passed in a secular court was in 1511 at Waliszew, near Poznań, although he claims that there is evidence that the death sentence had been passed in clerical courts prior to this (1952, pp. 16–17). In his opinion, the peak of the persecution fell between 1675–1725 (1952, p. 179), which has been confirmed by my own research (Wyporska 2003, pp. 42–45) and the last death sentence for witchcraft was passed in 1775 (Baranowski 1971, p. 245), although there are accounts of suspected witches being beaten and killed after this date. Baranowski's estimate of a total of 10,000 legally passed death sentences and 5,000 illegal deaths of both men and women (1952, p. 178) is perennially quoted by authors, who have cited the figures from the French résumé (1952, pp. 178–81). The figures are based on a calculation by Baranowski that in 1952 there were 1,250 towns in modern-day Poland. He supposes that each town court tried an average of four cases for witchcraft during the period and sentenced two people to death from each trial. He then adds to this the figure of 10,000 death sentences, and an additional and arbitrary 5,000 deaths to reflect the illegal murders of people suspected of witchcraft, making a total of 15, 000 deaths over the three centuries. If this figure were correct, the total number of deaths in Poland would account for 30 per cent of the European total, given the figure of 50,000 deaths, suggested by authors writing more recently (Briggs 1996, p. 8 and Levack 1995, p. 22).

Baranowski's figures are founded on no scientific or factual basis. The one ascertainable fact in the equation, i.e. the number of towns in Poland in 1952, is also incorrect and anachronistic. According to the *Encyklopedia Powszechna* (Krzyżewski 1985, 3, p. 600) there were 806 towns and 2,110 parishes in Poland and since there has been no territorial change since 1952, one might reasonably assume that the figure has not changed. The difference in territory between the *Koronna* 'Crown territories' in the seventeenth century and the Poland of 1952 is evident. This cannot be regarded as equivalent to 1,250 towns, given modern-day population figures. Therefore, Baranowski's statistics and methodology can be criticized. Karpiński (1995, pp. 319–20) disputes them and claims that, having studied the records of Poznań, Lublin, Cracow, and Lvov in the 150-year-period from around 1550 to around 1700 he found only 78 records of witchcraft trials involving women in

the four towns. His work was specifically concerned with the study of the life of women in the towns and so he writes nothing about male witches. To date, I have discovered references to and materials indicating that there were at least 700 trials for witchcraft, which on average involved two people per trial, in both archival records and secondary sources. However, it is extremely unlikely that we will ever be able to calculate a comprehensive figure of deaths or convictions for witchcraft in the Polish lands, since up to ninety percent of the Municipal Court Record books (including the Criminal Books, which were routinely destroyed after their use as a matter of course) were destroyed during World War Two.

The demonological printed sources, which some would term as originating from 'high culture' or the 'elite' are mainly printed sources in the form of treatises and sermons with a clearly didactic aim. They are valuable from the point of view of both what they record and what they omit. The types of genres in which the materials appear are also extremely valuable and represent differing specific forms of relaying information, with their own stylistic devices and specifics of interpretation. However, these printed sources were published in order to be read (often aloud), and to present both a form of oral communication, and a written lasting record of the author's purported opinions, or those of his benefactor or patron.

The Polish printed sources tend to be, as others in the field, synthetic in their style and plagiarize many examples from early works such as those of Del Rio, St Augustine, and the *Malleus Maleficarum*, as a matter of course and style. Surprisingly, in Polish works, despite widespread claims by the anonymous author of *Czarownica powołana*, 'A Witch Denounced', that there were not enough trees in Poland to supply stakes for all the witches, the majority of examples of witchcraft or interaction with the devil are quoted from earlier French, German or Spanish works. The devil appears, of course, in many types of literature, but for brevity the representations will be taken from a few selected treatises, and two particular literary works. *Nowe Ateny* or 'New Athens' by Father Benedykt Chmielowski was originally published between 1745 and 1756 in four volumes and republished several times. Father Chmielowski was a Jesuit writing in the latter half of the eighteenth century, whose fantastic descriptions of miracles

and wonders provided a reanimation of the descriptions of witchcraft found in fifteenth and sixteenth century authors. *Diabeł w swoiey postaci z okazyi pytania jeżli są upiory ukazany, część pierwsza* by Father Jan Bohomolec, 1772, attempts to be rather more philosophical and theological in its approach and debates the various qualities and properties of the devil, but still propagates fantastic facts about witchcraft. *Młot na czarownice,* 'A Hammer of Witches', was a translation of Part two of the *Malleus Maleficarum* by Stanisław Ząmbkowicz, published in 1614. Ząmbkowicz was secretary to the Castellan of Krakow, however, despite the fact that he was a lawyer, he only published the part that describes the operative powers of witches and remedies to protect against them, omitting descriptions of court procedures. This version also contained what was described as, 'A Book of Johannes Nider' and a 'Dialogue of Witches' by Ulryk Molitor. The Polish translation credits both Sprenger and Krämer as the authors, but does not provide information as to which edition of the *Malleus* was used. It is one of the earliest examples of a translation into the vernacular of the *Malleus,* and as such is of extreme interest in itself.

In these works the devil predominantly appeared as male and his names were numerous and etymologically diverse. There are Latin names common to the majority of treatises, such as *Princeps hujus mundi, Neptunus, Expertus, Accusator, Defluentes, Suggestor, Tentator,* and *Malus* (Chmielowski 1966 [1754], pp. 85–86, 93–94), as well as Greek names, and Biblical names such as Szatan, 'Satan', *Beelzebub* etc. but the most interesting are those of Polish or Slavonic origin. There are also many Polish calques of common names of devils, such as *Ojciec kłamstw,* 'Father of Lies' for example.

The origins of some of the Polish names for the devil or devils indicate their duties or qualities such as, *Jędza* 'hag', *Szczebiot* 'babbler', *Bajor* 'cheat', *Mrokot* 'gloom', and *Strojnat* 'dandy'. However, these occur mainly in fiction. In treatises the words *diabeł, bies,* and *czart* are commonly used (Chmielowski 1966 [1754], p. 85; Bohomolec 1772, p. 56; Benis 1892 [1570], p. 9; Krämer – Sprenger 1614, p. 36; Nider 1614, p. 336), which are variations on the word 'devil'. It is worth bearing in mind, when analyzing texts, that, since Polish has no definite article, it is often difficult to determine whether the authors were writing about 'the devil' or 'a devil'. It is interesting to note that the names *Rokita* and

Boruta, traditionally mentioned in Polish folklore, are absent from the treatises (Czubryński 1958, pp. 40–43). This is possibly an indication of the differences between elite and popular cultural concepts.

As for the physical appearance of the devil, since he was thought by some to be a spirit with no bodily form (Górnicki 1961 [1624], p. 534 and Molitor 1614, p. 410), he was able to transmogrify into various animals and human beings (Chmielowski 1966 [1754], p. 86; Krämer – Sprenger 1614, p. 54). This protean ability was reflected in the devil by the name of *Odmieniec* 'Changeling' who was thought to be able to turn himself into various animals and birds (Benis 1892 [1570], p. 100). There are also accounts of green and yellow devils vomited up by the possessed (Benis 1892 [1570], pp. 74, 76).

The devil was thought to take on many guises, including that of animals, trees, and a river. The human forms in which he was said to manifest himself in order to tempt people often contained precise detail and included that of a beautiful young woman (Chmielowski 1966 [1754], p. 89), a five-year-old child, a cook, and a gravedigger (Bohomolec 1772, p. 8). He was even said to have appeared as Christ or God (Chmielowski 1966 [1754], p. 89). Thus he could appear at any time and in any guise. There were also more fantastic accounts: he had two horns (one on his neck, the other on his forehead); bristly hair; a pale face; wide, round, inflamed eyes; or the beard and body parts of a goat. He might have had hawkish sharp nails (Bohomolec 1772, p. 75; Molitor 1614, p. 437), goose legs, or the tail of a donkey (Bohomolec 1772, p. 136), or a human face under his tail. He might even be two-faced like Janus (Bohomolec 1772, p. 135). A common perception was as the devil as a black man (Chmielowski 1966 [1754], pp. 92–94; Bohomolec 1772, p. 151) who breathed fire from his mouth and nostrils. He was also said to have appeared as a small child with a black face (Molitor 1614, p. 414). This is clearly an attempt to construct the devil as the physical 'other,' either in animal form or in opposition to white European society.

Devils were often associated with specific sins (Benis 1892 [1570], pp. 98–106; Chmielowski 1966 [1754], p. 86), in a style similar to the personification of sin as evident in other pantheistic systems. This is particularly visible in literary works, where devils are little more than literary or didactic devices. There are two dramas from which we can see the use of devils as popular characters. *Sejm Piekielny,* 'Hell's Par-

liament' (often confused with the work *Theatrum Diabolorum*) which was written in 1622 and whose author's identity is the subject of great dispute. *Postępek prawa czartowskiego,* 'A Trial of Devilish Rights' from 1570 is yet another anonymous work. Both works present a hierarchy of devils, with specific duties, who are to some extent Polish or "polonized." In *Postępek*, we find mention of female devils, *Dziewanna, Marzana, Wenda, Jędza, Ossorya, Chorzyca,* and *Markana,* who were sent specifically to Poland (Benis 1892 [1570], p. 97).

In *Sejm Piekielny,* each devil is assigned one of the seven deadly sins, and encourages people to commit that particular sin. We can also see an example of a regional devil, usually associated with folklore, for example *Lewiathan,* spends most of his time in Mazovia, whilst a Ruthenian devil named *Bies* is portrayed, together with his brother *Dietko* who splits his time between Moscow and Podole (Benis 1892 [1570], p. 64).

The devil considered to have the worst job, was *Smołka,* who had to live among women (Benis 1892 [1570], p. 44). The idea that devils are somewhat frightened of women is evident in popular Polish tradition and reflected in the popular Polish saying, 'Where the devil fears to tread, send a woman.' The tradition that the devil feared women was also apparent in the story of Pan Twardowski, a Faust-like figure, who sold his soul to the devil. When the time came for repayment, since he feared the devil, he sent his wife in his place, who made swift work of him. As for the connection with witchcraft, a devil named *Rogalec* was charged with recruiting witches, and the lack of reference to male recruits indicates that the concept of a male witch had not yet gained general currency (Benis 1892 [1570], p. 46). According to this work, it was *Lucyper,* who sent female devils to Germany to teach women witchcraft. Other devils focus their attention on inns, alcohol, theft, bad weather, battle, murder, and female finery and vanity—the latter becomes a recurrent theme. Others tempted the clergy or encouraged people to swear (Benis 1892 [1570], pp. 101–105). Devils particularly liked to cause marital discord, for unsuitable people to marry, and for couples to live together without marrying (Krämer – Sprenger 1614, pp. 209–211) which made a mockery of the marriage sacrament. Devils were also held responsible for longing, illness, loss of reason,

nightmares, sleeplessness, crying in the night, substituting babies and encouraging mothers to kill their children (Benis 1892 [1570], pp. 109, 111; Bohomolec 1772, p. 371).

Thus the role of devils in printed sources appears to be didactic; they appear as the personification of sins and provide a convenient explanation for temptation. They also give a rather interesting insight into the social and moral norms of the times. Through these works all social ills and sins can be traced to the relevant devil, who could be used as either a warning or as a convenient excuse.

In contrast, the role and figure of the devil appears to be somewhat different in popular culture and belief. The following information has been extracted from trial records and the confessions of witches therein. The trials reflect a mixture of the judge's preconceptions, prejudices, fear and demonological knowledge, which emerge in the questions posed. In some cases the confession is recorded in the form of answers to the various questions posed by the judge—so the results are obviously directed and often feature suggested information. In others the confession is recorded as a continuous piece of prose, less frequently accompanied by witness accounts. Judges, of course, had different ideas about the details of the Sabbath and the practices of witches. The extent to which details concerning the devils and Sabbath make an appearance depends on the specifics of the case. A preliminary typology of the witchcraft trials can be discerned: cases involving the purported use of magic, charms, or incantations; the leveling of charges of a more ritual nature with a greater emphasis on sexual relations with the devil and often abuse of the Eucharist; and accusations of harming people and animals in which there was no mention of the devil. This study is not concerned with the truth of these accusations but the comparison between the demonological details found in both printed and manuscript sources, and any possible interaction.

The manuscript sources were originally oral statements evinced most often under torture, and recorded by a notary, who was part of the judicial system. Thus the information cannot be said in any way to be objective, but serves the purpose of indicating what type of opinions on demonology were prevalent amongst the judges and perhaps amongst ordinary people.

If, as is popularly thought, the confessions of the witches were read out at executions, then the confessions themselves or at least their rendering by the notary would have an added didactic importance, and served to educate and deter. In this guise the confessions would also take on the role of propaganda, as well as being a method of disseminating information more widely. As a result of familiarizing the presentation of the evil deeds and practices of apparently everyday people, who were one's neighbors and friends, fear of falling into the clutches of the devil increased. One was living in a world apparently inhabited by devils, who had familiar names, familiar clothing, and whom had been seen by people known to one personally. This demonological propaganda was used by both the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches for varying purposes. However, there is little evidence that churches actively sought to bring cases of witchcraft before municipal courts. Charges were most often brought by members of society or by the local Seigneur.

The majority of the examples discussed feature descriptions of the differing devils and their garments. The variety of descriptions of the devil is something rather peculiar to Polish, German and Estonian trial records. Devils are variously described as German, French or Polish and within that typology, we have Polish devils who are of aristocratic or peasant origin. The descriptions are mainly concerned with the devils' style of dress. The most frequent names for devils, according to a collection of trials from Grodzisk, were *Jasiek, Jan*, and *Kuba,* followed by *Woytech. Rokita*, a traditional devil's name in Polish folklore, as we have mentioned, was not to be found in the treatises examined here, but appears in the testimonies of those accused of witchcraft (AGAD KM Radziejów 15:fo. 268). He was a devil traditionally connected with the area of Łęczyca.

Hanykowa's *Kuba* (AGAD Księgi Baworowskich 252:fo. 15) was dressed fashionably in the German style. It appears to be a common feature that the German devils also tended to have the epithet 'fashionable' attached to them. In another case, Anna Stelmaszka's devil was described as *pokuśnika po Niemiecku w czerwonej barwie*, 'a temptor in the German style in dressed in red' (APP Akta Miasta Pyzdr I/43: fos. 59–62). This is perhaps due to the fact that in Wielkopolska, an important section of society would have consisted of German merchants

and townspeople, some of whom may have dressed more fashionably or more distinctively.

There was also mention of Polish devils, and one may assume that if nationality is not mentioned, then the devil is in fact Polish. *Stach,* a devil in the Polish style, dressed in green, was neither old nor young, and one of his compatriots, Barbara Konieczna's devil was dressed as a Polish peasant (AGAD Księgi Baworowskich 252:fo. 15, 25ᵛ). Another witch confessed to having a devil named *Kuba* (AGAD Księgi Baworowskich 252:fo. 16ᵛ) who was described as dressing in the French style. According to one witch, following her third session of torture (Baranowski 1971, p. 203), her devil was described as *po żydowsku,* 'in the Jewish style'.

It was common for devils to be described as dressing in black, green or red (AGAD Księgi Baworowskich 252:fo. 41ᵛ), such as a devil named *Jarek,* who wore green hose, a red hat and black boots (AGAD Księgi Baworowskich 252:fo. 9ᵛ, 15 ᵛ, 18). Małgorzata Kupidarzyna's *Jasiek* was *młody w sukni zielonej i żółtych botach, czapka barankowa,* 'young, in green dress and yellow boots, a lamb fleece hat' (AGAD Księgi Baworowskich 252:fo. 28ᵛ). It is interesting that there appears to be no need to explain the meanings of these descriptions of devils. If the accused said that the devil was dressed in the French or German style, then it was perhaps obvious to contemporaries what was meant by that. Generally the style of dress was described rather than the actual physical manifestation of the devil, so one may assume that these devils were not monsters, or abnormally ugly. If they had had any particularly noticeable features, then perhaps they would have been mentioned. However, in one case, the devil was described as having horse's hooves (Tripplin 1852, p. 283). The only physical description was usually of the devil's penis and it was an often repeated fact that during sex, the devil's member was cold (AGAD Księgi Baworowskich 252: fos. 8–8v), however, Agnieszka Jakóbka, during a second session of torture, confessed that 'she enjoyed sex with the devil, and his nature was warm' (Wawrzeniecki 1909, p. 59).

In addition to descriptions of devils in treatises and trial records, there are also references to people apparently turned into demons after their death. This phenomenon is more often found in regional legends. One such tale was told about a certain Wideracki, of the Zarębów

family, in the first half of the fifteenth century. He was famous for his plundering and pillaging in the local area (Różek 1993, p. 146). Upon his death, there were rumors that he roamed the area as a devil. Thus we have another process of demonization. Tales of regional devils, elements of Christianity, remnants of belief in old Slavonic spirits and demons, combined with variations in folklore to provide a rich tapestry of demonology.

Since in the majority of Polish witchcraft confessions there were no references to familiars, it can be suggested that the personification of the devil was an analogous concept. However, the familiar nature of devils could equally be perceived as a continuation of the tradition of the *domovoi* (house spirits), who were an important part of ancient Slavonic mythology. They were mischievous, rather than harmful spirits who looked after the home and were placated with offerings of food. Christianity, according to Pełka and Baranowski, demonized these harmless creatures. The lingering spirit of the Christian could conveniently be viewed as a Slavonic water or forest spirit, and many of them were identified with liminal Christian situations, such as death without the appropriate rites, for example suicides or the death of unbaptized infants. Thus from a brief examination of the trial records and printed sources, one can see that the portrait of the devil serves a variety of purposes and beliefs and appears to be distinctly different within elite and popular cultures. In elite cultural sources there are obvious parallels with the religious and social morality of the time, with the emphasis on personifying sin (especially in the context of the shift from an emphasis on the seven deadly sins to the Decalogue). Consequently, the sins were magnified by their equation with a devil.

In sources from popular culture the devil appears to be a figure to be feared or scorned. He appears in a particular style of dress and is often kept by the witch, since he is poor and often lives in the kitchen. It is important to note that the devil is not uniformly seen as the personification of evil, but as a more familiar figure with whom one can joke and outwit. The appearance of foreign devils (Różek 1993, p. 142) can be identified with the emergence and strengthening of the *Polak-Katolik,* 'Pole-Catholic' stereotype. Thus, the demonization of foreigners was an added stigma and method of projecting the 'other' onto for-

eigners, whether in person or reputation. The ambivalent concepts of the devil are reflected in the concepts of the witch that can be found in early modern Poland—there are many challenges to the hegemonous idea of the witch or the devil as universally perceived to be evil. The devil, as we have seen, in Poland was seen as two sides of a coin—both a laughing stock and a powerful stereotype. An idea that has continued to this day.

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SEXUAL ENCOUNTERS WITH SPIRITS AND DEMONS IN EARLY MODERN SWEDEN: POPULAR AND LEARNED CONCEPTS IN CONFLICT AND INTERACTION

JONAS LILIEQUIST

The subject of this essay is the confrontation and interaction between popular traditions and learned doctrines in early modern Sweden regarding the sexual activities of spirits and demons and how it evolved over time. Traditional notions were appropriated and redefined by representatives of elite culture, while learned doctrines were appropriated and used in various ways by members of the population at large. Differences in cultural uses and strategies are in focus here rather than different sets of beliefs (Chartier 1984).

In 1640, Peder Jönsson confessed before the town court of Söderköping that he had had sexual intercourse with a female water spirit several times over a period of years. The spirit was described by Peder as resembling a beautiful woman, except for the buttocks where she had a tail like a foal.[1] This female spirit had visited him either when he was out at sea fishing or in the woods, referring to her as a water spirit (*sjörå*) and a forest nymph (*skogsrå*), respectively. Peder's confession reflected traditional beliefs in anthropomorphic spiritual beings living in the woods or in lakes and river streams. Such spirits were of an ambiguous nature—neither entirely good nor entirely evil. They could be dangerous and hostile toward humans if they were annoyed, but there were also benefits for those who encountered them, in particular good fortune in hunting and fishing. However, in the conceptual perspective of early modern elite culture, there was no room for ambiguous spiritual beings existing somewhere between God and the devil. The trial against Peder also reflects the ambitions of an elite culture in service of the church and the state to reform traditional popular culture and root out all behavior, customs and beliefs perceived as immoral and

idolatrous. Pagan deities and spirits were appropriated by the authorities and reconceptualized as manifestations of demons or even the devil himself. This changed during the eighteenth century, when the authorities became more inclined to seek more naturalistic explanations for alleged supernatural encounters. In this paper, I will begin with the changing strategies of elite culture and then proceed to popular appropriations of demonic sexuality.

Early Strategies of Elite Culture—Demonization of Popular Encounters with Spirits

Demonization was a strategy that had already been applied by the medieval church, but it was not until early modern times and the emergence of a strong central government in symbiosis with the Lutheran church that this tactic could be enforced with greater strength in Swedish society. In 1608, the text of the Bible and the Ten Commandments were made official law in Sweden. A wide range of behavior, customs and beliefs were designated crimes against "the law of God" and associated with the devil. The devil was used in various ways: to mark the sinfulness of certain behavior, especially prohibited sexual relations; to demonize popular magic and healing as the devil's work, implying some kind of alliance with him; and to label all kinds of supernatural spirits as demons or manifestations of the devil himself.[2]

The influence of learned demonology is obvious in the case of Peder Jönsson. Not a word about his sexual encounters with the water spirit was mentioned in the first interrogation, which actually concerned an unsubstantiated accusation of theft. Peder had been engaged by another man to trace some stolen goods and eventually located them at the home of one of his client's neighbors, when in turn led to charges and counter charges in court. Apparently Peder had a reputation for being skillful in such things and the court immediately took an interest in his methods. After numerous exhortations to reveal them, Peder confessed that he first went to three springs, struck the surface of the water with a rod and scooped up some water, saying: "Bless God, the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit." Then he sacrificed some coins, mixed the water from each spring in a pail and placed a crystal stone into it, saying

the words: "Through you in the water, I bless you God, Father and the Holy Spirit." It is evident from the records that the court did not believe that these were the words he actually spoke. In the next inquiry, he was pressed about his wording and promised a more lenient sentence if he confessed "unforced." After some time, he began to tell the court what it wanted to hear. He had used the words "Trolls and devils help me know what I request to know." This was a first step to admitting having established contact with the devil. Consequently, the court asked him whether someone appeared to help him. Yes, he answered, the water spirit emerged from the water in human shape. Not entirely satisfied with his answer, the court pressed on and asked if he had not used the same formulation as a notorious witch revealed in 1613, namely "Take what I give you and give me what I request." Yes, he replied, he had. And what had he given her? She requested a limb, Peder answered. "And perhaps also body and soul?", the court suggested. "Yes, that is true" he answered, "but I wouldn't want to lose that." He had promised her a finger from his right hand and since then had also been forced to have sexual intercourse with her and abstain from having relations with his wife in order to keep all of his limbs intact.

Even though Peder had not confessed to having conjured up the devil, the court still had succeeded in securing all statements necessary for proving a *pactum diabolicum*. According to the Christian demonology established in the twelfth century and adopted by the early Lutheran church, the devil and his demons could appear either as a man (*incubus*) or a woman (*succubus*) and entice humans to have sexual intercourse with them (Masters 1962, pp. 3–11; Kiessling 1977, pp. 35–38). Peder had not confessed doing anything harmful to anyone when asking for help from the spirit, but this was irrelevant in the court's eyes. He had been coerced by the court's questions, promises and threats into confessing that he had struck a deal with the spirit.

In a third inquiry, Peder seems to have given his account more freely. He tells how he came into the service of a very successful hunter and fisherman, who always lingered behind in the forest. After serving him for a year, Peder and a companion decided to ask the hunter about his great luck, whereupon the man admitted having an intimate relationship with a water and forest nymph. He told them what they needed to do in order to exhort the spirit by hitting the water with a rod and

saying "I exhort you, water nymph, to come to me in the name of trolls and a thousand of devils. I wish to serve you." Proceeding to do this three evenings in a row, the water nymph finally appeared and climbed aboard the boat, where she requested a limb from each of them as collateral in exchange for granting them good luck in shooting and fishing. Thereafter they both had sexual intercourse with her for the first time.

Such dealings with spirits belonged to a popular tradition of pre-Christian origin, representing a notion of spirits as the supernatural "owners" of nature with power and influence over wild animals (Granberg 1971). This tradition was represented in learned mythology as well. Medieval Swedish chronicles contain a story concerning a sexual encounter between Philmer Myckle, also called Vilkinius, the mythic third king of Götaland, and a water nymph. During his journey home after conquering Livonia and Russia, the king left his ship once and went ashore alone into the forest, where he met a beautiful woman with whom he had sexual intercourse. Out at sea again, the woman appeared in the water, holding the royal ship by the stem until the king recognized her as his beautiful mistress and promised to give her a kindly reception in Götaland. Half a year later, the water nymph appeared for a third time, now at the king's residence, where she gave birth to a son before disappearing forever. Such a story could still be related by official historiographers in the seventeenth century without being demonized (Klemming 1868–81, pp. 222–23; Johannes Messenius 1643, pp. 5–6. The original version in *Didrik's saga of Bern* ch. XVIII). In the case of Peder Jönsson, however, elements of demonology became more and more pronounced in his confessions under interrogation. During the third inquiry, he described the water nymph as not only having a tail of a foal (a traditional motif), but also shaggy legs and the hooves of an ox, which resemble attributes of the devil. In the course of their fifth encounter, the spirit is also said to have demanded that Peder and his companion agree to a time limit for serving her, after which date their bodies and souls would belong to her. This is strongly reminiscent of a contract with the devil.

Referring to regulations in biblical and secular law dealing with witchcraft, idolatry and bestiality, the court sentenced Peder to death. The sentence was confirmed by the royal superior court, which characterized his crimes as making a pact with the devil and committing

sodomy.[3] It may be that his original intention had been to avoid an outright accusation of witchcraft by telling the story about the water nymph, without realizing just how serious such a confession was until it was too late. It may even be the case that he had started telling his wife about the water nymph as an excuse for not fulfilling his matrimonial duties (the water nymph had forbidden him to have sexual intercourse with his wife, which had in fact occurred only once during the most recent years of their marriage). While being transported to a safe custody after receiving his death sentence, he suddenly burst out with curses and threats against his "pursuers"—the vicar and the mayor of the town—promising to exact revenge if he ever managed to escape. This was taken as a further proof of his guilt, just like the sudden storms which were reported to have broken out during his transportation.

A few years later, another trial took place in a neighboring district. On his sickbed, Per Håkansson confessed that while serving as a huntsman, an old woman had taught him how to hunt wild animals belonging to the forest nymph.[4] One day some years later, he lay down and fell asleep in the forest after having shot a buck. Upon waking, he found himself in a beautiful house when an old, ugly black figure approached him and asked why he had shot his animal, threatening to have him boiled together with the buck in a huge cauldron. Per pleaded for mercy and a beautiful young woman suddenly appeared, dressed "not like a maid of honor but like a burger's or a priest's daughter." To him she said, "If you are willing to chat and consort with me in the forest, I will save you from this place and help you to hunt animals and birds whenever you want." Per accepted her offer and from that point on, the forest nymph often visited him when he was in the forest.

From the very outset of Per Håkansson's account, a connection between the forest nymph and the devil seems explicit. However, the ugly black male figure and his companions with "large burning eyes, long ears hanging down and thick lips" also resemble trolls, and waking up in a beautiful house is reminiscent of stories about being enchanted by trolls and spirited away into a mountain hold. Nymphs were also sometimes said to dwell in mountains. Per's initial words describing the beautiful woman's dress ("not like a maid of honor") reveal a possible influence from a migratory legend about trolls and the appear-

ance of a maiden related to the noble family Trolle from the neighboring province of Småland, where Per had long served as a huntsman. In one of the earliest preserved accounts of this legend, the forefather of the Trolle family was on his way to church when he was confronted with a "well-dressed" maiden emerging from a nearby mountain where "gallant people" were dancing and amusing themselves. The maiden offers him to drink from a horn and the nobleman, suspecting mischief, pretends to accept but throws the drink over his shoulder and in one swift motion cuts the maiden's head off with his sword. The decapitated maiden is later found metamorphosed into "an abominable and awful troll." The nobleman changed his family name to Trolle and had the decapitated troll depicted on the family's coat of arms (Petter Rudebeck 1690, cited after Lövkrona 1982, pp. 148–49).

Distinctions between spirits, trolls and devils, however, had little relevance in a clerical perspective. In another version of the legend, the bishop Petrus Jonae Angermannus states explicitly that the maiden was a demon sent out by the devil and describes the metamorphosis without using the word "troll" (consequently Angermannus also doubts the veracity of the decapitation "since spirits have no bones and flesh") (Petrus Jonae Angermannus 1620, cited after Lövkrona 1982, p. 148). According to the church's demonological doctrine, presented at considerable length in a manual on witchcraft written by the bishop of Linköping, Erichus Johannes Prytz in 1632, evil spirits and demons were fallen angels who had been expelled from heaven and now dwelt throughout the world—"the ones in mountains are called mountian trolls; the ones in forests forest nymphs, elves and ghosts," and so on.[5] In this manner, all traditional, popular and local notions of spirits, creatures and supernatural beings were conveniently demonized as manifestations of the devil and his agents.

Per Håkansson was brought to Linköping to be heard before the Consistory. Like Peder Jönsson before him, the court attempted to coerce Per into confessing to having struck a deal with the forest nymph and engaging in sexual intercourse with her, but in contrast to Peder he had the strength and insight to resist the pressure (perhaps he had heard about Peder's fate). The forest nymph had certainly tried to force him to copulate with her but he had been too astonished to be able to consummate the act, and hence the forest nymph never partook of his

"manhood." Thereafter he had always rejected her advances, because he feared that he would never get rid of her if he did and would eventually suffer from bodily afflictions "like Nils in Nässja who became lame in one of his legs." While according to the popular worldview, sexual intercourse with a forest nymph, and especially the transference of any emitted bodily fluid or substance, could be damaging to one's own spirit and health (a risk which had to be weighed against the benefits of good hunting and fishing luck), this very same phenomenon was interpreted by Lutheran demonology as the ultimate proof of voluntarily entering into the service of the devil. Per admitted that the forest nymph had required some drops of blood from his finger, told him to hide a consecration wafer in his mouth during communion and give it to her, and bring her his newborn son so that she may raise him to be a wise and learned man, all of which he refused to do. Eventually he escaped with his life, but at the price of spending at least two years imprisoned in the town's tower.

The legal influence of the *incubi/succubi* thesis reached its peak during the great witch-trials of the 1660s and 1670s. However, in the decades which followed, courts, judges and even priests seem to have been much more hesitant in applying the doctrine in a literal way. In 1691, Sven Andersson, a young servant, confessed that he had had sexual relations with a female mountain spirit for six or seven years.[6] The spirit appeared to him in the form of a beautiful woman dressed in white cloth, dwelling in a nearby mountain. Sven described his trysts with this female being in most sensual terms. While it was true that during copulation he had felt that she was all hairy up to the navel, it had not deterred him. Like in the case of Peder Jönsson, the spirit was immediately regarded by the judge as a manifestation of the devil, but unlike the former case, alternative interpretations were also considered. The possibility of the devil appearing in human shape and having sexual encounters with humans was first stated with reference to a number of judicial and theological authorities. It was then stated that in most cases such stories were no more than fantasies brought on by melancholia. In this case, however, the reality of the confessed experiences could not be doubted, according to the judge. Lodged in favor of this interpretation were witnesses' testimonies about Sven's frequent overnight stays in the woods and several circumstances of a more physi-

cal nature—an investigation of the servant's sexual organ showed that he had indeed had sexual intercourse, his complexion revealed that he had been under the influence of something evil, and his experience of the spirit's coldness during intercourse was in accordance with what had been reported in similar cases. On the latter, point, however, there was a certain ambiguity—Sven had on one instance actually said that the spirit's sexual organ was warm, not cold, but this was passed over in silence by the court. Sven was sentenced to death with reference to the biblical and secular regulations on bestiality. However, this sentence seems not to have been confirmed by the Royal Superior Court.

By the early eighteenth century, the elite perspective had shifted its focus, from demonization of alleged encounters with spiritual beings as actual pacts with the devil, to the explaining of such meetings as mere illusions and fantasies, surely instilled by the devil, but without any veracity in real life. In a case from 1705, a soldier on trial for going away on numerous occasions from his regiment explained that he had a mistress with long, beautiful hair who lived in the woods.[7] The court was of the opinion that the soldier had fallen victim to the devil's delusions, but just to be on the safe side he was sentenced to capital punishment and the case was reported to the Royal Superior Court. While awaiting the court's resolution, the soldier modified his account and said that he had experienced the encounters with the forest nymph as if in a dream. He was eventually set free and referred to the priests for religious instruction.

From Demons to "Human Beasts"—the Disenchantment of the Spiritual World

The new emphasis on devilish illusions and the power of imagination cleared the way for more rationalistic and naturalistic interpretations. Paradoxically, this did not always mean that popular accounts were considered less credible. In a case from 1708, the tables were turned. The priests, who had been the most zealous in applying the *incubi/succubi* thesis, now made their efforts to persuade the person on trial to withdraw his confession, while secular military judges displayed great determination to get to the bottom of the confessed matter. Once again

the case concerned a soldier who had spoken of a relationship with a forest nymph as the explanation for leaving his regiment without first being granted official leave. And once again the spirit was described as a woman in every aspect except for her shaggy legs and mare's tail.[8] Sven Jönsson was tried by both the regimental court and the consistory in Skara. Colonel Anders Sparfeldt, head of the military court, took the confession most seriously, asking detailed questions about the stature of the spirit and whether her body was solid and fleshy. He also had a portrait drawn of the nymph after the soldier's description to be enclosed in a letter to the Royal Supreme Court, in which he argued that this so-called *forest nymph* was nothing but a corporeal creature of blood and flesh.[9] The substance of demon's bodies had been a much-discussed question among demonologists. Some claimed that demons had phantasmal bodies and thus only fooled people into believing that they had had sexual intercourse with them, while other held that unclean spirits could assume actual human form (Kiessling 1977, pp. 21–22; Masters 1962, pp. 29–31). According to a third opinion, demons' bodies were made of condensed vapors, which explained the perceived coldness of the demon, especially of the sexual organ.

Sparfeldt first rejects that a spirit could assume a material body, citing John 3:6 and Luke 24:39 that "what is flesh is born from flesh" and that "a spirit has no flesh and bones." He then proceeds to argue that the so-called *forest nymph* must be a corporeal being since the soldier had embraced her and copulated with her in such a harsh manner that his sexual organ had become swollen and bloody. Since the creature not only lived and moved also but could talk, use reason and sense, persuade a man into sexual intercourse, make love as a human and express all sorts of human affections, it could not be considered a beast. The mare's tail did not necessarily make it less human than people with harelips and "feet like horses and cattle," living in society (one wonders where Sparfeldt made his observations). Eventually, Sparfeldt comes to the conclusion that the creature must be the offspring of some shepherd boy abusing of a mare in the forest. According to Sparfeldt, such monsters filled the earth both before and after the Flood. The problem was now how the relationship between the soldier and this creature should be judged, since there was no law against sexual intercourse with a monster!

The drawing of the female creature in the woods enclosed in the letter of Colonel Anders Sparfeldt.

Some time after Sparfeldt had sent his letter, the soldier withdrew his confession. Both the local vicar and the bishop of Skara had assured him that his experiences were nothing but illusions and warned him of the penal consequences if he adhered to his confession. The bishop had even told him that one person had been executed on the grounds of a similar confession. In a letter to the Royal Supreme Court the bishop and the members of the consistory expressed their opinion that his confession was no more than pure imagination and an attempt to delay punishment for his escapes from the regiment.[10] The sincerity in Sven's retraction of his earlier statements was seriously doubted by Sparfeldt, who obviously thought that he had stumbled onto a hitherto hidden phenomenon of unsuspected proportions. His exaltation is almost palpable when he, during the second interrogation, asks the soldier if "he had seen or heard of other similar creatures resembling cows or oxen or just like human beings." However, the members of the Royal Supreme Court were more influenced by the formal reports submitted by the bishop, and Sparfeldt was reproached for lending too much credence to the soldier's story and thereby encouraging ordinary people in their delusions, instead of leaving the matter in the hands of the priests.[11]

Despite this reprimand, three years later Sparfeldt was appointed provincial governor and his comments and arguments reveal a more than passing acquaintance with demonological treatises and biblical commentaries. For instance, he uses the word *nephelim*—a term from the Hebraic text of the Old Testament—as a synonym for *monster*. *Nephelim* refers to the original passage in Genesis 6: 1–4 on the *sons of God*—interpreted by Jewish and early Christian and apocryphal commentators as angels—who took "the daughters of humankind" as their wives and fathered children which grew up to be mighty men. The mighty men were identified with the *nephilim,* which was translated as *gigantibus* in the Vulgata. The "angel version" was taken up by early modern demonological treatises in association with the origins of demons and the *incubi/succubi* thesis, even though this interpretation had been questioned and refuted by thinkers of the Scholastic tradition in the Middle Ages (Kiessling 1977, pp. 9–10, 22). Prytz mentions it only briefly in his manual without using the word *nephelim.* Nor did Swedish translations of the Bible favor such an interpretation or use

the Hebraic term. In the translation from 1703 for example, the sons of God are defined as the sons of the holy Patriarchs (*Biblia*, Genesis 6:2 note a). Still, the perception of giants as some kind of monstrous off-spring seems to have lingered on—Vilkinius' son by the water nymph was described as very tall, revealing an early influence of this Judeo-Christian tradition.

While Sparfeldt was far from ignorant of the politics of demonology, his opinion seems to have been less at odds with some other general trends in contemporary society. Bestiality was certainly on people's minds in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Sweden, where young males were regularly put on trial, decapitated and burnt at the stake and the abused animals publicly slaughtered and burned or buried in spectacular executions (Liliequist 1991; 1992). Learned attitudes towards monsters had also begun to change. In the early seventeenth century, supernatural causes and celestial constellations were still favored explanations. The vicar Joen Petri Klint comments on a drawing of a monster—half-human half-cow—as follows:

> It happened in a village that a cow gave birth to a calf half human, and because of this people accused the village shepherd, but when Albertus Magnus heard this, he went to the village and acquitted the shepherd from the stake, and told the people that such births could happen when the planets and stars were in a certain conjunction.

The case is probably taken from Ambroise Paré, *Des Monstres et Prodiges*.[12]

In the eighteenth century, a growing interest in natural causes and hybridization made monstrous offspring resulting from acts of bestiality a more intriguing possibility. Sparfeldt's search for a natural explanation could in fact be seen as a modest forerunner to the upsurge in natural science some thirty or forty years later. Stories about water and forest nymphs and other fabulous beings were reconsidered, now in the hunt for "missing links" in Nature's great chain of being. Linneaus showed great enthusiasm about the report of a mermaid caught off the coast of Denmark in 1749, and was for some time convinced of the success of an attempt in Paris to crossbreed a hen and a rabbit. In his *Anthropomorpha* (1760), he presents the species *Homo troglodytes*

(cave dweller) and *Homo caudatus* (tail man) as intermediary links between *Homo sapiens* and apes, and he later loosely suggested that the origins of the *Hottentots* could be the crossing of a troglodyte and a woman (Broberg 1975, pp. 163, 184–95, 241–42). Bestiality became in fact a scientific matter. According to the German zoologist Eberhard Zimmerman (1778), a prostitute had been paid to mate with an orangutan in London, and in his *Venus physique* (1746), Maupertius exhorts the sultans to conduct experiments in their harems (Broberg 1975, pp. 236, 241). Eventually, Sparfeldt received a certain degree of vindication. His letter and the drawing of the forest nymph were copied by a Swedish natural scientist and sent to the Royal Academy of Science in 1764.[13]

Popular Appropriations—the Bestialization of the Witches' Sabbath and the Demonization of Bestiality

While people continued to tell just about the same stories about encounters with forest and water nymphs throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the *incubi/succubi* thesis was far more influential in witch-trials. From the very outset, the great witch-trials in northern and central Sweden were dominated by the testimony of child witnesses. From the court records, it is obvious how the *incubi/succubi* doctrine was introduced to the children by judges and priests. In the preliminary trials held in Elvdalen with the girl Getrud Svensdotter in 1668, the court asked Gertrud if she saw that the devil was lying in bed with Marit Matsdotter.[14] Yes, she answered, he took her with him and laid her on a bed. So far nothing about sexual intercourse had been mentioned, but the court pressed on and asked if not Gertrud herself had been lying in bed with the devil. Gertrud went silent and could not answer, and since these questions "astonished" her, according to the trial record, the court decided to ask some other questions for a while. Gertrud was taken aside by pastor Elvius who returned after some time and told the court that Gertrud had confessed that she had laid in bed with the devil, that they had both been naked and that the devil had held her in his arms. Still, she had not admitted to any sexual intercourse. Later on, Gertrud was asked if she had been together with

the devil in the bedchamber. She denied this and was once again taken aside by the pastor, who asked if the devil had had sexual intercourse with her. Gertrud admitted this after some time and said that the devil had assured her that she would not become pregnant because she was so young.

The notion of sexual intercourse with the devil spread fast among children and soon became an obligatory feature in their testimony. However, this notion was appropriated and modified by the children in various ways, often along bestial lines—the witches were said to have had sexual intercourse with the devil manifesting himself in the shape of an animal, most often a dog. The appearance of the devil in the shape of a dog was of course part of a more general picture and not necessarily made up by the child witnesses themselves, but the introduction of the *incubi/succubi* doctrine was followed by a general bestialization of the world of the witches' Sabbath. The children were married at the Sabbath to brides and bridegrooms who turned out to be either demons or ordinary farm animals—heifers, sows, and bitches for the boys, and oxen, boars and rams for the girls. Often these marriages had already been consummated, resulting in a more or less monstrous offspring. One testimony claimed that an adult male performed acts of bestiality on a nightly basis at the Sabbath in return for money (Sörlin 1997, pp. 135–36).

If demons and demonic activities were bestialized at the level of popular culture, bestiality and other crimes were in turn demonized. The devil was used by the authorities to mark the sinfulness of certain behavior—to give in to prohibited sexual desires was to succumb to the devil. From a popular perspective, however, the devil was used for the opposite purpose—it was he who took the blame, in order to make excuses and diminish one's own responsibility. This was especially salient in cases of bestiality, especially during the eighteenth century. Accused individuals spoke of how they had been enticed, fooled and forced into committing acts of bestiality by the devil. Threats and violence played an important role in many of these stories. The devil whispered in their ears, pulled and pushed the person toward the cow, helped him off with his trousers, lifted him up if he was too short, offered him money or threatened him with violence if he hesitated. In these instances, the devil usually appeared as a black man. The devil was also said to some-

times have committed bestiality himself. A beggar named Olof Olofsson said that while walking around in the cowsheds at night, the devil appeared to him and first buggered a cow and then enticed him to do the same. Witnesses were sometimes not clear as to whether it was a human being or the devil himself who sodomized the cow. This ambiguity was further exacerbated by the fact that the male water spirit—*näcken*—was known to take on human shape when having sexual intercourse with cows (Liliequist 1992, pp. 131–33). Demons and spirits met once again, but now on a popular level.

To sum up, the confessions made at trials dealing with sexual intercourse with water, forest and mountain nymphs did not change very much from the early seventeenth century to the mid-eighteenth century. Such stories were probably told and retold among people without coming before the court other than by chance or in exceptional cases. The way these stories were appropriated and modified by representatives of the state and the elite culture were, however, transformed from demonization of popular notions to the bestialization of the same phenomena associated with an emerging general trend in search for naturalistic and rationalistic explanations of the world. At the popular level, there was an almost reverse development—from the bestialization of demonic sexuality to the demonization of bestiality. Popular and learned perspectives encountered one another in a continuing preoccupation with the boundaries of humanity. Animals and spirits emerge as the fundamental categories in this cultural process, illustrating the longevity and suitability of these categories for thinking about humanity throughout its history—animals and spirits have indeed been "good to think with."

Notes

1 Court record, Söderköping 6/5 1640, 7/8 1640 (in the sacristy), 16/9 1640, (before the town court), EVAA: 11, Archive of Göta Hovrätt, Jönköping.

2 Kjöllerström 1957 (the doctrine and the law); Liliequist 1991, 1992, 1998, 2000 (sexual behaviour and gender transgression); Ankarloo 1971, 1990; Sörlin 1997, 1999; Oja 1999 (witchcraft and magic); Granberg 1971 (popular religion and belief).

3 Resolution of the Royal Superior Court Göta Hovrätt 24/10 1640, EVAA: 11, Archive of Göta Hovrätt, Jönköping.

4 Court records, the Consistory of Linköping, 5–6/6, 12/6 1643, AIa: 4, Provincial Archive of Vadstena.

5 Prytz, *Magia Incantatrix*, 1632, Question 11, manuscript Nv 20, The Diocesan and Provincial Library of Linköping.

6 Court record, Vättle härad extraordinarie ting 22/12 1691, in transcript: Nordin 1208, Uppsala University Library.

7 Resolution of the Royal Superior Court Göta Hovrätt 20/2 1705, BIIA: 15, Archive of Göta Hovrätt, Jönköping.

8 Court records, Elfsborgs läns infanteri regemente 13/2, 20/2 1707, Generalauditörens handlingar 7/7 1708 N:29a, National Archive of Sweden (RA), Stockholm.

9 Letter from Colonel Anders Sparfeldt to the Royal Supreme Court 16/12 1706, Generalauditörens handlingar 7/7 1708 N:29a, RA.

10 Letter from the Consistory of Skara to the Royal Supreme Court 12/3 1708, Generalauditörens handlingar 7/7 1708 N:29a, RA.

11 Letter from the Royal Supreme Court to Colonel Anders Sparfeldt 7/7 1708, Generalauditörens handlingar 7/7 1708 N:29a, RA.

12 Joen Petri Klint, *Järteckensamling*, fol.114, manuscript N28, The Diocesan and Provincial Library of Linköping.

13 Adolph Modéer, "Om en menniskja med hästsvans och et barn med ovanligt stort huvud", manuscript in Kungliga Vetenskaps Akademin, Sekreterarens arkiv, K.8, Stockholm University Library.

14 Court record, Elvdalen 4/9 1668, in transcript in Linderholm C76, Uppsala University Library.

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CHURCH DEMONOLOGY AND POPULAR BELIEFS IN EARLY MODERN SWEDEN

SOILI-MARIA OLLI

The Image of the Devil

The witch-trials in Sweden reached their climax around the years 1660–1670. At this time the Devil was considered to be very active, which is reflected in legal sources and in measurements taken by the authorities. The aim of this paper is to discuss in what way different groups of society—the authorities, the elite and the popular classes in early modern Sweden—could have both similar and different images of the Devil and how the idea of the Devil could be used in different ways for different purposes. The intention is also to point out in what way the image of the Devil was changing towards the beginning of the eighteenth century. This study is based on cases of blasphemy in the King's Council (*Justitierevisionen),* during the time period 1680–1790.[1] The King's Council was at this time the highest legal institution, which was formed by the King and his counselors. Most of the cases in the King's Council were sent in from the High Courts from all over the country, also from Finland, which was a part of Sweden.

During the seventeenth century the legal system in Sweden underwent major changes at the same time as the state became more centralized, which led to an increased control of the inhabitants.[2] There was no church law in Sweden until 1686 and a general law for the country as a whole did not exist until 1734. In 1608 the Ten Commandments from the Bible were added to the legal system and started to be used as a parallel prescription to the medieval provincial laws. Referring to the appendix from 1608 increased the number of crimes submitted to death penalty.[3] Blasphemy was considered to be among the gravest crimes to be committed at this time and was sanctioned by death penalty by the appendix from 1608 and by several statutes.[4] No death

penalty could, however, be carried out without the permission of the King, who was also the only one, who, together with his Council, could pardon criminals from being executed. Towards the beginning of the eighteenth century it was becoming more common that the death penalty was changed into some kind of corporal punishment, usually flogging. According to the authorities' point of view all kind of contacts with the Devil was looked upon as blasphemy and called *Crimen laesae Majestatis Divinae* (Crime against the Heavenly Majesty).

By studying cases of blasphemy in the King's Council it is possible to catch a glimpse of the popular beliefs about the Devil and also of the authorities' point of view on this matter. In the 120 cases of blasphemy examined here a large number of the delinquents have expressed a stronger belief in the Devil than in God. Among these cases of blasphemy it is possible to separate four different groups of perpetrators, namely:

1. Those accused of injuring God directly, which is outside the scope of this paper.
2. Those who confessed to have believed both in God and in the Devil.
3. Those who confessed to have a stronger belief in the Devil.
4. Those who confessed to have tried to make a pact with the Devil.

The Idea of the Devil's Pact

The idea of the Devil's pact originally comes from two early medieval legends and in the early modern time it spread out through the whole European Christianity.[5] According to these legends the person who wanted to make a pact with the Devil should himself write a contract containing the conditions for both parts, sign it with his own blood and leave it in a church yard on a Thursday night.[6] In exchange of certain benefits, the Devil should receive the body and the soul of the person who had entered the pact, when the time of the contract was to its end. It was also possible to make a pact with the Devil that was considered to be a kind of loan.[7] In Sweden a large number of contracts are spoken of in the judicial records, and thereby it is possible to know

what the persons in question had allegedly asked the Devil for. The benefits wished seem to have been far more important than the worry about the soul.[8] The pact was usually made for a time period of 20–30 years, only in one case the time period is five years and in another one 60 years.

During the time period under investigation 29 cases of the Devil's pact appear in the King's Council.[9] Attempts to make a Devil's pact were thought to be common in an urban male culture.[10] Most of the delinquents accused of Devil's pact in the Kings Council were soldiers. Fourteen persons were soldiers, two persons were noblemen, who were also soldiers, others were administrators, writers, bailiffs, students, burghers or some kind of craftsmen. Two of the delinquents accused for Devil's pact were farmers, two were farmers' apprentices and one person was a crofter. The social status of only one person remains unknown.[11] The most common motive for making a pact with the Devil was money.[12] In the sources formulations as *"some money," "enough money"* and *"as much money as I will need"* often appear.

The similarity of the Devil's pact with a modern business agreement can be observed in its form and in the rituals connected with the establishment of the pact. The form of the written contract is the stereotype and it was also said to be common to shake hands with the Devil after the agreement was made or when the contract was handed over. An example of similarities with a business agreement appears in one case, where the delinquent told that he wrote in his contract. *"I look forward to receiving the money until tomorrow evening at 18.00"* (RA. 1727–11–17, nr 21). Also in the eyes of the authorities the contract had to contain certain conditions in order to be considered to be valid. In 1694 Anders Mårtensson was pardoned, as told he had not signed his contract at all.[13] If the Devil was thought not to have received the contract, the alliance was not considered to be valid and the person accused could be pardoned from the death penalty or even not punished at all. An alleged delay in the handing over of the contract to the evil one often appeared. The accused confessed to have been easier to write the contract, but the delivery brought already some kind of hesitation. In several cases they confessed to have the contract hidden instead of given to the evil one. Some of the delinquents claimed that they had never had the intention to give away the piece of paper.

In the King's Council almost everyone accused of Devil's pact was pardoned. Most of the delinquents were between 19 and 24 years of age and their youth was referred to as the reason for pardoning them from the death penalty. Because of their young age, they apparently had not been able to truly understand what a terrible crime they had committed and how dangerous the Devil really was. Some were also pardoned because it was understood that the Devil had not got the contract or had not kept his part of the agreement. In the first half of the time period studied the authorities made big efforts to find out whether the Devil had kept his part of the pact or not, by asking the persons accused whether they had got what they had wanted or not (Oja 1999, p. 161). The fact that the delinquent seemed to have received what he had asked for, confirmed that the alliance had taken place. In one case, in 1694, the delinquent was pardoned because the King's Council established the fact that he was as poor as before entering the pact (RA. 1694–11–02, Bunt III, nr. E 334). Johan Ekelau, on the other hand, who confessed to have made a pact with the Devil in 1724, had, according to his own testimony at the hearings, got everything that he had asked the evil one for, which was not taken lightly upon (RA. 1731–07–20, nr. 87). All this shows a stable belief in the power of the Devil in the first part of the time period under investigation. Later on, towards the end of the eighteenth century the reason for pardoning blasphemants was due to changes in attitudes towards transgression in religion. This change has by many scholars been explained by an individualization of the religion and a secularization that had taken place in the eighteenth century (Jarrick 1987 and Oja 1999). In the law of 1779 a parallel was drawn between witchcraft/Devil's pact and superstition.

Church Demonology and Popular Beliefs

According to the Lutheran belief the Devil is by definition nothing but evil.[14] Within the popular classes, however, the notion of the Devil is more varied. In the popular beliefs the Devil was often considered to be a stronger power than God, more reliable, more helpful and in many fields more present in the daily life. It was also possible to contact the evil one directly, while the contacts with God usually demanded assis-

tance of some kind of clergy. Nils Larsson Sandberg said in 1734 that the Devil was stronger than God was, and if you prayed to God you only made a fool of yourself (RA. 1734–12–03, nr. 1). Axel Wilhelm Thomsson who confessed to have made a pact with the Devil in the middle of the seventeenth century, stated that he was not afraid of God, but of Satan (RA. 1753–03–17, nr. 27). Lars Stökman had even blessed the Devil and cursed God (RA. 1749–10–25, nr. B 26).

In the eyes of the authorities all kinds of contacts with the Devil were considered to be the same as turning your back to God, and through the Devil's pact the alliance with God, given you in the Christian baptism, was cancelled.[15] Within the popular classes it seemed, however, possible to pray both to God and to the Devil, one not eliminating the other. In a large number of the cases of blasphemy an ambivalent relationship to God and to the Devil appears. Per Larsson, for example, who was accused of blasphemy in 1702, said that he would pray to God until he had visited the Holy Communion, but as soon as he returned home he would start praying to the Devil again.[16] In this views disappointment in God could have made the persons accused of blasphemy, turn to the Devil instead. Gudmund Fyrmössa, accused in 1710, had started to pray to the Devil as he had realized that God did not listen to his prayers (RA. 1710–04–16, nr. 5). In both the elite culture and the popular culture the existence of both God and the Devil was a reality and it was even punishable to have another opinion. In the year of 1733 a young boy, Per Rasmusson, was sentenced to death, for having said that he does not think that the Devil exists.[17]

The Devil was also thought to have more influence on the natural powers as the weather, the wind and the growth in the fields. As Mickel Kalkström in 1739 went fishing with some friends he had explained all these things to his fellow fishermen (RA. 1739–06–06, nr.22). As the fellow fishermen of Mickel Kalkström had wanted to pray to God for good fishing luck, Mickel had said: "It will not help to pray to God, even a beggar has more influence on the fish than God. It is the Devil who decides about the fish." According to his beliefs also the wind and the thunderstorms were not from God, but a creation of the Devil.

Different images of the Devil also appear in the different descriptions given. In church demonology Satan is usually described in a

more abstract way, in legal sources referred to as the evil spirit (*den onda andan*) or as the unclean spirit *(den orena andan)*. On the other hand persons accused of contacts with the Devil often claim to have experienced a real meeting with the Devil and have been able to describe the evil one in a more concrete way—as a human being with a body that you could see and even touch. Two persons claimed to have shaken hands with the Devil. One of them could even give a detailed description of what the Devil's hand looked like—it was big, strong and hairy. The Devil had, at this occasion, pressed the hand of the delinquent so hard that there was blood coming from out of his fingernails. The Devil was usually described as a man, taller or shorter as normally, dressed in black, gray or blue clothes—often in the same kind of clothes as the farmers used themselves or clothes familiar to them.[18] Another difference in the image of the evil one is the fact that persons accused of contacts with the Devil have usually wanted to establish the contact themselves and also settle the conditions for it themselves. Several persons accused of blasphemy said to have been praying to the Devil, called for him, stayed up in the night in order to talk to Satan etc. In church demonology in the later part of the seventeenth century, on the other hand, the Devil was always considered to be the active part.

Conclusion

In the second half of the seventeenth century the state and the church, as well as the popular classes shared a strong belief in the presence and the influence of the Devil. Members of the popular classes were thought to relay upon the assistance of the Devil in difficult situations of crises and in getting help to solve personal problems in everyday life.[19] The idea of the Devil's pact offered benefits that were not possible to obtain otherwise. At a time when the Devil, according to church demonology, was considered to be a real counterpart to God, big efforts were made to prevent transgression in religion and all kind of behavior not accepted by the church. A demonologisation of the popular culture took place as the state control increased.

    Two facts have to be taken in consideration when blasphemy in early modern Sweden is studied—the centralization of the state, which led

to an increased control of the inhabitants and the unification of the religion according to the Lutheran belief. The state became more powerful and could be supported in its aims by the church authorities; thereby Lutheran belief became a means for control. Robert Muchembled has interpreted the aims of the state to control the local society in connection with the witch-trials in France as a part of the reformation of the popular culture. According to Muchembled the attempt to reform the popular culture was made possible with help by a local elite and by the support from the church (Muchembled 1985). Already in earlier research scholars have pointed out the role of the local ministers as mediators of the Devil's image according to church demonology also in Sweden (Bååth 1887; Gadelius 1912–13). Blasphemy is to be considered more a crime against the state than a crime against the church, because the order in society was disturbed. Religious behavior not accepted by the Lutheran church was punished severely and all traces of popular beliefs were to be eliminated. In church demonology the Devil was made visible in order to make people turn away from the evil one and keep to the Lutheran belief. In this way the same image of the Devil, as a real power could be used in different ways by different groups in society.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century the image of the power and influence of the Devil changes in different directions within different cultures. A change in the attitudes of the authorities shows in a decreasing belief in the Devil and in an increasing pathologisation, which starts around 1730, when the legal hearings are preceded by medical examinations. In 1757 Axel Thomsson was considered to be mentally ill, as he had stayed awake many nights at a row in order to be able to talk to the Devil. He himself had claimed at the hearings that his problems were so big that Satan was the only one who could help him (RA. 1757–03–17, nr. 27). The reasons for committing a religious crime were now looked for in the medical history of the delinquent. Blasphemy was no longer automatically a work of the Devil. Attempts to make a pact with the Devil appear, however, evenly spread out during the whole time period under investigation. In this study seventeen cases of Devil's pact appear during the time period 1680–1750 and twelve cases between 1750–1779. Subsequently, the idea of a severe God punishing a whole country with war, fame and diseases started to be more

important than the belief in a dangerous Devil. When the last trial of Devil's pact in Sweden took place in 1779 the delinquents' alleged attempt to make a pact with the Devil was called by the authorities "a foolish imagination" (RA. 1779–09–02, nr. 1).

Notes

1   It was possible to ask for a revision of death penalties by applying to a special department (*Justitierevisionen*) of the King's Council from about 1680. At this time the department of revision also got a permanent position. Jägersköld 1984, 2.
2   In resent years the question of state control and discipline in early modern Sweden have been studied by many scholars, both in Sweden and in Finland, latest by Lennersand, 1999.
3   In the end of the 1690es about 70 different crimes were sanctioned by death penalty, Taussi Söberg, 1996, p. 24. Even if death penalty appeared more often in the written law, criminals were actually not executed as often as the law would have demanded. Rolf Thunander mentions for the High Court, Göta Hovrätt, during the time period 1635–1699 that out of 1342 death sentences 982 were revoked. See Thunander 1994, pp. 196 ff.
4   Especially the Statute of Religion from 1655 has been considered to be of great importance as an attempt by the state to eliminate popular beliefs that were looked upon as blasphemic or superstitious. Sörlin 1993, p. 44.
5   Through the legend of St. Basil told by Hincmar of Reims, in the eighth century, the idea of the Devil's pact was widely disseminated and the legend about Theophilus from Sicily, from the seventh century, is found in hundreds of versions under a period of a thousand years. Grambo 1990, p. 141. f.
6   The majority of the alleged Devil's pacts known to us are known by written contracts spoken about in the trials. The pact could also be made by carrying out some kind of a ritual, running around the church, blowing into the keyhole of a church or stepping on a Bible, etc. Djävulen 1990, p. 24. Oral contracts do also appear in the sources. Per Nilsson for example had made an oral pact with the Devil as he had met the evil one in a graveyard. RA. 1698–10–11, B.VII nr. 20. About medieval legends on contracts with the Devil see also Mayer 1902.
7   In this case the Devil should receive the body and the soul only in the case when the sum of money required was not paid back. In this study this kind of contracts do also appear, for example in the year of 1702 one person had asked the Devil for a loan of 10,000, rix-dollars, to be paid back at a certain date—30 November 1710. RA. 1702–02–05, nr. 16.

8 Djävulen 1900, p. 25. The fact that the worry about the body and the soul was apparently neglected can also be explained from the point of view that it was common within popular beliefs to think that it was possible to cheat on the Devil.

9 I want to stress the fact that the number of cases is still not final due to two reasons, this is an on-going research project and the archive of the King's Council is not put totally in order, which means that parts of the archive are still unknown. The 29 cases mentioned here are not the only cases known in Sweden. A large number of cases also appear in the high courts of the country. It is difficult to estimate the total number of cases as a total investigation has never been done and as parts of the archives have been destroyed. Per Sörlin mentions for Göta Hovrätt—the High Court of Jönköping—that 34 persons, divided on 26 cases, were accused of Devil's pact during the time period 1635–1754. Sörlin (1993, p. 35) and Linda Oja mentions 16 cases of Devil's pact in Svea Hovrätt—the High Court of Stockholm—during the seventeenth and the eighteenth century. Four of these 16 cases came to a further treatment in the King's Council, Oja 1999, p. 160. Oja's thesis includes five district of jurisdiction of the High Court of Stockholm, the archives of which have large parts missing.

10 Sörlin 1993, p. 30. As far as we know only one woman in Sweden has deliberately tried to make a pact with the Devil. Assumed relationships between women and the Devil in connection with the witch-trials are not to be considered deliberate Devil's pacts.

11 RA. 1702–02–05, nr. 16. This person is only referred to as "the unmarried person."

12 Sörlin 1993, p. 30. Usually, an undecided sum is mentioned, but sometimes a specific sum is also wished. The soldier Zacharias Elfing had asked the Devil for three silver coins every month for 20 years. RA. 1714–09–16, nr. 21. Other things wished were good physical health, high professions, to be resistant against shots and strokes, to be able to play instruments, to be lucky with women, beautiful clothes, to get help to find lost objects, guidance to find hidden treasures and wisdom. Farmers usually wished good luck in hunting.

13 If the pact was not made in the correct way, as one person in the year of 1727, for example, had used blood from the leg instead of from the finger, the pact was not considered to be valid RA. 1727–11–17, nr. 2. Another person had not signed the contract with his own name, but with the name of another person. RA. General Auditörens Arkiv, 174607–23, nr. 84.

14 The Lutheran image of the Devil as categorically evil has to be looked upon in connection with the eschatological beliefs existing in Lutheran countries at this time, where Satan was considered to be a real counterpart to God in the fight for the mastery of the world. See Wall 1990, p. 21.

15 One person in the sources did not actually confess to have made a pact with the Devil, but still in writing cancelled his baptism, according to his own

words, in order to follow the Devil. There are also other cases in the King's Council where some persons are accused of the Devil's pact even though they did not admit to have made a pact, but were said to be socialising so much with the evil one that a real alliance between them was thought to exist. These cases will not be discussed here.

16 RA. 1704–06–15, nr. 20. Sven Brun, accused in 1710 had been singing Christian songs and swearing and praising the Devil all at the same time. RA. 1710–11–28, nr. 71. Samuel Brunswick explains in a hearing, in 1731 that he had first relied upon God's help, but later noticed that he will not get any help and then decided to give his body and soul to the Devil. Håkan Gullberg was condemned for a lot of crimes, in the beginning of the seventeenth century and finally in 1725 accused of injuring God by saying that it is better to believe in the Devil. This statement Håkan Gullberg based on the fact that he was well aware of his weaknesses. Since I was a little child I have been praying to God, he said, and look what become of me, it would have been better to believe in the Devil from the start. There are still many other similar cases; these are just some examples.

17 RA. 1733–02–04, nr. 32. The death penalty was changed to flogging by the Council.

18 At one occasion the Devil had appeared dressed as a special kind of marine soldier, well-known to the farmers.

19 Very often a real situation of some kind of crisis appears behind the motive to make a pact with the Devil. Many of the delinquents who had asked for money had huge debts, one person had been unemployed for one year, an other one had to support his mother after his father had died.

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PART III

EVIL MAGIC AND DEMONS IN EAST EUROPEAN AND ASIAN FOLKLORE

SAINTLY AND SYMPATHETIC MAGIC IN THE LORE OF THE JEWS OF CARPATHO-RUSSIA BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS[1]

ILANA ROSEN

Introduction: The Jews of Carpatho-Russia Between the Two World Wars

Jews have lived in Carpatho-Russia (or Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia, at present the western part of the Ukraine Republic) since the late medieval era (Jelinek 2003; Gutman 1990, 4, pp. 1472–73). They were as a rule Hasidic in a Galician fashion (Stransky 1971, p. 349), rural, and traditional. However, under the inter-war Czechoslovakian regime and its relatively liberal attitude towards the different national minorities of the region (Sole 1968, p. 134), this Jewry went through an ideological revolution regarding traditionality, due to the rise of the Zionist movement in the region (Sole 1971, pp. 401–439). As a result of the Zionist challenge to the old beliefs and way of life, the different Hasidic courts became even more extreme in their objection to modernity and moderation. This is the context in relation to which the present paper wishes to examine the case of the westerly Rabbi Yoseph Zvi Dushinsky of the Hust community (Gross – Cohen 1983, p. 205) and some Hasidic mystic stories told about him to this day.

Hasidic Lore: History, Geography, and Hagiography

The Hasidic movement, which started eastwards with the figure of Rabbi Israel son of Eliezer (1700–1760),[2] better known as the *Ba'al-Shem-Tov* or *Besht*, constituted a reaction to Rabbinical Judaism, which stressed and appreciated intellectual learnedness, and dismissed the spiritual intention of the ignorant and the poor. In this sense, the Hasidic movement is a social revolutionary movement (Dinburg 1998, pp. 89–108), although in its class-oriented organization and hereditary

leadership principle it is just as reactionary. To this we may add that Hasidism developed at a time of major crisis for East-European Jewry, following the 1648–9 Pogroms and alongside other religious (Messianic) movements that did not last as long as Hasidism and are therefore retrospectively termed "false." But in their time, they too had their appeal and power on certain circles; and from an external viewpoint, Hasidism too was at first suspected as a "false" creed (Etkes 2002, ch. 3). Eventually, however, Hasidism survived all objections and has become a legitimate and even major trend in Judaism.

At first, the Hasidic movement turned to the folk and was largely spread by word of mouth, at least as far as stories were concerned, while preaching and sermons did circulate in writing already in the early stages of the movement.[3] As for the oral material, it consists mainly of legends of an obvious hagiographic nature, and, as a separate corpus in its own right, the *Tales of Rabbi Nachman of Breslaw* (Buber 1956), which bear a deliberate fantastic and allegorical character, drawing on Kabbalistic doctrines.

The legends, which are the majority of Hasidic literature, revolve in many cases around central figures of the Hasidic movement: The *Ba'al-Shem-Tov*, Rabbi Yaakov-Yoseph of Polnea, Rabbi Dov-Ber of Mezeritch, Rabbi Levi-Itzchak of Berditchev and their spiritual successors (Newman 1963; Levin 1951; Polsky – Wozner 1989). In terms of sub-genre, these legends are mainly biographical, hagiographic, or founding legends. This triad delineates a scale of focus moving from the individual protagonist to the storytelling community, so that hagiography is right in the middle, in that it gives expression to both the individual and the communal and presents them as mutually dependent. The following analysis will pay special attention to these three aspects, and to their inter- and intra-relations.

The Figure of Rabbi Dushinsky in the Context of the Carpatho-Russian Corpus

Ideologically and theoretically, the figure of Rabbi Yoseph-Zvi Dushinsky, Head of the Hust community, is diagonally opposed to that of the typical Hasidic hero—be it a righteous leader (Heb.: *Zaddik*) or a

devoted follower—portrayed in the above discussed hagiographic oral lore. Rabbi Dushinsky comes from a family of Rabbis affiliated with the leadership of the Rabbinical and westerly Chatam-Sofer dynasty of Pressburg (Bratislava, Pozsony) in Slovakia (*Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 15, pp. 77–79). He is not a Hasidic Rabbi or *Rebbe* (in Yiddish) in the sense of a leader of a court, who has a host of pious followers or *Hasidim* (in Hebrew), and who performs acts of curious communication with heavenly forces or the dead, uncanny curing or mythic battles with evil forces. On the contrary, Rabbi Dushinsky is a learner and Head of a *yeshiva* (Heb., institution for higher learning of Jewish law and lore). Nevertheless, much like the medieval Rambam (or Maimonides, Rabbi Moshe son of Maimon) of the Sepharadic Diaspora,[4] and the Maharal (Rabbi Yehuda-Leib, son of Bezalel) of Prague,[5] who were first and foremost, not to say exclusively, learned scholars, and only remotely or esoterically mysticists, so does Rabbi Dushinsky go down in the lore of his community as also a wonder-maker of a mystic and mysterious nature.

In a research project about the lore of the Jews of Carpatho-Russia now living in Israel, which took place in the mid-ninetees at the Diaspora Research Institute (at present Center) at Tel-Aviv University, and in which I took part (Rosen 1999), the figure of Rabbi Dushinsky was quite prevalent in stories of people coming from Hust and its surroundings. Out of the entire corpus of about 450 items of various genres and forms, the figure of Rabbi Dushinsky occupies almost 10 items, which is about 2% of the entire corpus, and is considered significant on the background of the otherwise very varied material in terms of both scope and character. In some stories, he is mentioned as part of the community's spiritual lineage of leadership, in others his departure to Palestine or the Land of Israel is related with high emotional involvement, as he was considered irreplaceable by the narrators, who could not follow him and who faced the Holocaust and the extermination of their community within the following decade.

The story to be presented and analyzed here concerns not the departure of Rabbi Dushinsky, however, but his activity as Rabbi of the Hust and Galanta communities. Notwithstanding the otherwise very positive and hagiographic stories about him, this story tells about confrontations the Rabbi had with local rivals rejecting his authority. The

story was recorded from an 80-year-old Orthodox-observant male who at the time of the interview lived in Bnei-Brak, a small town near Tel-Aviv. This narrator, Dov Moskowitz, dwelt much in his narration on figures of Rabbis and leaders in both Hust and Palestine of the thirtees and forties, as he followed the route of Rabbi Dushinsky by immigrating to Palestine in the mid-thirties. Moskowitz's narrative is saturated with Biblical and Talmudic allusions, and on the whole clearly bears the qualities of traditional East-European Jewish storytelling, which is relatively rare both in the Carpatho-Russian corpus I recorded and in our present-day modern and secular culture in general.

Story and Analysis

The story of Mr. Moskowitz goes as follows:

> Rabbi Dushinsky was a superior man, no doubt. He had the power of the Torah [Pentateuch]. It happened several times that we had *Dinei-Torah* [religious legal disputes], so the whole town was ringing and telling about this man [who challenged Rabbi Dushinsky]. So he, Rabbi Dushinsky, raised his stick like this. So he [the disputer] died within a year.
>
> In addition, before he came to our town to be Rabbi, He was the Rabbi of Galanta. There, they usually had big disputes about the elections to the post of chief Rabbi. So, when he came to receive the post, they made a reception with a band and everything. So this Jew took a dog and attached the Rabbi's picture to it and sent the dog to the reception. That is what people told, I was not present on the occasion. The following day, this Jew started barking like a dog and went on barking for a week, until he died, committed suicide. Well, these are stories.[6]

In this story, which consists in fact of two separate episodes in a reversed chronological order, there is very little information concerning the Rabbi's two rivals, in Hust and in Galanta. Thus the narrator puts these rivals in an inferior position even before relating the plot. This trait is also part of the story's verbal minimalism and stress on the

visual, aural, and almost palpable: the motion of the Rabbi's arm and stick, the procession, the sight of the dog with the Rabbi's picture on it, and the barking of its dispatcher. All this comes in contrast to the otherwise poetical nature of this narrator, who for example told a long and moving story about the Rabbi's departure to Palestine later on.[7]

In the first incident, a member of the Hust community confronts the Rabbi's verdict in a religious matter that is not specified. The Rabbi, in reaction, does not even talk to his opponent, but instead performs a gesture loaded with Biblical allusions of raising his stick, like Moses in his confrontations with the king of Egypt in the book of Exodus (chs. 7–9). Thus each side is marked as positive or negative in the so-called grammar of the story by its action or inaction, power or vulnerability, and their meaning for this specific storytelling community. In this case the dissident is put in the negative and passive pole and thus becomes a recipient, or "addressee" in Roman Jakobson's terms (Jakobson 1960, pp. 350–77), of the Rabbi's gesture. As such, he is prone to the Rabbi's counter-attack or curse, which he himself initiated, but of which he has by now become victim.

This becomes possible and reasonable if we consider the event in James Frazer's terms of sympathetic magic (Frazer 1951, pp. 11–12), which is based upon contact, as opposed to similarity. In this incident contact is initiated by the dissident, with the intent of undermining and damaging the Rabbi. But once contact has been established, it can likewise serve its object, who in the meantime—and due to the power ascribed to him by his community—has become subject, or "addressor" in Jakobson's terms. This "addressor" can now use the same contact to undermine and annihilate the original sender of the Jakobsonian "message." One way or another, for the narrator and the community he represents, the obvious result of the incident is the death of the Rabbi's opponent within the following year.

This event brings to the narrator's mind, in an associative manner, a similar event which took place earlier on, when the Rabbi was still in post in Galanta. The occasion this time is the festive reception in honor of the Rabbi upon his arrival to town. However, here too, sympathy and support of the Rabbi are not unanimous. This time, a member of the community likens the Rabbi to a dog, which is an act of defiance and insult that verges on blasphemy, as a Rabbi is considered sa-

cred and his insult is therefore also the insult of sacredness. To this we may add that in Jewish tradition although dogs—as basically impure animals—do not possess the favored position of well-liked household members as in the general and especially rural environment, they are still appreciated for their loyalty and sensitivity.

Dogs with human emotions are a widespread universal motif (Thompson B773), but in Jewish lore there are also many stories about dogs as incarnations of sinners suffering "a dog's life" to make up for their sins. All this is supported by the Hebrew letters composing the word "dog" (*kelev*, made up of the consonants [k], [l], [v], and a rather free vowel use), whose different combinations likewise create the words "all" ([kol] or [kulo]) and "heart" ([lev]) to mean that "dogs are all heart," i.e., full of emotion (Ganuz 1995). Of course, all this is acceptable as long as it is a dog that is likened to a human being and not vice-versa, which is shameful, and also as long as the very analogy works for pointing at positive traits or processes concerning both.

But in this story it is not a dog that is likened to a man but a highly respected man that is likened to a dog, which does not leave any room for complimentary interpretations. Therefore, and also because the matter concerns both the Rabbi and the Galanta Jewish community as a whole, this act of defiance is considered more acute than the previous one and calls for even stricter measures than before. Hence, maybe, the much shorter period it takes the rival to die, a week, compared to the Hust incident, in which it took—or the rival was given—a year.

The reader familiar with co-eval Hebrew literature is necessarily reminded of a similar incident in the famous novel *Only Yesterday* (*Temol Shilshom*), by Sha"y (Shmuel Yoseph) Agnon (Agnon 1978). In this novel, the protagonist Yitzhak Kummer paints the phrase "mad dog" on a stray dog and sends it aimlessly around. After a while, just like the Galanta provocative, Kummer deteriorates and dies a disgraceful death at the end of the novel. In the folk narrative and narration, which are by nature shorter, more intensive, and less discursive than the novel, the ordeal lasts much less but its affect is just as powerful.

In terms of the magical action attributed to the Rabbi, this time it is both sympathetic and metaphorical, which likewise reinforces the story's intensity. The initial contact between "this Jew" and the Rabbi is made by a dog that is sent by the former to the latter, and also by the

picture of the Rabbi, which "this Jew" has attached to the dog. Here again, once contact is established, it turns mutual, so that the addressee can become addressor, and aggressor. However, unlike "this Jew," the Rabbi does not need any visual means in order to suggest or create an identity between his rival and the dog, or the canine behavior or principle, as he is spiritually superior to his rival, and also because his rival has already supplied him the means.

The principle of similarity or metaphor then is expressed first by the use of the Rabbi's picture, and later by the barking of the original addressor, who starts acting "like a dog." As for the sympathetic principle, it is manifested through the canine phenomena, such as the dog's sight and sound. Needless to say that the effect and appeal of all this to the public's senses promotes the memory of the story and its key figure in the years to come, as proven by its circulation over fifty years after the event.

The story does not specify what exactly the Rabbi says or does when faced with the dog, and considering the Rabbi's overall figure it may well be that he did nothing at all. Still, the story's ending necessarily teaches us that, in line with the logic of the Hasidic mystic context in which this incident was perceived and is remembered, he—or some heavenly forces—must have made some act of reversal between addressor and addressee, curser and cursed, subject and object, which causes the demise of the initial aggressor. Either way, for the narrator and storytelling community the missing information is not a gap or flaw but rather an apt and expected story component that fulfils its function as it brings about the rival's punishment and the story's appropriate ending.

It is therefore interesting to point at the anticlimactic note supplied to the story at its very ending by the narrator's remark or disclaimer "well, these are stories." This remark means that for the narrator, the sound fact about the story is its telling or circulation, not, or much more than, its content. By making such a remark, the narrator defends his own status as a reliable, rational, and disillusioned or demystified person, as well as expresses reservations concerning the partly negative portrayal of the Rabbi as vehement and vengeful in such stories.

To prevent such an impression, the narrator also reduces the story's value as testimony or first hand account, by stating that he himself did

not witness the event. Or, to use the early terminology of personal narrative, for this storyteller, the story is a fabulate rather than a memorate (Dégh – Vázsonyi 1974, pp. 225–38). At the same time, in proairetic terms (Barthes 1985, p. 19), i.e., in the sense of proclaiming an action, even if only that of telling, the narrator does turn this story into an existing fact while still expressing reservations about its hero and its status as truth.

Conclusion: Ideological Context as Creator of Content and Character

Needless to say, no such (hi)stories appear in any publication about Hust and its Rabbis, or about the Dushinsky dynasty. Moreover, other informants in the entire Carpatho-Russian corpus shed light in their stories on completely different aspects of the Rabbi and his activity. Yet, in the context of Hasidic Rabbis and their wonders, the deeds of Rabbi Dushinsky are not more outstanding or supernatural than, say, the temporary resurrection of Rabbi Israel-Yaakov (better known in Yiddish as *Srul-Yankev*) of Hust in the middle of the ritual purification preceding his funeral;[8] or the wonders of *Reb* Yechezkel-Mordchai Vezel or Vizel, who was originally a *shochet* (coming from the Hebrew *shchita*, the Jewish ritual slaughtering of chicken and cattle), became a wonder-maker *Rebbe* for a while, lost his so-called "stairs of sacredness" and was eventually deported to Auschwitz as an ordinary man.[9]

Story and meaning depend on context, on how people are prepared or indoctrinated to view and tell them, and in fact, on the cultural atmosphere or set of values that govern a certain place and community at a certain period. In the present case, it is evident that geography and hagiography overpower biography, and that the storytelling community changes or effects the perception of facts related to Rabbi Dushinsky and his deeds. This remains true in spite of the fact that, unlike the more ancient Rabbis mentioned above, Rabbi Dushinsky lived only a few decades ago, and quite a few of his coevals are still among us to confirm or refute these stories, depending on their own mental, ideological, cultural, and poetic dispositions.

Notes

1   Based on my work in the Project for Research of the Carpatho-Russian Jewry and Munkács Community at the Diaspora Research Institute, Tel-Aviv University, 1995–1999.

2   Of the ample research concerning Hasidic theology, a few of the most well-known works are the following: Schatz Uffenheimer 1993; Weiss 1985; Rapoport 1996; Assaf 2001. As for the figure of the Baal-Shem-Tov, see Reiner 1994, pp. 52–66; Rosman 1996; Etkes 2004.

3   The most famous at the early stages of Hasidism is the work of Rabbi Yaakov-Yoseph Hacohen of Polnea, especially his *History of Yaakov-Yoseph.*

4   As for the image of two famous philosophers and Rabbis in folk memory and literature, see Alexander 1992, pp. 29–64.

5   See Eli Yassif's Introduction to Rosenberg 1991, pp. 7–72.

6   Archives of the Project of Research of the Carpatho-Russian Jewry and Munkács Community at the Diaspora Research Institute (at present the Goldstein-Goren Center), Tel-Aviv University, file Moskowitz no. 6 [Hebrew]. The story and a slightly different analysis of it also appear in Rosen 1999, ch. 3, pp. 38–41.

7   Archives of Research Project, file Moskowitz no. 12. See also: file Sheinfeld no. 8; file Adler, no. 13 [Hebrew].

8   Archives of Research Project, file Hofman, no. 11 [Hebrew]. Incidentally, the same miracle is traditionally attributed to Ha-Ari (Rabbi Itzhak, son of Shlomo Ashkenazi Luria, 1534–1572), a central scholar of Kabbalah. See Berdichevsky 1966, no. 482. Unfortunately, this story is not included in the book's annotated and abridged English edition (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976).

9   Archives of Research Project, files Moskowitz no. 4, Zahor no. 9, and Hofman no. 5 [Hebrew]. The same personage is mentioned in Gross 1983, p. 1, as well as in Elfassi 1973.

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MAGIC AS REFLECTED IN SLOVENIAN FOLK TRADITION AND POPULAR HEALING TODAY

MONIKA KROPEJ

In Slovenia, folk traditions related to witchcraft are considerably rich and diverse. According to older sources, wizards and witches were mythological and demonic creatures just like the *kresnik,* the *vedomec/benandanti,* the *lamija,* the fairies, etc.; other sources, on the other hand, stress that ordinary people could attain witchcraft as a profession. On the basis of our data on Slovenian folk tradition, we may draw the general conclusion that magic was practiced mainly sympathetically, based on analogy, by the rule "pars pro toto," through apotropaic rites with water, medicinal herbs and potions. Sorcerers mastered spells and knew how to conjure and adjure. They used books on black magic and various magic objects such as sticks, goat horns, bells etc., which were sometimes considered the seat of the guardian spirit. Of special interest is the fact that according to folk tradition there are certain differences between magic acts of wizards and those performed by witches.

Flying and the invocation of ghosts may be interpreted as journeys of the "spirit" which leaves the body behind and travels around other worlds in a trance-like state, establishing contact with ghosts and spirits of the dead. People used to say that witches go dancing to Klek or to some other mountain such as Slivnica, Grintavec, Rogaška mountain, etc. It was a widespread belief that at midnight witches rode on birch-brooms to a mountain to join the festivities—named "Sabbath"; or that they met among hazel trees, where they were sometimes perceived as shining lights. People also belived that witches could ride, among other, also on a neighbour transformed into a pig, or on a young man bewitched into a horse. In some Slovenian folk ballads and legends The shod "Witch" (*Slovenske ljudske pesmi* I [Slovenian Folk Songs]

Ljubljana 1970, no. 30, pp. 156–157)—known also in other countries—a young man transforms a witch into a mare, and takes her to the blacksmith to be shod.

According to the popular belief, the demons encountered by witches and wizards on such journeys—and the demons that witches and wizards were able to invoke at crossroads, from a magic circle, at their home at midnight, etc.—acted as their assistants. They took a shape of a black cat or bird. Some stories have it that witches or wizards kept the demon (the devil) in a jar.

It was believed that witches and wizards used their magic to change the weather, conjure hail, thunderstorms or winds, but they could also avert winds, hail or rain. According to mostly earlier sources, they performed magic by imitating the natural phenomena they wanted to influence: linen, for instance, represented fog or clouds, a switch could be the equivalent of lighting, etc. They often drove away thunderstorms with a blessed bell, holy water and the like. People also believed that witches danced in whirlwinds, or that wind gusts carried hail-making witches, sometimes depositing them in a nearby brook.

According to Slovenian folk beliefs, such sorcerers were able to take away milk from cows and to cause sickness in people and animals. If they wanted to steal milk from a cow, they took the shepherd's rope and "milked" it by dragging it from both ends and uttering strange words. Fields on which sorcerers buried something did not produce crops, and vineyards were damaged if they put quicksilver in them. They also knew how to transfer crops to their own fields. If the night before Whit Sunday was dewy, witches wrapped in sheets would roam on wheat fields and wring the wet sheets over their own field, thereby transferring the wheat to their lands. Similarly, on Sundays after new moon they would drag sheets over hedges and pastures before sunrise, and thus acquire the property of others. They could also find buried treasure and unearth money where, as they said, "a treasure bloomed."

Diseases were healed in different ways. They were often cured by beseeching, adjuring, conjuring and praying. Invocations against spells, sprains, snake bites, St. Anthony's fire, swelling and a number of other illnesses have been preserved. During the process of healing, numerous other healing practices and expedients were used; water and herbs were of special importance.

Love magic was equally diverse. It could be performed in many ways; in one method, a girl boiled her lover's hair to make him come to her; in another one flowers were used to predict the future; in still another, girls tried to find out who their future husbands were with the help of elder.

According to the opinion of some researchers, the beliefs about witches' skills descended from the cult of the Great Goddess, a lunar deity from which the magic powers and orgiastic characteristics of female witchcraft originated. Beliefs about wizard, on the other hand, have preserved more shamanistic elements, than those about witches, which seem to have descended from the worship of some important deity, since the shamans were usually prestigious members of traditional societies. Slovenian traditions, for instance, mention the *kresnik*, the protector of the clan, whom God has given to mankind in order to protect the humans against a dragon which threatened its existence. It was believed that wizards often fought against evil forces, evil wizards and witches. According to folk beliefs especially wide-spread in Western Slovenia, on Midsummer Eve witches battled against *kresniks*, or the *vedavec* fought the *šentjanževec*.

After these brief general words about folk magic in Slovenia, let us take a closer look at one location, namely Rosental in Carinthia (Koroška). A relatively high number of records on witchcraft and on popular healers from the beginning of the twentieth century are known from this part of Slovenian ethnic territory, recorded by Ivan Čavko, Josip Šašel, Georg Graber, Franc Kotnik, Pavel Košir and Vinko Möderndorfer. I shall focus on the beliefs recorded by them which are specific for Carinthia and are still surviving to the present.

Čavko, Šašel, Graber and Möderndorfer all mention Modra Barbca (Wise Barbca), a famous witch who was said to have lived in the first half of the nineteenth century and whose home was Bodental (Poden or, according to Čavko, Loibtal) Brodi. Numerous stories about her have been preserved. Let us describe how Modra Barbca healed farmer Košutnik, whose illness had been caused by a priest, and how she punished the priest by transferring the disease on him. In the version recorded by Ivan Čavko, farmer Košutnik had a quarrel with a priest. Shortly afterwards the farmer started to feel sick and to pine away. Nobody could help him; even the village healer who could cure every

illness and save people bitten by snakes could not restore his health. It was obvious that he was to die. Eventually the farmer dragged himself to Barbca, who advised him to wind a rope on which a Lutheran hunter had hung himself around the *taterman*—meaning in this case the end of a tube by a well in a shape of a carved head, otherwise also a straw man that sometimes comes to life—afterwards to put some wilted flowers under his pillow, to place a fragment of a skull from the cemetery in the hot coal and to draw a pentagram on a wall against the incubus, using the coal with which bread was baked. At midnight an owl began to hoot, a shadow floated through the closed door and fell upon the wall with the pentagram sign. Since the farmer did everything Barbca had told him to do, the ghost could not enter and could only sob: "I'd like to enter to take away his soul, but I can't get in, I can't raise the block!" The farmer was healed, and Barbca cast the spell of illness on the priest.

Graber's description of the same event is much shorter. In his version, Barbca healed the farmer with a belt behind which she had tucked some medicinal herbs; the rest of the data are more or less identical.

It is interesting to note that individual descriptions of some other magical acts performed by Modra Barbca do not differ from each other significantly. Thus, for instance, Čavko tells the story of how she discovered Matko's father's money in the following way: Matko's father lost ten florins. People searched for it everywhere, but the coin was nowhere to be found. The farmer went to Barbca and asked her to let him spend the night at her house. Barbca told him to go to her neighbor's. He crawled into the strewing in the neighbor's barn which stood next to Barbca's cottage. At midnight he heard a whistle, then another and yet another. The farmer left the barn and tiptoes to Barbca's little room, where he saw the devil. From their conversation he finds out that he had accidentally dropped the florin in the bran, and a black sow had eaten it and was still carrying it around in her belly. The farmer hurried home, slaughtered the black sow and found the undamaged florin in its stomach.

Although somewhat different in a few details, Georg Graber basically gave a very similar rendering of the same event.

Let us return to the present to examine the activity of a present-day healer, the 76-year-old Marija Wieser from Windisch Bleiberg (Slovenji Plajberg). As a young girl, Marija became interested in the

skills of wise men, the healing power of plants, invocations and the magic book of spells, the *Kolomonov Žegen*. She also wanted to find out about the objects used during healing, like bells, holy water, fire, medicinal herbs, etc.

Marija knows of several invocations which she uses against different illnesses and other ailments such as sprains, consumption or cramps. Invocations are accompanied by other acts. In one case, the sick man has to bring a towel, fold it and place it on his feet. When he is leaving, he takes the towel with him; it is supposed to help in healing him. As Marija said, such healing practices are only successful "for those who believe in all this."

Marija also owns a bell which has been handed down from one generation to the other. It used to belong to her husband's grandfather, a very wise man who could heal animals and people. It is said that the bell is blessed, and it was purchased at Višarje, a place of pilgrimage two hundred years ago. In most cases Marija uses the bell to ward off thunderstorm and hail. As she says:

> Unless I am too late, and the black fog already covers Vranca and Žingarca, I can drive them away. I ring the bell, sprinkle holy water, make a fire and pour a spoonful of holy water and some flowers into it. Then I chant this prayer:
>> There is a fog, there is a mist,
>> and the Holy Trinity among them.
>> Whoever is stronger
>> can go ahead and test us.
> Then I make the sign of the cross and say: 'Father God, help me, Son God, help me, God and the Holy Spirit, help me.'

Another object driving away thunderstorm is a napkin covering a basket full of offerings, which is taken to church on Easter. The napkin should not be washed. If a storm is approaching, the napkin is draped over a fence and the storm passes over. As Marija relates, "Sometimes people took a rake, a fork and a scythe and place them under the watershoot. This drove away hail." Thus, different magical methods can achieve the same goal. It is evidently the magic power that is of greater importance here.

We may conclude from the above that the faith in the supernatural power to heal diseases, to prevent and solve difficulties is still alive in Slovenian ethnic territory, especially in the rural areas. The same is true for the use of magical methods to achieve this goal. What seems to have changed in time, at least in the geographical areas this paper focuses on, but probably in the villages of Slovenia as well, is that now positive witchcraft, namely the one used for healing, prevails. An average Slovenian does not believe in black magic any more. This, however, might not be true for remote country areas, and the urban areas, where the influence of various sects and modern orientations is considerably stronger.

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CATEGORIES OF THE "EVIL DEAD"
IN MACEDONIAN FOLK RELIGION

ĽUPCHO S. RISTESKI

In the traditional attitude of the community towards its deceased members of great importance, we can find the notion that they are divided depending on their personal characteristics into categories of *pure, suspicious* and *impure* (Vaseva 1994, 3. pp. 154–55). The whole ritual and magic behavior of the community is structured and subordinated on the basis of this concept. The folk terminology distinguishes a fourth category for the period right after the death of members of the community, who are called "fresh" dead. This category of *fresh* deceased usually lasts one year, which is the necessary time period for the fresh deceased to go through all phases of after-death existence, thus becoming either *pure* or *impure*. This one-year period, during which the intensive ritual activities of the community take place, corresponds to the period and state in which the fresh deceased is also considered *suspicious*.

The ritual-magic activities performed for the deceased (i.e., the *fresh deceased*) are always aimed at helping him towards a successful and complete breakaway from the community, separation of positive and negative (evil) attributes, and, as a final goal, his successful deliverance into the World of the Dead and his complete acceptance into the community of ancestors. According to the folk beliefs, from there he can successfully and fruitfully act in the interest of the living community. For the living, it is only the *pure* deceased who are important and useful, i.e. the ones who were accepted into the community of deceased ancestors after complex ritual-magic acts, and who have the status of progenitors (*forefathers*). This can be only achieved if all of the necessary ritual-magic acts are performed, so that the *suspicious* can

be transformed into *pure* dead. If anything is left out or goes amiss, the suspicious will become impure, and as such, it is harmful for the living, and destined to eternal wandering in this world. If such a thing occurs, it leads to chaos, destruction, and imbalance in the harmony of the living community.

The concepts of the dead reappearing among the living, the return of the soul of the deceased and the transformation of the deceased into harmful demonic creatures are very archaic. They provide a good opportunity for analysis and display of the direction and basic meaning of the complex ritual cycle related to dying. As we have said, only the strict adherence to the ritual rules established by traditional culture can provide the community with the certainty of the deceased being freed.

For this reason, the following are basic and crucial for the traditional community:

1. All their members should fully abide to the rules of the prescribed behavior in everyday life in the sphere of social relations as well as in the ritual-magic acts, which constitute an inseparable segment of life in the traditional context. A person can achieve positive conditions after his death only if he abides to the traditional rules of behavior regarded as positive as they do not disturb the harmony in the community and in the world. (Everything considered as sinful, undesirable and harmful for the community is considered to be a sign that the person who committed it will become evil after his death.)

2. Just as important is the fulfillment of the elaborate rites that the community has to perform after the death of its member in order to retain the deceased's integrity. This means that the deceased's fate can be ruined even by the smallest deviation from the strict rules of everyday and ritual behavior, whether the mistake is on the level *individual towards the community,* or the opposite, the *community towards the individual.* Persons may also become evil dead if, through no fault of theirs, they behave or die outside the traditional patterns, e.g. dying with too grand or unfulfilled wishes, or dying "unseen" (without anybody being present at the moment of death), etc.

On the basis of what we have said so far, we can state the following about persons who may become *evil* or *suspicious* after death, and in what forms they may exist:

1. People who are predisposed to become *evil dead* through their own negative and undesirable behavior within the community: *vampire (vampir), karakondzol*, demonic souls of the deceased with undefined social status, e.g. bachelors/spinsters, people who committed suicides, drowned persons, etc.

"The old folks say that people with an impure soul, the unbaptized, the corrupt, the thieves, and mischief-makers were buried in church, but they became vampires" (Prilep region; Vrazhinovski et. al. 1995, p. 100).

2. The deceased who turn evil due to the community's improper behavior: *vampire* (due to the irregular behavior of the community towards the individual in the ritual and social context*), navi* (souls of unbaptized newborn children).

It needs to be mentioned that for both of these categories of the deceased the only "factor" for their "future" is the community of the living, and especially its ritual activities.

Evil dead – origins, characteristics, activities and the means of protection against them

Vampires

Terminology: *Vampir, vampirin* (Gevgelija region; Tanovich 1927, p. 259), *voper* (Struga, Ohrid and Veles region; Vrazhinovski et. al. 1998, p. 220), *vampir, vapir, senishte* (Prilep region; Vrazhinovski et. al. 1998, p. 220), *vopir* (Prespa region; Vrazhinovski et. al. 1998, p. 220), *lompir* (Veles region).[1]

Rites of prevention: The most important measures to prevent somebody becoming a vampire are: a) guarding the corpse, the grave or the place where a person has died in order to protect them from an animal that might jump over them; b) making sure that nothing is passed over the corpse; c) if the deceased has open wounds on its body, a so-called

blue stone (copper sulfate) is put over the wounds, or "something spicy to burn out the spot" (Veles region); d) full completion of the ritual process through the burial as well as after the burial for one year, when the intensive ritual activities are considered complete.

The following rites taken from different regions of Macedonia will serve as an example to illustrate the measures taken to prevent the deceased from turning into vampires.

If the community believes that there is a chance that the deceased will turn into a vampire (if he was sinful, if he died *unseen,* etc.), a hawthorn's thorn is placed in the heels of the left foot. A more common method is to stick a metal needle into the stomach (belly button). It is believed that this will destroy the evil powers. To achieve the same goal, in some villages in Mariovo it was usual to slice the corpse with a knife in the area of the chest or the heart.

In Mariovo, besides other ritual-magic activities, the most important act was *the magical cutting of the dead (opsekuvanie na umreniot)*. When they have prepared the deceased, the most significant actor in the ritual, the *mesarka* (the woman who makes bread throughout the whole ritual period) performs the magical cutting of the dead. While cutting the corpse next to the head and the legs from right to left with a sickle or an axe, as an act of magic threat and freight, she says the magic formula abounding in symbolic meaning: "Odmet sakash, ali otsek sakash?—Odi mi so zdravie,"[2] (Do you want to be cast away or to be cut?—Go in good health), or "Da odish po Boga i Bogoroditsa, a ne po Saton i Satonitsa"[3] (Go after God and Virgin Mary, not after Satan and Satanitsa [fem.]).

Naprashtchanie na umreniot (sending off the dead) is a magic-ritual act during which one of the older women takes part of the deceased's clothing or hat after the burial, steps outside the house and tries to "send off" the deceased away from the house and the living space. During this she says:

> V planina da ojsh, ili vo Ohrid, ili vo Pogradets ili nekade... Da ne idish ovdeka pak! Da ne shetash tua! Da ne idish voper!"[4] (Go to the mountain, to Ohrid, to Pogradets or somewhere else... Do not come here again! Do not walk around here! Do not come back as a vampire!)

How they come into being: If not all the protection measures are taken into consideration, or if the magic-ritual activities are incompletely or improperly performed, it is believed that the deceased member of the community can turn into a vampire.

Outside appearance: Field research has found many ideas about the looks and appearance of vampires, and every new research reveals new information regarding their main characteristics. Thus, it may be appropriate to select only some of the most important features attributed to this demonic creature: a) amorphous structure, body without bones, only blood and skin; b) the vampire is usually invisible, or only a specific category of people can see it.

Activity: They appear only at night, usually around midnight, the so-called *gluvo doba*. Their field of activity can be their own house, yard, the area where the domestic animals live; cemeteries or places where somebody has died, has been killed, etc.

Driving away and destruction of the vampire: Despite the numerous methods with which it is possible to prevent the dead turning into vampires, many stories have been recorded about their existence and about the difficulties of trying to get rid of them or to destroy them.

In the ritual practices there are several common ways to drive away vampires or to destroy them.

a) The act of driving away the vampires usually provides only partial and temporary results, because this ritual act does not enable its performers to kill the vampires, but only to dislocate them to a different socio-cultural or ritual space through various forms of spatial and symbolic borders that divide the spaces which people inhabit. *Prenesuvanjeto na vampirot* (dislocation of the vampire; Mariovo region), or *zalazhuvanie na vampirot* (deception of the vampire; Veles region), is a common magical means of defense for the community, but it does not ensure full protection, since it is limited to "driving away" the vampires, usually across the water (river, stream), or across the village boundaries hoping that they will not come back into the village. In the most common method, the vampire is lured away with a wine flask and bread under the pretence that the villagers are going to a wedding in a nearby village, and then they leave the wine and the bread somewhere along the road in order to make the vampire stay there.

b) Killing the vampire is a more secure way to destroy the vampire forever. It is usually done by the so-called *vampirdzhidzha,* a person specialized for such tasks because he is the only one who can see the vampire and shoot him with a rifle. At the place where the vampire has been killed, *krvishche – kako pacha* (blood – like a brawn) appears. They pour hot water over this, or burn the spot with hay and so the vampire can not resuscitate again. However, after the killing of the vampire a very interesting situation takes place, charging the whole event with ambiguity; "people took the blood of the killed vampire and rubbed their bodies with it as a protection against sickness, to attain good health and to be resistant to other vampires" (Prilep region; Vrazhinovski et. al. 1995, p. 98).

According to our ethnographic data, a *vampirdzhidzha* could be a person born on specific days of the week, or a person whose father was a vampire. We have several data about cases where the vampire continued to have sexual contact with his wife, and as a result, the wife gave birth to a child, known in folk tradition as a *vampirche* (dem.), i.e., 'a vampire's son.' The vampire's son had special characteristics, which were very useful for the community for the destruction of other vampires.

Navi (pl.)

Navi are mythical demonic creatures. They were originally children who had died before being baptized, and who did not manage to pass through the phase of *suspiciousness* and thus turned into *impure souls.* The *navi* attack mothers of newborn babies and the babies themselves up to forty days after their birth, causing sometimes mortal sickness of the mother. It has to be mentioned that recent ethnological researches from 1994 to 1999 show a decline in people's awareness of the characteristics of the *navi,* and especially about their being the souls of children who died during infancy. Nevertheless, the data already collected about the *navi* and the beliefs about their activities clearly prove their connection with newborn babies and their mothers.

Terminology: navi (Prilep, Bitola, Mariovo, and Veleshko regions; Vrazhinovski et. al. 1998, p. 215), *naviak, naviatsi* (Maleshevo, Debar,

and Kochani regions)[5], *navi, navoi* (Skopska Crna Gora region; Vrazhinovski et. al. 1998, p. 215), *hunapi, hunai, unai* (Ohrid region; Miladinovtsi 1962, p. 302).

How they come into being: The souls of the children who have died before being baptized turn into *navi*. Although in folk beliefs the forms of appearance of these demonic creatures have not been precisely distinguished, it is generally believed that the souls of the unbaptized are impure and they can never become pure. In the Maleshevo region, the unbaptized dead children became *naviatsi, naviak* or *naviache*, and they were thought to move around in groups at night "crying" and "screaming." Since they did not have any milk to drink, each one went to its mother "da suchi" (to ask for milk; Vrazhinovski et. al. 1998, p. 215).

Outside appearance: They look like birds, but they cannot be seen, although they can be heard. According to some folk beliefs, their voice causes pain to women and newborn babies (Maleshevo region). "Naviatsite bile liliatsi – diavolski brakia" (Naviatsi were bats – the devil's brothers (Kochani region), or "invisible" (Skopie region).

Activities: They attack women who have just delivered children as well as the babies themselves up to 40 days after the birth. The woman usually goes dry, suffers from dizziness; "they take her, they drive her mad, they always accompany her." Other women will say: "She has been taken by the navi" (she and her baby are always sick; Mariovo region; Vrazhinovski et. al. 1995, p. 87).

Protection and cure: In most cases the community takes preventive steps, which include phony baptizing while children are sick or right after their death, to avoid situations leading to their transformation into *navi*. In the traditional culture, it is unusual to leave the newborn child without a name for a longer period. Being without a name is a symbol of someone's personal lack of identity, but, more importantly, also of his exclusion from the ritual activities of the community. Only after the baptizing ceremony do children become full members of the community. However, these steps are not always sufficient. As "unproven" members, they are buried in places where their grave will not be known, into "unknown graves." This alludes to the community's determination to erase the still undeveloped integrity of the newborn child, mainly to ensure further protection of the community from harmful

influences. The preventive measures taken to protect the mother and the newborn child can be classified into several categories according to their symbolic and magical connotations:

a) *Ritualistic crossing of the woman* who has just given birth over several important elements of division: *water, fire, blade.*
b) *Placing certain objects in her bed* which prevent the coming of *navi* (hemp, tar, red wool, dough, broom, knife, mirror).
c) *Ritualistic knotting* – analogous to other kinds of ritual protection by tying knots, the mother and her baby are protected in the same manner; a *babitsa* (midwife) or *bajachka* (faith-healer) tie knots on a hemp thread or a red string.

The Souls of Bachelors and Maidens

Other important members of the category of the *impure dead and souls* are bachelors and maidens, who are regarded as socially undeveloped people. This is why the community tries to achieve at least a symbolic, ritual balance of social integrity by organizing a wedding—the so-called *eternal wedding*—after their death. This is supposed to fulfill the preliminary requirements for the *fresh* dead to pass through the transitional phase.

There are no fixed notions about the forms of appearance the souls of the dead bachelors and maidens may take among the living. Traditional communities usually grieve over such people because they believe that their souls will never find rest and they will never reach the World of the Dead; instead, they will wonder in the void between the World of the Dead and the world of the other demonic creatures.

The Souls of the Drowned and Those who Committed Suicide

The category of the *impure dead* also includes those who have drowned, committed suicide or died by unnatural death. The following story is a good illustration of their conditions:

> When I entered... [the World of the Dead in the narrator's dream], I saw a girl and a boy in fancy clothing, standing at the door [in front of the entrance to the World of the Dead]. I said: "Why are you standing alone like that? Because we caused our own death. They do not let us inside. This is where we must stay!"[6]

According to folk beliefs, the souls of those who *drowned* are given to the devil, and they wander eternally in the world of the living, causing damage to the community. In the traditional culture, they are believed to have control over the powers of the waters, and as such, they bring hail. "When there is a hailstorm, it comes with the dead, with the ones who have drowned." When heavy clouds are approaching, an older woman or man goes out to meet them with a knife in his or her hands, using verbal threats and gestures to make the souls of the drowned redirect the clouds from the village:

> ... to the high mountains, to the thick forests,
> where the axes do not cut,
> where the sickles do not reap,
> where the threshing-floors (gumno) have not been
> scattered.

At the same time, the drowned, or their souls can play the useful role of mediator between the waters and the community, especially when rain is needed. In times of drought, young girls from the villages take a stone from the grave of someone who has drowned and throw it in a well or a water spring, thus trying to bring about the coming of rain.

In order to understand better the duality of these functions and characteristics, and their oscillation—once positive, once negative—we have to go back to the ontological view of the world and its characteristics and functions, especially in a state of crisis. According to the folk beliefs, the drowned are water ghosts, i.e., demonic creatures who control the waters on the Earth. The community of the living can call for their assistance in crisis situations, thus establishing direct contact with the World of the Dead through them. This contact can be established through wells and water springs, which are locations abounding in mythical connotations as the places that are believed to be the entranc-

es to the "other world"; places through which one can contact the dead, or see them on the day devoted to the dead—Duovden (Pentecost)

Notes

1 ADE (Archive of the Department of Ethnology), Field researches, Region of Veles 1999. Village of Melnica – Macedonian muslims.
2 AIOSC (Archive of Institute of Old Slavic Culture – Prilep), Inv. no. K–52/1995, 10. Village of Gradeshnitsa, Mariovo region, 1995.
3 AIOSC, Inv. no. K–40/1995, 19. Mariovo region. Recorded in Prilep, 1995.
4 ADE, Field researches. Village of Peshtani, Ohrid region, 1999.
5 Vrazhinovski et. al., *Narodna demonologija,* 215. ADE , Field researches. Village of Peshtani, Ohrid region, 1999.
6 AIOSC, Inv. no. K–41/1995, 25–26. Mariovo region, 1996.

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BALKAN DEMONS PROTECTING PLACES

ANNA PLOTNIKOVA

My paper is about folk beliefs reflecting images of the so-called "lower mythology." Among various types of demons belonging to this "lower mythology," I will focus on demons protecting places because of their specific character in the ethnocultural traditions of the Balkans. The demons to be discussed have various names, features and functions, but their main characteristic is linked with their protecting role. I will apply typological methods, so the topic *demons protecting places* will be examined from linguistic (lexical), structural and functional aspects. The investigation is based on already published ethnographic sources as well as the field notes from Bulgaria, Greece and Montenegro by the authors of the Balkan Dialect Mini-atlas, which includes an ethnolinguistic program. My own notes and questionnaires used in this paper were made in different regions of Serbia and Macedonia in 1997–1999 in modern villages where folk beliefs are still surviving.

The classification of demons in different European traditions is very often based on the types of places they inhabit. Thus, one can speak of *forest demons, water demons, house demons* and so on. In the ethnocultural traditions of the Balkans, the situation is quite specific. Almost every place of environment has its own patron, and this fact is conditioned by Balkan comprehension of nature. This is why in the ethnocultural traditions of this region we can find demons with the same name and the same set of features and functions, but they appear as patrons of different places: villages, houses, bridges or any building, the spring, trees, parts of land or fields, pastures and so on. For instance, in modern Northern Greek traditions *stikhio (stiio, stihiio)* denotes a number of such patrons (spirits protecting a small part of the land in

the village; people with demonic features whose soul leaves their bodies and ascends into the air struggling to protect their part of village; patrons of forests and mountains). In South Macedonia (Ohrid region), *smok* or *tolosum,* i.e., 'big snake' denote patrons of people's homes as well as patrons of fields, vineyards or patrons of buried treasure, who demand a sacrifice. These examples could be continued for a long time.

Balkan Slavic notions about demon protecting place are reflected in the vocabulary in several ways. Sometimes their names include words meaning 'master,' 'owner,' 'host,' 'landlord' (Bulgarian and Macedonian *stopan, sajbija, domachin, namestnik*); in other cases the name of a demon is related to how it came into being: from a dead man or his shadow, a footprint that was built into the walls or the foundation of some building (Bulgarian and Macedonian *senk'a, senchishche*). This group also includes demons whose name appears as a phonetic modification of the Turkish word *telsem,* i.e. 'talisman, magic thing,' which comes from Greek *telesma* 'sacrifice' (Bulgarian and Macedonian *talasym, talasymin, talason,* Serbian *talason*). Sometimes the name of demons is related to the common Greek term *stikhiio*, which means a natural phenomenon or element, thus confirming the Balkan idea that all places of the environment have their own patron demon. This type of names can be found in the Southern Balkans (Macedonia and South Bulgaria) as well as in Greek and Albanian regions (Bulgarian *stihia, stivo, stiia*, Macedonian *stiia, stiha*). In Greek traditions *stoikheia* primarily meant a spirit of the waters, air, fire or ground. In Balkan Slavic traditions, demons whose names are related to *stoikheia* are usually connected with the sphere of air, and seldom with the waters; however, both spheres are associated in folk beliefs with circulation in nature (for example, the dragons *lamia* and *azhdaia* equally dwell in the water—lakes, sees, rivers—and in the air; what is more, there are also beliefs about air dragons which drink water from the lakes in order to fill the clouds with moisture for rain). All of the above-mentioned names occur typically in the Eastern Balkan-Slavic area, especially in the Bulgarian and Macedonian regions.

The first group of folk beliefs concerns demons who are *masters of the land or some part of the land.* In the ritual practice, the existence of a patron demon of the land is manifested in the interrelations between the demon and people who disturb the boundaries of its pos-

session in some way, e.g. by ploughing, picking up herbs, felling trees or even slipping or urinating under the trees protected by demons (Serbian *senovita drva*, i.e., 'demonic trees'). Any act disturbing this natural ownership must be accompanied with some gift, such as bread, money and so on. Before scooping water from a spring, a well or a river, Bulgarians put a coin or at least a thread of clothing there. In the Rhodope region, animals living in the water (snakes, frogs) are regarded as the patrons of the given basin. In Eastern Bulgarian folk beliefs, big snakes called *sinornici, mezhnici* protect fields from hail: when a black cloud is approaching a village, the inhabitants walk out to meet it and whistle, thus trying to disperse the cloud. Similar beliefs can be found in Eastern Serbia, where people put some meal for such snakes in the vineyards.

In the South Bulgarian, Macedonian and Southeast Serbian regions, certain trees are believed to be protected by female demons called *samovili, iudi, ale,* etc. Sometimes such trees have something unusual about them, such as thick interwoven branches forming a big knot. People who stay or sleep under these trees will fall ill, and they can be cured only by acts of coaxing the demons. This is illustrated by a story from my fieldwork in East Serbia, in which a woman herding sheep lay under such a tree, and the *ale* brought her an illness (*udarile je ale, ale je srinule, na loshe mesto legla*). Afterwards, other women went to that tree with a number of small buns, wine jugs and sweet water. All these things were placed under the tree and the ill woman recovered (village of Novo Korito near Knjazhevac). In some cases only sweet water is necessary, with which they splash the tree and address the *samovilas* with the following words of cajoling: *Slatki, medeni, sestre...* and so on (Serbian village of Ravna Gora near Vlasotincy). The patrons of trees are very often called "sisters" or "mothers"; this way, people try to contact them on such a level of relationship that makes revenge or enmity inappropriate (well-known Balkan *pobratimstvo*).

In Balkan Slavic areas bordering on Macedonia and Bulgaria, i.e. in Serbia, Montenegro and Eastern Hercegovina, other types of folk beliefs about demons protecting places can be found. They constitute a *modification* of the group about demons who are *masters of the land*. These beliefs are related to the struggles in the air between the demon patron of the village and its demonic adversary that attacks the pro-

tected territory. This belief is especially wide-spread in Montenegro and East Hercegovina, where the names of such demons are related to the above-mentioned Greek word *stihija,* through the Albanian name of the same type of demon (*stihi)* coming from the same source. Thus in Montenegro, Eastern Hercegovina and Western Serbia we can find demon patrons called *stuha, stuhach, zduva, zduhach, zdua*, etc. These are protectors of places in the shape of men or animals with demonic features. When such a man or animal is asleep, his (or its) soul flies away to battle with the aggressor. After the fight, the soul returns into the body, and its owner wakes up tired and worn out by the battle. Similar beliefs are widespread in other parts of Serbia, in Western Bulgaria and Macedonia as well, but in these regions the name of the demon-protector *is zmej* or *zmaj* (i.e., 'good dragon') and its adversary is an evil dragon, also called *zmej, zmaj*, or more often *lamia* or *azhdaia.*

The next group of folk beliefs concerns demons who are *master of buildings*. Demons belonging to this category usually tend to scare people but at the same time they are quite harmless. Their origin is closely connected with rituals practiced during the process of build-ing. According to the folk beliefs in the Balkans, a building can only stay erect if a sacrifice is made during its construction. The sacrificed human or animal turns into the demon patron of the building, which can be a house, a bridge, a church, a school and so on. These demons are called *talasom, senk'a* or *stiia*. Due to its Turkish origins, the name *talasom* is widespread in the Eastern Balkans, that is, in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Eastern Serbia and in the Eastern parts of Bosnia; *senk'a* is used in the borderlines between Serbia and Bulgaria, while *stiia* is the name of this demon in the South Balkan Slavic region (Macedonia and South Bulgaria). However, in many parts of the Balkan Slavic areas beliefs and folklore stories about men or their shadows or footprints immured in the new building are quite widespread, but the notion of these turning into patron demons is unknown. Such is the case in Serbia, where many folk songs and stories are devoted to poor people who were sacrificed in this way, but beliefs about demon patrons of a building are known only in the Eastern parts of the country (Dzherdap, Zaglavak, Budzhak, Pirot regions).

The builders usually measure somebody's shadow or footprint with a red thread that they wall into the foundations of the building. Forty

days later the victim dies and his/her soul turns into a *talasom*—a night spirit that lives in this building and protects it from intruders during the night. This demon may appear as a shadow in white clothes or as an animal—sheep, dog, cat, duck, snake and so on. Very often its outward appearance resembles the man, woman or child who was sacrificed to the building. At night the demon cries or moans, sings or plays on musical instrument. If a living man tries to contact it, he will become blind or deaf.

Our next group includes demons who are *masters of buried treasure.* Demons belonging to this group guard over buried money or treasure. They can be called to being by magic words, oaths or magic acts that are performed in order to protect money from strangers. This kind of money is called in Macedonian *vakavski (vakoski) pari*, that is, 'the other world's money,' in Bulgarian *stupaniti pari* 'money protected by *sto(u)pan,*' or *kleti pari* 'cursed money.' In Bulgaria and Macedonia, treasure is also protected by demons called *talasam* or *tolosum*. According to my fieldwork notes, in the Ohrid region the *tolosum* is thought to be a big snake (*smok*) with a big head. In other Balkan Slavic regions it can be any animal. Once a year on some church holiday this demon appears as a fire at midnight. If someone wants to get access to the treasure, he must throw some clothes into the fire, and the next morning tracks will appear. If it is a footprint, a sacrifice of a human being is required, while if it is a scent track, a sacrifice of an animal is sufficient. Such treasures can only be obtained this way, through a sacrifice. Otherwise the money disappear, or bring misfortune and death to anybody who takes it.

As for *snakes protecting houses*, their names are very often semantically linked to verbs meaning 'to protect, to guard,' (Serbian *zmija-chuvarkucha*, Bulgarian *chuvarka, vardachka*), or to words with the meaning of 'master, owner' (Southern Serbian *sajbika,* Bulgarian *domosharka,* etc.). In Western Macedonian regions the name of the snake protecting houses sometimes coincides with the name of the demons protecting all kinds of buildings; thus, as my field notes show, in Ohrid the name *tolosum* is also used for such a snake. The best known belief about snakes protecting houses is connected with the prohibition of killing them. If such a thing happens, an inevitable punishment awaits the whole family: diseases and accidents occur, all members of the house-

hold die and the clan becomes extinct. According to a Bulgarian belief, if a snake protecting a house is killed by accident, it has to be burned and candles must be burnt on its grave for forty days. Pictures of this snake are necessary elements on the top of Serbian calendar breads dedicated to the family and house. On major calendar holidays, some meal is put aside for the snake protecting the house. A slice of bread, cooked corn and a glass of wine are put on the garret, into the corner of the house, or, what is more common, near the hearth, which is regarded as the center of a house. The favorite dwelling places of these snakes are the hearth or the threshold, which is also a sacred place of a house as it symbolizes the borderline between the cultured space of the inside and the strange wild world of the outside.

The cult of snakes protecting the house is a more or less specific feature of the Balkans, although some traces of it can be found in other Slavic lands as well. In Western Polesia grass-snakes living in a house are called *domovik.* It dwells under the stove, it must not be killed and it brings happiness to the house and household members. In Carpathian Ukraine this snake is called *gazdovnik* (from *gazda* 'master'), and lives under the stove, under the threshold or in the foundations of the house. While rich people have large gray snakes, the poor have only small ones. In Czech and Slovak folk beliefs this snake is white, and its name is also related to the word 'master, owner': (Slovak *domací had, starý dedo, gazda*, etc.). Thus, unlike the other patron demons examined here, traces of the cult of home snake appear outside the Balkans as well, although it is certainly the most developed in the Southern Slavic regions.

We may conclude that the names, functions and origins of Balkan Slavic demons protecting places are quite diverse, and in some cases the categories tend to merge with each other (for instance, in many present-day Bulgarian villages *talasam* means only 'dead man,' and it is used to denote some kind of vampire; *stiia* stands for a terrifying night spirit and so on). However, several of the features of these demons appear to be quite constant. Thus, a fixed set of names are used to denote such demons; their origins are usually connected with the world of the dead (ancestors); their outside appearance is very often snake-like; and their relations with the humans almost always depend upon sacrifices. We must mention an extremely significant ritual called

stopanova gozba (feast for the demon patron of a house), practiced in Eastern and Southern Bulgaria. In this ritual a black hen or black ram is sacrificed to the *stopan* or *namestnik,* as it is called in some areas. On the day of the ritual the house is cleaned with care, all the participants of the ritual get ready, and then the oldest woman slaughters the animal over the hearth. The blood, skin and internal organs are buried under the floor. They also place ritual bread and sweet cooked corn on the table. Portions from every dish together with three glasses of wine are put into the corner of the garret for the *stopan*. In the beginning of the feast the mistress of the house praises the demon-patron and shoves upon it felicitations in order to ensure the prosperity of the house. This ritual sacrifice to a demon protecting the house is the most elaborate version of all acts in the Balkans honoring the patron of a place. Naturally, the house has a priority among the places that need to be protected. Certain later versions of such a relationship of protection are related to Balkan Slavic ceremonies in honor of patron saints of the house (Serbian and Macedonian *Slava*, Bulgarian *kurban*).

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DEMONS OF FATE IN MACEDONIAN FOLK BELIEFS

VESNA PETRESKA

The belief in fate is widely present in Macedonian folk beliefs and folk narrative. It is believed that people's fate is determined on the third night after their birth. Existence in this world begins with birth, while the period until birth is a time of non-existence or an existence of some other kind, which is the opposite of *this world* and is expressed in the model of opposition *this world–that world.* The presence of the chthonic, the connections with the previous world and his still non-confirmed status in this world all condition the place of the newborn between two worlds.[1] Therefore, in this period the beliefs in the supernatural beings have a new significance, and that is why all subsequent rituals aim to pull the newborn and the mother away from this state of indefiniteness, to save him from the acute danger coming from the chthonic forces, and to bring them into everyday life.[2] The presence of the chthonic during the pass into earthly existence has certain consequences over man's future life. In the Macedonian regions, this chthonic power manifests itself through the designation of the fate of the newborn child, that is, through the "narechnitsi". Although people were aware that they were not capable of affecting the fate of the newly born, they persisted nevertheless with sacrifices, prayers or other activities to gain the favor of the demonic beings, which, if in a good mood, could designate a better future for them or their close family (Zechevich 1965, pp. 1215–21).

The demonic beings[3] that designate the destiny at the birth of a child are known in Macedonia as *narechnitsi, sudienitsi, urechnici* or *rechenitsi.*

A characteristic feature of the *narechnitsi* is their anthropomorphized appearance. They are females—*three women, maidens or sisters*—who normally cannot be seen, yet certain mediators can communicate with them. In some rare variants (e.g., in the Kumanovo area) their presence is shown by a certain kind of insects, the *stratki* (spiders).[4] They appear in three age categories, young, middle-aged, and old, and they are dressed in white clothes, but in some sources they are dressed in black (Svetieva 1991, p. 241). It is believed that the *narechnitsi* live forever, and their home is somewhere at the end of the world.

As for the interrelations between the demons of fate, they always appear together, but they have their own hierarchy among themselves. The youngest one starts the foretelling, then the middle one, but the crucial information is foretold by the third, the oldest *narechnitsa*. This belief is related to the ancient Indo-European tradition of threefold death (Pócs 1999, p. 66). They are believed to be mythological, supernatural beings, who are close to God and act according to his orders; nevertheless, he has no influence over the things foretold by the *narechnitsi,* and neither do God's saints. These beliefs show their own syncretic character; that is, they bear witness to the way how the new beliefs have been adjusted to the old pagan concepts. The folk legends suggest that the *narechnitsi* have nothing to do with God, for he does not set the destiny of anyone, and he cannot influence the decisions of the *narechnitsi* or change their predictions.[5] In one story, a newborn had St. Elio (Ilija) for a godfather, and he heard when the *narechnitsi* decided that the child was to die of drowning on his wedding day. Even St. Elio's request to God and St. Arangiel did not help, so St. Elio went to the *narechnitsi,* who allowed the child to live if the boy's parents or his bride were willing to offer him some of their own lifetime. The boy's parents refused to do so, but the bride agreed to give him some years from her own life.[6]

The place of appearance of the *narechnitsi* is the home, i.e. the room where the child is, or its immediate neighborhood. The time of their appearance is the third night, about midnight, and they leave when the roosters crow for the second time. The *narechnitsi* begin their predictions with mutual dialogues, and in some stories they indicate their presence by taking food from the table, or leaving a mark on the child's body (Vrazhinovski 1998, 1, p. 194). They usually write down the des-

tiny of the child on his forehead with invisible letters or some form of line that is also invisible for men, but in some stories they write it down in a notebook.[7]

We have already seen that the main function of the *narechnitsi* is to foresee the destiny of the newborn child, which also means that the newborn is also an addressee. Communication with the *narechnitsi* is usually not verbal. It is expressed in specific rituals that aim to please the *narechnitsi* and try to manipulate their predictions towards two basic ends: long life for the newborn and his material welfare. Such communication is the responsibility of certain mediators. The one who is the most suitable for this task is *the midwife—the woman who assisted at the childbirth*. This kind of role is allotted to certain women in the village, or to the child's grandmother, the bride's mother-in-law. She is considered to be an important mediator between the parents and the child on the one hand, and the *narechnitsi* on the other—in other words, between this world and the other one.

The role of the grandmother as a mediator with the *narechnitsi* is manifest in the rituals she undertook. Thus, on the third night after his birth, the grandmother bathed the child while the parents threw coins into the bathtub as a gift for her. In some places, the grandmother also bathed the mother of the newborn baby. Then the grandmother dressed the child in a shirt of his father or in something white or in a napkin that had to be nice and clean. While she clothed the child in the napkin, she put the sign of the cross on its forehead, belly and legs saying:

> A cross on the head,
> an angel in the heart,
> a wolf beneath your feet (Shapkarev 1976, IV, pp. 26–27).

The grandmother also blessed the child with the following words: "Be smart and clever, happy and honorable, healthy, jolly and obedient" (Shapkarev 1976, IV, pp. 11–12). In one variant of the ritual, sweet basil and fire were trailed through the shirt before putting it onto the child. In the Poreche region, the baby was put over the fireplace on the third night after his birth.[8]

A dinner was prepared on the third night, and the relatives who were invited brought specific dishes. Bread, wine, and sweets had to be

put on the table. The grandmother fed the child with chewed bread and gave him some wine—to make him red in the cheeks. The grandmother also fed the mother with the ritual food prepared for the occasion (Svetieva 1991, p. 241). If the baby was a girl, she pierced her ears. After dinner, when the guests had already washed their hands, the mother was supposed to wash her breasts with the water from the basin, in order not to lose her milk. The table was left full during the night for the *narechnitsi* to be pleased and to foretell a better future for the child.

On the third, decisive night, the grandmother slept with the baby to hear what the *narechnitsi* would predict. To prevent the designation of a bad fate, the child was sometimes taken to the house of a relative, and they put some objects (e.g., a stick) wrapped in a napkin in his place,[9] or they simply changed the position of the child as he lay.[10] In some places in Macedonia, the mother-in-law formed a child's footsteps out of ashes from the fireplace towards the door (Kitevski 1982, p. 127; Zadrozhynska 1994, pp. 119–20), which was to function as a magic path diverting the *narechnitsi* away to the opposite direction. These rituals might be considered as a resistance against fatalism.

The mediator function of the grandmother remains important until the baptism, which takes place after 40 days. Until then, the midwife/ the grandmother had to visit the baby every day. On the day when the baby was baptized, she took him to church—where, during the church rituals and after that, the godfather took over the baby.

The belief in *narechnitsi* is wide-spread in folk customs and rituals, and it can also be found in Macedonian oral prose literature and poetry (Penushliski 1968, pp. 303–309; 1988, pp. 70–78; Miladinovtsi 1983, song no. 17, pp. 27–29; Shapkarev 1976, V. t. no. 106, pp. 211–14; no. 130, pp. 290–93; no. 137, p. 311; no. 194, pp. 401–402; Tsepenkov 1989, 3. t. no. 299–310, pp. 215–49). The belief in fate and the impossibility to change what has been foretold is expressed in such proverbs as: "Whatever the *narechnitsi* foretold you will come true" (Tsepenkov 1989, 1. t. no. 72, p. 356), "That much was his life" (Tsepenkov 1989, 2. t. no. 176, p. 212), "We cannot escape from our destiny," "We cannot fly from fate even if we hide in an ox's horn" (Tsepenkov 1989, 3. t. no. 300, pp. 218–19; no. 306, p. 240), "What is written by the *narechnitsi* cannot be unwritten" (Shapkarev 1976, V. t. no. 137, p. 309), "That was foretold for him by the *narechnitsi*"; "If something is predicted about

a man, he will die from that"; or "Whatever is written about a man on the third night will pass over his head" (Penushliski 1988, 4. p. 72).

The belief in these mythical beings—*narechnitsi*—is very ancient and known almost to all Indo-European peoples. These concepts have existed ever since the Iron Age of the European territories; we may mention the example of the Greek *moiras* or the Roman *parcae* (Schubert 1982, pp. 89–95; Srejovich – Chermanovich 1979, entry "Moira, Moire"), who were three women spinning one's destiny; the Gaels called them *matronae,* the Germans *nornae,* etc. The people of the Balkans use the following terms for these demonic beings: *orisnici* (Bulgarians), *sudienitsi* (Serbians), *soenici, roenici* (Slovenians), *ursitoare, ursitele, ursoiare* (Romanians), *mirë* (Albanians), or *ora* (Northern Albanians) and *fatia,* i.e., *fatmirat* (Southern Albanians), but they are also known as *zonja të jashtëmë* (ladies from outside), and *i të tri grat* (three women), *moira* (Greek) etc. (Radenkovich 1995, pp. 36–37; Zechevich 1981, pp. 80–82; Schubert 1982, p. 90; Chaikanovich 1994, pp. 247–56; Marinov 1914, pp. 170–73; Mitseva 1994, pp. 10–12). Although male demons foreseeing one's destiny do sometimes appear, in the case of some Southern Slavic peoples (Serbians, Bulgarians, Macedonians) these beliefs are thought to be of recent times, probably innovations that came from the concept that man's destiny is designated by God (Schubert 1982, p. 89; Radenkovich 1995, p. 37; Vrazhinovski 1995, p. 52; Mitseva 1994, p. 12). In a large part of Central and Eastern Europe, people believe in supernatural beings with chthonic characteristics of fertility goddesses who spin one's destiny (Pócs 1999, p. 52). According to a legend in the Okhrid area, the *narechnitsi* are three women sitting in front of the fireplace and spinning the thread of life: the first one spins on the spindle, the second one with her hand while speaking, and the third one cuts the thread with her scissors after the prediction.[11] Spinning is associated with women, and manifests women's productivity; that is, they are the suppliers of the thread of life and suppliers of clothes—one of the earliest marks of civilization distinguishing man from the animals. In this way, female productivity is avowed for the distinction between the nature and culture (Zipes 1993, pp. 50–53). In this interpretation, the distinction *nature – culture* can be rendered into the whole ritual complex performed on the third night after the child's birth, as a way of introducing the child from the world of nature into the world of culture.

The opposition *nature – culture* seems to become even more valid if we consider the fact that the actual birth took place in the spaces where the cattle were kept (stables, stalls), and the rituals preparing for the arrival of the *narechnitsi* to foretell the destiny of the newborn child were in the main living-place—the house. This lends a new meaning to the third night rituals, when the child was dressed in a shirt (some Southern Slavic people such as the Serbians put a shirt, a hat and socks on the child on this night[12]), because until then the child was only clad in napkins; similarly, when the grandmother fed the child with bread and wine, these foods are things that are more closely associated with culture. Dressing the child in his father's shirt can be seen as an introduction of the newborn baby into patrilocal society.[13] But the *narechnitsi* who spin the thread of life are also representatives of the magic of tying and untying the thread (Matich 1977, pp. 85–115, especially pp. 99–100; Kuper 1986, entry *chvor;* Chevalier–Gheerbrant, 1983, entry *čvor, tkanje; vreteno; nit*). The symbol of tying and untying is strongly featured in the family and calendar ritual cycle in Macedonia.

The *narechnitsi* are not always imagined as merely spinners but also as the ones who prescribe and record one's destiny at his birth, and keep these records very carefully. Let us illustrate this with a story. A poor man, a servant, always had to do the tough work. On one occasion, utterly dissatisfied with his condition, he asked himself if it was his fate to work as a servant all his life. At this moment, one of the *narechnitsi* appeared and she answered that "This was written down for him, and this is the life he is going to lead," and further the proof, she took him to the place where they kept the records.[14] In a socio-cultural context, the *narechnitsi* can have a socio-critical function (Röhrich 1987, p. 256; Bratich 1993, p. 165; Trebieshanin 1966, p. 347; Antoniievich 1991, p. 95)**.** For this reason, we can agree with the statement that "the demonic is one aspect of the individual; one aspect, but not only of his psychic, but also his real, material and social world" (Röhrich 1987, p. 256). With their decisive influence over the future of the newborn child, the *narechnitsi* determine all the things that signify the norms of *this world,* such as someone's good or bad luck;[15] wealth or poverty, illness or health, long life or premature death, etc. (Bratich 1993, pp. 162–63). As a result, death is regarded as something in the category of the inevitable, conditioned by these supernatural beings, a

category of events that will take place if "they" foretold them, no matter what "we" do to escape them. Stories about the child who was foretold to die on his wedding day at the well, or to be bitten by a snake, etc, belong to this group. From the above-mentioned beliefs and rituals performed on the third night, one can notice that the grandmother/ the midwife, who assisted at the birth, has the most important role in these practices. Because birth was considered as an arrival from *that world,* that is to say, only the kind of existence from *that* to *this* world changed, the grandmother appears to have a major role as a mediator in the successfully performed passage. Having already proved her skill as a mediator at the time of the birth, she is given this role on the third night, when according to people's belief the destiny of the future life of the child is determined. That is why we may agree with the opinion that the presence of the mediator only underlines the perils that are involved in these rituals (Zadrozhynska 1994, p. 149). In these rituals, the mediators aim to accomplish a successful passage into zones of insufficient safety, where one has to trod on sacred territories; in our case, this means that the mediator—the grandmother—establishes contact with the representatives of an alien world (the *narechnitsi).* On the third night she sleeps with the child in order to secure contact with them and to get them to predict a better future for the child. The contact is mostly established through symbolic gifts—bread, sweets and wine, which are cultic foods.

Several researchers see the grandmother as an equivalent of a goddess of a higher rank, a variant of the Great Mother (Chaikanovich 1973, p. 287; Antoniievich 1991, p. 173), and it is also thought that the *narechnitsi* are actually mythical *great-grandmothers,* i.e. the souls of the ancestors who make their visit on the third night after the birth of the child (Chaikanovich 1994, pp. 250–51). The message that is being transmitted through these beliefs in supernatural beings—the *narechnitsi*—reveals our dependence on *that* world, that is, on the ancestors, because according to many theories on early religion, a large part, if not the whole religious inspiration of man derives from death (Malinowski 1971, p. 55). The belief in *narechnitsi* is based on the cult of the deceased, or the ancient concept that the deceased determine fertility in the family and the length of its duration. Thus, some scholars relate this concept to the legends in which the *narechnitsi* decide that the child

will die on his wedding day, that is, at the moment when he is expected to demonstrate his power of reproduction. The child's death is caused by objects or animals which are closely connected with the chthonic world, such as wells, snakes, etc.[16]

The beliefs in the *narechnitsi* reveal the principle of male predominance in a given community. The *grandmother,* who assists at the birth, and who is the mediator on the third night is usually the husband's mother (the bride's mother-in-law) or his relative, or a woman whose task is to perform such acts, but basically she is a woman from the village which the bride will belong to after the marriage. The grandmother does the "cleaning of the new mother," and she says the big and the small prayer. These functions are not supposed to be fulfilled by the women from the family of the mother of newborn child, who are officially informed about the birth by a messenger called *mushtuld'iia.* According to a belief still persisting today, it is not desirable that the mother of the pregnant woman should know when her daughter is giving birth to a child, because otherwise the pregnant woman will be harmed. From all this, it is clear that the woman who assists at the birth and who mediates with the demonic beings, the *narechnitsi,* is from the husband's family. In accordance with the patriarchal order in the traditional family, she represents the male principle. Some authors also see prevalence of the male principle in the presence of a large number of female demons (e.g. Baba Roga—'Horny granny', Babaruga—'Mocking granny', Dedova baba—'Grandfather's granny', Baba Korizma—'Korizma granny', etc.) that are used to scare little children with. They are carriers of the traditional model of family life, about which the youth learn from the old people, and that is why the grandmother is a multiple and appropriate symbol (Bratich 1994, pp. 168–69). The authority of the old people may be seen in the beliefs that the crucial information is foretold by the oldest, the third *narechnitsa.*[17] In this sense, in accordance with the general practice, the narrators are from the older generation. All ritual values tend to be didactical, and through the art of narrating the older people try to pass them onto the youth (Sorlin 1991, pp. 67–68). But on the other hand, the female demons insist that the heaviest burdens in raising and educating children are put on the women, while men are separated from them with their authority given by the patriarchal order in the family (Bratich 1994, pp. 168–69).

The grandmother allows the new member to enter the new community—a community neither she belongs to, nor the child's mother. This entrance is accomplished with the ritual food—bread, sweets and wine, which again are connected with the father's ancestors. This connection with the male principle is manifested in some of the ritual practices that are undertaken on the third night: the child is swung in his father's shirt; the child is put over the fireplace; all this is related to the father's ancestors.

This domination of the male principle may appear in different types of narratives. In some, the foretelling is overheard by a strange man who accidentally shows up at the house while the third night rituals are performed (because sudden and strange guests, according to folk beliefs, can often be incarnations of ancestors). In others, mostly ominous things are predicted as the future of a boy, and they are overheard by his sister; in most cases the boy has to die on his wedding day, bitten by a snake, but the sister then disguises herself as a groom, or saves her brother in some other way: what is foretold does come true, but it happens to the sister, and the brother is saved.[18] In other versions, the boy dies on the wedding day, and in order to resurrect him, one of his relatives should give him part of his or her years, and in most cases the bride is the one who is willing to do this[19]—thus, in a way, the bride sacrifices herself for the sake of the domination of the male principle. This domination is again reflected in a wide-spread story in Prilep. In this, after the guests had left on the third night, the relatives put a book, a pencil, a glass of water and bread on the table, and they left the window open. Some time in the night the mother heard the coming of the three *narechnitsi* through the wind. They were three maidens with long hair, standing on the windowsill. The oldest one told the youngest to get in and to take the glass with the water, but she did not want to, because she was scared of the child's father who slept on a bed on the other side of the room. While they were arguing, the roosters started to crow, and the *narechnitsi* did not manage to foretell the child's future, so the newborn child was left to "make its own destiny in life."[20] The importance of the male principle, that is to say for this patrilocal community, is shown by stories such as the one in which a rich man comes to a very poor household where there is a three-day-old baby. The rich man overhears the foretelling of the *narechnitsi,* who predict

that the child is to marry the rich man's daughter. Despite all his efforts, the rich man is unable to prevent this, and what is foretold by the *narechnitsi* comes true—with the girl's help, the boy finally marries the rich man's daughter.[21]

From all this, we may conclude that the belief in the *narechnitsi* appears to be a survival of some features of a fertility goddess with chthonic characteristics, who is associated with the spinning and tying-untying of the thread of life, an opposition that we related to the distinction nature – culture. The ritual practices performed in Macedonia on the third night after the birth of a child, the waiting for the *narechnitsi* and the efforts to please them, the beliefs as well as the oral tradition all seem to indicate that the belief in the *narechnitsi* is based on the archaic idea that the dead, that is, *that world* designates the productivity and the fertility of the family and its durability. The chthonic relationship is confirmed by the presence of the mediator, the "grandmother" during the third night rituals. The communication is accomplished through ritual food and ritual bread. The role of the grandmother, but also the presence of a large number of female demons suggests that this social group is linked with tradition and the traditional model of family life.

Notes

1 The undesignated situation of the newborn is symbolized in the ritual act when on the third night after their birth, children were put on the doorstep. If they rolled outside, they were not expected to survive, and if they rolled towards the inside of the house, they were. The doorstep is a borderline between the two worlds, this one and the other coinciding with the opposition *outside – inside*. The Archive of the Institute of Folklore "Marko Tsepenkov" – Skopie, tape number (further: AIF, t. no. 3552, narrator Petkana Ristevska, born in the village Kokino [in the Kumanovo area]). Recorded by Vesna Petreska in 1996 in Kokino.

2 Iovanovich 1993, p. 109; Turner 1969, p. 80; 1983 pp. 169, 178; Tsivian 1982, pp. 117–23. The opposition *this world – that world* can be complemented by others such as *covered – uncovered, wide – narrow, day – night, internal – external,* which are also used in rituals aiming to pull the newborn and the mother away from this state of indefiniteness.

3 For the description of the demons of fate *narechnitsi*, we used the scheme of Vinogradova and Tolstoi 1989, pp. 86–114. Basic sources used here to describe

the *"narechnitsi"* are the following: Shapkarev 1976, IV: Obichai, obredi, nosii (Customs, rites, national customs), V: Prikazni (Folktales); Tsepenkov 1989, III; Miladinovtsi 1983, Pod redaktsiia na [Ed. by], Haralampie Polenakovits i Todor Dimitrovski; Filipovich 1939, pp. 412–14; Pavlovich 1928, pp. 217, 219, 278; Tanovich 1927, pp. 109–110; Vrazhinovski 1995, pp. 51–60; 1998, pp. 193–97. Personal field researches: The Archive of the Institute of Folklore "Marko Tsepenkov" – Skopie, tape number (further; AIF, t. no.) 3549, narrator Petkana Jovchevska, born in 1922 in Makresh, recorded in village Zubovtse (Kumanovo area). Recorded by Vesna Petreska in 1996. AIF t.no. 3551, narrator Draga Ratkova Mircheva born in 1912 in village of Zubovtse, recorded in village Klechovce (Kumanovo area). Recorded by Vesna Petreska in 1996; narrator Stevanka Korunoska, born in 1929 in village Devich (Poreche), recorded in village Ropotovo (Prilep area). Recorded by Vesna Petreska in 1996; AIF, Zbirka br. 10, "Obichai okolu radianie, sklopuvanie brak i umirachka vo Osogoviiata". (AIF, Collection no. 10, *Customs related to birth, marriage and death in Osogoviia region*). The materials were collected in the villages Kamenitsa i Sasa, (Delchevo area). Collected by Miodrag Hadzhi-Ristich.

4   AIF, t.no. 3549, narrator Petkana Iovchevska, born in 1922 in village Makresh, recorded in village Zubovtse. Recorded by Vesna Petreska in 1996.

5   Vrazhinovski 1995, tale no. 29. "Od rechenoto ne se begat" (We cannot run away from what is foretold), pp. 55–56.

6   Vrazhanovski, 1995, tale no. 32. "*Narechnitsite i Sveti Ilija*" (*Narechnitsi* and St. Elio), pp. 59–60.

7   Tsepenkov, 1989, p. 3, tale no. 301. "Siromav i *narechnitsi*" (The poor man and the *narechnitsi*), p. 211; tale no. 305. "Trite *narechnitsi* shto narekoa deteto od siromaio da mu ia iadi stokata na bogatio" (The three *narechnitsi* who predicted to a poor man's child that he would own the treasures of a rich man), p. 231; tale no. 306. "Trudnata zhena i trite *narechnitsi*" (The pregnant woman and the three *narechnitsi*), p. 237; tale no. 308. "Trite *narechnitsi* shto ie narekle na edna zhena deteto da zhivei i da si meni verata; taa ne sakaichi da si meni verata go umrela" (The three *narechnitsi* foretold a woman that her son would live but he would change his religion; she did not want him to convert and killed him) p. 244; tale no. 309. "Siromaio so dikelo shto kopashe i *narechnitsite*" (The poor man who dug with his digger and the three *narechnitsi*) pp. 246–47; Vrazhinovski 1995, p. 51. and tale no. 29. "Od rechenoto ne se bega" (We cannot run away from what is foretold), pp. 55–56; Tsepenkov 1972, p. 9. (Folk beliefs. Children's games), p. 45; AIF, Zbirka 10, "Obichai okolu radianie, sklopuvanie brak i umirachka vo Osogoviia" (AIF, Collection no. 10*, Customs related to birth, marriage and death in Osogoviia region*). Registered by Miodrag Hadzhi-Ristich.

8   Narrator: Stevanka Korunoska, born in 1929 in the village of Devich. Recorded in village Ropotovo (Prilep area) in 1996. Recorded by Vesna Petreska. Personal field research: according to the narrator's story, this ritual was performed

after her own birth, but the napkin in which she was wrapped caught fire at the edge. Her grandmother told her mother that she was going to marry a man with a defect. "And for sure, I married a man with a twisted mouth"– says the narrator.

9 Vrazhinovski 1998, I. pp. 195–96; AIF, tale no. 3549, narrator Petkana Iovchevska, born 1922 in village Makresh, lives in village Zubovtse. Recorded by Vesna Petreska in 1996.

10 AIF, tale no. 3551, narrator Draga Ratkova Mircheva, born in 1912 in village Zubovtse, recorded in village Klechovtse. Recorded by Vesna Petreska in 1996.

11 Shapkarev 1976, p. 5. tale no. 106. "Narchnicite" ili "shcho ie pisano, toa tse bidit" (The *"narechnitsi"* or "What is written, that will be"), pp. 211–14; Vrazhinovski 1995, p. 52.

12 Three pieces of clothing (for the head, the chest and the legs); they stress even more the distinction nature – culture, because the *narechnitsi* were also dressed, but they wore one-piece clothing, i.e. white dresses. See Radenkovich 1995, p. 38.

13 In this sense some authors equate the opposition *woman – man* with the opposition *nature – culture*. Ortner, 1983, p. 168. and further.

14 Vrazhinovski 1995, tale no. 29. "Od rechenoto ne se bega" (We cannot run away from what is foretold), pp. 55–56.

15 In the prose literature for this type of narration, see Tsepenkov 1989, p. 3. tale no. 301. "Siromav i *narechnitsi*" (The poor man and the *narechnitsi*), pp. 219–21; tale no. 305. "Trite *narechnitsi* shto go narekoa deteto od siromaio da mu ia iadi stokata na bogatio" (The three *narechnitsi* who foretold to the poor man's child that he would own the property of the rich man), pp. 230–37; tale no. 307. "Sveti Iliia i *narechnitsite*" (St. Elio and the *narechnitsi),* pp. 240–43; tale no. 309. "Siromaio so dikelo shto kopashe i *narechnitsite*" (The poor man who dug with his digger and the *narechnitsi*), pp. 246–47; Shapkarev 1976, p. 5. tale no. 130. "Od rechenoto ne se izbeguat" (We cannot run away from what is foretold), pp. 290–93.

16 Radenkovich 1995, pp. 35, 38. For this type of examples in narrative literature, see Tsepenkov 1989, p. 3. tale no. 300. "Od rechenoto ne se bega" (We cannot run away from what is foretold), pp. 218–19; tale no. 302. "Devoichinska kula" (Maid's tower), pp. 221–23; Shapkarev 1976, p. 5, tale no. 106. "*Narechnitsite* ili shcho ie pisano toa tse bidit" (The "*narechnitsi*" or "What is written will happen"), pp. 211–14.

17 Tsepenkov 1989, p. 3. tale no. 303. "Trite *narechnitsi* i deteto" (The three *narechnitsi* and the child), pp. 224–27; Vrazhinovski 1998, I, p. 196.

18 See Tsepenkov 1989, p. 13. tale no. 303. "Trite *narechnitsi* i deteto" (The three *narechnitsi* and the child), pp. 224–27; The sister saves the brother, but she must not tell what has been foretold by the "*narechnitsi*", for if she did, she would turn into a stone. Nevertheless, she tells the secret to her brother, but the brother manages to save her. Tale no. 304. "*Narechnitsite* i zenata so devette

devoichinia" (The *narechnitsi* and the woman with nine daughter), pp. 227–29; Miladinovtsi 1983, song no. 17. "Todorova cerka" (Todor's daughter), pp. 27–29. The song is from Struga.

19   Tsepenkov 1989, p. 2. tale no. 176. "Na mrtviot zet nevestata mu dala od svoite dni" (The bride gives the dead groom some of her days), pp. 212–13; 3. tale no. 299. "Devette sestri shto imale eden brat. Zmiiata go izede i pak zmiiata go ozive" (The nine sisters who had only one brother. The serpent bit him and resuscitated him), pp. 215–19. In this story, the bride lies down in the grave with her dead husband who died on the wedding day bitten by a snake. For the variations of the motif in Macedonian literature, see Penushliski 1988, pp. 303–309; and the attached bibliography.

20   AIF, tale no. 2255, narrator Slavka Petreska, born in 1913 in Prilep. Recorded by Milan Risteski in 1973 in Prilep.

21   Tsepenkov 1989, p. 3. tale no. 305. "Trite *narechnitsi* shto go narekoa deteto od siromaio da mu ia iadi stokata na bogatio" (The three *narechnitsi* who foretold to a poor man's child that he would own the wealth of the rich man), pp. 230–37; Shapkarev 1976, p. 5. tale no. 130. "Od rechenoto ne se izbeguat" (We cannot run away from what is foretold), pp. 290–93.

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GOG AND MAGOG IN THE
SLOVENIAN FOLK TRADITION

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In 1882 an article on national folk traditions was published in *Kres,* a Klagenfurt monthly, which contained a legend entitled "The Great Wall of China," recorded in the Tolmin area (NW Slovenia) by Fonovski. The story is as follows:

> The Chinese were at war with the neighboring king. At that time, the Son of God was travelling around the world, and when they heard that he could perform miracles, they asked him to make peace between them and their neighbors. God ordered the apostles and disciples to scatter sand around the country and behold, as soon as the sand was scattered, a tall, thick wall sprang up and not a soul could enter China any more. So the Chinese king is called the 'walled-in king' because God Himself walled him in (Fonovski 1882, p. 577).

This account belongs to a large group of Slovenian legends about the travels of the Holy Family (Jesus and Mary accompanied by St Peter and other saints) and their adventures and miracles. Based on older models (dating from the time of the Crusades) (Kotnik 1943, pp. 79–87), Slovenian folk poetry and legends emerged from the seventeenth century onwards, i.e. after the normalization of religious life in the Baroque period (Merhar 1956, p. 60). An analysis of the legend about the Great Wall of China confirms that its religious, moral and didactic role fitted the mental and emotional level of Baroque man. Nevertheless, Boris Orel has pointed out that the "pattern of legends about the travels of anthropomorphic holy individuals reveals how the

wandering knights and mythical heroes of the fairytales were replaced with travelling saints and Christ" (Orel 1933, p. 44). Could an older substratum be detected in our legend as well? In my opinion the legend is based on the episode of Gog and Magog from classical and Medieval traditions related to Alexander the Great.

The Asian campaign of Alexander of Macedonia, which lasted from 334 to 323 BC, was an undertaking unrivalled in the antiquity. According to reports by contemporary historians, tales of individual events from his long expedition, which took him as far as western India, were immortalized in folk tales in classical Greece. A considerable number of these tales were included in the Alexander Romance, which, in addition to historical and fictional episodes, encompassed philosophical commentaries and passages from Hebrew apocalyptic prophecies of the Old Testament. An important romance biography of Alexander the Great was presumably written in Alexandria during the Ptolemaic period (around 200 BC or earlier) by Pseudo-Callisthenes. It was known in western Europe through Valerius's Latin vulgate version from around 300 AD. This work was influential primarily in the ancient Orient. In the tenth century the romance was translated into Latin from the Byzantine text of Pseudo-Methodius by the arch-presbyter Leo of Naples. Known under the title of *Historia de proeliis,* it was extremely influential in medieval Europe. Several versions of the Alexandride, based on Byzantine sources, were also known to exist among the Southern and Eastern Slavs. Another romance of considerable importance for the Western European tradition related to Alexander is the first century historical romance *De rebus gestis Alexandri Magni* by the Roman historian Quintus Curtius Rufus, which uncritically quotes various classical sources and other texts, such as the forged letter *Alexandri Magni epistola ad Aristotelem magistrum suum de situ et mirabilius Indiae,* and the report of Alexander's encounter with Indian brahmans ("Commonitorium Paladii and Collatio Alexandri Magni cum Dindymo") (Ross 1963, pp. 5–65).

Since Alexander's letters were contained in a late fourteenth century manuscript from Gornji Grad (f. 3': "Epistola Alexandri regis ad Aristotelem"; f. 3'–4': "Epistola ad Alexandrum regem", etc.) and in another late fourteenth century manuscript of unknown origin (f. 39'–62': "Epistola Alexandri ad Aristotelem"), they must have exerted some

influence over Slovenian folk tradition (Kos 1931, pp. 88–89. no. 49, p. 116. no. 76). That the theme was still popular in the following century in the Slovenian territory can be surmised from a copy of Seifriet's epic about Alexander, transcribed in 1456 by Herman Thallner of Trebnje. Slovenian libraries keep several incunabulas which tell of Alexander's life, such as the *Historia Alexandri Magni* (1483); the *Historia scholastica* by Peter Comestor (seven copies dating from 1473, 1485 and 1500); the *Historiae Alexandri Magni* by Quintus Curtius Rufus (two copies dating from 1491 and 1494, which, although lost, are included in library inventory lists); and the *Sachsenspiegel* by Eike von Repgow (part 1,1484) (Gspan 1957, p. 257. no. 706, p. 213. no. 534–536, pp. 266–267. no. 745–746, p. 149. no. 259).

Apart from the 1483 fragment, which was discovered between the covers of a different book, these texts were widely read until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as is evident from their binding and other details. The Ljubljana National and University Library keeps a Latin copy of Alexander's *decree* or *testimony,* based on a "Czech Chronicle" by Vaclav Hajek, which was printed in Prague in 1541. The copy was probably part of Bohoric's legacy and undoubtedly comes from Slovenian Protestant circles. In the introduction to his grammar book (1584), Bohoric mentions the text and adds that after a considerable effort, it was acquired from the Prague collegium by his fellow countrymen Count Franc Thurn and Baron Ziga Herberstein (Simoniti 1973, pp. 225–33). From the account of Alexander's expedition to India, the episode about a dog defeating a lion, recorded in the writings of Aelianus, was included in a collection of sermons by Janez Svetokriski in the late seventeenth century (*Sacrum promptuarium* 1691, p. 216).

Besides the *Gog and Magog* episode, another passage from the Alexander cycle is preserved in the Slovenian tradition describing how the king attempted to measure the sky and the ocean. He rose above the clouds on an eagle and dived into the ocean in a glass bell. But God prevented him from reaching the greatest height and depth. In the tale, Alexander is replaced with the Hebrew king Solomon:

Wise Solomon wanted to measure the celestial heights and the depths of the ocean. He seated himself on an eagle, holding a long cane in his hand, at the end of which he tied a piece of juicy roast

meat. Seeing the roast, the eagle took off, carrying the king on his back. When the eagle rose high above the mist, a voice was heard from above: 'Solomon, look down! Turn the eagle towards that mole-hill below or a great ill will befall thee!' Recognizing the voice as that of God Himself, Solomon quickly turned the cane downwards and the eagle followed it. As it descended, the mole-hill grew larger and larger. Solomon suddenly realized that what from a great height had seemed a mole-hill was in actual fact the earth. He landed safely, but he had failed to measure the celestial heights.

Yet Wise Solomon did not give up. He then decided to measure the ocean's depths. For this purpose, he had an enormous bottle made and filled with food to last him for thirty years. He climbed in, taking with him a cock so that he would know whether it was day or night. A long rope was tied to the neck of the bottle, which at the other end was held by men who lowered the bottle into the sea.

The bottle sank deeper and deeper. Realizing that the bottle had stopped sinking because the rope was too short, Solomon cut the rope and the bottle started to sink again. Although he had been sinking for many days, he still could not reach the bottom of the sea. One day, a terrible storm arose. The turbulent waters threw the bottle this way and that, as if wanting to throw it on to dry land. All of a sudden, a horrible noise was heard, as if rocks were falling on the bottle. Solomon could no longer see through the glass. He realized that the water was burying him under rocks and sand. After being imprisoned for so many years, he prayed to God to save him.

The sea dried where Solomon was buried and people built a road over the land. Early one morning, they heard a cock crowing deep below the ground. They remembered the unfortunate Solomon and started digging away the sand and rocks. They found Solomon in the bottle, alive although aged. They looked up learned books and read that it was thirty years to the day since King Solomon had been lowered into the sea. And so he failed to measure the ocean's depths as well (Freünsfeld 1884, p. 297).

The following is a short summary of the Gog and Magog episode from Alexander's cycle. During his Asian campaign, Alexander encountered wild, hostile and cannibalistic peoples (twenty-two of them,

to be precise, including Gog and Magog). He fought and defeated them. Those who survived escaped to a place between two mountains which, upon Alexander's prayer, moved together, thus sealing the exit. On this face of rock, Alexander placed a massive iron door, thus creating an impassable obstacle.

In literary sources about Alexander, the Gog and Magog episode appears sporadically. Nevertheless, it was of great explanatory significance, and for this reason it was included in medieval encyclopaedias (Elucidarium) and the Cosmographies of a later age. Geographically and ethnologically, Gog and Magog denoted the nomadic eastern tribes which posed a threat to Christian civilization: Huns, Arabs, Hungarians, Khazars, Kumans, Bulgarians, Mongols and finally the Turks. It was the only logical explanation of the recurring invasions by the peoples of the steppe and was based on ethnic evaluations made in terms of familiar–foreign and Christian–pagan relations.

The names of Gog and Magog first appeared in the Hebrew Biblical tradition, the former as the name of a ruler of a certain nation or country in the north, and the latter as the name of Japheth's son, similarly denoting Indo-Europeans living in the north (Genesis 10.2). Both Gog and Magog were the enemies of Hebrews. According to the Bible, this was why they were destroyed by Yahweh or Christ (Ezekiel 38–39; Revelation 20.8–9). Therefore, in the Biblical tradition, the motif of Gog and Magog became associated with the prophecies of the Last Judgement: "when a thousand years expire, Satan will be loosed from the prison and shall deceive the nations in the four quarters of the earth, gathering them together for a battle, only to be devoured by fire coming from God out of heaven" (Revelation 20.7–9). The idea of peoples walled up until God lets them loose on a destructive campaign reminded Medieval Man of the coming end of the world. For this reason, Gog and Magog are also connected with the prophecies of the arrival of the Antichrist and with sibylline prophecies. In the second half of the sixteenth century, in accordance with this tradition, Trubar wrote: "Have mercy upon us, poor Slovenians, who like other people have sinned against Thee and are suffering from just punishment at the hands of Gog and Magog, the Turks and other serfs of the Antichrist" (Trubar 1574, p. 71). Trubar and Dalmatin identified Gog and Magog with the Turks and Tartars, whom they also called *Red Jews* (Dalmatin

1584, p. 150a; Trubar 1577, p. 256). This was based on an explanation commonly accepted in twelfth and thirteenth century Europe, according to which the walled-up peoples were in fact lost Jewish tribes. This belief reflects the anti-Semitic tendencies of the period of the Crusades. In fact, the first Mongolian invasions in Central Europe coincided with a Jewish prophecy about the arrival of a Messiah in the year 5000 according to the Hebrew calendar (1240), who would liberate Jews from the oppression. There even existed *new age* pamphlets advocating the Mongolian conquest of Europe (Breslau 1887, pp. 99–102).

The association of Gog and Magog with Alexander was first made by Hebrew historian Flavius Josephus, who in his *History of the Jewish War* written in the first century AD gave an account of how Alexander the Great sealed a passage with an iron gate in order to prevent the wild northern people of Magog (whom the author identified with the Scythians) from invading the cultured world (Pfister 1930–31, p. 911). This served as a basis for later interpretations, including those by Pseudo-Callisthenes and Pseudo-Methodius. In Christian literature from Syria, several versions of the legend were known. The legend later became integrated into Western (Latin, Greek and Slavonic) sources and Eastern medieval traditions (*yajuj-wa-majuj* of the Koran 18.95–98 and 21.96, and Persian, Turkish and Ethiopian literature) (Czeglédy 1957, pp. 231–49).

In the fourth century, Ambrosius, the Bishop of Milan, identified the nation of Gog with Goths due to the similarity of the two words, while in his commentary to Ezekiel, probably written before 435, Theodoretus identified Gog and Magog with the Scythians (Mänchen-Helfen 1978, p. 42). The word *Scythians* was at the time used to denote all barbarian peoples of north-eastern Europe, such as the Huns and their neighboring Slavonic, Germanic and Iranian nations. Other ethnic names, either original, bastardized or invented, created confusion, forcing chroniclers to rely on ancient authors, particularly Herodotus. In the late fourth and early fifth centuries, Sinesius of Cyrene attempted to salvage the reputation of late classical ethnography by claiming that it was, in fact, the same barbarian people that was constantly reemerging under different names, and they even disfigured their faces artificially, in order to scare people and make them believe that a strange new race had emerged from the ground (Mänchen-Helfen 1978, p. 5).

In the Byzantine version of Pseudo-Methodius, Gog and Magog de-note *Arabs* or *the sons of Ishmael.* The names of the two peoples are used in the same way in the old Russian prophecies of Methodius of Patara. At the same time, the legend of the walled-in lost tribes of Israel again reappears in twelfth century German literature (Kottinger 1987, p. 1351). For example, the *Historia scolastica* by Peter Comestor, written between 1169 and 1173, describes how Alexander walled in ten lost Hebrew tribes with divine help, as a punishment for their blas-phemous behavior (Ross, op. cit.). An attempt to determine the time period during which Gog and Magog came to denote the descendants of Ishmael or the Jews has been made by various researchers, includ-ing Ivan Grafenauer, who surmised that in the Occident this shift may have occurred as late as 1345. According to Grafenauer, this date is of considerable importance, for it also represents the date of origin of the Moravian tales about *Gojmagoj's regiment* sleeping inside a mountain. These tales resemble the Slovenian oral tradition related to King Matjaz (Grafenaür 1951, pp. 112–13).

In most versions of the legend, the Slovenian King Matjaz was swal-lowed up by the earth as a punishment for disobeying the divine will (Grafenaür 1951, pp. 113–16). The tradition obviously follows Ezekiel's prophecy, which relates that when a divine wrath is leashed upon Gog's army, there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel so that "the mountains shall be thrown down and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground" (Ezekiel 38.19–20). In the original legend about Alexander, the two mountains move closer together, thus creating a barrier, whereas in the legend of King Matjaz, they collapse upon Matjaz and his army, trapping them in an underground cave (Grafenaür 1951, p. 118). However, there exists another version which speaks of *good King Matjaz* and describes how, outnumbered by the enemy, Matjaz and his army seek refuge in a mountain which opens up to provide shelter for them (Grafenaür 1951, p. 119).

The Slovenian legend about the Great Wall of China differs from the Matjaz tales and is obviously based on a different source, because it gives an explicit account of the building of the wall. Naturally, the original elements have been thoroughly changed. Instead of the for-mer *Derbent Gate*, named after the gate in the Derbent defense walls in the Eastern Caucasus, which protected Armenia and Persia from

raids from the north, here it is the building of the wall in the Far East that is recounted. In addition, the original purpose of the construction (the punishment of defeated ogres and protection from them) is transformed into friendly intervention (the granting of a request to stop conflicts between quarrelling neighbors). The account of the peaceful agreement which results in the construction of the wall resembles certain Oriental versions of the motif (Koran 18.95–96). In this important detail and in certain other elements, it also differs from Southern Slavonic versions of the Gog and Magog episode from the Alexandride (Jagić 1871, pp. 299–300), but the elements of the supernatural origin of the wall and its impermeability are preserved. The explanation that Alexander acted as a divine instrument in the erection of the wall can already be found in the antiquity (Pfister 1930–31, p. 912). In an illustration in the Middle Dutch *Historienbijbel* from 1360–61, Alexander is depicted praying to God for the successful fulfillment of his task (Ross 1971, p. 166, 297). The divine command regarding the construction of the wall in the Slovenian tale is therefore not a new element. What is new is that Alexander and his army are replaced with Christ's apostles and disciples.

The identification of the legendary hero as the *Son of God* is of particular significance. The context of the Slovenian tale (the company of *apostles and disciples*) undoubtedly indicates that the hero is none other than Christ himself. Still, as early as in the *Historia de proleiis,* Alexander is described as the son of two fathers: a human being or an Egyptian pharaoh, and Jupiter. According to the Coptic and Egyptian versions of Pseudo-Callisthenes, Alexander's divine father was the Egyptian god Amon-Re (Poucha 1968, p. 67). Therefore, the term *Son of God* in the Slovenian legend accurately implies Alexander's semi-divine status.

In the legend, the scattering of sand around the land, from which a tall, thick wall grows, symbolizes divine omnipotence. This motif probably originates from an erroneous interpretation, or from an adaptation of the above-mentioned passage about Gog and Magog in Revelations: "when a thousand years expire, Satan will be loosed from the prison and shall go out to deceive the nations in the four quarters of the earth, gathering them together for a battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea" (Revelation 20.7–8). Given the oral transmis-

sion of the legend, the mental shift from the innumerable grains of sand to the scattering of sand is undoubtedly probable.

Let us now focus on the "exotic" Chinese setting of the legend. The origins of this setting should not be associated with Byzantine, Ethiopian and Arab traditions about Alexander's visit to China (between 842 and 844 an emissary of the caliph Wathiq traveled to China, saw the Great Wall, which he declared to be the dwelling place of Gog and Magog, and gathered all accessible sources about its construction) (Wensinck 1934, pp. 1236–37). In this respect, the tendency of classical and medieval hagiographies to glorify the hero out of all proportion is of greater relevance. According to these works, Alexander's glory traveled throughout the known world and reached all nations. China was located on the extreme edge of the world, and, as such, was synonymous with the terrestrial orb (Curtius 1954, p. 169). In Slovenia, ideas about the northern Euro-Asian origin of Gog and Magog were known as early as the sixteenth century. In the first Slovenian translation of the Bible (1584), a commentary was added to the Book of Ezekiel, in which Gog, "the ruler of Meseh and Tubal," is associated with the Muscovite empire: "Meseh and Tubal are Tartars and Wallachians, and Meseh is known to be the origin of Muscovites" (Dalmatin 2. 1584, 78b). This explanation is an almost literal quotation from Luther (1545) (Luther 1974, p. 1474). But the most probable explanation for the wall in the Slovenian legend is that the motif dates only from the seventeenth century, when Europe first heard about this architectural wonder from the first eyewitness accounts by Jesuit missionaries. During the Baroque period and the Enlightenment, the interest in Chinese culture and debates about the date and method of the wall's construction undoubtedly added a new dimension to the legend. In that period, the monuments of old cultures were often attributed to legendary founders. It is due to this tendency that, for instance, on the map of the lower course of the Amur river in the 1701 atlas of Siberia by the Russian geographer Semen Ustinovich Remezov, a location (which is in fact an archaeological site) is marked as the birthplace of Alexander of Macedonia (Okhladnikov 1954, pp. 228–29).

If, in the end, an attempt is made to evaluate the significance of the Gog and Magog tradition, we cannot ignore the fact that, in Slovenia and elsewhere in Europe, this tradition was closely connected with var-

ious versions of the motif of the *cynocephali*. The problem of the origin and genesis of these beliefs is highly complex, for cynocephalic beings appear as early as in Egyptian and Mesopotamian mythology, while in classical Greek, Roman and medieval literature they are put into different contexts. In general, the term cynocephali was used with the following meanings: a wild people (possibly living on the edge of the known world or in remote areas of one's native land), actual historical enemies (such as the Turks), and demons or degenerate human beings (Klimova-Richnová 1968, p. 112). The common trait shared by the Gog and Magog tradition and the belief in cynocephali is that, in both cases, a wild and half-human race is described. For example, in a sixteenth century Russian manuscript about the Apocalypse, Gog and Magog are depicted with dog's heads (Krek 1882, p. 165). Serbs and Croats believed that cynocephali lived in caves "where the day does not dawn and the sun does not shine" or in a "dark land" somewhere across the border of the Russian empire. The borders of this land are guarded by an army to fend off hostile raids (Diordievich 1953, pp. 106–107; Hirc 1896, p. 229). The elements of the original story about Gog and Magog can also be detected in the tale from the Croatian region of Podgorje, according to which a bishop threw the king of the cynocephali into a dark cave at the foot of the Velebit mountains, which he then surrounded with a thick wall (Kelemina 1930, p. 335).

According to Slovenian folk geography, the cynocephali lived in a land in the south, beyond seven mountains and seven seas and the Rotten Sea, or beyond nine seas (Kelemina 1930, pp. 330, 332). In addition, fragments from a Slovenian legend about the battle fought against the cynocephali and the capture of them in a cave at the foot of the Kum mountain have been preserved (Kelemina 1930, pp. 330–31). In this legend, the tradition about the cynocephali came to be associated with actual locations in the Slovenian ethnic territory. The basic elements of the association with Gog and Magog are that they are beings with canine heads, their land is located in a remote mountainous region (underground caves), and that they are cannibals. Let us examine, for instance, the opening passage of Valjavec's record about the cynocephali: "In a mountain near Rogatec, some 'dog-headed ogre' lived. His cave was in the forest. He hunted people and devoured (them)" (Krek 1882, p. 164). The Gog-Magog Antichrist tradition is also pres-

ent in the following passage, in which the role of God is played by the mythological figure of Kresnik: "Immediately, a thousand evil spirits emerged from a deep cave. And as they came into the light of day, lightning and thunder broke out as if on Judgement Day. But Kresnik knew that they were nothing but evil sorcerers and he killed them all, for all of them were dogheads" (Pajek 1884, p. 79).

If we extend the different versions of the cynocephali motif to the one-eyed giant of the Polyphemic type (Krek 1882, pp. 162–66) and various other demonic beings, in which the tendency to replace the cynocephali with the Devil becomes evident (Klimová-Rychnová 1968, p. 111), the thematic range of the Alexander legend about Gog and Magog is given much more significant dimensions.

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SYSTEMATIZATION OF THE CONCEPT OF DEMONIC AND EVIL IN MONGOLIAN FOLK RELIGION[1]

ÁGNES BIRTALAN

Being a part of an ongoing project dealing with the new interpretation of the Mongolian mythology, this paper is an attempt to offer a kind of systematization of the phenomenon of evil and the demonic in Mongolian folk religion. Ritual and folklore texts of different Mongolian peoples, travelers' notes, and field work materials collected since the nineteenth century are used as main sources for the systematization.

Although no systematic written Mongolian mythology exists, and the Mongolian-speaking population is spread among a vast territory of Asia (Mongolia, Russian Siberia, Northern China [Turkestan, Manchuria, Inner Mongolia] Afghanistan) and a small group, the Kalmyks, which represents the Mongols in Europe (at the Volga river), there is a common basis of Mongolian mythology and the Mongolian belief system that could be reconstructed on the basis of written and oral sources.[2] Because of the lack of internal written Mongolian sources, the primary data on the Mongolian belief system is offered by non-native (Chinese, Persian, European) travellers, missionaries, writers.[3] The first internal written sources, such as *The Secret History of the Mongols* (The Secret, 1982) and smaller testaments such as epitaphs, stone inscriptions, carvings etc., appear only in the thirteenth century. The detailed collections of myths and descriptions of the belief system are only from the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries: such data can be found in the notes of travellers (Pallas, Potanin, etc.), and in the first ethnographic field works begun in the late nineteenth century (Hangalov 1958, 1959, 1960).

Beyond the lack of sources, a major problem with research into Mongolian mythology is its syncretic character. Because of the signifi-

cant influence of non-Mongolian religions (Eastern Christianity, Zoro-astrianims, Buddhism, Islam) and philosophico-religious systems (Chinese Taoism, Confucianism), it is difficult, or sometimes impossible, to distinguish original Mongolian phenomena from borrowed ones.

    We would like here to provide a short survey of the main problems with the concept of evil and demonic in Mongolian folk religion, and try to outline the main aspects of its systematization. The term Mongolian is used for features that are common to Mongolian speaking peoples. Data pertaining to particular Mongolian populations e.g., Buriad, Khalkha, Dagur etc. will be spoken of separately.[4]

On the origin of evil, transformation of good into evil

The concept of evil in the Mongolian folk belief system is closely connected with the concept of Mongol world-modelization and, in a broader sense, of Inner Asian nomads and, in part, of Siberian forest people. In the three-layered world concept, the most important from the point of view of evil and demonic phenomena is the middle (the human) world. According to supposedly earlier data, when the concept of the underworld and upperworld appeared, there was almost no difference between the middle and other world layers. A clear example of this concept is an etiological fire myth, according to which all three world layers were inhabited by human-like beings, but fire was owned only by the ones living in the upper world, the sky (the stars are interpreted as herdsmen's campfires). The swallow was sent by mankind to steal fire for the inhabitants of the middle world; then the people of the underworld sent the moth to steal fire from the middle world (Mongol ardiin, 1989, pp. 161–62). There is no mention of a good – bad or good – evil opposition in the world layers. In this type of myth, neither the underworld nor the heavens are connected with the concept of bad or evil.

    What is the position of evil, and how did it appear in the world and in the cosmos? There is only scant evidence within Mongolian myths and mythological motives in different folklore genres as to the appearance of demonic and evil phenomena in the cosmic pattern.

    The cosmological myth of Balagan Buriads offer the most detailed description of the origin of evil. The first chapter of the Buriad version

of the Geser epos that is well-known throughout Inner Asia, the Abai Geser Khübüün (Geser, the honoured fellow), begins with the description of the upper world of the gods, followed by that of the gods' fight, which caused the appearance of evil in the middle, human world (Abai Geser 1959, pp. 19–89; Hangalov 1959, pp. 229–53; Lőrincz 1975, pp. 32–56; Birtalan 2001, pp. 933, 945–47, 983–84, etc). The good – bad opposition, clearly represented in this myth, is transformed into a good – evil opposition. The particular cosmological pattern of the Buriads is built on the dualistic division of the sky (upper world). This is not the usual, well-known vertical world pattern, but a horizontal division, which indicates the original equal position of good and evil. The concept of the we – others (other than us) opposition is reflected in the Balagan Buriad myth. The ancient concept is that of we (the middle, human world) – others (the world of non human beings, in this case gods), who, regardless of being good or evil, live side by side in the sky, which is divided horizontally into two parts: Western (the realm of the benevolent gods) and Eastern (the realm of malevolent gods). According to the cosmological myth, these two realms existed side by side, as the good–evil phenomena are inseparable, without active enmity.

Although the two rulers of the two realms fought with each other for supremacy over the 99 heavenly gods, a real conflict between them arose only when the third realm of a single god who would not join either the 55 Western benevolent gods ruled by Esege malaan tengeri or the 44 Eastern malevolent gods of Ataa ulaan tengeri appeared. Both rulers of the gods' realms wanted to force the neutral god Segen sebdeg to join him and proposed marriage to his daughter Naran gohon. When Segen sebdeg failed to answer this proposal, the sovereign of the Eastern gods made his daughter sick. The neutral gods' daughter seemed to be a kind of Sun spirit, her name means Sun beauty, and her sickness caused trouble among the gods. Although the Sun spirit was cured by the Ancestress of Western gods, this deed of the Eastern god's ruler is a turning point in the myth, and in the destiny of the whole world. From the point of view of the we, the spread of evil, the demonic and of harm in the middle (human) world began with this deed.

After her daughter got sick, the neutral god, joined by the Western benevolent gods and their ruler, Esege malaan, defeated the Eastern sovereign Ataa ulaan, who was captured, his body cut into pieces

and cast down from Heaven to the Earth. Parts of his body were transformed into numerous kinds of bad luck, pain and illness; the spread of evil in the human world began with this. This story contains the following problems:

1. The evil earns its importance only through the primary dualistic opposition of world concept: we (humans) and others (realm[s] of spirits, gods).
2. Outside of human existence, evil is not significant; beyond the human world, the phenomena of good and bad exits, namely together in the same frame, on the same world level, in a horizontal, not vertical division. The good was not prior to the bad (the future evil), their existence side by side indicates the wholeness of the world concept.
3. A conflict turns bad into evil. In our case it is the sickness of Sun spirit, caused by the Eastern ruler, who is originally only the bad, not evil phenomenon.
4. Originating from Heaven evil began to exist in the middle, human world, and harm mankind.
5. The underworld does not play any significant role in this primary concept of the appearance of evil.[5]

Another example of the appearance of evil among mankind is a creation myth of Indo–Tibetan origin. A pair of creator gods, Khal. Ochirwan (Skr. Vajrapani) and Khal. Cagaan shüxert (translation of Skr. Sitapatra, 'Goddess with white Parasol') created the world from soil, taken from the bottom of the Ocean.[6] While they took some rest the Chötgör ('devil'; about this type see the table) wanted to throw them into the water. In order to do it, he picked up the two gods, but could not reach the edge of the newly created world. As farther and farther he ran with the gods the Earth became larger and larger. Finally, the evil getting tired gave up his aim to harm the gods. Waking up the two gods created the first human beings but they started to quarrel who of them should rule the world. They tried to decide it prooving their meditative abilities. Two pots were placed in front of them and they had to produce a piece of flower into it by their power of meditation. The meditation power of whom is able to make a flower in the bowl, he or she should rule the world. The flower grew out of Ochirwani's bowl,

but Cagaan shüxert changed it with her empty pot. Because of her viscous action the mankind has become evil and sinful (Mongol ardiin, pp. 40–41).

In both stories the evil in the human, middle world originates from gods' enmity, gods' quarrel. While evil spirits, harm, sickness, bad luck external to the community, originates from a gods vicious deed, the internal evil is caused by a creator god.[7] According to our opinion the Buriad myth about the origin of evil contains motives, elements less influenced by other religions. However, Dordzhi Banzarov and his followers see a clear Iranian phenomenon in the dualistic division of the Sky (Banzarov 1891, pp. 1–46).

Transformation of the underworld into hell under Buddhist influence

On the basis of the supposedly oldest layers of the Mongolian belief system and mythology the so called underworld, as a realm of evil either did not exist or if it did, it did not play any important role. The underworld, as a kind of punitive hell and, as a realm of the terrifying principle, became significant after the so called second Buddhist convert of the Mongols (after the sixteenth century). The Indo-Tibetan hell-type underworld is clearly represented not only in the Buddhist scriptures, but also in shamanic texts, invocations. Even representations of different kinds of pains, and demonic spirits of the hell were spread in popular picture books in order to terrify people, and prevent them from acting against the rules of Buddhism (Sárközi 1976, pp. 273–307). Further an interesting concept of the hell appeared among the Buriads, showing not only the influences of Buddhism but also the Russian Tsarist administration. The hells are constructed similarly to Russian administrative units, with different types of clerks, spies, informers (Hangalov 1958, pp. 315–17).

The sovereign of the underworld-hell is Erlig qan, who similarly to many other spirits in the lamaized folk religion, originates from the upper or middle world layer. He originally belonged to a class of spirits, called Mong. qan (ruler), who lived in the middle world, and ruled different types of geographical, natural or social phenomena (Birtalan

2001, pp. 976–78, 1006, 1024–25). As a sovereign of the Buddhist type underworld he is similar to Indo-Tibetan ruler of the hell, to Yama (Skr. 'the lord of death'). Although, Erlig qan and the class of spirits he belonged to originates from the animistic concept of folk religion, his realm the underworld-hell shows external influences, strange to the original Mongolian (in case of the Buriad example) phenomena and, as it was mentioned before the evil character of the hell and its inhabiting spirits depends on the interaction between people and the spirits, most of which are not demonic by their nature, earn evil features only in the context of the human's deeds, actions.

Non-Buddhist and Buddhist types of spirits

The good – bad opposition analyzed above, concerning the gods' realm (in the upper world), is clearly represented in the Mongolian heroic epics which belong to the common heritage of Inner Asian warrior nomads. The bad principle, called in Mongolian mangγus (in most cases usually translated as demon), was originally the embodiment of the human enemy of warrior nomads, ruler, owner of another, enemic territory (Lőrincz 1970, pp. 309–340). The principle of bad got demonic features in the later motives of the epic poems and the original anthropomorphic human enemy became mostly zoomorphic or anthropo-zoomorphic being, sometimes similar to the dragons of European folklore.

The spirits of the genius loci type, already mentioned in the earliest sources, in *The Secret history of the Mongols,* and also in the records of the missionaries, inhabit the human world and are the most important phenomena of the Mongolian belief system (Bawden 1970, pp. 57–66). They are benevolent when they are offered the proper offerings in the proper way, and turn to be harmful, when they are offended by any member of the clan or the community. This type of spirits is most significant even today, they are the so-called lords of places, territories and lords of different phenomena, as it was mentioned above, lords of passes, summits, trees, wild animals, human activities (e.g., the activity of blacksmiths is very differentiated, any single action has its own ruler), of different objects, e. g. pipe, knife etc. (Birtalan 2001, pp. 976–78, 1006, 1024–25, 1034–35).

There are several classes of spirits, belonging to the genius loci type, e.g. the Mong. qan/qad ('ruler/rulers'), Mong. noyan/noyad ('lord/ lords'), ejhen/ejhed ('owner, owners'), etc.

According to their snake or half-snake shape and role, the luus ('lords of waters') could be considered as Chinese and Indo-Tibetan borrowings. This class of spirit, similarly to others is ambivalent, as well, but this type figures more frequently as demonic forces, causing illness, death, bad luck in the offering texts influenced by Buddhism (Bawden 1960–61, pp. 215–57).

Luus (Mong.)
an Indo-Tibetan anthropho-zoomorphic (half snake) type of representation of a lord of waters

The ambivalent spirits turn into demonic phenomena in conse-quence of the deeds of people, in case of the genius loci type in that of a smaller community (a tribe, or the inhabitants of a pastures). The interaction between mankind and spirits are strongly regulated by the systems of taboo and other prescriptions and the offended spirits could be pacified, namely can be turned from being malevolent into benevo-lent with the help of shamans or Buddhist lamas or, in case of the Islam believer Mongolian population (the Khoton), by the molla.

The Morphology of Evil and Demonic Spirits

Evil spirits could have their origin from upper world or can appear in the human world in other way, namely by transformation of human soul. According to the soul-concept of Mongolian and Inner Asian peoples, one of the two or three souls of a human being is able to transform into a spirit, a *genius loci* or a wandering harmful spirit in case of a violent death, murder, suicide, or tragic life. But the systematic concept of demonic appears under the influence of the external, non-Mongolian religions, having a developed system of demonic phenomena. The classes of spirits bear either Mongolian or Tibetan names.

Here we would like to mention only a few examples, to show some characteristic types.

Ada is a female demonic spirit, usually considered as having her origin from the Eastern Heaven. She could appear in various forms (anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, she is able to take the shape of household goods) and is very harmful for children under 3–5 years. The word ada (Mong.), ad (Khal.) is used in modern Mongolian languages and means "obstacle," when its root takes the suffix having the meaning of 'together, with' in Khal. adtai but could also mean "capable." In the myth about ada we find an important element about the evil; it originates from Heaven, from that part belonging to the Eastern malevolent god Ataa ulaan (s. above).

Muu shuwuu (Khal. 'harmful bird'), is a spirit that is harmful for the family, the clan, and also for the wider community. This kind of evil spirit is especially harmful for lonely hunters, travellers. She originates by a special case of transformation of human soul into a demonic spirit, violent death could transform a soul of a woman into it. Such a spirit could be created, too, especially by the father of a deceased young girl, if the father hides a flint in his daughter's hand, her soul will turn into muu shuwuu.

With the Buddhist conversion lots of ambivalent and evil spirits appeared in the Mongolian belief system. Supposedly a part of them had similar phenomena in the original Mongolian animistic religion, but was changed by the new one, getting new names, and also new characteristics. I would mention an example for this case: the teyireng

Teyireng (Mong.)
One-legged demon, Tibetan type of representation

(Mong.) demon, which is of Tibetan origin (from Tib. Theu-rang), is of human shape with one leg and in the offering texts causes sickness. This type of spirit belongs to the underworld and is the messenger type, sent by the lord of the underworld.

For a new systematization of the demonic and evil it is necessary to collect and structure the available data on this phenomenon. On the basis of the texts there are several categories, according to which the types of demonic and evil could be systematised. From the numerous examples we chose some well-documented and characteristic ones. The preliminary offered systematization is represented in the table. Further, continuing the investigation of texts other categories could be added to the present ones. Cf. the table below.

Name	Group, class, gender	Location	Origin	Role (harmful for ...) and ambivalency	Shape, form, ability of transformation	Special features of shape
ada	female evil spirit, causing sickness, death	human world	from Heaven; spirit transformation	children, women	anthropomorphic, zoomorphic objects, is able to transform	one-eyed
Ataa ulaan tengeri	ruler of Eastern Heaven, male, lord of horses, etc.	upper world	from Heaven	transformed into harmful beings; worshipped as a lord of horses by some Inner Mongolian populations	anthrophomorphic	red colour
chötgör	male evil messenger, stealing soul	underworld, human world	underworld	messenger	like a Buddhist Dharmapála, Yama	
Eastern qad, noyod	malevolent genius loci, mostly male	human world	from Heaven, underworld, spirit transformation	ambivalent		
Erlig	ruler of underworld, male	under-world	from Heaven	ambivalent	like a Buddhist Dharmapála, Yama	
erlig	male evil messenger, stealing soul	underworld and human world	from underworld	messenger	anthropo-zoomorphic, like a Buddhist Dharmapála, Yama	
luus	genius loci, male, female	human world, esp. waters	from Heaven, underworld	ambivalent	anthropomorphic, zoomorphic	snake
muu shuwuu	female evil spirit	human world	spirit transformation	males (hunters, travellers)	anthropo-zoomorphic	with bird bill
Teyireng	male evil spirit, causing sickness	human world	from Heaven or underworld	causing sickness	anthropomorphic	one-legged

Conclusion

The original Mongolian belief system contained the good – bad opposition, its traces are clearly represented in the Mongolian heroic epics. The concept of bad is connected with the concept of evil in the figures of mangγus (Mong.) and shimnus (Mong.). Mangγus is the embodiment of the enemy, which turned into a monster from a human shaped figure, with several heads, and a huge body. The shulmas originating from Buddhist mythology means the evil Mara and although the two figures preserved their own features, their roles could be changed in the folklore texts.

Mangyus (Mong.)
Tibetan type of representation

The most important figures of the original Mongolian religious system were and are the spirits of the genius loci type, which are ambivalent, and the behaviour of the members of the community can turn them into harmful beings.

The smaller evil spirits like the mentioned ada, muu shuwuu, etc. are of supposedly Mongolian origin, they could come into existence by descending from Heaven (in consequence of the Gods' fight), or transform from a human soul. Buddhism and other external religious systems enriched the original Mongolian system with evil phenomena, like the teyireng etc. of external origin, which are mostly of the mes-

senger type from the underworld, which assumed the characteristics of hell in consequence of Buddhist influence.
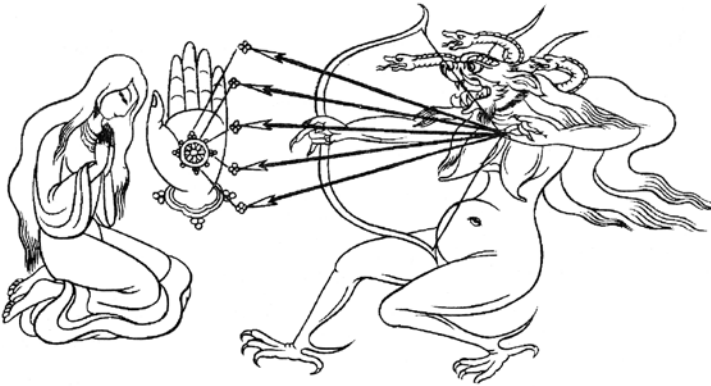
*An Indo-Tibetan type of amulet defending from harms of demonic forces
(an anthropo-zoomorphic representation of a Mangyus).*

Sabday (Mong.)
*An Indo-Tibetan anthropomorphic
type of representation of a lord
of the territory, holding Buddhist
symbols in his hands (right hand:
a stupa, left hand: a shell)*

Sabday (Mong.)
*An Indo-Tibetan zoomorphic type of
representation of a lord of the territory,
riding on a tiger, holding Buddhist
symbols in his hands (right hand:
a sword, left hand: a banner)*

Notes

1 An abstract of this concept was already published in Hoppál 2000.
2 On the literature of Systematization of Mongolian Mythology cf. Birtalan 2001, pp. 893–906.
3 Cf. Plano Carpini, W. Rubruk, Marco Polo, Rashid-ad-din, etc.
4 List of abbreviation: Mong. = Written Mongolian, Bur. = language of Siberian Buriads, Khal. = Khalkha, the main language of the Mongolian Republic. Non-Mongolian languages: Skr. = Sanskrit, Tib. = Tibetan.
5 In later myths strongly influenced by Buddhism and Christianity we find elements similar to Christian cosmology, and as it was mentioned above, Buddhist hell descriptions.
6 The story shows similarity with the creation myth of other Siberian populations.
7 Here we do not have the possibility to discuss the clear Christian and Buddhist evidences, parallels to the myths, this is the topic of the study concerning the whole Mongolian mythology, mentioned at the beginning of the paper.

Source of the illustrations

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