

BOOK REVIEWS

James Alexander Kapaló, *Text, Context and Performance. Gagauz Folk Religion in Discourse and Practice*. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2011, 352 pp. ISBN 978-90-04-19799-2

An extremely interesting contribution and a welcome addition to the study of a whole range of practices, such as charms, apocryphal texts, healing practices, prayers and so on, James Alexander Kapaló's book *Text, Context and Performance. Gagauz Folk Religion in Discourse and Practice* is concerned with that portion of the Gagauz population which inhabits the southern region of the Republic of Moldova. Past scholarship has focused on the ethnic origins of this population and the tension between its Christian faith and Turkish linguistic identity. As the result of its author's extensive fieldwork in the Republic of Moldova from 2005 to 2007, this study approaches the problem of this central dichotomy in Gagauz identity through the prism of daily religious practices.

Kapaló's research, historical in its scope, spanning from the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twenty first, is also ethnographic in its approach. It debates on and probes into the 'folk' or 'popular' religion as a *locus* of linguistic struggle between and betwixt academic, national, political, religious, or, according to the author, 'elite' discourses (macro-level) and everyday struggle for access to the divine realm through interventionist practices and in competitive fashion with clergy (micro-level) practices. Key-points of this approach include: a) 'texts' connected, on the one hand, with the scholarly, ecclesiastic and political discourses and their contribution to the construction of Gagauz national identity and popular religious consciousness and, on the other, with the liturgical/canonical and lay/apocryphal tradition of Gagauz, b) the context of above mentioned texts within their social, historical and political frame and c) the role of the performance of these texts in creating, institutionalising and transmitting lay religious practices.

Kapaló's book meets all the criteria of a thoughtfully organised, well-structured research both from an academic and methodological point of view. The first part of the book includes *Note on Transliteration, Names and Toponyms*, a very useful *Glossary of Frequently Used Terms and Abbreviations in Gagauz and Russian*, followed by lists of Illustrations and Maps. An extensive and analytical introductory chapter also provides all the necessary information concerning the geographical area, its historical and political contexts and the aims and key points of the relevant research.

Chapter one on *Folk Religion in Discourse and Practise* deals with the theoretical dimension of the performative nature of the 'folk religious field'. After

an overview of folk religion as a separate field of study, the author proceeds to focus on issues regarding the political and ecclesial history and context of the formation of the field in East and Central Europe. Various theoretical points in relation to terminology of folk religion are discussed and special attention is paid to the dichotomy between folk and 'pure' religion which is based on both contested emic and etic categories. Moreover, the author emphasizes the primary role of language in religious rituals, discursive practices and the institutionalisation of religious facts. Key terms, such as 'text', 'context' and 'performance' and their relationship to religious language are duly explained. The chapter concludes with an analytical outline of the methodological issues applied in his empirical study of the Gagauz.

The discussion on the context of the relation among Gagauz language, identity and religious practise continues in chapter two on *Historical Narrative and the Discourse on Origins* through an overview of the historical political and religious discourses and narratives in the last 200 years of Gagauz history. The chapter traces the role of immigration along with that of geographical, social, economic and administrative dislocations as determining factors in the formation of the Gagauz minority of southern Bessarabia during the Russian-Turkish war of 1768–1774 up to the end of the Second World War. It then proceeds to examine the role of Orthodox priest Mihail Çakir and his contribution to Gagauz religious life and to the national independence movement, concluding with further developments in the post-Çakir years and in the Post-Soviet Era. The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate the role of national political, clerical and scholarly approaches in the historical construction of Gagauz religious identity and popular consciousness also emphasising the crucial importance of the link between ethnic / national identity and religious identity and practice.

Chapter three traces the recent history of the Orthodox Church in Gagauzia by demonstrating how Orthodoxy, through the institutions of religious practices of the Church, Liturgy and the scriptures, becomes the principle expression of "Gagauz identity" in the early decades of the twentieth century. Starting with an analytical discussion on the interrelation of religious practices and language, Kapaló moves on to explain how a 'linguistic capital' was created for the Gagauz language through the introduction of this particular language into religious life by means of translating the canonical and liturgical texts into the local idiom. Moreover, the problem of "liturgical literacy", along with the political connections with the Russian and the Rumanian Church and State are analytically taken up. The remainder of this chapter is concerned with an exploration of the position of the *Gagauz Language, Liturgy and Scripture in the Post-Soviet Era*.

Chapter four examines the construction of Gagauz folk religion as a field of practice through an exploration of other alternative practices which have existed alongside the officially established expression of Christian worship of the Church and which have been vehemently rejected by the official church. These practises, based on non-canonical texts, consist of a set of privately translated collections in notebooks (*tetratkas*), known as *epistoliyas* into the Gagauz idiom. These texts, which emerged after Moldova's incorporation into the Soviet Union in 1944 due to a total absence of an official 'church' in most Gagauz communities, perform a number of functions in the Gagauz spiritual life (surrogate scripture on Sundays, healing and defensive rituals, protective talismans *etc.*). Based on this tradition, the author points out the crucial importance of Gagauz language 'texts' in terms of the authority and the establishment of lay institutions by highlighting the dual character of folk religion both as pure discourse and as a field of practice. Finally, it problematises once again emic/etic distinctions concerning official and folk religion and practises.

Another bipolar distinction associated with the field of folk religion and connected with political implications is the distinction between magic and religion, which is discussed in chapter five on *Healing and Divine Authority* through examining various healing practices in performance. In this chapter the author focuses on the context within which healings take place, and through the biographies and testimonies of Gagauz village healers (*ilacçı, okuyucu*) explores how the traditions of folk and official Church healing practice coexist as bases of authority and agency in the religious sphere. Based on an analysis of the emic categories and lay healing practices he problematises inadequate and misleading scholarly distinctions between the protagonists of religion and practitioners of magic focusing on the significance of language and direct communication with the divine in the construction of the institutions of the folk religious field.

The bipolar relationship between 'religious ritual' and 'magical practice' and the role of language and performance in transcending this distinction, is further taken up in Chapter six on *Healing, Text and Performance* through the exploration of the texts of healing practices themselves. The author highlights the role played by words revealed directly to healers and explains how, through performance, these words of such divine agents as God (*Allah*) or the Mother of God (*Panaiya*) operate to establish and maintain the legitimacy of the institution of healing in the community. Moreover, extremely interesting for the study of charms (*okumaklar*) is in this chapter is the examination of *modus operandi* of Gagauz healing 'texts', the pragmatic and semantic levels on which they function, and, finally, the relationship among healer, patient and the divine agent that they invoke.

In chapter seven on *Prayer as Social and Cosmological Performance*, which focuses on the Gagauz prayer life, the author discusses how emic categories function within the community and how modes of prayer are constructed in performance demonstrating that the propositional content and the function of canonical prayers do not necessarily determine their actual use. Following this, this chapter explores the tradition of *toast-prayer*, a culturally ubiquitous public practice with powerful symbolic significance. Examining this particular type of Gagauz prayer the author points out the role of public performance in maintenance of social and cosmological relations and realities and problematises, based on speech act theory, the etic categorisations and distinctions drawn between magical and religious acts in scholarly, ecclesial and political discourses.

Another form of prayer, quite different from toast-prayers, that of 'archaic prayer', private and 'domestic' in nature, textually 'fixed', and primarily performed by women, is discussed in the book's final, eighth chapter, on *Archaic Folk Prayer amongst the Gagauz*. The author examines the construction of this genre of 'apocryphal' prayer, often referred to as 'folk' prayer, a characteristic example of which is *Panaiyanın duşu* (The Dream of the Mother of God), in bipolar terms between canon and apocrypha as well as between 'folk' and 'official' religion. Its textual motifs and formulae, context, transmission, reception and performance, along with the significance of the Gagauz idiom as the medium for the establishment of lay institutions, are also analytically explored. Etic distinctions, such as magic versus religion, prayer versus incantation, canon versus apocrypha and tensions between 'mediated' and 'unmediated' modes of intercourse with the divine are also discussed here as the author explores the formation of the genre in folklore scholarship, pointing out the significance of drawing distinctions between the discursive content and the contextual function of texts.

The concluding section is succeeded by three appendices of great interest, though without an English translation, on Gagauz Epistolias (app. 1), Gagauz Okumak and Exorcism Texts (app. 2), Archaic Prayers in the Gagauz Idiom (app. 3.). Of particular interest is the book's bibliographical section, carefully organized into sub-sections, another token of the author's meticulously well-researched work. The first section includes the *Primary Sources* (Private religious tetratkas and papers in the Gagauz idiom, Religious Pamphlets and Booklets, Archival material), the second the *Works by Archpriest Mihail Çakir (Ciachir)*, while the third includes a number of "Other Published Sources." The book closes with an analytical, really useful and very-well organised index.

Finally, Kapalo's book constitutes exemplary research in terms of the way in which the fieldworker approaches the folk religious field, mediating successfully

across various scholarly defined categories and the lived experience of practices within their performative context. With considerable depth of argument and interpretative strength, the author offers a fresh methodological and theoretical perspective on 'folk religion' arguing, on the one hand, for the maintenance of the term as a descriptive category with semantic loading and associations connected to the political and contested nature of the object of study, while focusing on and revealing on the other, how scholarly discourses on 'folk religion' guide the local fieldworker's identification of what 'folk' religious practices are, thus actualising 'folk religion' in a given context. Last but not least, Kapaló's book, which constitutes the first monograph in a Western European language on the religion, history and identity of this under-studied European people, opens up such fascinating material for an international audience, giving thus the opportunity for further comparative studies.

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Т.А. Агапкина, А.Л. Топорков (ed.), *Восточнославянские Заговоры: Аннотированный Библиографический Указатель* (East Slavic Charms: Annotated Bibliographical Index), Moscow: Прованс, 2011, 170 pp. ISBN 978-5-98604-286-2

I am dealing here with an important and much-expected publication on verbal magic. With its clearly organized and comprehensive content, *Восточнославянские Заговоры: Аннотированный Библиографический Указатель* provides abundant information and makes significant scholarly contribution. A contribution that starts from the field of Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian charms, but also concerns every study of charms, verbal magic and popular religion. From my own professional experience, I can confirm the importance of such indexes in the research of South Slavic charms traditions.

The book is divided in six parts. It starts with a preface (pp. 4–7), where the editors present the scope of the index and the dimensions of the material, included within it. The book refers to East Slavic charms from the period from 1830s up to 2010, and published in several types of printed sources: general specialized collections of magical folklore, collections of regional folklore, publications in newspapers and journals, proceedings from witchcraft trials, ancient healing books and manuscript miscellanies. These charms are texts either recorded by folklorists and folklore collectors from authentic practitioners and

performers, or copied from manuscripts of different origin. The index only includes publications of charms with reference for the source. Thus, the preface clearly defines the borderlines and limitations of the presented material.

The editors' preface is followed by an overview of the previous publications of East Slavic charms (pp. 8–15). Focused and concise, this historical overview positions *Восточнославянские Заговоры: Аннотированный Библиографический Указатель* among the different publishing contexts and their development.

After the list of abbreviations (pp. 16–17), comes the index itself (pp. 18–170). It includes 340 Russian, around 100 Ukrainian, and around 40 Belarusian sources, divided accordingly in three chapters. The publications in each chapter are arranged on chronological order. Each publication is described in eight points: name and full bibliographical reference; general description of the publication; place of the recording of the charms; time of the recording; information if the recording is written, oral or both; number and functions of the charms; general amount of the charms in the publication; commentaries accompanying the charms; information if the charms are published with any descriptions of their context, performance details, proxemics and paraphernalia.

To conclude, *Восточнославянские Заговоры: Аннотированный Библиографический Указатель* is a well-organized, comprehensive and helpful book. Clearly, it represents an important step in the research of verbal magic. Even more, it is a precious reference volume, a good starting point and a solid foundation for research for a number of disciplines: from folkloristics and ethnology to cultural history and philology. And finally, this excellent book reminds that such bibliographical indexes of charms in other traditions are still very much needed.

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T. A. Agapkina, *Vostochnoslavianskie lechebnye zagovory v sravnitel'nom osveshchenii. Siuzhetika i obraz mira* (East Slavic Healing Spells in a Comparative Light: Plot Structure and Image of the World), Moscow: Indrik, 2010, 823 pp. ISBN: 978-5-91674-091-2

The fairly sudden revival of interest in the study of East Slav (Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian) magic and charms in recent years is impressive. This is very much to be welcomed because the quantity of recorded charms in the Slav world is very large, which makes them especially amenable to comparative and typological study. In particular we should welcome two new monu-

mental works on charms published by the Moscow publisher Indrik in 2010, perhaps not entirely by coincidence since their authors are a husband and wife who acknowledge each other's assistance in their prefaces. The two books are, however, quite different in content and methodology: Andrei Toporkov's book (see my separate review in this number of *Incantatio*), is concerned with the historical written charm tradition in a specific area of Russia and is primarily a large annotated corpus of written charm texts, while Tat'iana Agapkina's book is concerned with the typology, motifs and structures of healing charms, primarily from the oral tradition, and their place in the world view of the East Slavs, peoples who have close ethnic, linguistic and religious links.

As one might expect of one of the editors of the encyclopedia of Slavic folk culture *Slavianskie drevnosti*, Agapkina's book is intellectually very ambitious and attempts, convincingly I believe, both a sophisticated theoretical framework and detailed analyses of particular charm types.

In Part 1, after a thorough history of the study and publication of East Slavic charms (Introduction, pp. 9–25) ("The plot structure [*siuzhetika*] of East Slav healing charms"), Agapkina launches into a general analysis of her topic, and a definition of terms. The latter may be a little daunting for non-specialists in Russian literary theory and *fol'kloristika* in that it invokes Veselovskii and Propp and requires some understanding of the use of the Russian terms *tema*, *motiv* and *siuzhet*, and Agapkina's own use of the words *tema* and *siuzhetnyi tip* in a terminological sense.

The last mentioned term is exemplified in Agapkina's first chapter "Universal plot [*siuzhet*] types" (pp. 29–87) in which the first section is "Appeal to the sacral centre". This is the appeal to some magic object, personage, or creature [e.g. the King of Serpents] or demonic force to perform the healing function; this appears in more or less elaborate form (e.g. rising at dawn, washing, praying, going out into the open country (*chistoe pole*), or establishing some other sacral space – the ocean-sea, a magical island [e.g. Buian], where there may be a sacred stone [e.g. *alatyry*' or variants] or tree [often oak], where there is some person, often a saint) at the beginning of many East Slav charms and is the commonest "universal plot type". The second section of this chapter is devoted to another "universal plot type" entitled "The elimination of the illness". Both sections are analytical and taxonomic in character, and are illustrated with a wealth of examples and variants.

Chapter 2 (pp. 149–245) is entitled "Polyfunctional plots [*siuzhety*], motifs, formulas, and poetical devices". This is subdivided into "Magical enumeration"; "Dialogic ritual", "The motif of equal knowledge"; "Formulas of the impossible and their motifs"; "Flew without wings, sat without legs"; "No water from a

stone, no blood from the wound”; “The first sews, the second embroiders, the third charms the blood to stop”.

Chapter 3 (pp. 248–565), “Plots and motifs of charms for individual illnesses”, is divided into sections grouping particular types of illness: charms for infant insomnia and crying; charms for *gryzha* (often hernia, but also covering a rather wide range of medical problems usually involving swelling or abscess); charms for childhood epilepsy; charms for bleeding and wounds; charms for dislocations; charms for skin diseases; charms for toothache; charms for internal problems, especially of the womb (*zolotnik*, *dna*); charms for fever (the Sisinnius legend, *triasavitsy*, daughters of Herod etc).

Part II (pp. 569–677) is more discursive and is devoted to an analysis of the image of the world in East Slav healing charms. It discusses concepts of time and space, the other world, time as a factor in the magical process, the human body. It concludes with a chapter on “Plot structure [*siuzhetika*] of East Slav healing charms viewed comparatively” which compares East Slav charms with parallels among the West Slavs (Polish, Czech, Slovak and border areas), South Slavs (Serbs, Bulgarians) with some reference to Greek and Romanian charms. The chapter ends with a section on “Charms and the book tradition”. This discusses the interaction of the distinct written and oral charm traditions, the importance of “apocryphal” prayers and biblical themes from Byzantine and South Slav sources, and the “folklorization” of these motifs.

Appended to the main text of the book (at pp. 681–788) is an important detailed study of the complicated ramifications of the Byzantine Sisinnius legend in the East Slav and South Slav manuscript tradition, and the long and elaborate charm prayer against the fever demons (*triasavitsy*), together with ten variants of the text of the prayer in the first redaction and fifteen variants of the second redaction, and thirty variants of the third short redaction, taken from both published and manuscript sources. This is a fascinating topic on which more remains to be discovered but this invaluable work by Agapkina has moved the subject a long way forward and is a sound basis for further research.

A final two short appendixes are entitled “The East Slav prayers against the *triasavitsy* and charms about the shivering Christ” and “South Slav prayers against the *nezhit* and Slavonic charms”, both with texts.

It is hard to do justice to such a massive and detailed book in a review – so let me just conclude that this is a vast, erudite, and authoritative contribution to charm scholarship. It adds greatly to the store of texts available to scholars, it makes a serious contribution to charm classification, and it handles historical and linguistic data in exemplary fashion. My only regret is that it has no index.

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A. L. Toporkov, *Russkie zagovory iz rukopisnykh istochnikov XVII – pervoi poloviny XIX v.* (Russian Manuscript Charms from 17th to First Half of the 19th Century), Moscow: Indrik 2010, 830 pp. 14 illustrations.

This is a massive and invaluable addition by one of the foremost specialists in the field to the historical corpus of written Russian charms. As Toporkov emphasises in his introduction, charms in Russia are both a live tradition, with links to other areas of popular culture both Russian and non-Russian, and also a part of Russian manuscript culture going back at least four centuries. This wealth of material makes them a textual source of interest not only to specialists in charm studies but also to historians in many other disciplines, not least historians of language. The serious study of this kind of material is not new but it has grown substantially in recent years and is reaching a new level of maturity, of which this is a prime example in both erudition and scholarly method. We note that the author thanks his wife Tat'iana Agapkina in his preface; her comparative study of East Slav healing spells, primarily from the oral tradition, also published by Indrik in 2010, is of comparable size and importance and is reviewed separately.

Andrei Toporkov's major new work commences with an authoritative historical and theoretical introductory essay (26 pp.) which characterizes Russian oral and written charms, and in particular charm collections [*sborniki*], and summarizes the history of Russian charm study. It needs to be emphasized, as Toporkov does, that there is a distinction between oral and written charms which requires separate critical approaches.

The main section of the book contains some 500 charm texts of various types from 36 manuscripts written mainly in the contiguous former northern provinces of Olonets, Arkhangel'sk, and Vologda, with a few from Siberia, and dating from the 17th to the first half of the 19th century. Toporkov notes that the charms of this northern area are distinctive and have common characteristics which distinguish them from those of central and southern Russia, or Belarus' and Ukraine. In particular this northern area is relatively remote and historically conservative in culture and has a population which includes Finnic peoples and Old Believer fugitives from other parts of Russia, and some interaction is discernible.

The material of the main section is arranged according to source.

Part 1 (pp. 37–310) is devoted to the 'Olonets sbornik' (2nd half of the 17th c.). This has a 57-page historical and textological introduction, followed by the texts of the charms. Textual variants and corrections are noted in footnotes, and the text section is followed by no less than 135 pages of detailed comparative historical, textual and linguistic notes and commentary. This is followed

by a glossary of dialect and archaic words, and an essay by S. A. Myznikov on the Karelo-Vepsian charms in the manuscript, including texts, Russian translation and critical apparatus (pp. 286–310). Some of the Russian charms in this *sbornik* are presented in English translation in an article by Toporkov published elsewhere in this number of *Incantatio*.

Part 2 (pp. 313–422) contains charms from eight 17th-century manuscripts; Part 3 (pp. 425–652) contains charms from eighteen 18th-century manuscripts; Part 4 (pp. 655–784) contains charms from nine 19th-century manuscripts. These are presented in the same way, with commentaries at the end of each section.

The book ends with a typological index, an index of personal and place names, a list of manuscript sigla and archives, and a 30-page bibliography.

The book is well produced and a worthy addition to the impressive list of serious scholarly contributions to Russian cultural history issued by the Moscow publishing house Indrik.

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Charms, Charmers and Charming. International Research on Verbal Magic, edited by Jonathan Roper, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, 294 pp. ISBN 978-0-230-55184-8

The present volume represents a collection of nineteen researches dedicated to the study of charms, charmers and charming. Its editor, Jonathan Roper, is well known in the community of charm scholars: he authored the monograph *English Verbal Charms* (Helsinki, Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2005; FFC 288), and, for several years, he has been constantly promoted the creation of a network of researchers interested in this field and of their publications. This volume relies on such endeavours, and comprises many contributions which were presented in two conferences held in London in 2005 and in Pécs in 2007. Its organisation in two parts (*Topics and Issues in Charms Studies* and *National Traditions*) echoes another volume edited by Jonathan Roper, entitled *Charms and Charming in Europe* (2004, Palgrave Macmillan).

Nine studies are gathered in the first part of the volume. Two of them focus on the expression of impossibilities in charms. Natalia Glukhova and Vladimir Glukhov discuss the Mari Charms in this respect (Expressions of Impossibility an Inevitability in Mari Charms, pp. 108–121), while Éva Pócs focuses on the

Hungarian charms, but takes into account a larger corpus of texts attested during a long period of time. The variety of texts analysed allows her to draw important conclusions on the long-lasting employ of this motif, on its presence in charms meant to cure certain diseases and on the contribution of the Christian themes to the various expression of impossibilities (*Magic and Impossibilities in Magic Folk Poetry*, pp. 27–53).

Laura Stark discusses various evidence dating from the 19th century regarding the means used in the rural milieu to protect and to strengthen the human body, and persuasively argues that the body was imagined as extremely ‘porous’ in the archaic communities (*The Charmer’s Body and Behaviour as a Window onto Early Modern Selfhood*, pp. 3–16). Paul Cowdell’s article provides with a diachronic description of the consistent structural elements of charms against rats and discusses their long use in relation with the information supplied by natural history (*‘If Not, Shall Employ “Rough on Rats”’: Identifying the Common Elements of Rat Charms*, pp. 17–26). On the basis of more than 500 Swedish snake charms preserved in documents of the 19th – 20th centuries, Ritwa Herjulfsson addresses the problem of the informants’ and of the users’ gender, and connects her results to previous discussions on similar Swedish charms of the 17th – 18th century (*Swedish Snakebite Charms from a Gender Perspective*, pp. 54–61). In a research based on charms from the Russian, Bulgarian and Ukrainian traditions, Vladimir Klyaus argues that the narrative character of a charm does not refer exclusively to the magical words, and discusses narration as at least “a function of the charm’s broader performative or objective nature” (*On Systematizing the Narrative Elements of Slavic Charms*, pp. 71–86). On the basis of the hypothesis that the transmission of charms discloses that they were “socially, medically and doctrinally respectable”, T. M. Smallwood analyses the variation of medieval English charms in order to reveal their inventiveness (*Conformity and Originality in Middle English Charms*, pp. 87–99).

In the second section of the volume, Andrei Toporkov illustrates the researches meant to re-establish the history of magic texts by a thorough analysis of the evolution of the formula “let her neither eat nor drink”, which is also present in the Russian charms (*Russian Charms in a Comparative Light*, pp. 121–144). Jonathan Roper discusses the frequency and the typology of the Estonian narrative charms and their relation to charms from other traditions (*Estonian Narrative Charms in Europe Context*, pp. 174–185). Daiva Vaitkevicienė debates on the relations between the Baltic charms, and analyses Lithuanian and Latvian texts based on invocations and comparisons, on dialogue structures and on narratives (*Lithuanian and Latvian Charms: Searching for Parallels*, pp. 186–213). Lea Olan focuses on a corpus of charms that circulated in manuscripts of one fifteenth-century medical recipe collection, and compares

the charms in the Leechcraft collections to charms in other recipe collections (The Corpus of Charms in the Middle English Leechcraft Reemedy Books, pp. 214–237). Mary Tsiklauri and David Hunt give an insightful overview of the words for ‘charm’ in Georgian and a structural description of the Georgian charms and classify them according to their aims and the conditions of their performance (The Structure and Use of Charms on Georgia, The Caucasus, pp. 260–272). Two studies focus on the tradition of charms and charming outside Europe: Verbal Charms in Malagasy Folktales; *Manteras*: An Overview of a Malay Archipelagoes’ Charming Tradition (Lee Haring, pp. 246–259; Low Kok On, pp. 273–287).

Through the important number of researches, covering various traditions, both European, and non-European, the volume represents a significant contribution to the study of charms, charmers and charming. Because it comprises numerous charms, all translated into English, it is a very useful tool for the specialists interested in such texts. Last but not least, through its focus on charms attested since the Middle Ages up to nowadays, the present book acquires a specific position in a research field dominated by studies dedicated to the ancient or to specific national traditions.

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James Alexander Kapaló, *Text, Context and Performance. Gagauz Folk Religion in Discourse and Practice*. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2011, 352 pp. (Haralampos Passalis)

T. A. Agapkina, A.Л. Топорков (ed.), *Восточнославянские Заговоры: Аннотированный Библиографический Указатель* (East Slavic Charms: Annotated Bibliographical Index). Moscow: Пробел, 2011, 170 pp. (Svetlana Tsonkova)

T. A. Agapkina, *Vostochnoslavianskie lechebnye zagovory v sravnitel'nom osveshchenii. Siuzhetika i obraz mira* (East Slavic Healing Spells in a Comparative Light: Plot Structure and Image of the World), Moscow: Indrik 2010. 823 pp. (William F. Ryan)

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