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About the Author

Haralampos Passalis is currently employed as a teacher of Ancient and Modern Greek Language and Literature at the Intercultural School of Evosmos–Thessaloniki (Greece) and has also been working as a researcher at the Centre for the Greek Language-Department of Greek Medieval Lexicography (Thessaloniki) since 1998. He is a member of the compiling team for the Dictionary of Medieval Vernacular Greek Literature 1100–1669 (Λεξικό της Μεσαιωνικής Ελληνικής Δημόδους Γραμματείας) [vols 15 (2003), 16 (2006), 17 (2011), 18 (2013), nineteenth (2014)] published by the Centre for the Greek Language in Thessaloniki. Personal research interests mainly focus on Vernacular Folk Literature and Tradition as well as on the magico–religious system of Greek Traditional Culture.

BOOK REVIEWS

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

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

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

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