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THE VIRGIN MARY (PANAGIA/ THEOTOKOS) IN MODERN GREEK INCANTATIONS: THE SACRED AFFLICTED

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Abstract: Sacred personae of the officially recognized religious systems often appear in charms in order to enhance the therapeutic efficacy of the ritual. Their appearance is particularly common in Greek narrative charms where they often assume the role of the auxiliary agent who expels the malevolent factor and provides a cure to the afflicted person. In this context, the appearance of Christ, the Virgin Mary, Angels, Archangels, the Apostles, as well as various saints, is also quite frequent. There is, however, a peculiarity in terms of the role that the figure of the Virgin Mary (*Panagia, Theotokos*) assumes. This holy figure can not only assume the role of an auxiliary sacred agent who provides a cure to the afflicted person, but also the role of the afflicted, seeking healing treatment by another holy figure. Worth mentioning in the last case is that this affliction could have as its source another sacred figure such as the Apostles or even the Angels. In which particular charm-types does the Virgin Mary appear as the afflicted person? Which are the factors leading to the onset of this affliction and which are the symptoms experienced by the holy figure? How is this affliction cured and by whom? How could we, finally, explain this ambiguity of the Virgin Mary (*Panagia*) who appears to be standing in a liminal and transitional space between the sacred and the secular, divine and human, healer and afflicted? These are some of the questions that this article seeks to examine and answer.

Keywords: Virgin Mary, Greek narrative charms, evil eye, afflicted sacred figures, Greek folk religion, Apostles, Angels, liminality/ambiguity

INTRODUCTION

The Lady of the Angels and the Joy of the Archangels divine cloth she wore and sat on a throne [...].¹ The sacred figure cited as “The Lady of the Angels and the Joy of the Archangels” in the above excerpt of a charm against the evil eye can be easily identified with the Virgin Mary (Greek Παναγία [Panagia]). Such an association is not coincidental. The connection of the Virgin Mary with angelic realms and her superiority in sacred hierarchy is often illustrated in Byzantine icons and in the official ecclesiastic orthodox hymnology.² Hence, unsurprisingly we often find references in charms, such as the following:

The Virgin Mary [...] worshipped by the Archangels [...].³

The Virgin Mary sat with thousands of Angels, with countless Archangels [...].⁴

The Lady Virgin Mary arrived at the Mount of Olives surrounded by the wings of thousands of angels and archangels [...].⁵

Far, farther away from the Jordan River there walked the Virgin Mary, my Lady, with four hundred angels [...].⁶

The worship of the Virgin Mary is so widespread in Modern Greek traditional culture that exceeds that of any other sacred figure. There is a surprisingly large number of churches and monasteries dedicated to her grace in all parts of Greece. Similarly excessive is the number of her local names (Κεφαλληνιάδης 1997: 163–212).⁷ The name *Θεοτόκος* (Theotokos), by which she is primarily mentioned in the literary ecclesiastic tradition of the eastern Christianity, denotes the woman who gave birth to God himself. In Greek traditional culture, however, this holy figure is mainly known as *Παναγία* / *Παναγιά*, (dialectal form) *Παναϊά* / *Παναϊά* (nominalization of the female form of the adjective *Πανάγιος* (< *Παν* + *άγιος* = all holy), *Παρθένα* (nominalization of the female form of the adjective *Παρθένος*, virgin) in addition to honorary titles *Δέσποινα* (respected Lady and Domina, Mistress), *Κυρά* / *Κερά* and *Αφέντρα* (Mistress/Lady).⁸

This sacred figure is repeatedly encountered in charms, since in the folk religious system of the Greek traditional culture she is considered to bear the energy of the sacred *par excellence*. Her name is frequently an essential supplement in the catalogues of holy figures.⁹ Such a reference is typically and fundamentally closely associated with the performer of the ritual who, in this way, attracts the energy of the sacred, hence enhancing the effectiveness of the treatment. Indicative of the considered sacred power of the Virgin Mary is the fact that the stereotyped formula of scholarly ecclesiastical tradition “Εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος” [*In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit*] is altered in oral tradition to “Εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τῆς Παρθένου” [*In the name of the Father and the Son and the Virgin*] (To stop bleeding, Zakynthos, Γιαννοπούλου 1951: 267).¹⁰ This has not happened by chance, since the Virgin Mary is, as cited in charms, “βασιλίτσα τοῦ κόσμου” [*queen of the world*] (Against evil eye, Naxos, Ημελλος 1962: 179) and “Δέσποινα τῶν ἀπάντων” [*Despoina/Lady of everything that exists*] (Against jaundice, Leukada, Κοντομίχης 1985: 96–97).

THE VIRGIN MARY IN GREEK NARRATIVE INCANTATIONS

Elements for the identity of this sacred figure, as developed in the frame of the folk religious system, are traced in Modern Greek narrative charms, in which *Παναγία* takes on one of the main principal roles. The most representative case of her ultimate sacred power is recorded in charms based on the typical structural model of the encounter of a sacred power with the personified cause of the evil. In this type, the Virgin Mary appears as the leading sacred figure which encounters and exorcises the malevolent agents. A typical example of such a case is the following:

The Lady Theotokos and the Mistress of all that exists met Hector, yet she did not salute him, only stood and told him: -Where are you heading to, Nectora, Dictora (=nonsensical words whose formation is based on the name of the sickness jaundice ἰκτερός), red, yellow, Death's brother and Lord, along with Death, of death? He [The Jaundice] replied and said to Mother of God: -The Earth saw me and was appalled. The rocks saw me and got torn apart and you ask where I am heading to? - I go to this God's servant to burn his kidneys. Then, Theotokos exorcised

him holding a golden ring by saying: -Go to Tartaro (=the river of the underworld) itself, because this servant of God is baptized in the name of the Father and the Holy Spirit.¹¹

An independent and autonomous benevolent interference often appears in narrative charms based on the structural model in which an assistant sacred figure meets with the sufferer himself.¹² In those charms the Virgin Mary herself encounters the sufferer and heals him providing the necessary therapeutic instructions:

[...] The Virgin Mary came [and said to the afflicted person:]. -What is wrong and you are in pain and you are crying? [The afflicted person answered:] -Red (name of the disease) caught me. [The Virgin Mary said:] -Set a fire, find seven pieces of thick cloth, cut them in seven parts, place them inside out and burn them.¹³

The power and her supremacy are also apparent in charms where the charmer appears in the narrative using only her name in order to command the malevolent agents to disappear:

[...] Panagia, the Mistress told me [...] to say [...].¹⁴

It seems as if the independent therapeutic intervention diminishes when the Virgin Mary appears as a member of a group of sacred figures, as in the following case:

Forty brothers up on the mountain chopped wood for ceilings and floors and windows. And there drops an axe off one's hands and hits him on [that part of his body]. And John the Baptist and the Virgin Mary, the Mistress, told him to take the wool from a black sheep, to enchant and heal it [...].¹⁵

It has to be noted that such instances are not associated with decreasing the authority of the sacred figure summoned by the healer, but with the rhetorical strategy applied in charms to enhance and establish the healing outcome by pleading as many sacred figures as possible.¹⁶

The Virgin Mary's autonomy is weakened when she undertakes the role of a mediator between the sufferer and the sacred power, which she herself pleads to help solve the problem. In an incantation from the area of Paros used

to heal jaundice, after meeting with the evil factor, the Virgin Mary pleads God to help her cure the disease. God promptly responds to her summon and sends St. George:

[...] The Virgin Mary made with her hands the sign/gesture of the cross and pleads upon God. The God quickly sends [...] St. George who is riding his horse holding a lance [...].¹⁷

The power of the Virgin Mary to intervene and handle crucial situations seems to be diminished or even to be annulled in the charms she undertakes the role of the victim. In those instances, the Virgin Mary appears to be afflicted by a disease and gets sick. It is surprising that a sacred figure, especially that of the Virgin Mary, who in other instances has the power to heal and exterminate evil, becomes its victim and in some cases is infected by the same diseases that she heals.¹⁸ Finally, it is worth considering that “the Lady of the Angels and joy of the Archangels” can be afflicted by the very same sacred escorts like the Angels and the Apostles. All these issues will be addressed below.

THE TYPE “THE VIRGIN MARY AFFLICTED”

The narrative charms in which the Virgin Mary is presented as afflicted are widespread in many areas of Greece, more widely in Cyprus (Ιωνάς 2007B: 352–500, Ιωνάς 2007A: 156–158)¹⁹ and less frequently in Crete (Πάγκαλος 1970: 443–44, 1983: 363–364; Λενακάκης 2007: 50–57, 59, Χριστοδουλάκης 2011: 256, 258, 263, 264, 264, 265; Παπαδάκη 1938: 520–552; Κουτουλάκη 1962: 196–197), Thrace (Σαραντή - Σταμούλη 1938: 238–240), Rhodes (Παπαχριστοδούλου 1962: 72–73), Paros (Στέλλας 2004: 457–458), Naxos (Ημελλος 1962: 179), Santorini (Κεφαλληνιάδης 1997: 76) and Kasos (Μιχαηλίδης-Νουάρος 1932: 14–15).²⁰ Incantations of this type are exclusively used against the evil eye.²¹ In Ionas’ compilation (Ιωνάς 2007) of Cypriot incantations, 140 samples of this type have been documented, allowing us to refer to it as a widespread, unique type of charms with specific structural traits.²² They include an extensive text which, along with stereotyped introductory and concluding frames, can be up to 65 verses in length. In Cyprus they are known as “γητειά της ελιάς” (*charm of olive*), a name associated with the fact that the recitation of the narrative is always accompanied by smoking olive leaves (Ιωνάς 2007B: 354), as well as “γητειά της καππαρκάς” (*Charm of Caprer*;

Caper spinosa kapparka, a native herb to which the transfer of the evil eye is attempted). It is worth mentioning that this type of charms is exclusively recorded in oral tradition, since the exact literary source in the written tradition of charms — if it exists at all — cannot be traced.

The structure of those charms consists of two characteristic parts. The first part includes a stereotyped introduction, where the Virgin Mary is presented taking care of her physical appearance, embellishing herself and carrying out various domestic chores or other tasks. Her impressive image provokes admiration by various encounters who consequently cast the evil eye on her. What follows is an analytical description of milder or more serious physical symptoms caused by the affliction. Then, the Virgin Mary meets the sacred figure (healer) exchanging stereotyped answers and questions. These dialogues involve the sacred figure's inquiry of the cause of the evil eye and the Virgin Mary's response, which is based on the repetition of the entire typical introduction as she explains the reason for her symptoms. This section apart from the expected trivial variations is common in almost all charms of this type.

Nonetheless, significant variations are evident in the second part with reference to the therapeutic treatment. Despite the amalgamation of various types of charms, additions, abstractions and omissions of parts due to the oral transmission, we can distinguish three different versions of therapeutic intervention (see the Appendix for representative example of each type). The first version (see Appendix, type 1) involves standardized instructions to perform specific rituals (actions and/or words). The second (see Appendix, type 2) follows the characteristic pattern of a wide category of Greek narrative charms, based on the meeting of the personified cause of evil with the sacred figure which alters the evil power's course of action (Πασσαλής 2016: 176–177). In the third version (see Appendix type 3) healing intervention is based on the transfer of the evil eye to organic or/and inorganic substances with the view to annul its influence. Detailed analysis of these three versions will follow in a section of this article referring to the therapeutic treatment.

THE CONTEXT OF AFFLICTION

The first section of these charms starts with the characteristic introduction in which the main character is the Virgin Mary, who performs a series of activities purely connected to her human/secular dimension. Those activities are related to taking care of her body and generally her physical appearance.

Often after completing all these activities, the Virgin Mary sits on her throne usually dressed in her sacred vestment:

The Virgin Mary, the Mistress, washed and combed her hair, wore her (sacred) vestment, sat on her throne [...].²³

The Virgin Mary, the Mistress, washed and combed her hair, sat on her golden throne [...].²⁴

In other instances the Virgin Mary after her usual embellishment and sitting on her throne deals with textile activities:

The Virgin Mary, the Mistress, has woken up since dawn, washed and combed her hair, put on a headscarf and had made with her hands the sign of the cross, took a golden spin, turned a golden wheel, filled seven wheels [...].²⁵

The Virgin Mary, the Mistress, sat on her throne. She arrowed seven little threads and she filled seven spindles [...].²⁶

Quite frequent is the reference to Virgin Mary's involvement with household, like doing the laundry and sweeping:

[...] She washed and rinsed, and she laid the clothes over laurel [...].²⁷

The Virgin Mary, the Lady, woke at dawn swept and sprinkled water [...].²⁸

The list of activities is more rarely enriched with charities like building of churches, ordination of priests and endowment of orphans (Cyprus, Καλλιανώτου 1957–58: 609–610; Φιλίππου 1912–13: 535–536).

The time of the incident is usually undefined. Saturday is mentioned in some cases (Crete, Παπαδάκη 1938: 520–521), whereas Thursday is cited in others (Cyprus, Φιλίππου 1912–13: 535–536). In all instances, however, the defined time when specific activities occur is the morning, at the crack of dawn:

The Virgin Mary, the Lady, she wakes at dawn [...].²⁹

[...] at dawn [...] and the sun did not rise [...].³⁰

The place is usually undefined. It is probably the area where the Virgin Mary lives, which is inferred by the kind of activities she performs. In some cases there is a reference to the cave of Christ's birth:³¹

[...] into horses' barn [...].³²

The Virgin Mary gave birth into a Cave and bore Jesus Christ. In eight days she washed her hair and sat on her throne [...].³³

THE AGENTS OF AFFLICTION

The Virgin Mary's appearance provokes the admiration and the envy of passers-by who usually happen to be going past the area where they encounter her. Those individuals belong to two different categories of figures. The first category of those who cast the evil eye on the Virgin Mary includes women with strange, disfigured external characteristics and malformations: “η δημοβρουσού, η μαλλουροποδιά, η σακουλοβύζα, η αναρκοοντιά” (*with thick brows, hairy legs, loose breasts, sparse teeth*);³⁴ “η μυτού, η αχειλού, η πηγουνού, η φτερνού” (*with a big nose, huge lips, big jaw, big heels*);³⁵ “η ορθοβυζού, η μονοβυζού, η καουρόραχη” (*having upright breasts, one breast, with a hump*);³⁶ “η συλλουροποδιά” (*with dirty and torn clothes*);³⁷ “η καρταροβυζού, η βενετόματη” (*with big heavy breasts, blue eyes*).³⁸ This is a unique group of women that in some areas, such as Crete are called “γελούδες” [*gelloudes*], a name derived from the female demon Γελλού [*Gellou*], whose main target is pregnant women and infants (Crete, Κουτουλάκη 1962: 196–197). Not surprisingly, the name of Λάμια (*Lamia*, a female demonic figure of Greek folk tradition who lethally attacks babies) appears in the list of those women (Cyprus, Κυριαζής 1926: 94, Ιωνάς 2007B: 364, Κυπριανός 1969: 43) in addition to witches (Λενακάκης 2007: 52).

The second category of those who cast the evil eye includes a group of sacred figures like the Apostles:

[...] Twelve Apostles passed by and admired her [...].³⁹

[...] The Apostles saw and admired her [...].⁴⁰

[...] Twelve Apostles passed by and saw her and cast an evil eye on her [...].⁴¹

Angels are also incorporated in the catalogue of the holy figures who cast the evil eye on the Virgin Mary:

[...] and the angels passed and casted the evil eye on her [...].⁴²

[...] The angels passed and cast their evil eye on her [...].⁴³

In some instances the angels and the apostles constitute one group:

The Virgin Mary gave birth and washed and combed her hair and wore her angelic vestment, her golden apostolic clothes and started walking. Saints Angels encountered her on the road and the twelve Apostles and saw her, lusted after her and put the evil eye on her [...].⁴⁴

Hardly ever do “τρεις άγιες παρθένες” (*three virgin saints*) (Crete, Λενακάκης 2007: 55) or simply “τρεις παρθένες” (*three virgins*) (Crete, Λενακάκης 2007: 51) or “τρεις αδελφάδες” (*three sisters*) (Thrace, Σαραντή – Σταμούλη 1938: 238–240) appear.

SYMPTOMS AND PATHOLOGY

What is the evil eye’s pathology? That is to say, what are the symptoms which signify and verify the casting of the evil eye, thus revealing the Virgin Mary’s human dimension? Headache and fever are incorporated in the main pathology leading to her resigning from her activities:

[...] her head sharply ached, she shivered and her thread was cut [...].⁴⁵

In other instances, fever forces the Virgin Mary to lie down:

[...] In black chill the Virgin Mary shivered and lay and pondered and covered up [...].⁴⁶

[...] she lay and covered up, shivered in fever but found no comfort and called her son, the only begotten Son [...].⁴⁷

The list of symptoms extends further to include not only intense headache, sore throat, abdominal pain, lower back pain but also pain in joints and bones:

[...] she suffered from headache, sore throat and abdominal pain and covered up with her sheet [...].⁴⁸

[...] hear head ached and she lay and covered up [...].⁴⁹

[...] headache, pain in the eye and toothache [...].⁵⁰

[...] headache, sore throat, abdominal pain, lower back pain, pain in bones [...].⁵¹

What is also included in the intense symptoms is paleness of the face and the loss of the Virgin Mary's hair:

[...] The colour of red roses on her face faded away, her hair fell [...].⁵²

The evil eye's pathology is also evident in Christ's words when he encounters with his mother:

[...] -Mother, what is wrong, and you curled up and bandaged your head and leaned against your throne? [...].⁵³

[...] Christ passed by and saw her pale her expression was fatigued [...].⁵⁴

The intensity of symptoms is illustrated in some cases through excessive/dramatic utterances like:

[...] She sighs and that sigh was heard on heaven [...].⁵⁵

[...] The Virgin Mary, the Mistress, sobs and mourns, she withers trees and she dries up rivers [...].⁵⁶

The Virgin Mary's human dimension is also realized through her expression of fear due to her encounter with those women with the distorted external characteristics:

[...] The Virgin Mary, my Mistress was terrified and pulled her gold sheet, placed it over her head [...] and cried: Run, Angels-Archangels, to stop evil with your hand [...].⁵⁷

THE THERAPIST AND THE THERAPY

No other sacred authority could better undertake the role of healer than Christ himself, who in most cases constitutes the main benevolent agent dealing ef-

ficiently and effectively with the affliction of the Virgin Mary.⁵⁸ The therapeutic intervention of this sacred figure emerges in three different forms. The first type includes instructions delivered by Christ to the Virgin Mary to perform a combination of verbal and non-verbal rituals, usually the smoking of olive leaves (hence the name “charm of the olive”, *Ιωνάς* 2007B: 354–388) accompanied by a sacred phrase such as “*Ἐἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος*” (*In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit*):

[...] Take three olive leaves and say: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.⁵⁹

[...] Didn't you have, my mother, three olive leaves to say in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.⁶⁰

In other instances, the therapeutic instructions involve simply the reciting a sacred formula which is simply based on the repetition of the Lord's Prayer or the sacred name of Christ (*Κύριος*):

[...] Wasn't there any person with five fingers to say Our Father nine times? Our Father one, Our Father two, Our Father three, [...] Our Father nine.⁶¹

[...] Say, my mother, Kyrios one, Kyrios two [...] Kyrios nine, three times.⁶²

While the first type appears irrespective of the category the agents who provoke the affliction belong to, the second and the third type of therapeutic approach are only evident in cases where the evil eye is cast by non-sacred figures. Obviously, the casting of the evil eye by a non-sacred figure is considered to be more powerful, thus demanding a more drastic intervention of the healer. In the second equally widespread type of therapeutic intervention the text follows the structure of charms based upon the encounter of a sacred figure with the wicked power which is in process of causing harm (Cyprus, *Ιωνάς* 2007B: 404, 405–406, 408, 409, 410–411, 417–418, 421–422, 428, 430, 436–486, 488, 500). In these cases, what is added in the first part of the stereotypical dialogue between Christ and the Virgin Mary is Christ's question about the direction of those powers as well as the Virgin Mary's response:

[...] Where did they go, my mother; -They go to the east [...].⁶³

[...] -Where did she head for? -She headed towards west [...].⁶⁴

[...] -And where are they going now? -They go out in the villages to wither trees and bury the young and small children in the ground [...].⁶⁵

[...] -And where did she go, my mother; -In the underworld, deep in earth [...].⁶⁶

What follows is those malevolent agents' pursuit by Christ, their encounter and a stereotypical dialogue between the sacred figure and the malevolent agents in relation to the course of their actions:

[...] There goes Christ and catches them and says to them: -Where are you heading for, you, the one with the black eyes, with hair on your legs and hanging breasts? -We go to dry trees out and bury the young and small children [...].⁶⁷

The therapeutic strategy applied is based on altering their direction. The location to which Christ diverts the malevolent agent is a sacred place, usually the Mount of Olives (Cyprus, *Ιωνάς* 2007B: 404, 405–406, 408, 409, 410–411, 417–418, 421–422, 428, 430), where, in most cases, a marble pond is set (*Ιωνάς* 2007B: 401, 403) that features (usually three) cups of honey and milk (*Ιωνάς* 2007B: 396). Christ commands the malevolent agents to eat the honey, drink the milk and leave there all their negative influence:

[...] Go up the mount of Olives, eat and release your anger [...].⁶⁸

[...] Eat the honey, drink the milk, drop your bitterness and come back [...].⁶⁹

The third type of therapeutic intervention involves Christ's (*Ιωνάς* 2007B: 398, 400, 413, 414), as well as the Virgin Mary's own effort (*Ιωνάς* 2007B: 383–386, 390) to transfer the negative influences into various places in order to annul and stop their effect:

[...] The Virgin Mary got the evil eye with her right hand and dragged her [the malevolent agent] to the mountain to get lost and cut into pieces.

The mountain growled and shouted: ‘Oh, my dear Virgin Mary, my Mistress, I can bear thousands of people yet, I cannot stand envy and the evil eye’. The Virgin Mary, my dear Mistress, took it, and sank it into the sea to drown and disappear. There were waves at the seashore and ships and boats sank. [The sea said:] ‘My dear Virgin Mary, my Mistress, I can bear thousands of people yet, I cannot stand envy and the evil eye’. My dear Virgin Mary, my Mistress, took him, and dragged it to caper whose root is on the rock and its leaves forever bitter.⁷⁰

After numerous attempts, the sacred figure ends up transferring the negative influence into a plant (κ)αππαρκά, the well-known thorny plant of caper (Παπαγγέλου 2001, s.v. *καππαρκά*, Ερωτόκριτος 1898: 449), “πο’ [είναι] η ρίζα της βαθιά” (*whose root [is] deep*, Ιωνάς 2007B: 399), “στην πέτραν φυτεμένη” (*planted on a stone*, Ιωνάς 2007B: 384; see also 2007B: 385), “τζαι τα φύλλα της πικρά παντοτινά” (*and whose leaves forever bitter*, Ιωνάς 2007B: 383). The vast number of the charms of this type resulted in their being referred to by collectors as the “charm of caper” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 383–386, 390, 398, 400, 413, 414).

Much fewer in number are the instances where the therapeutic intervention is performed by an angel or a group of angels following the Virgin Mary’s direct plea to the angels or to Christ:

[...] and called her begotten Son and the Lord’s Angel came and told her: -What is wrong, my Lady, and you cry and you sigh and call God’s name? [...] And the Angel told his Lady: -Take three olive leaves in your hand and form the sign of the cross in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit now and forever. Amen [...].⁷¹

[...] The Virgin Mary, my Lady, is scared [...] and cried: Run, Angels-Archangels, and stop evil with your hand [...].⁷²

EVIL EYE AND THE VIRGIN MARY

All the incantations in which the Virgin Mary is presented as afflicted are used against the evil eye, a widespread affliction which has diverse and severe symptoms.⁷³ Its source is to be traced in the admiration/fascination (cf. Latin *fascino* and Greek *βασκαίνω*), as well as the subsequent envy evoked either

consciously or unconsciously by sight of a person, animal, or even object. As previously observed, in almost every stereotyped introduction of this type of charms, the Virgin Mary's physical appearance and activities are emphasized constituting her *ex principio* a potential victim of the forthcoming affliction.⁷⁴ Therefore it is not surprising that in some charms against the evil eye the list of women encountering the Virgin Mary includes the personified ζήλα (=jealousy, envy) (Cyprus, Χατζηϊωάννου 1933: 308–309; Κυριαζής 1926: 90–91; Σπανός 1993: 304; Ιωνάς 2007B: 355).

Biologically sensitive groups like parturient women, new mothers and small children are potential victims susceptible to the evil eye.⁷⁵ The Virgin Mary represents the prototype of a great mother who gave birth to God himself.⁷⁶ Thus, in some charms, the enchantment is as expected, located in the cave of Christ's birth, a little while after his birth (Κεφαλληνιάδης 1997: 79).⁷⁷ Likewise, quite expectedly, the outcome of the enchantment is the ceasing of the Virgin Mary's milk:

[...] She neither eats nor drinks nor her begotten son breastfeeds [...].⁷⁸

The association of the Virgin Mary with motherhood explains also why in some charms the list of figures that cast the evil eye includes women called Γελλούδες (Gelloudes, a name derived from the female demon Γελλού),⁷⁹ whose enchantment is directed against everyone, yet is mostly aimed at biologically and socially vulnerable groups, like pregnant women, but primarily against small children.⁸⁰

An additional indication that relates and explains the effect of the evil eye on a sacred figure is the fact that the enchantment does not originate from any deliberate, conscious ill intention of those people to harm, but it is due to an uncontrolled inner power (cf. uncontrolled power, Douglas 1966: 98–99; witchcraft, Evans-Pritchard 1977: 10, 21)⁸¹ that some taboo categories intrinsically have.⁸² Quite characteristic is the expression that often appears in charms of this type and refers to the lack of ill intention of the people to cause harm:

[...] they told her good words but harm was caused [...].⁸³

[...] she was told something good and evil returned to her [...].⁸⁴

[...] she was told good words and bad things happened [...].⁸⁵

Admiration in combination with the lack of intention to cause harm as a source of affliction allow for the appearance of sacred figures in place of those who cast the evil eye, like the Apostles and Angels, who are part of the Virgin Mary's escort. Nonetheless, when suffering derives from sacred figures, a certain differentiation is noticed not only in the intensity of the symptoms but also in their treatment. In these cases, the method of treatment is based on a mild, simple therapeutic procedure, including the reciting of a simple prayer and smoking of leaves from the holy olive tree.

THE LIMINALITY AND AMBIGUITY OF PANAGIA

Within the frame of both the folk and the official religious system, the figure of the Virgin Mary is a symbolic representation of a liminal space between different categories.⁸⁶ The basic quality of such a liminal space lies in the fact that it represents a blurring of the distinction between divine and human, spiritual and secular, and while it belongs to both categories, it falls in neither one.⁸⁷ This role has been credited to her, as she constitutes the superior expression of a human existence that is able to stand in this liminal sacred space and fulfill the incarnation of God himself. This liminal space constitutes a "locus of power" allowing for the undertaking of roles from both categories: as a divine figure who heals or facilitates treatment and as a suffering human seeking for the divine agent's contribution to heal.

The efficacy of the mediation is enhanced by the fact that she is the mother of the God himself.⁸⁸ The display and exposure of this mother-son relationship is a particularly powerful element of the rhetoric of such charms. Christ, as son of the Virgin Mary and God himself who can effectively facilitate a problem's resolution, addresses to the Virgin Mary which is his mother and, at the same time, a superior figure of the sacred hierarchy:

And Christ asks her. - What is wrong, my dear mother, what is wrong, my Virgin, what is wrong, Lady of the world? [...].⁸⁹

[...] Her son heard her. -What is the matter, my mother, what is the matter, my mother, what is wrong queen of the world? [...].⁹⁰

The Virgin Mary as a superior figure of sacred hierarchy but primarily as a mother addresses to Christ who is both her son and God:

[...] And Christ approached and said: -What is wrong, my mother [...]
-My Master, my God and Christ, my Lord [...].⁹¹

It is worth mentioning that quite often the divine dimension of those two figures is temporarily abandoned and the emphasis is placed on the tender relationship between the mother and the son:

[...] -What is wrong, my mother? [...] -Oh, my sweet mother [...].⁹²

[...] -What is wrong, my mother, [...]? What happened to you, my sweet mother and your head aches? -That, my son, my begotten son [...].⁹³

The liminality of the two basic protagonists, that of Christ and of the Virgin Mary, is framed and supplemented by the liminality that characterizes most elements of this kind of charms. The time in which the affliction occurs is also integrated in the domain of ambiguity/liminality: at the crack of dawn, between day and night, which is neither day nor night, yet it is indeed both. Additionally, the malevolent agents belong to the sphere of sacred and evil. On the one hand, they are taboo categories, while on the other hand, they are sacred agents.⁹⁴ The very cause of the disease should be traced back to the liminal space between admiration and envy, good and evil, which allows for the inclusion of the Apostles and Angels in the group of the agents provoking this kind of affliction.

Although in the charms of the category we examine here the Virgin Mary undertakes the role of the afflicted, her main mediation/liminal role is also sustained. This latter function is enhanced as with her secular, human quality, that of the mother, she takes on the role of the victim and pleads her son, who as both the son and God, undertakes the elimination of one of the most serious and widespread afflictions. As a result of this mediation an effective therapeutic method is delivered to humans by the most powerful figures in the religious hierarchy. This mediation is validated at another level concerning the relation between the text and the contextual frame, the mythical past and the present crucial situation, and, finally, between the sacred narrative figures who suffer and heal, and between the charmer and the sufferer that participate in the ritual.⁹⁵

CONCLUSIONS

The narrative charms we examined are representative cases of how a superior spiritual figure in the religious hierarchy like the Virgin Mary, may become the

victim of a serious affliction. The key feature of this sacred figure is the ability to represent a ‘betwixt and between’ transitional space which is characterized by fluidity: both sacred and secular, human and god, afflicted and healer. This coincidence of opposite and at the same time complementary processes and notions in a single representation characterizes the peculiar unity of her liminality: that which is neither this nor that, and yet both (cf. Turner 1987: 9). This position allows her to move easily between those categories and undertake seemingly contradictory roles in order to achieve the resolution of a crucial moment of human life, irrespectively of being in the role of the afflicted or the healer. Such a creative blurring of boundaries is further enhanced by the ambiguity of almost all the other elements of this kind of charms (Christ as god and human (her son), time and cause of affliction, agents). Furthermore, it allows for the correlation of the text with the contextual frame, the mythical past with the current crucial situation, and finally the connection of the narrative figures and the ones participating in the ritual (the actual healer and the actual afflicted person).

Finally, some further aspects should be underlined, as they provide a basis for further research into this issue. The type of the charm we examined is preserved only via oral tradition. This is not only shown by the vernacular register of the text, but also by the fact that this type has not been recorded in the written tradition of charms, at least as far as the first part of the charms is concerned.⁹⁶ The wide dissemination of this type across a range of areas in Greece, illustrates that it is an independent type that has not derived from modifications, additions or abstractions of parts from other charm types.⁹⁷ The existence or not of a literary prototype is particularly interesting, as it can enlighten the relation between the written and oral tradition of charms as well as provide elements for the historical, cultural route of incantations in south-eastern Europe.

APPENDIX

Here follow representative examples of the three versions of the charm “the Virgin Mary afflicted” based on the healing treatment.

TYPE 1:

“Η Παναγιά στο θρονί της εκαθόντανε κι ελούγουντονε κι εχτενιζούντονε. Τρεις αγίες Παρθένες επεράσανε. Άι καλά ’πανε, άι κακά ’πανε, τα νύχια τ’η εμπλαβίσανε, τα μαλλιά τ’η εμαδήσανε, οι φίλιασες τση εκοπήκανε. Κι ο Χριστός τση λέει: -Είντα ’χεις, μάνα μου; Είντα ’χεις, μητέρα μου; -Τα κρυφά κατέχεις, γιε μου, και τα φανερά δε γ-ξέρεις; Στο θρονί μ’ εκάθουμνε τα παρθενικά μου ρούχα εφόρουμνε κι ελούγουμνε κι εχτενιζούμνε. Τρεις αγίες παρθένες επεράσανε. Άι καλό ’πανε, άι κακό ’πανε, τα νύχια μου εμπλαβίσανε, τα μαλλιά μου εμαδήσανε, οι φίλιασες εκοπήκανε. Και ο Χριστός τση λέει: -Δεν ευρέθηκε άθρωπος μυρωμένος, βαφτισμένος τση Μεγάλης Πέμπτης αντίντερο να ’χει φαωμένο, να γητεύει το θαρμό, το κακό αμάτι.-Εβγα, θαρμέ, έβγα, κακέ, έβγα κακό αμάτι, κι άμε κάτω στο περιγιάλι, που φούρνος δεν γ-καπνίζει, πετεινός δε γ-κράζει”.

The Virgin Mary sat on her throne, and washed and combed her hair. Three virgin saints passed by. They uttered good or bad words. Her nails were bruised, her hair fell, her body’s joints ached. And Christ says to her: -What is wrong, my mother; What is the matter, my dear mother; [The Virgin Mary answered:] -My son, you know the secrets, don’t you know the obvious matters? I was sitting on my throne and wore my virgin clothes. Three virgin saints passed by. They uttered good or bad words. My nails were bruised, my hair fell, my body’s joints ached. And Christ says to her: -There hasn’t been any man covered with chrism (holy myrrh), who was baptized, who has eaten holy bread of Holy Thursday, to cure the evil eye. -Come out, Tharme (evil eye), come out, malevolent one, come out, evil eye, and go down the shore where stoves don’t burn, nor do roosters crow (Crete, Λενακάκης 2007: 56).

“Η Τσερία των ατζέλω τσαι Τσερά τω χαρχατζέλω ηδ’θητσε, στολίστηκε επ’ρ’ αλεκάτη τσ’ ήγνεθε. Περ’σανε δώδ’κα ’Πόστολοι τσαι τη φασκάνανε. Η τσεφαλή τση πόνεσε τσαι τσ’ αγκαρδγιό τ’η ράισε. Ηπ’ρασε τσ’ ο Ισούς Χ’στος τσ’ αρωτημένη τ’ν έ’ει. -Τι έ’εις, Τσερία των ατζέλω τσαι Τσερά τω χαρχαντζέλω; -Λεκάτ’ έπερα τσ’ ήγνεθα τσαι πέρ’σανε οι δώδ’κα ’Ποστόλο τσαι με φασκάνανε. Τσ’ έπε τσ’ ο γιός τ’η ο γλυκός, η άνοιξη τση πλάσης. -Απέρασε το Βγατζέλι’ο τση

Μεγαλο-παρασκευής. Ετού 'ναι η αθεότητα (η ελπίδα κι η γιατρεία σου)".

The Lady of the Angels and Lady of the Archangels wore her clothes and dressed up took her distaff and started spinning. Twelve Apostles passed by and cast the evil eye on her. Her head ached and her heart broke. Then Christ came and asked her: -What is wrong, Lady of the Angels and Lady of the Archangels? [The Virgin Mary answered:] -I took my distaff and started spinning and twelve Apostles passed by and casted the evil eye on me. And her sweet son, the spring of nature, told her: -Read the gospel of Good Friday. This is your hope and your treatment (Paros, Στέλλας 2004: 466).

TYPE 2:

“Η Παναγία η Δέσποινα εσηκώστηκεν 'που το πουρνόν ενίφτην, εχτενίστην τζ' εσταυροτζεφαλιάστην. Χρυσόν δουλάππιν έβαλεν, χρυσόν ροδάνιν έξεξε, εφτά ροάνια εγέμωσεν τζ' ο ήλιος δεν ανέτειλεν. Τζ' ήρτεν η ζήλα, η ήλα, η μαλλουροποού, η δημοβρουού, η αναρκοδοντού, καλόν είπεν τζαι κακόν εγύρισεν. Η Παναγία αρρώστησεν, στο κρεβάτιν έπεσεν, τζ' ήρθεν ο γιός της ο Μονογενής τζαι λαλεί της: -Είντα 'σεις, μάνα, τζ' είσαι άρρωστη; -Ηρτεν η ζήλα, η ήλα, η μαλλουροποού, η δημοβρουού, η αναρκοδοντού τζαι καλόν λόον είπεν τζαι κακόν εγύρισε. Πόθθεν επήεν, μάνα; -Κατ' ανάτολα. (Επήεν, έφτασεν την τζ' εδοκέν της την πουπάνω). -Πού πας, ζήλα, ήλα, μαλλουροποού, δημοβρουού, αναρκοδοντού; -Πάω εις τους μύλους πολλά μελίσσια να ζηλείψω, πολλά ζευκάρια να ποζάρω τζαι πολλά μωρά στην γην να βάλω. -Πάαινε στο όρος των Ελαιών, τζαι να βρεις μιαν βούρναν μέλιν με το γάλαν τζαι να φάεις τζαι να πκικεις τζαι να ρίψεις την ορκήν σου. Σαν τρέσει το φεγγάρι στη μάναν του να πάει, έτσι να τρέξει το κακόν που το δούλον του θεού (τάδε)".

The Virgin Mary, the Mistress, who has been awake up since dawn, washed and combed her hair, put on a headscarf and made the sign of the cross with her fingers, took a golden spindle, turned a golden wheel, filled seven wheels and the sun did not rise. And the jealous one came, who has hairy legs, thick eyebrows, sparse teeth, and she told her good words but evil turned out. The Virgin Mary fell sick, lay down, and her only begotten son came and says to

her: -What is wrong, mother, and you are sick; [The Virgin Mary answered:] -The jealous one came, who has hairy legs, thick eyebrows, sparse teeth, and told good words but evil turned out.[Jesus Christ said:] -Where did she [the jealous one] go, mother? [The Virgin Mary answered :] -She headed east. (Christ caught her up [and asked her:])- Where are you heading for? [The jealous one answered:] -I'm going to the mills to destroy many beehives, to separate many couples and bury many babies. [Jesus Christ said:] -Go to the mountain of Olives, find a pond with honey and milk, eat and drink there and cast your rage. As the moon runs to its mother, so shall the evil run away from that servant of God (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 458–459).

TYPE 3:

“Η Παναγία Δέσποινα έπλυνεννεν τζ’ εποσπάστηκεν τζ’ ελούχηκεν τζ’ εχτενίστηκεν τζ’ εσταυροτζεφαλιάστηκεν τζ’ εφτά ροβάνια εγέμωσεν. Έρεξεν η μαμμουροζαμπού τζ’ η δημοβρουού τζ’ αναρκοδοντού. “Α(δ) έ μου την, κόρη μου! Έπλυνεν τζ’ εποσπάστηκεν τζ’ ελούχηκεν τζ’ εχτενίστηκεν τζ’ εσφιχτοτζεφαλιάστηκεν τζ’ εφτά ροβάνια εγέμωσεν”. Μαύρον ριόν [την] έπιασεν, τζ’ επήεν ο γιος της ο Μονογενής. -Είντα ’σεις, μάνα, είπεν της., τζ’ αρρώστησες; -Έπλυννα τζ’ εποσπάστηκα τζ’ ελούχηκα τζ’ εχτενίστηκα τζ’ εσφικτοτζεφαλιάστηκα τζ’ εφτά ροβάνια γέμωσα. Τζ’ έρρεξεν η Μαλλουροζαμπού, η δημοβρουού τζ’ η αναρκοδοντού. Το λάλημάν της ας πάει στο βουνόν, είπεν ο Γριστός. Τζαι το βουνόν εμουγκάρισεν τζ’ είπεν της: -Γριστέ μου, ούλον το κόσμον σηκώννω τον τζαι τα δεντρά, τζαι τον φτόνον έν τον σώννω. Τζ’ έπεψεν τον εις την θάλασσαν ο Γριστός, τον φτόνον. Τζ’ η θάλασσα εμουγκάρισεν τζαι τα ψάρια εψοφήσασιν. -Γριστέ μου, τόσα καράβκια σώννω τα μα τον φτόνον έν τον σώννω. Τζ’ έπεψέν τον εις την καππαρκάν που ‘ταν η ρίζα της βαθικιά”.

The Virgin Mary washed [her clothes], finished her chores and washed and combed her hair and put on a headscarf and filled the seven wheels of the spindle. And the one with the hairy calves, thick eyebrows and sparse teeth passed by [and said:] -“Look, my daughter! She finished her chores and washed and combed her hair and put on a headscarf and seven wheels of the spin filled”. The Virgin Mary suffered from black shivering and her only begotten son

went. -What is wrong my dear mother, -he told her-, and do you feel sick? I washed, finished my chores and washed and combed my hair and put on a headscarf and filled the seven wheels of the spindle. And the one with the hairy calves, thick eyebrows and sparse teeth passed by. - May her uttering go to the mountain -Christ said-. And the mountain growled and said: -Jesus Christ, I bear the whole world and the trees, except envy. And Christ sent envy to the sea. And the sea growled and the fish died. Jesus Christ, I bear so many ships, but I can't bear envy. So he sent envy to caper whose root was deep (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 398).

NOTES

¹ “Η Κυρία των Αγγέλων

κι η χαρά των Αρχαγγέλων

θεϊκή στολή εφόρεσε και σε θρόνο εκάθησε [...]” (Ασβεστή 1962: 211).

² Cf. “[...] ὄχημα πανάγιον [...] Τὴν τιμωτέραν τῶν Χερουβεὶμ, καὶ ἐνδοξοτέραν ἀσυγκρίτως τῶν Σεραφεὶμ” ([...] Hail, holy medium (of Christ) [...] you are more honoured than Cherub and incomparably more glorious than Seraphim) (Salutations to the Virgin Mary). For the typology and symbolism of the figure of Theotokos in hymnography, see Hannick 2004.

³ “Παναγιά [...] αγγελοπροσκυνισμένη [...]” (Crete, Πλατάκης 1979: 116).

⁴ “Η Παναγιά καθότανε με χιλιάδες αγγέλους, με μυριάδες αρχαγγέλους [...]” (Kefalonia, Φιλιππάτος 1912–13: 583–584).

⁵ “Η τσερά η Παναγιά πήε στ’ ὄρος των Ελώ, στα φτερόματα τσ’ ατζέλω τω μυργιάδω χ’ αρχατζέλω [...]” (Paros, Στέλλας 2004: 248).

⁶ “Πέρα, αντίπερα του Ιορδάνη ποταμού εδιάβαιναν η Παναγία μου η Δέσποινα με τετρακόσιους αγγέλους [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 272).

⁷ The figure of Panagia is prevalent in all aspects of the daily social and national life of modern Greece and has been recorded in almost all types of oral literature, such as couplets, folk songs, lullabies, wedding songs and laments (Κεφαλληνιάδης 1991: 41–74). For the worship of the Virgin Mary in Greek traditional culture see also Κεφαλληνιάδης 1991, 1993.

⁸ The following references are indicative of the most common names of the Virgin Mary in Greek incantations: “Παναγία/Παναγιά/Παναΐα η Δέσποινα” (*Panagia, Despoina/Lady*) (Crete, Κουτουλάκη 1962: 196–197; Kasos, Μιχαηλίδης-Νούρος

1932: 14–15; Κύπρος, Χριστοφορίδης 1923: 210; Naxos, Ημελλος 1962: 179; Rhodes, Παπαχριστοδούλου 1962: 72–73; Cyprus, Φιλίππου 1912–13: 535–536); “Η Δέσποινα η Παρθένα” (*Lady the Virgin*) (Cyprus, Κυριαζής 1926: 93); “Η κυρά η Αφέντραϊνα” (*Lady, the Mistress*) (Cyprus, Κυριαζής 1926: 93); “Η Κερά η Δέσποινα” (*Lady, the Mistress*) (Crete, Παπαδάκη 1938: 520–521); “Η τσερά η Παναγιά” (*The lady Panagia*) (Paros, Στέλλας 2004: 248); “Η κυρά η Παρτένα/Παρθένα/Παρθένη” (*The Lady Virgin*) (Cyprus, Βελεφάντης 1913: 38–39; Ιωνάς 2007B: 12, 13, 18, 21, 23, 24, 26); “Παναγία Παρθένη/Παρθένα” (*Panagia the Virgin*) (Ιωνάς 2007B: 14, 15, 17, 19, 22, 28). The name Παναγία (*Panagia*) (Paros, Κορρές 1966: 112–113; Megara, Βλάχου 1959, 549; Cyprus, Κυπριανός 1969: 43) or Παρθένα (*Virgin*) (Zakynthos, Γιαννοπούλου 1951: 267) is rarely cited as such. Finally, it is also worth noting that the name of Panagia, Maria, is rarely found in verbal charms of Orthodox Christianity, and when it does, then hardly ever unaccompanied (Crete, Πάγκαλος 1983: 391), but almost always in close correlation with one of her acknowledged names or titles: “Μαρία (και) παρθένη/παρθένος” (*Virgin Mary*) (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 12, 16, 25, 28); “Δέσποινα Μαρία” (*Despoina Maria*) (Crete, Φραγκάκι 1949: 58).

⁹ Cf. “Κύργιε Ιησού Χριστέ, Δέσποινα Θεοτόκο, άγιοι Ανάργυροι θαυματουργοί [...]” (*Lord Jesus Christ, Lady Theotokos, Ss. Anargyroi, the miraculous [...]*) (Against evil eye, Corfu, Σαλβάνος 1929–32: 119–120); “Άγιε Κωνσταντίνε, άγιε Νικόλαε, άγιε Δημήτριε, άγιε Αντώνιε, άγιε Γεώργιε, Παναγία Παρθένε [...]” (*St. Constantine, St. Nicholas, St. Demetrius, St. Antonius, St. George, Virgin Mary [...]*) (Against anthrax [σούφρα, an malignant blistering], Peloponnesus, Κουκουλές 1908: 146); “Ορκίζω σας εις τους τέσσερις Αρκαγγέλλους, [...] τζι εις τον απόστολον Αντρέαν τζι εις τον απόστολον Λουκάν τζι εις τον απόστολον Βαρνάβα τζι εις τον απόστολον Νεόφυτον [...] τζαι εις τημ Παναΐα [...]” (*I conjure you to the four Archangels, [...] and to the Apostle Andrew and to the Apostle Loukas and to the Apostle Barnavas and to the Apostle Neofytus [...] and to Panagia*) (For scorpion bites, Cyprus, Χατζηϊωάννου 1984: 150).

¹⁰ It is also worth mentioned that in oral charms, the first (*In the name of the Father*) and the last part (*and the Holy Spirit*) of the above-mentioned sacred formula are frequently omitted, while Christ’s and Panagia’s names and that of the sufferer are consistently used (Φασατάκης 1991, 130, 134; Σαραντή-Σταμούλη 1951: 223; Φραγκάκι 1949: 56). The name of St. Panteleimon also is in some cases intervening as the healer saint (Against the evil eye, Κυρμιζάκη 1935: 202).

¹¹ “Η κυρία Θεοτόκο και Δέσποινα των απάντων απάντησε τον Έκτορα και δεν τον εχαιρέτησε, μόνον έστεκε και του έλεγε: -Πού πας, Νέκτορα, Δίκτορα, κόκκινε, κίτρινε, αδελφέ του Χάροντος και συκύρυγε του Θανάτου; Ο δε απεκρίθη και γείπε προς την Θεοτόκο: -Η γη με γείδε και έφριξε. Οι πέτρες με είδον και σκίστηκαν και συ με ρωτάς πού πάγω; -Πάγω εις τον δούλον του Θεού τάδε να κάψω τους νεφρούς του. Η δε Κυρία

Θεοτόκο με χρυσόν δακτυλίδιον εξόρκισεν αυτόν και του λέγει: -Υπήγαυε εις τον ίδιον Ταρτερόν ποταμόν ότι ο δούλος του θεού τάδες είναι βαφτισμένος εις το όνομα του Πατρός και του Αγίου Πνεύματος” (Κοντομίχης 1985: 96–97). The model in which the Virgin Mary performs an exorcism is prevalent in charms for treating jaundice, a disease that infects mainly small children. For similar charms, see Ιωνάς 2007B: 270, 271–272; Σελίπα 1957–58: 612; Ήμελλος 1962: 182, 194–195.

¹² The Virgin Mary’s healing intervention upon summoning appears frequently in charms against scorpion’s bites. In Ionas’ compilation, there are thirteen charms of this type with Mary as the main healer (Ιωνάς 2007B: 671, 674, 674–675, 677, 677–678, 680, 681, 683, 684, 684–685, 690, 692–694) and seven with Christ (Ιωνάς 2007B: 672, 673, 673–674, 679, 687, 688, 690).

¹³ “[...] Επέρασεν η Παναγιά. -Τι έχεις και πονείς και κλαίεις; -Το κόκκινο με ήυρεν. -Εύρε φωτιάβ, βάλε εφτά κανναβάτσα και κάμε τα εφτά κομμάτια και βάλε το ανάσκελλ^d και κάψε το” (Against erysipelas, Rhodes, Παπαχριστοδούλου 1962: 88).

¹⁴ “[...] Είπεμ μου η Παναϊά η Δέσποινα [...] να πεις [...]” (*Binding of foxes which cause harm to farmers*, Cyprus, Κυριακίδης 1917: 611).

¹⁵ “Σαράντα αδέλφια ήτανε στο βουνό και κόβανε ανώφιλα και κατώφιλα και παραθυρόξυλα. Και πέφτει του ενούς το μανάρι και βαραίνει του στο (τάδε μέρος). Και του ’πε ο άγιος Γιάννης ο Πρόδρομος κι η Παναγιά η Δέσποινα να πάρει μαλλί ’πό μαύρο πρόβατο, ναν το γητέψει ναν του περάσει [...]” (For wounds, Kythira, Φώτιος 1912–13: 56).

¹⁶ Cf. also note 9.

¹⁷ “[...] Η Παναγιά ησαύρωσε, το Θιο περικαλάει. Πέβει ο Φέδης [...] γοργά τον άι Γιώργη· καβάλα ’ναι στο άλλοο κοδόριζα κρατάει [...]” (Paros, Στέλλας 2004: 248–249). A similar intervention is documented in a charm for treating wounds and injuries (Crete, Φραγκάκι 1978: 191).

¹⁸ These are the charms against the evil eye which are structured upon the model of the Virgin Mary’s encounter with the *Φταρμό* (= wicked eye, personification of the affliction) (Λενακάκης 2007: 58–60). In those charms the personified evil eye (*Φταρμός*) is in process and its malevolent intended action is interrupted by the Virgin Mary’s intervention.

¹⁹ Also in Κυριαζής 1926: 93–94; Κυριακίδης 1917: 611; Καλλιανώτου 1957–58: 609–610; Φιλίππου 1912–13: 535–536; Χατζήϊωάννου 1933: 308–309; Κυπριανός 1969: 43; Βελεφάντης 1913: 38–39.

²⁰ The examination of this issue is based on a collection of 4000 charms from my personal archive. Undoubtedly, further research could reveal more areas of Greece where this type of charm was performed.

²¹ Occurrence of almost the same pattern is documented in charms for combating fright (Ιωνάς 2007B: 308–309, 315), as well as for treating sunstroke (Cyprus, Βελεφάντης 1913: 21). Nonetheless, it is the same charm used against different afflictions.

²² The case of narrative charms where a sacred figure appears as sufferer is not restricted in the figure of the Virgin Mary. John the Baptist is also documented as a sufferer (For sunstroke, Paros, Στέλλας 2004: 72).

²³ “Η Παναγία η Δέσποινα ελούστην, εχτενίστη, τ’ ωμόφορό της ήαλε, στο θρόνο της εκάτσε [...]” (Kasos, Μιχαηλίδης-Νουάρος 1932: 14–15).

²⁴ “Η Παναγία η Δέσποινα ελούσθη, εχτενίσθη, στο χρυσό της θρανίο έκατσε [...]” (Crete, Κουτουλάκη 1962: 196–197).

²⁵ “Η Παναγία η Δέσποινα εσηκώστηκεν ’που το πουρνό, ενίφτην, εχτενίστην τζ’ εσταυροτζεφαλιάστην. Χρυσόν δουλάππιν έβαλεν, χρυσόν ροδάνιν έξεξε, εφτά ροάνια εγέμωσεν [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 458–459).

²⁶ “Η Παναγία η Δέσποινα εκάθουνταν στο θρόνον της. Εφτά κλωστίτσες έσυρεν κι εφτά αδράχτια εγίμωσεν [...]” (Rhodes, Παπαχριστοδοούλου 1962: 72–73).

²⁷ “[...] Έπλυνεν τζ’ εξέπλυνεν, τζαι πα’ στις δάμνες τ’ άπλωσεν [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 361).

²⁸ “Η Παναΐα η Δέσποινα σηκώθημ που το πωρνόν εσάρισεν, εράντισεν [...]” (Cyprus, Χατζηγιωάννου 1933: 308–309).

²⁹ “Η Παναΐα η Δέσποινα καλόν πωρνόν σηκώνεται [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 360).

³⁰ “[...] το πωρνόν [...] τζ’ ο νήλιος δεν ανετείλεν [...]” (Cyprus, Χατζηγιωάννου 1933: 308–309). This temporal reference is found in a vast number of charms, see Ιωνάς 2007B: 352, 357, 358; Καλλιανώτου 1957–58: 609–610.

³¹ It should not be assumed, however, that the reference to the cave of Christ’s birth belongs to the initial core of this type of charms but has been influenced by a text widespread in Greece (Οικονομίδης 1962: 35), the folk prayer to “όνειρο της Παναγίας” (*The Virgin Mary’s dream*). It is also known as “γητειά της Παναγίας της Παρθένας” (*The Virgin Mary charm*) (Ιωνάς 2007B: 11–16, 17, 29), “τραγούδι της Παναγίας” (*the Virgin Mary’s song*) (Ιωνάς 2007B: 35–36, 43), “γητεία του πόνου της Παναγίας” (*charm of the Virgin Mary’s pain*) (Ιωνάς 2007B: 43) or the charm “για τον φθόνο” (against envy) (Ιωνάς 2007B: 34). In the text, a conversation between the Virgin Mary and the newborn Christ is presented. In the dialogue Christ asks his mother the reason for her sadness and she explains that she is sad because she saw a dream related to the betrayal of Christ by one of his Apostles as well as to her son’s imminent torment (Οικονομίδης 1962: 40). Variations of this widespread text are used as charms for numerous purposes (Ιωνάς 2007B: 11–45) and applied for every evil (Ιωνάς 2007B: 41). Variants of this text are recorded in the wider area of south-eastern Europe, see

Οικονομίδης 1962: 45–50, Timotin 2011 (Romanian variant); Kapaló 2011: 272–277 (Gagauz variant). This folk prayer has a different structure from the type we examine in this article. However, the characteristic beginning in the first verse of the folk prayer “Our Virgin Lady”, is synonymous with one characteristic of the charms we examine here “Virgin Mary, my Mistress”, allowing for transferring parts from one to the other.

³² “[...] μες στ’ άλογον τη μάχνη [...]” (Megara, Βλάχου 1959: 549; Κεφαλληνιάδης 1997: 79).

³³ “Η Παναγία εγέννησε μέσα σ’ ένα σπήλαιο κι έκαμε τον Ιησού Χριστό. Σε οχτώ μέρες λούστηκε, στο θρόνο της εκάθησε [...]” (Paros, Κορρές 1966: 112–113).

³⁴ Cyprus, Κυριαζής 1926: 93.

³⁵ Crete, Παπαδάκη 1938: 520–521.

³⁶ Cyprus, Κυριαζής 1926: 93.

³⁷ Cyprus, Κυριαζής 1926: 94.

³⁸ Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 356.

³⁹ “[...] Δώδεκα Απόστολοι περάκανε τσαι τήνε θαυμάκανε [...]” (Megara, Βλάχου 1959: 549).

⁴⁰ “[...] Οι Απόστολοι επέρασαν, την είδαν κι εθάμαζαν [...]” (Paros, Κορρές 1966: 112–113).

⁴¹ “[...] Οι δώδεκα Αποστόλοι περάσανε κι είδανέν την κι ελαβόσανέ ντη [...]” (Crete, Πάγκαλος, 1983: 363–364).

⁴² “[...] τσ’ επέρασαν οι αντζέλοι τσαι την εφταρμίσασι [...]” (Kasos, Μιχαηλίδης-Νουάρος 1932: 14–15).

⁴³ “[...] Άγγελιοι περάσανε και την εμαθιάσανε [...]” (Santorini, Κεφαλληνιάδης 1997: 76).

⁴⁴ “Η Παναγία εγέννησε κι ελούστηκε κι εχτενίστηκε κι έβαλε τα αγγελικά τζη, τα χρυσά ’ποστολικά τση κι επόρισε να περπατήξει. Στο δρόμο τση παντήξανε οι άγιοι άγγελοι και οι δωδεκ’ Αποστόλοι και την είδανε και την ερεχτήκανε και την εφταρμίσανε [...]” (Crete, Λενακάκης 2007: 50).

⁴⁵ “[...] την σύγλισε το κεφάλι της, ανετρίχιασ’ το κορμί της και κόπκε η κλωστή της [...]” (Thrace, Σαραντή-Σταμούλη 1938: 238–240).

⁴⁶ “[...] Μαύρον ριόν την έπιασε την Παρτένα κι έπεσε κι εσυλλογίστηκεν εκουκουλώθηκε [...]” (Cyprus, Βελεφάντης 1913: 38–39).

⁴⁷ “[...] έππεσεν τζ’ εσεπεάστηκεν το ριόν την έπκιασεν τζαι δεν εσιουρκάστηκεν τζ’ εφώναξεν είς τον γιόν της τον Μονογενή [...]” (Cyprus, Χατζηϊωάννου 1933: 308–309).

⁴⁸ “[...] Έπιασεν την τζεφαλόπονος, λαιμόπονος τζαι καρκίοπονος τζ’ έπεσεν τζ’ εσκούλλιστηκεν [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 372).

⁴⁹ “[...] την τζεφαλήν της πόνησεν τζαι έπεσσεν τζαι εσσεπάστηκεν [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 353).

⁵⁰ “[...] τζεφαλόπονον, αμματόπον τζαι οδοντόπονον [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 404).

⁵¹ “[...] τζεφαλόπονος, λαιμόπονος, καρκίοπονος, μεσόπονος, κοκκαλόπονος [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 427).

⁵² “[...] Τα ρόδα του προσώπου τση εχαθήκανε, τα μαλλιά τζη εμαδήσανε [...]” (Crete, Λενακάκης 2007: 51).

⁵³ “[...] Τι έχεις, μάνα μου, κι έκλινες κι εκεφαλοδέστηκες και στο θρόνο σου εκούμπησες; [...]” (Rhodes, Παπαχριστοδούλου 1962: 72–73).

⁵⁴ “[...] ηπέρασε ο Χριστός και την είδε χλωμισασμένη κι η όψη ντης κομμένη [...]” (Santorini, Κεφαλληνιάδης 1997: 76).

⁵⁵ “[...] Αναστενάζει κι ο αναστεναγμός της στους ουρανούς εκούστη [...]” (Naxos, Ημελλος 1962: 179).

⁵⁶ “[...] Η Παναΐα η Δέσποινα κλαίει τζαι θρηνίσκει, τα δένδρα μαρανίσκει, τα ποτάμια ξερανίσκει [...]” (Cyprus, Κυπριανός 1969: 43). The weakness and sudden tiredness which are regarded as characteristic symptoms of the evil eye are expressed with a common utterance that is still in use in modern Greek language “κόβονται τα χέρια μου και τα πόδια μου” (*I am worn out, my legs and my arms ache*) (Paros, Κορρές 1966: 112–113).

⁵⁷ “[...] Η Παναγία μου η Δέσποινα φοβήθηκεν τζ’ ετράβησεν το χρυσοσέντονόν της, στην κορυφήν της το βαλε εκούγησεν κι εφώναξε: Τρέξατε Αγγέλοι-Αρχαγγέλοι, με την χείραν να κόψετε το κακόν [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 355).

⁵⁸ It is worth mentioning that Christ remains the main therapeutic figure even in charms in which the time of action in the narration is set around his birth. In these cases healing is performed by the Christ child (Κεφαλληνιάδης 1997: 79; Κορρές 1966: 112–113). It should not be assumed that these cases are included in the initial type of the incantation, on the contrary, they derive from a text widespread in Greece, the Dream of the Virgin Mary, in which a youthful Christ converses with the Virgin Mary about her dream. See also note 31.

⁵⁹ “[...] Πιάσε τρία φύλλα ελιάς τζαι πε: Στο όνομα του πατρός και του Υιού και του Αγίου Πνεύματος” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 356).

⁶⁰ “[...] Έν είσεν, μάνα μου, τρία φύλλα ελιάν να πεις εις το όνομα του Πατρός και του Υιού και του αγίου Πνεύματος” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 419).

- ⁶¹ “[...] Δεν ευρέθηκε ένας πεδαδάχτυλος να πει τον πάτερ ημών εννιά φορές; Πάτερ ημών μια, πάτερ ημών δυο, πάτερ ημών τρεις [...] Πάτερ ημών εννιά” (Naxos, Ήμελλος 1962: 179).
- ⁶² “[...] Πες μάννα, Κύριος ένας, Κύριος δύο [...] Κύριος εννιά, τρεις φορές” (Megara, Βλάχου 1959: 549).
- ⁶³ “[...] Πού επήαν, μάννα μου; - Επήαν κατανατολά [...]” (Ιωνάς 2007B: 431–432).
- ⁶⁴ “[...] -Είντα μέρος έκαμεν; - Έκαμεν κατά την Δύσην [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 361).
- ⁶⁵ “[...] -Και που πηγαίνουν τώρα; - Πηγαίνουν όξω στα χωργ’ά, να μαράνουδ δέντρα κι άουρους και μικρά παιδγ’ά στηγ γην να βάλουσι(ν) [...]” (Rhodes, Παπαχριστοδούλου 1962: 72–73).
- ⁶⁶ “[...] -Και πού πήγεν, μάνα μου; - Πήγε στα κατατάρατα της γης [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 421).
- ⁶⁷ “[...] Και πάει ο Χριστός και φτάνει τες και λέει τες: -Που πάεις, Μαυρομαπτού, Μαλλδοποού και Κλιντοβυζού; - Πάμεν να μαράνουμεδ δέντρα κι άουρους και μικρά παιδγ’ά στηγ γην να βάλουμε(ν) [...]” (Rhodes, Παπαχριστοδούλου 1962: 72–73).
- ⁶⁸ “[...] Άμε πάνω στο όρος των Ελαιών, φάε τζαι ρίψε τον θυμόν σου [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 361).
- ⁶⁹ “[...] Φα το μέλιν, πε το γάλαν, τζ’ ά(φ)ησ’ το φαρματζιν σου τζ’ έλα [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 396).
- ⁷⁰ “[...] Η Παναΐα μου η Δέσποινα εζαλίστητζεν, επήρεν την με το δεξίν της χέρν τζαι την έσυρεν στο όρος να χαθεί, να κατακοπεί. Το δε όρος εμούγκριζεν, εφώναζεν: -Ω, Παναΐα μου Δέσποινα, τόσες σιλιάδες κόσμον σώννω τον τζαι τον φτόνον, την βασκανία εν τους σώννω. Επήρεν τον η Παναΐα μου η Δέσποινα τζαι τον έσυρεν εις την θάλασσαν να πνιγεί, να χαθεί. Ο δε γιαλός άφριζεν τζαι τα καράβκια τζαι παμπόρκα εβυθιστήκαν. - Παναΐα μου Δέσποινα, τόσες σιλιάδες κόσμον σώννω τον τον δε φτόνον τζαι την βασκανία εν τους σώννω. Επήρεν τον η Παναΐα Δέσποινα τζαι τον έσυρεν εις την καππαρκάν πο ’ν’ η ρίζα της στην πέτραν τζαι τα φύλλα της πικρά παντοτινά” (Ιωνάς 2007B: 383).
- ⁷¹ “[...] τζ’ εφώναζεν εις τον γνιόν της τον Μονογενήν τζ’ επήεν Άγγελος Κυρίου τζ’ είπεν της: -Είντα ’σεις, Δέσποινα, τζαι κλαίεις τζι αναστενάξεις τζαι τοθ θεόφ φωνάζεις; [...] Τζ’ είπεν ο Άγγελος εις τη Δέσποιναν: -Να πάρεις εις το σέρισ σου τρία φύλλα ελιάν να σταυρώσεις εις τ’ όνομαν του Πατρός και του Υιού και του Αγίου Πνέμματος νυν κι εις τους αιώνας των αιώνων. Αμήν [...]” (Cyprus, Χατζηγιώαννου 1933: 308–309).
- ⁷² “[...] Η Παναγία μου η Δέσποινα φοβήθηκεν [...] κι εφώναξε: -Τρέξατε Αγγέλοι-Αρχαγγέλοι, με την χειράν να κόψετε το κακόν [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 355).

⁷³ The significance of this affliction is, on the one hand, evident in the fact that the majority of the recorded Modern Greek charms concern the healing of the evil eye, and, on the other hand, in the fact that relevant modified rituals have survived and they are even performed nowadays in rural as well as in urban areas. Moreover, its danger is shown by the popular belief that the evil eye apart from humans can also affect animals, plants and objects, and also by the conviction that it can even lead to death (Φραγκάκι 1978: 68).

⁷⁴ One of the most impressive descriptions regarding the Virgin Mary's physical appearance is recorded in the following charm from the area of eastern Thrace: [...] The Virgin Mary was washing her hair in a meadow. In a golden bowl washing her hair, water was poured from a golden cup, she was combing her hair with a golden comb wore her hair in a golden braid, sat on a golden chair, took a golden distaff, she had a golden spindle and made a golden thread. Three sisters passed by and casted the evil eye on her. She suffered from a severe headache, chilled all over her body and her thread was cut [...] “[...] Η Παναγιά νελούζονταν μέσα στο λιβάδι. Χρυσή λεκάνη λούζονταν, χρυσό τάσι νερό χύνουνταν, χρυσό χτένι χτενίζονταν χρυσή πλεξούδα έκανε, χρυσή καρέκλα έκατσε, χρυσή ρόκα πήρε, χρυσό αδράχτι είχε χρυσή κλωστή έκαμνε. Τρεις αδελφάδες πέρασαν κι αβάσκα την ερρίζανε. Την σουγγλισε το κεφάλι της, ανετρίχιασ’ το κορμί της και κόπκε η κλωστή της [...]” (Eastern Thrace, Σαραντή - Σταμούλη 1938: 238–240).

⁷⁵ Cf. also “Like many other peoples throughout history, the Byzantines believed that it was pregnant mothers and new-born children who were the most susceptible to the workings of the envious eye because of the risks and dangers arising from pregnancy and childbirth. A whole series of apotropaic practices relating to babies and children indicates how widespread this belief was [...]” (Foscolou 2005: 255).

⁷⁶ Cf. also the depiction of the Virgin with the Christ child at her breast in Greek icons (Galaktotrophousa, Virgo lactans). For this type of representation in iconography, see Foscolou 2005: 251 (extended bibliography *ibid.*, note 3); Bolman 2004, 2005:13–22; Κεφαλά 2004: 79–82 (extended bibliography *ibid.* 79, note 5). For an interesting comparative approach to the Virgin Mary and Isis based on the lactans iconography see Higgins 2012; Thomas and Norman 2005.

⁷⁷ See also notes 31 and 58.

⁷⁸ “[...] Ούτε τρώει ούτε πίνει ούτε το γιο της το μονογενή βυζαίνει [...]” (Naxos, Ήμελλος 1962: 179).

⁷⁹ Crete, Κουτουλάκη 1962: 196–197.

⁸⁰ For the female demon Gellou/Gyloy in Modern Greek charm and legends, see Passalis 2015: 115–127.

⁸¹ About the categories *witchcraft-sorcery* and the problem of distinction between them, see Yalman 1972: 523. Cf. the distinction *external-internal* and *uncontrolled-controlled* power mentioned by Douglas (1966: 98–99).

⁸² These are mainly groups of taboo people, with special deviations and malformations in their appearance, see Μέγας 1941–42: 5; Βελεφάντης 1913: 37; Φραγκάκι 1978: 216.

⁸³ “[...] καλόν της είπαν τζαι κακόν της εγίνηκεν [...]” (Cyprus, Χατζηϊωάννου 1933: 308–309).

⁸⁴ “[...] καλόν της είπεν τζ’ αι κακόν της εγύρισεν [...]” (Cyprus, Καλλιανότου 1957–58: 609–610).

⁸⁵ “[...] καλά λόγια της είπασιν τζαι άσσημα εγνήκασιν [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 356).

⁸⁶ The term *liminal* derives from the Latin word *limen* which means “threshold”, and which was used to declare and represent the intermediate stage of rites of passage by van Gennep ([1908]1960), the threshold of the transition from one category (place, time, social status) to another, in which one leaves behind his old identity and lies in the intermediate stage of ambiguity. It is a particularly powerful field (locus of power). This stage, was used by anthropologists, like Douglas (1966: 1975) and Leach (1964: 23–63) as an intermediate/liminal point between the two categories A and B, for the investigations of classification mechanisms (Werbner 2001: 138–140).

⁸⁷ It is characteristic that Mary Douglas uses the term *anomaly* to describe the capacity of this liminal stage, as it cannot be classified (1966: 37–38).

⁸⁸ The Virgin Mary’s power to mediate has also been documented in many songs (Κεφαλληνιάδης 1997: 23) and, chiefly, in folk prayers. In the folk religious system, a widespread apocalyptic text entitled “The Apocalypse of the Theotokos” clearly demonstrates the mediating role of the Virgin Mary. In this text the Virgin Mary is at the Mount of Olives and pleads the Archangel Michael to reveal the sinners in Hades (the underworld equal to hell). Accompanied by the Archangel Michael, the Virgin Mary visits hell where she sees thousands of sinners being tortured. She pleads for God’s mercy for those sinners. God refuses claiming that they have fallen by unforgivable sins. Then the Virgin Mary gathers all archangels, John the Baptist, the twelve Apostles, the prophets and martyrs to support her claim. God responds to her call and agrees to grant them days of rest from Easter until All Saints’ Day. For the content and the variants and the dissemination of this text, see Πολίτης 1874: 373–389; Pernot 1900; Λαμπάκης 1982: 46–49.

⁸⁹ “[...] Τσ’ ο Χριστός την ερωτά: -Τι ’χεις μητέρα μου, τί ’χεις, Παρθένα μου, τί ’χεις, Τσουρά του κόσμου; [...]” (Kasos, Μιχαηλίδης- Νουάρος 1932: 14–15).

⁹⁰ “[...] Ο υιός της της άκουσε. -Τι έχεις, μάνα μου, τι έχεις, μητέρα μου, τι έχεις, βασίλισσα του κόσμου; [...]” (Naxos, Ήμελλος 1962: 179).

⁹¹ “[...] Κι επήεν ο Χριστός κι είπεν την: -Τι έχεις, μάνα μου [...] - Αφέντη μου, Θεέ μου, κι αφέντη μου, Χριστέ μου [...]” (Rhodes, Παπαχριστοδούλου 1962: 72–73).

⁹² “[...] -Τι έχεις μητέρα μου; [...] -Α, μανούλα μου [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 354).

⁹³ “[...] -Είντα ’παθες, μανούλα μου, τζ’ επόνησες την τζεδαλούλλαν σου; -Έτο, γιε μου, Μονογενή μου [...]” (Cyprus, Ιωνάς 2007B: 356).

⁹⁴ According to Turner, this liminal stage which enhances the appearance of structures “Living through” can be defined “fructile chaos, fertile nothingness, a store house of possibilities, not by any means a random assemblage but a striving after new forms and structure, gestation process, a fetation of modes appropriate to and anticipating postliminal existence” (Turner 1991: 11).

⁹⁵ For this kind of mediation between text and contextual

⁹⁶ The second part of all narrative charms of all types with spiritual figures on leading roles, that concerns healing, has a rising rate of mobility and easily moves among charms of various types. Consequently, elements of the second part from the type of charms we examine here can be traced in other types. For example, the second type which is based on an encounter between a sacred figure and the personified cause of evil constitutes an independent type of charm against the evil eye with Christ playing a crucial role. The expulsion of a malevolent figure to the Mountain of Olives is a common pattern in the type of charms against bites by poisonous reptiles. Nonetheless, we cannot draw secure conclusions about one type of charms based solely on their second part.

⁹⁷ A similar characteristic introduction is found in charms against the evil eye in Crete: “Η Παναγία καθότανε λουσιμένη, χτενισμένη, κι ο φταρμός επέρασε [...]” (*The Virgin Mary sat on her throne, having her hair washed and combed and the evil eye passed by [...]*) (Crete, Λενακάκης 2007: 59). In those charms, which follow the pattern of an encounter between a sacred figure and evil in action, the Virgin Mary encounters the evil eye and shifts its direction (Λενακάκης 2007: 58–59). Such types derive from a fusion of charms of the type we examine with the charms that present Christ as the main figure, who encounters the malevolent agents and alters their direction. The pattern of the encounter of certain figures (mother and son) who work in the vineyard with women who have certain malformed external characteristics is found in literary charms (written in archaic language) that are used to protect the vineyard against the evil eye (Ιωνάς 2007A: 155–156, for such charms, see also Ιωνάς 2007B: 342–349 and Ionas 2005). The typical introduction to those charms though is totally different (Mother and son planted a vineyard in the desert) and the second part concerning treatment follows a totally different pattern.

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ARMENIAN AMULETS FROM THE COLLECTION OF ARMENIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESE IN BAGHDAD

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Abstract: This study is dedicated to the Armenian manuscript and printed Amulets¹ of the Armenian Diocese of Baghdad (DAOB). In this collection of early printings, there are two printed Amulets in scroll (Pr. n. 14, second half of the 19th century and Pr. n. 15, A.D. 1716). The third Amulet is a manuscript written in 1736 in the city of Erzurum (Karin) for a certain Ohan (Ms. n. 13). The scanned copies of these amulets are currently available through the website of Hill Museum and Manuscript Library (HMML).² Since this paper is the first study of these amulets, it presents them in terms of codicology and bibliographical study and discusses their decoration. The study of some iconographic details will help to reveal the practice of using

amulets and their meaning, considering them as a representation of Armenian “folklore-art”, since scribes and miniaturists were partly free to choose texts and decorate them, even they were mostly works of the priesthood.³

It should be noted that as artifacts of the same genre, having a purpose of protection of their owners using incantations and prayers, very often the content and decoration of these three Amulets have similarities. From this point of view, Ms. n. 13 (A.D. 1736) and Pr. n. 15 (A.D. 1716) are more relevant to each other both in content and, accordingly, in decoration. A selection of prayers and illustrations to them show almost the same structure, and for the printed Amulet, we can certainly argue that such structure was typical (but not limited) for the printed Amulets in the Armenian tradition from the 18th to 19th centuries. Despite some similarities with two previous Amulets, the Pr. n. 14 (19th century) represent another structure of content and its decoration. It is enriched with prayers and illustrations which does not exist in mentioned above two examples of the 18th century. E.g. engravings depicting the life of Christ (Annunciation, Birth of Jesus Christ, Baptism, Resurrection, etc.), or portraits of the evangelists, accompanied by the passages from their Gospels. Our research shows that the publishers of this Amulet had an eighteenth-century prototype and took an innovative approach using Western art engravings.

Key words: amulet, miniature, engraving, demon, al, saint, beard pulling, goat, early printing, protection, folklore.

INTRODUCTION

Since not all specialists in studies on charms, charmers and charming are familiar with Armenian amulets, we find useful an introductory note on handwritten amulets’ practice and role, as well as on the largest collections where these amulets currently are kept. Previously, the authors of this article had the opportunity to publish on this topic (see in Ghazaryan, Sargsyan 2016: 13–15).

Հմայիլներ (“Hmayilner”, ‘*Amulets*’) – a collection of spells – among the ancient Armenian manuscripts differ by their shape (a scroll), and miniatures. They are objects prepared with ‘magic’ prayers, aimed to preserve their holders from various misfortunes (Mescherskaya 1981: 96). The word Հմայիլ (“Hmail”) originates from Pahlavi (Old Persian) humav = ‘blessing’ (Malxasean 1944: 113, Ačařyan 1977: 103). The scribes called the collection of spells Հմայիլ (“Hmail”), Համայիլ (“Hamail”) or Կիպրիանոս (“Ciprianos”), Կպրիանոս (“Cprianos”), Նիսիթագիր (“Niatağir”).⁴ As a rule, by the name “Cyprianos” are called the amulets which include the story of the bishop Cyprian (3rd–4th

centuries). The story tells that Cyprian was a mage who commanded many demons and devils. Later he converted to Christianity (Ghazaryan 2014: 243-264).

The roll is the oldest form for magic miscellanies and its roots go back to old magic experience. People used to believe that rolled prayers or maledictions cannot be touched by outside spiteful influence and, thus, acquire great power (Mescherskaya 1981: 96). This is the reason why the oldest form of Armenian amulets or magical miscellanies is a roll or ribbon. In the Armenian tradition, amulets are of different sizes: the small ones are less than a metre, and the longest one is 2776.7 cm in length (National Library of France, BnF, Arménien 348). The earliest examples of Armenian amulets in scroll which are known to us belong to the 15th century. The dated oldest one is from 1428, and is kept in Matenadaran (Yerevan, Armenian Amulet 116, see in Ghazaryan 2012: 147-61).

The biggest collection of amulets in scroll is also in Matenadaran (Armenia; 560). There are also amulets in the collections of Holy Saviour Cathedral in New Julfa (Iran; 57, see Minasean 1983-1984; Ghazaryan 2019: 460-67), in the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin (Armenia; 46, see in C'uc'ak Mayr Atof Surb Eĵmıacni nor stac'vac ĵefagreri: 1952: 59-60; 1961: 59; 1962: 63; 1963: 61-62; 1970: 58-59; 1971: 61-62; 1971: 46; 1975: 60-63), in the libraries of Mxitarists' Congregations in Venice (44, see Fejdit 1986; Tĕr-Vardanean 2013: 62-98) and in Vienna (11, see Voskean 1963: 383-5, 879-80; Sĕkulean 1983: 378-9, 1000), in the History Museum of Armenia in Yerevan (13), in the British Library in London (13, see Nersessian 2012, v. II, 1077-1110, v. I, pl. XXVIII), and in other state and private collections.

The collection of Armenian amulets in Iraq is smaller than the collections mentioned above, however it is important evidence for the existence of Armenians in Iraq. So we consider a historical overview necessary. The presence of Armenians in Iraq has been known since ancient times. Armenians settled mainly in Baghdad, Basra, Mosul and other cities. In the 14th century, an Armenian community and Bishopric were already established in Baghdad under the rule of the Tatars (Alpöyaĉean 2003: 29). Later, in 1623 with the capture of Baghdad by the Persian Shah Abbas the First, and then in 1638 by the Ottoman Sultan Murat IV, the number of Armenians in the city increased significantly (Alpöyaĉean 2003: 35, 69). Groups of Armenian immigrants who survived the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire in 1915 found refuge in Iraq, and in a number of other Middle Eastern countries. The Diocese of the

Armenian Apostolic Church in Iraq was formed in 1944, and the seat of the Bishopric is the Saint Gregory the Illuminator Church in Baghdad (Sargsyan, Petrosyan 2003: 270). During migration, and sometimes forced resettlements, the Armenians carried with them manuscripts and books of various contents, in particular, amulets for their own protection, and the Iraqi-Armenians are no exception. This may be one of the reasons for the existence of Armenian manuscripts and books in Iraq.

Studies on Armenian manuscripts and early printed books stored in Iraq are still scarce. Only the descriptions of a few manuscripts are known to us from the Saint Trinity Church of Baghdad (K̄iwrtēan 1932: 347–8)⁵ and from the Saint Astvatsatsin (Mother of God) Church of Basra (Samuēlean 1905: 326–9).⁶ In this regard, the study of the manuscript and printed amulets of the Armenian Diocese of Baghdad is very important, since it makes these artifacts known in the scientific environment and represents the first attempt of their study.

THE MANUSCRIPT AMULETS

The Amulet (Appendix 1) is illustrated with scenes and figures from the Old and New Testaments, as well as with images of saints protecting from evil forces, and of an Armenian saint: the portrait of Saint Gregory the Illuminator, the founder of the Armenian Apostolic Church (A.D. 239–325/6), and the first official head of the Armenian Apostolic Church (since 302). The sequence of miniatures of this Amulet begins with a scene of the temptation of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, followed by the adoration of the Magi. Through these two subjects, the miniaturist seems to have emphasized the well-known connection between the Old and New Testaments: Adam – Christ (New Adam), Eve – Virgin Mary (see Appendix 1, I–II). Then there are images of the most powerful intercessory saints in the Armenian tradition: Saint Mother of God with Child Jesus in Her arms, John the Baptist, Saint Stephen the Protomartyr and Saint Gregory the Illuminator (see Appendix 1, III–VI). They are followed by miniatures representing the sacrifice and salvation of human sins: the Crucifixion of Christ, the apocalyptic scene – the Lord, the twelve Apostles and the Lamb of God in the centre, and the Sacrifice of Isaac (see Appendix 1, VII–XII). The prayers of protection from the evil forces are accompanied by images of the archangel Gabriel, the saviour of the deceased, of archangel Michael, the dragon-slayer, and Saint Sargis (Sergius), a saint widely venerated by the Armenians for his swift help (see Appendix 1, XIII–XV). The function

of the Archangel Michael fighting the dragon was widespread throughout the Christian world, while the depiction of the two other saints has an interesting interpretation in Armenian tradition. According to the Armenian version of the Lives of the Saints, the worship of the Archangel Gabriel by the Armenians is known for the fact that he brought about the salvation of people, being the courier of the heavenly king (Awgerean 1810, 804–5). The Holy Scriptures describe the Last Judgement with seven angels, to whom were given seven trumpets (Revelation 8:2). One of these angels is the Archangel Gabriel, and in Armenian miniature art, his image is depicted in front of the resurrecting dead, sometimes accompanied by the inscriptions “the trumpets of Gabriel are blowing”, “Gabriel’s trumpet”, etc. (Sargsyan 2018: 149–50). Such a mission given to the Archangel Gabriel helps to interpret his role in this miniature as the saviour of the deceased. The other saint, Sargis, is depicted on horseback. It is known that Saint Sargis, after leaving Cappadocia, received the hospitality of the Armenian king, Tiran, and then, together with his son Martiros,⁷ he was moved to Persia, where he was tortured and buried in the city Hamian (late 362 or early 363 A.D., Awgerean 1810: 116, 124). Later, as the Armenian version of the Lives of the Saints testifies, Mesrop vardapet Mashtots, the founder of the Armenian alphabet (405 A.D.), moved the body of Saint Sargis to Armenia and reburied it in the city called Karbi (Awgerean 1810: 124). The same source testifies that the veneration of Saint Sargis was widespread not only among Armenians, but throughout the entire Christian East (Awgerean 1810: 124). The last miniature (see Appendix 1, XVI, ill. 1), the image of a saint chiding with an al (a demon), completes the theme of protection from evil forces.

These miniatures are simple in terms of artistic expression and iconography, but they contain some interesting details, from among which we will discuss the image of a saint fighting a demon alongside a Prayer for the disappearance of evil demons (Վասն քանալոյ չար սյոսոն թաղալի). This evil demon called in Armenian al (ալ) is known as a creature that is harmful to childbirth and new-borns (Harutyunyan 2006: 302). Father Lewond Ališan and Frederic Feydit studied the interpretation of the word al. According to Father Ališan al or als means a deep abyss and is originated from the Germanic word “hell”, which in Armenian is “դժոխք” (Ališan 1895: 222). Feydit, in his turn, provides a broader study of the meaning of the word. He agrees with linguists Hračya Ačarian and Stepan Malxaseanč, that the word al has no Armenian origin and is related to the Iranian word al, which means red (Feydit 1973: 230). The author

also draws parallels between the Armenian demon *al* and folkloric beliefs from other cultures. He identifies it with Iranian or Kurdish *Albasti*, the Romanian *Avestitza* or *Alvestitza* (Feydit 1973: 237, Mazilu, Timotin 2017: 528–42), Egyptian *Alabasdrina* and others (Feydit 1973: 233–40). In contrast to the beliefs of various Balkan, Slavic, Arab and other peoples, where this demon appears as a female evil creature (Lyavdanski, Toporkov 2017: 13), in the Armenian traditional seems to be a male demon, since in medieval Armenian handwritten incantation prayers very often it is described as “a man ...” (այր մի ..., (Ališan 1895: 224, Harutyunyan 2006: 306). Incidentally, it should be noted that in the later folklore tradition, *al* always appears as a female cannibal creature that could transform into various animals (Harutyunyan 2006: 306).⁸ This folkloric belief can also be explained by the use of synonyms given to *als* as female evil mythical spirits: ալիսունուլ (ali-crone) (Tadevosyan, Kotsinyan 2017: 328), ալիսունունլ (alipučuk), ալայիմ (alayim) (Sukiasyan 2009: 11). Since our Amulet with its text and illustration has a structure typical for medieval Armenian amulets, and given the continuity of medieval Armenian amulets till the 18th century, we tend to think that we are dealing with a male demon *al*.

The depiction of this demon and of the saint is extremely important for understanding the function of this Amulet. Armenian painters portrayed demons in various iconographic forms. From this point of view, rich material is represented by the drawings of a manuscript created in 1616 (Venice, Bibliotheca Marciana, Ms. Nr. 210), which contains 72 images of demons with textual descriptions (Macler 1928: 29–42, figs. 310–77). It is noteworthy that none of these images exactly correspond to the image of the demon we are interested in.⁹ In some cases, there are goat-headed figures (e.g. Macler 1928, figs. 317, 322, 339, 354). In the Amulet described here, the artist depicted the image of a demon standing upright, with a goat’s head and brass fingernails, although it is described in the text as follows: and he looked like a wild-boar (և էր տեսիլ նրա իբրև վարազի ...). Similar images of *al* can be found in other amulets, for example in the Amulet A.D. 1724 (Library of Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia in Antelias, Ms. Nr. 238) or in an Amulet of the Library of the Ducean Cultural House in Bucharest (Ms. n. 17) (Ghazaryan, Sargsyan 2016: 22). Father Ališan presents two reproductions with such iconography of the demons calling them *ipła* and *al*, without mentioning the source (Ališan 1895: 221, 223).

How can we explain the depiction of the goat as a symbol of evil forces? The image of the goat is well-known since pre-Christian art. According to T. Wildridge when the pagan Gods were skilfully turned into Christian devils, we find the goat as a Satanic form (Wildridge 1899: 73). In the Armenian oral tradition, there is a remarkable description of a goat in the Armenian oral epic *Daredevils of Sassoun* (or *David of Sassoun*).¹⁰

The Great Idol in the guise of a goat,
Came over his head and began to grunt;
He would not let him sleep all night.
This he kept up for a month.
At the end of the month,
Baghdasar became sick with jaundice and was morose.¹¹

In this epic one can read ‘*devas*’ as a synonym for the word ‘*idol*’.¹² And it is noteworthy that with the appearance of the Idol Baghdasar became sick. The words *ṭpṭutiwn* and *ṭpṭotel*, which come from the word *ṭpṭa*, were used as synonyms for illness and to get sick in Armenian (Feydit 1973: 228; Malxaseanc 1944: 127). According to Father Ališan, *ṭpṭa* always appears with the evil force called *al* (Ališan 1895: 222).

The depiction of evil ones in the form of a goat can also be explained by the Gospel text: “But when the Son of God comes in His glory ... He will separate them [all the nations] one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will set the sheep on His right, but the goats on the left” (Matthew 25:31–33).¹³ So, in Christian understanding, the image of the goat is identified with the sinner, which itself coincides with the evil forces.

Al is usually depicted holding a “knife made of iron” (երկթի կարոց) in his hand (see Harutyunyan 2006: 137, 1(159) XVII 4). In our miniature, he seems to have two sacks in his hand, which is probably a symbolic depiction of the lungs described in the text, which is the food of the *al*:

Ես եմ այն չար, գոր կորուսանեմ զմանուկն յորովայնի մօրն և զխսսսսայն առնումք և մեր կերակուրն այն է

I am the evil *al* who looses the baby in the mother’s womb, takes the lungs, and that is our food.

The lungs are more clearly visible in the hand of a lord of demons in the Amulet of DAOB, Pr. n. 14, ill. 2.

The text mentions the names of three saints: Peter (Պետրոս), Paul (Պողոս) and Silas (Շիղա). Who is depicted in this miniature from these three saints? Very often, the saint fighting against the demon is Saint Sisinnius in Greco-Byzantine, South Slavic and Romanian magic literature, while the name of Saint Sisinnius occurs only sporadically in Aramaic, Syriac, Hebrew, and in Jewish traditions (Lyavdanski, Toporkov 2017: 14). Other saints also act in Christian charms, and one of them is the Archangel Michael (Badalanova Geller 2015: 178–9). In the Armenian tradition, both Saint Sisinnius and the Archangel Michael, along with other saints are known as protectors of a new-born child from the demon (Tadevosyan, Kotsinyan 2017: 333–5). The only saint depicted in the miniature presented here is Saint Peter, whose name is mentioned first in the text. Saint Peter pulls the beard of the evil demon with one hand, and with the other brings the sword close to the demon, as if cutting its beard. The sword is like tongues of fire. A similar topos can be found in various Armenian charms:

Յայնժամ հանին սուրբն Աստուծոյ զսուրն հրէղէն

At that time the saints of God drew their fiery sword (Harutyunyan 2006: 131, 1(159) IV 25).

Եւ սուրբն հանին զհրէղէն սուրբն իւրեանց

And the saints drew their fiery swords (Harutyunyan 2006: 132, 1(159) V 31).

The use of the sword in order to protect the new-born child or the woman in labour found an interesting interpretation in the ethnographic material. In the Armenian folk tradition of childbirth, it was customary to place a sword next to the bed or under the pillow of the woman in labour to protect the baby's crib or the four walls of the room from evil forces (Harutyunyan 2006: 302–3).

The gesture of pulling the beard of evil is an interesting detail. It is depicted in various arts, also in Armenian, and there are different interpretations of its meaning (Endoltseva, Vinogradov 2016: 88–98, Jacoby 1987: 65–85). The role of the beard pullers is mainly played by secular people with negative characteristics or people with positive characteristics, sometimes even saints (Endoltseva, Vinogradov 2016: 90). In this miniature, we are dealing with the

latter version, but the saint does not pull the beard of a man, which is often found in the iconography; instead, he pulls the beard of a goat in the role of an evil al. Considering that a beard is also an expression of sin and impurity (Jacoby 1987: 65), it can be assumed that the saint, pulling the beard of evil and drawing the sword closer to him, is trying to chide and kill the evil al. The meaning of beard pulling is interpreted in the Armenian national epic *Daredevils of Sassoun*. According to the epic poem, the Caliph of Baghdad, a negative character, notices the growing power of Sanasar and Baghdasar, two brothers with positive attributes, and says to himself: “I know that when they grow up they will hang from my beard and cause me no end of trouble”.¹⁴ Of course, in this description the gesture is not repeated directly as in the miniature, but the pulling of or hanging from the beard represents the same action.

THE EARLY PRINTED AMULETS IN SCROLL

Just like early printed Armenian books, Amulets in scroll form are of special interests by virtue of both their contents and their form, which derives from the tradition of Armenian handwritten scroll-shaped Amulets (Ghazaryan 2018a: 70). Usually, the contents of early printed Armenian Amulets represent prayers to various saints and passages from the Gospels.¹⁵ These texts are decorated with scenes illustrating the Holy Scriptures (Ghazaryan 2018a: 70). Currently, the number of identified Armenian early printed Amulets between 1659 and 1731 is eighteen, and they were produced in four printing houses: three in Constantinople and another one, the location of which is unknown (Ghazaryan 2018a: 69–99, Ghazaryan 2013b: 13–14, Ghazaryan 2018b: 73–85). It is possible that new Amulets may appear in the future, which will enrich our knowledge about early printed Armenian Amulets.

The Pr. n. 15 (Appendix 2) was printed in 1716 (Armenian era 1165) in the publishing house of Grigor Marzvaneci in Constantinople. There are missing parts at the beginning and in the middle of the Amulet. This happens very often with Amulets, as they were held by the owners and repeatedly re-read for ritual purposes.

We do not know of any completely preserved example of this Amulet. Originally, it would be over 660 cm in length. The Amulet is decorated with eleven engravings¹⁶ (Appendix 2, I–XI), five headpieces and nine ornamented letters. These gravures belong to the first Armenian engraver Grigor Marzvaneci.¹⁷ Six Amulets in scroll are known from the printing house of Marzvaneci.¹⁸

The amulet consists of sixteen prayers¹⁹ and some of these texts are accompanied by engravings describing the text.

The second printed Amulet (Pr. n. 14, Appendix 3) was printed by an unknown printing house at the second half of the 19th century. It is decorated with twenty-three gravures (Appendix 3, I–XIII), and two headpieces: one with three angels on their knees in a gesture of prayer, and the other with two angels on their knees leaning on the tomb of Christ. The Amulet consists of thirty prayers.

Although the date 1717 (A.E. 1166) is mentioned in the colophon of the Amulet,²⁰ there are several reasons to question the date stated in the colophon:

1. The paper of the Amulet is very thin, without watermarks or waterlines. Such paper is typical of the second half of the 19th century.

2. The letters and the style of printing are not typical for the early printing period of Armenian book production (1512–1800). They are closer to the printed products of the 19th–20th centuries.

3. Another important argument, which allows us to assign the date of the Amulet to the 19th century is the signed European-style gravures. Some of them are signed: “Laurent et De Berny” (ill. 3). These gravures were engraved in the Deberny printing house in Paris. The Deberny house is the heir to Balzac’s printing project, a project that he financed thanks to Madame Louis Antoinette Laure De Berny in 1826.²

Below are the descriptions of the above-mentioned handwritten and early printed Amulets in scroll.

Appendix 1

Armenian Orthodox Diocese of Baghdad, Iraq

Ms. n. 13

AMULET IN SCROLL

ARZRUM (=ERZRUM, KARIN)

1736

OWNER: Ohan.

MATERIAL: paper. SIZE: 699.4x10-10.5 cm (composed of 15 pieces²² (14. 4+15.7+49.5+18+53.4+47+48.5+48.5+36.6+60+60.5+61+61.8+57+34.5) glued together). WRITING: one column (7.8-8 cm). SCRIPT: notrgir.²³

ILLUMINATION: Colours: red, green, blue, orange, rosy, violet, brown, black, bronze (partly missing) and silver (partly missing).

STATE: Satisfactory. The amulet is incomplete and there are losses at the beginning and at the middle. The edges of the Amulet are worn. The manuscript was restored at the end of the 19th century, during which a cloth was glued along the verso of the Amulet.

CONTENTS AND ILLUMINATIONS

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I. The Adoration of Magi

///

II. The Temptation of Adam and Eve

Note: The miniature II must be before the miniature I. It has been glued on the wrong place during restoration undertaken at the end of the 19th century.

1. [Prayer of Nerses Shnorhali – “In faith I confess”] ... to the servant of the God Vardan (19th century, shlagir).

[Աղօթք տեառն Ներսէս հայրապետի ասացեալ – Հաւատով խոստովանիմ ի երկիր պագանեմ ...] Արարիչ հրեշտակաց եւ մարդկան եւ ամենայն եղելոց ... Արքայ երկնաւոր տուր ինձ զարքայ[ութիւն]/// [զղշա] ցայց ի մեղաց եւ գործեցից զ[ար]դարութիւն ... Փառք եւ երկրպագութիւն անբաժանելի սրբոյ Երրորդութեանդ, յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից. ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Վարդանիմ:

Note: The unit, except the end, is divided into 14 rhombuses and a triangular part. The parts have vegetal decorations.

2. Gospel of Saint Matthew (15: 21–28)

Սրբոյ Աւետարանիս ըստ Մատթէոսի (ԺԵ. 21–28) - Եւ եղեալ անտի Յիսուս զնաց ի կողմանս Տիւրոսի եւ Սիդոնի ... Եւ բժշկեցաւ դուստր նորին ի նմին ժամու:

3. Gospel of Saint Mark (1: 1–8)

Սրբոյ Աւետարան ըստ Մարկոսի (Ա. 1–8) - Սկիզբն Աւետարանի Յիսուսի Զրիստոսի՝ Որդւոյն Աստուծոյ որպէս եւ գրեալ է Եսայի մարգարէ ... Ես մկրտեմ զձեզ ջրով եւ նա մկրտեսցէ զձեզ Հոգւով Սրբով:

4. Gospel of Saint Luke (9: 37–44)

Սրբոյ Աւետարան ըստ Դուկասու (Թ. 37–44) - Եւ եղև ի վաղիւն մինչ իջանէին նոքա ի լեռնէ անտի ... եւ զարմանային ամենքեան ի վերս մեծամեծացն Աստուծոյ:

5. Gospel of Saint John (4: 43–54) ... Help Vardan. Amen (19th century, shġagir).

Սրբոյ Աւետարանիս ըստ Յօհաննու (Գ. 43–54) - Եւ յետ երկուց աւուրց ել անտի եւ գնաց ի Գալիլայայ ... զայս դարձեալ երկրորդ նշանս արար Յիսուս եկեալ ի Հրէաստանէ ի Գալիլայ: Վարդանին օգնական եղից. ամէն:

III. Madonna with the Child Jesus in Her arms

6. Prayer to Madonna ... always help and protect the servant of the God Vardan (19th century, shġagir) ... Amen.

Աղերս Աստուածածնայ - Աստուածածին ամէնօրինեալ զպաղատանս մեր ընկալ ... ի փորձանաց զմեզ փրկել, մանաւանդ ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Վարդանին, օգնական եւ պահպան եղիցի միշտ եւ հանապազ ամէն ժամու. ամէն:

IV. Saint John the Baptist.

7. Prayer to John the Baptist ... protect and save the servant of the God Vardan (19th century, shġagir).

Աղերս Յովհաննու - Այլեւ բարեխօսութեամբ սրբոյն Յովհաննու Մկրտչին ... եւ այլ ամէն սուրբ մարգարէիցն բարեխօսութեամբ պահեա՛ եւ փրկեա՛ զծառայս Աստուծոյ՝ Վարդանին յամէն չար փորձանաց եւ որոգայթից. ամէն:

V. Saint Stephen the Protomartyr.

8. Prayer to Stephen the Protomartyr ... to the servant of the God Vardan (19th century, shġagir).

Աղերս Ստ[ե]փաննոսի – Ի քէն հայցեմք արտասուագին Նախավկայ Տեառն Արարչին ... փառաւորել զոյսն անքն<ն>ին, մանաւանդ ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Վարդանին:

VI. Saint Gregory the Illuminator.

9. Prayer to Gregory the Illuminator ... to the servant of the God Vardan (19th century, shġagir). Amen.

Աղերս Լուսաւորչին – Խնդրեմք ի քէն հայր պատուական, Լուսաւորիչ ազգի մարդկան ... եւ ի բարին առաջնորդեա, մանաւանդ ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Վարդանին. ամէն:

Note: The units 6–9 and the miniatures III–VI are into the circles. The parts, which are out of circles, have vegetal decorations.

VII. The Crucifixion

10. Prayer against the spells of demons and witches and sects, and for the successful judgment and pleasure and lucky.

Աղօթք վասն կապանաց դիւաց եւ կախարդաց եւ աղանդաւորաց եւ վասն դատաստանի յաջողելոյ եւ վասն քաղցրութեան եւ երեսբախտութեան – Թագաւոր հօր, ապաւէն ծարաւեոց, փրկիչ նեղելոց ... պարգևիչ բարեաց մարդկան, ամէնառատ, ամենեսեան պատրաստեցո զմեզ անխափ[ան] զպէտս հոգւոյ եւ մարմնական. ամէն:

VIII. The Lord

IX. Six apostles

X. The Lamb of God

XI. Six apostles

Note: The miniatures VIII–XI are in circles surrounded by floral ornaments. The apostles are in twos in every line.

XII. The sacrifice of Isaac

11. Thanksgiving to Saint Abraham and to the Lord's saint signs ... protect the servant of the God Vardan (19th century, shlagir). Amen.

Մաղթանք սուրբ Հօրն Աբրահամու նահապետի եւ սուրբ նշանացն Քրիստոսի Աստուծոյ մերոյ – Եւ էառ Աբրահամ զորդին իւր՝ զԻսահակ եւ տարաւ ի գնելիս իւր... եւ Մահակ ծերացեալ պետք ծաղկեցաւ եւ հանգեալ խաղաղութեամբ ի Քրիստոս:

Բարեխօսութեամբ սուրբ եւ աստուածային նշանացն Քրիստոսի Աստուծոյ մերոյ, եւ անբարբառ բարեխօսացս վասն ազգի մարդկան ... որ ի զալստեան Տեառն յառաջագոյն գայ. սոցին բարեխօսութեամբն պահեա՛ Քրիստոս Աստուած զծառայս քո՝ Վարդանին. ամէն:

Note: item 11 consists of two prayers, which are written in slanting-intersecting lines, except the title and the end of second prayer. The rhombuses, which emerge from the slanting-intersecting lines, are decorated with floral ornaments.

XIII. Archangel Gabriel takes the soul of the deceased

12. Prayer to Archangels for the protection ... to the servant of God Vardan (19th century, shlagir).

Աղօթք հրեշտակաց Աստուծոյ վասն պահպանութեան - Գաբրիէլ, Միքայէլ, Ռաֆայէլ ... չորացուցէք եւ փայտ դարձուցէք ի դիմաց ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Վարդանին:

13. Prayer for lucky travel

Աղօթք վասն ճանապարհի յաջողման գործոց – Կենդանամէլ, Կենդանամայէլ, որ էք սպասաւորք Աստուծոյ ... եւ ի բարի վանառս շահաւոր արարէք սմա անուամբ Հօր եւ Որդւոյ եւ Հոգւոյն Սրբոյ. ամէն:

14. Prayer against the evil fear and the evil tongue ... the servant of the God Vardan. Amen (19th century, shlagir).

Աղօթք չար նագարի եւ չար լեզուի եւ այլոցն – Հրանիւթ, Հրափայլ, Համատուն, Համակէզ, որ էք սպասաւորք Աստուծոյ... չար աչք եւ չար նիւթ եւ չար լեզու եւ չար խորհուրդ եւ չար զգայարանք պատառի եւ խաւար դառնայ ի դիմաց ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Վարդանին. ամէն:

15. Thanksgiving to the holy kings ... protect the servant of the God Vardan, and help him. Amen (19th century, shlagir).

Մաղթանք սուրբ թագաւորացն – Այլեւ բարեխօսութեամբ սուրբ թագաւորացն Եգեկեա, Սեղեկեա, Մանասէի, Արգարու... եւ այլոց սուրբ թագաւորացն եւ աստուածաւեր իշխանացն բարեխօսութեամբն, Տէր Աստուած, պահեա՛ զճառայս քո՝ Վարդանին, օգնական եղիցի. ամէն:

16. Prayer to the Holy Pokas patriarch... save your servant Oh[an] (the name of the first owner is erased by ink-line) Vardan (19th century, shlagir) from all dangers.

Աղօթք սրբոյն Փոկասու հայրապետին – Սուրբ եպիսկոպոսն Փոկաս ինդդեաց յԱստուծոյ եւ ասէ, եթե՛ն որ յիշեսցէ զիս ի վերա ծովու, փրկեա՛, Տէր Աստուած... ազատեա՛ յամենայն վտանգից զճառայս քո՝ Օհ[անին] Վարդանին:

17. Prayer for lucky speech and business... to your servant Vardan (the name is written upon the name of the first owner, 19th century, shlagir) ... Vardan (19th century, shlagir).

Աղօթք յաջողման բանի եւ գործոյ ծառայիս Աստուծոյ – Յայնժամ բացան երկինք եւ իջին ԿԶ. (66) հրեշտակք ... ի ծառային քո՝ Վարդանին ... առնէմ զամէն մարդոյ սիրտ, քան զնույշն անոյշ, քան զաքարն քաղցր ի դիմաց ծառային իմոյ՝ Վարդանին:

XIV. Saint George on horseback slaying the dragon

18. Prayer to Saint soldier George... protect the servant of the God Vardan (19th century, shlagir).

Աղօթք սրբոյն Գէորգայ զինաւորին – Բարեխօսութեամբ սրբոյն Գէորգայ զինաւորին, յետ բազում չարչարանացն ... բարեխօսութեամբ սրբուհւոյ Աստուածածնին եւ սրբոյն Գէորգայ զինաւորին եղիցի պահպանութիւն ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Վարդանին:

19. Prayer for childbirth ... give a child to your servant Vardan (19th century, shlagir).

Աղօթք վասն զաւակի ծնանելոյ ծառայի Աստուծոյ – Նայեա՛, Տէր, զաղաչանս ծառայի քոյ եւ աղախնոյս, որպէս հսնեցար զաղաչանս Աննայի ... նոյնպէս եւ տուր զաւակ ծառայի եւ աղախնոյս քոյ Վարդանին ... զի դու, Տէր, օգնեցեր ինձ եւ մխիթարեցեր զիս:

20. Prayer for pain in the eyes ... enlighten the eyes of your servant Vardan (19th century, shlagir).

Աղօթք վասն աչաց ցաւի ծառայի Աստուծոյ – Երանելի սրբուհիս այս Փոտինոս խնդրեաց ի յԱստուծոյ եւ ասէ՛ Տէր Աստուած Յիսուս Քրիստոս, տո՛ւր ինձ եւ զայս շնորհս ... լուսաւորեա՛ զաչս ծառայի քոյ Վարդանին: Լույս տուր, Տէր, զաչաց իմոց, զի երբէք ննջեցից ի մահ. ամէն:

XV. Saint Sargis on horseback

21. A wish for Saint Sargis General and his son Martiros... protect the servant of the God Vardan (19th century, shlagir).

Սաղթանք Սրբոյն Սարգսի զօրավարին եւ որդւոյ նորա՝ Մարտիրոսին («ՏԵՐԳ ՄԵԾԻ ՎԿԱԻ») – Երջանիկ մեծ զօրական եւ Քրիստոսի յաղթօղ վկայն, գլուխ զօրացն Առստանդեայն, քաջ սպառազէն սուրբդ Սարգիս... այն, որ օրհնեալ է արարած, Հօրն փառք, Որդւոյն պատիւ եւ Սուրբ Հոգւոյն այժմ, յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից. ամէն: Եղիցի պահպանութիւն ծառայի Աստուծոյ Վարդանին:

XVI. Saint Peter chides the demon - al.

22. Prayer for disappearance of evil demons ... and do not enter the house, especially the house of the servant of the God Vardan, Amen (19th century, shlagir).

Վասն ջքանալոյ չար այսոցն թպղայից – Սուրբ Պետրոս եւ սուրբն Պօղոս եւ սուրբն Շիղա երթային յեզր ծովուն դէմ ելեալ այն չար եւ դժնդիկ կենդանին ... ուր այս անուանք յիշէն, անդ ո՛չ մերձենամք ի ծառայն Աստուծոյ եւ ի տունն այն ո՛չ մտանեմք, մանաւանդ ծառայի Աստուծոյ՝ Վարդանին. ամէն:

23. Prayer for persecuting the evil demon and the evil devils... the servant of the God Vardan (19th century, shlagir).

Վասն հալածման պիղծ այսոցն, չար արքից – Սուրբն Սիովն եւ սուրբն Սիսի եւ սուրբն Սիսիանէ ի յորս էին ելեալ ... ո՛չ մտանեմք ի տունն այն, եւ ո՛չ ի ծառայն Աստուծոյ Վարդանին:

24. Prayer of Saint Gregory of Narek (Extract from “Book of Lamentations”, Chapter 41) for protection from nocturnal horrors.

Աղօթք սրբոյն Գրիգորի Նարեկացւոյն ասացեալ վասն պահպանութեան գիշերային զարհուրանաց (Մատենան Ողբերգութեան, Բան ԽԱ.) – Որդի Աստուծոյ կենդանւոյ, օրհնեալդ ամենայնի... եւ ամենայնի լրմամբ օրհնեալդ ի բարձունս եւ քեզ ընդ Հօր եւ Սուրբ Հոգւոյդ այժմ եւ միշտ եւ յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից. ամէն:

25. Prayer for the protection of the servant of the God ... The servant of the God Vardan (19th century, shlagir).

Աղօթք վասն պահպանութենէ ծառայիս Աստուծոյ – Աղաչեմ զքեզ, Տէր, եւ գոհանամ զանհաս մարդասիրութենէդ, որ արժանի արարեր զիս՝ զանարժան ծառայս ... եւ գոհութեամբ փառաւորեցից զամենագոր տէրութեանդ. այժմ եւ միշտ եւ յաւիտեանս. ամէն: Ծառայիս Աստուծոյ՝ Վարդանին:

26. Prayer of Saint Gregory of Narek (Extract from “Book of Lamentations”, Chapter 94) for protection from nocturnal horrors ... the servant of the God Vardan /// (one line was erased). Amen (19th century, shlagir).

Աղօթք սրբոյն Գրիգորի Նարեկացւոյն վասն զարհուրանաց գիշերոյ (Մատենան Ողբերգութեան, Բան ԳԳ.) – Աստուած յաւիտենական, բարերար եւ ամենակալ, ստեղծիչ լուսոյ, եւ յօրինիչ գիշերոյ ... եւ անուն քո կոչեցեալ է ի վերա ծառայից քոց եւ քեզ ընդ Հօր, Հոգւովդ Սրբով փառք եւ իշխան]ութիւն [յաւ]իտեանս յաւիտենից. ամէն: Ծառայիս [Աստուծոյ] Վարդանի[ն] /// . ամէն:

COLOPHON ABOUT THE TIME OF WRITING BY THE SCRIBE

“The holy protection letters (=Amulet: one of the synonyms of the name in Armenian tradition) were rewritten in 1195 of the Armenian era (=1736) in the city Arzrum”.

«Գրեցաւ սուրբ պահպանութեան գիրս ՌՃՁԵ. (1736) թվին Հայոց ի քաղաքս Արզրում»:

ANNOTATION: At the 2nd piece in marginal part: “DAOB-00013”. At the beginning of verso, glued: rectangular, printed in 3 colours (red, blue and black), “تاولص DAOB_00013 دادغب - سكدوثوالا نمرأالا ةينارطم تاوطوخم”, “تم عنللا عولمم سي سرن سي دقلا (arabic, Manuscripts of the Armenian Orthodox Diocese of Baghdad / DAOB_00013 / The prayers of Saint Nerses Shnorhali, 24 Centre Numérique des Manuscrits Orientaux Dominicains – Mossoul – Fondé

en 1990”. At the beginning of the verso, on glued paper with black pencil we find: “GDz 1” (Գձ 1).

Appendix 2

Armenian Orthodox Diocese of Baghdad, Iraq

Pr. n. 15

AMULET IN SCROLL

(early printed)

[CONSTANTINOPLE]

1716

PRINTING HOUSE, ARTIST: [Grigor Marzvaneci]. OWNER: Melkon.

MATERIAL: paper. SIZE: 348x10 cm (composed of 9 pieces: 22.9+40.8+40.3+40.3+40.8+40.3+40.3+40.3+42). WRITING: one column (8.5 cm). SCRIPT: bolorigir (8 dpi).

Note: For the size of the Amulet is used another Amulet of the same publishing house (early printed Amulet in scroll, Pr. n. 19, Matenadaran).

ILLUSTRATION: Ornamented letters: bird-shaped (eight), zoomorphic (one).

Note: Subsequently, the engravings are partially coloured in blue, yellow, orange, pink (discoloured), brown, and the marginal parts are partially coloured in yellow.

STATE: Satisfactory. The printing is incomplete and there are missing parts in the beginning and in the middle. The edges of the beginning of the Amulet are worn. The paper gradually changes its colour and becomes yellowish with moisture. Now the Amulet composed of nineteen separate pieces.

CONTENTS AND ILLUMINATIONS

///

1. Gospel of Saint Luke (6: 19) ... And protect the servant of God.

[Մրթոյ Աւետարանիս որ ըստ Դուկասու (Չ. 19)] - /// [Եւ բժշկէ]ր
զամենեսին: Եւ իցի պ[ահապան] ծառայիս Աստուծոյ:

Headpiece

2. Gospel of Saint John (5: 1–9) ... And protect the servant of God Melkon (notrgir).

Սրբոյ Աւետարանիս որ ըստ Յօհաննու (Ե. 1–9) - Յետ այսորիկ տօն էր հրէից... եւ էր շարաթ աւուրն այնմիկ: Եւ լիցի պահա[պան] ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Մէլքօին:

Headpiece

Note: The left part of the headpiece is lost.

3. Excerpt from Gregory of Narek “Book of Lamentations” (Chapter 12) ... **Melkon** (notrgir). *To Atlas and his sons* (19th century, notrgir).

[Աղօթք Գրիգորի Նար]եկացւոյն, Մաղթամբ [գորաւորք ընդդէմ ամենայն չար]եաց եւ փորձութեանց (Նարեկ, Բան ԺԲ.) – [Ընկալ քաղցրու]թեամբ Տէր Աստուած հգօր... եւ սթափեալ վերստին ի ննջմանէ ծանրութեանց/// Հոգեն[որոգ]/// ի քեզ արձանացեալ... զի դու փառաւորեալս յամենայն արարածոց յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից. ամէն: Մէլքօին: Աղասին ու իր որդոցն:

I. The Lamb of God

II. 12 apostles

Note: The miniatures I–II are into the circles. The apostles are in twos in every line. The parts that are outside the circles represent vegetal decorations.

4. [Prayer to the saint apostles] ... And protect Barseł, Guhar’s Zirō, Ałas, Melkon (notrgir), Karapet, Hakō, Suxō, Garux, Sargis (19th century, notrgir).

[Աղերս առ սուրբ առաքեալսն] - Անմահ գառինըն հրգօրի... փրկել ըզմեզ այսոց պրղծոց: Եւ լիցի պահապան Բարսէղին, Գուհարի Չիրօին, Աղասին, Մէլքին, Կարայալետին, Հակօին, Սուխօին, Գառուխին, Սարգիսին:

Headpiece

5. Excerpt from Gregory of Narek “Book of Lamentations” (Chapter 41) ... And protect the servant of God Melkon (notrgir).

Աղօթք գորաւոր սրբոյն Գրիգորի Նարեկա՛ (Նարեկ, Բան ԽԱ.) - Որդի Աստուծոյ կենդանւոյ, օրհնեալոյ յամենայնի... եւ քեզ ընդ Հօր եւ Հոգւոյդ Սրբոյ վայել է փառք յաւիտեանս. ամէն: Եւ լիցի պահապան Մէլքին:

III. Madonna with the Child Jesus in her arms

6. [Prayer to the Madonna by Mesrop vardapet Mashtots (Matenadaran, Amulet in scroll, Ms. n. 498, 10)] ... Sargis, Ałas, Guhar (19th century, notrgir) ...

[Աղօթք Մեսրօպայ վարդապետի ասացեալ առ Սուրբ Աստուածածինն (ՄՄ Հմյլ 498, Ժ.) - Բարեբանեալ եւ փառաւորեալ ամենասուրբ կոյս Աստուածածին ... բարեխօսեա առ որդի քո միածին վասն մեղուցեալ եւ

անարժան ծառայի քոյ Սարգիւն, Աղասիւն, Գուհարին: Տուր զօրութիւն ծառայի քոյ ... եւ արա առ իս նշան բարութեան:

Headpiece

7. Prayer for childbirth ... and give a good child to the servant of God Ałas, Guhar (19th century, notrgir).

Աղերս վասն զաւակ ծնանելոյ – Աստուած բոլորից, անճան մեծութիւն... նոյն ողորմութեամբդ քո պարգեւեա եւ տուր սոցա զաւակ բարի ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Աղասիւն:

IV. Beheading of John the Baptist

8. Prayer to John the Baptist ... and protect the servant of God Gařux, Hakō, Suxō (19th century, notrgir).

[Աղերս առ Յովհաննէս Մկրտիչն] - Չայն բարբառոյ յանապատի, / Սուրբ Յովհաննէս դու ամլորդի... եւ ամենայն սրբոց դասի/, պահապան լիցի ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Գառուխին, Հակօին, Սուխօին:

V. Saint Stephen the Protomartyr

9. Prayer to Saint Stephen the Protomartyr ... And protect Barsel, G///ō, Melkon (notrgir), Karapet (19th century, notrgir).

Աղերս առ սուրբ Ստեփաննոս Նախավկայն - Ի քէն հայցեմք արտասուազին, նախավկայ Տեառն արարչին ... բարերանել զոյսն անքն<ն>ին: Եւ լեր պահապան Բարսէդ, Գ///օին, Մէքօին, Կարապետ:

VI. Saint Gregory the Illuminator

10. Prayer to Saint Gregory the Illuminator ... protect Your servant Karapet (19th century, notrgir).

Աղերս առ սուրբն Գրիգոր Լուսաւորիչն - Խընդրեմք ի քէն հայր պատուական, լուսաւորիչ ազգի մարդկան... եւ ամենայն սուրբ հայրապետաց եւ ուղղափառ եպիսկոպոսաց աղօթիւքն եւ բարեխօսութեամբն պահեա զծառայն քո Կարապետին:

VII. Archangels Michael and Gabriel lancing the devil

11. Prayer to the heavenly soldiers ... help and protect the servant of the God Zirō (19th century, notrgir). Melkon (notrgir).

[Աղերս առ երկնային զաւրսն] - Անեղ անմահ արարչին սպասաւորք անմարմինք... զգործս ձեռաց քոց մի անտես առներ, օգնական եւ պահապան լերուք ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Չիրօին: Մէքօին:

VIII. The sacrifice of Isaac

12. [Prayer of Saint Abraham]

[Աղօթք Արրահամու նահապետի] - Եւ ասէ Արրահամ գպատանիս իւր ... եւ ահա ծերացեալ հանգեաւ խաղաղութեամբ ի Քրիստոս: Բարեխօսութեամբ սուրբ նահապետացն պահեա եւ փրկեա զծառայն քո:

Note: The middle part of the unit is written in slanting-intersecting lines. The rhombuses, which emerge from the slanting-intersecting lines, are decorated with cross-shaped flowers.

IX. The Crucifixion (The cross is framed by wreaths)

13. [Prayer of the Holy Glorious Cross]

[Աղօթք սուրբ խաչափայտին Քրիստոսի] - Բարեխօսութեամբ եւ շնորհօք անբարբառ սրբոյն կենաց խաչափայտին Քրիստոսի ... որ ի վերա քնեռեցաւ խաչակցելոց: Պահապան եւ պցելու եղիցի ծառայիս Աստուծոյ:

Note: The unit is written on both sides of the image in vertical lines.

X. Saint Sargis and his son Martiros on horseback

14. Prayer to the saint soldiers of Jesus ... protect and save the servant of God Melkon (notrgir).

Աղօթք առ սուրբ զինաւորսն Քրիստոսի - Բարեխօսութեամբ սուրբ զօրավարացն՝ սրբոյն Սարգսի զօրավարին եւ որդւոյ նորա Մարտիրոսին ... եւ այլ ամենայն սրբոց բարեխօսութեամբն պահեա եւ փրկեա զծառայիս Աստուծոյ Մէլքօին:

Headpiece

15. Prayer against the evil fear and the evil tongue

Աղօթք չար նազարի եւ չար լեզուի - Տէր Աստուած մարդասէր, մարդասիրի Հօր Որդի ... զի դու, Տէր, օգնեցեր ինձ եւ մխիթարեցեր զիս. ամէն:

XI. Armed Archangel and a demon

16. Prayer against the *ipła* and the *al* who does not come near to the servant of the God ... to the servant of the God Melkon (notrgir).

Աղօթք վասն թպղայի եւ ալի, որ ոչ մերձենայ ի ծառայիս Աստուծոյ - Տէր Յիսուս Քրիստոս, ամենագօր, ողորմած ... հերքեալ հալածեցիս ի դիմաց ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Մէլքօին:

COLOPHON OF THE PRINTING HOUSE

“The Amulet was printed in 1165 of the Armenian era (=1716), in January.

Also remember in your prayers Nerses the typesetter, Isaiah the paint spreader and Jacob the printer, and you, who remember us, will be remembered on the Day of Judgement. Amen. Our Father, who is in heaven”.

«Տպեցաւ Հեմայիլս թվին Հայոց ՌՃԿԵ. (1716) յամսեանն յունվարի:
Այլեւ յիշել հայցեմ ի ձէնջ զշարող գրոյս՝ Ներսէսս, զմրազարկ
Եսային եւ զտափազարկ Ակոբ դպիրն եւ որ յիշէքդ, յիշեալ լիջիք յաւուրն
այցելութեան. ամէն: Հայր մեր, որ յեր՞»:

ANNOTATION: On the paper with the Amulet: rectangular, printed in 3 colours (red, blue and black), “دادغب - سكدوثرال انمرالا تينارطم تاطوخم”, DAOB_00015 تيسقطتاولص (arabic, Manuscripts of the Armenian Orthodox Diocese of Baghdad / DAOB_00015 / Ritual prayers²⁵). Centre Numérique des Manuscrits Orientaux Dominicains – Mossoul – Fondé en 1990”.

Appendix 3

Armenian Orthodox Diocese of Baghdad, Iraq

Pr. n. 14

AMULET IN SCROLL

2nd half of 19th century

ARTIST: [Foundry Laurent et Deberny]. OWNER: Naslë.

Note: Some gravures are signed by him “Laurent et De Berny” or “LAURENT DE BERNY”.

MATERIAL: paper. SIZE: 600x12 cm. WRITING: one column (10 cm).
SCRIPT: bolorgir (7 dpi).

STATE: Satisfactory. The edges of the beginning of the Amulet are worn. The Amulet underwent restoration during which paper was glued along the entire length of the verso.

CONTENTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

I. God the Father

Յանուն Հօր եւ Որդւոյ եւ Հոգւոյն Սրբոյ. ամէն:

Note: This and other illustrations are accompanied by titles and explanations.

II. The Annunciation

Աւետիսն Գաբրիէլի

III. The Nativity

Ծնունդն Յիսուսի Քրիստոսի

IV. The Baptism

Մկրտութիւնն Քրիստոսի

V. The Resurrection of Christ

Յարութիւնն Քրիստոսի

VI. The Holy Trinity

Ամենասուրբ Երրորդութիւն

Headpiece with three kneeling angels in a gesture of praying

1. Prayer of Nerses Shnorhali – “In faith I confess” ... to the servant of God Naslē (bolorgir) ...

Աղօթք Տեառն Ներսէսի Հայոց կաթողիկոսի – Հաւատով խոստովանիմ եւ երկիրպագանեմ քեզ ... եւ քեզ փառք եւ երկրպագութիւն անբաժանելի Սուրբ Երրորդութեանդ յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից. ամէն: Ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Նապէին օգնական եւ պահապան եղիցի եւ յամենայն չարեաց պահեսցէ եւ ազատեսցէ. ամէն:

2. Prayer to the Madonna ... Cafik (is written on the paper, which is glued upon the name of the first owner, 19th century, shlagir) ...

[Աղօթք առ Մարիամ Աստուածածին] – Ողջոյն քեզ Մարիամ լի շնորհօք ... Բարեխօս լեր Մայր Աստուծոյ ծառայիս քո Ծաղիկին:

VII. The Intercession ... Naslē (bolorgir).

Հայրն Աստուած, արարիչն ամենայնի, երկնի եւ երկրի ստեղծող, օգնական եւ պահապան լեր ծառայի քո Նապէին:

VIII. Decorated Canon Table ... Naslē (bolorgir).

Երկոտասան առաքեալքն Քրիստոսի բարեխօս լերուք ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Նապէին:

IX. The Lamb of God ... Cafik (is written on the paper, which is glued over the name of the first owner, 19th century, shlagir).

Գառն Աստուծոյ, որ բառնայ զմեղս աշխարհի, ողորմեա ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Ծաղիկին:

X. The chalice, two Doctrinal Wands and the Tablet ... Naslē (bolorgir).

Քրիստոս պատարագի ի մէջ սկիիի եւ բառնայ զմեղս աշխարհի: Սուրբ մարմին եւ արիւն Տեառն, օգնական լեր ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Նապէին:

XI. The Tomb of Christ ... Naslē (bolorgir).

Քրիստոսի գերեզմանն է: Տէր Աստուած, արժանի արա տեսանել մարմնաւոր աչօք զամենայն հաւատացեալս եւ համբուրել զքո լուսաբուրիս սուրբ գերեզմանդ եւ զծառայս քո Նապէին:

3. Lord's prayer

Աղօթք Տէրունական – Հայր մեր, որ յերկինս ես... եւ փառք յաւիտեանս.
ամեն:

4. [To Holy God on a proper day] ... to the servant of God Naslē (bolorgir).

[Սուրբ Աստուած ըստ պատշաճի աւուրն] – Սուրբ Աստուած, սուրբ եւ
հօր, սուրբ եւ անմահ... եւ պահեայ ամենայն չարեաց եւ աղանդաւորաց
ի դիմաց ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Նապէին:

XII. The Crucifixion of Christ ... Naslē (bolorgir).

Խաչելութիւնն Զրիստոսի օգնական եւ պահապան եղիցի ծառայիս
Աստուծոյ Նապէին:

Headpiece with two angels on their knees leaning on the tomb of
Christ

5. Prayer against the spells of demons and witches and sects, and for
successful judgment and pleasure and luck. Amen ... to the servant of God
[Naslē] (bolorgir)...

Աղօթք կապանաց դիւաց եւ կախարդաց եւ աղանդաւորաց, եւ վասն
դատ[աստա]նի յաջողելոյ եւ վասն քաղցրութեան եւ բարեբախտութեան.
ամեն – Թագաւոր հօր, ապաւէն ծարաւելոց ... ծառայիս Աստուծոյ
[Նապէին]: Չար իշխանք հալածին, որք ընդ ծառայս քո մարտնչին ... եւ
նչ ի նետէ, որ թնչի ի տուէ:

XIII. Madonna with the Christ Child in her arms

6. Prayer to the Saint Virgin ... to the servant of God Caḡik (is written on the
paper, which is glued over the name of the first owner, 19th century, shḡagir) ...

Աղօթք սուրբ կոյս Մարիամ Աստուածածնին – Աստուածածին
ամենօրինեալ զպաղատանս մեր ընկալ ... ի փորձանաց զմեզ փրկել:
Ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Ծաղիկին օգնական եւ պահապան լեր յամենայն
ժամ. ամեն:

XIV. Saint John the Baptist

7. Prayer to John the Baptist... the servant of God [Naslē] (bolorgir).

Աղօթք սրբոյն Յովհաննու Կարապետին – Այլեւ բարեխօսութեամբ
սրբոյն Յովհաննու Կարապետին, Մովսէսի, Ահարոնի ... եւ ամենայն
սրբոց մարգարէիցն պահեա եւ փրկեա զծառայս քո [Նապէին]:

XV. Saint Stephen the Protomartyr

8. Prayer to Saint Stephen the Protomartyr

Աղօթք սրբոյն Ստեփանոսի Նախավկային – Ի քէն հայցեմք
արտասուազին նախավկայ Տեառն արարչին ... բարեբանել զոյսն
անքննին:

XVI. Saint Gregory the Illuminator

9. Prayer to Saint Gregory the Illuminator

Աղօթք սրբոյն Գրիգոր Լուսաւորչին մերոյ – Խնդրեմք ի քէն հայր պատուական տէր սուրբ Գրիգոր պետ Պարթեւեան... եւ ի բարին առաջնորդեա. ամէն:

10. Prayer for protection ... to the servant of God [Naslē] (bolorgir).

Աղօթք պահպանութեան – Հայր Սուրբ սրբեա զիս, Որդիդ Սուրբ պահեա զիս ... մերձ առ քեզ դիր զիս՝ ընդ հրեշտակս քո, յամենայն չարէ պահեա զձառայս քո [Նասալէին]:

11. Prayer for protection

Աղօթք պահպանութեան – Տէր Յիսուս օգնական իմ եւ ի ձեռս քո եմ յամենայն ժամ ... զի դու, Տէր, կարող ես ամենայնի եւ քեզ փառք եւ զօրութիւն այժմ եւ անվախճան յամենայն. ամէն:

XVII. Trumpet angel on horseback

12. Prayer for the protection of Archangels Gabriel, Michael ... to the servant of God Naslē (bolorgir) ... to the servant of God [Naslē] (bolorgir).

Աղօթք հրեշտակաց պահպանութեան – Գաբրիէլ, Միքայէլ, Ռափէլ, Դակուէլ... ի դիմաց ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Նասալէին ... ուր այս անուանքս յիշեն, անդ ոչ մերձենամք ծառայիս Աստուծոյ [Նասալէին]:

13. Prayer for headache and pain in eyes ... to the servant Cafik (is written on the paper, which is glued over the name of the first owner, 19th century, shlagir) ...

Աղօթք գլխացաւի եւ աչաց ցաւի – Գայր զետն ի Յորդանան եւ քերէր ծառ մի զեղեցիկ եւ պատուական... փորացաւի եւ միջաց ցաւի, ԳՃԿԵ. (365) պիղծ ցաւոց, զոր ազատեալ եղիցի ծառայիս Ծաղիկին: Աստուած օգնական եւ պահապան եղիցի. ամէն:

14. Prayer for protection from the evil fear and the evil tongue ... Help and protect the servant of God Naslē (bolorgir).

Աղօթք չար նազարի եւ չար լեզուի – Հրանիւթ, Հրափաէլ, [Հ]րատն, Համատուն, որ էք սպասաւորք Աստուծոյ ... եւ չար զգայարանք պատառի, իսաւար դառնայ ծառայիս Աստուծոյ [Նասալէին] [օ]գնական եւ պահապան եղիցի. ամէն:

15. [Prayer against the evil fear and the evil tongue] ... and save the servant of God Naslē (bolorgir) ...

[Աղօթք չար նազարի եւ չար լեզուի] - Տէր Աստուած մարդասէր, մարդասիրի Հօր Որդի ... եւ ամենայն թունաւորաց պահեա եւ փրկեա զձառայ Աստուծոյ Նասալէին, օգնական եղիցի եւ պահապան. ամէն:

16. Prayer for the travellers ... the servant of God Calik (is written on the paper, which is glued upon the name of the first owner, 19th century, shlagir) ...

Աղօթք վասն ճանապարհորդաց – Կենամանուէ, Կենդանամաէ, որ էք սպասաւորք Աստուծոյ, դուք ճանապ[արհորդա]կից լերուք ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Ծաղիկին ... եւ շահաւոր արարէք սմա անուամբ Հօր եւ Որդոյ եւ Հոգւոյն Սրբոյ այժմ եւ միշտ եւ յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից. ամէն:

17. [Prayer of Saint Abraham and his son Isaac, and of the Holy Glorious Cross] ... Calik (is written on paper glued over the name of the first owner, 19th century, shlagir) ... to the servant of God Naslē (bolorgir) ...

[Աղօթք սուրբ հօրն Աբրահամու եւ որդոյն Սահակայ, եւ սուրբ խաչափայտին Քրիստոսի Աստուծոյ մերոյ] - Եւ էառ Աբրահամ զորդին իւր՝ զԻսահակ, եւ տարաւ ի գենեղիս իւր ... ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Ծաղիկին ... եւ ի հանդերձելումն երկնից արքայութիւնն պարգեւեցէ. ամէն:

- Բարեխօսութեամբ եւ աստուածային սուրբ նշանացն Քրիստոսի Աստուծոյ մերոյ ... եւ այլ յամենայն սուրբ նշանացն, որք ընդ հանուր տիեզերս իցէն, սոցին սուրբ եւ արժաւաւոր աղօթիւքն ողորմեա Քրիստոս Աստուած ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Նապէին, օգնական եւ պահապան եղիցի յամենայն ժամ. ամէն:

Note: item 17 consists of two prayers, the first part of which are written in slanting-intersecting lines. The rhombuses, which emerge from the slanting-intersecting lines, are decorated with cross-shaped flowers.

18. Excerpt from Gregory of Narek’s “Book of Lamentations” (Chapter 41) ...

Աղօթք սրբոյն Գրիգորի Նարեկացոյն (Նարեկ, Բան ԽԱ.) – Որդի Աստուծոյ կենդանոյ, օրհնեալ յամենայնի ... եւ Հոգւոյդ Սրբոյ վայել է փառք յաւիտեանս. ամէն:

19. Excerpt from Gregory of Narek’s “Book of Lamentations” (Chapter 12)

Աղօթք նորին Սրբոյն Գրիգորի (Նարեկ, Բան ԺԲ.) - Ընկալ քաղցրութեամբ Տէր Աստուած հօր ... զի դու փառաւորեալ ես յամենայն արարածոց յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից. ամէն:

20. Prayer to Saint George the general ... the servant of God Naslē (bolorgir) ...

Աղօթք սրբոյն Գէորգայ զօրավարին – Բարեխօսութեամբ սուրբ զօրավարացն՝ սրբոյն Գէորգայ զօրավարին եւ սրբոյն նորա Մարտիրոսին ... եւ Խարիթեանցն եւ այլ ամենայն սրբոց քարեխօսութեամբ պահեա եւ

փրկեալ գծառայս Աստուծոյ Նապէին, օգնական եղիցի եւ պահապան, ամենայն չարէ պահեսցէ. ամէն:

XVIII. Saint Sargis on horseback

21. Prayer to Saint Sargis the general ... help and protect the servant of God [Naslē] (bolorgir).

Աղօթք սրբոյն Սարգսի զօրավարին – Երջանիկ մեծ զօրական եւ Քրիստոսի յաղթող վկայն... Հօրն փառք, Որդւոյն պատիւ եւ Սուրբ Հոգւոյն պլծմ եւ յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից. ամէն: Ծառայիս Աստուծոյ [Նապէին] օգնական եւ պահապան եղիցի. ամէն:

22. Prayer to Saint kings ... the servant of God [Naslē] (bolorgir) ...

[Աղաւթք սուրբ թագաւորաց] – Այլեւ բարեխօսութեամբ սուրբ թագաւորացն Եզեկիայ, Սեղեկիայ ... գծառայս Աստուծոյ [Նապէին] ... եւ արա առ իս նշան բարութեան:

XIX. Saint Matthew the Evangelist

23. Gospel of Saint Matthew (15: 21–28) ... help and protect the servant of God [Naslē] (bolorgir). Amen.

Սուրբ Աւետարանս որ ըստ Մատթէոսի (ԺԵ. 21–28) - Եւ ելեալ անտի Յիսուս գնաց ի կողմանս Տիրոսի եւ Սիդոնի ... եւ բժշկեցաւ դուստր նորա ի նմին ժամու: Փառք քեզ, Տէր Աստուած, օգնական եւ պահապան եղիցի ծառայիս Աստուծոյ [Նապէին]. ամէն:

XX. Saint Mark the Evangelist

24. Gospel of Saint Mark (6: 45–56) ... Help the servant of God Na[slē] (bolorgir).

Սուրբ Աւետարանս որ ըստ Մարկոսի (Չ. 45–56) - Եւ նոյն ժամայն ճեպեաց զաշակերտսն մտանել ի նաւ... եւ որք մի անգամ մերձեցան, փրկեցան: Փառք քեզ, Տէր Աստուած մեր: Օգնական եղիցի ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Նա[պէին]:

XXI. Saint Luke the Evangelist

25. Gospel of Saint Luke (4: 31–42)

Սուրբ Աւետարանս որ ըստ Ղուկասու (Գ. 31–42) - Եւ էջ ի Կափառնաում ի քաղաքն գալիլեացւոց ... զի գիտէին գնա, թէ Քրիստոսն է: Փառք քեզ, Տէր Աստուած մեր:

XXII. Saint John the Evangelist

26. Gospel of Saint John (6: 1–14) ... help and protect the servant of God [Naslē] (bolorgir) [Cañ]k (is written on the paper, which is glued upon the name of the first owner, 19th century, shlagir) ...

Սուրբ Աւետարանս որ ըստ Յովհաննու (Չ. 1–14) - Յետ այսորիկ գնաց Յիսուս յայնկոյս ծովուն... սա է ճշմարիտ մարգարէն, որ գալոց էր յաշխարհ: Փառք քեզ, Տէր Աստուած մեր, օգնական եւ պահապան եղիցի ծառայիս Աստուծոյ [Նապլէին] [Ծաղի]կին, յամենայն չարեաց պահեցէ. ամէն:

27. Prayer for childbirth ... and give a child to the servant of God Calik (written on paper glued over the name of the first owner, 19th century, shlagir) ...

Աղօթք վասն զաւակ ծնանելոյ – Նայեաց յաղաչանս ծառայիս քո եւ աղախնոյն ... եւ տուր զաւակ ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Ծաղիկին ... զի ծնաւ մանուկն յաշխարհ:

XXIII. Solomon chides the lord of demons

28. Prayer against the spells of the devils and als ... from the servant of God Calik (written on paper glued over the name of the first owner, 19th century, shlagir) ...

Աղօթք կապանաց դիւաց եւ ալաց – Սողոմոն իմաստունն ետես զիշխանն դիւաց խաւարի... եւ սատանայական չար հնարք արձակեալ եւ հեռացեալ եղիցին ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Ծաղիկին: Չնանսպարիս քո, Տէր, ցոյց ինձ եւ զշաւիղս քո ուսոյ ինձ:

29. Prayer against the t'pfa and the al ... to the servant of God Calik (is written on paper glued over the name of the first owner, 19th century, shlagir) ...

Աղօթք թըպղայի եւ ալի – Սուրբն Սիովն, սուրբն Սիսի եւ սուրբն Սիսիանէ... յոր տուն, որ ձեր անուանքն յիշեն, անդ ոչ մերձենամք ի ծառայն Աստուծոյ [Ծաղի]կին յանուն Հօր եւ Որդւոյ եւ [Հոգւոյն] Սրբոյ պժմ եւ միշտ եւ յաւիտեանս յաւիտենից. ամէն:

30. Prayer for successful sale and for everything ... the servant of God Calik (written on paper glued over the name of the first owner, 19th century, shlagir) ... to the servant of God Naslē (bolorgir) ... of the servant of God Naslē (bolorgir). Amen.

Աղօթք վասն վաճառի եւ թալէիի եւ սթարայի եւ յորժամ դատաւորի եւ պարոնի դիմաց կանգնի, խօսքն կտրուկ եղիցի ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Ծաղիկին – Յայնժամ բացան երկինք եւ ելին հրեշտակք եւ ունէին քանալիք ԿՉ. (66) ... ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Նապլէին ... քան զարեգակն պայծառ, քան զլուսինն ի լրումն, փառօք եւ պատուօք ի դէմ ծառայիս Աստուծոյ Նապլէին. ամէն:

COLOPHON OF THE PRINTING HOUSE

Աստուած վայելում տացէ,
Այս հէմայիս, որ գրված է,
Հայրք եւ եղբայրք, որ սայ առցէ,
Իսաղաղութեամբ վայելեցէ,
Ոչ չար իւրն պատահեցէ,
Խորհուրդ բարին կատարեցէ,
Ի խորին ծերութիւնն հասցէ,
Հայր մեղայիւ գտաղոս սորին յիշեցէ,
Եւ յետ աստեացս, որ նա ելցէ,
Արքայութիւնն ժառանգեցէ:
Գրեցաւ Հէմայիս ի թուականիս մերում ՌՃԿԶ. (1717) նոյեմբեր Ա.:

May God grant enjoyment,
This Amulet, that is written,
Fathers and brothers who take this,
May they enjoy it with peace,
May evil be far from them,
May the good come true,
May they live until old age.
Remember the printer of this in your prayers,
And afterwards, at Doomsday
May he inherit the Holy Kingdom.

The Amulet was written in 1166 of the Armenian era (=1717), on November 1.

Note: The later printer saved even the date of the first publishing.

ANNOTATION: At the end of verso, on glued paper: rectangular, printed in 3 colours (red, blue and black), “دادغب - س كذوثرال انمرأالا قتي نارطم تا طوطخم”, DAOB_00014 ةم عنل ءولمم س س سرن س س يدقلا تا اول ص (Arabic, Manuscripts of the Armenian Orthodox Diocese of Baghdad / DAOB_00014 / The prayers of Saint Nerses Shnorhali)26 Centre Numérique des Manuscrits Orientaux Dominicains – Mossoul – Fondé en 1990”.

CONCLUSION

The collection of Armenian Orthodox Diocese in Baghdad holds three Armenian Amulets in scroll format. The oldest one was printed in 1716 at the printing house of Grigor Marzvaneci in Constantinople (DAOB, Pr. n. 15). The manuscript Amulet was written 1736 in Erzurum (DAOB, Ms. n. 13), as the colophon reveals. The date of the third Amulet (DAOB, Pr. n. 14) eludes us, despite its preserved colophon. Careful study allows us to state that the publishers of DAOB Pr. n. 14 have used the Amulet of 1717 from the printing house of Astuacatur Kostandnupolseci as a prototype. Ten Amulets in scroll (1716, 1717, 1718, 1724, 1725, 1726, 1727, 1728, 1729 and one without date) are known from this printing house (Ghazaryan 2018a: 72). In the second copied Amulet (second half of the 19th century), the publishers used the same prayers and kept the colophon, but decorated it with new engravings. There are a few more unanswered questions regarding this Amulet, such as what was the printing house where it was created and what was the reason for keeping the date of the Amulet it was copied from. We hope that further research will help us to answer these questions.

The system of artistic decoration of the handwritten Amulet relates to the content of the texts of the invocations. They also represent the images of authors or personages, to which the texts of amulet-scrolls are dedicated. This is mostly typical for Armenian illuminated amulets, as well as for the early printed Armenian amulets. The image of the saint and the demon - al has interesting iconographic details that we were able to explain using written sources, ethnographic material and folk tradition. Such imagery in the Amulet testifies to the formation, development, and long-living tradition of Armenian folk beliefs.

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NOTES

¹ The word “Amulet” with a capital letter is used here with the meaning ‘handwritten or printed amulet’ as a variation of manuscripts or books.

² For a brief physical description and full scanned copies of the amulets, see the following permanent links:

DAOB 13 - <https://www.vhmmml.org/readingRoom/view/136277> (consulted 15.04.2021),

DAOB 14 - <https://www.vhmmml.org/readingRoom/view/136278> (consulted 15.04.2021),

DAOB 15 - <https://www.vhmmml.org/readingRoom/view/136279> (consulted 15.04.2021).

³ Usually, in the decoration of the Amulets we see the first steps of artists, sometimes scribes, who created their first miniatures. Previous researches (Ghazaryan 2013a: 43-4, 84-5, 106, 109) showed that some amulets were decorated by scribes who were not miniaturists.

⁴ One can find the name “Niatagir” only in the scroll Amulet kept in the collection of Matenadaran (N 544, 1716, Owner: Hakob, son of Petros Kalzvaneci).

⁵ The author describes two manuscript Gospels.

⁶ The author describes seven manuscripts.

⁷ In Armenian illustrated amulets, Saint Sargis is often depicted on horseback with his son Martiros.

⁸ The same is true of the female cannibal creature in Russian tradition; see Tadevosyan, Kotsinyan 2017: 339.

⁹ According to Feydit, the reason was the threefold specialty (puerperal fever, abortion and infant mortality) of als that differentiated them from other demons (Feydit 1973: 228).

¹⁰ The Armenian epic *Daredevils of Sasoun*, oral in its origin, was first published in 1874 in Constantinople by Garegin Sruanjteanć; later on many new editions of this epic were published. We are grateful to Tork Dalalyan (Institute of Archeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Sciences, Republic of Armenia) who directed our attention to this epic.

¹¹ David of Sassoun 1964: 49, First Cycle “Sanasar and Baghdasar”, Part I, Chapter 16, lines 4–9 (translated by Shalian Artin).

¹² David of Sassoun 1964: 24, First Cycle “Sanasar and Baghdasar”, Part I, Chapter 8, lines 106 and 111 (translated by Shalian Artin).

¹³ See <http://www.ankyunacar.com/bible/>.

¹⁴ Daredevils of Sassoun 1964: 39, First Cycle “Sanasar and Balthasar”, Part I, prose translation from Armenian.

¹⁵ For more details about the content of early printed Armenian Amulets, see Ghazaryan 2018a: 70.

¹⁶ Originally there were more than twenty gravures.

¹⁷ On the engravings of Grigor Marzvaneci, see also Ghazaryan 2018a: 71.

¹⁸ For more details, see Ghazaryan 2018a: 73.

¹⁹ Originally it was supposed to contain nineteen prayers.

²⁰ Prior to this study, two Amulets were thought to have been printed in 1717, but, as we will see, one of them was printed in the 19th century.

²¹ <http://www.letyrosemiophile.com/images/Imprimeurs/Laurent-et-Deberny-75.htm>. We are grateful to our colleague Arpine Simonyan (PhD in Arts, Senior Researcher in Matenadaran) for help in identifying the engravings.

²² In the brackets, the size (length) of each piece of the Amulet is given sequentially.

²³ Armenian scripts are divided into four main groups: erkatagir (from 4th century), bolorgir (from 10-11th centuries), notrgir (from 15th century) and shlagir (from 18th century).

²⁴ Read and translated by Knarik Sahakyan, Senior Researcher in Matenadaran.

²⁵ Read and translated by Knarik Sahakyan, Senior Researcher in Matenadaran.

²⁶ Read and translated by Knarik Sahakyan, Senior Researcher in Matenadaran.

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<https://www.vhmmml.org/readingRoom/view/136279>

TABLE OF TRANSLITERATIONS FROM ARMENIAN

Ա ա – A a	Ի ի – I i	ԅ Յ – Y y	Տ ս – T t
Բ բ – B b	Լ լ – L l	Ն ն – N n	Ր ր – R r
Գ գ – G g	Խ խ – X x	Շ շ – Š š	Յ ջ – Č č
Դ զ – D d	Ծ ծ – C c	Ո ո – O o	Ի լ – W w
Ե ե – E e	Կ կ – K k	Չ չ – Ć ć	Փ փ – P p
Զ զ – Z z	Հ հ – H h	Պ պ – P p	Զ ջ – K k
Է է – Ē ē	Ձ ձ – J j	Ջ ճ – Ĵ ĵ	Օ օ – Ō ō
Ը ը – Ǽ æ	Ղ ղ – Ł ł	Ռ ր – Ř ř	Ֆ ֆ – F f
Թ թ – Ț ț	Ճ ճ – Ć ć	Ս ս – S s	Ու ու – U u
Ժ ժ – Ž ž	Մ մ – M m	Վ վ – V v	+lu-ew

BIOS

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Armenian Amulets from the Collection of Armenian Orthodox Diocese in Baghdad include Armenian manuscript studies and Printings, Armenian Art of Medieval and Modern times.

Image 1



Saint Peter chides the demon - Al.

Iraq, Baghdad, Armenian Orthodox Diocese in Baghdad, MS 13 [HMML Pr. No. DAOB 00013]. Photo courtesy of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Saint John's University, Minnesota, USA, the Armenian Orthodox Diocese in Baghdad, and the Centre Numérique des Manuscrits Orientaux (CNMO), Erbil, Iraq. Published with permission of the owners. All rights reserved.

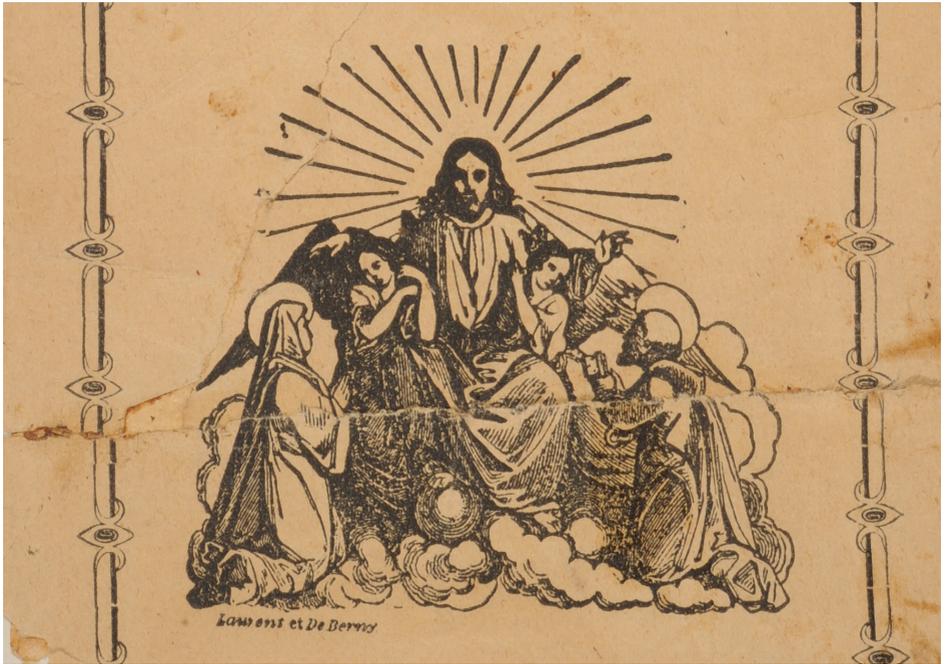
Image 2



Solomon chides the lord of demons.

Iraq, Baghdad, Armenian Orthodox Diocese in Baghdad, MS 14 [HMML Pr. No. DAOB 00014]. Photos courtesy of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Saint John's University, Minnesota, USA, the Armenian Orthodox Diocese in Baghdad, and the Centre Numérique des Manuscrits Orientaux (CNMO), Erbil, Iraq. Published with permission of the owners. All rights reserved.

Image 3



The Intercession

Iraq, Baghdad, Armenian Orthodox Diocese in Baghdad, MS 14 [HMML Pr. No. DAOB 00014]. Photos courtesy of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Saint John's University, Minnesota, USA, the Armenian Orthodox Diocese in Baghdad, and the Centre Numérique des Manuscrits Orientaux (CNMO), Erbil, Iraq. Published with permission of the owners. All rights reserved.

THE HISTORIOLOAE IN BELARUSIAN INCANTATIONS

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Abstract: The article deals with one of the most popular techniques in Belarusian magical medicine — the so-called *historiolae*, the essence of which is to recall precedent situations. This implies that the “disequilibrium of being, which has arisen in human life at the present moment (e.g. a disease), is restored according to a sacred pattern that took place in the past”. The texts declare connections between different levels of the worlds, past and present, but to the same extent between the microcosm and the macrocosm, erasing all distinctions between the real and the supernatural worlds. The present time of these charms prevents the transfer of the patient and the healer to ancient times of the myths. Instead, it is the sacred world that spreads around the requester. The most common form of such charms includes a narrative that relates certain events in Christian history, primarily describing the life of Christ or of one of the saints. A particular place among the narrative manifestations of *historiolae* is occupied by references to the Passion of Christ. These narratives, in turn, possess powerful life-affirming and healing potential. It is not the logical correspondence of a specific comparison in an incantation that is central, but the very desire to place the situation of treatment in an appropriate context. A number of texts from the author’s field records and archival materials are introduced here into scholarly circulation.

Key words: traditional medicine of Belarusians, incantations, *historiolae*, precedent, Biblical images.

The term *historiolae* has been widely used in western European scholarship to denote a type of charm or spell in which short mythological stories provide a paradigm for a desired magical action (Faraone 1988: 284). The term has been dominant in the German-speaking world as a more neutral term than the previously prevalent *Analogieerzählung*, a story by analogy, or *Vorbilderzählung*, a model story, as it allows for a broader interpretation (Schumacher 2000: 203). The *historiolae* exemplify the principle of *similia similibus* by placing charms “between a human dimension where actions are open-ended and a mythic dimension where actions are completed and tensions have been resolved” (Frankfurter 1995: 464) and describing the events that occurred during *illo tempore*, an indefinite time in the past. The *historiolae* aim to establish a connection between the mythological precedent and the present situation faced by the sufferer and their magical assistants. Mythic events are understood as archetypal: they retain their power forever, and this power can be used when they are repeated. Daniel James Waller offers a productive concept of considering the mechanism of using the *historiolae* as an echo when the healing effect is ensured by the repeated, modulated, and distinctive sounding of a sacred story (Waller 1988).

In East Slavic folklore studies, the term precedent is most commonly used. Drawing on numerous examples, Tatiana Agapkina convincingly reveals the magical functions of precedent-based situations as one of the most important tactics of a magical text:

“A reference to a precedent implies that the disequilibrium of being, which has arisen in human life at the present moment (e.g. a disease), is restored according to a sacred pattern that took place in the past. The regulation of both the present and the future is based on the past; it is from this past (in which sacred characters act) that examples of situations are drawn, the imitation of which is essential for correcting the present” (Agapkina [Агапкина] 2010: 612).

Relying on the definition of a situation of returning to mythic times for pragmatic purposes as “domesticated diachrony” (Claude Lévi-Strauss), on facts from different cultures, particularly German culture, Monika Schulz demonstrates how a return to the sacred and blessing atmosphere of mythic times becomes a peculiar kind of *typikon* of magical activity in the present (Schulz 2000: 292). The effect serves to blur the boundaries between the hu-

man situation and the mythical dimension, sometimes in its most distant times of the creation of the world. Mircea Eliade repeatedly wrote about likening the earthly world to the sacred one when everything in the profanum world is created according to the models of the first times. The effect of the spell then lies in the re-actualisation of the mythic first time; as a model of any creation, the cosmogonic myth is able to help the patient start their life anew (Eliade [Элиаде]1995: 34–43).

Allusions to the cosmogonic myth as a mythological precedent are also preserved in the magical texts. The doctor and the patient's appeal to the times of creation programme a return to the primordial time, a time with no diseases or troubles. The suffering person is recreated together with the world.

Шоў Госпадзі паўз сіняга мора, дунуў на свет, на свеці стала трава, на траве стала раса. Як сонцэ ўзойдзе на свет, так з травы раса спадзе і з этага дзіцёнка ўсё ліха спадзе...¹ (Lopatyn [Лопатин] 2017: 137)

God walked by the blue sea, He blew at the world, grass grew around the world, dew grew on the grass. When the sun ascends above the world, then the grass will lose its dew and all the evil will fall from this child....

The actions of a Christian character endowed with the functions of a healer are woven into the cosmographic picture of regulating the world:

Сягодня панядзелак. У панядзелачак вечарам Найсвенчая Матка на небе хадзіла, на небе хадзіла яснымі зарамі, яснымі зарамі з бэльмі зубамі. Ясныя зоры патушыла, (імя) зубы загаварыла. Нябесныя зоры не гарэлі, каб у (імя) зубы не балелі. Я з духам, Бог з помаччу.²

Today is Monday. On Monday night, Holy Mother was walking in the sky, in the sky she was walking in bright stars, in bright stars with white teeth. She put out the bright stars, so [name] did not have a toothache. I am with the spirit, God with the help.

The charms demonstrate an orientation toward the cosmic order, which is mentioned in the following text by way of a reference to the origin of Man himself (through the recoding of the embryo and the new moon). Taking into account these “first” events, health should also be eventually restored:

Млад маладзік нараждаецца ў цёмных начах, у вячэрніх зарах, не чуяў ён ні стукату, ні грукату, ні заносных лун да ні солнышка. Раб Мікалай у ўтробе мацеры зараждаўся, не чуяў ён ні стукату, ні грукату, ні краснага сонца, ні яснага месяца. Дай Госпадзі, штобы яго зубы не балелі і балезні ў сабе ня мелі. Амінь (Bartashevich [Барташэвіч] 1992, No. 634)

The new moon is born in the dark night, in the stars of the night, it heard no rattle, no roar, no alien moons, nor any sun. Mikalai, servant of God, was born in his mother's womb, he heard no rattle, no roar, no red sun, no bright moon. Help him, oh Lord, so his teeth don't ache and have no disease inside them. Amen.

Obviously, the essence of this technique is also in declaring a connection between different levels of the worlds, the past and the present, and, to the same extent, between microcosm and macrocosm.

However, the most common kind of incantation of this type includes a narrative conveying the events of Christian history, primarily describing the earthly path of Christ or one of the saints. Although a historiola does not necessarily require a Biblical precedent or even its magical reinterpretation, it is the story of the miraculous intervention of Christ or his associates that acts as the most substantial role model. In the spell, an episode is presented to describe the positive resolution of a crisis. What follows is a reference to the person's painful condition (or, less often, an animal's) in this world, the healing of which is expected according to a sacred pattern.

Крэст на небе, крэст на зэмлі, крэст на мні. Спас Господь роскольника на крысте, спасі Господі рабу твою (имярек) і мене.³

Cross in the sky, cross on earth, cross on me. The Lord saved the rebel on the cross, save, oh Lord, your servant (name) and me.

A historiola manifests itself most clearly in direct comparison, when the narrative part ends with a comparative construction, i.e. there is a comparison of the cases, conditions or attributes of the sacred character and the patient. There are such texts in Belarusian tradition, too, e.g.:

Як Ісус Хрыстос на расп'яці буў, з расп'яцця ўзняўся на небеса, усе замкі паламаў, (имярек) чараўніка, чараўніцу не дапускаў
(Bartashevich [Баргашэвіч] 1992, No. 85)

When Jesus Christ was on the cross, he ascended to heaven from the cross, he broke all the locks, did not allow wizard, witch to [name];

Як Сус Хрыстос із мартвых шоў, так залатнік на месца ішоў, як Ісус Хрыстос із мартвых устаў, так залатнік на месцы ўстаў. Залатнік-залатнічок – старынькі дзядок, дзе быў ад малку, стань да старку.⁴

As Jesus Christ returned from the dead, so the zalatnik [the uterus and related diseases] returned to its place, as Jesus Christ rose from the dead, so the zalatnik rose to its place. Zalatnik, little zalatnik — a little old man, where you were from your birth, there you stand till you're old.

The structure of *similia similibus* essentially subjugates the narrative part of the spell to the directive statement, the part that says, “May it be as it was then” (Frankfurter 1995: 468). However, there are very few direct parallels or comparisons of the events of Biblical history and the healing situations in the corpus of Belarusian incantations.

Comparison is implicated in constructions of the type “sacred precedent, may the patient not have...”, e.g.:

Першым разочкам, добрым часочкам Госпаду Богу памалюся. Маць Прачыстая на цэркві хадзіла, з-над права рабра Ісуса Хрыста радзіла. Не баялася ні ўроку, ні прасроку. Хай жа раба Божая (імя) не баіцца. Бог з помаишчу, а я з духам (Viarheyenka [Вяргеенка] 2013, No. 177).

In the first place, in the good time, I will pray to God. Most Holy Mother walked in the church, from under her right rib did she give birth to Jesus Christ. She feared no bad spell or hex. May the servant of God (name) have no fear. God is with the help, and I am with the spirit

Curiously, in the structure of the text itself, a *historiola* can also complete the narrative, follow the directive appeal to the disease, and then the appeal to the sacred events serves as a guarantee of healing.

*Патайнік, каласьнік, дваровы, сасновы, карчовы, рабінавы, асінавы. Стой, патайнік, каласьнік, пасылаю цябе на мох, на балаты, дзе людзі не ходзяць, сарокі не шчабечуць. Там табе піць гуляць, а этага патайніка ў (імя) не бываць. Радзіўся Ісус Хрыстос, патайнік ізьнёс, Маці Ісуса Хрыста раджала, беса праклінала, Маркавай рукой, усе ангелы са мной.*⁵

Epilepsy, falling evil, of the yard, of the pine, of the stump, of the rowan, of the aspen. Stop, epilepsy, falling evil, I am sending you to the moss, to the bogs, where people do not go, magpies do not chirp. There you will eat and drink, but (name) will not have this pain. Jesus Christ was born, he took the falling evil with him, Mother gave birth to Jesus Christ, cursed the devil, with the hand of Mark, all the angels are with me.

The historiolae organised around the baptism of Jesus Christ in the River Jordan, especially popular in the European fund of spells, is also common among Belarusians.

Стань крэзь у рани, якь вода вь Ирדани, кеды ксцивь свентый Янь, кеды ходзिवь Христось Пань, аминь (Romanov [Романов] 1891: 69, No. 94)

Blood in the wound, become like water in the Jordan, when Saint John baptised, when Lord Jesus walked around, Amen.

“Looking at the wound, cross oneself and say:

Пане Езу, нех в тэй ране кроў стане, як вада ў Іярдане, дзе Пана Езуса хрысцілі. / Lord Jesus, may blood stop in that wound, like water in the Jordan, where Lord Jesus was baptised.

Then read the prayer “Our Father” and “Hail Mary” and then blow on the wound. Repeat this three times” (Vasilevich, Salavei [Васілевіч, Салавей] 2009: 39, No. 1815, Іўје district).

In popular representation, St John the Baptist is easily replaced by the Mother of God or one of the saint characters, and it is not only water that mighty stop, but Christ too:

Стой, кроў, у ране, як Ісус на Ярдані, як Матка Боска Ісуса Хрыста хрысціла.⁶

Stop, blood, in the wound, like Jesus in the Jordan, like the Mother of God baptised Jesus;

Астанавіся, кроў на рані, як Ісус Хрыстос стаяў на Ярдані. Ісус Хрыстос цягне і крыві астанавіцца вялеў. Амін.⁷

Stop, blood, in the wound, like Jesus Christ stopped by the Jordan. Jesus Christ suffered and told the blood to stop. Amen.

However, it is much more common to witness the motif for baptism being implied, while there is a reference to stopping water, or even Christ himself, that becomes semantically significant and is thus expected to programme the cessation of bleeding.

Ішоў Ісус Хрыстос цераз раку Ардан. Астанавіўся Ісус Хрыстос пасярэдзіне Ардані, астанавіся кроў у рані. Амін (Vasilevich, Salavei [Васілевіч, Салавей] 2009: 373, No. 1776, Masty district)

Jesus Christ walked through the Jordan River. Jesus Christ stopped in the middle of the Jordan; stop, blood, in the wound. Amen.

Curiously enough, a number of Latin and German texts of the 15th century with the motif of Christ in the River Jordan never mention baptism; it is the stopping of water that is semantically important (Ohrt 1938: 31). The dominance of plots with the motif of the sacred centre in local complexes and in the texts of this group match the sacred river with the mythological locus marked by the oak.

С-пад дуба караністага цякла Юрдань-рака, там ішоў Ісус Хрыстос і святая Ілля. Вадзяныя ключы закрываліся, Юрдань-рака становілася. Закрыйцеся, жылы крываваыя, стань, не цячы, кроў чырвоная.⁸

From under the rooty oak flowed the Jordan River, there were Jesus Christ and Saint Elijah. Water springs were locked, the Jordan River stopped. Stop, vessels of blood, do not flow, red blood.

In the European traditions of various times, the situation on the River Jordan is included in many functional groups, not only in charms against bleeding (Ohrt 1938: 79). Belarusians, for example, have incantations ‘for a fire’:

*Як Ісус Хрыстос на Арданскай вадзе стаял, так стой, агонь,
астанавісь на месце...⁹*

As Jesus Christ stopped in the water of the Jordan, so stop, fire, stop where you are...

and against sorcery. Perhaps, the texts of this group also reflect the motif of Moses crossing the Red Sea:

*Ішоў Бог цераз раку Іардан, вялеў вадзе стаць. А я вялю крoві
стаць. Амін (Vasilevich, Salavei [Васілевіч, Салавей] 2009: 364,
No. 1713, Dziatlava district)*

God walked across the River Jordan, he ordered the water to stop. And I will order the blood to stop. Amen,

which is especially popular in the German charms tradition (Schulz 2000). The choice of characters and the organisation of events are often subordinated to the rules of poetic speech, including rhyme, alliteration, and so on, as in the formula-based text of:

Сьянты Ян ішоў праз Ярдан, вада стала, то і ты, кроў, стань.¹⁰

Saint John walked through the Jordan, water stood still, then you, blood, stand still.

The vast majority of the texts with the River Jordanian motif are recorded in the west of Belarus, in areas of primary residence of the Catholic population.

A special place among the renditions of the historiolae is occupied by the Passion of Christ. In the texts of various genres, the crucifixion and wounds of Christ (inspired by John 19: 34: “one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water” acquire the meaning of the redemptive sacrifice. According to Ernst, the water and the blood of Christ, as healing tools in verbal magic, are a metonymy of baptism and redemption. The motif was first found in a spell against arrows from a twelfth-century manuscript in the Vatican Library. In a free translation, the plot amounts to the

following: Longinus was a Jew, he pierced the heart of our Lord Jesus, blood and water flowed from there. Water is our baptism, blood is our redemption (Ernst 2011: 76-77). See in later German records:

...Logemimuss (=Longinus), der blinde Jude, der stach Christus dem Herrn seine Seite durch und durch; daraus floss Wasser und Blut, das ist dem N. N. Für seine Augen gut. (Haase 1897: 54)

The image of Longinus in the German tradition is primarily characteristic of charms for bleeding, but is also found in other thematic groups. It is also important that the soldier received his sight, not only in the physical sense, but also came to believe in Jesus. Among Belarusians, the image of Longinus appears on a single occasion, and is related to the treatment of ocular diseases: “Here you’ll wake up early, don’t drink or spit, and cross yourself and say: ‘Christ is Risen! Longinus the centurion, help me’. Take some spit from under the tongue and rub it in your eyes”.¹¹ Perhaps, indirectly, the situation was reflected in the incantation imperative of

Сьвяты Якаў, хапай кап’ё, затыкай, замыкай кроў ў рані. Амін, амін!¹²

Saint James, grab a spear, stop, lock the blood in the wound. Amen, amen!

The redeeming meaning of the blood of Christ is also found in the Belarusian texts:

Мамка мая, дабрадзея мая, ці спіш ці ляжыш ці адпачываеш? – Сплю, ляжу, адпачываю і ўва сне сніцца. Няхай мой сон на дажджы падзе. На высокай гары на дрэве залаты хрэст, на хрысце Ісус Хрыстос распяты, раскрыжаваны, жалезнымі гваздамі папрыбіваны. Праз святое рабро кроў цячэ. Прышоў к яму Госпад на трэці дзянёк, паставіў грабок, усяму свету аб’яўленне, святому целіцу палягчэнне.¹³

My Mother, my patroness, are you sleeping or lying down or resting? —I am sleeping, lying down, and resting and having a dream. May my dream fall with the rain. High on a mountain, on the tree is the golden cross, Jesus Christ is crucified on the cross, spiked with iron nails. Blood

is flowing through the holy rib. The Lord came to him on the third day, set him a coffin, revelation for the whole world, relief to the holy body.

... цябе жыдові паймаўшы і на крэст цябе распяўшы, назей і рукай к кресту прыгваздзіўшы, цярновы вянок на галаву тваю святую вазлажыўшы і тваё рабро святое кап'ём прабіўшы, і з твайго рабра сыйдзе кроў і вада. І Адам хрысціўся тваёй крывёю (Vasilevich, Salavei [Васілевіч, Салавей] 2009: 82, No. 275, Dziatlava district).

...the Jews caught you and crucified you on the cross, nailed your legs and arms to the cross, put a crown of thorns on your holy head and pierced your holy rib with a spear, and out of your rib blood and water will flow. And Adam was baptised with your blood.

In the Belarusian tradition, the theme of Christ's torment is included in the texts aimed at stopping bleeding.

Хрыстос у цямніцы і на крэст яго распіналі, кап'ём рэбры прыбівалі, кроў пускалі, свечкай прыпекалі. Ізноў кроў знімалыся, сунімаўся. Займіся і ў рабы Божае (імя). Амін (Vasilevich, Salavei [Васілевіч, Салавей] 2009: 380, No. 1821, Krasnapollie district).

Christ was in prison and crucified on the cross, they pierced his ribs with a spear, let his blood out, seared it with a candle. And blood stopped again. Stop it in the servant of God (name). Amen.

A prayer for nosebleeds is known from the seventeenth-century handwritten doctor books: “And cross yourself three times with a knife and draw a line: «Откуда ти придет господь бог, копие приа в ребра свои, яко он не утрашился язвы, не режежеса, укорися у вяде, яко лоза» Очевидна книжная основа этих текстов. ‘From somewhere, Lord God will come, a spear will take into his ribs, as he was not afraid of the wound, was not hurt’” (Redkiye Istochniki [Редкие источники] 1977: 113). The book origin of these texts is obvious.

The stigmata of Christ, mentioned in Gal. 6: 17, are used in many European spells for wounds, when they are credited with the ability not to bleed, fester or swell, although none of this is mentioned in the Biblical descriptions. The charm magically simulates both reality and the sacred event itself — out of

compassion, the popular consciousness would like Christ not to be sick and his wounds not to hurt him. Particular emphasis, as conditioned by the pragmatics of the incantation, is extended to the invulnerability of the Body of Christ.

Як у нашага Ісуса Хрыста пяць раначак, пяць болечак. Раначка з раначкай сайдзіся, плахая кроў у рабы Божай (імя) у (галаве, крыві, нагах) разыйдзіся, добрая астанавіся. Як нашаму Ісусу Хрысту ў балезнях не бываць, так і нашай рабе Божай (імя) балеzni не відаць (Vasilevich, Salavei [Васілевіч, Салавей] 2009: 378, No. 1809. Valożyn district).

As our Jesus Christ had five wounds, five sores. Come wound with wound, flow out, blood in servant of God (name), in her (head, blood, legs), stop, good blood. As our Lord Jesus Christ will not be in pain, so our servant of God [name] will not see diseases.

The idea of every human wound as the sixth wound of Christ, washed and redeemed by His blood, is rarely found in the East Slavic tradition (Agapkina [Агапкина] 2010: 369), e.g. in Belarus:

У Спасіцеля было 5 ран, а шостую я загаварываю (Shtainer, Novak [Штэйнер, Новак] 1997, No. 148, Homiel district).

The Saviour had five wounds, and I'm charming away the sixth.

In Belarusian incantations, an appeal to the holy wounds of Christ does not necessarily refer to the corresponding Biblical account, as the very mention of them attaches a specific tone and sacredness:

Госпадзі, прыймі маю малітву да святое раны. Хрыстос радзіўся, хрысціўся на Вердані.¹⁴

Lord, accept my prayer to the sacred wounds. Christ was born, baptised in the Jordan;

Ізусовы крэпкі раны. Сонца ўсходзіць і заходзіць, няхай таго ... цела боль праходзіць.¹⁵

Christ's wounds healed fast. The sun is up and the sun is down, may this... body lose its pain.

The episode of Christian history (John 19: 34), which formed the basis of the “Longinus formula”, is well known in apocryphal texts, cf., in “The Virgin’s Dream”, known to Belarusians in hundreds of versions,¹⁶ e.g.:

*На гарэ Сіянскай, на зямле хрысціянскай
Там цэркаўка стаяла,
У той цэркаўкі Прысвятая Дзева Маці Марыя спала.
Відала ана сон дзіўны-прадзіўны, страшны-прастрашны,
Як Хрыста на муку бралі,
На Крысце распіналі,
Цярновы вянок надзявалі,
Кап’ём рабро і рукі прабівалі.
Із-над правага рабра лілася кроў і вада
Усяму свету на стаянія, а людзям на помашч (Lapatsin [Лапацін]
2018: 262)*

On Mount Zion, in the land of the Christians,
There was a church,
In the church the Blessed Virgin Mother Mary was sleeping.
She saw a most miraculous dream,
As Christ was taken to be tortured,
Crucified on the cross,
They put a crown of thorns on his head,
Pierced his rib and hands with a spear,
From under the right rib, there flowed blood and water
For the whole world to stand, and for the people to help.

The appeal to the resurrection of Christ, in turn, possesses a powerful life-affirming and healing potential. The Easter formula “Christ Has Risen” is a vivid example of the declarative type of ritual expression, which not only recognises, but also creates a certain reality. In Belarusian incantations, this formula can even be used in the form of a reinforcement:

Хрыстос васкрэс ад рабы(а) божай... Амінь(Vietka district)

Christ is risen from the servant of God... Amen;

Мой дух, Господня помашч, Хрыстос васкрэс і ўрок ісчэз (Žlobin district)

My spirit, Lord's help, Christ is risen, and the bad spell is gone.

The knowledge and understanding of Biblical events in incantations are sometimes accompanied by simple and even primitive analogies, for example with the birth of Christ:

Як Ісус Хрыстос на увесь свет явіўся. так і р.б. радзіўся, сонцам асвятліўся і месяцам увязаўся, усімі святкамі саджаўся (Bartashevich [Барташэвіч] 1992, No. 1214, Homiel district).

As Jesus Christ manifested himself to the whole world, so the servant of God was born, illuminated by the sun and girt by the moon, with all the saints around him,

Or with His Resurrection:

Ісус Хрыстос васкрос, каб і.р. здароўе васкрасло (Bartashevich [Барташэвіч] 1992, No. 914)

Jesus Christ is resurrected, so may the servant of God's health be resurrected, etc.

The events of the sacred history are intertwined in mundane contexts, when even the disciples of Christ are compared with varieties of roses or the disease of rose (erysipelas):

Камяной дарогай Пан Езус ішоў, цвет ружу Пан Езус нашоў. У Пана Езуса дванаццаць учанікоў, а у розы дванаццаць цвятоў.¹⁷

Lord Jesus walked along a stone road, Lord Jesus found a flower of rose. Lord Jesus has twelve disciples and the rose has twelve colours.

Obviously, resorting to Biblical history, in turn, undergoes processes of adaptation and transformation that demonstrate the liberal handling of material for the historiolae, with a rather significant departure from the dogmatic seriousness required in relation to the Biblical word. In some cases, this process is

forced to the level that it almost leads to a new concept of Biblical events, which, in turn, are then again used as initial evidence for subsequent magical practice (Schulz 2000: 357). Indeed, it is not always a question of establishing a similarity, but of creating a correspondence — sometimes a quite surprising one — between the two situations (Bozoky 1992: 89).

Божэжая Мацір' на камені сядзела, Ісуса Хрыста дзяржала, тынам агараджала, піліной пілінала, а большы яна нічога ня знала, толькі знала ўрокі-улёкі адбаўляць палявыя, дамавыя, наносныя, намоўныя, прыгаворныя, суседнія, сямейныя. Із Ісуса Хрыста із ручак-із ножак гваздзё вынімала, на камені прыбівала, і таі рабе Божэжай Ганні пакой давала, ціхінькі лёгінькі мой дух прынімала. Мой Дух — Гасподні Дух (Lorain [Лопатин] 2017: 125).

Mother of God was sitting on a rock, holding Jesus Christ, guarding him with a fence, covering him with a shroud and she did not know anything else, just knew how to fight bad spells of the field, of the house, contagious, magic, sorcerous, from the neighbours, from the family. Out of Jesus Christ, out of his legs and arms, did she take out the nails, left them on the rock, and gave peace to this servant of God Hanna, accepted my quiet and light spirit. My Spirit — Spirit of the Lord.

The process is especially expressive in Belarusian incantations, as Biblical events are intertwined with fabulous motifs, and sometimes their logically incompatible and figuratively fantastic fusion produces a special effect. Obviously, the logical correspondence of a specific comparison is not essential, essential is the desire to place the treatment situation in an appropriate context.

The plot varieties of the historiolae form two equal blocks — when the action takes place in the sacred centre or the main assistant is on the way. It is someone, most often a Christian or even a mythological character, who is travelling; something happens to him or her, as a result of which (or in spite of) a recovery occurs. Analogy requires that the semantic levels of the text and reality be interconnected.

Ходыў Біг по зымлі і по воді і по всякой моцы і ны бояўся суроцы, уроку, ляку і прыговору, ны урыкання, ны ўлякання. І ты, раб Божыі (імя) ны бійся ны ўроку, ны ўляку. Амінь.¹⁸

God walked around land and water, and everywhere He could and he feared no bad spells, fright or a love spell, no hex or curse. And you, servant of God (name), fear no bad spell or fright. Amen.

The description of events in the sacred centre involving divine characters produces such a powerful healing effect that the entire cluster of texts does not require listing the person's inferiority or seeking help. They are only limited to stating the sacred order or the ability and willingness of the named character to come to the rescue.

Ехаў Юрый і Ягорый на вараном кане, у залатом сядле, на крутой гарэ, на сырой зямле, на зялёнай траве з трыма залатымі тростачкамі. Адна тростачка малая, другая залатая, а трэцяя тая, што ўдары і вывіхі выгаваравае і вымаўляе на сіняму мору адпраўляе.¹⁹

St George was riding on a black horse, in a gold saddle, on a steep hill, on the damp ground, on green grass with three gold canes. One cane is small, the second is gold, and the third one is that charms blows and dislocations away and sends them off on the blue sea.

This cluster also includes a number of implementations of the plot of the Second Merseburg Charm:

Ехаў Ісус Хрыстос на вороном коне, на золотом седле цераз калінавы мост.

Конь спатыкнуўса, а мост проволіўса, у коня сустаў звернуўса.

Мусіў Ісус Хрыстос з коня зьязаць, сустаў настаноўляць.

Шкура на шкуру, а кроў на кроў, а сустаў на сустаў, штоб удар і зьвіх перастаў.²⁰

Jesus Christ was riding on a black horse, on a gold saddle, through the bridge of Kalina.

The horse stumbled, and the bridge collapsed, and the horse's joint dislocated. Jesus Christ had to climb down from his horse, and fix the joint. Skin to skin, and blood to blood, and joint to joint, so the blow and the twist stopped.

These and a number of similar texts report a precedent event with a favourable ending, without mentioning the patient, while the story is limited to information about the sacred character healing or his horse. No less widespread are texts involving a story told at the beginning of the incantation, preceding, conditioning, and introducing a final imperative formula.

Первым разам Гасподнім часам Госпаду Богу памалюсь, святой Прэчыстай пакланюсь. Ехаў Сус Хрыстос чэраз залаты масток, еслятко ступіло, ножку звіхнуло. Стоіт Ісус Хрыстос і плачэ-рыдае. Іде Прэчыста Матер Божэ і кажэ:

– Сын мой вазлюбленны, чаго ты плачэш-рыдаеш?

– Як мне не плакат не рыдат, ехаў чэрэз залаты масток, еслятко ступіло, ножку звіхнуло.

– Не плач, Сынку, не рыдай, я яму так зраблю, як яго маті параділа. Кость і з костью складала, жылу з жылою стачыла, кроў і з кроўю перэлівала.

Як сухому дубу не развівацца, так у крэшчэнаго (имярек) у нозі болі не буют²¹

For the first time, in God's time, I will pray to God, will bow to the Most Holy Mother. Jesus Christ was riding across a bridge of gold, his donkey stumbled, twisted its leg. Jesus Christ stopped, and started lamenting. There goes the Most Holy Mother of God and says:

–My dear son, why are you crying?

–Why can I not cry, I was riding across a bridge of gold, my donkey stumbled and twisted its leg.

–Don't you cry, Son, don't you cry, I'll make it look the way his mother bore it. Bone to bone, vein to vein, blood to blood.

As a dry oak will not grow, so the baptised [name] will have no pain in his leg.

The incantations of this type blur the distinction between the real and the supernatural worlds. The present time of these spells precludes the transfer

of the patient and the healer to ancient, mythic times, and the sacred world spreads around the supplicant, instead.

In Belarusian charms, the *historiolae* are found in most functional groups, and occupy a rather prominent position in some of them, e.g. in charms for easy childbirth. The main plot conflicts of childbirth charms are few, while the main motif for opening the birth canal is realised by various means. The special elevated tone and sacredness of this type of spells is imparted by the idea of comparing the pains of a woman in childbirth with the torments of the Virgin or even those of Christ. The European traditions of charms and the rituals of Christmas are saturated with numerous parallels between the figurativeness and ritualism of childbirth and those of Christmas, as the Virgin and the mother in childbirth are regularly compared (see in detail Strakhov [Страхов] 2003: 191-227). In childbirth charms, events occur simultaneously in Biblical time and the time of woman's labour, which by the mere fact of referring to the precedent, magically ensures a successful outcome in the childbirth:

Божжая мацэр Суса Хрыста спарадзіла, сорак нядзель насіла, у божжай насыцелі ляжала; к рабе божжай прыхадзіла і гэту боль адвадзіла, за повесыці ў добрам месці станавіла (Bartashevich [Барташэвіч] 1992: 244, Mahilioŭ district)

Mother of God gave birth to Jesus Christ, bore him for forty weeks, lay in God's bed; came to the servant of God and took the pain away;

Як Маць Прячистая у етом сама бувала, и Суса Хрыста у городзи у Русалими на руки принимала, и царскія вoрoты расчиняла и рабе божгой прощи давала, растуицeся, разыйдзицeс, усе сцежачки, дорожачки, царскія вoрoты. Быстрыя косыци растуицися, рабе божгой Марьи разыйдзися (Romanov 1891: 160, No. 4)

As Most Holy Mother did it herself, and took Jesus Christ in her arms in the city of Jerusalem, and opened the Holy Doors and offered help; come apart all paths and tracks, the Holy Doors. Quick bones,²² come apart, in servant of God Maria, come apart.

Relevant in this context is the formulaic beginning of a charm from the Bierazino district, which should be repeated three times:

Шчаслівая тая мінутачка, у якую Ісус Хрыстос нарадзіўся (Vasilevich, Salavei [Васілевіч, Салавей] 2009: 48)

Happy is the moment when Jesus Christ was born.

An effective magical tool expected to programme not only successful, but also painfull childbirth is the precedent-setting situation of the Virgin's giving birth to Christ.

Як Маць Марія Ісуса Хрыста радзіла, не крічаўшы, не станаўшы і людзі не слыхаўшы, так і мне памагі, сьвятая Багародзіца, радзіць і не крічаць і не станаць. Амінь.²³

As Mother Mary gave birth to Jesus Christ, without a cry, without a moan, and people heard nothing, so help me, Holy Mother of God, to give birth to a child without a cry or a moan. Amen.

In addition to the verbal embodiment of the motif of the Mother of God's delivery, the ritualism of Belarusians has preserved references to the action-based design, first of all, in the advice to give birth on straw (Piatroskaya et al. 1998: 62). An appeal to the Virgin Mary, who suffered no torments, was quite common in the spells of medieval Europe. In particular, it was recorded in the popular English medical book (*Liber receptorum medicinalium*), compiled in Latin by John of Arderne, but translated many times into other languages. Among the tips, including magical ones, there are texts for easy delivery:

To make a woman deliver a child quickly after a long labour. Bind this charm below the knee of the woman in labour while saying the Lord's Prayer and the Ave Maria. (...) When Christ was born his mother suffered no pain. (...) Christ calls you child + come out (...)”²⁴ (Jones, Olsan 2015: 421).

CHARACTERS OF CHRISTIAN HISTORY

The precedential space and time of the Belarusian charms are inhabited by key characters from the Old Testament, among whom the most frequent are Adam and Eve, as well as King David; less common are Cain and Abel, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Noah, Solomon, and others. God, Christ, and the Virgin Mary occupy a special position; Archangel Michael, Saints George, Nicholas, Barbara,

etc. play their roles in certain plot situations. The set of these characters is to some extent determined by the chosen Biblical subjects, however, a number of heroes may become part of rather arbitrary situations. In some cases, the choice of a character follows the goal of the charm, by correlating the legendary history of the saint with the problem itself. In particular, St Antipas helps to relieve toothache. Regional traditions are represented by their own heroes, for example, the Sož and the Dnieper river basins are marked by a frequent reference to the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra reverends, more often Anthony and Theodosius together, which reflects the local tradition of their veneration.

Unexpectedly active in the charms is the anthroponym Adam. Saint Adam appears as a proper healer. It might be interesting to note that these plots speak about the heavenly times, before Original Sin had been committed:

І ты, соль, царыца, божая памашніца, і не я цябе буду даваць, і будзець цябе даваць святы Адам, і будзець казаць: “Етай скаціні, краснай шарсціні, ад чэмеры помачы дам” (Bartashevich [Барташэвіч]1992, No. 212)

And you, salt, the queen, divine helper, and I will not give you, Saint Adam will give you, and he will say: “This cattle, the red fur, I will give help from chemer [disease specific to horses].”

And even as a substitute for Christ in the versions of “The Virgin’s Dream”:

Матка Святая пайшла ў цэркаўку ды кругом прыстола тры разы хадзіла, легла ды й заснула. І прыйшоў Адамко-сыноч і пытае: “Ці ты, матанька, спіш, ці ты так ляжыш?” (Vasilevich, Salavei [Васілевіч, Салавей] 2009: 253, No. 1177, Klieck district).

Holy Mother went to a little church and walked around the altar three times, and lay down and fell asleep. Then came Adam the son and asked her, “Are you asleep, Mother, are you just lying?”

Of even greater interest is that the charms tend to demonstrate the life of the first humans from birth to death. In particular, in charms for good childbirth, an unborn baby is named Adam or Eve:

Первым разам добрым часам, я к Розе пріступаю, Маць Прячыстую на помашч прізываю. Маць Прячыстая пріступала,

каму там помачы давала. Ці ты Ева, ці Адам, не дзяржы, Гасподзь, там. Ці ты Ева, ці Адам, не дзяржы Гасподзь там.

For the first time, in a good time, I will proceed to Rose, calling Most Holy Mother for help. Most Holy Mother appeared, gave help to someone there. Or you Eve, or Adam, do not hold it, o Lord, there. Or you Eve, or Adam, do not hold it, o Lord, there.

It is the child who is addressed in the charm “For the preservation of the foetus”:

Ішоў Адам чэраз божы дом, чэраз дванаццаць замкоў. Замкну ты замкі і загавару, пакуль Бог народзіць да ўрэм’я, зялезныя тыны, камянная гара, ты, дзіцятка, стой, пакуль твая пара. Дай Бог на помач (Bartashevich [Барташэвіч]1992, No. 1099)

Adam was walking through the house of God, through twelve locks. I will lock up those locks and I will spell them, until God helps give birth in time, iron fences, a stone mountain, you, baby, wait until your time comes. God, grant us help.

In the healing contexts, the precedent situation of creating Eve from Adam’s rib foregrounds the very moment of the creation of Adam, placing the sick person in the place of Eve. In this way, the archaic motif of the second, this time divine, birth is implemented:

Івана маці радзіла, па людзях не хадзіла, здароўем надзяліла. Івана Бог сатварыў з жоўтай косці, Адамавага рабра, каб Івану было добра. Дзе сонейка западала, там і ліха прападала (Vasilevich, Salavei [Васілевіч, Салавей] 2009: 262, No. 1220, Liubań district).

Mother gave birth to Ivan, She did not go among people, gave him health. God made Ivan from a yellow bone, Adam’s rib, so Ivan could be well. Where the sun sank, there the evil disappeared.

It is Adam and Eve who are the first married couple:

Штоб мы у пары жылі, вясяліліся і добра гаварылі... Адам і Ева спарышы, этай пары нікто не нарушы (Polesskije zagovory [Полесские заговоры] 2003, No. 937)

May we live as a couple, have fun and a good talk... Adam and Eve, the couple, no one will break this pair.

The incantations also mention the paradisiac tree:

У прасветлым полі стаіць дрэва, пад тым дрэвам Адам і Ева. Як Адаму з Евай з раю не выхадзіць, так ётаму залатніку на жывату не хадзіць, не бушаваць і крэпка на сваім месечечку стаяць (Bartashevich [Барташэвіч] 1992, No. 814)

In the bright field, there stands a tree, under the tree, there are Adam and Eve. As Adam and Eve will not leave Eden, so this zalatnik will not travel around the stomach, will not rage, but firmly stay in its place.

The initial position of Adam and Eve in this text — the sacred centre under the tree — is generally consistent with the precedent, but is understood in the evaluation-based categories. Yet, the first people should become the first deceased:

Я прашу Плёскія кладбішча, первых занятых людзей Адама і Еву. Прашу Мар'ю, Ганну, Пятра, старых і малых, бывалых, прыхажалых, знакомых і незнакомых і ўсех святых. Прашу, хлеб-соль прыміце, Ніне здароўе вярніце. 9 разоў. Змыўшы ліцо вадой, выліць ваду ў бок могілак.²⁵

I ask the cemetery of Pliosy, the first late people of Adam and Eve. I ask Mary, Anne, Peter, old and young, experienced, outsiders, familiar and strangers and all the saints. I ask you, take bread and salt, give Nina her health back. (Nine times. Having washed the face, pour the water towards the cemetery.)

Accordingly, living in the other world led to their frequent mention in tooth-ache charms:

Маладзік-маладзік, гдзе ты быў? – У Адама. – А былі людзі у Адама? – Былі. – А што яны ядзяць? – Камень. – А баляць у іх зубы? – Не баляць. Пускай у раба Божяга Івана зубы тожа не баляць.²⁶

New Moon, New Moon, where have you been? —At Adam's. —And were there any people at Adam's? —There were some. —And what did they eat? —Rocks. —And did they have a toothache? —No, they didn't. May God's servant Ivan have teeth without pain, too.

In addition to this precedent status, the images of the primordial people in charms appear along with other sacred assistants in typical plot situations:

*Паехаў Адам на зялезных калёсах, паўёз урокі, падуманьні, згаворы на ўсіх сёлах. Папоўскія, парабоўскія, панскія, цыганскія, татарскія, жыдоўскія, французскія, германскія, аўстрэйскія, мышкавы, жабкавы, ужовы і камарковы.*²⁷

Adam went on an iron cart, took bad spells and charms to all the villages. Of priests, of workers, of lords, of Gypsies, of Tatars, of Jews, of French, of Germans, of Austrians, of mice, of frogs, of water snakes and of mosquitos;

*Перэход, перэход, сколькі тебе год? Казаў Адам і Ева, што ты тут не трэба.*²⁸

Falling evil, falling evil, how old are you? Adam and Eve said you are not needed here.

Significantly, the anthroponym of Adam itself acquires a wide range of meanings. Along with the name of the first man, it begins to denote the name of the fundamental element — the earth:

*Добры вечар табе, земля Адам, ты, вада Арданне, ты од свету прыбываеш в калодезя и в реки наполняеш, наполни маю семейну жызьнь любовью...*²⁹

Good evening to you, Adam the earth, you, the water of the Jordan, you come to the wells from very beginning and fill the rivers, fill my family life with love...

Curiously enough, the character of the sparrow, which was discouraged from damaging the crops, acquires the name of Adam, the fact most likely relying on consonance:

Ты, верабейка Адам, я табе загона свайго не дам (Bartashevich 1992, No. 67) – You, Adam the sparrow, I won't give you my lot.

It is equally curious that the name of Eve is used to mark both the sacred assistants and a number of their antipodes. Within a single text, Eve appears as a holy helper and as the eldest among the twenty-seven sisters, the stars:

Вада-вадзіца, царыца Улляніца-румяніца! Прыбаўляеся ты із гор, із вод, із вялікіх ключоў, прыбаў ты, Госпадзі і матар Божая, святая царыца Бугуродзіца, етай скаціні малачка. І зоры зарыцы, ёсць трыдзеваць сястрыцы, між вамі ёсць большая сястрыца Ева. Святая Ева, святы Восіп, пашліця вы сваіх слуг шукаці етыя скаціны малачка... (Bartashevich [Барташэвіч] 1992, No. 264).

Water-water, queen Ullianitsa! From the mountains you swell, from the waters, from the great springs, swell milk in the cattle, you Lord and the Mother of God, Queen of Heaven. And the stars, the twenty-seven sisters, among you there is the eldest sister, Eve. Saint Eve, Saint Joseph, send your servants to find milk for this cattle....

In one charm, Eve is the name of the snake queen (Romanov [Романов] 1891: 111) or the water snake's wife:

*Вуж, вуж, добры муж, твая жонка Ева, Ева, Ева. Садзяржай сваіх дзяцей, бальшых і маленькіх і самых пасьледніх...*³⁰

Water snake, water snake, a good husband, your wife, Eve, Eve, Eve. Support your children, big and small, and the last ones...

or simply of a snake that bit someone:

*Гадзіна Ева, сухая как дрэва, чого ж ты разозлілася, чого ж ты покусілася...*³¹

Eve the snake, dry as wood, why are you mad, why did you bite....

Of particular note is the group of texts in which Eve is described as the mother of all illnesses and placed in the mythological centre of the anti-world, the world of sickness:

Удару, удару, гаспадару! Парадзіла цябе Ева на сінім моры, на белым камені, там табе піваці, ядаці, у Параскі не бываць, касцей не ламаць... (Bartashevich [Баргашэвіч] 1992, No. 529).

Blow, blow, oh Lord! Eve gave birth to you in the blue sea, on a white rock, there you will eat and drink, will not be at (name)'s place, will break no bones....

The Belarusian spells have numerous mentions of Eve as the mother of illnesses, especially of dislocations and other limb injuries, e.g.:

Звіхава маці, ударава маці, увяродава маці на садочку хадзілі, галубак шукалі. Галубкі знайшліся, каб костачкі, сустайкі ўместа сыйшліся³²

Mother of twist, mother of blow, mother of sprain walked in the garden, looking for doves. The doves were found, so the bones and joints came together.

Cases referring to Biblical characters as to the “parents” of illnesses are not unique. Even Jacob-Isaac, a character twinned in line with the mythological striving for two-ness, is declared the father of the saint (!) daughters who give shivers to the heart, make hands and feet numb and brain dry:

На востраве на камні там стаіць прастол. За прастолам сядзіць Якаў-Ісакаў, і са святымі дачарэй, каторыя хадзілі сэрца знабілі, рукі ногі атымалі, у галаве мозгі высушалі.

Прыехаў Юр'я-Ягор'я на вараным кані і з залатым мячом.

– Якаў-Ісакаў, адвядзі сваіх дачарэй, штоб яны не хадзілі, жывата не сушылі, рукі-ногі не ламілі, у галаве мазгі не атнімалі. Як не будзеш іх увадзіць, буду мячом рубіць і агнём паліць. І ў гэты час амінь. Эта ад уроку.³³

On an island, on a rock, there stands a throne. Jacob-Isaac is sitting on the throne, and with his saint daughters who gave shivers to the heart, made arms and feet numb and brain dry.

St George came on a black horse with a golden sword.

— Jacob-Isaac, take your daughters, so that they did not go around, make no belly dry, no arms and legs ache, no brain numb. If you do not take them, I will fight with my sword and burn with fire. And for this time, Amen. This one is for bad spells.

The incantations of the Polesia region preserve a motif involving the daughters of a sacral character included in a countdown structure. Most typical is Samson:

*У Самсона было сім дочок. Из семі шысь, із шысты пять, із пяці штыры, із штэрых тры, із трох дві, із двоух одна, ропала вона, хай і врокы пропадаюць.*³⁴

Samson had seven daughters. Of the seven six, of the six five, of the five four, of the four three, of the three two, of two one, she is gone, so may the spells be gone.

Researchers have documented a number of texts about the daughters of the Virgin Mary (in a spell against a snake bite (Bartashevich 1992, No. 624) or Jesus Christ, who “walked in the mountains, led the twelve daughters with him”.

The story of Cain and Abel takes a prominent place in the cluster of the Belarusian aetiological legends for the spots on the Moon, with the Earth’s satellite standing for the place of punishment and disgrace, which arises from the main theme of these legends: fratricide. The topic of fratricidal murder is typical of many European traditions, e.g. one of the many Belarusian examples: “They say Cain killed Abel, a brother killed his brother. Cain is a sinful man. God revealed the murder on the Moon, so that people were afraid to kill” (Avilin, Bohaneva 2016: 114). In the system of medical magic, these Old Testament characters took their place among the toothache charms.

Каинъ, Каинъ, Каинъ, вяли спрасить брата сваяго Авиля, ци балять ли у яго зубы. – „Нетъ“. – Такъ и у р. Б. нетъ. Ва имя Ацца и Сына и Святага Духа. Аминь, аминь, аминь (Dobrowolski [Добровольский]1891, No. 3)

Cain, Cain, Cain, tell them to ask your brother Abel if he has a toothache. —No. —So the servant of God has none. In the name of Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Amen. Amen;

Кайн! Кайн! Кайн! Спытай у брата свайго Авеля: не баляць у яго зубы? – Не. – Так бы ў раба Божага (імя), не. Амін. Амін. Амін (Vasilevich, Salavei [Васілевіч, Салавей] 2009: 401, No. 1939, Iŭže district)

Cain! Cain! Cain! Ask your brother Abel: Does he have a toothache?
—No. —May God’s servant (name) have none. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Perhaps this configuration was conditioned by the dominant position of the Moon as the somatic equivalent of a tooth.

In every instance, allusions to the legendary story contribute to the formation of spells, in this case for epilepsy:

У полі пяску не перемеріць, у морі вады не перяліць. Так Кайлю Авелю на месяцы не стаяць, у маладзенца спужанага маладзенца не бываць.³⁵

One cannot measure sand in the field, pour water from the sea. So Cain and Abel will not stand on the Moon, the frightened baby will have no fright.

In rare cases, one can find the names of Abraham and Sarah, both popular in incantations due to consonance, rather than relying on a precedent.

Оцець нашъ Аўрамъ усё поля узорав, жана яго Сара по полю ходзила, тьвятыеты садзила. А хто их копавъ, тому Богъ помогавъ (Romanov 1891: 103, No. 262).

Abraham, our Father, ploughed the field, his wife Sarah walked in the field, planted those beautiful flowers. And those who dug them had help from God.

Abraham is mentioned among the holy helpers:

Святы Абрам, святы Іван, святы Адам, прыйдзеце, з (імя) чорна гора забярэце, у сухі дуб занясеце, дзе вецер не вее, дзе сонца не грэе, дзе месяц не ходзіць, дзе ніхто не ходзіць (Bartashevich [Барташэвіч] 1992, No.1247).

Saint Abraham, Saint John, Saint Adam, come, take black evil from [name], put it in a dry oak, where the wind does not blow, where the sun does not shine, where the Moon does not go, where no one walks,

as well as the name of a demonological character, though in the function of an assistant.

Як на моры Кіянскам, на гарэ на Сіяньскай, ранняя зара, вячэрняя зара, Абрамя, Храмя Ляксеєвіч, і ты, Мар'я Хвёдараўна, упрашаю вас, умаляю, не сам сабою - кроўю сваёю, прашу вас на хлеб, на соль, із жаной, із дзеткамі (Bartashevich [Барташэвіч] 1992, No. 970).

Once on the Sea of Kijanskaje, on Mountain Zion, a morning star, an evening star, Abraham, Khramia Liakseyevich, and you, Maria, daughter of Khviodar, I beg you, not by myself - with my blood, I ask you for bread, for salt, with my wife and my children.

Apparently, it was rhyming that led to the appearance of Joseph and Mary: *Марыя, Іосіп звiх і ўдар разносіць* (Bartashevich [Барташэвіч] 1992 № 535): Maria and Joseph, twist and blow dosing. King David, and his principal and permanent attribute of meekness, is often referred to in the set opening of a prayer “O Lord, remember David, and all his meekness”:

Памяні, Госпадзі, цара Давыда і ўсю кротась яго, і вялікую памяць яго. Судзяржаў цар Давыд ваду і зямлю, судзяржай жа раба Якімава ружжом (Bartashevich 1992, No. 4).

Remember, O Lord, King David and all his meekness, and his great memory. King David held water and land, so hold Yakim’s gun;

Цар Давыд скрапіў неба і зямлю, зоры і ясны месяці, скрапі, Госпадзі, маю просьбу (Bartashevich 1992, No. 105).

King David sealed heavens and the Earth, the stars and the bright Moon, seal, O Lord, my request.

Perhaps, David’s role as victor over the giant Goliath indirectly contributed to the north Belarusian motif of a war journey:

*Ехаў круль Давід да Бога на вайну. Як табе, Давід, Бога не ваяваць, так табе, звіх, касьці не ламаць. Выгавараваю з трох да дзевяці, Бог да памоцы і я сама.*³⁶

King David was going to wage war on God. As you, David, will not wage war on God, so you, sprain, will break no bones. I count from three to nine, God will help and I myself.

David's royal position was in demand in texts which deviate a lot from the Biblical account, such as the following:

*Было ў цара Давыда сем валоў, сем бугаёў. Сеў цар на крэсле, стань, сустай, на месце.*³⁷

King David had seven oxen, seven bulls. The King sat down on a chair, stand, joint, on the place.

In general, the Belarusian material confirms and once again exemplifies the findings of Tatiana Agapkina: “Another peculiarity of this precedent-setting time is the fact that, although some events taking place in its framework reduplicate relatively accurately the facts of Biblical history, in the majority of these prayers and incantations, Biblical events are of symbolic interpretation, and even radically change their meaning; sometimes, incantations and apocryphal prayers simulate a different reality, the magical meaning of which, apparently, is conditioned by the nature of the precedent-setting essence of names and characters involved in them; finally, in other cases, this precedent time, and the reality created in it, become virtual, because the same events — due to variation, verbal game, etc. — appear and are perceived in different ways”³⁸ (Agapkina 2010: 612).

The popularity of the *historiolae* strategy in Belarusian incantations is based on fundamental philosophical traits, which are characterised by the underlying unity of the world, the close relationship of all elements of the universe. “Assistance from powerful forces is a key peculiarity of the Belarusian incantations... An appeal to another person conditions the appearance of numerous actors, both of the highest rank (the saints), and the secondary, actively involved in the abolition of a disease” (Zavyalova 2006: 194). It is also important that the disease itself, which is conventionally explained as something alien, superfluous and relating to otherworldliness, occupies a corresponding position in the

whole picture of the world, possessing its own self-contained portrait, which determines the strategy of communication.

The *historiolae* are not evenly distributed in the Belarusian ethnic territory, but pattern according to the functions of charms and local specifics, and in certain cases, they reveal obvious leitmotifs and goals. To a large extent, this is a result of whether the tradition is part of *Slavia Orthodoxa* or *Slavia Latina*. In particular, an appeal to Holy Scripture, including references to a separate account, is much more common in the western part of the country, in those cities densely inhabited by the Catholic population. First of all, it concerns the involvement in the magical texts of the theme of Christ's Passion and Resurrection. Among the west Belarus charms, there are sporadic references to the wounds of Christ and the retelling of his life, unique for the Belarusian ethnic territory, but quite common and popular in Western Europe. The Old Testament characters, often in fabulous surroundings, appear in the east Belarus charms.

Researching the *historiolae* in different ethno-cultural regions of the country and the comparison of records made in different periods (the period of official atheism and revitalisation of religious life) provides fruitful material for the study of religious behaviour "practiced away from the literate institutional religion of formal theology" (Waller 1988: 264). In any case, the *historiolae* serve as both a model of human healing and a set of case studies, but, most importantly, as a guarantor of the recovery of lost harmony.

Translated from Belarusian by Kanstantsin Staradubets.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABSU – the Archive of the Education and Research Laboratory of Belarusian Folklore of the Belarusian State University.

AHH – the Archive of the House of the Herbalist in the village of Strel'na, Ivanava District.

AIASEF – the Archive of the Institute of Art Studies, Ethnography and Folklore of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus.

APSU – the Archive of the Polack State University.

NOTES

¹ Hereinafter, quotes from oral spells are given in italics. Omitted text before and after the quoted passage is not marked.

² ABSU: 1982, Vierbavičy village, Narouĭia district, A.K, b. 1924.

³ AIASEF: 2017, Biaroza district, AV, b.1928.

⁴ AIASEF: 2007, Slabada village, Ušačy district, TK, b. 1935.

⁵ AIASEF: 2009, Akciabr village, Źlobin district, NH, b. 1931.

⁶ AIASEF: 1987, Pierašary village, Valožyn district, MD, b. 1920.

⁷ AIASEF: 2003, Lukonica village, Zeĺva district, MZ, b. 1930.

⁸ AIASEF: 1995, Barysaŭ sity, R.J., b. 1930.

⁹ ABSU: 1991, Zabalaccie village, Mscislaŭ district, VS, b. 1908.

¹⁰ AIASEF: 1999, Douhaje village, Ščučyn district, AZ, b. 1917.

¹¹ AIASEF: 2011, Mochaŭ village, Lojeŭ district, MA, b. 1933.

¹² AIASEF: 2015, Sielišča village, Vierchniadzvinsk district, VA, b. 1920.

¹³ ABSU: 2006, Uhrynki village, Ušačy district, NR, b.1926.

¹⁴ AIASEF: 1989, Pasiničy village, Slonim district.

¹⁵ ABSU: 1984, Čaropki village, Hlybokaje district, VL, b. 1905.

¹⁶ See East Belarusian recordings in Lapatsin [Лапацін] 2018.

¹⁷ APSU: 2009, Tumulavičy village, Dokšyčy district, TV, b. 1936.

¹⁸ AHH: 1975, Starasiellie village, Ivanava district, FB, b.1897.

¹⁹ AIASEF: 2008, Hubičy village, Buda-Kašaliova district, MP, b. 1937.

²⁰ AIASEF: 2011, Dubrova village, Lieľčyčy district, AA, b. 1931.

²¹ AIASEF: 2017, village Brahin district, AB, b. 1930.

²² ‘Quick bones’ refers to the pelvic skeleton, where ‘quick’ denotes ‘moving’; the ‘quick bones’ are the bones that can move and let the foetus out.

²³ AIASEF: 2012, Mysavoje village, Kasciukovičy district, RK, b. 1930.

²⁴ “*Ut mulier paret cito infantem que diu laborat. ligetur istud carmen infra genua mulieris parturientis cum oratione dominica & salutacionem beate virginis + Sicut vere credimus quod verbum + caro + factum est. + et quod maria virgo deum peperit infantem deum verum & hominem. Sic & tu ancilla maria intercedente & domino magistro Jesu christo iubente feliciter. parias prolem quam in utero habes. Quando christus natus est nullum dolorem eius mater passa est. Denuo christus deus & homo nascitur. + infans te*

vocat christus + exi + exi + christus vincit + christus regnat + christus imperat + christus te ab omni malo defendat amen. + michael + gabriel + Raphael + venite in adiutorium ei.”

²⁵ ABSU: 1984, Tamary village, Babrujsk district, NŠ, b. 1912.

²⁶ AIASEF: 2018, Sanuki village, Jeľsk district, MČ, b. 1933.

²⁷ AIASEF: 2010, Ščytkavičy village, Staryja Darohi district, FS, b. 1924.

²⁸ AIASEF: 2011, Lipliany village, Lieľčycy district, AL, b. 1929.

²⁹ AIASEF: 2018, Telman village, Brahin district, NF, b. 1924.

³⁰ AIASEF: 2008, Chizau village Karma district, MS, b. 1933.

³¹ AIASEF: 2011, Salihorsk, PI, b. 1925.

³² AIASEF: Tuča village Klieck district, NK, b. 1923.

³³ AIASEF: 2009, Akciabr village, Žlobin district, NH, b. 1931.

³⁴ AIASEF: 2007, Psyščavavillage, Ivanava district, LB, b. 1937.

³⁵ AIASEF: 1989, Kniazejka village Mahilioŭ district, LM, b. 1918.

³⁶ AIASEF: 2019, Kamai village, Pastavy district, LK, b. 1940.

³⁷ AIASEF: 1999, Barysauŭ city, MH, b. 1936.

³⁸ «Особенностью этого прецедентного времени является также и то, что, хотя некоторые происходящие в рамках его события и воспроиз-водят относительно точно факты библейской истории, в большинстве случаев в молитвах и заговорах эти библейские события получают символическое толкование и даже в корне меняют свое значение; ино-гда заговоры и апокрифические молитвы и вовсе моделируют иную реальность, магический смысл которой, по-видимому, обусловлен ис-ключительно прецедентным характером задействованных в ней имен и персонажей; наконец, в других случаях это прецедентное время и создаваемая в нем реальность приобретают виртуальный характер, ибо одни и те же события — благодаря варьированию, словесной игре и т.д. — выглядят и воспринимаются по-разному».

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BIO

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DISTANT READING OF THE METADATA OF THE DIGITIZED HUNGARIAN CHARM CORPUS

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Abstract: Based on Éva Pócs' manual charm index an online database was created for Hungarian verbal charms within the East–West Research Group at the Institute of Ethnology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Budapest), between 2013 and 2018. The main goal was to create a multidimensional digital database. Digital text preparation would open the gates to new interpretations and analyses, which would bring us closer to understanding the compound and complex phenomena of charms. In the Digital Database of Hungarian Verbal Charms users can search by various metadata, like date and place of collection/recording, name of collector/scribe, informant, type of source, function of the charm, rites/gestures, language of the text, keywords etc. This paper focuses on how different new arrangements and distant reading of the corpora can reshape our knowledge about the Hungarian verbal charms.

Key-words: digital database, digital textology, computational folkloristics, folklore database, distant reading, Hungarian verbal charms, visualisation of metadata, verbal charms

The first to call attention to the potential of computational research of large-scale metadata in the humanities was the literary historian Franco Moretti with his method of distant reading. (Moretti 2007). Although computational analysis has a long history within folkloristics and the problematic of classifying collected data has long preoccupied folklorists, we can only speak of large-scale digitization from the 2010s on, and therefore of large-scale digital folklore collections that truly require computational and digital, methods and assistance.¹

According to Canadian digital humanists, Geoffrey Rockwell and Stefan Sinclair, large scale analyses do not interpret texts, rather they explain them. “Explaining is [...] about discovering the large-scale patterns of change in texts. It is epidemiology; it tracks symptoms, not causes”. (Rockwell–Sinclair 2016: 116). Translated to cultural studies or philology this means that they do not wish to explore the meaning of individual texts or phenomena (as happens in the case of close reading) but wish to explain the symptoms. After presenting some of the milestones of computational folkloristics, my paper will call attention to some of the symptoms through the distant reading of the metadata of the Hungarian verbal charm database and will formulate some suggestions for treating the symptoms.

BEFORE THE DIGITAL BOOM

The unmanageable quantity of texts presented a problem in folkloristics already before the digital boom and folklorists appeared among the pioneers of digital humanities. Folklorist-musicologist Bertrand Harris Bronson at the University of California, Berkeley began to use rudimentary IBM 5081 punch cards for typologizing Child-ballads in the 1940s (Bronson 1949; Voigt 1971: 540), practically at the same time as Roberto Busa, who is often called the father of digital humanities (Rockwell–Sinclair 2016: 49). Following this early precursor, computational folkloristic research really gained momentum during the 1960s,² and although it may seem that interest flagged during the 1980s and 90s, in fact computational folkloristics can be considered something continuous.³

The first research projects primarily were related to formalization, modeling, and taking off from these to typologization, as the potential of the computer was first and foremost in the assistance it could provide in classification. By then scholars of folk culture have long been struggling with “questions of storing, analyzing and comparing data, and when their data had become very

numerous these tasks could only be accomplished by computers” wrote Vilmos Voigt at the beginning of the 1970s (Voigt 1971: 540–541).

Folklorists were not only relying on computers for their speed and the possibilities offered by them for organizing and classifying data but were also hoping that they would be able to assign individual texts and especially the motifs appearing in the texts to several categories. Already in 1968 Éva Pócs, for example, at the time of her first attempt to typologize Hungarian charms, was hoping that punch cards would prove to be a good solution for future typological problems (Pócs 1968: 277–278).

DIGITAL DATABASE OF HUNGARIAN VERBAL CHARMS

We published the test version of the Digital Database of Hungarian Verbal Charms in August 2018 with 1712 charm texts at the conclusion of the ERC project Vernacular Religion on the Boundary of Eastern and Western Christianity, Continuity, Changes and Interactions,⁴ under the European Union’s Seventh Framework Program (FP7/2007-2013) /ERC grant agreement No 324214. Additionally our research group has digitally prepared 6037 texts. For the analyses of this paper, I have used the entire material that had been digitally prepared. The immediate precursor of the database is the two-volume collection of charms entitled Charms [Ráolvasások] that Éva Pócs and I published in 2014 (Ilyefalvi 2014; Pócs 2014). The two volumes: A, containing 19th–21st century texts, and B, comprising texts that survived in pre-19th century historical sources with their 1500 pages and nearly 3500 texts (and reference to further roughly 3000–3500 variants) is one of the most voluminous textual publications of European charms research.⁵ In terms of its conceptualization it was a rather unique endeavour in that there is hardly any other collection of charms that attempts to bring together and publish the entire repertory of charms of a single nation/language from the earliest historical sources to the most recently collected folklore material. In the charms database we provided the following metadata to the individual records: type, function, ritual gesture, type of source, venue of collection/ collector, informant (name, sex, age, and further data if known), the language of the item, place of storage, reference to the original publication.

THE CORPUS IN THE LIGHT OF THE METADATA

What can we conclude about this Hungarian digital charm corpus in the light of the metadata? What kind of symptoms can we observe? Thanks to digitization we can have a better understanding of the composition of the corpus than ever.⁶ Although the unevenness of the corpus was already known (namely, that compared to charms deriving from folklore collection we have few historical data), now we have a much more detailed picture of the extent and nature of these.

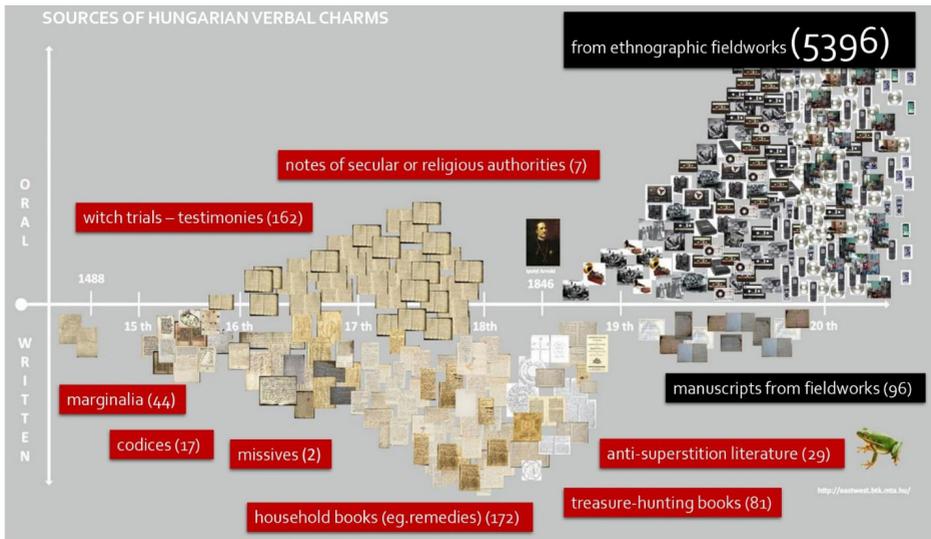


Figure 1: Infographic of the corpus of Hungarian charms drawn in Photoshop

In Diagram 1 we can see the visualization of the corpus of Hungarian charms drawn in Photoshop. The timeline demonstrates the differences between the two kinds of tradition (oral and written), their relative proportions, the spread of the sources of the corpus in time, the variety of sources, and changes in collection techniques. In the digitally drawn infographics I highlighted the most important milestones of Hungarian charms research (the Bagonyai charms as the first data of the genre in 1488, Arnold Ipolyi as the first folklorist to collect and publish charm texts in 1846), and I tried to place the data deriving from witness accounts of witch trials in the border zone between oral and written sources. Although the infographics say a lot about the corpus, they do not reflect the real proportions and unevenness. In order to see these, we need to carry out computational analyses.

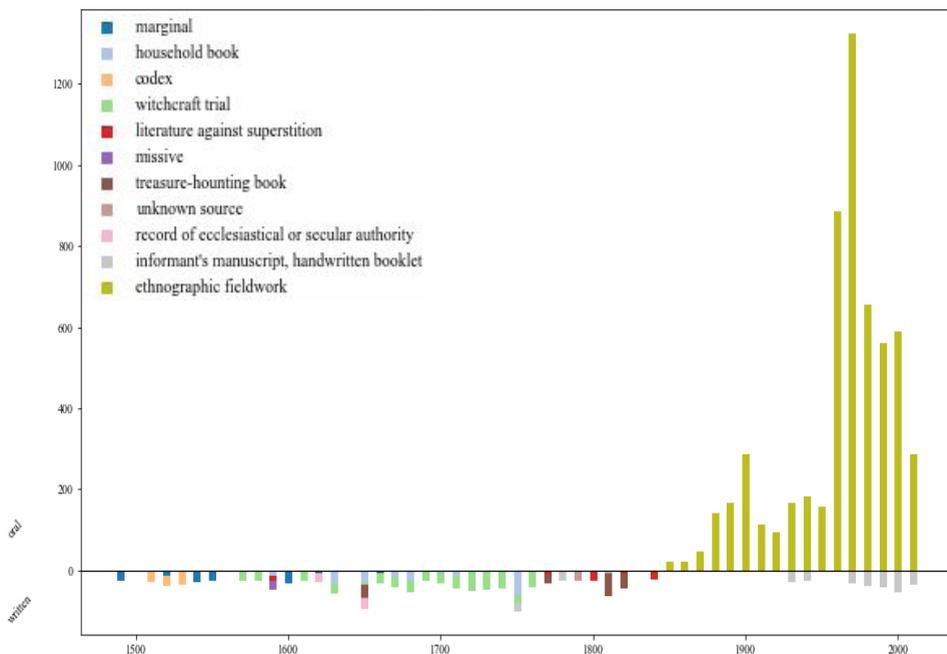


Figure 2: Distribution of the data of the charm corpus in time and according to the types of sources⁷

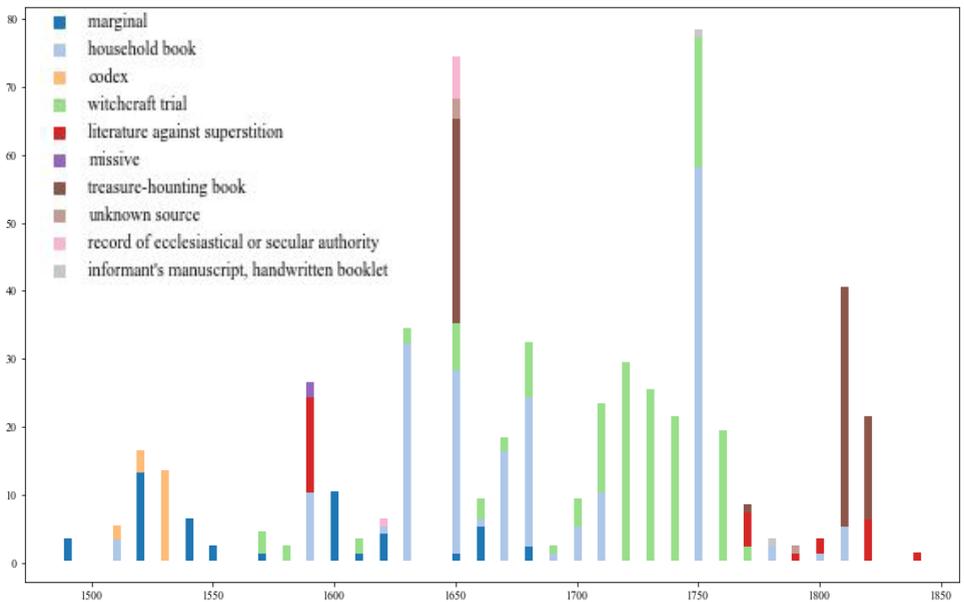


Figure 3: The distribution of pre-1851 charm texts in time and according to types of sources

According to the state of the database finalized on August 31, 2018, 82.11% of the corpus is comprised of texts collected during the course of the 20th – 21st centuries. Examining the text corpus according to the types of sources the proportion of texts from folklore collections is even higher. Altogether 90.98% of the data derive from 19th – 20th and 21st century folklore collecting.⁸

In the case of historical sources, the proportions demonstrate the arbitrariness and haphazardness of the exploration of the sources (Ilyefalvi 2014: 21–23). What is also remarkable is the almost complete absence of any evidence of the collection of manuscripts, i.e., of folk literacy. This lack is explained by the self-definition of folkloristics (as primarily researching orality) when it first emerged as a discipline.⁹

It is also instructive to examine how the data deriving from folklore (at present altogether 5476 items) are distributed over the 19th – 20th centuries. The graph below (Figure 4) shows the numerical values of folklore collections in 20-year blocks.

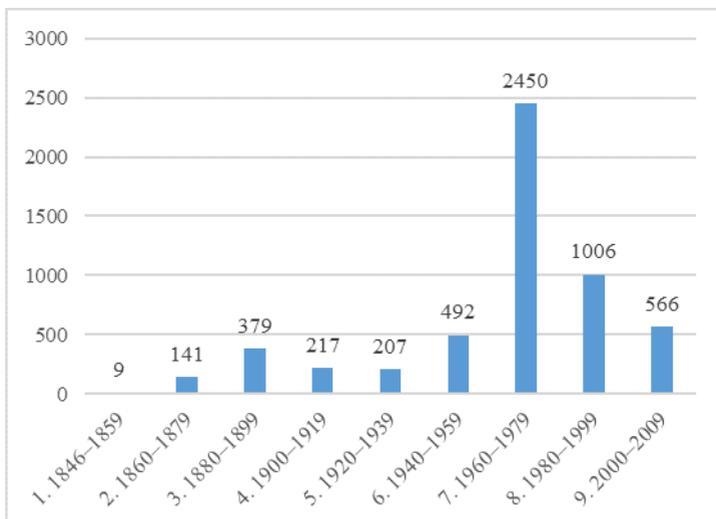


Figure 4: The distribution of the items of the charm corpus broken down into twenty-year blocks¹⁰

The amount of data in the period between 1960 and 1979 are exceptionally high, they comprise 45 % of charms obtained through folklore collection, altogether 2450 data items. For those familiar with Hungarian folkloristics and the history of Hungarian charms research the above proportions are perhaps not surprising but they certainly call for explanation. In the course of data collecting activity associated with the creation of the Atlas of Hungarian Folk Culture (AHFC), the Topography of Hungarian Folk Beliefs (THFB) and the Atlas of Szolnok County Folk Culture (ASzFC), several questions related to practices of healing/harming with charms were included, thus thanks to these questionnaire surveys we have country-wide data for the phenomenon (Barabás 1958; Diószegi 1967; Pócs 2001a; 2001b; 2014: 42). At the same time, if we compile the data without those of the various Atlases, we shall still see that from the 1960s, but especially from the 1970s on, the collection of charms by folklorists intensified (Figure 5). 33% of all folklore collection of charms derives from this period even without counting the results of the collecting activity carried out for these ethnographic atlases. This ‘symptom’ may be explained on the one hand by the fact that from the 1960s and 70s onwards, research on topics related to folk religiosity and folk beliefs was no longer prohibited by the Communist regime. On the other hand, this was the period

when the activities of a few dedicated charms scholars began to flourish or came into full bloom (Pócs 2014: 34).

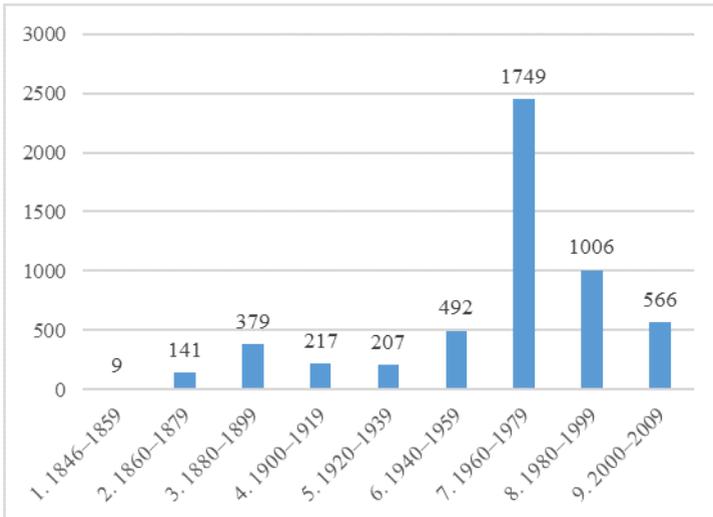


Figure 5: Distribution of the charm corpus without the data of the ethnographic atlases (AHFC, THFB, and ASzCFC)

In the course of digitally preparing the texts, we marked the rituals themselves and cases when speech acts (i.e. charms texts) were associated to them separately, therefore we can determine the proportion of descriptions of rituals to charms texts in the corpus. We may have had hunches and impressions about these earlier, however, asking this question and gaining a numerical answer to it is only made possible by digital data preparation.

Distant Reading of the Metadata of the Digitized Hungarian Charm Corpus

	Data item	1. 1846–1859	2. 1860–1879	3. 1880–1899	4. 1900–1919	5. 1920–1939	6. 1940–1959	7. 1960–1979	8. 1980–1999	9. 2000–2009
Full corpus	5476	9	141	379	217	207	492	2450	1006	566
Texts	5176	9	141	366	215	206	471	2313	931	526
Rites	4270	9	120	370	156	177	363	1698	859	536
Texts/Data item	95%	100%	100%	97%	99%	100%	96%	94%	93%	93%
Rites/Data item	78%	100%	85%	98%	72%	86%	74%	69%	85%	95%
Collectors	542	4	19	52	76	68	77	157	71	18
Collector/Data item	9,9%	44%	13%	14%	35%	33%	16%	6%	7%	3%

Figure 6: Numerical values for data on texts and rituals among the material deriving from folklore collecting

Figure 6 shows that 95% of charms are constituted by texts in the corpus, which supports the earlier insight of Hungarian charms studies that researchers of the genre primarily collected and published those charms that entailed concrete speech acts. When querying the data of the table we will also realize that during the 1960s and 1970s, the above mentioned ‘heyday’ of charms collection, collectors paid the least attention to recording the rites and gestures belonging to the texts or at least to publishing them. Between 1960 and 1979, rites are noted down in 69% of the data, which is a much lower rate than among all the other charms combined, and even when we compare it to all the other time intervals. This can most likely be attributed to collecting methodologies (e.g. the questionnaires of the atlases.) If we re-examine the question excluding the data from the three questionnaires, we still get the same result, i.e., that although without those data the number of descriptions of rituals is much higher between 1960 and 1979, but still, compared to all other time periods (with the exception of the period between 1900 and 1919) the period still has significantly fewer description of rites and gestures (Figure 7).

	6. 1940–1959	6. 1940–1959 (without the atlases)	7. 1960–1979	7. 1960–1979 (without the atlases)
Full corpus	492	387	2450	1749
Texts	471	369	2313	1614
Rites	363	299	1698	1333
Texts/Data item	96%	95%	94%	92%
Rites/Data item	74%	77%	69%	76%

Figure 7: Numerical values for data on texts and rituals among the material deriving from folklore collecting without the data of the atlases (AHFC, THFB, and ASzCFC)

In the case of folklore corpora, it is important to know how many collectors the data comes from. The digital text corpus is the result of the collecting activity of 542 collectors.

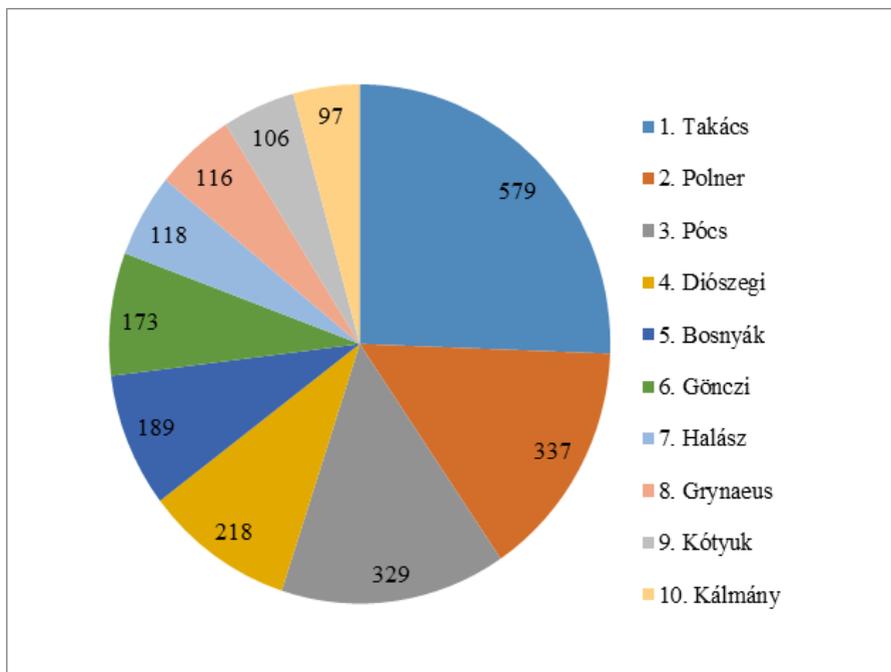


Figure 8: The ten researchers who collected the largest number of charms texts

The ten most prolific collectors can be seen on the pie chart (Figure 8). They collected 41.3% of all charms in the database, altogether 2262 texts. If we examine the proportions of the descriptions of rituals to speech acts, once again we will notice that between 1950 and 1973 Vilmos Diószegi and Éva Pócs who played a significant role in the large-scale folklore collections mentioned above, collected significantly fewer descriptions of rituals when compared to both other collectors and the totality of data.

	Data item	1. György Takács	2. Zoltán Polner	3. Éva Pócs	4. Vilmos Diószegi	5. Sándor Bosnyák	6. Ferenc Gönczi	7. Péter Halász	8. Tamás Grynaeus	9. Erzsébet Kótyuk	10. Lajos Kálmány
Full corpus	5476	579	337	329	218	189	173	118	116	106	97
Texts	5176	557	317	328	214	174	161	91	92	98	97
Rites	4270	554	245	223	128	147	160	113	101	105	79
Texts/Data	95%	96%	94%	100%	98%	92%	93%	77%	79%	92%	100%
Rites/Data	78%	96%	73%	68%	59%	78%	92%	96%	87%	99%	81%

Figure 9: The number of texts and ritual descriptions collected by the ten most prolific collectors of charms

The corpus of György Takács whose collection activity stands out in terms of the quantity of texts he recorded. The database currently contains 579 texts (10.6% of the totality) that he collected in the course of fieldwork in Csík, Valea Uzului, and Ghimeş over the past 30 years. We also have to thank him for the most recent data. That is to say, if we examine the last twenty years of the corpus (altogether 1258 texts between 1990 and 2009), 46% of it has been collected by György Takács, but if we hone in on the last ten years, then 384 out of 566 texts, more than 50% of the total number in the database are there thanks to him.

It also follows from the above that for the most recent period we only have data from areas beyond the borders of Hungary and within that the majority come from research among Hungarians in Romania. Between 2000 and 2009 we only have 7 charms from Hungary, 2 from Ukraine, while there are 555 from among Hungarians in Romania. We can also see the unevenness of regional distribution when looking at the number of data broken down by county: Harghita /Hargita County (331), Bacău /Bákó County (210), Cluj/Kolozs County (1), Mureş/Maros County (13).

Overviews that indicate the number of data per settlement are indispensable, since it is possible that we have a proportionately large amount of data from after 2000, but they may be coming from a single region.

SYMPTOMS AND READINGS

From the above figures the unevenness of the Hungarian charms database is clear. Given this, in keeping with the changed scale of computational research we cannot consider our data to be longitudinal, for example it is not suitable for the computational study of historical change for this very reason.¹¹ Folklore databases can be large-scale in terms of their size, but they do not qualify as big data because they can never be complete datasets and for the most part, they have been prepared with particular research goals in mind. Folklorists have long been aware that folklore corpora, digital databases are artificially constructed. However, the enormous amount of digitized folklore material is not used only by folklorists. Because of the unevenness of the databases, we must make sure that we make the users aware of this in several different ways (e.g. in the introductory essays to the project, with the help of data visualization tools, etc.), so that they draw their conclusions from their analysis of the data with these characteristics in mind.

Good examples of this are the Dutch VolksverhalenBank and the Icelandic Sagnagrunnur. For example, gaining an overview of the Dutch folktale database corpus is helped by dynamic timelines operated by the users which makes it possible for them to see each hit in relation to the density of the collected data, too.

Decennium timeline

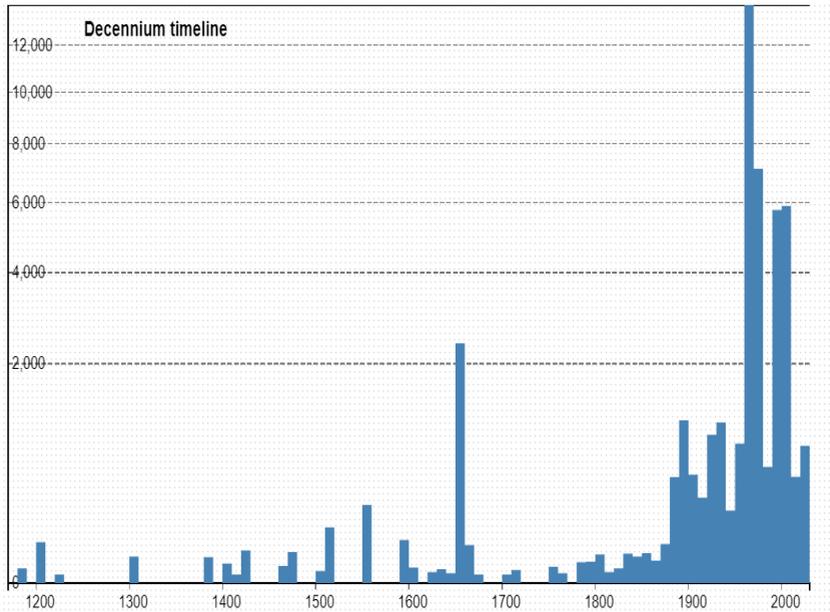


Figure 10: The dynamic timeline of Nederlandse VolksverhalenBank

The material of the Icelandic belief narrative database was connected with the mapping program called CartoDB in 2015, with its help viewing various layers of the data becomes possible. Blue indicates the homes of the informants (the size of the dots shows the number of informants from a given location proportionately), orange shows the number of texts collected at a given locale, while green conveys once again the number of informants at a given location, however, the size of the dots depends on the number of texts collected there. With the selection of the layers the user is free to choose from among the various modes of presentation.¹²

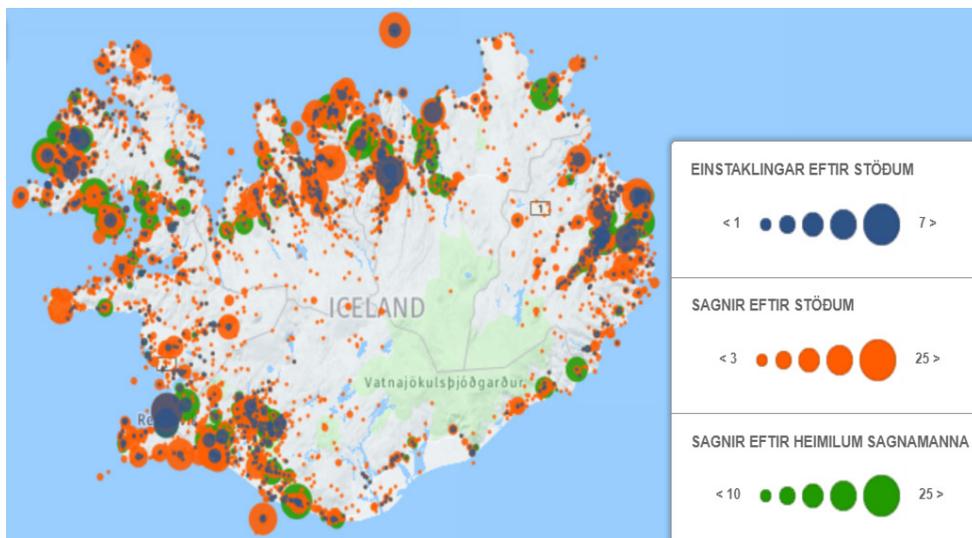


Figure 11: The data of Sagnagrunnur visualized with the CartoDB program, after choosing all the layers

Digital data and computational research hold the possibility of new kinds of errors since a badly prepared data item or a poorly chosen analytical method or tool can lead to erroneous conclusions. Although this was true of humanities research prior to the digital age as well, possibilities for error (in part due to the increased scale) have multiplied. According to folktale scholar Donald Haase, for this reason folklorists of the future will be obliged to master quantitative computational methods (Haase 2016: 79).

The unevenness and arbitrariness of the Hungarian digital charm corpus call our attention to the need to incorporate several dynamic visualizations and summaries into the user interface of the digital database to unequivocally remind researchers and users of these shortcomings.¹³

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NOTES

¹ Cf. Abello & Broadwell & Tangherlini 2012; Tangherlini 2013, 2016; Kenna & Maccarron & Maccarron (eds.) 2017.

² Hungarian-born Thomas A. Sebeok for example studied the poetic and linguistic elements of various genres of Cheremis folklore, primarily folksongs (Sebeok 1965), the American anthropologist Benjamin N. Colby and his colleagues compared Kwakwaka'wakw, Egyptian Arabic, Inuit, Hindu and Chinese folktales with the help of computers (Colby–Collier–Postal 1963; Colby 1966). Under the direction of Marie-Louise Tenèze also during the 1960s French folklorists created a catalogue for French animal tales and created a system for digitally cataloguing folktales (Voigt 1971: 542). Canadian anthropologist Pierre Maranda modelled the organization of myths with the help of the computer (Maranda 1967). During the 1970s John Miles Foley analyzed the metrics of Beowulf with computer programs (Foley 1978).

³ Cf., for example: Voigt–Preminger–Ládi–Darányi 1999. The first golden age of computational folkloristic and anthropological research can definitely be designated as the 1960s and 1970s, along with structuralism. See for example the edited volume primarily presenting North American research entitled *The Use of Computer in Anthropology* with an introduction by Dell Hymes (Hymes (ed.) 1965); or Vilmos Voigt’s overviews regarding the question: Voigt 1971; 1976; 1981; 2007.

⁴ See: <http://eastwest.btk.mta.hu/>.

⁵ One of the largest recent text editions for example is Daiva Vaitkevičienė’s Lithuanian charms collection, which publishes 1636 texts (Vaitkevičienė 2008).

⁶ I am grateful to Péter G. Tóth for his help in preparing the tables for this study.

⁷ Figures 2-3 were prepared by Márton Muntág, I am grateful for his assistance.

⁸ The data collected from orality (89.37%) and from handwritten booklets of the informants (1.61%) add up to altogether 90.98%.

⁹ Thanks to the collecting efforts of György Takács, this part of the collection has been significantly enlarged in recent years, but we have not yet incorporated the data into the charm corpus. Cf., for example: Takács 2018.

¹⁰ Because dates were often missing from the record in many cases, we had to supply the timeframe ourselves, as a result the twenty-year blocks of the graph show an approximate picture only.

¹¹ Big data are such relatively complete datasets that did not come into being for the purpose of research. Cf. Rockwell & Sinclair 2016: 124.

¹² <http://sagnagrunnur.com/2015/10/26/number-of-persons-and-legends-by-places/> (last consulted: 2019.03.21.).

¹³ One of the best practices for dynamic research environment in folkloristics is the Dutch folktale database. On the user interface see: Muiser–Theune–de Jong–Smink–Trieschnigg–Hiemstra–Meder 2017.

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BIO

Emese Ilyefalvi studied folkloristics, religious studies and philology at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. She worked from 2013 to 2018 as a junior research fellow in the “East–West” Research Project (“Vernacular religion on the boundary of Eastern and Western Christianity: continuity, changes and interactions” ERC project No 324214). Within the framework of this project, she published a new Hungarian charm collection in 2014 co-authored with Éva Pócs and the Digital Database of Hungarian Verbal Charms in 2018. (See: <http://raolvasasok.boszorkanykorok.hu/>) She finished her PhD Thesis in 2019 about the theoretical, methodological and technical questions of computational folkloristics. She published several articles in Hungarian and international journals (*Ethnographia*, *Replika*, *Incantatio*) on these topics. She was a visiting scholar in Vienna (*Collegium Hungaricum Wien*), in Amsterdam (*University of Amsterdam*) and in Edmonton (*University of Alberta*, *Wirth Institute for*

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GOING BACK TO THE MANUSCRIPTS: AN INTERVIEW WITH LEA OLSAN

Jonathan Roper

In the first of what is to be hoped will be the first in a series of interviews with charms researchers about their scholarly life and work, we present an interview with Lea T. Olsan conducted remotely (via Skype) by Jonathan Roper in October 2020. Lea is one of the earliest members of the Committee for Charms, Charmers and Charming, having attended the first meeting in London almost twenty years ago. A medievalist and manuscript scholar, she moved from America to Cambridge almost twenty years ago. She and her husband Peter are familiar figures at our conferences.

J.R.: How did you get started in charms research?

I started charms research because a friend of mine (Suzanne Sheldon) was writing a dissertation on charms, and she wanted me to help her translate Latin charms which she had transcribed from the microfilms of manuscripts. And she was also developing the film in the bath-tub. And I had never read charms in manuscript before, and didn't know a thing about it then.

J.R.: So what were you studying then?

I took a degree in medieval studies and I had done Old English at Tulane [Louisiana], and we had met one another there. Working with her was my introduction to manuscripts. So everything I have learnt, I have learned by practice, off the seat of my pants. One time somebody at a conference said – well, these

are hard to read, I wasn't trained as you were. And I laughed inside because I was never trained. It's a matter of going back to the manuscripts. Peter [her husband, the scholar of medicine, Peter Murray Jones] is very good at that of course, but he learnt the same way I did: he just started reading manuscripts.

I was teaching at the University of Louisiana at Monroe, and I could go to one meeting a year, so I chose to go (usually) to Kalamazoo [the American medieval studies congress]. And in the seventies and eighties, I put on sessions on medicine and magic there, including charms. And together the three of us, Suzanne Sheldon (Parnell, as she became), and another friend from Tulane, Patricia Giangrosso, conceived of an index of charms in medieval manuscripts¹. Suzanne left the profession and changed her life, so she gave it up. And so did Patricia. So I'm the one that kept on doing charms forever. And we'd done a lot of work on it in a handwritten bespoke computer program, but the computer platform disappeared. It still chases me. People have asked me, you have asked me, for my index: it doesn't exist! I kept on working on charms, but I did not want to proceed with making an index after the computer platform disappeared. I wanted to work on charms, I didn't want just to make a list.

J.R.: So what in your view would have been the benefit of an index?

Just opening up this subject to everybody. And getting people to look at the texts.

J.R.: And the difference between an index and a list?

We were not going to transcribe the whole charm. We were going to locate charms in texts with key words and incipit to the text and incipit to the incantations. But unless they were very short they were never going to be fully transcribed.

J.R.: So it was going to be a bit like the Index of Middle English Verse?

Yes, but purely for charms. But I refused to just make an index. I was the one who decided not to do it because I'm the only one left of the original three still in this field, and I wanted to think more about the charms in the manuscripts.

J.R.: But to go back a little, what aspects did your charms talks at Kalamazoo cover?

Mainly charms and medicine. Usually charms for healing. In the eighties, I did Latin charms from manuscripts in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Eventually that came out much later in that corpus chapter in the book you

edited². And things like that Arcus paper³, which was my first charms article, I gave at Kalamazoo.

J.R.: Lots of those papers you published in recent years you'd given at Kalamazoo? Why didn't you publish them earlier?

Yes. I was working very hard, teaching five courses a semester. And then in the mid-eighties, it became clear that if I didn't start publishing, I would never be promoted! [laughter] So that's when I started to work more seriously on charms. I think it was 1989 that I gave a paper on charms in Toronto. They didn't publish it, but Peter [Jones] was at that conference, and he asked a question there. He was the only other one who knew about the manuscript, Sloane 6. So that was how I met him.

And the only other connection I had with him was that occasionally he would come to give papers at a medical session that I went to at Kalamazoo. And he brought a text to me that was written on the Middleham Jewel. So we co-authored an article on the Middleham Jewel, which did not come out until 2000⁴ because we had problems communicating. Every time he sent me a draft, my computer officer had to open it, and every time I sent it, his computer officer had to open it. The reason he asked me to do that was to write about what it said on the jewel from the perspective of charms.

J.R.: And eventually you moved to Cambridge...

I retired in 2002 after twenty-seven years. And I moved here [Cambridge] in 2003. I had come to England to meet my new in-laws, and I came to London too and gave a paper at the Warburg Institute. [This was at the 'Conference Zero' of the group: Charms and Charming in Northern Europe, January 25th, 2003. A version of this paper was subsequently published as ⁵]. So I was retired, and had no university support for travel to the States, for example. But I knew that I could travel east in a way that I could not travel west. And once I met the people who were working on charms in central and eastern Europe, I thought: These people will teach me. And that's what happened.

J.R.: Teach you because they're dealing with living traditions often?

Yes, and that made a real difference, because the first time I saw films of people doing charms, say, in a bath-house in Russia or in a house where the practitioner was taking on patients, and had people in their front room, lined up, and I could see the performance, that was enormously helpful in thinking about how the charms were performed.

And the other turning point for my work on charms was when I signed up for a summer seminar on oral traditions in Missouri with John Miles Foley in 1989. And that made a big difference. He wanted me there as I looked at the Anglo-Saxon and the Latin. Coming out of that seminar, I wrote the article that came out in *Oral Tradition*⁶.

J.R.: How might you describe your scholarly development in the last fifteen years or so?

In the last fifteen years or so, it's been with manuscripts. That is to say, I've been trying to look for context for charms in the manuscripts. That's because I'm closer to the libraries now than I've ever been. I always came to the manuscripts for a few weeks in summer after I'd taught enough summer school to get the money. And then I would spend a week in Oxford, a week in Cambridge, and a week in London. But now I'm like Brer Rabbit in the thorn bushes, I'm living in the land of manuscripts. The old colleges have wonderful collections. The university library I spend an enormous amount of time in. And then I can get to London.

J.R.: When you talk about context you mean immediate manuscript context?

I would characterize it as trying to understand the place of the genre in manuscripts, as in my piece on the 'marginality' of charms⁷. The questions are: how do they relate to medical texts in manuscripts? how do they relate to religion in manuscripts of religion? and how do they relate to the context of their period? That is to say, are they in a vernacular text or in a Latin text? Are they in something that's being moved from one language to another?

J.R.: So the impact you've been talking about modern-day fieldwork is a more diffuse influence on your work?

I think this work is most meaningful to me when you come to think about performance. Because you realize that in performance you've got a lot more going on than just words. You've got the context of the need or problem, you've got the social event or maybe a private event, but it's a socially recognized event where some human need is being met – maybe fear, maybe sickness, maybe animal troubles, maybe to enhance a medicine. Or when you write a charm on a birth girdle, that's going into a specific set of circumstances – the anticipation of the difficulties of childbirth. All those represent living situations.

So thinking about those situations is what people doing fieldwork brought to my medieval stuff. There's an interesting meshing there, because manuscripts become so philological – and they are, and you've got to track them – but when they are built of something like prayers, or charms, or recipes, then you know that they are having contact in some way or another with human situations.

J.R.: What are you working on now and what paths do you envisage your scholarship taking in the future?

I went away from Anglo-Saxon because I could not teach Anglo-Saxon in my university. So that's when I concentrated on Middle English, and I always kept up the Latin. Just lately, I have a paper I gave in Vilnius [at the ISFNR Congress in 2013] I mean to finish about literary texts that appear in vernacular charms in English, high-level bits of literary Latin incorporated into early medieval charms that go into the vernacular.

J.R.: You'd see this as a continuation of your work on the context of charms?

Yes. And the other thing I am supposed to be doing is putting together a collection of charms old and new in translation for students to look at the genre.

J.R.: You have co-authored various works with your husband Peter Jones. How does that process work? And what benefits does it bring?

The first one we did was on the Middleham Jewel, and that's been a paper picked up by archaeologists, like Roberta Gilchrist. And then we were asked to contribute to the encyclopedia that Sophie Page and Catherine Ryder published a couple of years ago on magic and medicine. Of course that involves charms and amulets⁸. And the other co-authored thing useful for charms studies was the one we did on performative rituals for conception and childbirth⁹. And that was a collaboration because Peter's department has been the Department of History and Philosophy of Science in Cambridge, which had a grant to work on reproduction from antiquity to now.

J.R.: How does the collaboration work?

The easiest way is to divide up the sections. He doesn't do Anglo-Saxon, so I do anything on early medieval. He got into charms and amulets through his study of medieval surgeons and doctors. So that's how we met. He gave me his charms from Fayreford, one of his physicians, when I was writing the article on 'Charms and Prayers in Theory and Practice'. This was not a

joint article, but I got material from him¹⁰. It was an important piece and it showed that high-profile scholastic doctors were using charms, something the rational medicine people had argued against. What collaborations with Peter have brought to my attention are medical manuscripts that I would not have looked at otherwise.

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PUBLICATIONS MENTIONED IN THE INTERVIEW:

¹ The Index of Charms: Purpose, Design, and Implementation. *Literary and Linguistic Computing*. 1991. 6,1: 59-63. [Co-authored with Suzanne Parnell]

² The Corpus of Charms in the Middle English Leechcraft Remedy Books. 214-237 in Roper, J., ed. *Charms, Charmers and Charming: International Research on Verbal Magic*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

³ The Arcus Charms and Christian Magic. *Neophilologus*. 1989. 73: 438-447.

⁴ Middleham Jewel: Ritual, Power, and Devotion. *Viator* 2000. 31: 249-290. [Co-authored with Peter Murray Jones].

⁵ Charms in Medieval Memory. 59-90 in Roper, J., ed. *Charms and Charming in Europe*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

⁶ Latin Charms of Medieval England: Verbal Healing in a Christian Oral Tradition. *Oral Tradition*. 1992. 7,1: 116-142.

⁷ The Marginality of Charms in Medieval England. 135-64 in Kapaló, James, Éva Pócs, and William Ryan, eds. *The Power of Words: Studies on Charms and Charming in Europe*. Budapest: Central European Press, 2013.

⁸ Medicine and Magic. 299-311 in Page, Sophie and Catherine Rider, eds. *The Routledge History of Medieval Magic*. London and New York: Routledge, 2019. [Co-authored by Peter Murray Jones].

⁹ Performative Rituals for Conception and Childbirth in England, 900-1500. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*. 2015. 89: 406-433. [Co-authored with Peter Murray Jones].

¹⁰ Charms and Prayers in Medieval Medical Theory and Practice. *Social History of Medicine*. 2003. 16: 343-366.

BOOK REVIEW

Marcello Barbato, *Incantamenta Latina et Romanica. scongiuri e formule magiche dei secoli V-XV*, Testi e Documenti di Letteratura e di Lingua XLI (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 2019)

Marcello Barbato's *Incantamenta Latina et Romanica. scongiuri e formule magiche dei secoli V-XV* breaks new ground by bringing together, editing, and translating into modern Italian charms in manuscript sources from Italy, France, Spain and Anglo-Norman England. It foregrounds materials which are distinct from the long-known and well-studied Germanic tradition. Barbato draws on Eleonora Cianci's 2015 edition of medieval Germanic charms, with translations into Italian for relevant comparisons with his texts. The first half of Barbato's book consists of an introduction; the last half contains individual texts, each edited with a brief, but informative, introduction and commentary. Additionally, he supplies indexes of manuscripts, difficult words, themes and functions, and languages.



Barbato's sources are late Roman and pre-modern manuscript texts in Romance languages, including Italian, Friulian, French, Anglo-Norman, Spanish, Catalan, and Occitan. This editor possesses sophisticated linguistic skills, which he deploys to great advantage to describe and analyze dialectal variations and to situate particular variants in terms of the history of the language and geography. Chronologically, the charms range from the late antique period, beginning with the medical writings of Marcellus Empiricus in the early fifth century CE and the *Physici Plinii*, ending with two fifteenth-century witch's incantations. He observes (p. CXX) that between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries, charms enjoyed "a sort of golden age" under the protection of monasteries. This medieval flowering of the genre in Western Europe, excluding Germanic and Celtic language regions, is represented by 87 texts, grouped under 42 headings, arranged roughly chronologically.

In his substantial Introduction, Barbato addresses the basic questions regarding the genre of charms. What is the relationship between charms and prayers? What is special about the language of charms? What are the functions of charms? Fundamental to his approach is the concept of a language of magic, which underlies the function of a charm. He has read widely in the theories of magic constructed by Mauss and Todorov and others, and has taken into account the contributions of linguistic theorists and anthropologists, such as Austin, Tambiah, and Bourdieu. He moves quickly from the linguistic aspects of semiotics, proxemics, and historical dialects to rhetoric. Here, he defines and provides examples of the poetic forms typical of charms. Within the span of his Latinized texts, Barbato analyzes the details of rhyme, rhythm, metre, repetition, alliteration and other figurative language, which reoccur across different formulas. He often presents these in grids, laying out comparisons very precisely. One can hear as well as read the texts. As with jingles and popular songs, it is often their linguistic appeal that makes charms memorable. Useful cross-references are provided within the commentaries on individual texts. These relate specific rhetorical features to ones in his other edited texts, as well as to the analyses in the Introduction.

In the section of the Introduction on metrics and stylistics, Barbato identifies two opposite trends, corresponding to the two eras covered in his survey. He finds extreme synthesis (*estrema sentesi*) and an enigmatic character (*carattere enigmistico*) in his earliest late antique examples and what he calls redundancy (*ridondanza*) in the later examples. It is among these later, more poetic examples

of the genre that Barbato illuminates the overlap between charms and the literary language of poetry. Here his literary skills and knowledge of the strategies of poetic language are brought to bear on charm texts. Like others interested in this genre, Barbato is attracted to texts that display literary attributes. Yet, he makes the point (p. XLVII) that because charms are grounded in magical language, they do not need to make sense in order to function. One regrets that he did not select for analysis from his manuscript materials any examples of unintelligible formulas, for these are plentiful, at least in late antique sources. Given his linguistic training, apart from his literary inclinations, what might he have made of the nonsensical incantations, that is, those very enigmatic and synthetic texts characteristic of the late Roman period?

After all, he argues that the magical language of charms is foundational and separable from the ebb and flow, births and deaths, durations, disappearances and rediscoveries that affect individual formulas. He begins his enumeration of types by explaining selected forms of charms according to their mode of operation. 1) Impossibility (*adynaton*) vanquishes an evil by equating it with non-existent circumstances: a mule cannot give birth. 2) The chain sets out the step-by-step removal of an evil out of the body, paralleling the desired reality: from bone to flesh, from flesh to skin, from skin to hair, from hair to earth. 3) Animal analogies compare the sickness or evil with the actions of an animal. Other types discussed by Barbato represent familiar medieval motifs: 4) Mother and son, 5) Three women, 6) Encounters, 7) Longinus and Three Good Brothers. In the last paragraphs of this section, Barbato addresses these subjects: 8) prayers versus charms, 9) narrative charms versus pure conjurations, 10) blood-staunching charms and 11) rarer types.

Barbato establishes the historical contexts for these texts. He offers detailed descriptions of his manuscript sources and often provides information on exactly what surrounds the charm text in a particular manuscript. In one table (pp. XCVI-XCVII), he lists where the charms are recorded within individual manuscripts, that is, whether they are written in blank spaces, on fly-leaves, within the main text or in the margins, and indicates in the last column the type of material contained in the manuscript as a whole. Matters of cultural contexts and reception of the genre are highlighted in a section of the Introduction on metalinguistic witnesses (*Testimonianze metalinguistiche*), in which we find a list of quotations from high-profile writers, many of whom feared or suspected that users of the genre were vulnerable to demonic influences

or worse, that is, that they were practitioners of witchcraft. The quotations hit the highpoints of statements on the legitimacy of incantations and written amulets from the fifth through the fourteenth century. At the conclusion of his introduction, he sketches changes in the reception of charms toward the end of the medieval period.

This is a valuable book. It fulfils a significant need for a comprehensive introduction to a neglected field of Latin and vernacular texts. Like all good books it will stimulate new work and remind us of connections that are yet to be worked out. How, for example, do the Romanian charms from manuscripts dating from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, recently edited by Emanuela Timotin, relate to the Romance language traditions represented in Barbato's collection? Also, although a great deal of work has been carried out by scholars such as David Frankfurter on late Latin incantations, the continuities and syntheses between late antique and early Christian vernacular charms remain to be fully explored. Readers of this book, especially charms scholars, will find many ways of making use of Barbato's carefully wrought edition.

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