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### About the Author

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## BOOK REVIEWS

Tatiana Panina. *Slovo i ritual v narodnoi meditsine udmurtov* [Word and Ritual in Udmurt Folk Medicine]. Izhevsk: Udmurt Institute of History, Language and Literature, 2014. 238 pp. ISBN 978-5-7659-0795-5

The researches into Udmurt charms and prayers published by Tatiana Vladykina, Vladimir Vladikin and Vladimir Napolskikh during recent decades have been intriguing. Now those who know Russian can have a more detailed overview of the Udmurt charming tradition. Tatiana Panina's monograph "Word and Ritual in Udmurt Folk Medicine" (*Слово и ритуал в народной медицине удмуртов*) is based on fieldwork and published materials. The heading refers to the intentional complexity of the book, a desire to view, besides the textual side of the charms, also practices associated with them. Timewise the analysed material dates back to the 18th century, while the most recent texts originate in the fieldwork in 2003. T. Panina explains the background on some Udmurt concepts (*pell'as'kon, kuris'kon*) and discusses charms as rhythmically organised texts with a certain psychological and functional orientation: they are meant to influence the outer world to produce the desired result. In her monograph the author uses different folkloristic methods: comparative-typological, synchronic descriptions, comparative-historical method, semantic analysis and the methodology of ethnolinguistics. This is inevitable in the case of a genre with variegated content, structure and ritual practice.

Due to the linguistic-cultural specific features, confessional circumstances (long-term ethnic belief, existence in the intersection of Christianity and Islam), and traditions of neighbouring peoples from different language families the material is fascinating and complex. The expelling of diseases is the most extensive sphere of application of charms, which involves the aetiologies of diseases and a myriad of treatment models, not to mention that the sphere itself covers everything from hygiene to illnesses, and from cure to social welfare. Panina defines healing rituals as a complete cultural system, as part of the Udmurt traditional worldview system, which helps to disclose the codes for verbal and non-verbal texts. The author brings to the fore the personal level of rituals and discusses the levels of space and time, attributes and actions in practices and verbal charms. She also analyses colour symbolism, and for the first time ever discusses the role of foreign (Russian) verbal charms and Christian prayers in the Udmurt tradition, which so far have deserved little attention.

As texts, religious views and activities are treated in an intentionally syncretic manner, the book enlightens us about the main facets of folk medicine,

introducing the reader to popular definitions of diseases, hygiene rules, and more general cure procedures. The second chapter describes a variety of temporary and permanent rituals, and gives an overview of calendrical rituals and those related to room cleansing, as well as of symbolic rituals (e.g. the symbolic re-birth of a child, which was used to fight so-called animal-origin diseases), transmissions of diseases, ritual deception of diseases, etc. The ritual “re-baking” of the sick person and many other rituals elicit the main features of the archaic range of methods. A separate subchapter gives an overview of the verbal charms for expelling a disease.

The following two chapters dwell upon the specific features of the rituals associated with charms and their verbal side. The author brings to the fore the personal code related to the text, which is divided between the addressee and the addresser, and secured by the status of the healer. The requirements set on the healer seem to be widely known and stereotypical, including those concerned with good health and existence of teeth, as well as other determiners of social status (e.g., the healer could be a widow or a woman who had given birth to several children).

Space requirements as well as attributes and the semantic side of the charms have been characterised in great detail, by concrete spatial objects (yard, window, sauna, crossroads, water bodies, etc.).

The monograph provides an overview of the researches on the collection and publication of the Udmurt material, which certainly constitutes valuable information for the reader. As concerns the study of charms on the international level, the most comprehensive overview is given of Russian publications, yet several significant sources are missing even here. A more detailed characterisation of the material in other languages has been hindered by global diffusion and problems in finding relevant books and articles. It is obviously a separate topic, as in many countries this genre features a long history with a wide range of theoretical approaches, and covering all this material in one book would have a negative impact on presenting the results obtained on the basis of own material.

The main value of the book consists in examining the Udmurt material from several aspects and discourses. It is a good academic publication, another achievement in the sphere of charm studies.

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Rita Balkutė (ed.). *Galia užburti: kenkimo magija 1982–2012 metų užrašuose* [*The Power of Magic: Harmful Magic in Recordings from 1982–2012*]. Vilnius: R. Balkutės fondas, 2013. 752 pp. ISBN 978-609-95585-0-9

Given the increasing interest in magic and witchcraft, it is particularly important that authentic folklore material should be published to provide an alternative to all the sorts of secondary sources of information, of which (unfortunately) there are many. In this context, the unique and irreplaceable source of living material is that submitted directly by a collector. Materials collected by numerous folklore expeditions always offer exceptional value, but, as a rule, have the disadvantage that they usually are well hidden from the majority of the reading public and are available only to the elite. But here we have a happy exception: Rita Balkutė, senior archivist at the Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre, has published the result of her many years of fieldwork. For more than 30 years she has collected material on folk magic and medicine in Lithuania and abroad. The book contains material resulting from more than 140 expeditions in 19 regions of Lithuania, as well as in Lithuanian enclaves in Belarus and Poland. The book presents 882 texts, selected from more than 1,200 author's recordings.

The book is divided into seven parts, in each of these the field material proper is preceded by brief summaries of the texts to come. The first section is devoted to sorcerers and contains stories, folk beliefs and practices that describe the careers and characteristics of sorcerers: their aetiology (how sorcerers differ from exorcists, and how one can become a sorcerer), typology (what kind of sorcerers there are), their relationships, life and death; a separate section is devoted to portraits of individual well-known magicians, compiled according to the informants' accounts. The second part of the book includes a description of the methods of harmful magic. The chapters here cover magic by means of voice, hands, ringing, wind, etc.; magic items (salt, blood, food, clothing, money, etc.); love magic and wedding magic. A separate section describes how you may protect yourself from the effects of magic. The third part of the book is devoted to people with the “evil eye”. This section which forms a large portion of the book includes a classification of people with the evil eye (as well as the cause of the “evil eye”); description of the influence of the evil eye on people, animals, plants, and things; various methods of treating humans and animals suffering from the effects of the evil eye, and a section on how to escape from the evil eye. The fourth, fifth and sixth parts deal with people with “light” hand, “heavy” hand, and an “evil voice”. Finally, the last part is devoted to witches, who steal the milk of cows.

The book benefits from its numerous illustrations which depict the informants, as well as the objects used in magic rituals. At the end of the book there