

CANONICAL AND
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The 2022 conference
of the ISFNR Committee
on Charms, Charmers
and Charming

6–9 September 2022
Riga (Latvia)

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Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia
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International Society for Folk Narrative Research (ISFNR)
Committee on Charms, Charmers and Charming

Canonical and Non-canonical in Charming Texts and Practices

At various times and in various societies, there have existed, alongside the texts and practices based on the canons of science and religion, other unofficial but widely practiced traditions. The traditions of charms and folk medicine feature traits of both “high” cultures and peripheral otherness, in practices that have interacted over time. Historically, their co-existence has often been peaceful and complementary, though at times violent as well. Traditions practiced by the masses could be banned and persecuted. This clash was based on the values of different cultures, religions, and ethnic groups, as well as economic considerations. At the same time, the antagonism between these values enriched tradition, whether that was clashes between the official religion and folk religion, permitted and forbidden medicine, or proper and deluded texts and practices among others. Priests, monks and educated doctors have fought for the right to heal the people; church canons, prayers, and the cult of saints have influenced folk traditions; the development of conventional medicine has changed local traditions, while local conditions have determined the regional peculiarities of the official religion and conventional medicine.

This conference aims to focus on canonical and non-canonical texts and practices, and their co-existence and interaction over time. The conference also invites discussion on the terminology and methodology of the discipline, analogue and digital resources, and future perspectives. Applicants were encouraged to focus on the following topics:

- canonical and non-canonical healing practices and texts;
- learned and lay medical texts and traditions;
- monastic and folk healing traditions;
- the transmission and dissemination of healing texts and practices;
- the dichotomy of religion and magic;
- the punishment of charmers over time;
- wrongdoing and correct practices;
- national and regional peculiarities of charms and charming;
- the framing of folk religion and vernacular;
- digital and audio-visual resources involving charm texts and tradition.

The conference has been supported by the International Society for Folk Narrative Research, basic budgeted sub-programme 05.04.00 “The Krišjānis Barons Cabinet of Folksongs” of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia, and the State Culture Capital Foundation of Latvia. The conference take place in Riga as a hybrid event for both in-person and online participation.

Aigars Lielbārdis

Tuesday, September 6

16.00.–18.00. **Conference opening, reception**

The National Library of Latvia, Mūkusalas street 3

Aigars Lielbārdis (Conference organizing committee)

Eva Eglāja-Kristone (Director of the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia)

Rīta Grīnvalde (Head of the Archives of Latvian Folklore, ILFA)

Jonathan Roper (Chair, Committee on Charms, Charmers and Charming, ISFNR)

Wednesday, September 7

The National Library of Latvia, Mūkusalas street 3

Session 1. Chair: Aigars Lielbārdis

9.30.–10.00. **Jonathan Roper.** Chugg's Charms: Authenticity, Typicality and Sources

10.00.–10.30. **Andrey Toporkov.** Russian Versions of "The Dream of the Virgin": Problems of the Social Functioning of a Non-canonical Text

10.30.–11.00. Coffee

Session 2. Chair: Jonathan Roper

11.00.–11.30. **Daiva Vaitkevičienė.** Prayers and Verbal Charms in Lithuanian Oral Literature: One or Two Genres?

11.30.–12.00. **Laura Jiga Iliescu.** "This 'Mother of God Prayer' Comes like a Charm": Considerations on a Terminological Issue in the Frames of the Charm Genre

12.00.–12.30. **Tuukka Karlsson.** Kalevala-metric Communicative Incantations: Discussing Canonical Terminology of Finno-Karelian Knowledge Objects

12.30.–13.00. **Frog.** Para-Incantations and Para-Charms More Generally

13.00.–14.00. Dinner

Session 3. Chair: Katherine Hindley

14.00.–14.30. **James Deutsch.** The Scientific, Religious, and Charming Practices of Hyomei During the Influenza Pandemic

14.30.–15.00. **Alessandra Mastrangelo.** Verbal Charms in the Context of Healing Practices in 19th century Sweden: The Case of a Healing Book

15.00.–15.30. **Ilona Tuomi.** License to Kill: An Investigation of Frog Coffins and the Social Logic of Magic

15.30.–16.00. Coffee

Session 4. Chair: Mare Kõiva

16.00.–16.30. **Nidhi Mathur.** Sadhguru, great mystic from India, on healing Sadhguru, Great Mystic from India, on Healing

16.30.–17.00. **Kira Kyrgys.** Tuvan Charms and Their Relationship with the Worship of Nature

Thursday, September 8

The National Library of Latvia, Mūkusalas street 3

Session 1. Chair: James Deutsch

9.00.–9.30. **Davor Nikolić, Evelina Rudan, Josipa Tomašić.** The Status of Charmers, Charming and Charms in the Ethnographic Discourse of Ethnographic Monographs at the Turn of the 20th Century

9.30.–10.00. **Inna Veselova.** Men and Magic in a Soviet Village

10.00.–10.30. **Danila Rygovskiy.** Illness as Blessing, Illness as Penance: Discourse and Practices in Old Believer Monasteries

10.30.–11.00. Coffee

Session 2. Chair: Ilona Tuomi

11.00.–11.30. **Mare Kõiva, Tatziana Valodzina.** Transmission of Knowledge: A Comparison of Belarusian and Estonian Traditions

11.30.–12.00. **Lubov' Golubeva, Sofia Kupriyanova.** The Transmission of Magic Knowledge in the Healing of Baby Diseases

12.00.–12.30. **Julia Marinicheva, Angelina Potasheva.** Magic Knowledge Transfer: A Knower and a Successor

12.30.–13.00. **Kira Sadoja.** Healers' Codes of Behavior in Rural Areas of the Carpathian Mountains in Ukraine

13.00.–14.00. Dinner

Session 3. Chair: Tuukka Karlsson

14.00.–14.30. **Katherine Hindley.** Vernacular Charms and the Vernacular Bible in Medieval England

14.30.–15.00. **Aigars Lielbārdis.** The Formation of the Vernacular Religion in Latvia: Traces of the Jesuit Legacy

15.00.–15.30. **Aleksi Moine.** Finno-Karelian Incantations and Networks of Non-human Agents: How to Talk About Vernacular Christianity?

15.30.–16.00. Coffee

16.00.–17.00. Committee on Charms, Charmers and Charming meeting.
Chair: **Jonathan Roper**

18.30. Conference dinner

Friday, September 9

10.00.–14.00. Excursion to the Latvian Ethnographic Open-Air Museum.

James Deutsch

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The Scientific, Religious, and Charming Practices of Hyomei During the Influenza Pandemic

One of the most common folk remedies during the Influenza Pandemic of 1918–1919 was hyomei, an inhalant that was 80 percent oil of eucalyptus leaves, 10 percent alcohol, and 10 percent liquid paraffin. One recommendation reprinted widely by U.S. newspapers in October and November 1918—during the pandemic's second and most deadly wave—urged readers “to go to the nearest drug store and get one of the famous Hyomei Inhaling Outfits.” Even though the Journal of the American Medical Association, as early as 1912, had declared hyomei a fraud that “never cured anything,” belief in the oil’s magical curing powers seemed to increase during the Influenza Pandemic, thanks to contemporaneous reports that breathing hyomei “deep into your nose, throat and lungs [. . .] will absolutely destroy the germs of influenza that have found lodgment there.”

What makes hyomei an especially intriguing healing practice is its direct association with the Gospel Temperance movement, which the Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church (1981) described as a mixture of religion and temperance based on the belief that “a soul could not be saved while the body was being continually corrupted by intemperance.” Hyomei Oil was manufactured by the R.T. Booth Company, established by Richard T. Booth, “a reformed drunkard and self-appointed temperance missionary” from the United States who had sparked the Blue Ribbon Army for temperance in Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand during the 1880s. How Booth reconciled his belief in temperance with hyomei’s alcoholic content is one of several medical mysteries.

For the purposes of the ISFNR conference in Riga, this paper will focus on the canonical and noncanonical beliefs associated with the hyomei cure during the Influenza Pandemic—specifically the ways in which religious doctrine, scientific methods, and charming practices all coexisted in hyomei’s presentation and distribution to the public. For instance, advertisements that appeared in newspapers during 1918 and 1919 began by reminding readers that Booth had led the religious Blue Ribbon Movement and had “induced over a million men to sign the [temperance] pledge.” From there, the advertisement delves into exaggerated claims that hyomei is “the most wonderful catarrhal treatment known to medical science,” thanks to Booth’s “wonderful discovery” of ancient eucalyptus. This potent combination of religion, science, and tradition presumably charmed readers into regarding hyomei as a panacea. Moreover, the coexistence of canonical and noncanonical practices in 1918–1919 suggests folkloric continuities with similar coexisting practices during the coronavirus pandemic of 2020–2022.

Frog

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Para-Incantations and Para-Charms More Generally

This paper introduces the concept of “para-incantation” to describe and discuss things that are used and treated as incantations but are simultaneously recognized as lacking efficacy. The broader concept of “para-charms” is also considered. I consider charms as instruments of supernatural power that are reproduced or reproducible or as otherwise enduring material or immaterial things. I consider incantations as instruments of supernatural power that include verbal charms but also include ritual poetry that may not be considered fixed, enduring or reproducible as a charm. Several types of para-incantations have been surveyed, including: oral epic, legends, fairytales, child-rearing, modern literature, cinema, heritagized usage in modern rituals and social media. Cases are considered of how para-incantations move beyond these genres and can operate as resources in society, for instance with therapeutic effects or as entertainment, which also makes the resources that connect people, yet the same resources may also be tested and applied as potentially effective incantations.

Exploring the dynamics of para-incantations (alongside para-charms more generally) suggests that, in milieux where incantations are considered to have efficacy on the world, these are not reproduced as such in traditional narratives. Instead, narrative traditions more likely present a meta-discourse about incantations in which the genre will have its own conventions for representing incantations through para-incantations, and there may be a repertoire of such para-incantations in the genre. In modern contexts, para-incantations function similarly within narrative worlds as part of fictional universes. In addition, science-based epistemologies deny the efficacy of traditional incantations, which alleviates concerns about their use in non-ritual contexts and turns their usage in ritual contexts into heritage performances. The role of writing in these contexts leads many para-incantations to correspond to verbal charms and to move into uses as enduring written texts, such as tattoos. They also get picked up with the potential to circulate widely in connection with particular trends or ideologies. Although the survey of para-incantations gives the impression that they are characteristically verbal charms with a regular identity as linguistic text, examples can also be observed of para-incantations that are transient, and which are largely absent from the data making it difficult to document them.

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The Transmission of Magic Knowledge in the Healing of Baby Diseases

Our report will focus on the Russian North territory practice of magical knowledge transferred from mother-in-law to a daughter-in-law. It covers a period from the end of the 19th century to the 1990s of the 20th century. We have based our study on the material of the "Russian daily" open electronic archive (daytodaydata.ru). Interviews were conducted in the Russian North territory (Vologda region from 1980 to 2006; Arkhangelsk region from 2007 to 2021).

As we have noticed, the village women defined a baby's restless state (lack of sleep, constant crying, poor appetite, etc.) as a disorder ("razlad"). The infantile disease was considered not a bodily disorder but a commutative one. The disease was a marker of relationship disorders: with strangers, neighbors, or supernatural forces. Usually, the eldest woman ("bolshukha") could correct this situation. In other words, when a baby started to get sick, its mother turned to her mother-in-law for help in his treatment. However, the mother-in-law could perform a healing rite only with the baby's mother. Performing the ceremony together, the mother-in-law taught her daughter-in-law to interact with the social and metaphysical environment. In turn, the young woman increased her communicative competence in magic with each subsequent child. Later, when the daughter-in-law became a bolshukha in the house, she would independently recognize the cause of the illness in her children and grandchildren and determine the norms in disorder.

Bolshukhas show their daughters-in-law what to do and explain what magic words to say. Thus, the mother is able to master magical knowledge through observing the ritual and learning a new speech strategy. These strategies have three different communication tactics. The first tactic is a dialogue which takes place in real time between real actors (the mother-in-law and baby's mother). Women, expelling the disease, called it indirectly. The second strategy is a direct threat to the disease. For example, a woman in the mother's status could indicate the place of the disease and expel it there. In the third tactic, the older woman uses a conspiracy to describe a particular symbolic space and time where higher forces (the Virgin, John the Baptist, and so on) interact with diseases. In our article, we will consider all these communicative tactics in detail.

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Vernacular Charms and the Vernacular Bible in Medieval England

In a well-known trial of 1382, Roger Clerk was found guilty of impersonating a physician because he could not accurately report the text of the amulet he had given his patient Johanna. The focus on literacy and understanding in the record of Roger's trial might prompt us to see objections to charms as learned, literate attempts to moderate popular religious practice. However, as scholars such as Jacques Le Goff, Aron Gurevich, and Peter Burke have shown, patterns of influence between popular beliefs and scholarly beliefs, and between elite and popular cultures were complex. In charm practice, the situation is further complicated by practical access. While spoken charms could be repeated by anyone who could remember their words, charms that required writing—like Roger Clerk's—would have to be performed by someone with some level of literacy.

In medieval England, the cultural distinction between spoken and written charms can be seen partly on the basis of language. While spoken charms use a wide range of languages, including both English and French, written charms almost never use the vernacular for their written components. However, this does not seem to be the case in early modern England. Reginald Scot's *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) lists and condemns various practices that he views as superstitious. Among them are several charms that use vernacular writing, including English translations of texts that appeared in Latin in medieval written charms and amulets. Although Scot associates charms with Catholics, he records examples that use the language of the Protestant "Bishops' Bible", the authorized English translation of the time. Rare examples of charms to be written in English are recorded from before the translation of the Bible, but the official translation seems to have encouraged their use. This suggests two different responses to authority in different contexts: while practitioners continued to use charms despite condemnation from certain corners, the manner in which they used them responded to wider ideas about text and authority.

This paper will examine the changing use of vernacular charms in the late medieval and early modern period in England, with the goal of understanding how charms might illuminate the relationship between official religion and popular practice.

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"This 'Mother of God Prayer' Comes like a Charm": Considerations on a Terminological Issue in the Frames of the Charm Genre

My proposal aims to epistemologically discuss the couple "folk prayer" and "charm" in the specific case of the narrative incantations whose main protagonist is a holy figure. In this regard, I have chosen a certain structure known among Romanians as "The Mother of God prayer" or "The Mother of God search for her Sun", or "The Tale of God", which combines episodes from the Virgin Mary cycle of apocrypha legends, together with images that depict scenes of divination and bibliomancy performed in a consecrated, but uncommon space (e.g. a church with nine altars). The text we deal with here—a legend which works as an incantation—also presents structural and functional similarities with the famous "Dream of the Mother of God", especially with respect to the Passions description and the formalized ending demands for delivering the story under certain conditions of time, space and performance.

In the beginning, the analysis focuses on those aspects of intertextuality that predispose this prayer to embed references to other charming incantations and practices, as well. Then, based on ethnographic references, the discussion moves towards the process of putting the text in practice within a storytelling ritualized event with magic purposes (for example, the pregnant woman who says it ceaselessly for 40 days will give birth to a child with oracular abilities).

The paper takes into account the etic-emic dynamic interactions involved in the issue of defining the "folk prayer" as a subcategory of charms. Personal field discussions with informants (including priests) concerning the role Mother of God plays within this text, also concerning the circumstances when the distinction between a prayer and a charm "with Mother of God" might be effective, revealed the emic terms of "faith" and "emotion" as the main parameters to (self)evaluating such expressions of religiosity, sacred communication, and expectations.

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Kalevala-metric Communicative Incantations: Discussing Canonical Terminology of Finno-Karelian Knowledge Objects

Kalevala-meter describes an oral poetic system that was shared by multiple linguistically related ethnic groups, such as Finns, Estonians, and Karelians. Potentially established already around 200 CE, the meter was commonly used in some areas all the way until the first decades of the 20th century. In current usage, the meter anachronistically derives its name from Elias Lönnrot's epic, the *Kalevala* (1835; 1849). Kalevala-metric poetry was multi-generic: its genres included, among others, epic and lyric poetry. The third prominent genre consisted of magically empowered instruments, or charms, which researchers have named in Finnish folkloristic research as incantations.

The Kalevala-metric incantations have conventionally been divided into two main groups: those that were used more commonly among the population, and those which were perceived as tools of specialists. The incantations in wider circulation are often perceived to function on their correct mechanical recitation, which was seen as the requirement for the efficacy of the uttered charm. In the use of ritual specialists, however, direct communication with the otherworld and the personal power of the performer have come to be seen as the principal requirements.

The incantations used by Finno-Karelian ritual specialists, called among other names as "tietäjät", have been categorized in research as being "communicative". While the name for this category is tautological, it has become established in Finnish folklore studies as a way to describe the knowledge objects, which efficacy relies on large part on the communication with unseen agents.

My focus in the paper is in discussing some of the terminological issues related to Kalevala-metric incantations. I will explore how the term "incantation" has become canonical in Finnish scholarship over the more international concept of "charm", and if naming the knowledge objects of the tietäjät as charms would be justified. I will additionally present more in-depth the core features of the genre, and reflect on the usability of concepts of "communicative" and "mechanical" frequently used in research. The paper thus contributes to international charms scholarship and discussion on an established research subject with canonical terminology.

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Transmission of Knowledge: A Comparison of Belarusian and Estonian Traditions

The healer, as a bearer of tradition, mediates the cultural pattern of their era and implements traditionally accepted models, decisions, beliefs, and narratives. The cultural capital of the traditional healer is largely determined by the situation of acquiring sacral knowledge. Belarusian and Estonian materials will be analyzed in the report. Comparison of the data from two traditions which are neither related and nor neighboring allows the revelations of both archetypical and mythological components of this composition as well as embedding it with cultural and historical context, dependent on the realities of social life.

Attention to diachronicity accentuates a series of transformations, especially noticeable at historical shifts (from traditional society to industrial society and in the current transition to online communication). The transfer of knowledge by inheritance, predominant in the past, has given way to purposeful teaching (especially common in Estonia), the discourse of enlightenment and appeals to a supreme will, when the sacredness and divinity of their activities are explained by the fact of receiving them directly from God, which happens during imaginary or dreamlike meetings (prevailing in contemporary Belarusian recordings). Reports and reflections of modern informants about the possibility and conditions of receiving a gift with the participation of supernatural forces are so filled with Christian ways of expressing religious feelings that the archaic pre-Christian component is pushed to the periphery of the individual's religious consciousness. At the same time, certain categories of urban healers use appeals to the pagan roots of their knowledge as an important status component. Rare evidence in both traditions includes a special rite of initiation into the healers or the fact of acquiring a certain book, which may be referred to as both the Bible and the Black Book.

Particular rules of magical knowledge transfer are connected with the spatial and temporal characteristics possessing a necessary degree of mediativity, and can be represented in the main dichotomies: junior/senior, female/male, oral/written, white/black magic, own/alien (ethnically or socially), etc. Each of the semantic nodes of knowledge transfer is narratively productive, although it exists in a situation of clear regulation of the open/closed within society and even more so to

an outside observer. This comparison of Belarusian and Estonian traditions allows the formulation of a number of reasons of freer circulation of traditional *znakhar/teadja/healer/sage* practices and hexes in some territories and closed and repressive nonnormative transfer in other territories. In the territory of Belarus there are areas with diametrically opposite situations concerning the freedom of transfer of knowledge.

The uniformity of a number of conditions and rules of acquisition of sacral knowledge among Estonians and Belarusians relates them to cultural universals, and the ethnically specific details are interpreted in the context of the corresponding worldviews. The internal norms of tradition give personal experience and interpretations a traditionally acceptable, i.e., standardized shape.

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Tuvan Charms and Their Relationship with the Worship of Nature

Among the Tuvans most pastoral rites were performed not for the sake of one family, but in the interests of the whole family which was reflected in well-wishes, blessings and spells that have been preserved since ancient times. For example, the ritual of sprinkling the surrounding area with milk or tea was strictly observed as an offering to the host spirits of the area. This ceremony is called “chazhyg”, and it was performed in the early morning with a bow to the sun since the life of all living beings on earth depends on the sun.

It is believed that after performing such a ritual, the weather becomes “soft”. The offering “chazhyg” was also addressed to the water element, to the sources of rivers, sacred springs—arzhaans—since water is the source of all life, and also to heaven, since powerful deities show tenderness to a person in this world. The chazhyg rite was also directed towards mountain peaks and wooded forests, since the master-spirit of Taiga sensitively controls the fate of a person, and so that after such an offering, animals would be found in gradually, berries and nuts would grow there.

In order to live in good health for many years, a person should not bring pain and harm to nature: break trees, pick flowers, kill living beings unnecessarily. This was due to the deification of the whole nature surrounding man. It was believed that the spirit of the master of nature lives on large larches, birches, in the upper reaches of the taiga. Therefore, the Tuvans have never cut down, never broken the so-called “sacred” trees—birch and larch. On the contrary, they performed the ceremony of offering, and tied shreds of “chalama” fabric on the branches and trunks of these trees. If a tree needed to be cut down, then they would definitely pray and ask for forgiveness. These actions were complex, consisting of magical elements that were carried out to achieve a certain result. It was believed that in this world all living beings, including plants, have their own father and mother, one deity created us all like that, and only a dry (dead) tree can be cut down without a ritual religious asking for permission from the progeny.

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The Formation of the Vernacular Religion in Latvia: Traces of the Jesuit Legacy

The Society of Jesus was one of the most important religious orders in the history of Christianity and had an impact on folk religiosity in the Early modern period in Europe and beyond. The Jesuit presence in Livonia, the territory of nowadays Latvia and Estonia, started to form by the end of the Livonian War in 1582 when the king of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Stephen Bathory, visited Riga accompanied by a famous Jesuit preacher, academic, and polemist, Piotr Skarga. Since that time, the importance and impact of the Jesuit legacy have been powerful and long-lasting—deeply rooted and merged with different forms and expressions of Latvian folk culture and religiosity, still continuing today.

It is thought that the period of Jesuit activities from the end of the 16th century until the first quarter of the 19th century was the time when customs of Christianity commenced, intermingled with vernacular practices, and were established in the Latvian community. The Jesuits continued the practices (such as the healing, calendric customs, the cult of saints, etc.) established by Catholicism before the Reformation, actively participated in the founding of schools and the publication of religious literature in the vernacular language, healed the sick with holy water, organized theatre performances on religious themes, encouraged people to take part in pilgrimages, promoted the distribution of sacred vocal music and also left an important architectural heritage. Thus, a significant part of contemporary Latvian culture and traditional practices are linked to the influence of early Catholicism and the Jesuit legacy.

The paper will focus on the borderline cases between the canonical and the non-canonical in popular religion, related to healing and charming practices and texts. The paper will be based on historical evidence from the territory of modern Latvia (Jesuit chronicles and witch trials from the 16th century) and folklore materials that began to be collected in the second half of the 19th century.

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Magic Knowledge Transfer: A Knower and a Successor

In the folklore and anthropological expeditions to the Russian North (Arkhangelsk region), we regularly interview the village residents who have received the status of knowers—that is how the locals call witches, magic knowledge holders in the village. In a general sense, a witch is a person who can harm someone (make ill) or damage someone's property (for example, contribute to the loss of livestock), understanding that the traditional North Russian culture embraces both evil and good. In this case, knowers are ritual specialists who use their magic knowledge in various life situations, e. g. helping in childbirth, treating children or adults with incantations, removing jinxes, causing the lost livestock to return, etc. This knowledge is often passed down from the oldest members of the family or kin (e. g. one's mother or the wife's mother-in-law).

The research discusses the ways of transferring magic knowledge. We are interested in when the knowers decide to pass on their knowledge and how they appoint the successor of it. We also consider the cases when they voluntarily refuse to pass on or accept magic knowledge. Of particular interest, are the situations when kinship, close acquaintance, or neighborly relations between the knowledge holder and his/her potential successor appear to create conditions for the knowledge transfer. The research findings enabled us to identify a number of reasons why magic knowledge may not be transferred or may be rejected.

We apply Max Weber's concept of charisma to analyze the narratives about the hereditary succession of magic knowledge. According to the German sociologist, charismatic authority is a type of leadership in which authority derives from the personal charisma of the leader—a certain quality, by virtue of which an individual is considered to have some exceptional, supernatural powers and therefore treated as a leader. In this case, the only way to carry out a change of charismatic authority is by transferring it to another person, so that the members of the community can identify that person as their new charismatic leader. For this succession, Max Weber introduced the term routinizing charisma. The methods of routinization are the subject of our research, based on the interviews with the modern-day villagers

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Verbal Charms in the Context of Healing Practices in 19th century Sweden: The Case of a Healing Book

There is much evidence to suggest that still in 19th and 20th century Sweden, popular faith in magic and in the supernatural to heal, prevent and solve difficulties was quite alive, especially in rural regions. The paper proposed for this conference will deal with the analysis of the content of a 19th century healing manuscript which was discovered among family papers in a farmstead in the Swedish village of Vägersjön, Ångermanland, and which I came across during fieldwork in northern Sweden. The manuscript contains eleven verbal charms addressed to healing physical distress in humans and livestock, averting evil influences, and protecting against bewitchment, as well as one procedure to heal goiters and a recipe for external use. Many of the charms in the manuscript are also associated with special healing rituals whose ritual treatment methods follow the pattern of the geographical area of origin.

According to the current owners of the book, the manuscript belonged to the klokgubbe (cunning man) K. O. R., who, in turn, received it as a gift from a Sámi folk healer. Exact information concerning who wrote it and when is lacking, but still from the linguistic analysis I would argue that the charms were recorded in the second half of the 19th century, somewhere in the northern Sweden, an area of cultural confluence between Swedish and non-Scandinavian Sámi people that could suggest a lot about the migration of motives, beliefs, and practices concerning magic.

In this paper, I will try to highlight some preliminary conclusions regarding K. O. R.'s verbal charms. In particular, most attention will be paid to the verbal artifacts, the charms, their motifs, and tradition, as well as to the components accompanying healing rituals. As we shall see, they are texts which cross many borders: canonical/non-canonical, ethnic beliefs/Christian worldview, supernatural/natural. I will also try to check how the texts mirror the syncretic aspects of the pre-Industrial Swedish society both on linguistic and conceptual level. While presenting the case, I will also set K.O.R.'s healing charms in a broader comparative framework with the aim of identifying any points of contact of similar texts attested in other traditions, in order to discuss about their migration and dissemination in northern Europe and demonstrate their continuity and consistency within the context of Scandinavian and, more general, European charming traditions.

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Sadhguru, Great Mystic from India, on Healing

Sadhguru is a modern-day mystic from India. He is an ardent devotee of Adiyogi and Shakti. He has engaged himself vastly with youth and has taught to live a joyous and exuberant life. Needless to say, he has successfully influenced the youth. Young students listen and follow him.

Sadhguru explains traditional charms and practices in new language with a rational and logical explanation. In this paper I will try to analyze the standpoints of Sadhguru on healing, physical, mental and spiritual. I will try to explain the relevance of his views in modern and technological world. The paper will include Sadhguru's insights on the human energy system. According to Jonathan Roper, charms are patterned traditional utterances that may include alliteration, assonance, repetition of words or parts of words, rhyme, near-rhyme, and other poetic devices; they are performed in certain arenas or contexts. The paper will analyze divergent illustrations, verbal lore, mantras/chants and paradigms in Hindu traditions, as well as the significance of moon, sun in human energy system taking reference of canonical texts by Sadhguru. For Example, Sadhguru says that there is one day in a month when are body does not require food at all. One needs to understand the body. That day in Hindu tradition is Ekadashi, the eleventh day of every month according to Hindu calendar. One must keep fast on Ekadashi to live healthy life. The energies that we get from cosmos, from the sun and the moon are sufficient to keep us energetic on that day. It is just one example out of several. The paper will also focus on other kinds of material culture like idols, herbs, foods, organic clothing and other ingredients or accessories that may also play a part in the creation and performance of charms for particular reason.

The primary texts for this paper are the teachings, interviews, authentic (verified) YouTube videos of Sadhguru and books written by him on Yoga and Indian culture system.

The paper will focus on the relevance of Sadhguru's words in leading healthy and exuberant life. Seeing the popularity of Sadhguru, the modern mystic, among global youth always makes me wonder how Hindu traditional ways and charms are becoming popular among youth. The paper will try to present old Hindu ways in a scientific manner.

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Finno-Karelian Incantations and Networks of Non-human Agents: How to Talk About Vernacular Christianity?

A huge corpus of verbal charms was collected in 19th-century Finland and Karelia. Most of the collected charms had a therapeutic function, but some were used to protect cattle or grant luck in hunting. The charmer communicated with non-human agents in order to manipulate reality. The first collectors of folklore were mainly interested in pre-Christian and archaic motives and beliefs. They aimed at reconstructing a Finnish mythology, based on epic poetry and charm texts. However, the charmer used to communicate as well with non-human agents that were part of the Christian lore, such as Jesus or the Virgin Mary. The collected texts show how some Christian canonical beliefs and narratives were reinterpreted in the frame of vernacular religion.

In this paper, I examine the networks of human and non-human agents as they are constructed in the collected charm texts. I propose a quantitative analysis of a corpus of around 500 charms collected in the parish of Ilomantsi, North Karelia, between the years 1816 and 1939, and published in the volumes of the *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* (Ancient Poems of the Finnish People), later digitized. I use methods from social network analysis and reflect particularly on epistemological premises of this analysis. The ontological turn in anthropology affects the ways we approach networks of non-human agents, whom we need to take seriously. The relationships between the charmer and non-human agents are based on a model of analogical thinking, the structures of which I explore in this paper. My aim is to evaluate anew the place of Christianity in the Finno-Karelian incantatory practice and question the ways researchers have talked about popular or vernacular religion in Karelia.

I reflect as well on the limits and benefits of this method for further investigations on the charm corpora from Finland and its neighboring regions, Karelia, Ingria, and Estonia. Although this historical data is by nature fragmentary and cannot give an exhaustive overview of the beliefs of the population, the quantitative analysis can be used as a base for further comparative research on oral poetry and verbal charms. This could enable a more precise analysis of local variations of charm traditions.

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The Status of Charmers, Charming and Charms in the Ethnographic Discourse of Ethnographic Monographs at the Turn of the 20th Century

At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the Croatian culture gave birth to several significant ethnographic monographs of certain small towns and villages in Croatia. Some of these monographs were written as a result of A. Radić's *Osnova za sabiranje*, published in the first volume of the journal *Zbornik za narodni život i običaje* (Ivanišević, Lang, Žiža). Others came into existence even before Radić's *Osnova* (Lovretić). The monographs by J. Lovretić and associate B. Jurić (Otok, the region of Slavonia), F. Ivanišević (Poljica, the region of Dalmatia), and M. Lang (Samobor, larger Zagreb area) were published either in large part or in their entirety, in several volumes of *Zbornik za narodni život i običaje*. Some other monographs had only smaller excerpts published, while, to this day, the majority remains in the form of a manuscript (S. Žiža – Rovinjsko Selo, the region of Istria). This paper explores the status of charmers, charming, and charms in the ethnographic discourse of each of these ethnographers. It considers how much space was allotted to them in the monographs as opposed to specific charms and healing procedures. Further, it points out the type of information about charmers that ethnographers found important enough to record: gender, age, means of practice, obstacles to practice, whether they wrote generally about their "occupation" or they referred to specific examples. Finally, this paper explores the manner and the extent to which these authors included their own value judgments in the ethnographic discourse, and to what extent and in what way are these judgments, personal beliefs, possible expressions of contempt or lack thereof in accordance with their respective professions, keeping in mind that the most common occupation of an ethnographer was a priest or a teacher.

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Chugg's Charms: Authenticity, Typicality and Sources

Author Henry Williamson (1895-1977) grew up in London. Following his traumatic experiences in the World War I, he moved to the rural southwest of England. In his new home he met "a harmless old fellow who lived alone in his cottage" who he refers to in his writings as "Jimmy Chugg". Two decades later, Williamson published eight of these "white witch's incantations" in his local topography book, *Life in a Devon Village*. They are for "white swelling", "hurden hill", "sprain", "strain", "blackthorn", "a kenning", "longcripple ting", and "stenten blood", respectively. Much of the material displays a folk-Christian character. Williamson thus seems to have done what has not often been done in twentieth century England by dedicated folklorist: collect a substantial number of charms from a single named individual. This paper intends to ask a series of questions about these charm texts. How authentic is the material? Where does the material fit along a continuum of familiar-to-idiosyncratic? Are international charm-types to be found here? Might some of the "incantations" better described as prayers?

I also wish to springboard from this case into discussing the question of the nature of our scholarly data more broadly. We are dependent for all our investigations into charming upon texts. If our texts of charms derive from interview situations, how can we know how closely they resemble the words spoken during charming itself? I am not talking here about differences such as repeats, or changes in quality of voice or volume, but differences in the words themselves. Such differences between "texts-as-told" and "texts-as-used" might arise from the deliberate choices of informants aimed at maintaining the integrity and secrecy of their knowledge. Or they might arise from happenstance, memory problems, or not being in the mood. However they arise, this gap between our material and charms as they really are in the wild should be kept in mind by us as we examine published collections of charms.

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Illness as Blessing, Illness as Penance: Discourse and Practices in Old Believer Monasteries

Attitudes towards illnesses in Russian Orthodox Christianity is twofold. They are a punishment for those who crossed the symbolic line of correct Christian behavior and, if a person proved to be a good Christian, they could serve as a sign of heavenly foresight or some sort of a test, a prerequisite for future reward in the afterlife. That said, a discourse of illness sets up a boundary between belonging and non-belonging to the religious community. In my presentation, I will observe an example of Dubches monasteries of Chasovennye Old Believers. Founded in the 1930s deep down in Krasnoyarsk taiga, Dubches monasteries became the main spiritual center for the Chasovennye community. My research is based on fieldwork materials and writings of the community, including such manuscripts as "Povest Chudesnykh Sobytiy" ("A Tale of Miraculous Events") also known as "Uralo-Sibirskii Paterik" ("Patericon of the Urals and Siberia") (Pokrovskii 2014, 2016) and a previously unpublished work, "Rodoslovnaya Obiteli Novoselie" ("A Genealogy of the Novoselie Hermitage").

Chasovennye started to compose "Povest" upon their arrival in Dubches taiga and continued supplementing it with new chapters within the following decades. The published version has been lastly edited in 1990s. A need to document memories of the founding fathers of the religious group, important events in its history, and to commemorate the deceased members of the monastic order was behind the creation of the work. Therefore, it mostly consists of biographies of the late monks and nuns, written in the genre of Orthodox hagiography that include a lot of personal details and facts of monastic lives and beliefs. No less important was a counter-atheistic claim as "Povest" contains stories that prove an existence of the divine in the human world. "Rodoslovnaiia" was created significantly later and commemorates late nuns of one of the female cloisters in Dubches.

Dubches monasteries are one of the most isolated Old Believer communities in the world that encourages its members not to seek official treatment but either use the local folk methods of healing or take illness for granted. Physical fragility, suffering, and their overcoming becomes a distinct part of biographic descriptions of late monks and nuns in Dubches monasteries, who are considered as holy people. Specifically, I address this discourse of suffering, healing practices, and cases, when illness is represented as a diving punishment for rule-breakers and heretics.

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Healers' Codes of Behavior in Rural Areas of the Carpathian Mountains in Ukraine

In our report, we will talk about the attitude of healers to their knowledge and the unwritten code of their conduct. The work is based on field material collected from 1987–2019 in the Ukraine's Carpathian Mountains. In the course of these expeditions, in addition to incantation texts, we recorded a large number of stories about healing practices and specifics of healers' activities.

From the narratives of healers and villagers who use their services, it becomes clear that there are at least two categories of healers. Healers in the first category receive this skill "legally", by inheritance from relatives. However, this knowledge is not passed on to just anyone. The recipient must have certain moral qualities: be balanced and not greedy, so that s/he would not abuse the acquired skill. The heirs who were bypassed may be offended; they might demand that the knowledge be transferred to them instead. However, as a rule the new healer does not do this, respecting the wishes of the old one.

If no one gives a person the knowledge voluntarily, s/he can buy it for money, demanding that the old medicine man sell him knowledge. However, the knowledge obtained in this way is considered second-rate. A person who extorted a magical skill from an old healer might, for example, begin to monetize his skill by demanding money from clients, which is not usually practiced in traditional knowledge transmission. Traditional healers accept the fee they are offered, or refuse the fee altogether and ask to give it to the church.

The transmission of knowledge traditionally takes place at a certain time, usually around Christmas. It is worth noting that talking about one's knowledge and even allowing collectors to write down spells is not considered a violation of the traditional order of transmission, or as transmission at all. The reason for that is that collectors are perceived as outsiders, and healers understand that a collector wants to know about the magic skills, but would not use them.

In addition, a real healer must do a number of other things in order to maintain the effectiveness of the received gift. Besides not using the knowledge for material gain, s/he must observe fasts at certain times, possibly refrain from certain types of work, observe some other restrictions. Once a year, usually at Christmas time, s/he also must repeat spells, as if refreshing them.

The paper examines and analyzes the order of knowledge transmission, as well as other components of the code of conduct of the "good" healer, and provides the rationale for such a set of practices.

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Russian Versions of “The Dream of the Virgin”: Problems of the Social Functioning of a Non-canonical Text

“The Dream of the Virgin” is one of the most widespread Christian apocrypha. It is widely known among the peoples of Southern, Central, and Eastern Europe, both Orthodox and Catholic: Belarusians, Bulgarians, Bosnians, Greeks, Italians, Macedonians, Germans, Poles, Portuguese, Romanians, Russians, Serbs, Slovenes, Ukrainians, and Croats. “The Dream of the Virgin Mary” functions in both manuscript and oral tradition; it takes the form of a spiritual verse, a verbal charm, a prose article.

In Russian indexes of false books “The Dream of the Virgin” appears from the beginning of 17th century. The earliest dated record of “The Dream of the Virgin” in Russian is in the investigation file of Afonka Naumenko (1642). Most likely, “The Dream of the Virgin” came to Russia in the first half of the 17th century from Poland through the territory of Ukraine and/or Belorussia.

The paper traces the history of the “The Dream of the Virgin” in Russia from the seventeenth century to the present. It is known that in the 17th–18th centuries the people who kept the manuscripts of “The Dream of the Virgin” were persecuted by the state. Nevertheless, “The Dream of the Virgin” has survived in hundreds of manuscripts of the 18th–20th centuries. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, manuscripts of “The Dream of the Virgin” were popular among Old Believers and supporters of Synodal Orthodoxy. The popularity of “The Dream of the Virgin” revived in Russia in the post-Soviet period. In the beginning of the 21st century “The Dream of the Virgin” is spread in the Russian segment of the Internet in dozens and even hundreds variants.

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License to Kill: An Investigation of Frog Coffins and the Social Logic of Magic

Tuusniemi is a small, quiet, and beautiful municipality located in the Lakeland area of the Northern Savo region in Eastern Finland. Nothing much ever happens in Tuusniemi, days go by as they always have done. The locals in the area are known for their relaxed attitude, calling themselves the salt of the earth. But clearly things were not always quite as idyllic, for at the beginning of the twentieth century, underneath Tuusniemi church apparently as many as a hundred little coffins were found with frogs buried inside. What on earth was going on? Why did the God-fearing folk of Tuusniemi pin frogs into small coffins (made of alder and aspen) with the frogs' mouths sewn together with thread? On occasion, a piece of grain was placed inside the frog's mouth.

Only a handful of frog coffins, housed in various museums, have survived to our day. While the archaeological evidence is rather scarce, fortunately written sources of the topic are more plentiful. Back in the day, it was reported in newspapers that the phenomenon of frog coffins was related to gaining fishing luck. This may be so, but studies have shown that more was at play: frog coffins offer a rare glimpse into the darker side of life in traditional rural Finland for they belong in the realm of harmful magic, counter-sorcery that people used against each other. This paper illustrates how a deeper investigation into the practice of frog coffins can offer us a view of the communal pressures and tensions that people experienced in their everyday lives and allow us to form a picture of the social logic of magic. Special attention will be paid to international comparanda in order to create a context for what at first sight might look like a regional peculiarity in the world of charms and charming.

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Prayers and Verbal Charms in Lithuanian Oral Literature: One or Two Genres?

In the 20th century, Lithuanian academic discourse, similarly to many other countries, displayed a tendency to differentiate between verbal charms and prayers by attributing these texts to different fields: scholars associated verbal charms with magic and prayers with Christian religion. As a result of this distinction, verbal charms and prayers were treated as different genres of oral literature. However, charmers did not make such a clear distinction between these genres in Lithuania: frequently they labelled both Christian prayers and verbal charms as prayers (Lith. malda). Besides, they also employed the word "malda" to denote the prayers with non-Christian content which were addressed to the fire, the earth, or the crescent moon (this practice was known in Lithuania even until the mid-20th century). Two other folk terms were also widespread to denote verbal charms—"užkalbėjimas" and "užžadėjimas". In contrast to the word malda, these words were never employed to denote canonical Christian prayers.

Lithuanian folklorists classified these texts into three genres: 1) malda "prayers" (canonical prayers with little variation), 2) maldelė "little prayers" (prayers which address divine non-Christian persons—the goddess of fire Gabija, the goddess of the earth Žemyna, the deity of the crescent moon Dievaitis Mėnulaitis, etc.), and 3) užkalbėjimas "verbal charms" (texts intended for healing, protection from fire, theft, or other misfortune, also for a better harvest and attracting love, etc.). According to Lithuanian folklorist Kazys Grigas, verbal charms were employed to influence physical and mental phenomena (such as human and cattle diseases, love, harvest, weather, etc.) in a commanding way and by forcing one's own will. Conversely, in the instance of prayers, the charmer must "bow down [to the higher powers], supplicate, rather than give orders". Hence prayers emphasize the power of God or gods, while in verbal charms, on the contrary, the power of the charmer comes to the fore.

This attitude, prevalent in the research on Lithuanian verbal charms, deserves to be revisited from a wider ethnographic perspective. The author of this paper will explore Lithuanian folk terms for verbal charms employed by the charmers themselves and will analyze the communication process which surfaces in the texts of verbal charms as well as the relationship of the charmers with the addressees they appeal to. The investigation reveals that the understanding of peculiar communication strategies ingrained in these texts is more important than drawing a line between genres.

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Men and Magic in a Soviet Village

The description of healing and magical practices in the Russian village of the 20th century and research of those practices are based largely on information recorded from women. In the thematic folder "Magic, Prohibitions, Magical Etiquette" of the Folklore Archive of St. Petersburg State University, more than 95 percent of records are made from women. There are a lot of reasons for this. First of all, the field work of university folklore expeditions in the countryside in the second half of the 20th century was carried out mainly with elderly women. Elderly because, according to popular belief, the older the interlocutors, the more "traditional" and "archaic" facts they remember. Women because they are easier to contact (with female folklorists, who are the majority in student groups) and women statistically prevail in the elderly stratum (wars, arrests and, as a result of them, disabilities affected men first of all).

However, the point is also that magic and folklore are regarded as gender-inappropriate topics for men. Most men avoid talking about the irrational: "somehow not serious." Usually they refer to the fact that they studied at school and institutes; meanwhile, folklore is the stories of old women, whom there was no time to listen to. At the same time, songs, charms, fairy tales are included in the "irrational" along with prayers, priests and baptism. The religious and the traditional constitute the common realm. The first reaction of the men in the village to the offer to talk about folklore is joke and refusal. However, the archive contains incantations recorded from hunters, healing practices described by men using them, tales of sorcery experienced by the storytellers, and memories of male sorcerers. As a result of participant observation, in-depth interviews and lengthy conversations, the attitude of Soviet in their background men to magic and religion appears to be more complex than ignorance or refusal. Men are aware of most magical actions as many were patients of village healers in childhood and believe in the effectiveness of some forms of village healing practices. Many try to rationalize this knowledge or apply it for reasons of "this is how the old people did it" and "it won't get worse". While others consistently and consciously turn to the magical repertoire (family or neighborhood). In this paper I will show complex combinations of types of knowledge that forms the life worlds of Soviet and post-Soviet men: rational-logical, practical, religious and magical.

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<http://lulfmi.lv/en/news>

Archives of Latvian Folklore

<http://en.lfk.lv/news>

International Society for Folk Narrative Research (ISFNR)

<http://www.isfnr.org/>

Committee on Charms, Charmers and Charming

<http://www.isfnr.org/committee-on-charms-charmers-and-charming.php>

