

CHARMS IN SLOVENIAN CULTURE

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Nowadays, there only remains a small fraction of charms that used to exist in Slovenia. Charms seem to have become a little known relic of Slovenian culture. Despite this, some healing charms have been preserved and even published in research works by Ivan Grafenauer and Milan Dolenc. The most widely known charms in Slovenia include charms for snakebite, sprain, toothache, cramp, fever, and red rash. In those charms there are obvious German influences, though some charms still show Slavic roots. Charms are a genre that has not been studied by the Slovenian researchers as intensively as other traditional genres, like narratives. We will introduce the main charm types and their characteristics in the Slovenian culture.

Keywords: oral charms, ritual, context, Slovenian charms

The interest in collecting and researching charms and charm-ritual appeared in the nineteenth century. Even though it was hard to get texts and descriptions of the ritual, it was still a time, when the Slovenian area was full of such information. Therefore, most of the material we can work on was collected at the end of nineteenth and beginning of 20th century. Nowadays there are only a few people that know how to charm; today, eastern philosophies seem to be more popular in alternative medicine.

Charms as a magic ritual and text with magical power were highly prohibited in Slovenia through the history; therefore the practice was a secret even though it was quite common in past centuries. People practiced charms on everyday basis – to protect their health or harvest, as a protection from evil forces and to cure themselves.

Charms were persecuted in churches, when preachers tried to convince the listeners not to use such healing for problems, and in some newspaper articles (*Ljubljanski glas II* (1883), *Ljubljanski glas III* (1884)). They preached especially against believing in spells and evil eye. Perhaps that is also a reason, why “only” healing charms (for people and livestock), charms against spells/evil-eye (for people and livestock) and charms for weather problems are preserved in Slovenia; there are no love charms in archives, for example we know of some rituals, like when a girl would rub a piece of bread on her chest and

gave it to her chosen man to eat; that was the way to make that man fall in love with her; but there are no love-charm words that are known in Slovenian area). The charms that still remain are related to health and protection, and are preserved mainly in remote areas, especially if these areas were harder to get to. The main reason is that help could not come as quickly as in towns, for example, a doctor could never get in high mountains quickly. Medical doctors were also very expensive, so people tried to help themselves or they tried to get help from close by. Even today we have proverbs that show us the prior perception of medicine: *If one goes to the hospital, he goes there to die / To the hospital one goes to die (V bolnico greš umret); Health is an expensive merchandise (Zdravje je drago blago).*

The oldest charm found on Slovenian area is charm against tooth ache. It was written in Latin in codex of Gregorius Magnus "Liber moralium" (from Stična) in 12th century. It was written down by the Cistercian monk Bernard:

B,s,e,a,c,d,e,l,m,l,n,n,u,n,s,i,i,i. In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen. Sancus Petrus dum sederat supra petram marmoream, misit manum ad caput et Dolores dentium contristabatur. Veni Jesus et ait: quarecontristeris Petre? Air: venit vermis migraneus, ut exas et recedes et ultra famulum Dei enim ledas. Amen. (Dolenc 1999: 90)

B,s,e,a,c,d,e,l,m,l,n,n,u,n,s,i,i,i. In the name of God the Father and the Son and the Holy. Spirit. Amen. When St. Peter sat down on the marble rock, he his head with his hands and was sad because of toothache. He came to Jesus and said, 'Why are you sad, Peter?' Peter answered: 'There came crawling worm and ruined my teeth.' And Jesus said: 'I charm you, crawling worm, to go away and not bother anymore the servant of God.' Amen.

Those kinds of charms were popular in southern and western German lands. The letters at the beginning are relict from magical alphabets. The function of such an alphabet was to create mystic meaning and to awake faith into the magic function of every letter. The charm has a typical form with historiola, which tells how, when the charm was for the first time, it was really successful. Then follows the text from the charm; the one, which should work in any case. This charm is supposed to be one of the most popular charms by the content in the Middle Ages and later (Dolenc 1999: 70).

Slovenian charms will be presented at the three different levels at which folklore actualizes according to Dundes (1965): texture, context, and text. We only make use of these three levels for the purpose of study; we have to acknowledge that in practice these three levels are inseparably interwoven in the ritual. The only purpose in dividing them is to show all the functions that charms have and at the end the esthetic function that exists in charm-ritual.

TEXTURE

Texture was rarely written down; many facts are missing, especially about the speaking of the charm. It is obvious that texture was a part of the charm ritual that was passed on from generation to generation directly in communication between teacher and student. It was prescribed how the charm was to be said: how loudly or quietly it should be told, if there had to be any pathos in the speech, some were supposed to be told really quiet, whispering or mumbling, and some were allowed to be spoken out loud. Charms that were spoken loudly were mostly against minor diseases or problems, which were healed by family members (grandmothers, mothers, aunts, etc.), such as eye sores, styes, etc. Whispering or saying the charm secretly was typical for charms against major diseases or problems, the healer's words were suggestive to the patient and gave him/her hope for getting better. All the charms were said slowly – so that the force (good or bad) could receive the message (Orožen 2009: 270). There were also proscriptions as to how to use mimicry or body movement: for example, “sowing” stye or making knots on the rope in the charm to treat sprain.

Repetition has had a big role in charms – not only words but also repeating of moves, prayers and the repeating of the whole ritual. These kinds of repetitions are constructing rhythm and at the same time fixedness of the structure. Repetition gives greater importance to the words and gestures, e.g. putting seven or nine little coals in the water.

CONTEXT

Context in charm ritual is divided into four parts: the first part is the reason for the charm ritual: disease or weather inconvenience. If we do not have this part of the context, then there is no charm ritual. It also dictates which charm and ritual to use (the possibility of choosing charm was in reality rather small – it was already fixed which charm to use against certain disease/inconvenience).

The second part of the context is ritual: what are the location (crossroads etc.), time (by moonlight, sunrise, sunset, the day in the week, midnight, solstice etc.), objects (coal, bread etc.) etc. that are used in the charm ritual. The third part of the ritual-context is the person who came to the healer. He/she had to believe in his/her magical powers and in the power of the word. The belief in the strength of word and magical powers of the healer had to be very strong. If there was no trust and belief in the magic of words and in special powers of the healer, the ritual could not be done.

The fourth part of the ritual is the healers. Whether an ordinary person would be able to heal the illness themselves, or whether they would have to call on a healer, depended on the seriousness of the illness. For example, eyesore or warts could be charmed by the grandmother, mother or even by the person himself, but for charming snakebite, it was necessary to call the healer. Healers were members of the community: healers or magicians (Dolenc 1999: 28) and they were mostly older people. Healers of people were mostly women; men were healing livestock diseases and more difficult diseases, for which the effect was better with a more “masculine, stronger word” (Matičeto 1948: 29). Healers did not have any formal medical education, their healing was based on belief in the magic of words and their magical powers; they also relied on the power of trust and power of suggestion. Healers knew charms mostly by heart, especially illiterate healers, who could not use written charms. Though there are some charms preserved in written form with a secret alphabet, which could be read only by the healer; secret alphabets consist of numbers, punctuation marks and some letters (Makarovič 2008: 89). Healers were usually very knowledgeable in herbs and their healing effects, so besides healing with words they usually also prescribed herbal tea, tinctures that helped in the healing process etc.

It was believed, that the healer possessed a gift of power of healing with words (with the help of the tongue – the organ) and with gestures (fingers) (Vel'mezova 2004: 64–65), and this gift was inherited in the family. Charms were usually passed on before stopping the practice or even right before death. At the moment of passing charms to the student, there were some fixed rules and terms that had to be respected: age, gender, family relation etc. It was also important how old was the teacher – the charm could work only if it was passed on by an older person than the student was. That means it was treated as a natural passing on from older generation to the younger. Gender was also very important: a man passed the charm over to a man or a woman to a woman; in the Slovenian area charming was a mostly feminine activity (Radenković 1996: 16). In some examples the charms could not be passed on with a spoken word, they were passed on in written form (in so called “black books”, as *Duhovna bramba* and *Kolomonov žegen*, healing writings or handwritten healing books).

Passing over the text had to be really strict: charm worked only if it was an exact copy of the “original”, it had to be the same from one generation to the next. Healing remained as a great secret inside the family (especially in times of inquisition – sadly there is data that in some places in Slovenia the inquisition was still alive in nineteenth century) (Dolenc 1999: 29, 30).

TEXT

Text is the words of the charm. Some charms have many variants of the same text (e.g. charms against snake-bite, spell/evil-eye, stye etc.); those charms were widespread over this area. There are some dialect versions and changes of the basic rhythm, but as a whole they present one text. We can also find charms with only one known text, without any variants. Those texts are usually preserved in written form (in healing books) and we have no data about usage – context and texture (e.g. charms against plaque, leprosy). It is obvious that these texts were rarely used, as those diseases were harder or even impossible to cure.

Ivan Grafenauer (1937) differentiated between two types of the charm-text structure: one-part and two-part structures. The first type consists only of an incantation: it is persecuting the bad force or disease; it is the older type of charm. A two-part structure consists of a *historiola* and the incantation, i.e. persecuting the bad force or disease. The *historiola* usually consists of a Bible story with some changes (added dialogue or other details).

The texts and some descriptions of the ritual of most frequent Slovenian charms are printed in the work of Milan Dolenc (1999). Those charms are mostly against the most frequent diseases and inconveniences, nevertheless we also find very rare charms in that book. The most frequent charms were against: snakebite (99), curse/evil eye (51), eye-diseases/stye (47), gangrene/infected wound (45), rheumatism and other joint and muscles illnesses (45), erysipelas (32), burn (29), warts (21), tooth ache (16), crow/goitre (16), distortion (16), cataract (15), bone spavin (14), tuberculosis/inflammation of lymph nodes (14), agnail (13), swelling (12), and charms against all diseases (12).

We will present three examples of Slovenian charms (against snakebite, curse/evil eye and the group of charms against stye, warts and goiter) with variations and texture and context information where possible.

CHARMS AGAINST SNAKEBITE

Snakebite charms, mostly against viper or adder bite, were the most popular charms in Slovenia. This tells us that this area is full of snakes; two species are dangerous to people (the viper and the adder). Farmers were in danger especially in the fields or in the woods. There are approximately 100 charm texts in Dolenc's collection of charms. Among these texts there are over 40 different types of charms against snakebite; some of these texts are actually a prayer in the role of the charm, but most of them are actual charms.

There were many rules to these charms. Healers of asp bite had their own curse, that of St. Martin, who has been thought to heal snakebite (Dolenc 1999:

152). The snake that bit a person should not be older than the healer; otherwise poison would come into the healer's body. Also, the bitten person had to stay serious (he/she was prohibited to smile). The charm was processed directly to the bite or on the bread, also speck (i.e. fat meat) and on stones. Many charms against snake bite were copied from *Kolomonov žegen*. The most common charm against snake bite is about St. Šempas in which the Holy Mother asks Šempas to heal the bitten man, but those do not contain Šempas's prayer, that is why at the end there is the healer's prayer or charm. The oldest charm against snake-bite by its structure is:

Evo sčudeža!!	<i>Behold a miracle!</i>
So oni koj verovali,	<i>They believed immediately</i>
Jime moje zaterali:	<i>They said my name:</i>
Če je vraga govoril,	<i>If he talked to the devil,</i>
Bude nove jezike pahudil,	<i>He will walk over new languages</i>
Če je vraga ...	<i>If there is hell ...,</i>
Ako budo otrov pili,	<i>if they will drink poison,</i>
Neče škodovati njim;	<i>it wo not harm them;</i>
Na bolezne ruke	<i>To who ill hands</i>
Kladati ti čejo,	<i>they will put,</i>
Izlečiti njih budo.	<i>they will heal them.</i>

(Dolenc 1999: 170)

The informant did not know all meanings of the words; she has just remembered them by heart as she has heard them (Dolenc 1999: 170).

The oldest written charm in Slovenian area is a charm against snakebite *Ta veči pana*; it appeared in 1641 in a German calendar almanac:

Stoi ena slata Gora,
 Na gori stoy ena sueta Zerku,
 V zerkui Lessi Gospud Sueti Jobst,
 Knemu je pershla Luba Diuiza Maria,
 Ti lesshis inui trdu spish.
 Vstani Gori inui pomagaj N. N.
 Od tega hudiga Zerua Kazeuiedi ne,
 De bode taku sdrau,
 Koker ie od suiga ozheta inui matere royen
 Nato zerno semlo patu Synu Nebu in nomine
 Patris et filij et Setus S. Amen.
 (Dolenc 1999: 158)

*There is Golden Mountain
On the mountain there is a holy church
St. Job lies in that church
The Virgin Mary comes to him,
You are lying and sleeping tight.
Wake up and help to N.N.
From this horrible worm
So he becomes so healthy
As he was born from his father and mother
Then the black soil and this bright sky in nomine
Patris et filij et Spiritus S. Amen.*

Another charm from the seventeenth century runs:

Stoji, stoji, silna skala,	<i>There stands, there stands, a powerful rock</i>
Na ti skali leži Irmbas,	<i>On this rock lies Irmbas,</i>
Mati božja pride k njemu:	<i>Mother of God comes to him:</i>
‘Stani gori ti Irmbas,	<i>‘Stand up Irmbas,</i>
Pomagaj temu človeku,	<i>Help this man</i>
Če je vgrizen al popaden	<i>If he is bitten or attacked</i>
Od tega črva podzemeljskega’	<i>from this worm of underground.’</i>

(Dolenc 1999: 158)

There is also a version of this charm in which there is an interesting example of threefold repetition:

Tam, tam, tam, stoji, stoji, stoji, ta siuna skala, tam gori leshi, leshi, leshi svet Schembaminus, pershlaie, pershlaie, pershlaie, mati boshe, Marie Devize de, de, de, ta potsemelski zheru tebi N. nemre shkodovat. 5 ozhenasheu, 5 zheshena mari, potem 3 krishe en mau kruha dai snest (Dolenc in 1999: 161).

There, there, there, stands, stands, stands, this powerful rock, up there lies, lies, lies Saint Schembaminus, she came, she came, she came, the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary that, that, that, this underground worm could not do thee N. any harm. 5 Lord’s Prayers, 5 Hail Maries, then cross oneself three times and eat some bread.

This charm is supposed to be mumbled three times, one after another – it should not be heard by anyone else.

The example of one-part charm is countering the poison by means of the bread right back to the snake. It is obvious that poison is understood as a living

and hearing being in this charm, poison is a curse ghost that can be frightened and exiled. The written version consists also the description of the ritual:

O strup! Jes tebe zarotim da pojdi na ti kruh ino skus ta kruh imash jiti v to kazho v imenu Boga očeta ... Duha + no v imeni svetiga shent Jansha. (Sdaj pa tri barti noter v ta kruh pihni, potem pa rezi: Jest tebi zapovem v imeni Boga Ozheta + ino Sina + ino svetiga Duha + da to meni nasaj pernesesh, kir si vsel N.N. ino spet to dej! Pomagaj Bog Ozha ... Duh +) (Dolenc 1999: 161)

O poison! I command you to go to this bread and through this bread you have to go into this snake in the name of God the Father ... Holy Ghost + and in the name of Saint John (now blow three times onto the bread, then say: I command you in the name of God + and Son + and Holy Ghost + that you bring back what you took from N.N. and give it back! Help [me], God the Father ... Ghost +)

Another one-part charm supplies information on all venomous snakes. It also has a gender aspect, as it is persecutes both evil forces both female and male:

Zagovarjam te,
Da ti nimaš nič opraviti pri tem človeku,
Bodi si gad ali gadinja, kača ali kačon,
Viper ali vipera, modras ali modrasica.
Zelenc ali zelenka in da imaš
Ta tvoj strup vzeti od tega človeka.
(Dolenc 1999: 167)

*I tell you,
That you do not have anything to do with this man,
Be you viper or viperess, serpent or snake,
viper or viperess, horned viper or horned viperess,
Male green snake or female green snake and you have to take your
venom from this man.*

There is also a dialogue charm between St. Peter and an adder:

Kaj sta Bog jin sv. Petar govorla
Ko sta po svet hodila
Modras:
Peter kaj ti govoriš
Jest jimam 51 strupenih žil
Kamor pičim ali kamor kane moj strup
More vse mrtvo bit.
Peter:

Jest imam 71 mazil kar pomažem vse obstane
Modras ti moraš krepat
Dostavek
3 perste vznamenje prič posavt na tla blizu kače.

*What did God and St. Peter talk about
When they were walking around the world*

Horned viper:

*Peter what are you saying
I have 51 venomous veins
Where I sting or where my venom drips,
Everything must die.*

Peter:

*I have 71 ointments; all that I anoint is kept
Horned viper, you have to die.*

Tag

3 fingers put by the witnesses on the ground near the snake.

Jizgovor in Pan zastrup

Dans N. je kačji gada dan

Jest kersen in birmen N.

Tebi zapovem jin Prepovem

Deti moraš to bolečino jin srbečino proč vzet

Tako hitro kakor zakonska žena za svojim Možam gre

Ti men pomagaj svet Šempas +++

Za tem besedilom je treba izmoliti 5 očenašev: Uimen Boga Očeta in Edinega Sina in Svetega Duha ter trikrat dihniti na kruh bil strupeni kraj. (Dolenc 1999: 170)

Charm against poison:

Today N. is the viper snake day

I, that baptized and confirmed N.,

command thee to take away

this pain and itch

As fast as the lawfully wedded wife follows her husband.

Help me Saint Šempas + + +

After this text there should be prayers: 5 Lord's Prayers: In the name of God the Father and the only Son and the Holy Spirit, and three times blow on the bread this was a toxic place.

There are many other charms against snake bite, where the charmer addresses also Jesus, Saint Trinity, St. Urh [Ulrich], St. Margaret etc. There are no

counting-down charms and all charms persecute venom (i.e. evil spirit) or they forbid the snake from harming a person. Charms with *historiola* have dialogue details or they have the structure of a dialogue.

Snakebite was a very dangerous and serious threat for a person or animal, so it was healed only by a healer, never by person her/himself or by a grandmother. It was also possible to heal the bitten person via a messenger: the healer conducted a ritual on the person who had come to tell about the accident, which was considered to help the bitten person.

CHARMS AGAINST CURSE/EVIL EYE

There are around fifty different texts against curse/evil eye in Dolenc's collection. A person could be cursed by a word or the evil eye, the consequence most of the time was an illness: headaches, stomach-ache, vomiting, or a generally bad condition; children might have rheumy eyes, have belly cramps, faint, or cry. It was mostly elderly women who treated diseases considered to have been caused by such curses. In order prevent getting a curse, some people wore amulets (Dolenc 1999: 98).

Healing a curse or the evil eye could also be done by adult women within the family (mother, grandmother, aunt). The most well-known rite to heal curses was the ritual three "little live charcoals" (burning charcoals). It was performed by mothers or grandmothers. Burning charcoals were thrown into clean fresh cold water. Then the mother cleaned the child's face with that water. The child also drank some of the water (Dolenc 1999: 92).

Another method to heal curses was to count down them down. As there were usually nine curses, they were counted down from nine. There are many versions of this kind of charm all over the Slovenian area.

Drugi ludi pravijo, da jih je 9

Jaz pa pravim, da jih je kar 8

Drugi ludi pravijo, da jih je 8

Jaz pa pravim, da jih je kar 7 ...

In tako naprej, da se pride do ene in potem se reče: drugi ludi pravijo, da je kar eden, jaz pravim, da ni nobeden. (Dolenc 1999: 102)

Other people say there is 9

I say there is 8

Other people say there is 8

I say there is 7 ...

And so on, till one gets to one and then one must say: other people say there is one, I say there is none.

The example of charm against curse from Pliberg (Carinthia) has a dialogue structure, in which the Holy Mother forbids the spell from harming a person:

Hudi urak pride Marija proti

Marija reče: Kam ti greš?

Urak reče: Grem k tisti hiši bom vse čreva zmešal in kosti zdrobil.

Marija reče: Ti nemaš hodat tisti hiši da bi vse čreva zmešal in kosti zdrobil. Idi v skalovje da ne boš nobene škode naredu, da nobena ptica ne odleti in noben zgon ne bo cute. Pomagaj bog ... (Dolenc 1999: 100).

The horrible Curse comes to Mary

Mary says: Where are you going?

The Curse says: I'm going to that house; I'll mix all the guts and crush bones.

Mary says: You are not allowed to go to that house to mix guts and to crush bones. Go to the rocks, where you can do no harm, where no bird flies, where you can hear no church bells. So help me God ...

Then one should wash one's hands with water from the stream over which the dead people are carried, then another hand, then one leg, but not the other leg! Wave the skirt three times, spit three times to one side, and shower with blessed water from Three Holy Kings.

The curse was also countered with directly attacking words; this one-part charm also shows the perception of the evil eye as something alive, but also as something that the healer would be strong enough to defeat, by mentioning the holy persons:

Ti hudi urak, al si prišu od lufti al od teh žlehtnih ljudi, ti hočeš temu človeku škodovati, jidi beg (trikrat ponoviti), jaz te preganjam. Pregarja te Bog Oče, preganja te Bog Sin, preganja te Bog svet Duh. (Dolenc 1999: 101)

You horrible curse, did you come from air or from evil people, do you want to harm this person, go back (repeat three times), I chase you. God the Father is chasing you, God the Son is chasing you, God the Holy Spirit is chasing you.

EYE-DISEASES/EYESORE/STYE (47); WARTS (21); CROW/GOITRE (16)

The third group of charms are those which were performed by the sick person her- or himself (or by female relatives). Charms in this group were characteristically used primarily by women.

(1) Stye

The charm against stye is in the form of a dialogue form between a (grand) mother and the person with stye:

The one with the stye asks: what are you doing?, the other answers: I'm mowing the stye and she slashes with a little knife in her hand in front of the eye or she holds it, as she would hold sickle. Everything is repeated three times. This charm is still widely known (Dolenc 1999: 63).

(2) Warts and crow

These charms are connected to the concept of the waxing moon: warts and crow were reduced by a waxing moon. Charms that use the moon and its cycles are supposed to have old Slavic roots (Radenković 1996). Crow was especially frequent in the Carinthian area because of lack of iodine in the soil. Girls with crow were mocked by village boys, so they tried to put it away, first with creams then with charms. People associated crow with the moon: as the moon started to appear and wax, the girl squeezed her crow and said: *What I see grows, what I squeeze disappears (Kar vid'm raste, kar muškam sahne)* (Dolenc 1999: 74).

Warts were also an inconvenience which people tried to heal with association with the moon. In Semič (south Slovenia) a method of treatment ran thus: When you see a new moon, look at it and take soil from the ground, anything that gets into your hand, pull it three times by the wart, look at sky and say three times: *Moon you gave it, moon, you take it. (Mesec, si dau, mesec, vzemi!)* Then spit over your shoulder and go (Dolenc 1999: 115).

CONCLUSION

Charms played an important role traditionally in health care in Slovenian area, even though their use was persecuted and prohibited. Healing with charms was a means by which people tried to help themselves healthy, to get better or even to survive, especially poorer inhabitants which could not afford a medical doctor. Every community has had its own healer, who was a neighbour, a fellow villager or lived in a nearby village. For minor diseases and problems, people tried to help themselves with charm-rituals that could do by themselves (some

weather inconveniences, stye, warts etc.), but for major problems they had to call in the healer. Healers were not just “magicians”, persons with magic abilities; healers were legal members of community who also knew herbs, hygienic rules and have helped also with for example births, dressing wounds etc. This knowledge and magical ability to heal (and in many cases also to predict the future) was given by family relation – it was passed on from one generation to another, when older healer stopped with his/her activity (exp. from mother to the daughter).

The power of the word and belief in the magic powers of the healers was definitely the most important aspect in the ritual of charming. If there were no faith, the charm would not work. That is why the essential element in the healing ritual was the patient: with his/her disease or a problem and with his/her faith. When they were charming animals this role was taken by the caretaker of the animal: the caretaker noticed the disease and called the healer or even performed the ritual by him/herself. Most important is that the caretaker believed in the magical powers all the time.

Our discussion has shown that there is, in addition to very important magic-religious structure and functions, a very obvious aesthetic structure and function to the ritual. “In every human act, especially in magical ceremonies, that are supposed to bring storm clouds, heal or deflect the floods, is a great need of a man to cope with nature, nevertheless the most prevailing motif in all of them is religious (the opposite is black magic rituals) ritual to compel unavoidable faith this motif is even more obvious...” (Campbell 2007: 430). We must also emphasize the aesthetic structure and functions, which helps give those texts religiosity and festivity. The aesthetic structure of charms is not only in stylistic elements: such as rhythm and rhyme, repetitions, ellipsis, hyperbole, metonymy, and metaphor. The aesthetic structure can be found also in the whole ritual and in faith in magic powers of the word. Charms are probably one of the last structures, where words have such strong suggestive function. Uncommonness, eeriness, festivity, hope and faith were key to understanding charms and their context. Aesthetic structure creates aesthetic function that is hidden but on the other hand one of the most important elements in the ritual: if there were no festivity in words and moves, there would be no healing effect.

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