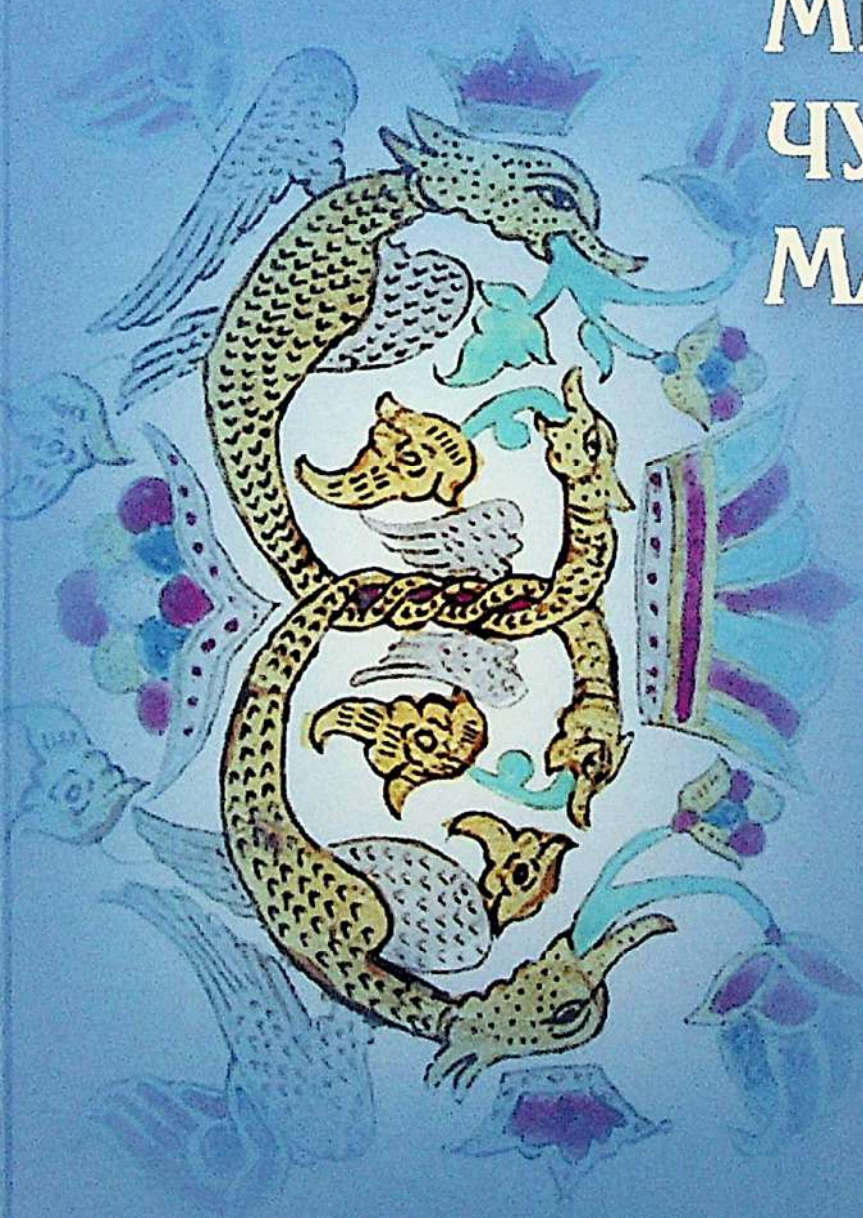


STUDIA 33 BALCANICA

MIRABILIA: ЧУДЕСНО И МАГИЧЕСКО



ИСТ
БАН

ИНСТИТУТ ЗА БАЛКАНИСТИКА & ЦЕНТЪР ПО ТРАКОЛОГИЯ ПРИ БАН

Съставителство и редакция:
проф. д.изк. Ваня Б. Лозанова-Станчева
проф. дин Валерия Н. Фол



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ISBN 978-619-7179-05-7

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София, 2020

MIRABILIA: ЧУДЕСНО И МАГИЧЕСКО

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Vanya Lozanova-
Stancheva

MIRABILIA: MIRACULOUS AND MAGICAL. ON THE ANCIENT ROOTS OF THE CONCEPT APPARATUS

The article aims at analysing and systematising the movement and development of concepts integrated into the problematic situation *Mirabilia: Miraculous and Magical*. The analysis focuses on the ancient roots of the concept apparatus in various genre forms from Homer to the Middle Ages.

Studies in the semantic field of “miracles” (*mirabilia* or *miracula*) and the “miraculous” whose context generates the “magic” and the “magical” presuppose several levels of investigation, among them being that of lexical analysis and conceptual precisions, defining the concepts of the “supernatural” and of “magic” and “magical,” as well as their related notions.

Keywords: Mirabilia, miracles, magic, magical, supernatural.

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Valeria Fol

ENRAGED DEITIES AND HEROES – EXAMPLES FROM THRACE

The paper examines testimonies about ancient Thrace, which inform of enraged deities and heroes, and of the punishments, which they send to humans? The correct accomplishing of the rite is a type of magical act for contact with deities and heroes, who can be summoned, subjugated, propitiated. Committing errors during ritual practices, be they a conscious, or an unconscious insult, or forgetting to honour the deities and the heroes usually provokes their fury, which leads to unfavourable consequences for specific people, the community, frequently for nature. Propitiating deities and heroes requires the performing of specific actions and rituals in order for harmony between divine and human to be restored.

Keywords: enraged deities, heroes, Tamyris, Orpheus, Thrace

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Ivan Marazov

HYBRID MONSTERS – A MYTHICAL BESTIARIA OF ANTIQUITY.

1. FANTASTIC POPULATION OF THE SEA

The basic mythopoetic mechanism through which the images of fantastic beings are created is hybridity. It is achieved by combining different animal and human elements. The appearance of the monsters embodies the ambiguity, i.e. the disorder, the indifference of chaos. Therefore, they have a mixed, hybrid nature: the constituent organs and parts belong not only to different beings, but also to different spatial zones, encoding various levels of the cosmic substance.

In the applique of Vettersfelde the hybrid appearance of the sea monster is based on the fish. It encodes the water / wet element, the bottom position, the behavioral characteristic "mute". In this plate, however, the fish is hybridized with the head of a ram— fire / super dry, marking the middle zone, and with the eagle – air, marking the upper zone. The hybrid is complete – in any respect, a totally impossible cosmic model. In the ram heads in which the fish tail ends, we can see a visual aetiological sign of the famous *Thalattios krios*, "sea ram" – a big and very dangerous predatory fish that attacks even people who have fallen into the sea.

In the lower half of the fish body a bearded semi-human semi-fish is represented, swinging with a dolphin and leading a passage of dolphins and fish. In the imagery of Greek art, this figure is known as "The Old Man of the Sea". The etymology of the name of *Nereus* derives from the action of "diving, immersion". Immersion in water has a sense of social birth. In Indo-European mythology there is the figure of *apām napāt* – the child of the water. In the Iranian tradition, the Fire in the Water is known as *hvarāna*.

Herodotus unequivocally determines *Tagimasad* (whom he glossed as *Poseidon*) as a royal deity in the Scythian pantheon. In this aspect, the proximity of the Scythian *Tagimasad* with the Aryan deity *Yima-Yama*, the king of the hereafter, i.e. of Paradise of Immortality, is likely. Maybe him, in the same way as the sea god, would guide not only the fish but also the souls of the heroes to this Paradise.

Keywords: Hybrid monsters, hybridity, *bestiaria*, Sea, Indo-European mythology,

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AN OLD KINGDOM FAMILY OF
DOCTORS-MAGICIANS

In Ancient Egypt the relation between medicine and magic was very strong from at least the Old Kingdom on. In the family of the famous *3h.t-htp* from the Louvre Museum that relation was very obvious. According to the preserved titlature, the members of his family were either doctors or magicians. That can be observed not only in their conventional titles *‘s wr swnw* “great doctor,” *swnw pr-‘3* “doctor of the palace,” *hry-hb* “lector priest,” but also in the less known as *jm3-‘*, *‘-Nmty*, *‘-Hq3.t*, *hw-‘*, which were with probable relation to the practice of magic and medicine. Furthermore, each of them was exercising a priestly service to a divinity more or less connected to the magical or medical practices. These were gods like Horus, Anubis, Kherty and Heka. Our study aims at showing the mechanisms for transmission of the profession within the family through the different groups of titles, as well as understanding the duties of each of its members.

Keywords: Ancient Egypt, Old Kingdom, Doctors-Magicians, Horus, Anubis, Kherty, Heka

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Maya Vassileva

MORE ON THE FUNCTIONS OF THE NEO PHRYGIAN INSCRIPTIONS

The majority of the Old Phrygian inscriptions are dedicatory. In contrast, all of the Neo Phrygian inscriptions (1st–3rd century AD) were grave stones, containing malediction formulae. In most cases Phrygian curses accompany Greek epitaphs. Quasi bilingual texts are also known. The present paper discusses several examples of different combinations of Greek and Neo Phrygian texts in the inscriptions, the latter thus probably increasing the apotropaic effect.

The practice had probably had a much longer tradition going back to some of the latest and the longest Old Phrygian inscriptions: the stele from Vezirhan and that from Dokymeion (5th–4th century BC). Both disclose persons bearing Greek names as commissioners and beneficiary of the monument. The use of Phrygian texts by Hellenized indigenous people or by Greeks suggests a special value of the formulaic passages. Social analysis of the users of such monuments reveals something like an upper middle class, but mainly in rural areas where no major cities existed.

The chronological gap between the Old and Neo Phrygian texts seems to be reduced now with a recently published Neo Phrygian inscription dated to the 2nd century BC displaying the usual malediction formula. The context of these grave monuments suggests rather a magic, apotropaic function of the Neo Phrygian texts. They fell into a long Phrygian tradition of writing sacral texts, though now related mainly to tomb stones.

Keywords: Old Phrygian inscriptions, Neo Phrygian inscriptions, Greek epitaphs, malediction formulae, sacral texts

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MAGIC OF OBJECTS – OBJECTS OF MAGIC

When the purpose of an artifact is not clear, in archeology it is often defined as cult one. The work presents an attempt to read the symbolism of certain objects/ complexes which they signified for their creators.

1. At those early times the colour contrasts were mainly between red of the clay and white of the oxide. The opposition red – white was the opposition of real to unreal, i. e. of life to ideal, to natural perfection and serenity (Fol A. 1997: 103)

Stamps – *pintaderas* bearing remains of red ocher in the incised solar patterns have been discovered in most of the Neolithic and Copper Age settlements. They were used for decorating the faces of men who performed certain rituals. The *pintadera* in the depot of NIAM is the most interesting of all: one of its ends has been shaped as a solar sign, and the other one has been modeled as a left hand with outstretched fingers bearing an eye in the middle. It is covered with white paint and the reliefs at both ends are thoroughly filled with red ocher. The size of the *pintadera* and the red ocher are a sure indication that it was used to stamp an eye on the human forehead and a solar sign on each of the cheeks. The tattooed symbols of the major deities in ancient times – the Great Goddess – Mother and the Sol – were an act of inclusion of participants in the rites dedicated to them.

2. Every small stone can be the primary rock if one can believe it (Fol A. 2004: Orphica Magica I: 77)

1200 graves dating from the late 6th – 3rd millennium BC have been explored in the necropolis of Golemiya Ostrov Tell (the Big Island) near Durankulak village. Only Grave 62 contained *Magic sets* as a part of the grave goods laid into a container with a lid (i.e. they were hidden). The set comprises: a flint blade, a round pebble/ polisher, a bone awl, a bone or copper hair pin, a seashell (fragment of a *Spondylus* jewel), and a lump of red ocher. The inner surface of the container is usually generously covered with red ocher. The set in question was probably related to the performance of certain magic rites destined to

defeat the disease/ death and/ or to assure new birth after the passage to the Beyond. The mandatory presence of flint (the male – Solar) and stone/ polisher (the female – Chthonic) signifies the most important presence of the Great Goddess – Mother and her son, the Sol, for to provide the new birth.

3. Magic is not witchcraft as could rashly be considered...The symbol is corporeality, association with Gods, a sacred object – mediator which fuses the mysterially initiated man with the god through the concept that the other half of the corporeality of the object – mediator is with the god who is waiting for the sympathetic relation. (Fol A. 2004: Orphica Magica I: 188–189)

Within the territory of the Prehistoric necropolis of Golemiya Ostrov Tell (Durankulak village) explored on the western bank of the lake 41 graves from the Hellenistic and Late Antiquity Ages have been also revealed. Among them stands Grave 18 containing two individuals – a girl (Juv. II) and a female (Adult).

The grave goods in the pit have been distinctly distributed between both skeletons. Two vessels and a string of glass beads various in shape around the neck were with the female. The girl was accompanied by three vessels inserted in one another; a bronze mirror laid on the left part of the chest as below the mirror a band/ belt has been traced decorated with bronze appliquéés and beads; a bronze bracelet terminating in serpent heads in the middle of each arm; and in the palm of the right hand were concentrated glass and bone beads various in colour and shape, bronze and iron rings, a medallion, earrings (a tooth of a stag stringed on one of them), and perforated shells of lobster and two snails. All these objects were likely collected in a bag. The date of the grave is from the second half of the 3rd c. BC. A priestess, sibyl?

Keywords: magic, symbolism, stamps – *pintaderas*, magic sets.

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ATTITUDE TOWARDS MAGICIANS AND MAGIC IN THE LATE ANTIQUE LAWS

The fourth century presents new political, social and religious landscape of the Roman Empire. New religion, Christianity, have emerged and started to dominate every aspect of the everyday life in the cities. Along with it magic and magical find their way to thrive and prosper. During 4th and 5th centuries have been issued twenty eight laws forbidding different magical practices.

The main purpose of the article is to study the alleged Christian influence on imperial legislation against magic and magical. The study is based on the all known civil laws about the magic and magicians preserved in the Theodosian Code and the Institutes of Justinian.

Keywords: magic, magicians, Christianity, Late Antiquity, civil law

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SOME MIRACULOUS TURNS IN ARISTOPHANES' *CLOUDS*

The article aims at analysing Aristophanes' *Clouds* through certain miraculous elements among the poetic devices for evoking the audience's laughter. The miraculous is present at different levels of the comic text, in explicit or in more implicit form. In *Clouds* the type of education in sophistry represented by “Socrates” could be defined first of all as “strange”. Aristophanes uses mainly verbal mechanisms to make the spectators laugh. The speeches throughout the plot are strange too, absurd and funny as well. Typical comic turns of the situation and of the opinions of the characters are observed. The end of the play is unexpected and to a degree “tragic.” The extant text of *Clouds* is a revision of an earlier unsuccessful play. This failure is discussed in the parabasis: although through irony and boasts, the self-referential view of the poet on writing a good comedy becomes clear.

Keywords: Aristophanes, *Clouds*, Comic Miraculous Turns, Sophistic Education, Generation Gap.

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в птица цар. В този смисъл, тракийският контекст се оказва ключов за иновативното разработване на мита, т.е. за произвеждането на безпрецедентните чудовища Терей и Прокна. Чудовища, които – стана ясно – са по специфичен за комедията начин нестрашни.

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Vyara Kalfina

MYTHOLOGICAL MONSTERS IN ARISTOPHANES' *BIRDS*

If we think of depictions of monstrosity in ancient literature, comedy would not be the first genre to come to mind. This does not mean that comedy does not depict mythological monstrous creatures, usually hybrid monsters. Unlike the other genres and dramatic uses of such mythological figures, comedy does not aim at provoking fear by describing them: it usually presents monstrosity in a grotesque way. The mythological monsters in Aristophanes are not scary, their monstrous nature is tamed and 'normalised' to the level of everyday experience. The current analysis focuses on the monstrous characteristics (in terms of usual mythological strategies of depiction) of king Tereus and his companions in the comedy *Birds*. It analyses the dwelling of Tereus, his depiction and the subtle references to ancient Thracian religious concepts related to his biographical survival after metamorphosis.

Keywords: Monsters, Aristophanes' comedy *Birds*, Tereus, Prokne, Thracian religious rituals.

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The stories about the wolf are numerous and are known both from the Indo-European cultural circle and the Asian one. They present many different aspects of the beast, but most often portray him as a chthonic character related to the afterlife, to freedom, and as a parent who sets the beginnings of a family or tribe in marriage to a human. In the latter case, the wolf – or she-wolf – represents a young personage in fertile age.

As it happens with many other ancient heroes, the Christianity tried to change the history of the wolf. It portrays him as cruel, bloodthirsty and vicious. Nevertheless, it does not succeed in Christianizing him. Hereditary memory proves to be stronger. The traditional Christian calendar gives him feasts – the wolves' days between 11th and 21st of November (the dates change according the geographical regions) culminating in the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin, on this day celebrated as the Wolf's Theotokos.

The stories about the wolf really do not end. Finally I shall mention the treasure hunters. They also have a connection with the wolf – the caves where the mythical treasure is hidden are commonly known as wolfish (Петров 2001: 61–74).

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WOLF STORIES

N. Y. Bichurin (Hyacinth, 1777–1853) tells us about the ancestor of the tribe of *tugü-tukü*, a branch of Hunnu. The tribe was defeated and massacred by a neighbouring chieftain. Only a ten-year-old boy was left alive as they cut off his arms and legs and threw him into a swampy lake. A she-wolf came and began feeding him with meat. Some *peripetia* follows and the she-wolf brought the boy to a cave in the Central Altai and gave birth of ten sons by him. They have begun clans. One of them, Ashina, a man of great merits, put above his home gates a flag with a wolf's head in memory of his origin.

The wolf takes part in the mythology and rituality of nations from the Eastern Mediterranean cultural circle. Lykaon was the man – wolf who established Lykosura – the Mountain of the Wolves and established the cult of Zeus. Leto, coming from the land of Hyperboreans, was transformed into a she-wolf to give birth to twins by Zeus – Apollo and Artemis. She gave the name of Lykaia in honour of the wolves that helped her while in labour.

There are a lot of folklore texts describing the transformation of men into wolves dressing wolf skin for to perform certain rites or for trial. According to Socrates a man inevitably becomes a wolf if he eats human inwards cut and mixed with ones of other animals.

A very interesting ethnological study on St. Triphon the Pruner (Trifon Zarezan) also provides links with wolf rituals (Вълчинова 1988). In the Southern and Southwestern Balkans the feast is associated mostly with fertility of vines and gardens. However, moving to North the agricultural aspect gradually is replaced by strongly expressed wolf practices.

The wolf also appears often as personage in the Bulgarian folklore. His role is versatile.

The stories about the wolf are numerous well known within both Indo-European and Asian cultural circles. They represent various aspects of the beast in general associated with the Beyond, with freedom and parenthood – in a marriage with a human giving birth to a clan. In the latter case, the wolf – or she-wolf are young characters in fertile age.

Key words: wolf, Lykaon, Hyperboreans, St. Triphon the Pruner (Triphon Zarezan), Balkans

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МАГИЧЕСКОТО НА БАЛКАНИТЕ,
ОТРАЗЕНО В ТЕКСТОВЕТЕ НА
ЗАПАДНИ ПЪТЕШЕСТВЕНИЦИ
ОТ 14–15 В.

В настоящето изследване ще се спрем на любопитна информация, давана от западните пътешественици за Балканите през 14 и 15 в. Ще се съсредоточим върху текстове, които касаят реликви и свещени места, съдържащи чудодейни сили, специфични обичаи и религиозни практики, текстове, които се отнасят до извънредни събития, натоварени с необичайна магическа сила. Ние ще работим с текстовете на Николо да Мартони (1394–1395), Руй Гонзалес де Клавихо (1403–1406), Перо Тафур (1437–1438), Джован-Мария Анджолело (1478) и Конрад Грюнемберг (1486).

Преди да преминем към конкретните текстове, накратко ще представим пътешествениците, които са обект на настоящето проучване.

Николо да Мартони (Van der Vin 1980: 609) е един от малкото западни пътешественици от края на XIV век, който оставя много пълно описание на антични паметници. Мартони е италиански нотариус в малкото градче Каринола (северно от Капуа, в областта Кампания), където брат му е архидякон. Той осъществява своето поклонничество до Йерусалим през 1394–1395 г. Престоят му в Гърция се датира през лятото на 1394 и пролетта на 1395 г. Той посещава Атина, Коринт, Патра, Централна Гърция, Архипелага. В неговата *Liber peregrinationis ad loca sancta* (Le Grand 1895: 566–576, текст 577–669) е запазено най-старото средновековно описание на древностите в Атина.

Руй Гонзалес де Клавихо като пратеник на Енрике III, крал на Кастилия и Леон, е изпратен в двора на Тимур. Заминава през май 1403 г. и му трябват 15 месеца, за да стигне до Самарканд, като от тях 5 месеца прекарва в Константинопол – това е зимата на 1403–1404 г. Оттук заминава за Трапезунд и после за Самарканд. През март 1406 г. се връща обратно в Испания. Споменава за островите Родос, Лесбос и прави детайлно описание на Константинопол, описва множество църкви и реликвите, пазени в тях, описва мозайките и техните изображения в „Св. София“, „Св. Йоан Кръстител“ в Студион, описва Хиподрума. Споменава, че градът е в упадък, отбелязва наличието на много празно пространство, малко жители, и наличието на руини навсякъде в града (Van der Vin 1980: 99).

Другият именит пътешественик испанецът **Перо Тафур** в пролога на своята книга обяснява какво го е накарало да посети различни страни; казва, че за

THE „MAGIC“ ON THE BALKANS AS VIEWED BY THE WESTERN TRAVELERS OF THE 14TH-15TH CENTURIES

The present study summarizes the most curious information which the western travellers provide us about the Balkans during the 14th and 15th century. It comments texts referring to relics and holy places, specific customary practices, or narratives referring to casual events – pestilence, furious storms, earthquakes and so on. It is based on the accounts of Niccolò da Martoni (1394–1395), Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo (1403–1406), Pero Tafur (1437–1438), Giovan-Maria Angiolello (1478), and Konrad Grünenberg (1486).

Keywords: magic, Balkans, western travelers, relics and holy places, customary practices

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THE DARKNESS, THE HELL AND THE BYZANTINE TRAVELLERS

The purpose of this article is to present a vision of some Byzantine writers about the Night/ the Darkness/ the Unknown. We try to reconstruct on the basis of preserved historic sources the way of thinking of Byzantine travellers and their way of perceiving ‘the others’, the barbarians. They travelled in the unknown lands with preliminary prejudices and fears which mark a continuity in the process of thinking about the unknown stemming from the Antiquity through the Middle Ages to the modern world.

Keywords: Byzantine travelers, Bysantium, Macedonia, Theophylact of Ochrid, Nicephorus Gregoras

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Penka Danova

THE METAMORPHOSES OF THE RHODES DRAGON (SECOND HALF OF THE 16TH AND THE 17TH CENTURIES)

The story about the monstrous dragon killed on the Island of Rhodes by the brave knight Deodat de Gozon, who became later Master of the Order of Knights Hospitaller (1346–1353), is well known to scholars and to fans of historical science fiction. The question asked persistently over the centuries whether that legend had anything in common with historical truth has been answered fully today.

In the present paper Penka Danova raises another question: during the period of most intensive dissemination of that legend, did scholars and writers who had contributed most to its propagation really believe in the historical truth of that event? According to the author, Giacomo Bosio, who introduced the legend in academic circulation by drawing information from Antonio Foxá, did that due to lack of sufficient sources about the life of Deodat de Gozon. The historian Bosio and his censors had strong doubts about the authenticity of the event. Daniello Bartoli, writer and philosopher, presented the same story as a metaphor of the eternal struggle between good and absolute evil (the Rhodes dragon). Athanasius Kircher, a researcher of the subterranean world (*Mundus subterraneus*), was probably the only scholar at the time in question for whom it was important the story to be true, and he tried through written evidence (Bosio, Hieronymus Megiser) to assert

his view that dragons existed, using also as argument the dinosaur bones that had been found at that time.

Travellers who visited Rhodes added new touches to the story. The head of the killed dragon, described as the head of a buffalo (Stocove) was impaled above the city's gate, on the side of the land. Thévenot claimed later that the trophy was above the St. Catherine Gate and that it strongly resembled the head of a huge crocodile. These testimonies show that the Ottoman authorities on the Island of Rhodes entertained the "tourists" from Europe with various trophies-heads, thus contributing to the appearance of new forms and dimensions of the Rhodes dragon.

Two texts translated from Italian into Bulgarian, which describe the story under consideration, are presented (Bosio, Bartoli).

Keywords: the Rhodes Dragon, Deodat de Gozon, Giacomo Bosio, Daniello Bartoli, Athanasius Kircher

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праведен халиф – название, отнасящо се само до първите четирима заместника на пророка Мохамед в качеството им на халифи: Абу Бакр (ок. 572–634), Умар I (ок. 585–644), Осман (ок. 575–656) и Али ибн Абу Талиб (поч. 661 г.)

суфизъм – най-специфичното и недефинирано досега течение, появило се още през първите векове от въвеждането на исляма като световна религия; изключително устойчиво и много широко разпространено в ислямския свят течение, което е жизнено до днес, включително и у нас; суфизмът е преди всичко мистично течение, което въвежда и налага светците и чудесата в исляма

тахтаджии – суфитско хетеродоксно братство в Турция

юруци – тюркско номадско племе, преминало от Анадола в Румелия и ползвано като помощен военен корпус

Lyubomir Mikov

THE MIRACLES OF KIZ ANA SULTAN, THE MUSLIM SAINT OF THE VILLAGE OF MOMINO, NORTHEASTERN BULGARIA

Kız Ana Sultan is the most popular female Muslim saint among both the Sunni Turks and the heterodox Muslims (Alevi) of Northeastern Bulgaria. However, the miracles, attributed to her, were well known also among the Christian Bulgarians living in many other parts of Bulgaria.

The paper dwells on the legends describing the supernatural power of Kız Ana Sultan and the miracles she has been allegedly done. These legends have been produced in the Sufi circles, which as well known offered to Muslim people a mystified version of Islam.

Keywords: Kız Ana Sultan, miracles, Sunni Turks, heterodox Muslims (Alevi), Islam

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DID THE OTTOMANS SEE UFOS? (AN 1838 OTTOMAN DOCUMENT ABOUT AN UNUSUAL CELESTIAL PHENOMENON)

The paper deals with an Ottoman document preserved in the Oriental Department of the Sts Cyril and Methodius National Library in Sofia. The document reveals that in October 1838 a heavy storm broke out in the night, followed by the appearance of a bright light in a round shape. It illuminated the whole horizon and afterwards broke into pieces that fell down onto the earth. The unusual celestial phenomenon was observed by Ottoman soldiers camping near Mardin, as well as by the locals. They reported the case to the Sultan, who was also informed about the opinion of the local men of religion, whose interpretation associated the phenomenon with a divine omen for future military victories.

Keywords: UFO, Ottoman documents, unusual celestial phenomena, Mahmud II, Mehmed Ali Pasha

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HOLY WATERS: RELIGIOUS DEVOTION AND HEALING PRACTICES IN A BALKAN CONTEXT

In this article I discuss the veneration of waters and the related healing practices in interdisciplinary context and in diachronic perspective in Balkan milieu. I endeavor to delineate the main cultural models which influence the pattern of contemporary religious culture in one of its particular aspects: the healing practices with water. Those models are the religious systems of Antiquity in their Greek-Roman and Thracian variants; the culture of folklore; and Christian doctrine and practice. For the purposes of analysis I draw on a broad range of diverse material: published research, folklore texts, popular religious literature, an ethnographic film, images, internet sources and personal fieldwork including observations and interviews. In the final part I also consider a particular case: the Church of the *Annunciation of Mary of the Fish* in the small town of Asenovgrad in Southern Bulgaria. This case gives me an interesting example of the interweaving of universal and local in the devotion to a water source and in the ritual practices performed there. It also gives me grounds to suggest the term *crypto-cult* to denote a specific form of cultural interaction observed there. By outlining and summarising the versatile expressions of water devotion and healing rituals I point out some characteristic features and tendencies of these phenomena and argue that despite their specifics, Antiquity tradition, folklore and Christianity operate with similar attitudes and patterns.

Keywords: healing practices with water, culture of folklore, Antiquity tradition, Christian doctrine and practice, *crypto-cult*

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FOLKLORE PROJECTIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT FEAST

In the ecclesiastical Christian calendar, the Day of the Holy Trinity or Holy Ghost is a moveable feast that is celebrated on the Monday after Pentecost, in May or June. In the folk calendar, this holiday marks the beginning of the so-called Whitsuntide or Midsummer Week (in Bulgarian *Rusalska nedelya*). It is believed to be the period of wood nymphs' special activity – during the week those supernatural creatures, who personify vegetation and greenery in the fields and the woods, provide the fertility of crops and vineyards. The analysis focuses on those notions and the respective practices, outlining that to a great degree Whitsuntide corresponds to the Dirty or Pagan days in winter: the period between Christmas and Epiphany. As this is one of the most important periods in the agricultural calendar, it is linked to efforts of people to ensure fertility and water balance in their inhabited territory by offering sacrifices and by propitiating the supernatural powers – of owners and hosts of vegetation and water resources.

Keywords: Whitsuntide, wood nymphs, *kurban*, water source, water host.

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MAGICAL RITUALS FOR GATHERING PLANTS

The paper discusses some magical rituals for gathering plants based on information from Greek magical papyri, other Ancient literary sources, ethnographic records and publications from South-East Europe. The presented practices show many resistant elements of ritual gathering of plants. Exemplary is the special attitude towards the plant as a conscious being, supernatural power living in the plant and the plant's help is sought through the rite. The plant is being honoured with prayers and offerings.

The mentioned folkloric parallels from ethnographic records and publications from South-East Europe are evidence of the preservation of the cited archaic features in folk culture as well. These examples verify the scholarly hypothesis about the antiquity of the ritual practices for magical use of plants and their preservation through a cultural continuity.

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NOTES ON THE MIRACULOUS STAG. SOME BULGARIAN AND HUNGARIAN FOLKLORE PARALLELS

The article analyzes customs performed during the transition between the old and the new year and practised in a vast cultural area between Europe and Asia. Persistent verbal formulas and images that preserve archaic concepts about the cosmogonic role of the stag are found in the examined fragments from Hungarian and Bulgarian Christmas songs. An opinion is expressed that the image of the wonderful gold-horned stag from the Bulgarian Christmas song and the songs performed by the Hungarian singers (regös) can be viewed as a relic of the archaic solar symbolism of the deer in the mythological beliefs of the peoples of Europe and Asia. This image points to a common cultural fund which over time experiences natural transformations – desacralisation and Christianization.

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THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE AND THE MAGICAL RITES OF TRADITIONAL BULGARIAN WEDDING

This article aims at comparing the teachings of the Orthodox Church about the sacrament of marriage and the traditional celebration of Bulgarian wedding. A parallel will be drawn between Church teachings and folk domestic rituals. The scientific focus of the report is also placed on the concepts and contemporary perceptions of the sacrament of marriage and the beliefs about the magical rites in our modern time. Here the question is: "What do Bulgarian men or women believe in and what kind of actions they undertake to marry?" Based on this research and up-to-date reports, the current state of marriage ceremonies in Bulgaria is described, keeping in view intangible cultural heritage.

Keywords: Orthodox Church, sacrament of marriage, magical rites, domestic rituals, traditional wedding, contemporary perceptions, intangible cultural heritage.

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ABOUT THE MIRACLES OF ST. GEORGE IN THE DAMASCUS SERMON DEDICATED TO HIM

The sermon about the miracles of St. George is widespread in the Damascus literature of the Bulgarian lands. The present publication examines the specifics of the miracle presentation in the different types of Damascene. A comparison is made between the texts of the archaic Damascene, translated from the church-slavic language (Karninski damaskin), the New Bulgarian Damascene (Tikhonravov Damaskin), from the late New Bulgarian Damascene from the middle of the 19th century, shaped by Greek graphics (Raykovski Damaskin).

Key words: St. George; the miracles of St. George; Damascus literature; Raykovski Damaskin

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MORE FOR THE "ERKETCH" MYTIC WORLD

This article presents one of the most interesting creatures which inhabits the mythical world of Erkech village, Pomorie region. Children and their grandmothers are both well acquainted with Granny Virenka. This is an entity which combines demonic features with features of a guardian, and belief in its existence is linked with a wide range of taboos.

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VENICE – THE MIRABILIA CITY IN THE WORK OF CROATIAN WRITERS OF THE 19TH CENTURY

Italy was the most popular foreign itinerary among the Croatian romantics in the nineteenth century, and Venice – the most commonly reflected Italian city. The present article is an attempt to throw light on the functioning of this *civitas maris* as an object of magical and wonderfully in the works of Croatian writers of 19th century. The city turns into a key to rethinking the collective and individual identity of the Croatian elite who is trying to obtain ethnic self-identification. The presence of the mythical topos was reflected in the works of A. Nemčić, A. V. Tkalčević, Iv. Kukulević Sakcinski and S. Kranjčević. Their journey to Venice is considered as a meta-text, filled with mythologemes of the imaginary and contemplation space for cultural memory and dialogue of different civilization codes and temporal strata.

Key words: Croatian writers of 19th century, Venice, Comparative Studies, imagology, intercultural research

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ESOTERIC PRACTICES OF BULGARIAN INTELLECTUALS IN THE 1920S-1930S: A CASE

The paper presents some facts of newly-found archival documents, testifying to the existence of esoteric networks and practices involving the Bulgarian intellectuals in the 1920s-1930s. The structure, aims, practices of esoteric network created by Stoyan Zaimov (1853–1932) – a famous Bulgarian revolutionary and cultural figure, is commented in the context of rise of secret and closed societies in Bulgaria after the World War I.

Key words: esoteric networks; esoteric society, Bulgarian intellectuals; Stoyan Zaimov, Rosicrucian symbolism

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**CIVILISATION MONSTRUEUSE:
P. R. SLAVEYKOV, D. VOYNIKOV**

The article discusses a cultural-civilization paradox that occurs in the collective mentality of the late (“high”) Bulgarian Renaissance (1860-70s) and even more in the national myth-poetic narrative producing by the literature. It starts from the problem how the figure of the ethnic alien/enemy functions in the national myth-poetry as a chthonic monster in the image of the Asian “savage”: Turk, Circassian, Tartar, Arab/Negro. How it functions in literature – in a wide genre range – through a central motif/archetype: the kidnapping of the Bulgarian maiden by this ethnic antagonist monster. But the interest is directed towards one travesty in this subject: the modern civilization itself, the *Lumières* turns out to be a chthonic monster. Central attention is devoted to two key works in the literary canon: the comedy *The Phoney Civilization* (1871) by D. Voynikov and the poem *The Spring of the White-legged Maiden* (1873) by P. R. Slaveykov.

Keywords: Bulgarian Renaissance, national myth-poetic narrative; ethnic alien/enemy = “savage”/monster; the *Lumières*

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MIRACLES AND MAGIC IN PERFORMATIVE
ARTS

The paper looks at different ways of performing alive miracles and magic on the stage from ancient times to the present days with the development of new technologies when all magical beings could be presented on the stage. The main point is that there is nothing surprising in miracles, and there is nothing magical in magic (Littlewood's law). In the magic bowl, only innate and acquired skills, knowledge, dexterity, abilities, talents have to blend in with a lot of hard work, perseverance, effort, sustainability, faith and a bit of luck to get in the right place and at the right time. The magic art creates a new virtual reality in which the impossible becomes possible before the eyes of the spectator. The dreams materialize. In the new digital era this is no longer a big problem. But when it pertains to live performance arts, the problem of creating illusions or virtual realities is essential. The study analyzes problems related to life and non-life, to here and beyond, to the vertical link and the metaphysics of the human presence in art in the process of interpersonal communication.

Keywords: miracle, magic, illusion, Littlewood's law, Performance arts, Theatre, Magic art.

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THE TEARS OF THE BULGARIAN MIME: THE INCOMPREHENSIBLE MAGIC OF SILENCE

The development of the pantomime in Bulgaria can be systematized in two main chronological periods, the first of which – from the appearance of the pantomime on the Bulgarian theatrical stage as a standalone art in the 1960s until the changes in the last decade of the XX century, and the second – after the changes in the end of XX until the beginning of the 2020s of XXI century. This article discusses some of the main problems of the Bulgarian pantomime against the background of its short historical development – problems such as

the need for an institution of the silent art, socio-cultural situation in Bulgaria, reflected in this art, as well as lack of traditions and sufficiently prepared for this purpose professionals in modern pantomime to establish a representative and influential movement to promote it. By the end of the 1980s of XX century, i.e. before the start of the so-called Transition, the Bulgarian pantomime is in its heyday and develops in full force, despite the difficulties on its way and the lack of awareness of the audience. Specific artists such as Vassil Indjev, Velyo Goranov, Alexander Iliev and others played a significant role. Bulgarian talent goes far beyond the country's borders. The work of the Bulgarian mimes until the end of XX century left a deep trace in the development of theatrical art. After the political changes in the late 1980s of XX century and in the context of the complicated transition in Bulgarian society the state of the Bulgarian pantomime began to change. There are less emblematic performances and personalities, and the pantomime has become less present in the theatrical life in Bulgaria as a standalone art. It has been modified and transferred to other more contemporary theatrical forms and has often been often marginalised due to the introduction of new theatrical trends since the beginning of the XXI century.

Keywords: Bulgarian pantomime, Bulgarian society, Vassil Indjev, Velyo Goranov, Alexander Iliev

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ARCHITECTURAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE MAGICAL WORLD OF *ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS*

The genre of the magic tales is one of the oldest manifestations of human needs of narrative. In the variety of fabulous fairy specimens, the authors of this analysis chose *The Tales of Scheherazade*. For us, the intriguing elements were both their high popularity (as a favourite reading of many generations all over the world) and their close affiliation with the Orient.

The book (as a product) follows functional demands, respectfully in textual (scribal) and in aesthetic and artistic areas. Therefore, book issuing is a subject of research in the field of art, in particular – in graphic design studies. Our article explores illustrations of the 19th and 20th century editions of *The Tales of the Thousand and One Night* in Europe.

The study is focused on the depiction of architectural motifs and structures as presentations of “magic”. Supernatural elements had been inevitably expected in any human space (urban environment, dwelling, interior, etc.) from ancient times. The aim of the article is to reveal the phases of the evolution of illustration art towards the architectural images – as part of their general composition and depending on the time, place, cultural context and personality of their authors.

Keywords: *1001 Nights*, Scheherazade, architectural motifs, illustrations, magic, book.

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THE SEASON OF WITCH: FILM MYTHOLOGY OF MAGIC

The article explores the emblematic figure of the witch whose captivating power fires the Western imagination even these days. Depicted in her historical context – the dark epoch of the Middle Ages when the Inquisition organized trials against many women accused of dealing with witchcraft, the image of the witch gradually occupied the territory of literature. Some of the greatest literature masterpieces such as *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare successfully constructed a vivid cultural trope that turned out to be extremely sustainable and easily conquered the global popular culture.

Cinema but above all Hollywood contributed mostly to this process creating two opposite visual stereotypes: 1) the old ugly and malicious witch and 2) the young beautiful good fairy. Various examples illustrated the multiple contemporary discursive usages of the witch in both movies and TV productions and what is more interesting: in the PR strategies aimed to discredit female politicians. The text outlined the differences between American and Scandinavian model in terms of the representations connected to the witch.

Keywords: witch in cinema, American and Scandinavian films concerning witches, Cinema Mythology, mainstream genres, TV series, pop culture

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HOMO MIRABILIS: CYNICISM, COUNTER-CULTURE, BIZARRISM, TRANSGRESSION. THE STRANGEST AMONG THE STRANGE IN MODERNISTIC BALKAN PROSE

In *Homo viator* Gabriel Marcel says: *We cannot help seeing that there is the closest of connections between the soul and hope. I almost think that hope is for the soul what breathing is for the living organism. (...) It is precisely the soul that is the traveler; it is of the soul and of the soul alone that we can say with supreme truth that „being” necessarily means „being on the way” (en route)* (Marcel 1951: 10-11). And thus man on the way is precisely a man of hope, whether traveling in space, time, imagination, oneself, etc.

Since the time of modernism the so-called existential traveler turned into a preferred character in the vast literary field. He or she is so irresistibly attractive probably because the existential traveler is homo viator par excellence, most vividly expressing the idea of the modern mobility in a broader sense – as freedom and search through the world, but also into oneself – and expressing hope eventually. No matter how various existential travelers sound like and how we are accustomed to

perceiving them, after all, they are expressing hope – an exit from the terrible issues that weigh above the human situation.

Furthermore, since *hope is a knowing which outstrips the unknown* (Marcel 1951: 10), in a way, hope represents an excess. Hence hope is deviation, hope is strange, hope is even bizarre. Man on the way, or the travelling man, is often a strange man, or at least he is a stranger. And then the strangest of the strange is perhaps the one who gives the most hope in his or her own way.

It happened so that modernism transformed the literary narrative into an institution of the modern society and artistic shape of time. The author, as a creator, turned into original paradigm of human being, respectively the existential traveler – into original paradigm of traveling man; into homo viator par excellence. He articulated his own cultural and civilizational code through writing. Modernist narrative was his transcendent achievement. And its strangest of the strange, its most bizarre manifestations, which we here refer as bizarrism, were often its highest efforts. Thus the most bizarre travels of the existential traveler turned into ultimate travels – travels par excellence – the furthest trips to hope.

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THE MIRACLE IN DANILO KIŠ'S PROSE

Danilo Kiš (1935–1989) is one of the most representative writers of Serbian literature in the second half of the 20th century. His debut was in 1962 when his novel *Mansard: a Satirical Poem* was published. The critics estimated that he deserved real attention when he published his trilogy *Garden, Ashes* (1965), *Early Sorrows* (1969) and *Hourglass* (1972). However, the real “blast” of the literary scene occurred with the appearance of his book *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich* in 1976 when a wild pseudo-literary witch-hunt against the author flared up and even a political process. The present paper will analyse the presence of miracle in that book by Danilo Kiš, as well as in the last published book during his lifetime: *The Encyclopedia of the Dead* (1983). The complicated mechanism of juxtaposition between mythologisation and demythologisation will be examined in these stories that grow up from varied hypotextual basis: from sacred Judaic, Islamic and Christian books, over Medieval and Baroque legends to the period of Nazi and Stalinist “miracles”.

Keywords: Serbian literature, Danilo Kiš, *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich*, *The Encyclopedia of the Dead*, miracle

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FANTASTIC AND MAGIC IN THE WORKS OF NAZLI ERAY

Considering that there are many motifs which have developed from the wonderful, the fantastic, the magical Works in the classical Ottoman literature, realism tendencies are found to prevail in contemporary Turkish literature. Such domination of realistic trends was mainly because the fact that the first modern writers adopted the ideas of the Enlightenment in their quest to transformation and modernization of Ottoman society. Realism prevails during early decades of forming new European literary genres in Turkish prose, particularly, in novels. Quite visible in the first works of late Ottoman writers are the influences of Maupassant, Zola, and Stendhal. Fantasy stories appear in only a few such works – Ahmed Mithhad's *Dancer* (Chengi 1877), Hussein Rahmi Gulpunar's *Ghoul* (Gulabani 1912), Peyami Safa's *Madmoazel Noralya's Armchair* (1949). However, it was not until the 1960s, that the inclination towards "magical realism" began to appear in Modern We can estimate with a degree of certainty that this new trend only appeared during the 1980s, with novels by these same writers. This article examines the works of Nazli Eray, with its inherent fantastic elements – dreams, science fiction, and magical realism. It follows that the question may undoubtedly arise as to whether this way of telling is an example of so-called "female writing" (*l'écriture feminine*) because women are the main representative of this type of Turkish literature.

Key words: Nazli Eray, Turkish literature, magical realism, fantastic, women writing

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LATIFE TEKIN – PROTEST OF DREAMS AND MAGIC

As it is known, the writing of novels only entered Turkish literature after the beginning of its Europeanization, which began in the middle of the 19th century, during the period of public reforms in the Ottoman Empire known as Tanzimat. In the years of its renewal, Turkish literature has gradually shrugged off the height of the old Divan literature and becoming more realistic, putting human and his social problems at the forefront and thus rearranging their core values. Although the Sultan Reconciliation Decree, known as Gulhan Hatisherif, adopted on November 3th 1839, at the time of sultan Abdul Medjid, has no point about literature, this date is considered as the beginning of modern Turkish literature. In its first years, the Turkish novel has been influenced by Western realism and naturalism, and this tendency persists in the decades after the founding of the Republic. The creativity of the writers Liatife Tekine and Nazla Eray is a trend close to the magical realism that in the 1980s grew and became even more pronounced again in their novels.

Key words: Turkish literature, magical realism, dreams, protest.

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