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THE SLAVIC AND GERMAN VERSIONS OF THE SECOND MERSEBURG CHARM

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This paper considers the dissemination of the versions of the Second Merseburg Charm among the Slavs. The authors combine the structural-semiotic method, which allows them to describe the text structure and the inner logic of its variations, with the historical-geographical method, which helps in understanding texts and their historical transformations and geographical transferences.

Key words: the Second Merseburg Charm, Belorussian and Ukrainian charms, text structure, areal dissemination, formula, theonym

In 1842, Jacob Grimm presented an amazing finding to the scientific community, that of two Old High German charms from a manuscript of the 10th Century,[1] now generally known as the *Merseburg charms* (*Merseburger Zaubersprüch*e) (Grimm 1842). For more than one and a half century an enormous amount of research work has been done, but many puzzles connected with both texts remain unsolved.[2] Since one of the notable traits of the Second Merseburg charm (hereafter MC2) is the presence of pagan theonyms (a quite rare phenomenon even in the Old High German period), the question arises of whether this can be taken as undeniable evidence of the text's pagan origins or had the Old Germanic theonyms lost their direct connection with the mythological heritage as they were recorded in written form? The text below itself being a classic example of Old German pagan poetry, its translation or interpretation of certain lexemes cannot be clearly explained once for all:

> Phol ende Uuodan uuorun zi holza
> du uuart demo Balderes uolon sin uuoz birenkit
> thu biguol en Sinthgunt, Sunna era suister
> thu biguol en Friia, Uolla era suister
> thu biguol en Uuodan , so he uuola conda
> sose benrenki, sose bluotrenki, sose lidirenki,
> ben zi bena, bluot zi bluoda,
> lid zi geliden, sose gelimida sin

> *Phol and Wodan rode into the woods,*
> *There Balder's foal sprained its foot.*
> *It was charmed by Sinthgunt, her sister Sunna;*
> *It was charmed by Frija, her sister Volla;*
> *It was charmed by Wodan, as he well knew how:*
> *Bone-sprain, like blood-sprain,*
> *Like limb-sprain:*
> *Bone to bone; blood to blood;*
> *Limb to limb as they were glued.*

No other medical charms contains so many characters, going back genetically to the Old German pantheon. While most of the Old High German charms contain the names of Christian Saints, Old German pagan theonyms are rarely found in the later texts. Phonetic and graphical analysis of Old German words (first of all the following pagan theonyms) accounts for both the occurrence of the Christian Saints' names in the later versions of the MC2 and the areal distribution of the texts. The presence of Low German elements suggests the text comes from North German area, even though it was been recorded in writing at the East Franconian monastery in Fulda, or at the monastery of Merseburg in Thuringia.

The closeness of both monasteries to the Low German territory resulted in the mixed character of the charm dialect: there were some attempts of copyists to substitute the Old Germanic consonants *p* and *th*, partially affected by the High German Sound Shift, for *ph* and *d*. The extant versions of the MC2[3] are written in Low German or in the standard German language, while South German versions do not exist. The texts did indeed spread to the south, but this happened when supra-regional forms of German language were developing actively.

The Low German forms of the words could have resulted in pseudo-etymological explanations of the initially pagan vocabulary. The theonym P(h)ol in the beginning of the MC2 kept the non-shifted initial sound p instead of the Old High German affricate:[4] *puhl, paul, pohl*. In that case it could be identified with homonymous Low German forms of the Saint Paul's name. Saint Paul occurs most often in the Low German versions of the MC2 in the same role as the Old German P(h)ol: he goes riding with a companion, sees the horse sprain its foot, but he is not involved in healing the horse, for example:

> St. Peter und St. Paul gingen auf einen hohen Berg / St. Peters Pferd vertrat einen Fuß, / da steigt St. Peter selber ab und zog dem Pferde den Fuß und sprach: Fleisch zu Fleische, / Blut zu Blute, / Sehen zu Sehen. / du sollst nicht kellen, du sollst nicht schwellen[5]

> *St.Peter and St.Paul went to a high mountain / St.Peter's horse sprained its foot / Then St.Peter got off his horse, grabbed its leg and said: flesh to flash / blood to blood / sinew to sinew / You should not hurt, you should not swell.*

The question of the influence of the MC2 on the dissemination of its variants among the Slavs remains without an answer. Most linguists hold to the theory of typological affinity of the Indo-European charm traditions, drawing on the structural and topical similarity of the texts. But in our opinion the ***territorial closeness of the Baltic, Slavic and German ethnic groups*** played a more important role and certainly could have found its reflection in the local folklore. It is noteworthy that the manuscript with both Merseburg charms came to the monastery from Fulda with the Catholic mission for converting pagans to Christianity. It is difficult to say why two Old German pagan charms were included in the collection of the Christian texts and how the missionaries were going to use them. We could state the following: the area of distribution of the variants of the Second Merseburg charm was Eastern and North-East Germany, in close vicinity to the Slavs and the German settlements in the West Slav territories; that the dialect of the charm versions was Low German here, while in other regions of Germany variants were recorded in written form by the means of standard German. The following example taken from a West German book of the sixteenth century shows how the copyist substituted the voiceless plosive *k* for the South German affricate *k(c)h*:

> Der h. Mann St. Simeon
> Soll gen Rom reiten oder gan,
> Da trat sein Folen uf ein Stein
> Und verrenkt ein Bein.
> Bein zu Bein, Blut zu Blut,
> Ader zu Ader, fleisch zu Fleisch,
> So rhein khomm sie zusammen
> In unsers Herrn Jesu Christi Namen.
> Also rhein du aus Mutterleib khommen bist[6]
>
> *St.Simeon went riding or on foot to Rome*
> *and his foal stumbled over a stone*
> *and sprained its foot*
> *foot to foot, blood to blood,*
> *vein to vein, flesh to flesh*
> *in the name of the Lord Jesus*
> *be the same as when you came out of the womb.*

The structural analysis of the versions of the MC2 gave complete versions and texts with different combinations of three parts.[7] The complete versions vary in character sets and their number. Usually St. Peter and St. Paul go somewhere in horse riding, St.Peter's horse sprain its foot, the hurt is healed by St. Peter, casting the spell. In other versions Jesus Christ goes riding a donkey and it is Holy Virgin Mary who heals the hurt:

> Unser Herr Jesus ritt über einen Stein,
> ben Eselin, hat zerbrochen sein Bein,
> da kam die Maria gegangen,
> sie sprach:
> Knoche zu Knochen
> von Knochen zu Knoche
> Lende zu Lende,
> bis du wieder zu rechte werdest. (i.N.)[8]
>
> *Our Lord Jesus rode*
> *a donkey, that stumbled over a stone and hurt its leg*
> *then came the Virgin Mary*,
> *and she said:*
> *bone to bone,*
> *from bone to bone*
> *loin to loin,*
> *until you are well.*

The incomplete versions lost the third formula, it was substituted for the information about healing the horse by St.Peter or Jesus Christ:

> Peter un Paulus chengen över den Brauch,
> Peter sin Pertken verklikt sik den Faut,
> Do kam user Här van Engelland,
> De Petrus sin Pertken kureiern kann[9].
>
> *Peter and Paul were going across a field,*
> *Peter's horse sprained its foot,*
> *then came Our Lord from the Angels' Land,*
> *He was able to heal St.Peter's horse.*

However some versions only containing the third formula are found in Low German:

> Von Leder tau Leder – von sehn tau sehn –
> Von glit tau glit – Von fleß tau fleß –
> Von Blud tau Blud – Von Mest tau Mest –
> Von Mutter Maria geboren vaß[10]

From leather to leather – from sinew to sinew –
from limb to limb – from flesh to flesh–
from blood to blood – from knife to knife –
was born of the *Virgin Mary*.

THE SLAVIC DISTRIBUTION OF MC2

In 1903 Oscar Eberman analyzed basic versions of MC2 in the Germanic languages. Later, in 1914, he was followed by Reidar Christiansen who summarized Finish and Scandinavian versions of the MC2 in his dedicated monograph. In Christiansen's book we can find, amongst others, a short chapter devoted to East Slavic variants of MC2. It should be noted that this is entirely based on the work written by the Russian-Finnish philologist V. Mansikka (1909), and mainly covers Christian reminiscences in the Belorussian versions of the MC2. Unfortunately, Slavic parallels to the MC2 still remain unknown to Western scholars.

Nevertheless, the first work devoted to the MC2 appeared in Russia as early as in 1849. Since then it has become a rather popular subject, which has been analyzed from different points of view (e.g. comparative analysis). Several works concerning East Slavic and Polish versions of the MC2, as well as the charm's functioning on the border between Belarus, Poland and Lithuania, have appeared recently. In this report we shall focus on this recent research.

Texts of the MC2 type are spread unevenly amongst Slavic ethnic groups. They are known among Western Slavs – in Poland, Czech and in practically all Belorussian regions. Most of the Belorussian material comes from the Homel province. The Ukrainian versions of the MC2 were mostly recorded along the Dnieper's right bank (Pravoberezhie), in the central regions and in Polesye. The MC2 type was recorded sporadically in some other areas where Ukrainians live, for example Kuban. Several texts of the MC2 type were found in the south, where the Don Cossacks live. Besides, in the Russian North (in Obonezhie and Vologda province) and in the Upper Volga region (in Kostroma and Yaroslavl provinces) the researchers found a modified version of the MC2: here the charm focuses on stopping bleeding, but not on the dislocation treatment. They still have a "bone to bone, tendon to tendon" part, but they gained a new historiola: usually, a young girl sits on the stone, treating a wound. The MC2 is almost unknown among Southern Slavs (in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia and Croatia), but it is rather widely spread in Slovenia, where it has German origins. The charm was once recorded in Serbian Banat, but this does not change the overall picture.

Thus we can come to the conclusion that the texts of the MC2 type are widely spread in Belarus and in Ukrainian Polesye, which borders with Belorussian Polesye. They are also familiar to Western Slavs and Slovenians, but practically unknown for Balkan Slavs, Russians and for the most part of Ukraine. This geographical coverage drives us to the conclusion that the MC2 type is not the common heritage of the Slavic nations. Even if we admit that the MC2 type (or at least the formula 'bone to bone, tendon to tendon, joint to joint') can be traced back to the Indo-European era, it is evidently a quite late innovation among the Slavs.

In 1909 V. Mansikka suggested that the MC2 type came to Slavs from the Central Europe, probably from Germanic ethnic groups (Mansikka 1909: 249–259). Modern Russian scholars agree with this point of view emphasizing the idea that West-Slavic traditions acted as a mediator between German and East-Slavic traditions (Agapkina 2002:247; Zavyalova 2006: 206). According to them, the MC2 came to Poles, Czechs and Slovenians directly from the German tradition, the Belorussians received it from Poland. Probably, the modified type of the MC2 came to Russian North from the Karelian-Finnish tradition, where this type of text is found widely.

On the basis of Christiansen's material we drew up the following table which reveals the first recordings and the MC2 versions among Germanic and Finnish ethnic groups (unfortunately we do not have the relevant data about Lithuanian, Latvian, Hungarian and Romanian versions). Evidently, Christiansen's data reflecting the 1914 situation are not up-to-date and we could have made them more accurate, but here we are not interested in absolute numbers. What is important is the correlation between them.

Table 1. Texts of the MC2 type in German and Finno-Ugric languages (by Christiansen 1914).

	Total number	The earliest recordings and publications
German	25[11]	X c., XIV c., XVI c.
English	11	XVI c., 1834
Dutch	14	1873
Norwegian	38	1682, 1685
Swedish from Sweden	35	1750, 1817
Swedish from Finland	20	1907, 1911
West-Finnish	83	1658, 1852
East-Finnish	284	1789, 1813
Estonian	133[12]	1884, 1887

We tried to make the similar table for the Slavic world. Surely, it reflects more recent data, which explains the differences from Christiansen's book. Though some figures may be made more exact later, we are confident that the general idea and the ratio are correct.

Table 2. Texts of the MC2 type in Slavic languages

	Total number	The earliest recordings and publications
Polish	16	1544, 1547
Czech	3	1613, 1745
Slovenian	3	1923(?)
Serbian (from Banat)	1	1911
Belorussian	104	1891
Ukrainian	13	1892
Southern-Russian	6	1987
Northern and the Volga region Russian	11 (modified)	2nd quarter of the 17th c.; 1660

This table shows that the MC2 versions were recorded among some Slavic nations (i.e. Poles, Czechs and Russians) no later than in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which is much later than in Germany, but rather close in time to the situation in England, Norway and Western Finland.

The second conclusion from the table is much stranger: the overwhelming majority of the texts of the MC2 type were recorded not in Germany, where these texts presumably originated, but in places where they appeared much later through the mediation of other ethnic traditions: in Belarus, where it came from Poland, and in Finland, where it came from Sweden. (As for Estonia, the MC2 could appear via different routes. This question deserves its own dedicated research). The number of texts of the MC2 type, which are recorded in Belarus, Finland and Estonia, is much more than the number of these texts in Germany. The same situation is observed in Poland and Sweden, which played the role of both donors and mediators.

We have two explanations of this phenomenon:

1) The MC2 type was not just transferred to new ethnic traditions, but became their organic feature and put down its roots there. Then it got closer to the other types of charms and other genres of folklore, was modified and gave birth to many new texts.

2) In the second half of the nineteenth century, folklorists began collecting the charms, at that time magical traditions were actively used by the Belorus-

sians, Finns and Estonians, therefore they managed to find so many texts. We can see a different situation in Germany and Scandinavia, where the magical folklore was not a widespread tradition in the nineteenth century.

BELORUSSIAN AND POLLESYAN CHARMS FOR DISLOCATION AND INJURY

As we have already mentioned, the majority of texts of the MC2 type in the Slavic world were recorded in Belarus and in the area of Belorussian and Ukrainian Polesye. It is important for us that Belarus was the chief area where the MC2 type actively functioned. The Belorussian texts of the MC2 type are not only large in number, but also highly variable in structure and content. Almost every text represents a new variant. Obviously, such instability and variety of texts is typical only of oral tradition.

In the end of the 1970's and the beginning of the 1980's, we participated in the so-called Polesyan ethnolinguistic expeditions. Our aim was to systematically research Polesye (the area, which is located in the basin of the Pripyat River and unites boundary regions between Ukraine and Belarus). Later we published the book, *Charms from Polesye*, which was based on the results of our research and included approximately 1100 charms.

The Belorussian charms tradition has an exclusively oral character. Handwritten charms are almost unknown there which is why the majority of texts are written down from oral speech and have the feel of oral functioning. In Belarus there were neither medieval recordings nor recordings in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, but the charm tradition exists there till nowadays. Large collections of charms were gathered in Belarus in the past decades and were recently published. Modern collections of charms, combined with E.R. Romanov's extensive collection (1891), allow us to examine the charm repertoire of Belorussians very carefully in terms of its dynamics over the last 100 years – from the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twenty-first.

The following table (Table 3) provides information about the most important editions of Belorussian charms and texts included in them.

The fourth table contains the data about the number of Belorussian and Polesyan charms from dislocation and injury. It is clearly seen that the number of these texts is great, though their number decreased with time if compared with the total number of charms.

Table 3. The most important editions of charms from Belarus and Polesye.

	The time of the fixation	The place of the fixation	The total number of charms
E.R. Romanov's collection (1891)	1880s	Belarus	396
Замовы (1992)	1975 – 1989 (+ republications)	Belarus	1351
Поліські замовляння (1995)	1990–1992	Belorussian and Ukrainian Polesye	183
Таямніцы (1997)	1980s – the beginning of 1990s	Homel region (Belarus)	715
Polessian Charms (2003)	1973 – 1991	Belorussian and Ukrainian Polesye	1092
Полацкі этнаграфічны зборнік (2006)	1996 – 2006	Polotski region, Vitebsk province	229
The total number of charms:			3963

Table 4. The number of charms for dislocation and injury in Belarus and Polesye.

	The total number of charms	The number of charms for dislocation and injury	The correlation between charms for dislocation and injury and the total number of charms
E.R. Romanov's collection (1891)	396	66	16.7 %[13]
Замовы (1992)	1351[14]	81	6.0%
Поліські замовляння (1995)	183	17	9.3%
Таямніцы (1997)	715	46	6.4%
Polessian Charms (2003)	1092	40	3.7%
Полацкі этнаграфічны зборнік (2006)	229	20	6.2%
The total number of charms:	3963	270	6.8%

Looking at this table, we can come to the conclusion that charms for dislocation and injury form a large and considerable group of Belorussian and Polesyan charms. It should be noted that the presence of such a group should not be taken for granted. For example, charms specifically for sprains are not to be found in the Northern Russian charms corpora. As this kind of functional group is present in Polish and German traditions, we can assume that it was formed in Belarus under Western influence.

In E. R. Romanov's book, the total number of sprain and injury charms is 16,7%. This figure is considerably lower in subsequent collections: from 3,7% to 9,3%. This fact can hardly be incidental. Probably, general changes in the charm tradition can explain it. During this period the number of narrative charms becomes lower in comparison to conjurations and counting down charms. Similarly, the number of monofunctional charms becomes less in comparison to the number of 'universal' charms, which can be adapted to treat many different illnesses. Thus the texts of MC2 type were continuously eliminated from the folklore tradition.

Table 5 contains data about the number of charms from dislocation and injury, the number of texts of MC2 type and number of full texts of MC2 type, which include all the 3 formulas (see below the structural analysis of the MC2 type)

Table 5. The number of texts of the MC2 type in Belarus and Polesye.

	The number of injury and sprain charms	The number of texts of the MC2 type (with 2 formulas)	The number of texts of the MC2 type (with 3 formulas)
E.R. Romanov's collection (1891)	66	43	3 (104, 105, 152)
Замовы (1992)	54[15]	18	1 (565)
Поліські замовляння (1995)	17	5	1 (7)
Таямніцы (1997)	46	15	4 (179, 204, 209, 211)
Polesyan Charms (2003)	40	10	1 (380)
Полацкі этнаграфічны зборнік (2006)	20	11	1 (118)
Totals:	243	102	11

On the basis of this table we may conclude, that:

1) the number of texts of the MC2 type in the Romanov's collection is about two-thirds and in the collections of 1990–2000 it is much lower – between a quarter and a half. This can be explained by the same processes of elimination of narrative and monofunctional charms that we described above;

2) the number of texts, which keep the full set of three formulas, is not large – about 10% of the total number of texts of the MC2 type.

THE STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF MC2 SLAVIC VERSIONS

It is well known that there are three formulas in the MC2 type, which follow one another in a recorded order. The structure of the MC2 texts was described by Agapkina using the example of Belorussian tradition. There are complete versions (or 'first level' versions) and incomplete versions (or 'second level' versions).

Complete versions include three formulas. Their invariant can be described in the following way:

1. First level versions (a + b + c)

A – "while somebody (male protagonist) was riding a horse, the horse sprained its foot";

B – "sacral protagonists (male/female) are charming the illness";

C – "let the bone stick to bone, tendon to tendon, blood to blood" (the motif of body integrity and recovery).

Example:

> Первым разом, Гасподним часом, Господу Богу памалюся, Святой Прэчистой пакланюся. (**a**) Ехаў Сус Христос чэрэз залатый мост, аслятко ступило, ножку звихнуло. (**b**) Стоить Сус Христос, плачэ, ридаэ, иде Прэчиста Мати: – Сын мой возлюбленный, шо ты плачэш, ридаеш? – Ехаў чэрэз залатый мост, и аслятко ступило, ножку звихнуло. – (**c**) Не плачь, сынко, не ридай, я так ей пастановила, як его мать парадила, косточку з косточкой складала, жилу з жилой точила, кровь з кровью перэливала… Господи Божэ поможы, а я захватила, Бога попросила (ПЗ, № 380, гомел.).
>
> *At first time, at God's hour I'll pray to God, I'll bow to the Virgin. (a) Jesus Christ rode across the golden bridge. His donkey made a step and sprained its foot. (b) Jesus Christ is standing and crying. The Virgin comes up to him and says: – Oh, my beloved son. Why are you crying? – I was riding across the golden bridge. And my donkey has sprained its foot. (c) Do not cry, my son, I made it like it was at birth. I put his bone to bone, tendon to tendon, blood to blood. Help me, God, I asked God for help.*

2. Second level versions (a + c), (a + b), (b + c)

We can mark out three variants among the second level versions of MC2 type. They are formed by different combinations of the three formulas: (a + c), (a + b), (b + c).

2.1. (a + c).

Example:

> Ездзив святый Юра по чистому полю на сивым кони. (**а**) Коник яго спотыкнувся, суставка зьвихнулася. (**c**) Суставка с суставкой, сыйдзися, и цело с целом зросцися, кров ис кровъю збяжися (Романов 1891:75, № 131; Могилев.).
>
> *St. George rode his horse in a field. (a) The horse stumbled and sprained its tendon. (c) Tendon with tendon, body with body, blood with blood.*

2.2. (a + b):
Example:

> (**a**) Христос ехав з нябёс, на буланом кони, на Сіяньскую гору. Конь споткнувся, сустав с суставом соткнувся, и звих минувся. (**b**) Мати Прачистая по Сіяньской горе ходила, траву зрывала, жилы кровъю наливала, рабу Божаму помочи давала (Романов, № 112, Гомел.).
>
> *(a) Jesus Christ rode from heaven to Mount Sinai. His dun horse stumbled, one joint crashed against another and a dislocation happened. (b) The Virgin was walking on the Mount Sinai, picked up the grass, filled the tendons with blood, helped God's slave.*

2.3 (b + c):
Example:

> (**b**) Шла Пречиста Мати полем, седить яслятка на дороге, плаче. «Чего ты, яслятка, плачешь?» – «Бегла я железными стоўпами, ножку зломало». – «Не плач, яслятко, я твою ножку сцелю, (**c**) кров з кровью зальеца, костка с косткою зростеце» (ПЗ 2003:228, № 382, Чернобыл. р-н Киев. обл.).
>
> *(b) The Virgin is walking through the field. The donkey is sitting near the road and crying. "Why are you crying, donkey?" – "I was running along iron poles and broke my leg". – "Do not cry, donkey, I'll couple your leg, (c) blood with blood, bone with bone".*

In Belorussian texts we can rarely meet with full variants possessing all three formulas. What we find generally lacks the harmony, fullness and logical order of the MC2. And the majority of Belorussian charms of this type have lost the *second* formula. This means that the story about a sacral personage, who rode a horse, is immediately followed by the incantation formula similar to 'bone to bone, tendon to tendon' or 'the horse stood up, his dislocation was recovered'.

There is also another variant: the protagonist is driving the horse and the next moment this hero cures the dislocation. We see that there is only one protagonist in the text and only one formula which includes three events: riding a horse, the treating process and pronouncing the incantation formula.

The dialogue between the victim and the healer, which is so typical of Polish charms of this type, is practically absent in Belorussian texts.

The general tendency is the following: the range of Belorussian texts of the MC2 type becomes narrower; they break up into separate complete syntactic periods, which can be combined differently or even drop out altogether. The lack of sense and the loss of logical connections are partly compensated by formal resources: rhymes appear in texts, sometimes the charm turns into the verse similar to counting-out rhyme. Here is an example:

> Шол Господзь по широкой дорози,
> по вяликих лясах,
> по зялёных лугах,
> косточки-суставки собирав,
> рабу от зьвиху помочи давав (Romanov 1891:74, No. 127).
>
> *God was walking along the wide road,*
> *Through large woods,*
> *Through green fields,*
> *He put bones and joints together*
> *And helped the servant of God (so-and-so).*

In this example the text was transformed so much, that it is difficult to recognize the MC2 type in it. There is neither a horse, nor a rider, nor his movements; the horse does not stumble. And only the phrase 'bones and joints' was left from the formula of body integrity recovering.

CONCLUSIONS

As the performance of treating charms is usually connected with certain ritual, it is expedient to consider charm borrowing not to be a migration of separate plots, but a part of a general process of interaction and mutual enrichment of different cultures. During this process of interaction the text is translated into the other language and 'puts down roots' into a new tradition – the same thing happens with the whole fragment of foreign culture. In this process, bearers of different ethnic-cultural traditions master new knowledge and skill: the knowledge of some sacral texts and the skill to defeat some illness.

In this report we tried to outline such a method of charms research, which may lead us to some results in the case of scholars' international cooperation. Though sometimes we do not have enough data for complex research of charms, this aim is worth aspiring to it.

Nowadays it’s not enough just to state that the texts of the MC2 type are known among Belorussians, Poles or any other nation. It is much more important to describe the region of one or another text or even to place it on the map, to restore the history of the text over time, to discover the structural features of the text and its basic variants. The ultimate aim of such a research can be the description of text’s history in the European cultural space during several centuries or even a millennium. If we want to do this job on a European scale, it is necessary to do it in every European country individually at first.

Nowadays it is necessary for us to switch from gathering charms and studying them in separate ethnic traditions to researching them in wide geographical bounds. I think that the most productive way is that of philological systematization of texts on the basis of separation of different functional groups and plots types with the following description of their history and geography of expansion. We may combine the structural-semiotic method, which allows us to describe the texts structure and the inner logic of its variations, and the historical-geographical method, which helps us to research texts in their historical transformations and geographical transferences.

The goal is not only to count the maximum amount of texts in each language, but to elaborate common and mutually accepted methods and the number of questions, which must be asked for one or another tradition. Only in that case the following transfer from studying separate ethnic traditions to understanding of the European tradition as a whole may be possible.

NOTES

[1] Arguments in favour of an earlier oral version dating of the MC2 include Bauschke (1993, 548), Dieck (1986, 115), and Kartschoke (1990, 120).

[2] For background, text and comments, see Beck (2003).

[3] By 1914, Christiansen had collected about 25 versions of the MC2. We found eight previously unpublished texts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the Richard Wossidlo Archive in Rostock (Germany) and also two more versions in the ethnographic magazines (see *References*); we present texts with a reference to the Richard Wossidlo Archive (WA), code number, and place and year of recording.

[4] Paleographic analysis of the MC2 reveals that the copyist wrote the grapheme *h* over the vowel *o* following the capital letter *P*; this revision of the text can be explained by the irregularity of consonant shift, the spelling rules have not yet having been formed.

[5] WA, C VII/06, Boitzenburg, 1636.

[6] *Zeitschrift des Vereins für rheinische und westfälische Volkskunde*, VII.Jahrgang, 1910: 147, (Sponheim, 1575).

[7] On the text structure, see Düwel (1998: 551) and Schumacher (2000: 213).

[8] WA, C VII/03, Schwerin, 1930.

[9] *Zeitschrift des Vereins für rheinische und westfälische Volkskunde*, 1. Jahrgang, 1904: 216.,

[10] WA, C VII/06, Güstrow, 1860.

[11] See note 3 for more information about the ten texts we found.

[12] According to J. Roper, there are only 286 Estonian versions of the MC2 known to date; the earliest version is from an investigative report of the eighteenth century (Roper 2009: 177–178).

[13] Hereinafter the numbers are rounded to the 0,1th %.

[14] Some texts in Замовы have been taken by the editor from the E.R. Romanov's book, so we counted these texts twice, in both the first and the second row of this table. We should not have taken the charms from the E. R. Romanov's book published in Замовы, but the general number of texts in Замовы would have been much less then. We suppose that this discrepancy does not change the general trend in the data.

[15] In that case we have not taken into account 27 of 81 charms from dislocation, borrowed from the E. R. Romanov's book. They were already presented in the previous row of the table.

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