



Traditional Naga kitchen. Photo source FB Washidi @imtyjumper

## BNN Newsletter, October 2020

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Sincerely,

Kristel Kivari

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*On behalf of the BNN Committee:*

*Mirjam Mencej, Willem de Blécourt, Terry Gunnell, Anders Gustavsson, Desmond Kharmawphlang, Fumihiko Kobayashi, Mare Kõiva, Kaarina Koski, Dilip Kumar Kalita, Mirjam Mencej, Maria Ines Palleiro, Tok Thompson and Ülo Valk.*

Mirjam Mencej, mirjam.mencej@guest.arnes.si

3 September 2020

Dear BNN members,

In accordance with the rules of the BNN, it is the duty of the chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, to submit an annual report on the activities of the BNN over the previous year to the other members of the BNN. Due to the cancellation of the ISFNR congress where the meeting of the Committee was supposed to take place, and a new chair, and possibly also some new members, were expected to be elected, the election of the new chair and members of the BNN Committee has been postponed to the next ISFNR congress. This means that the old team will continue to serve on the board for one more year, until the next ISFNR congress. The following is the report for 2019-2020. I would particularly like to draw your attention to several novelties that have been initiated over the year – firstly, in spring, during the pandemic, we launched a BNN Facebook account to gather folklore on corona virus (see no. 7), and second, we have organised a new series of monthly online lectures on the topic of belief narratives which will start in September (see no. 8).

## **1. Membership**

Two new members joined the BNN this year. The small increase in the number of new members, compared with previous years, is probably due to the pandemic and its consequences, that is, those cancelled activities where people interested in belief narratives could get to know about our activities and join. Altogether there are now *133 members* in our network. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to welcome both our new members!

## **2. Publications**

The publication of proceedings from the joint BNN and Charms, Charmers and Charming Committees' conference on *Verbal Charms and Narrative Genres* which took place in Budapest, 8-10 December 2017, was published in *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica* 64 (2) in December 2019. The guest editors of this issue were Maria Palleiro and Éva Pócs and we would like to thank both of them for their valuable work.

Eight papers by BNN members, which were presented at the BNN conference on *Human-Animal Relationships in Belief Narratives* (held as part of the ISFNR interim conference in

Ragusa, 12-16 June 2018), were published in a special edition of *Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore* 77 (Tartu) (general editor, Mare Kõiva; guest editor Mirjam Mencej) in December 2019. The journal is available online at: <https://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol77/>

In addition to this, 27 papers presented at the BNN conference on *Belief Narratives in Folklore Studies: Narrating the Supernatural*, which was run by the Anundoram Borooah Institute of Language, Art and Culture in Guwahati and the BNN, and held in Guwahati, Assam, India, on 6-8 February 2019, are being prepared for publication in 2020. We would like to thank Dilip Kumar Kalita for all his work with this collection.

### 3. BNN Conferences

The BNN conference on *Fear of the Other*, which was supposed to be held within the framework of the 18<sup>th</sup> ISFNR congress in Zagreb, Croatia, on 21-26 June 2020, was cancelled due to the pandemic. The congress, and with it the BNN conference, has now been postponed until September 2021. It is assumed that the new Call for Papers will be issued by the ISFNR congress organisers again in the fall of 2020 and that all relevant information will follow shortly. Please, do not forget to submit your abstract (once again), if you plan to participate in the conference!

Earlier this year, BNN Committee Members were also actively involved in planning the venue of the next BNN conference. Due to the postponement of the BNN conference within the ISFNR congress, the next BNN conference will have to be postponed too. The probability is that it will take place in June 2022. Tommy Kuusela has kindly offered to organize this conference in the Folklore Archives in Uppsala. We are very grateful to Tommy for his willingness to take over the organization! A Call for Papers for the conference will be issued in due course, presumably in late spring /early fall 2021.

### 4. The BNN e-Newsletter (see no. 5 at: <http://www.isfnr.org/belief-narrative-network.php> )

At the BNN Committee meeting in Guwahati, we decided to launch a special section of the BNN Newsletter which will be dedicated to belief narrative research in particular countries. In the previous BNN newsletters, you have thus been able to read about state of belief narrative scholarship in Meghalaya (India), Belarus and Assam. As before, we encourage all of you to send in contributions on the state-of-the-art in belief narrative scholarship in your own country.

As before, we would also like to encourage everyone to send us information on their personal research, new publications, calls for papers, conferences and other events (also local!) related to belief narratives, as well as any other news that might be of interest to belief narrative scholars. As always, we would also like to express our thanks to Kristel Kivari who is kindly

taking care of the distribution of the Newsletter, and to Nidhi Mathur for promptly uploading it to the ISFNR website! Information should be sent in good time to Kristel (kristel.kivari@ut.ee; [kristelkivari@hotmail.com](mailto:kristelkivari@hotmail.com))

## **5. The Student Award for the Best Paper in the Field of Belief Narratives**

In 2018, the Committee decided to make some slight changes to the rules for the next competition for the best student paper award. Every second year (at the ISFNR congress and at the ISFNR interim conference) two awards (rather than one) will now be granted: one for the best paper written by a PhD student, and one for the best paper written by an undergraduate (BA) or graduate (MA) student. Due to the postponement of the ISFNR congress, the deadline for submissions has also been postponed to 15 December 2020. The next awards will be presented at the next ISFNR congress in Zagreb in 2021 but contestants will be notified about the results beforehand, in January 2021. The Call for Applications, along with details about the award (that is, regarding the requirements, criteria, profile of the students involved, the nature of the award, and so on) can be found at the ISFNR/BNN website, under no. 4: (<http://www.isfnr.org/files/beliefnarrativenetwork.html> ).

## **6. The BNN Web Site ( <http://www.isfnr.org/belief-narrative-network.php> )**

As always, we encourage all those who still have not yet sent in data to send us their CVs (including names and surnames; degrees; present professional status and affiliations; e-mail addresses and contact details – as long as you are happy for these to be published on the Internet), along with *a list of main research interests* (in the form of key words – please add such information at the end of your CV) and *a personal bibliography*, including works related to belief narratives (that is books written in one of the major languages or with a summary in one of these languages; and papers written in one of the major languages). The information should be sent to Kaarina Koski ([kaakos@utu.fi](mailto:kaakos@utu.fi)) before the end of October for her to send it to the ISFNR admin Nidhi Mathur to put it on the website later this year (see no. 10 at: <http://www.isfnr.org/belief-narrative-network.php>). Kaarina up-dates the list of belief narrative scholars' CVs annually. We would once again like to thank Nidhi Mathur for her assistance in this matter, and Sadhana Naithani for her support.

## **7. BNN Facebook group**

During the first wave of pandemic, the BNN Committee decided to open a BNN Facebook account which Tommy Kuusela has kindly offered to make and administer. The Committee would like to express their thanks to Tommy for his work with regard to the new account!

Bearing the situation in mind, the aim of BNN Facebook account was, and continues to be, to gather and share Corona/ Covid folklore of all kinds (jokes, memes, conspiracy theories, “myths” about wonder cures, (personal) experience narratives and so on). Any contextual

information, observations (for instance, on attitudes towards foreigners on the streets), photos and more are all much appreciated, as are links to other Facebook accounts, conferences or relevant web sites dealing with the same topic. As we know, many people all around the world are already collecting such folklore. Our hope is that our Facebook page can become a hub for all this international material, allowing comparison and further research. Everyone is welcome to use the data that is available here as a form of archival base for their own research. Indeed, it may even become the heart of a future project. Beginning in 2021 or 2022, we anticipate pulling together some of the diverse global data that has been collected on this subject, examining it from what we hope will then be a historical perspective. We encourage members who are researching this subject to engage with each other on our Facebook page for the purposes of organizing our future response, posting links and the like, and also to begin thinking about and discussing what forms this project might take. The next BNN Newsletter will contain an invitation to all those of you who are interested in this topic, inviting you to join a working group the main activity of which will be to note and present various themes relating to the pandemic.

When the pandemic is over, we hope that the Facebook page can continue to be a site where immediate exchange can take place among the BNN scholars on other subjects as well. Everyone is most welcome to actively participate in the discussions, and also in uploading and sharing any information that might be of interest to belief narratives scholars. If you would like to be connected to this Facebook account in order to upload information or simply follow what is going on, please visit – and join – the following page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/625573241323757/about/>

## **8. ISFNR Belief Narrative Network Online Lectures**

The ISFNR Belief Narrative Network Committee has decided to launch a new series of monthly events: online presentations entitled the “ISFNR Belief Narrative Network Online Lectures”. On the first Friday of each month at 5 p.m. CET (except in July and August), members will be able to watch a pre-recorded 20-30 minute lecture by a scholar working in the field of belief narratives, dealing with her or his research. This will be followed by a live on-line discussion with the lecturer in which members can take part, ask questions and discuss various aspects of the talk. Members will be sent an email with an invitation to listen to the lecture and take part in the discussion on Zoom, the letter being sent about a week before each lecture is going to take place. The first online lecture will be given on Friday, September 4th by Prof. Timothy Tangherlini of UC Berkeley who will be talking about *Conspiracy in the time of Corona*. The Committee would like to express their gratitude to Eva Pórdís Ebenezersdóttir for kindly offering to assist us with technical issues. All lectures will be later available on the ISFNR/BNN website: <http://www.isfnr.org/belief-narrative-network.php>. We would like to thank Nidhi Mathur and Sadhana Naithani for their support in arranging this too.

Should any of you would be interested in giving a lecture in the future, or have a promising student who you would like to suggest, please send the Committee a title and a short abstract

of the lecture for evaluation to the following address: [mirjam.mencej@guest.arnes.si](mailto:mirjam.mencej@guest.arnes.si) . We hope you find this new feature of BNN of interest (to you and your students), and encourage you all to participate in the online discussions!

\*

As usual, we encourage all members to continue sharing information about the BNN with their colleagues. Everyone interested in belief narratives of any kind is welcome to join the Network! If you are aware of any scholar who is interested in belief narratives and wishes to become a member of BNN, please remind them that all they need to do is contact the chairperson ([mirjam.mencej@guest.arnes.si](mailto:mirjam.mencej@guest.arnes.si)) in order to receive information about all future BNN activities. Potential members should nonetheless be informed that they need to join both the ISFNR and the BNN. If any of you has not yet become a member of the ISFNR, please bear in mind that, in accordance with our statute, the BNN forms part of the ISFNR and that official membership is only open and free to those who are members of the ISFNR. If you are not yet a member of ISFNR, you can nonetheless receive information about our activities, and participate in our conferences and meetings. However, you will not have the right to vote for members of the BNN Committee or be able to become a BNN Committee member yourself. Everyone is therefore encouraged to join the ISFNR (see: <http://www.isfnr.org/becoming-a-member.php>; <http://www.isfnr.org/ISFNR-membership.php>); please contact the Chairperson of the Membership Committee, Prof. Kimberly J. Lau ([lau@ucsc.edu](mailto:lau@ucsc.edu)), if you have any questions regarding the ISFNR membership. Should anyone wish to cease being a BNN member, and receive no further information about our activities, please let us know and we will delete you from our list.

As always, all BNN members are also most welcome to suggest their own ideas about the future activities of the BNN and to comment on the decisions taken by the BNN Committee members. We will be happy to hear from you!

Keep safe in these strange times.

Best wishes,

Mirjam, on behalf of the BNN Committee (2016-2021):

Willem de Blécourt, Terry Gunnell, Anders Gustavsson, Desmond Kharmawphlang, Fumihiko Kobayashi, Mare Kõiva, Kaarina Koski, Dilip Kumar Kalita, Mirjam Mencej (*chair*), Maria Ines Palleiro, Tok Thompson and Ülo Valk.



Éva Pócs [pocse@chello.hu](mailto:pocse@chello.hu)

The volume is based on lectures of the international conference on Verbal Charms and Narrative Genres held in Budapest on October 12–15, 2017, whose primary goal has been to bring close together these two distinct areas of folkloristic research – charms and belief narratives – as well as to establish fruitful links between the scholars who are working at present in each of them. This has been the first meeting organized jointly by two committees of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research: the one focused on Charms, Charmers and Charming and the Belief Narrative Network, both of which have organized many international events in their own right. In addition to folklorists, many other

scholars representing related disciplines – anthropologists, medievalists, literary historians, historians of religion, as well as specialists in Germanic, Slavic, Baltic and Balkan studies – joined the Conference. Studies were submitted by nearly half of the more than 30 conference attendees from Eastern and Western Europe, as well as from Asia, America, and Australia. As it has been affirmed in the call for proposals, “Through collaboration, we would like to conduct a parallel examination of Eastern and Western European folklore from the Middle Ages to the present, and also to examine phenomena from Christian and non-Christian, elite and popular, literary and oral traditions.” In this sense, the conference has boosted interdisciplinary co-operation, as it can be seen in this volume.

The book has been structured around the three major, pre-determined topics of the conference. These three groups of articles explore the possible ways in which charms (and related genres: prayer, blessing, curse, threat) as well as belief narratives and other narrative folklore genres (religious legend, fairy tale, heroic epic, etc.) are related. Each of these topics is represented by several articles from different geographic locations and disciplinary perspectives, with diverse methodological approaches, shedding light on distinctive layers of the networks of folklore genres. What Haralampos Passalis writes about his own research applies to the objectives and results of each study here presented: “Although belief narratives and charms are regarded as two different folklore genres with different modes of transmission, performance and function, they are both in a constant dialectical relationship,



yielding mutual feedback.” As several authors of this volume concluded: it is impossible to penetrate the deep structures of belief narratives without understanding the textually related genres such as charms and belief narratives; and that is certainly true vice versa. The volume is a testimony to the fruitfulness of sharing ideas and research on common issues.

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María Palleiro: Charms and Wands in John the Lazy: Performance and Beliefs in Argentinean Folk Narrative

Kinga Markus Takeshita: Iranian Belief Narratives and Verbal Charms. A Preliminary Survey

Haralampos Passalis: The Etiology of a Disorder (dis-ease) and the Restoration of Order (therapy). A Case of a Greek Belief Narrative Connected with Charms against Abdominal Diseases

### 2. Verbal charms and belief narratives: comparative aspect.

Aigars Lielbārdis: The Devil in Latvian Charms and Related Genres

Edina Dallos: Albasty: A Female Demon of Turkic Peoples

Vita Džekčioriūtė-Medeišienė: Child-threatening Mythical Creatures in Traditional Lithuanian Culture: Between Real and Constructed Threats of the Mythical World

Danijela Popović Nikolić: Man Versus Demon: Interconnections between Incantations and Belief Narratives

### 3. Belief narratives about charmers and charming

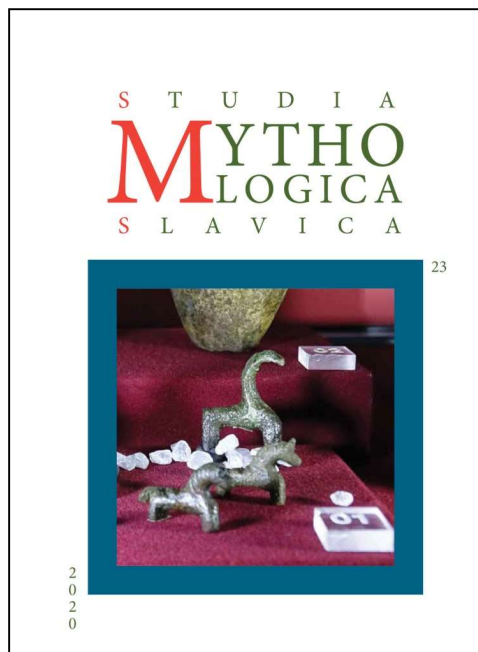
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Emese Ilyefalvi: Dilemmas of Corpus Construction beyond Folklore Collections – Threat as a Speech Act in Early Modern Witchcraft Trials



Monika Kropej [Monika@zrc-sazu.si](mailto:Monika@zrc-sazu.si)

Studia mythologica Slavica is international scientific journal on the mythology, spiritual culture and tradition of Slavic and also other nations and people. One of the main aims of this journal is to present comparative research that defines and determines (i.e. establishes) Slavic culture in the context of the wider European and non-European world (cultures). The journal intends to throw light on the belief systems and religions of older Slavic, Eurasian, and other civilizations. Moreover, it encourages the research of contemporary phenomena in the field of spiritual, social and material culture, and their transformation. The character of the publication is both international and interdisciplinary, covering the themes from the field of ethnology, history, archaeology, linguistics, religious studies, history of literature and philosophy. It also brings new interpretations of historical sources and presents new discoveries, material, and field research.



More about it see: <https://ojs.zrc-sazu.si/sms/>

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## Recent publications by Prof. Julian Goodare and colleagues

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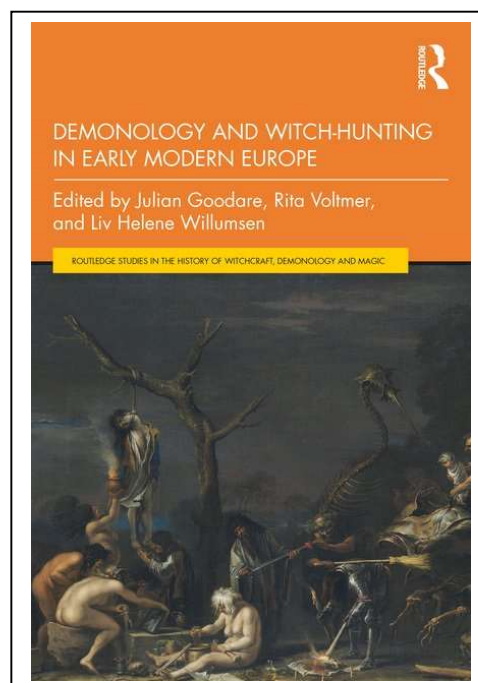
[J.Goodare@ed.ac.uk](mailto:J.Goodare@ed.ac.uk)

**Julian Goodare, Rita Voltmer and Liv Helene Willumsen (eds.), *Demonology and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Europe*. London: Routledge, 2020.**

<https://www.routledge.com/Demonology-and-Witch-Hunting-in-Early-Modern-Europe/Goodare-Voltmer-Willumsen/p/book/9780367440527>

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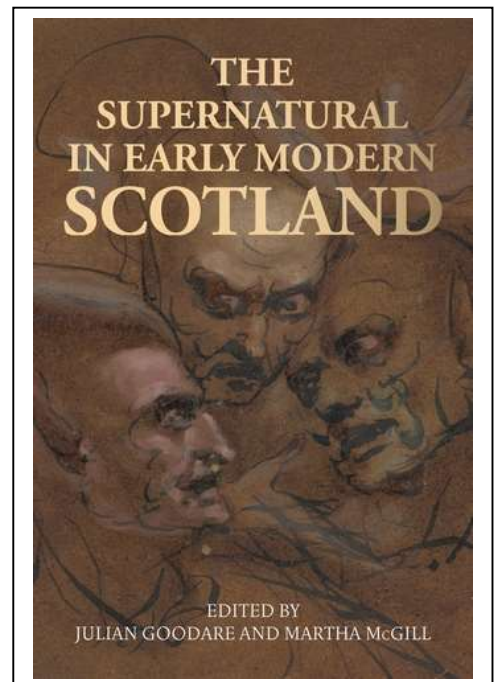


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**Julian Goodare and Martha McGill (eds.), The Supernatural in Early Modern Scotland. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020. (Will be published in December)**

<https://manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk/9781526134424/>

- 1 Exploring the supernatural in early modern Scotland - Julian Goodare and Martha McGill
  - 2 The elrich poems: the supernatural and the textual - Janet Hadley Williams
  - 3 Emotional relationships with spirit-guides in early modern Scotland - Julian Goodare
  - 4 Experiencing the invisible polity: trance in early modern Scotland - Georgie Blears
  - 5 The ninety-nine dancers of Moaness: Orkney women between the visible and invisible - Liv Helene Willumsen
  - 6 Angels in early modern Scotland - Martha McGill
  - 7 Scottish political prophecies and the crowns of Britain, 1500-1840 - Michael B. Riordan
  - 8 Astrology and supernatural power in early modern Scotland - Jane Ridder-Patrick
  - 9 Fallen spirits and divine grace: sermons and the supernatural in post-Reformation Scotland - Michelle D. Brock
  - 10 The uses of providence in early modern Scotland - Martha McGill and Alasdair Raffe
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Two volume monograph by Prof. Mathias Guenther “Human-Animal Relationships in San and Hunter-Gatherer Cosmology”

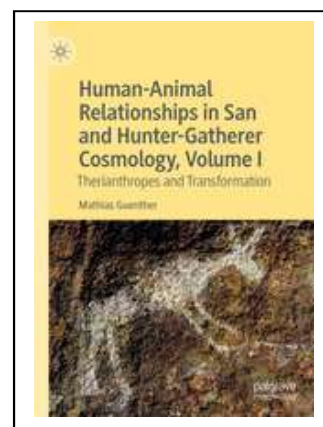
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[Mathiasg8@gmail.com](mailto:Mathiasg8@gmail.com)

<https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9783030211813#aboutBook>

Exploring a hitherto unexamined aspect of San cosmology, Mathias Guenther’s two volumes on human-animal relations in San cosmology link “new Animism” with Khoisan Studies, providing valuable insights for Khoisan Studies and San culture, but also for anthropological theory, relational ontology, folklorists, historians, literary critics and art historians.

In Volume I, therianthropes and transformations, two manifestations of ontological mutability that are conceptually and phenomenologically linked, are contextualized in broader San myth. Guenther explores the pervasiveness of human-animal hybridity and transformation in San expressive culture (myth, stories and storytelling, ludic dancing and art, ancestral rock art and contemporary easel art), ritual (trance dance curing, female and male rites of passage) and hunting. Transformation is shown to be experienced by humans, particularly via rituals and dancing that evoke animal identity mergers, but also by hunters who may engage with their prey animals in terms of sympathy and inter-subjectivity, particularly through the use of “hunting medicines.”



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A monograph by Dr Judit Kis-Halas, University of Ljubljana

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Judit Kis-Halas

*Boszorkányok, gyógyítók és a Gyűdi Szűz Mária. Az orvoslás piaca az újkori Dél-Dunántúlon*  
[Witches, Healers and the Virgin Mary of Gyűd: the medical landscape of 18<sup>th</sup> century South Western Hungary]. Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2020. 336p., 24 ill.

ISBN 978-903-456-071-5

ISSN 2416-0318

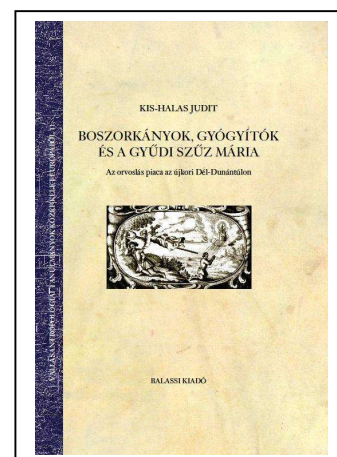
The volume presents the medical landscape of the south Transdanubian region of Hungary in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and it focuses on the catchment area of a contemporary regional Marian shrine (Gyűd). The author adopts the patients' and the healers' perspectives and combines the approaches of medical anthropology, historical folkloristics and the history of mentalities.

The vivid spectrum of contemporary medical universe is illustrated by the metaphor of the marketplace, as an imaginary, yet often absolutely real site, where the various therapies and remedies appeared and the different healers of diverse origins and knowledge contested each other. Apart from the elaborate description of practitioners ranging from lay people to clerics, from legitimate physicians to charlatans, from folk healers to learned medical generalists and specialists, a systemic classification of symptoms and illnesses, as well as a typology of causation and the cures of the diseases are provided.

The analysis brings the patients' and the healers' experiences on the fore, which can be best seen through the illness narratives. Therefore, it draws on the parallel examination of the bewitchment-narratives extracted from the testimonies of the 18<sup>th</sup> century witch-trials and contemporary miracle stories from the recently explored miracle books of the Gyűd shrine. In this respect the author follows not only the directions of Hungarian witchcraft historiography, but she relies on the achievements of both the Hungarian and the international research of medieval miracle accounts and considers the latest outcomes of Hungarian research of baroque Marian devotion.

An introduction discussing the theoretical frames, methodology and describing the extended source material is followed by two similarly patterned sections each giving a systematic overview on the fields of lay, ecclesiastic and learned healing.

However, in both sections the dynamic co-existence of these medicinal fields are put in the focus, as their interferences within the local communities are highlighted by case studies based on the trial records and the miracle collections. These "thick descriptions" shed light on the changing attitudes towards healing and medicine in macrosocial crisis situations, such as plague epidemics, witch-hunts and witch-panics, or the miraculous events surrounding the birth of Mary's new cult site at Gyűd, furthermore, in the times of individual or microsocial crises, such as serious accidents and disasters threatening human life.



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### **Research on magical and religious healing in Hungary**

### **Theoretical frames**

Medical pluralism

Disease aetiologies and healing strategies

Illness narratives

### **Illness and healing in the witch trials**

*Bewitchment stories as illness narratives*

*From stroke to turning into a horse: the modes of bewitchment*

Bewitching from the distance: an illness sent

Stroke by ill wind, caught by whirlwind

Shot by a witch: illness by projection

The witch's touch

Bones extracted and hearts cut out

Turned into a horse and ridden by witches

'The fair women's bowl'

*The symptoms of bewitchment: the patient's experience*

Fever

Lameness, palsy, crippling

Languor, loss of senses

Swelling

Skin lesions

Pain

Fear, dread, madness

*Dangerous situations at the rites of passage*

Birth

Marriage

Death

*The moral and natural aspects of disease aetiology*

God's punishment

Natural causes

*Therapies and medicaments*

Identifying the witch

Bathing and washing

Massaging and rubbing

Smoking

Curative foods and drinks

Phlebotomy and cupping

Dream healing, incubation

Pilgrimage

Benediction, exorcism

*Healers*

Wise men and women, herbalists, javas, táltos and midwives

Barbers and surgeons

Priests, friars, pilgrims

Itinerant healers, charlatans

God, the almighty doctor

*Medical landscape in the witch trials*

### **Illness and healing in the miracle accounts**

*The emergence of the Marian shrine in Gyűd*

*Miracle cures at Gyűd*

The structure of the miracle narratives

Communicating with the saint

Invocation

Vow / offering

Gratitude

Recovery

*Symptoms and illnesses in the miracle collections*

Dolor

Dolor / tumor gutturis



Febris / calor	Benediction and exorcism
Contractus / claudus / contracture	Conversion
Vulnus / laesa, ulcus, apostema,	Dream healing, incubation
cancrena, puncturis	Measuring
Caecus / dolor oculorum	Walking around the church or the
Surdus, mutus	altar
Haemorrhage	Pilgrimage and procession
Phrenesis, morbus caducus,	<i>The actors of miraculous healing</i>
apoplexia	The Virgin Mary
Hydrospisi	Priests and friars
Hectica	Doctors, surgeons, barbers,
Calculus	apothecaries
Contagio morbo, lepra, pestis	Midwives
Circumsessio, obsession	Lay healers
<i>Dangerous situations at the rites of</i>	<b>The medical universe of the miracle</b>
<i>passage</i>	<b>stories</b>
Birth	<b>Medical landscapes</b>
Death	<b>Sources</b>
<i>Treatments and medicaments: liturgical</i>	Manuscripts
<i>means, lay healing and learned medicine</i>	Printed sources
Invocation	List of abbreviations of the printed
Fomentation, poultices	sources
Bathing and washing	<b>Bibliography</b>
Surgery	<b>Charts</b>
Herbs	<b>Tables</b>

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Two articles by Dr Jelka Vince Pallua, Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Zagreb

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**Making Gifts to Water in a Ritual-Mythological Interpretation: An Example of Croatian-Slovenian Professional Cooperation, *Studia Ethnologica Croatia*, Vol 31.**

URI

<https://hrcak.srce.hr/230980>

<https://doi.org/10.17234/SEC.31.1>

The first part of the article focuses on the collaboration on the topic of symbolism of and the words for daffodils between the Croatian scholar Dr Jelka Radauš Ribarić and her Slovenian colleague and friend Dr Milko Matičetov. Based on their correspondence from 1977, the paper examines their generationally conditioned, similar ethnological reflections. In the main body of the paper, titled "The new interpretation", the author develops a new ritual-mythological interpretation of customary spring-time practices involving daffodils, a water spring and a lime tree in the village of Vodice in northern Istria, Croatia. The former St. George's day's procession, preserved there in the form of children's folklore by the presentation of daffodils to the spring and to a bogič/god on the lime tree is interpreted as a reflection or a relic of a (proto)Slavic, pre-Christian rite. The names for daffodils – jurjevke and Marijine palčke/Maričice – are explained within the same interpretative context.

### **What Can the Mythical Frog Tell Us? The symbolism and role of the frog in history and modernity**

In the special issue of BNN panel „Human-Animal Relationships in Belief Narratives“. Folklore. Electronic Journal of Folklore. Vol. 77

<http://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol77/>

Abstract: Frogs have always been related to the mythical origin of life. In mythologies throughout the world, frogs were associated with the primeval waters out of which life arose. The author looks at the rich symbolic language of this amphibian, with a special focus on its clear female symbolism – fertility, fecundity, female genitals, abundance, regeneration, renewal of life, pregnancy, eroticism, wetness/life, etc., as well as divine symbolism as revealed in the Polish and Croatian words for frog – boginka and bogiña (goddess). The author identifies and discusses past and contemporary imagery, legends, narratives, and fairy-tales, and the folkloristic, mythical, ethnological, archaeological, and linguistic aspects of frogs and their symbolism. The folkloristic triplet toads – babas – mushrooms identified during the research is presented as additional proof of the analogous linguistic triplet with bau or bo roots in some European languages. All three of the items, with the aspect of wetness as a precondition for fertility, as shown in the paper, are symbols of female sexual organs, fertility, and renewal. In the end, the author points to the longevity of the image of the frog presented next to the Virgin Mary in an interesting syncretism of the pre-Christian and Christian worlds.

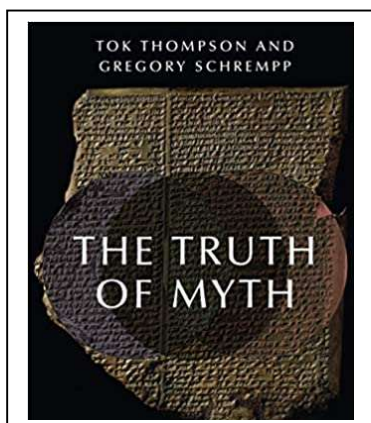
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Recent publications of Prof. Tok Thompson, University of Southern California, a call for book manuscripts

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The Truth of Myth: World Mythology in Theory and Everyday Life (co-authored with Gregory Schrempp). 2020. Oxford University Press



[https://www.amazon.com/Truth-Myth-Mythology-Theory-Everyday-dp-0190222808/dp/0190222808/ref=mt\\_other?\\_encoding=UTF8](https://www.amazon.com/Truth-Myth-Mythology-Theory-Everyday-dp-0190222808/dp/0190222808/ref=mt_other?_encoding=UTF8)

Review by Krešimir Vuković, Review Editor, The Journal of Indo-European Studies. "This is an excellent book on the study of mythology and provides a lot of fresh impetus for comparative mythology in a wider sense." The Journal of Indo-European Studies. Volume 48, Number 3 & 4, Fall/Winter 2020. Reviews pp 1-7.

NB! The Truth of Myth is meant as the theoretical center for the ongoing series on world mythology, a call for contribution is still ongoing "Tok Thompson announces a general scholarly call for expressions of interest in book-length case studies in mythology, to be published by Oxford University Press' new series *World Mythology in Theory and Everyday Life*. We seek to expand our series with case studies of mythology, both contemporary and ancient. Scholars interested in contributing a volume are urged to contact the editor directly, Tok Thompson, at [tokthompson@gmail.com](mailto:tokthompson@gmail.com). "

Series Abstract: *World Mythology in Theory and Everyday Life*

This series presents an innovative and accessible overview of the world's mythological traditions. The inaugural volume provides a theoretical introduction to the study of myth, while the individual case studies from throughout time and around the world help guide the reader through the wondrous complexity and diversity of myths, and their widespread influences in human cultures, societies, and everyday lives.

Posthuman Folklore. 2019. University of Mississippi Press

Review by Prof. Timothy Tangherlini (UC Berkeley) in the Journal of Folklore Research, calls it “wonderfully provocative” and concludes that the work “should find a place on even the most crowded bookshelf.” <https://jfr.sitehost.iu.edu/review.php?id=2509>

[https://www.amazon.com/Posthuman-Folklore-Tok-Thompson-dp%201496825098/dp/1496825098/ref=mt\\_other?encoding=UTF8](https://www.amazon.com/Posthuman-Folklore-Tok-Thompson-dp%201496825098/dp/1496825098/ref=mt_other?encoding=UTF8)



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A new website of Commission for folkloristics of the International Committee of Slavists has been established

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A new website of the Commission for folkloristics of the International Committee of Slavists has been recently established – you can find information in English on: <http://slavika.org/folklor/english>

On the site one can find the composition of the Commission on Folklore, a chronological list of stages in the formation of commissions of the International Committee of Slavists, pages related to the history of the Commission, short biographies of researchers of Slavic folklore, books, articles, and bibliographies. The bibliography of folklore papers presented at the congresses held from 1929 to 2013 contains information about articles published by American authors in collections submitted by the American delegation (Roman Jakobson, Svatava Pírková-Jakobson, William E. Harkins, Jan Louis *Perkowski*, James Bailey, G. Koolemans Beynen, Maurice Friedberg, Ewa Thompson, Robert Rothstein, Jeanmarie Rouhier-Willoughby) and researchers from Western European countries. The site also contains information about projects initiated by the Commission on folklore research – the cycle "Folklore and folkloric names of genres of Slavic oral narration" (fall of 2020). Web directories with links to institutions, departments, and journals allow to search for important information about Slavic folklore and Slavists specializing in folklore studies.

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## FB and Instagram page dedicated to the indigenous communities in North East India

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Washidi is a page launched by Talilula on Instagram and Facebook, that is dedicated to all things folklore related. The page endeavours to bring digital capsules of folklore through short narratives, visuals and sounds sourced from different folkloric contexts. Although the special focus of the page is on indigenous communities from Northeast India, it is not in any way limited to this specific geographical/cultural context. Original images/submissions are accepted and curated from all over.



As our world is becoming more reliant on digital forms, Washidi is an attempt to engage with people through mediums that they are most comfortable with, and facilitate an easy and entertaining interface to learn about their own as well as different cultures.

The name Washidi is a culturally loaded word in the Ao Naga language. It is the verb form of 'Washi' which stands for the ululating tribal yells/cries made in unison by men/women during dances, funerals, and other ritual performances and ceremonies of the Ao Naga community. So Washidi means - "let us vocalise the washi yell together." It is a visceral expression of a myriad range of human emotions from joy, anger to sadness.