

**University of Tartu**

**6th Nordic-Celtic-Baltic Folklore Symposium**

# **Supernatural Places**

**June 4–7, 2012 Tartu, Estonia**

**Abstracts**

**Tartu 2012**

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# Program

## Monday 04.06.2012

14.00–18.45 Registration (Lobby of the University of Tartu main building, Ülikooli 18)

17.00–18.30 Opening of the symposium and keynote lecture (Assembly Hall of the University of Tartu main building, Ülikooli 18)

**Bengt af Klintberg** (University of Stockholm): Wonders of Midsummer's Night: The Magical Bracken

19.00–21.00 Reception (History Museum of University of Tartu, Toome Hill, Lossi 25)

## Tuesday 05.06.2012

Plenary lectures will take place in the Philosophicum (Jakobi 2–226, round auditorium), parallel sessions in Ülikooli 16–212, Ülikooli 16–214 (second floor) and in Ülikooli 17–305 (third floor).

9.00–10.30 Plenary lectures (Jakobi 2–226)

**Ergo-Hart Västriik** (University of Tartu): Place-lore as a Field of Study within Estonian Folkloristics: Sacred and Supernatural Places

**Lina Būgienė** (Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore): Narrative Expression of Cultural Landscape: from Supernatural Place Legends to Everyday Talk

10.30–11.00 Coffee/tea

11.00–12.30 Plenary lectures (Jakobi 2–226)

**John Lindow** (University of California, Berkeley): Legends of the Churchyard

**Terry Gunnell** (University of Iceland): The Power in the Place: Icelandic Legends Concerning ‘Power Spots’ in a Comparative Context

12.30–14.00 Lunch

14.00–16.00 Parallel sessions

Ülikooli 17–305. Chair: Jonathan Roper

**Frog** (University of Helsinki): When Thunder Is Not Thunder: Changing Intersections of Narrative and Conceptual Models

**Jon Mackley** (University of Northampton): Wayland: Smith of the Gods

**Mari Purola** (University of Eastern Finland): The Devil’s Places in Finnish Folk Narratives

**Alevtina Solovyova** (Russian State University for the Humanities): Space in Contemporary Mongolian Demonology

Ülikooli 16–212. Chair: Ulrich Marzolph

**Ranibala Khumukcham** (University of Manipur): Supernatural Love Motifs in the Meitei Legends of Manipur

**Marie Alohalani Brown** (University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa): Here Be Dragons: Supernatural Encounters with Mo‘o Deities in Legendary Hawai‘i

**Hicran Karataş** (University of Hacettepe): The Devil in Old Turkish Religious Life

**Nina Vlaskina** (Russian Academy of Sciences, Southern Scientific Centre): Notions of Barrows in the Language and Culture of the Don Cossacks

Ülikooli 16–214. Chair: Timothy Tangherlini

**Annikki Kaivola-Bregenhøj** (University of Turku): The Role of Place, Time and Actors in Dream Narratives

**Kirsi Hänninen** (University of Turku): Representations of Ordinary and Supernatural Realms in UFO Narratives

**Kristel Kivari** (University of Tartu): Taming the Supernatural, Exciting the Natural: Activities of Dowsers' Associations

**Tiina Sepp** (University of Tartu): Glastonbury Abbey: Beliefs and Legends

16.00–16.45      Coffee/tea

16.45–18.45      Parallel sessions

Ülikooli 17–305. Chair: Daniel Sävborg

**Kendra Willson** (University of California, LA): Localisation in Saga Dreams and Dreaming Scenes

**Fjodor Uspenskij** (Russian Academy of Science): Comments on Snorri's Use of Ásgarðr, Miðgarðr and Útgarðr in the *Edda* and *Ynglingasaga*

**Mart Kuldkepp** (University of Tartu): Travel and Holy Islands in *Eireks Saga Viðförla* and *Eiríks Saga Rauða*

Ülikooli 16–212. Chair: Diarmuid Ó Giolláin

**Aarne Ruben** (Tallinn University): Counterculture in Medieval and Early Modern Livonia and Ösel

**Daria Penskaya** (Russian State University for the Humanities): Paradise and the Land of the Blessed in Monastic Literature: Irish and Byzantine Traditions

**Gülperi Mezkit** (University of Hacettepe): Some Findings on the Effect of the Birth Practices of the Wolf-Mother and Wolf Father, Which are Divine in Turkish Culture, in Anatolian Traditions

**Guinevere Barlow** (University of Edinburgh): Alexander Carmichael and the Hebridean Supernatural Landscape

Ülikooli 16–214. Chair: Ergo-Hart Västrik

**Reet Hiimäe** (Estonian Literary Museum): The Making of a Supernatural Place: The Example of the Kassinurme Hills

**Aldis Pūtelis** (University of Latvia): Where is the Border Between Research and Legend? The Sacred Romow in the Scholarly Tradition

**Leszek Słupecki** (Rzeszow University): How and Why the Benedictine Monks of the Holy Cross Lysiec Monastery Create a Legend about a Pagan Sanctuary?

**Jaana Kouri** (University of Turku): Narrated Environment

19.00–20.00 City excursion

### **Wednesday 06.06.2012**

9.00–10.30 Plenary lectures (Jakobi 2–226)

**Timothy Tangherlini** (University of California, LA): Supernatural Sitings: Geo-semantic Visualization of Supernatural Occurrences in a Large Folklore Corpus

**Jonathan Roper** (University of Tartu): On Folk Scepticism

10.30–11.15 Coffee/tea

11.15–13.15 Parallel sessions

Ülikooli 17–305. Chair: David Hopkin

**Courtney Burrell** (University of Victoria): Álfar and the Early Icelandic Settlers

**William Pooley** (University of Oxford): Witches, Werewolves, and Fairies in the Nineteenth-Century Landes de Gascogne

**Tora Wall** (The Nordic Museum): Taken into the Mountain

**John Shaw** (University of Edinburgh): Rev Robert Kirk's *The Secret Commonwealth* and Fairy Legends in the Scottish Highlands

Ülikooli 16–212. Chair: Lina Būgienė

**Margaret Lyngdoh** (University of Tartu): The Eden Cottage Haunting and An Interview with a Deity: A Contextual Approach to Family Narratives

**Alexandra Arkhipova** (Russian State University for the Humanities): Between Temple and Museum: New Types of Sacred Places in Mongolia, Central Asia and South Siberia

**Valentina Punzi** (L'Orientale University of Naples/Minzu University of China): Tibetan Sacred Mountains in the Amdo Region: Narration and Ritual at the Sino-Tibetan Border

**Ülo Valk** (University of Tartu): Alternative Place-Lores? Belief Narratives of Kāmākhyā Temple in Silghat, Assam

Ülikooli 16–214. Chair: Cristina Bacchilega

**Nada Kujundžić** (University of Zagreb/University of Turku): Generic Appropriations of Supernatural Places: Heaven and Hell in Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*

**Éilís Ní Dhuibhne Almqvist** (University College Dublin): Epiphanies, Transubstantiation, and Baking Cakes: The Relationship Between Oral Belief Legend and the Modern Literary Short Story

**Bārbala Simšone** (Zvaigzne ABC Publishers/Department for Latvian Language, Literature and Arts): Geography of the Imagination: Archetypal Landscape in Fantasy Genre Literature

13.15–14.45      Lunch

14.45–16.45 Parallel sessions

Ülikooli 17–305. Chair: Terry Gunnell

**Merrill Kaplan** (The Ohio State University): Bad Night at the Mill. Encounters with the Kvernknurr in Norwegian Legend

**Sandis Laime** (Archives of Latvian Folklore, University of Latvia): Place Valence Analysis: Example of F941.2 ‘Church Sinks Underground’

**Merili Metsvahi** (University of Tartu): Estonian Legends about Marriage Between Siblings and its Disastrous Outcome

**Eva Þórdís Ebenezersdóttir** (University of Iceland): Limping in Two Worlds: Disabled People in Icelandic Legend Tradition

Ülikooli 16–212. Chair: Irma-Riitta Järvinen

**Madis Arukask** (University of Tartu): In Between Human and Wilderness: Herder Magic in Vepsian and North Russian Tales

**Sanita Reinsons** (Archives of Latvian Folklore, University of Latvia): Landscapes of Getting Lost

**Karina Lukin** (University of Helsinki): “Today, There is a Chapel There”: Tenacity of Sacrality in Nenets Narration

**Valeria Kolosova** (Institute for Language studies, St. Petersburg): Etiological Legends about Plants

Ülikooli 16–214. Chair: Ülo Valk

**Ray Cashman** (The Ohio State University): Supernatural Encounters and Sense of Place in County Donegal, Ireland

**Pasi Enges** (University of Turku): Surrounded by the Supernatural: Topographic Approach to Sámi Folk Belief

**Paul Coddell** (University of Hertfordshire): “There are no ghosts at Auschwitz”

**Giedrė Šukytė** (Šiauliai University): The Horse in Supernatural Places: From Seeing Ghosts to the Image of Hidden Treasure



17.30–20.30      Excursions 1) to the Estonian Agricultural Museum, or  
2) on the riverboat Pegasus (for the registered participants)

### **Thursday 07.06.2012**

9.00–10.30      Plenary lectures (Jakobi 2–226)

**Daniel Sävborg** (University of Tartu): The Icelander and the  
Trolls: The Importance of Place

**Irma-Riitta Järvinen** (Finnish Literature Society): A Folkloristic  
Look at Saints' Lore

10.30–11.15      Coffee/tea

11.15–13.15      Parallel sessions

Ülikooli 17–305. Chair: John Lindow

**James Leary** (University of Wisconsin): Exile, Gender, Work, and  
Death: The Legends of 'Whitewater Ole' Horne

**Ave Tupits** (Estonian Literary Museum): "He Comes up from the  
Cellar[stairs], Sighs at the Door and Disappears Somewhere on the  
Stage." About the Supernatural in Theatre

**Júliana Þóra Magnúsdóttir** (University of Iceland): The Mystical  
World and the Home Yard: Domestic Spaces and Women's Legend  
Traditions in 20th Century Iceland

**Ingrida Šlepavičiūtė** (Vytautas Magnus University): The  
Supernatural in Urban Spaces: Contemporary Legends

Ülikooli 16–212. Chair: Merili Metsvahi

**Hasso Krull** (Tallinn University): Trickster's Footprints

**Bela Mosia** (Shota Meskhia State Teaching University of Zugdidi):  
The Function of Symbols of Astral Beings in Legends According to  
Georgian Materials

**Dinesh Baishya** (University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya): Magic and Witchcraft in Mayong, Assam, India

FILM on The Magic and Witchcrafts of Assam by Dinesh Baishya

Ülikooli 16–214. Chair: Bengt af Klintberg

**Helen Bome** (Tallinn University): Significant Stones in Southeast Estonia: At the Intersection of Folk Custom and Church Ritual

**Helen Frisby** (University of the West of England): Purgatory and English Folk Funerary Custom, c. 1170–1920

**Kaarina Koski** (University of Helsinki): Supernatural Aspects of the Sacredness of Lutheran Church Buildings: Belief Legends and Ecclesiastical Law

**Adina Hulubas** (Romanian Academy, Iasi Branch): Romanian Haunted Places – Unbaptised Buried Infants (Moroi)

13.15–14.45      Lunch

14.45–16.15      Plenary lectures (Jakobi 2–226)

**David Hopkin** (University of Oxford): Legends – the French Peasants' History of Feudalism

**Diarmuid Ó Giolláin** (University of Notre Dame): People, Nation and 'Combative Literatures': Baltic, Celtic and Nordic Configurations of Folklore

16.15–              Closing of the symposium

## **Preface**

In 1988 the Department of Irish Folklore, University College, Dublin, hosted a symposium entitled “The Supernatural in Irish and Scottish Migratory Legends”. Other symposia then followed: in Galway (1991), Copenhagen (1993), Dublin (1996) and Reykjavik (2005), and now, for the first time, the symposium is being held on the eastern side of the Baltic Sea. With each symposium, the international scope has expanded and the number of participants has increased. The local and migratory legends of northern Europe have remained the major topic of the meetings, providing common ground for discussions about the content, form, performance, history and theories of folk narratives and their relationship to social realities.

The 6th Nordic-Celtic-Baltic folklore symposium returns to the topic of the supernatural in legends, which was also discussed in the first meetings. The symposium is also dedicated to the relationship between tradition communities and their environments, expressed in folklore. The symposium explores the supernatural dimensions of natural places in the cultural landscape and in the wilderness as they are narrated and manifested in legends and other genres. The supernaturalisation of places – holy groves, churches, haunted houses, cemeteries, grave mounds, hills, lakes, locations of hidden treasures and other tradition dominants of place-lore – is studied as a narrative practice with social impacts, shaping the everyday life and behaviour patterns of tradition bearers. The symposium also studies the localisation of legend plots in a local environment, blending legends with social realities and other strategies for enchanting the world through belief narratives. The supernatural also opens narrative space to the realms of fantasy and imagination. Representations of heaven, hell, lands of the dead and other supernatural worlds are a vital part of

several oral and literary genres; this too is addressed at the symposium.

The following sub-topics are also under discussion: the history of legend research; the classification of legends; legend and everyday life; the pragmatics of legends and other genres of belief; legends and other place-lore; legends in sagas and other ancient sources; fantasy realms between belief and fiction; legends and theorising the supernatural.

The “Supernatural Places” symposium has been organised by the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore, the Department of Scandinavian Studies, the University of Tartu, and the Tartu NEFA Group in cooperation with the Centre of Excellence in Cultural Theory. Holding the symposium in Tartu is possible thanks to the support of the following organisations and institutions: the Cultural Endowment of Estonia, the Cultural Endowment of Tartu, the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, the Estonian Science Foundation, the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund, and the Royal Gustav Adolf Academy. We are greatly indebted to them for their valuable support.

Daniel Sävborg  
Professor of Scandinavian Studies, University of Tartu

Ülo Valk  
Professor of Estonian and Comparative Folklore, University of Tartu

## **Abstracts of Plenary Sessions**

### **Narrative Expression of Cultural Landscape: From Supernatural Place Legends to Everyday Talk**

Lina Būgienė

Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore

People have always been aware of peculiarities of the surrounding landscape, and have been anxious to ascribe meaning to the space that they inhabited. Certain outstanding natural or cultural objects called for explanation of their peculiar shape, outline, size, orientation, appearance, function, etc., presenting challenges to people's imagination and encouraging them to tell stories. Such place-related narratives form quite a massive corpus of Lithuanian folklore, rather diverse in terms of genre but nevertheless constructed according to certain general principles. Among such principles is personalisation of landscape, i.e. in a way 'taming' nature, or by means of narrative practices converting it to a coherent (personalised) space, inhabited by gods, supernatural beings, and cultural heroes. Hence such place names (together with the accompanying stories) as Devil's/Laume's Eye, Devil's Forehead, Devil's Tears, God's Foot, God's/Devil's/Laume's Table, God's/Sun's/Mary's/Witch's/Queen's/Devil's Chair, Laume's/Devil's Sauna, etc. Nevertheless diachronically, such place names and the related narratives exhibit certain development: mythical beings or deities tend to be replaced by historical personalities, although as a rule preserving the typical structure and story-line (thus, mounds once talked about as made by giants, become allegedly made by Napoleon's army or the Swedes, and such outstanding objects as Napoleon's Table appear along with former 'tables' and 'chairs' owned by various mythical beings). Changes in the surrounding landscape also find their expression in narratives, resulting in folk legends about the felling of sacred trees or the blowing up of huge stones, etc. and the consequences of such

actions. One important aspect to talk about in this regard, in relation to these narratives and the general public discourse, particularly in its contemporary manifestation, is the ecological consciousness perceiving the preservation of the surrounding environment as a significant common value.

## **The Power in the Place: Icelandic Legends Concerning ‘Power Spots’ in a Comparative Context**

Terry Gunnell  
University of Iceland

Folk legends have an active role in giving character, history, mystery and danger to the landscape that we inhabit. They also provide us with a moral map of how we should behave within this landscape. In this lecture, I mean to take the numerous Icelandic legends dealing with *álagablettir* (lit. cursed, or enchanted sites), what we might term ‘power spots’, legends which even today have an active role in keeping people away from certain places (which must remain untouched by human hand), and are often used to explain family misfortunes. Naturally, similar sites exist all over the Nordic countries (especially related to certain ancient graves) and Scotland and Ireland (the raths, and goodman’s crofts), but here they are often related to early archaeological sites. Iceland, however, was only settled in 870. What might be the background of the sites and legends there?

## Legends – the French Peasants' History of Feudalism

David Hopkin  
University of Oxford

Scholarly interest in oral traditions in France began, albeit tentatively, with the Napoleonic *Académie Celtique* (1804–1813). From time to time both the French revolutionary and imperial regimes played with the idea that the French people, the sovereign nation from which the state now claimed its legitimacy, was a Romano-Celtic population which had been enserfed by the invading Germanic Franks. The peasantry or 3rd Estate were the true French: the nobility were an ethnic other and the feudal or seigneurial regime was a foreign import. As the written history of the French state was the history of the Franks (and their descendants – France's kings and nobles), post-revolutionary France required a new history, a people's history of their own millennia-long struggle to free themselves of foreign overlordship. This vision of the country's past never became dominant, but one can find echoes of it in the works of the great romantic historian, Jules Michelet, who argued that what France required was a history from the heart of the people, a history of the people's own imagining (*le peuple* having both a social and a national designation). And the only place that such a history could be found was in the tales told by the people, the oral tradition of the French peasantry.

Much of the effort expended on collecting oral culture in France during the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century was aimed at fulfilling Michelet's demand. However, most collectors returned disappointed from their excursions among the peasantry: "no historic tradition has remained in peasants' memory" reported George Sand from Berry; other folklorists found a little more evidence of historical interests, but not historical veracity; and even when one did obtain stories concerning the confrontation between the nobility and the peasantry, too often they recorded the people's pusillanimity, not its heroism.

This supposed absence, however, contrasts with the view put forward by more recent investigations of the nineteenth-century peasantry.



Historians such as Peter Jones have argued that peasants' political behaviour continued to be dominated by 'atavisms' throughout most of the nineteenth century. Foremost among these atavisms were the memory of seigneurialism and the fear of its return. Although 'peasant atavism' is a derogatory term, and meant to convey that the peasantry were behaving in non-rational ways, it necessarily implies that some version of the history of seigneurialism was alive and well in the stories that one generation of peasants told the next.

The aim of this paper is to reconsider whether the historical legends collected by nineteenth-century folklorists might, after all, provide the material for an alternative, previously hidden history of seigneurialism, a popular history formulated by the peasantry for the peasantry, and relevant to the peasantry; a history that resisted and undermined what have been termed "the historical meta-narratives constituted in the hegemonic centres of knowledge". Only such a history can make sense of the actions of the peasants who, between 1787 and 1794, brought the feudal regime to an end.

## **A Folkloristic Look at Saints' Lore**

Irma- Riitta Järvinen  
Finnish Literature Society

A folkloristic look at traditions and narratives of Christian saints (Catholic/Orthodox) is clearly different from the viewpoints of historians and church historians. A folklorist would be interested in the way the hagiographic texts and the teaching of the church were adapted, transformed and interpreted in vernacular tradition. How did people make the saints useful for themselves, and in what ways was their acceptance promoted by the church? There are many examples of localisation and domestication of saints – e.g. marks left by holy people on the landscape. What was the relation of the veneration of saints to the respect of spirits in ethnic religion? In this context, the ambiguous concept of belief must also be discussed.

There are several methodologically difficult questions when dealing with the materials of saints' lore – to begin with, our folklore data in the archives derives from the 17th century at the earliest. Thus, we do not know much about earlier practices of vernacular saints' cults. In Sweden and in Finland, the veneration of Catholic saints was officially banned in the middle of the 16th century, but it was still practiced in some forms for centuries, whereas in, for example, Orthodox Karelia the veneration and cults of the holy were alive and strong until the first decades of the 20th century. In my paper, I shall deal with these questions presenting examples from Finnish, Karelian and Estonian saints' traditions.

## **Wonders of Midsummer's Night: The Magical Bracken**

Bengt af Klintberg  
University of Stockholm

There has been a widespread belief that bracken (fern) blooms and lets its seeds fall on Midsummer's night. Those who get hold of the flower or the seeds receive supernatural abilities, such as making themselves invisible or finding hidden treasure. This legend complex is spread all over Europe, and it is often combined with related traditions, especially legends about treasure digging, pacts with the Devil and finding a herb that opens all locks. These combined forms are, however, not the same all over the region.

## **Legends of the Churchyard**

John Lindow

University of California, Berkeley

The churchyard represented a particularly interesting space in older Nordic society. It was inside the church wall, but outside the walls of the church building. The walls of the church building marked off the sacral realm proper (thus the baptismal font was just inside the church door, and baptism and churching ceremonies began at the door). However, the secular only began beyond the church wall. The liminality of the church yard was thus obvious, even without the presence of graves. However, the graves, and especially the grave-stones with their specific namings of the dead, constituted a link between the dead and the living. The other link between the dead and the living existed and was perpetuated in legend tradition. In this paper I survey legends that are set in the churchyard and exemplify that link. To generalise, these legends fall into three broad categories: legends in which the living hear pronouncements from the dead; legends focusing on the unquiet dead; and – a smaller category – legends in which a human interacts with the remains of the dead. Each of these categories has ample relationship with other legends and belief traditions, as I will show.

## **People, Nation and ‘Combative Literatures’: Baltic, Celtic and Nordic Configurations of Folklore**

Diarmuid Ó Giolláin  
University of Notre Dame

I take the notion of ‘combative literatures’ from the literary historian, Pascale Casanova, who relates it both to the work of Fredrick Jameson and to Kafka’s remarks on the literatures of “small peoples”. For Casanova combative literatures suggests “literary spaces [that] are engaged... in struggles for recognition which are both political and literary”, and they may be contrasted with literatures that are “pacified or non-engaged”. When the nation was a project so too was a national literature, and folklore as a ‘national science’ could provide a constructed historical depth to the former, as a textualised *Volkspoesie* (or *rahvaluule*) provided the authentic basis for the latter. This is why folklore studies became a fully-fledged scholarly discipline in *emerging* European nation-states, and elsewhere remained in the shadow of the established disciplines, a topic I propose to explore in this paper with Baltic, ‘Celtic’ and Nordic examples.

## **On Folk Scepticism**

Jonathan Roper  
University of Tartu

The credulity of ‘the Folk’ (and the concomitant lack of credulity on the part of the researcher and his folk group) has been much emphasized in much of folklore studies. But the folk are not only credulous, nor are intellectuals only ever sceptical, thus this binary (folk belief – educated scepticism) should be expanded into a semiotic square consisting of folk belief, educated belief, folk scepticism and educated scepticism. In this talk, I shall focus on folk scepticism by, amongst other things, exploring anglophone ‘The Ghost who was not a Ghost’ tales (e.g. ATU 1676 and ATU 1791).

## The Icelander and the Trolls: The Importance of Place

Daniel Sävborg  
University of Tartu

The Icelandic family sagas are famous for their realistic depiction of down-to-earth events, of conflicts between peasants for social or materialistic reasons. Encounters with the Supernatural have no obvious place in the standard picture of these sagas. Anyway there are several cases where the heroes in family sagas encounter beings from the Otherworld. Traditionally this possible contradiction has been solved by putting the sagas with the greatest supernatural content into a separate group that has a basically fictitious character, allegedly later than the classical sagas where such motifs are absent or rare. Those encounters with the Supernatural, which in any case occur in the 'classical' sagas, are claimed to be depicted differently, more 'realistically', than those of the allegedly later and fictitious sagas. The standard solution has thus been a division of the sagas into two groups based on the dichotomies of early vs. late origin and historical vs. fictitious pretension.

My paper questions that picture on the basis of an analysis of the importance of *place* in an encounter with the Otherworld. Encounters with trolls in far away places are depicted fundamentally differently from encounters with trolls on Iceland, where they are connected with specific well-known places, for example caves, mountains or fishing grounds. Encounters of a more 'literary' character belong to stories about travelling abroad, sometimes with learned traits, sometimes with traits of Märchen-like pure entertainment. In addition, my paper examines a couple of encounters with the Supernatural that take place on specific locations on Iceland, arguing that these stories in various ways appear like folk legends (Sagen as opposed to Märchen, as described by Max Lüthi), and not at all as the fictitious stories of entertainment that they have been described as. How these stories are connected with specific places is examined in the paper in comparison with later recorded Scandinavian folk legends. Many of the allegedly late, 'post-classical', sagas appear to be parts of the

same saga tradition as the 'classical' ones, and as equally 'realistic' in their style and pretension, albeit they depict a vicinity with trolls in the mountains and fishing grounds. The standard view of saga literature is partly based on an anachronistic idea of credible/possible vs. non-credible/non-possible. Old Norse philology has previously suffered from a lack of knowledge of folkloristics, a deficiency which fortunately seems to have been undergoing improvement in the last decades.



## **Supernatural Sitings: Geo-semantic Visualization of Supernatural Occurrences in a Large Folklore Corpus**

Timothy Tangherlini  
University of California, Los Angeles

In this paper, we explore the use of different computational approaches for the visualization of topics derived from a corpus of approximately 30,000 legends and descriptions of everyday life from the Evald Tang Kristensen collection. Although early applications of mapping have focused largely on the places where expressive forms were collected, this approach relies predominantly on mapping the places mentioned in stories of the supernatural. By building several indices on top of the collection, making use not only of existing indices from the collection, but also making use of semantic indexing (via keywords) and topical indexing (using a probabilistic model known as Latent Dirichlet Allocation), we are able to compare the concentration of stories about particular types of supernatural events, or topics related to supernatural events. This first level approximation of the concentration of supernatural topics across the tradition area helps refine research questions. So, for example, a heat map of the topic ‘witch’, reveals a surprising concentration of stories in the area around Grinderslev, the site of the last witch burning in Denmark. What does this tell us about the persistence of the relationship between a place and supernatural events attributed to that place? Ultimately, these approaches allow us to wed the close reading approaches that focus on individual expressions, and the distant reading approaches that help us discern patterns in our target corpus. Taking a cue from Katy Börner’s influential work on research environments, we envision a ‘macroscope’ for the study of traditional culture.

## **Place-lore as a Field of Study within Estonian Folkloristics: Sacred and Supernatural Places**

Ergo-Hart Västriik  
University of Tartu

Research on place-lore as a distinct field of study within Estonian folkloristics was shaped in the second half of the 1990s. This was not an entirely new research interest within the scholarship as legends about certain important places in the landscape had been on the research agenda of the 19th century folklorists and, for example, a large scale collecting campaign dedicated to place legends was organised among school children in the 1930s. However, alongside the broadening process of the scope of folklore studies during the last decade of the 20th century, this research initiative was institutionalised. At that time a research group for place related folklore was established, in the Estonian Folklore Archives (EFA), which launched the first comprehensive research projects on the topic. Since then the research group has carried out extensive fieldwork, developed digital databases for archived texts and published a series of books on place related folklore (mainly anthologies dedicated to the place-lore of a particular region).

The EFA research group has defined its object of study as prose narratives about certain place names, places and objects (both natural and man-made) including legends, beliefs, custom accounts, historical tradition and memoirs, etc. Thus the field of place-lore covers a wide range of folklore genres and its scope reaches far beyond the discipline of folkloristics. The focus of research has shifted away from textually oriented philology to real places and to the aspect of spatiality in general bringing to the fore questions related to, for example, onomastics, geography, archaeology and religious studies. This has made place-lore, and research done by folklorists, an attractive field of interdisciplinary scholarship that is reflected in the co-operation endeavours of the EFA research group. On the other hand, recent shifts in the humanities have also included the human being's relationship with his/her environment in the research focus, a focus

that appeals to local communities and municipalities who have recognised the value of place-lore in the sphere of regional identity-building as well as in nature and heritage tourism.

The aim of this presentation is to discuss the formation of the above-mentioned research field since the 1990s in the context of Estonian and international folkloristics. My analysis, based on studies and publications by the EFA research group, intends to outline the main theoretical premises of this approach, its central research aspects and questions, as well as major influences and examples of other disciplines. More attention will be paid to studies on sacred sites and places that are labelled in folklore as supernatural.

## **Abstracts of Parallel Sessions**

### **Between Temple and Museum: New Types of Sacred Places in Mongolia, Central Asia and South Siberia**

Alexandra Arkhipova

Russian State University for the Humanities

I present three case studies (the results of my fieldwork in Mongolia, South Siberia and Kazakhstan), concerning semantic changes in the structure of everyday ritual life in the postcolonial space.

1. The Kazakhs had a sacred place (the eastern wall) in their traditional tents (urta), and orientation of the tent was highly important; however, the Kazakhs – migrants from China and Mongolia – were forced to live in former Ukrainian houses, so they needed to change the whole structure of their houses in their attempts to keep the idea of the sacred place.
2. I would also like to talk about how the traditional Mongolian shamans deal with the new situation without having traditional places and attributes, and how they organise their ritual space now.
3. The last case presents the Buryats, who are trying to ‘reconstruct’ traditional shamanic rituals, for example, using local museums (dedicated to the history of the region) as places to worship spirits during the night. Another ‘sacred place’ appeared in the Historical Museum in Ulan-Ude, after an exhibition of old shamanic costumes had been organised there.

## **In between Human and Wilderness: Herder Magic in Vepsian and North Russian Tales**

Madis Arukask  
University of Tartu

In northwest Russia (Baltic-Finnic – North Russian region) herding as a way of life can be handled as one of the quintessences of traditional culture up to the second half of the 20th century. In the customs and beliefs connected to herding the human and non-human space, its boundary, traditional role system, magical agreements, corresponding taboos and sexual connotations can be observed. In the middle of this complex the herdsman as a characteristic role is situated – from one hand as a marginal outcast (cf. Lotman & Uspenskii 1982), at the same time as extremely needful figure for acting between the human and non-human (forest), upholding the balance and securing this way welfare of community.

Basing first of all on Vepsian and Russian folklore recordings I am analysing in this paper the image of herdsman, traditional restrictions applied to him, and the circling ritual of cattle (Veps. *ümbardus*, Rus. *obhod*) performed by herdsman on the St George's day. In the folklore texts two opposite perspectives can be recognized. According to expectation the voice of lay members of community (mostly women) and the generalising and homogenising attitude is dominating in the stories. Some stories told by herdsman themselves discover the tradition's more stressful and magical nuances from inside. Here the *doctrinal* vs *imagistic* modes of religiosity (cf. Whitehouse 2004) can be observed, which is manifested also in the folkloric narrativeness deriving from the different role or/and experience of informants.

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## **Magic and Witchcraft in Mayong, Assam, India**

Dinesh Baishya

University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya

Mayong is a small village in Assam. This village has been famous for the culture of black magic and witchcraft practices since a very early date. Today in the state of Assam, and in the whole of the country of India, Mayong is known for black magic and witchcraft. Even today there are some people in Assam who chant mantras for supernatural activities. It is known that the magicians of Mayong have practiced extraordinary supernatural activities.

It is said that the magicians of Mayong could have converted a man into a sheep or a tiger by applying magic and mantras. They could transform the leaves of a tree into fishes and also hypnotise wild tiger. They could stop the oozing of blood and convert the bullets of a pistol or gun into water only by casting a magical spell. In addition, these magicians could even kill a man or an animal at will by using the power of their sorcery. They could also fly with the help of their mysterious application of magic.

Still today the older people of Mayong deeply believe in these incidents as real fact. The manuscripts of mantras, which are now preserved in the hands of the village of Mayong, also prove that these incidents were impossible to perform for the earlier seasoned magicians of Mayong. It is said that they had earned these powers through mystic methods of introspection and intuition and year's of meditation.

Among the powerful Tantra mantras practiced in earlier Mayong, the most important were:

- Kardikhya Mantra (used for killing someone)
- Uran Mantra (used for flying)
- Kalam Mantra (used for the act of destruction)

- Marcharam Mantra (used for the act of increasing physical strength)
- Pash Mantra (used for the act of destruction)
- Bewar Mantra (used for the act of destruction)
- Thumuric Ban (used for killing someone)
- Tekeli Ban Mantra (used for killing someone)
- Jui Nibarani Mantra (used to prevent fire)
- Atma Bandhani Mantra (used for the act of confining the soul)
- Bagh Bandha Mantra (used for the act of confining a wild tiger)
- Bish Ban Mantra (used for the act of causing pain)
- Mohini Mantra (used for the act of bewitching)
- Naran Loki Mantra (used to become invisible to steal something)
- Nidra Ban (used for the act of causing sleep)
- Shakti Shel Mantra (used to bring power to attack someone), etc.



## **Alexander Carmichael and the Hebridean Supernatural Landscape**

Guinevere Barlow  
University of Edinburgh

A major Celtic folklore archive, the papers of Alexander Carmichael (1832–1912) at Edinburgh University Library are the result of fifty years’ fieldwork throughout the Highlands. The collection is presently the subject of a major research initiative under the Carmichael Watson Project. With crucial field notebooks now transcribed, digitised, catalogued, and available online, funding from the Leverhulme Trust has allowed us to investigate Carmichael’s material collections, housed in the West Highland Museum, Fort William, and the National Museum of Scotland, and to examine his engagement, and that of his reciters, with the material world and the environment, particularly in the Outer Hebrides.

Alexander Carmichael’s practice of detailing recording context – date; place; name; age; and occupation of informant – allows us to trace his developing engagement with the cultural landscape around him. In practical terms, as an exciseman charged with preventing illicit whisky distilling, Carmichael needed to know the islands’ remotest corners. This, combined with growing interest in local historical and supernatural lore, generally linked with specific physical landmarks, and his rising profile as an ‘indigenous informant’ for Edinburgh antiquarians, led to his acquiring an unrivalled knowledge of the landscape and its various meanings for communities and individuals.

In this paper I shall examine how individuals engaged with specific physical sites endowed with supernatural power, as recorded in Carmichael’s notebooks, with particular attention paid to places connected with witchcraft and Evil Eye, fairies, water-horses, and hauntings. I shall focus upon the practices, beliefs, and objects associated with these sites, using additional folklore evidence recorded up to the present day. Finally, using biographical records, I shall speculate as to why Carmichael received these narratives from certain specific individuals.

## **Significant Stones in Southeast Estonia: At the Intersection of Folk Custom and Church Ritual**

Helen Bome  
Tallinn University

As a historian of medieval art, I have studied icons and stone carvings, as well as the role of artefacts in religious devotion and folk customs. In my presentation, I intend to look at the veneration of stones or objects made of stone – in their natural shape or modified by human hand – in the southeast Estonia of pre-modern times.

Three types of source, treated separately in previous research, will be viewed in comparison: sacrificial stones located near village chapels; legends of brides or wedding parties turned into stone, associated with human-shaped boulders; and medieval memorial crosses that have acquired an important place in later folk beliefs.

There seems to be a trait the objects or their accompanying beliefs share in common: they all mark the event of someone passing over to another stage in life or indeed, to the afterlife – be it a saint, a bride, or the deceased. In consequence, they become places where contact with the other world – the supernatural – is possible.

Analysis of how the transformation and transaction between man and stone has been described and explained, at times desired and other times feared, gives insight into the complicated co-existence of nature and man, natural and manmade, natural and supernatural, pre-Christian and Christian in folk culture.

## **Here Be Dragons: Supernatural Encounters with Mo‘o Deities in Legendary Hawai‘i**

Marie Alohalani Brown  
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Watery places, especially in isolated areas, are associated with the dreaded reptilian supernaturals known as mo‘o. These deities, predominately female, embody the life-giving and death-dealing properties of the element with which they are associated, water. In addition to inhabiting watery places, these shapeshifting elemental deities, who are also ancestral gods for some families, inscribe the geographical features of the Hawaiian land with their physical presence. Certain islets, mountain ridges, and valleys are indicated in legends as the remnants of slain mo‘o. Mo‘o possess the power of attraction. As fishpond guardians, they are prized for their ability to attract fish. As seductresses, they are feared for their ability to enthrall men, who once ensnared, rarely escape unscathed. When masquerading as humans, mo‘o are beauty incarnate, but in their reptilian form, their appearance is so horrifying that seasoned warriors cower in terror. This paper explores the relationship between the supernatural and place by offering a selection of Native Hawaiian legends about supernatural encounters between mo‘o and humans.

## Álfar and the Early-Icelandic Settlers

Courtney Burrell  
University of Victoria

Much has been written about Icelandic *huldufólk*, ‘the hidden people’, in folk belief and about their relation to Old Norse *álfar* (elves). *Álfar* are intriguing creatures themselves and seem to have a complex history since they change considerably through medieval Icelandic literature and differ from modern Icelandic elves. The period of Icelandic settlement and the years following it – as can be examined from evidence in medieval Icelandic texts – was when beliefs concerning *álfar* must have begun to change. One way that *álfar* were representative of early-Icelandic culture was through their connection to fertility – that is their association with nature – which is shown through references in Old Norse prose and poetry and through their relation to other fertility beings including the Norse god Freyr and the *landvættir* (land-spirits). *Álfar* appear to have been considered influential creatures in Iceland with regard to their connection to the landscape. It is possible that existing beliefs about *álfar* affected how the early Icelanders related to their new physical landscape – by helping to make it somewhat supernatural – but it is also possible that the landscape itself inspired the early-Icelandic settlers to attribute new characteristics to the *álfar*. Through examination of the possibilities of how the early Icelanders regarded these beings in relation to the landscape, an understanding of how people develop supernatural beliefs and how existing beliefs affect new conceptions of physical landscapes becomes available. My approach involves, in addition to my own ideas and conclusions, analysis of existing research and articles that discuss *álfar* and examination of references in Old Norse literature.

## **Supernatural Encounters and Sense of Place in County Donegal, Ireland**

Ray Cashman  
The Ohio State University

Stories of supernatural beings appearing in the familiar places of this world reveal a cosmology, teleology, and eschatology that shape the repertoire and inform the worldview of an Irish storyteller, Packy Jim McGrath.

Wraiths and banshees presage the deaths of individuals, unhappy souls dwell in the locations of their untimely ends, and fairies raid hearth and farm like dispossessed bandits, awaiting opportunity and soft targets. For Packy Jim, the syncretic foundational myth that begins to explain these dislocated and dislocating spirits is that of the original war in Heaven after which Lucifer and his rebel angels were cast into Hell. God also cast out the angels who took neither side, suspending them between Heaven and Hell on His new material creation, earth. These neutral angels, diminished in status but clutching residual powers, became what we know as the fairies. Suspended between Heaven and Hell, the fairies were doomed to share earth with humanity whom they envy. Unlike the fairies, humans are endowed with souls so that if they follow God's law on earth, at the death of their physical bodies their souls will ascend to Heaven to take the places vacated by the fallen angels. Once Heaven is filled to capacity with deserving spiritual beings, time and this material world will end and the Heavenly Kingdom will be complete. Until this time, harassing fairies evidence their resentment, having forfeited the opportunity we enjoy to transcend the material world and become one with God. Banshees and wraiths evidence the predestination of death, and exorcisable ghosts evidence the existence of our souls and consequences of transgressing divine order.

Located and dislocated, material and spiritual beings interact in this world, vivifying narratives that convey core beliefs and reveal a sense of place extending beyond immediate visible surroundings.

## **“There are no ghosts at Auschwitz”**

Paul Cowdell  
University of Hertfordshire

This comment was made by Ray, an informant in my recent field research into ghost belief in England. Given the scale of loss at such sites, he took the absence of ghost reports from sites of mass slaughter as evidence of the non-existence of ghosts. This argument was complicated by other responses. Some informants did interpret uncanny sensations at such sites, and other sites of Nazi atrocities, as caused by uneasy spirits. Other informants spoke of not seeing ghosts in places where sheer numbers of dead might suggest they would be present. The absence of reports that informed Ray’s non-belief made no difference to their underlying conviction of the probability of contact with the dead. Other informants reported ghost sensations from sites where large numbers of people had died as individuals, rather than as part of a collectivised catastrophe. These responses highlight the divergent thinking about ghosts, and the variety of ways in which informants discussed their understanding, expectations and experiences of the world of the dead. Using examples from my fieldwork I will examine here the negotiation of large scales of loss through different narrative genres, and point to their development. Folklorists have noted the tendency for local or personal tragedy to be expressed as legend and large-scale catastrophe to be affiliated to myth. To this can be added a specific use of metaphor that may reflect affinity at a distance with the victims of mass deaths. This can be seen in tendencies around disasters at sea, where ghostly presences shift from accident sites into more generalised hauntings. As myth is also the genre around which congregational religious practice is centred I will also suggest some possible distinctions between developing belief patterns at an institutional and personal level.

**Epiphanies, Transubstantiation, and Baking Cakes:  
The Relationship Between the Oral Belief Legend and the  
Modern Literary Short Story**

Éilís Ní Dhuibhne Almqvist  
University College Dublin

The traditional belief legend often focuses on the encounter of a human with a supernatural being. Realistic in mood and setting, the legend's essential territory is the borderland between the real and the numinous. The modern short story, as exemplified in the work of Anton Chekhov, James Joyce and many 20th century Irish and American fiction writers, "lifts the veil over reality to reveal a deeper truth". This paper examines parallels in form, substance, and technique between the traditional belief legend and the modern short story. It draws on examples of legends from Irish oral tradition and on short stories from 20th century Irish and international literature and deals in particular with Joyce's most celebrated short story, *The Dead*.

## **Limping in Two Worlds: Disabled People in Icelandic Legend Tradition**

Eva Þórdís Ebenezersdóttir  
University of Iceland

In this paper I will discuss if and how the attributes we recognise today as disability and sickness are defined and understood in the Icelandic legend tradition of the 19th and early 20th centuries. I will discuss how the legends and folk beliefs were used to explain and deal with people who were in some way or another different, people who are today not just seen as being different but also diagnosed and stigmatised as having impairments and disabilities. In order to explain the understanding and attitudes towards disabled people that lie within the legends, I will also be discussing the role of legends and folk belief within the societies that told the legends, such as those legends which tell of changelings and mental illness.

Disability, impairments and disabled people today invoke fear and prejudice among people. Impairments have always existed within the diversity of humanity and most likely have always inflicted fear in one way or another. Disabled people have also been marginalised throughout history. Marginalisation and a fear of the unknown are a natural foundation for the creation of folklore. However, the legends and beliefs that reflect upon disability may well have also helped people to understand and react to impairments and disabled people in positive and negative ways. In order to make this link between legends and understandings of various levels of disability I will be drawing upon theories dealing with ‘cultural mapping’, theories drawn both from folkloristics (mainly legend scholarship), and disability studies.



## **Surrounded by the Supernatural: A Topographic Approach to Sámi Folk Belief**

Pasi Enges  
University of Turku

The Sámi people of the Teno River valley on the border between Finland and Norway have lived in a milieu consisting of three basic habitats: the river, the high mountain area rising steeply from the valley and between them the narrow riverbank where the villages are located. For the residents, each of these habitats has offered resources for different livelihoods and activities. According to folk belief, each of these locations is also inhabited by various supernatural creatures and forces. My presentation concentrates on the topography of the supernatural as depicted in folklore material collected in one River Sámi village from the 1960s until the present day.

The traditional knowledge and narrative tradition in the village reveal a wide variety of places with supernatural qualities. Some are specific and permanent objects in the landscape (holy mountains, seita-stones, lakes with two bottoms, old burying places), others are probable or possible areas or places for encountering the supernatural (old places of residence, turf huts and cottages in the wilderness, exceptional formations in the terrain, knolls, hollows and ravines).

The most obvious elements of places are the physical features that can be observed through the senses. However, places also have historical and social connotations, and they carry images based on social communication or personal experience. One important factor is the atmosphere of the place, its *genius loci*.

Certain or certain kinds of place may bring about supernatural experiences, and reciprocally narratives about those experiences may give places a special meaning and reputation.

Legends and memorates handed down in the community are instrumental in spreading information about what has happened, discussing and explaining the reported incidents and experiences, and often also discussing the specific role a site has had in the episode. Besides

having other social and personal functions, local narrative tradition concerning the supernatural is an effective means for gaining awareness and cognitive control of ones surroundings.

## **Purgatory and English Folk Funerary Custom, c.1170–1920**

Helen Frisby

University of the West of England

*Purgatorium*, the place where the souls of the dead are cleansed of venial sin between individual death and Final Judgment, makes its first appearance in theological writings of the mid to late twelfth century. It quickly caught both the academic and popular imaginations, and was to profoundly shape death, dying, funerals and commemoration in Western Europe for nearly a millennium. Elaborate ritual mechanisms to ensure safe passage through, and earn remittance from, Purgatory developed in High and Late Medieval England. The Black Death, which killed – at a conservative estimate – one third of the European population during 1348–1349, greatly intensified anxieties around the Last Things. This led to the intensification of searches for signs and portents of death, and of deathbed and post-mortem rituals directed toward easing and assisting the passage of the recently deceased through the difficult, potentially dangerous liminal period of purgation. During the sixteenth century, funerary customs relating to Purgatory were officially repudiated, under the banner of the Protestant Reformation; however many such customs were still being documented by English folklorists into the twentieth century, suggesting that Purgatory remained an important place within the English mental landscape. This paper will explore the manner in which Purgatory continued to play a part in popular English funerary ritual and custom for a remarkably long time, despite the upheavals of the Protestant Reformation, the so-called Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution. In so doing I will challenge the Whiggish ‘narrative of progress’ which has (too) long dominated the history of English popular culture.

## **When Thunder Is Not Thunder: Changing Intersections of Narrative and Conceptual Models**

Frog  
University of Helsinki

Traditions associated with thunder are particularly rich in the Circum-Baltic region. This is reflected in folktales, legends and belief traditions. This is related to the centrality of the thunder god in earlier traditions of both Finno-Ugric and Indo-European cultures of the Baltic Sea region and the long history of interaction between them. The dynamic cultural history of this part of the globe has resulted in extremely stratified traditions and beliefs about thunder. The present paper will address the interface of a) narratives related to thunder or the thunder god and b) aetiologies or conceptual models for understanding thunder and its causes. It will open with a survey of different aetiologies of thunder that circulated in the Circum-Baltic region. This survey will be accompanied by observations concerning persistence and innovation as historical processes. The paper will then turn to narrative traditions related to ‘thunder’. Conventional narratives will be distinguished from narrative patterns and flexible conceptual schemas (that provide narrative cores). References to narratives that become ‘suspended’ in particular genres or applications (e.g. proverbs or riddles) will be distinguished. Adaptations to vernacular gods and mythic landscapes in cultural exchange will be observed. The paper will then present examples of narratives persisting in the wake of changing dominant conceptions of thunder. These include: a) the persistence of archaic conceptions; b) ‘renewal’, or updating the aetiology of thunder (and the consequences thereof); c) the divorce of a narrative or conceptual schema from specific aetiologies of thunder; and d) the adaptation of the material to new contexts and applications from which ‘thunder’ may be absent. Examples extend to ritual and preventative cultural practices. Connection to the local landscape is considered as a potential factor in the isolated persistence and maintenance traditions which otherwise drop out of circulation.

## **The Making of a Supernatural Place: The Example of the Kassinurme Hills**

Reet Hiimäe  
Estonian Literary Museum

In the recent decades the hills of Kassinurme in the county of Jõgevamaa (Estonia) have served as a crystallisation point of mythological and other expectations and needs of various groups. As a prerequisite to functioning in such a role, the hills join several (partly intermingling) attractive components:

- natural-geological (the hills were shaped by the ice age),
- settlement (proven settlement from about 6000 years ago),
- visual (dramatic landscape forms, a newly reconstructed wooden stronghold),
- mythological (some folk legends about Kassinurme are connected with the Estonian national hero Kalevipoeg. The place is claimed to be an ancient cult place centring around a powerful energy pillar; recently several wooden sculptures of mythological characters were erected in different parts of the territory).

From this background, discussions about the ‘real’ meaning of the place arise. Following such discussions I will try to outline and analyse the opinions of various contemporary groups and individuals about what characteristics and qualities a place should hold in order to be defined as a sacred place or a holy grove. Should it already have a history of being used as a cult place from thousands of years ago, and what if such a history cannot be proven? Or rather, is it crucial for a person to be able to perceive a place subjectively as sacred or supernatural now, irrespective of its past? Various ways of modern identity building and its connection with people taking certain roles in interaction with particular places will be shown.

## **Romanian Haunted Places – Unbaptised Buried Infants (Moroi)**

Adina Hulubas

Romanian Academy, Iasi Branch

The great sin of not baptising the newly born is made worse by the tragic event of the baby's death. Redemption involves carrying holy water to the grave for seven years and finding a Godfather who would baptise the infant over the tomb.

Nevertheless, the souls of unbaptised children are believed to become *moroi* in Romania, restless entities that can be heard near their burying places or even back at their homes, where they come to ask for Christianisation. Whoever happens to hear them crying has to perform a symbolic baptism using a ritual instrument and specific formulae. Therefore, the places where the babies lie, turn into supernatural spaces because of the defilement produced by such a corpse. Whether they are buried on the steep sides of deserted valleys, underneath bridges or in the special zones at the periphery of cemeteries, children transform the surroundings into a haunted place in search of their redemption. The acoustic phenomena often become clues for a secret burial performed by an ashamed mother.

The paper will make use both of the bibliographic resources on the topic and of direct fieldwork data gathered from Moldova, a south eastern region of Romania. It will also provide information from urbanites that have witnessed such uncanny events and are fully convinced the sounds were produced by such dead children.

## **Representations of Ordinary and Supernatural Realms in UFO Narratives**

Kirsi Hänninen  
University of Turku

UFO experience narratives, stories that people tell about their encounters with extraterrestrials, offer an interesting vantage point to explore representations of the supernatural. In my paper, I will discuss stories of UFO contacts and abductions and ask what the relation is between the ordinary realm and the supernatural realm in UFO narratives. In addition, I will ask how the boundaries between the realms are maintained, and how do these realms collide? How does a mundane place such as one's own bedroom turn into the setting of a supernatural encounter? How do narrative strategies differ when comparing the narratives of long-time UFO contact people with people who have only had one contact experience – what happens to the category of the supernatural when it becomes a recurrent incident? To approach these questions I will utilise the phenomenology of narrative and focus on frames and evaluations in the taleworld, the storyrealm and the realm of conversation (Young 1987). Evaluations make explicit the point of the story and the point of telling the story, and they specify the ontological status of the realm where the events happen. Research material for this paper will consist of my interviews with Finnish UFO contact people (1998–1999), written narratives sent to my research inquiry on supernatural experiences (2003–2004) and posts on Finnish Internet discussion forums focused on UFO experiences (2012). I will draw examples from each set of narratives.

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## **The Role of Place, Time and Actor in Dream Narratives**

Annikki Kaivola-Bregenhøj  
University of Turku

My paper focuses on Finnish popular dream narrating and interpretation. Examining dreams from a folkloristic perspective, I see them as part of the cultural heritage surrounding human intercourse and transmitted during direct interaction. My own research material consists, however, of written dream reports. There are considerable differences between oral and written narratives; dream writing organises and concentrates the narrative in a different way to oral communication.

Popular dream narration and interpretation bear many of the characteristics of folklore: dreams are part of the personal experience narrative tradition and contain both idiosyncratic symbols and symbols that are culture-bound, anonymous in origin and passed on from one person to another. In dreams a person is in a different reality, where many things strange to waking or external objective reality are quite natural.

I will concentrate on the role that the dream scene (places, time and actors) has in different types of dream narratives. My focus lies mainly on so-called 'true dreams' or 'realistic dreams' in which some detail points directly to some forthcoming event. The other type is the so-called 'prophetic dreams, in other words dreams that have an omen which comes true. It is important for these dreams to say 'what really happened' and in which way the omen or realistic detail in a dream came true. People can attest to listeners or readers that their dream had consistency by talking about the actors, the places, and the time lapse between the message in the dream and the message in waking reality. Most often the dream experience is narrated as a short episode together with a frame narrative, the importance of which is to convey to the reader how to understand the experience.



**Bad Night at the Mill:  
Encounters with the *Kvernknurr* in Norwegian Legend**

Merrill Kaplan  
The Ohio State University

The *kvernknurr* (or *kvernkall*) of Norwegian legend is a tricky creature. He is in the habit of interfering with the work of milling by stopping the mill wheel. This is already a dangerous situation on a purely mechanical level: woe to the miller who has his arm in the works when the wheel becomes unstuck. Legend shows matters to be even more complex. Some mill trolls need only to be tossed a gold coin and milling resumes with twice the output. Others threaten the miller and must be driven off by force and strong words. What is it about the mill that attracts such different supernatural beings and contrasting narratives? The mill is an ambiguous site, a site of economic activity perched over a mountain stream, suspended between the village and the wilderness. It makes good sense that it would be haunted by both workplace spirits and nature spirits, and this is how we should understand the two faces of the *kvernknurr*.

## **The Devil in Old Turkish Religious Life**

Hicran Karataş  
University of Hacettepe

The devil has existed as a universal myth from ancient times. Evil, the most striking feature represented by Devil, is seen as common in all world religions. It has an important position with this feature, representative of evil, both in verbal culture texts and in inscriptive culture texts as a mythic pattern. Whereas in monotheistic religions creator is associated with God, it is seen as a character representing evil within the frame of various naming. In this article, I discuss how the Devil is named, what he is made of and how he is described in the religions that Turks having been subjected to throughout history. I discuss what roles and qualifications were attributed to the Devil. Within the framework of religion mentioned, I will attempt to present the common features attributed to the Devil. The basic problematic of this article is to present the similarities of the Devil within non-monotheistic religions that Turks have been subjected to, with those within monotheistic and divine religions.

## **Supernatural Love Motifs in Meitei Legends of Manipur**

Ranibala Khumukcham  
University of Manipur

Oral or folk narratives have been an integral part of the Meiteis (native people of Manipur) since time immemorial. Among this huge amount of narratives, most of the legend stories talk about love between humans and deities or among humans who have supernatural powers. In this paper two Meitei legends will be discussed. The first is called Panthoibi and Nongpok Ningthou, and is the story of a woman who has supernatural power and leaves her human husband for her divine lover. Even though Meiteis are a patriarchal society, this woman was not punished but rather she is still worshiped as a Goddess. The second story is Akongjamba and Fouoibi, about a Goddess who has a love affair with a human. When the man's mother ill-treated her, she left their house full of paddy (rice) to make known her identity as a Goddess. She is also worshiped as a Goddess among Meiteis.

This paper will focus on figuring out the relationship between the human and supernatural worlds and how, in both stories, love connects them and helps to expose their extraordinary powers. This paper will also discuss how the Meitei people preserve their faith through these legendary stories in contemporary life.

## **Taming the Supernatural, Exciting the Natural: Activities of Dowsers' Associations**

Kristel Kivari  
University of Tartu

Dowsing is a well-known practice in the contemporary West to locate underground water. The earliest records of the method are seen in the cave paintings. It is even interpreted that the rod of Moses, not God's miracle, provided the Israelites with water from the rocks. The divining rod, which reacts to the small movements of the diviner, measures the quality of the surface and thus binds together the invisible powers of the environment and the extrasensory abilities of the dowser. These two elements in interaction form the basis of the variety of applications of dowsing, starting with the need to locate the well and ending with dowsing on maps, photographs and decisions.

The Estonian Dowsers' Association continues on the path initiated by the Commission for the Investigation of Abnormal Natural Phenomena, set up by the Communist Party. After the end of communist rule and the lifting of secrecy restrictions the scientists involved established contacts with sympathisers in Baltic countries and in Finland. However, the experiments carried out within this 'geopathic' framework remained marginal within their highly valued daily academic work.

Today, members of the association are from various professions. Their interests seem to remain quite controversial, illustrating the ambiguity of the concept. There are serious naturalists whose mission is to shed the light of science onto legends and gossip, as well as people whose intention is to find a scientific explanation and support for paranormal abilities and phenomena. The boundaries of science and belief are openly blurred when scientific rhetoric, and concepts such as waves and energies, are used to share the experiences. The deconstructive and reconstructive role of science towards the supernatural will be discussed further in the presentation.

## **Etiological Legends about Plants**

Valeria Kolosova

Institute for Language studies, St. Petersburg

The object of the article is Russian etiological legends concerning folk ideas about plants, as well as the general Slavonic parallels to these legends. In these legends, plants or their typical features appear from various mythological personages, parts of their bodies, or objects belonging to them. As a rule, the origin of etiological text is influenced by two factors: a clear, typical feature of a plant and an episode from a mythological personage's life. In addition, besides the etiological legend, the mythological motif is also reflected in folk plant names and sometimes in recommendations for its usage.

Legends can prescribe some ritual practices. So, blue cow-wheat – connected with a legend about turning a brother and sister into flowers – or St. John's wort with red spots on its leaves must be picked on St. John's day with consequent use in folk medicine and magic.

Sometimes legends associated with a certain territory help to explain phytonyms from other traditions, such as the case of Serbian *кључарица* and Bulgarian *кључанка*, Primula [lit. 'key flower'], which can be explained by a Belarussian legend about St. Peter's keys from spring gates which turned into flowers.

Etiological texts demonstrate evaluative attitudes to various features. The plants that originated from kind, pious, or innocent people have a pleasant smell, but those that originated from negative people are, for example, spiny or stinging.

The same motif may be expressed not only in vegetative but also in other codes. For example, the motif 'snake's wife' is realised in vegetative code in Russian, Lithuanian and Bulgarian legends, while in Ukrainian legend it is realised in zoomorphic code. Such variants demonstrate the system character of traditional culture.

## **Supernatural Aspects of the Sacredness of Lutheran Church Buildings: Belief Legends and Ecclesiastical law**

Kaarina Koski  
University of Helsinki

My presentation explores the different aspects of Lutheran church building sacredness in early modern Finnish belief tradition. On the one hand, Church buildings represented Christian values and served as the public sphere. Inappropriate behaviour in church was severely punished according to ecclesiastical law. This type of sacredness, in William Paden's terms the "sacred order", was based on the central ideals and inviolable norms that Lutheran society defended and onto which it held. On the other hand, church buildings were places for establishing relationships with the supernatural. The buildings themselves, as well as liturgical objects in them, were said to possess both useful and dangerous potential. According to legends, not only God but also the devil and various beings of ethnic belief tradition held the field in church, especially at night. Thus, the sacred was ambiguous, and danger could also be turned into a resource. Entered by cunning men using ritual means, the church replicates the realm of death as the place in which the specialist negotiates with otherworldly beings to make things right. In this light, the church's sacredness represents supernormal otherness, a category set apart from the everyday sphere. This seems almost opposite to the "sacred order". However, from both perspectives the sacred required the same normative behaviour. Legends, describing threatening beings or a dramatic death in the church during the night, can be interpreted either as the dangerous side of the ambiguous supernatural or as a punishment for violating the norms. Danger exists in both models: while one views it as a death resulting from norm breaches, the other regards it as a risk and a potential.

## **Narrated Environment**

Jaana Kouri  
University of Turku

I have collected oral history in an old pilot village in the Turku archipelago. Water is the centre, the fairway and the main essential natural actor and non-human other in the area of the village. In my paper I bring up how villagers' spatial practice is narrated, for example in the stories about rowing a boat and walking on the ice.

As a researcher I am an anthropologist at home. In my autoethnographic study of comparative religion I will also examine my position as an insider and an outsider.

## Trickster's Footprints

Hasso Krull  
Tallinn University

Springs and sources are often believed to possess magical qualities. In Estonian mythology they are sometimes created by chance, as footprints of a primordial being who acts like a trickster. My hypothesis is that there might be a cosmological connection between the idea of creation by chance, the trickster figure and the supernatural power of the sources. Some sources are believed to be underground tunnels between different places, i.e. they are like entrances into the nether regions. The trickster is also connected to the underworld; he and his family often dwell in caves or crypts, or sometimes in the marshes. In oral tradition, sources that are oriented towards north are sometimes considered to be more holy than others. Toomas Tamla (1985) and Mall Hiimäe (2005) have suggested that the north might also be a direction of the nether world, the home of the ancestors. The legend of the trickster's footprints indicates that landscape is a surface of mythical inscriptions that endow it with the power of primordial beings, the creators of the earth, and perhaps also connects it to the world of the ancestors.

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## **Generic Appropriations of Supernatural Places: Heaven and Hell in Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen***

Nada Kujundžić

University of Zagreb/University of Turku

Although mainly associated with the fairytale genre, the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (*KHM*) collected and published by the Brothers Grimm contains a large variety of short narrative genres, from fantastic (legends, fairy tales) to realistic ones (folk tales, jests). Despite the generic, thematic, linguistic, etc. diversity of their collection, the Brothers nevertheless strove to imbue it with an overall sense of unity. One of the editorial strategies employed with this aim in mind is the introduction of what John Ellis refers to as “stock” motifs, characters and episodes. In this paper, I propose to examine whether or not such standardisation is also observable in the case of supernatural places. To do this, I shall focus primarily on the spaces of heaven and hell and examine whether or not, and if so, how, these primarily religious spaces are appropriated by different genres. I propose to take a closer look at the narrative spaces of heaven and hell in various *KHM* genres (primarily fairytales and legends): the way they are structured, their narrative role, the characters that inhabit/visit them. Special emphasis shall be placed on the way religious connotations of these spaces are treated by individual genres (possible instances and degrees of profanisation).

## **Travel and Holy Islands in *Eireks Saga Viðförla* and *Eiríks Saga Rauða***

Mart Kuldkepp  
University of Tartu

Building on Eldar Heide's (2011) idea of the close connection between "holy islands" and the motif of crossing water, I examine two Old Icelandic texts that describe journeys to half-mythical places lying beyond the sea. Although the two sagas, *Eireks saga viðförla* and *Eiríks saga rauða* (in which I focus on the story of Leifr Eriks-son's discovery of Vinland) are in many ways different in both composition and outlook, I would argue that there is a definite commonality in how the motif of Christian holiness is connected to the notion of faraway islands. The beyond-the-sea geographical liminality of Vinland and India is what enables Christian motifs to enter the 'realistic' saga narrative, so that even Leifr and Eirekr themselves become less human and more saint-like, even though the transformation is much more amplified in Eirekr's case. Proceeding from that comparison, I propose that one way of conceptualising 'the supernatural' in the Old Norse sagas is to consider it as a function of distance, which can be geographical, temporal and/or even social. In this light, places where the otherworld appears to be especially close (gravemounds, holy groves, churches, etc.) can be understood as shortcuts (in time, space or social order) that lead outside the conventional reality without the necessity to actually cover the distance between.

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**Place Valence Analysis:  
Example of F941.2 ‘Church Sinks Underground’**

Sandis Laime

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Attachment of particular local and migratory legend motives and types to particular elements of landscape often depends on certain naturally or historically determined qualities of the actual place. In other words, certain places can possess some kind of valence or capacity to attract definite legend motifs which are dominant within some tradition area, and this capacity can be realised by the bearers of the particular tradition and/or tradition authorities. On the one hand, knowledge of the particular place and its qualities is often an important component of the frame of reference in the moment of actualisation of supernatural experience, which can later be narrated as a memorate. On the other hand, knowledge of the particular location can be included (but not necessarily stressed) in the plot of place-related belief legends, thus making them fully comprehensible only to those acquainted with that particular landscape. Place valence analysis can serve as an instrument to expand the amount of contextual information of archival material, which is useful for functional analysis to fully understand the functions of place-related legends.

In my paper I will analyse the Latvian variants of the F941.2 ‘Church sinks underground’ motif and show the variability of the functions of these legends in connection with the place type to which this motif has been attached. Valence analysis reveals at least four different reasons to attach this motif to certain locations both due to naturally and historically determined qualities. Each of these cases actualised and discussed a different set of norms and taboos.

## **Exile, Gender, Work, and Death: The Legends of 'Whitewater Ole' Horne**

James Leary  
University of Wisconsin

In 1905, eleven loggers, including the Norwegian immigrant Ole Horne, drowned in Wisconsin's Chippewa River. This incident contributed to a complex of still-current legends that focus especially on Horne.

Regarded as a handsome, cheerful, skilled, respected, and sometimes reckless worker, Horne was called 'Whitewater Ole' because of his agility riding logs on rivers: "The whiter the water, the better he liked it." 'Ole' is likewise a generic term for male Scandinavians in America, was widely used this way in lumber camps, and is associated with immigrant bumpkins in Scandinavian American jokes. Hence Whitewater Ole signifies a quintessentially competent yet sometimes comical Scandinavian immigrant logger. Legends surrounding Ole Horne include stories prior to the drowning emphasizing his status as both a heroic worker and a cheerful boaster speaking in 'Scandihoovian' broken-English. Supernatural elements surround his death: he tempted fate by declaring "there wasn't enough water in the Chippewa River to drown in"; an unlucky thirteen men drowned instead of the actual eleven; and their corpses each floated downriver to their homes.

Drawing on legend and belief scholarship for North America and Scandinavia (Degh, Kvideland and Sehmsdorf), on studies of the occupational narratives of male groups (Santino, Ives), and on examinations of immigrant folklore in the American Upper Midwest (Dorson, Leary), I argue that skilled itinerant workmen who assume dangerous tasks, triumph for a time, then die dramatically on the job and far from home often become central figures in legend complexes dwelling upon exile, gender, work, and death. They offer an artful means of considering a paradox at the heart of immigrant male working class experiences: the necessity of risking one's life by leaving home and family for the company of men so as to make a living and, eventually, a home in the company of women.

## **“Today, There is a Chapel There”: The Tenacity of Sacrality in Nenets Narration**

Karina Lukin  
University of Helsinki

The Nenets, an ethnic minority living in the northern Russia and northwestern Siberia, have gone through sweeping changes during the 20th and 21st centuries. Of these transformations, the sedentarisation, in other words the end of former nomadic way of life and the antipathy towards the former ways of living, including anti-religious propaganda, have had enormous impact on the Nenets' relationship with their living environment. Moreover, the latest newcomers, the temporary workers of the oil and gas industry, tend to see the tundra – formerly inhabited by the Nenets – in a seemingly different way to the Nenets.

In the paper, I examine the layers and interconnections of meanings of one Nenets sacred place, Hehe syedye, situated on the island of Kolguyev in the Barents Sea. I show how the sense of place of this hill was formed by the interaction of different ways of narration and movements of the community in and from the tundra. I also discuss how the Soviet and Russian attempts to desacralise on the one hand, and give Christian meanings to the hill on the other, have failed because of the circulating speech of the Nenets, especially their narration, recollection and place names.

The paper is based on ethnographic fieldwork among the Kolguyev islanders. It builds upon Keith Basso's notions on the sense of place and Halbwachsian understandings of places as corner stones of the community's sense of continuity. I will pay attention to how inter-animation, i.e. the meanings elaborated between physical features of a place and speech about that place, works in the Nenets' sense of sacred places at the beginning of the 21st century.

## **The Eden Cottage Haunting and an Interview with a Deity: A Contextual Approach to Family Narratives**

Margaret Lyngdoh  
University of Tartu

This paper will attempt to examine two narratives belonging to a family from the Talang clan in Shillong; the first narrative deals with the family's erstwhile residence at Eden Cottage from 1960 to 1971 and the consequent hauntings which took place there that influenced the health, psychology and financial state of the family members.

The second narrative explores the mysterious, highly esoteric and feared origin and worship of the family deity. The abandonment of the worship of this deity lead to a series of misfortunes that span generations of this family including its consequent fragmentation.

Both narratives are inseparably connected with special geographic locales. Connected with cultural and physical spaces, these sites link themselves with the general beliefs of the Khasi people along with personal experiences of them. When studied within the framework of the Khasi background, the spaces have generated narratives – one in a private and highly individualised context of family, and the other at the larger scale of the village community.

In addition, local belief set against the framework of the matriliney constitutes an important backdrop. Emic perceptions view the family as the central core of the social setup. With emphasis on clan and kinship as essential to societal discourse of the Khasis, these narratives will be examined in context to in order to further the meaning of these tales for the family and community. In the case of the first narrative, which occurred at Eden Cottage, a memorate account of the events narrated by the family members will form the basis of the analysis. For the second narrative, fieldwork at the village of - Chyrmang was carried out which focuses on an interview carried out with a special person, possessed by the deity.

## Wayland: Smith of the Gods

Jon Mackley  
University of Northampton

This interdisciplinary paper will consider how the legend of one of the Scandinavian sagas has been incorporated into English folklore and topography.

The legend of Wayland, the ‘Smith of the Gods’, has been attached to a Neolithic burial site near Uffington in Oxfordshire, England. The first phase of the barrow was constructed around 3590 BC, but legends were probably attached to it by Saxon settlers in the fifth century. There is documentary evidence that it has been called “Wayland’s Smithy” since the tenth century and it was believed the ‘cave’ was the home of an invisible Smith. If a traveller’s horse lost a shoe, the traveller could leave the horse with a piece of money; when he returned he would find the horse new shod. The character of Wayland also appears in Walter Scott’s *Kenilworth* and Kipling’s *Puck of Pook’s Hill*.

Wayland was an important deity in the Saxon pantheon, but there are only a handful of references to him in English literature including the Anglo-Saxon poems, *Deor*, *Beowulf* and *Widsith*. Through these texts, and early Scandinavian Yorkshire carvings, which incorporate Christian and Scandinavian imagery and depict scenes from Icelandic and Teutonic sagas, we can trace Wayland back to the Scandinavia Elder *Edda* poems, most particularly *Volundarkviða*. In these earlier legends, Wayland was blacksmith to the gods who forged legendary armour and swords and parallels with these tales can be traced back to Greek mythology.

In addition to the site of Wayland’s Smithy, this paper considers areas in the local and natural topographical features that have been named after characters in the Wayland stories. Wayland was also associated with the Saxon Winter Solstice and his legend was re-worked and sanitised and appropriated into the Christian calendar.

## **The Mystical World and the Home Yard: Domestic Spaces and Women's Legend Traditions in 20th Century Iceland**

Júliana Þóra Magnúsdóttir  
University of Iceland

Iceland's largest folklore archive is the sound archive kept within the Arni Magnusson Institute in Icelandic Studies, which holds approximately 2000 hours of audio taped interviews. Two of the most productive collectors of audio material were Hallfreður Örn Eiríksson and Helga Jóhannsdóttir, who travelled around Iceland from the 1960s to the 1980s, asking people about various types of folklore, including legends and folk belief. This material offers a rarely studied link between Iceland's well-documented legend tradition of the 19th and early 20th century and the legend tradition found in more recent times, representing what might be seen as the last remnants of the traditional worldview of Icelandic farming society.

The paper discusses some of the key features that characterise the legend tradition of women reflected in the aforementioned materials. Most of the women interviewed were housewives living in rural societies, whose sphere of action and life experience was largely limited to their home yard, that is, their immediate surroundings both inside and outside the house. I will discuss how these special limitations influenced the female legend and folk belief tradition, as seen in the tradition orientation and choices of topic and characters. Special attention will be paid to female memorates and what these tell us about beliefs and ideas concerning supernatural forces within the domestic space.



## **Estonian Legends about Marriage Between Siblings and its Disastrous Outcome**

Merili Metsvahi  
University of Tartu

My paper focuses on an aetiological legend about the origin of a lake that has numerous versions in the Estonian Folklore Archives. The folktale, which has been connected with different lakes all over Estonia, tells the story of a brother and sister who want to marry each other. When the siblings enter the church in order to get married the church suddenly sinks under the ground and the lake appears in its place.

In my paper I will briefly introduce the versions of the story and give an explanation of why this place legend was popular in Estonian folklore. I will point to the surviving mythical elements in the legend that linked the social order with the supernatural world. The breaking of the social norm brings a catastrophe to the world order that is caused by supernatural forces.

In addition to the mythical meanings, the legend also tells of real kinship relations in the past. I will put forward a short comparison of how the brother-sister relationship is depicted in other folklore genres within Estonian folklore. The strong bond between the siblings in different genres will be taken as proof supporting the hypothesis that society in the territory of Estonia before the 13th century was matrilineal.

## **Some Findings on the Effect of the Birth Practices of the Wolf Mother and Wolf Father, which are Divine in Turkish Culture, in Anatolian Traditions**

Gülperi Mezkit  
University of Hacettepe

The wolf cult, and its manifestation as the wolf father and wolf mother cults, which are symbolically significant among Turkish cultural assets, came into existence as a guide, protector and ensurer of bloodline. In this article, which is based on ancient Turkish legends, the importance of the wolf for Turkish people will be stressed and its effects on Turkish people's lives in the past and the present will be shown. The examples from Middle Asian, Oghuz and Anatolian myths and epics telling of the belief that Turks descended from wolves will be presented and their effects on folk belief will be discussed. In this article I will emphasise how the objects belonging to wolves affected 'birth facilitation methods' in the framework of the wolf's divine ability to continue bloodline. I will also emphasise how the wolf ancestor belief affected traditions. As a conclusion I will discuss the fact that the wolf motif retains its value today due to the Turkish people's traditionalist approach as well as the wolf's contribution to biological continuance through which it contributes to birth facilitation methods.

## **The Function of Symbols of Astral Beings in Legends According to Georgian Materials**

Bela Mosia

Shota Meskhia State Teaching University of Zugdidi

Legend as a genre is based on faith, is historically grounded, mainly religious in character and functions as knowledge and ideology, as a method of explaining the world and its phenomena. As examples of such narratives one can consider the legend of the foundation of Tbilisi, the legend of the holy stone kept in Sioni cathedral Tbilisi, of Sveti-Tskhoveli (meaning the life-giving column), Surami fortress and others. Shota Rustaveli's classical poem *The Knight in the Tiger's Skin* from 12th century based on historical legends. The above-mentioned legends make many Georgians feel that these narratives are not only fiction, not only magic, not only historical or religious: they also implant national spirit in generations of people. Some legends have become songs, some of which have so strong an impact on the society that they appear in behaviour patterns and traditional customs.

In my presentation I am going to focus on symbols of astral beings and how they have an impact on the legends, giving them magical functions; how the sun, the light, the moon, moonlight and stars appear in examples like Sveti-Tskhoveli, and the name Tbilisi comes from the word Tbili (meaning warm).

## **Paradise and the Land of the Blessed in Monastic Literature: Irish and Byzantine Traditions**

Daria Penskaya

Russian State University for the Humanities

Through mediation of the Western church or direct contacts with ascetae, reading of saint's lives and the Sayings of Desert Fathers, Celtic monasticism adopted many features of the 3rd and 4th century Egyptian monastic ambient.

During these first ages of monasticism in Egypt, Syria and Palestine, where Christian monastic culture was born, there were various texts describing visions of Paradise or journeys to the Land of the Blessed. These texts, still tightly connected with myth and folklore, provide the basis for a branch of Byzantine literature that could be called 'monastic paradise texts'. Some of these texts, known in Celtic and particularly in the Irish world, could also have influenced Ireland's monastic literature. In the paper the Byzantine and Irish corpora of monastic paradise texts will be compared in order to trace the possible canals of intermediation.

The texts are:

Byzantine: The Narration of Our Father Agapius; the Life of St. Macarius of Rome, St. Zosimus, Patermouthios, St. Euphrosyne the Cook, St. Paul the Obedient; the Vision of monk Cosmas; and in general two main compendia of monastic stories, the *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* and the *Historia Lausiaca* of Palladius.

Irish: The Life of St. Brigit, St. Brendan, St. Colman Elo, St. Columba, St. Comgall, St. Ita; the Visions of St. Monenna, St. Patrick. Some examples of the 'immrama' genre will be included: The Voyage of St. Brendan, The Voyage of Mael Duin's Boat, The Voyage of the Hui Corra.

The comparison will focus on following points:

- How is the main character described?
- What are the purposes of the journeys/dreams or visions?

- How is the path to the Land of Blessed through the territories of the Otherworld described?
- How is the description of Otherworld places organised?
- What are the consequences of the main character's return to this world?

At the same time I will show how folkloric structure gains a Christian skin in a new cultural environment, primarily in quiet a natural, vivid way connected with its origins, later stabilised and formalised in the hagiographic canon.

## **Witches, Werewolves, and Fairies in the Nineteenth-Century Landes de Gascogne**

William Pooley  
University of Oxford

Nineteenth-century reformers considered the moorlands of south-western France known as the Landes de Gascogne to be a desert populated by savages, in thrall to ‘superstitions’ about witchcraft and werewolves. Several historians have argued that the case of the Landes in the nineteenth century is one of the best examples of domestic colonialism, a project based on a double justification: the sterility of the environment, and the backwardness of its inhabitants. And yet very little has been written about how the ordinary labourers, servants, and artisans of the area experienced the wholesale transformation of the demography and environment of the Landes. Between 1857 and 1900, the French government created by force the largest man-made forest in Europe, and many of the local farmers and shepherds lost their livelihoods and abandoned the land.

This paper examines the manuscripts of the local folklorist Félix Arnaudin. Although his real passions were for songs and the study of dialect, a minor part of Arnaudin’s collection was made up of stories and fragments about supernatural beings recorded between the 1870s and 1921. Now that a team of specialists has published Arnaudin’s complete works, there is an opportunity to delve into the details from the manuscripts that the edition could not hope to include. This paper relies on the manuscripts to show some of the complexities of personal meaning that stories about the three most common kinds of supernatural beings might have held. Rather than belonging to a backward and ignorant world of peasant ‘superstition’, there are many details in the stories, in the lives of the people who told them, and in the ways they transmitted them to a folklorist who was no neutral outsider, but a local employer, which are revealing about changing senses of local community in an area that was being transformed by the forces of modernity.

## **Tibetan Sacred Mountains in Amdo Region: Narration and Ritual at the Sino-Tibetan Border**

Valentina Punzi

L'Orientale University of Naples/Minzu University of China

In this presentation, the author attempts to outline some relevant aspects concerning the cultural understanding of the landscape in Tibetan communities, giving some contemporary examples of written and oral geographic descriptions in the Amdo region.

Landscape, in its sacralised representations, is a recurrent topic in Tibetan religious literature: the organisation of the natural space into mandalas and the extensive production of catalogues and guidebooks for pilgrimages to sites disseminated through the whole Tibetan land have developed into cultural models for interpreting the landscape, echoed in oral traditions. Detailed descriptions of specific places serve not only religious purpose but also the need for orientation in the space.

The Tibetan people are culturally and emotionally connected to the territory they live in and traditionally produce mental maps of the land with relevant implications for building group memory and identity, by means of remembering and transmitting cultural models.

The “unity of the Tibetan conception of space” is conceived as an interdependent relationship among the elements constituting the landscape itself: “a mountain is usually associated with a lake, and in that case, the first is regarded as the father, and the second as the mother” (Buffetrille 1998). In fact, the natural environment undergoes a continuous process of interpretation, which eventually develops into cognitive patterns and ethnoecological classifications (Johnson and Hunn 2010).

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## **The Devil's Places in Finnish Folk Narratives**

Mari Purola

University of Eastern Finland

The Devil is one of the most productive characters in Finnish belief legends. He often appears and changes the everyday reality into the supernatural. Human encounters with the devil often take place in a familiar place: at home, in the sauna, in a cowshed or at any place where people are working. In these places the Devil is visiting the human domain. As presented in belief legends, the Devil's own place is not Hell but the outskirts of a village. The Devil is most at home in deep forests, dangerous mountains, caves and the ancient formations that appeared after the ice age ended. Devil's potholes and fields have aroused people's imagination and located the supernatural as part of the everyday landscape. Nature's abnormalities are an indication of the Devil, while abnormalities in the appearance of a child or in the devil himself signify demonic influence. The Devil claims his places by making noise or showing himself near these places. In addition to abnormal natural formations, the Devil has been associated with borders both abstract and concrete. Abstract borders are the border between excess and sufficiency or sin and correct behaviour. Concrete borders include roads and forests that are situated outside the village which represent the transition between the known and the unknown, the familiar and the foreign. The semiotic interpretation of the Devil's places links his characteristics to topological reality where he is the key to creating a whole and understandable world-view.

## **Where is the Border Between Research and Legend? The Sacred Romow in the Scholarly Tradition**

Aldis Pūtelis  
University of Latvia

Every religion needs its shrines, for worship or just for inclusion in a description. The pre-Christian religion of Latvia is very scarcely documented, if at all. When, many centuries later, it became necessary to find as much information about the ancient deities and places of worship as possible, all of the scarce data from the ancient documents received much attention. And the description of the legendary Romow – the religious centre of all the Baltic lands – was much employed. Doubts have been expressed regarding the credibility of the description, while at the same time there are scholars who still insist it is true. At least for the modern neo-paganistic religions Romow is the sacred centre again. It is just situated in some unreachable Otherworld.

A short history of the place is as follows. Peter von Dusburg in his chronicle in the early 14th century mentions a place in Prussia which has been, according to this account, the sacred centre not only of the Old Prussian lands, but also those of Lithuania and Livonia (as there was no such notion as Latvia at that time). Two centuries later in his chronicle Simon Grunau provides a much more elaborate and detailed description of this sacred place, the work becoming a source for many generations of scholars to come. This creates the impressions of a general truth being repeated over and over again.

## Landscapes of Getting Lost

Sanita Reinsone

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When one gets lost, a familiar and safe place suddenly becomes alien, unsafe and frightening. When it has once again become safe and familiar, it is no longer the same as it was before, since the emotional experience and the transformation of the landscape has altered the accustomed image of the location, so that one is always reminded of its potential otherness. Odd landscapes of getting lost are widely displayed in the archived and published Latvian legends of *vadātājs* (a mythical being in Latvian mythology, i.e. the one who leads people astray). When *vadātājs* besets one, a wide and plain road is seen instead of bumpy pathway and ditch, and an ostentatious castle instead of a marsh or sheer cliff. In the stories people tell today, the landscape does not contrast greatly to the ‘real’ one, although stories still evidence the fact that spatial distortions are seen when people are lost, enabling them to feel as though they are in another world or a world ‘upside down’. In the paper I will analyse how the landscapes of getting lost are portrayed, discussed and contested in Latvian contemporary narratives, and ask if the traditional interpretation of getting lost as a supernatural experience still has some significance in the discourse.

## Counterculture in Medieval and Early Modern Livonia and Ösel

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Tallinn University

Several thousand years ago the werewolf appeared to be a symbol of power and leadership. Why thousands and not hundreds? The story of Romulus and Remus directs us to believe in the werewolves of the Iron Age. During the period of the witchcraft trials, the situation changed. The church had set its sights and values on the linkage between men and predators. I will analyse the story of pro-God werewolves Thiess and Skeistan in Jürgensburg and Nitau, 1692.

As Carlo Ginzburg already noted, Thiess and a few other Livonian werewolves were similar to the Italian 16th–17th century ‘good combatants’ or Benandanti. They had an analogous concept to death, an analogous mission, and the habit of surging out, four times a year, in defence of mankind. In Ginzburg’s opinion, the Benandanti were a Dianic nocturnal cult, associated with the magic of fertility and the luck of the hunt; and, of course, with mankind’s ancient custom to be on the side of light, opposing darkness. Thiess defended the outer-world from Hell as so did Benandantis. Thiess fought with bad and Russian werewolves, some of these wolves fought with Devil, and finally, Thiess and Skeistan also fought traitors. Benandantis fought with witches and their actions were similar to those of their Livonian colleagues.

The true guardsman of Hell in the customs of those days is a brave man/werewolf, who uses his rear end for that purpose. Mentioning this area was a challenge to judges and authorities and therefore appeared to be a sign of counterculture. A man peeping through his legs is also depicted among the symbols in the cellar at Karja Church, a pose that was intended to get the treasure demon (*pisuhänd*) to fly all over the starry sky. This is mentioned in the medieval saying: Even with the blowing of my wind I praise God. God does not despise filthy things.

## Glastonbury Abbey: Beliefs and Legends

Tiina Sepp  
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Dion Fortune wrote in her book *Avalon of the Heart*: “Mediaeval piety and learning are in the very air of Glastonbury. The stones of the Abbey are overthrown, but its spirit lives on like a haunting presence, and many have seen its ghost.”

I have rarely been to a place that is more loaded with beliefs and legends than Glastonbury Abbey. It is the heart of the spiritual energy of medieval Glastonbury – the perfect place for a Benedictine monastery. The graves of King Arthur and his Queen Guinevere were discovered here in 1191. There is the mysterious Company of Avalon – a group of souls who have lived here as monks at different times during the life of the Abbey. The first person to communicate with them was Frederick Bligh Bond, an architect and archaeologist who was appointed director of excavations in the early 1900s. He was unusually successful in his work because during automatic writing he was told by the long-dead monks where to dig and what to look for.

Many people have said that they were ‘called’ to Glastonbury and have felt the presence of non-material guidance. According to Barry Taylor, the founder of Glastonbury PRC and the author of *A Pilgrim in Glastonbury*, that energy may have many names – the Angel of Glaston, the Company of Avalon, the Celtic Morgens, the Goddess, the earth spirits, the Archangel Michael, numerous saints and sundry pagan influences.

James Carley has said that every pilgrim worthy of his scrip returns from Glastonbury with his own small miracle. In my paper I am going to talk about my field trips to this beautiful and inspirational place.

## **Rev Robert Kirk's *The Secret Commonwealth* and Fairy Legends in the Scottish Highlands**

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Prominent among legends of the supernatural in the Gaelic communities of the Highlands is a rich and varied repertoire concerning the fairies. These traditions of fairy belief, together with those of 'second sight', persisted well into the last century and have aroused wide interest in spiritualist and literary circles. *The Secret Commonwealth*, one of Scotland's oldest and most compelling accounts of fairy lore, was written by a respected Gaelic scholar, Rev Robert Kirk, minister of Aberfoyle (Perthshire), in 1692, and contains "an incomparable legacy of the fairy belief traditions of Reformation Scotland". Although the contents have been of considerable interest to historians of religion, their importance to folklore studies in Scotland has not been fully explored. The materials include physical descriptions of fairies in their various manifestations; their bodily composition; their subterranean dwellings and other places associated with them; fairy funerals; changelings; abduction of human lovers and nurses; fairy arrows and their effects; their association with the faculty of 'second sight', and much more. A primary task for the folklorist is to determine the relationship of Kirk's materials to other accounts of fairy lore recorded throughout the Highlands: those published by Kirk's contemporaries, but just as importantly those amassed more recently from the region's oral tradition. A primary source for the latter is the extensive catalogue of fairy legends recorded in the field and held in the sound archive of the School of Scottish Studies. Comparisons with the oral and primary published sources will be used to make clear the place of the early Perthshire materials within the wider network of Highland fairy narrative traditions.

## **Geography of the Imagination: Archetypal Landscape in Fantasy Genre Literature**

Bārbala Simšone

Zvaigzne ABC Publishers/Department for Latvian Language,  
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The paper is devoted to deciphering the meaning of the landscape-forming elements in contemporary fantasy genre literature. It discusses the specifics of fantasy landscape and environment as a unity of physical and metaphysical aspects demonstrated by the mythical associations of the objects described.

Archetypal landscapes in fantasy works such as *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien or the Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling make the imaginary worlds meaningful. To achieve greater credibility, authors allude to mythical geography (flat world, middle-earth, etc.) by giving these worlds names and geographic contours; maps of imaginary landscapes inserted in the texts constitute an important part of the works. Almost every fantasy landscape has a certain 'ideological load' – objects are geographically and spiritually significant, thus indicating a symbolic relation between a hero's journey and his subconscious processes; this animistic vision of the world is characteristic of myth.

The earth itself has a decisive, almost personified, role. Two commonly used fantasy landscapes have deeply symbolic meaning – a barren land shows an antagonist's destructive activities or a ruler's weakness; a fertile land is a symbolic reflection of paradise lost, or it can be an obstacle for the hero because it brings oblivion and stops the quest. This binary opposition also contributes to the mythical characteristics of fantasy geography.

## **How and Why the Benedictine Monks of the Holy Cross Lysiec Monastery Create a Legend about a Pagan Sanctuary?**

Leszek Słupecki  
Rzeszow University

Among numerous sacred places in the Polish landscape hills and mountains play a very special role, especially the so-called ‘Bald Mountains’ (Łyse Góry) – believed to be the gathering places of witches. In the 1950s, however, an idea about Slavic pagan sanctuaries that were allegedly from the early Middle Ages and were located on mountains appeared within Polish archaeology. A genuine case here is mount Sleza mentioned as a pagan place in the Thietmar Chronicle (with emphasis on the impressive mountain, not on the sanctuary located on it). Another interesting case is a completely different one. At the famous Benedictine Holy Cross monastery on mount Lysiec (established most probably in the 12th century) a legend developed from the 15th century up to the 18th century that a pagan sanctuary existed there before the monastery was established (even the names of gods worshiped there were mentioned); the legend also stresses the role of this mountain as a central point in the country both in pagan and in Christian times. The aim of the forgery was to testify to the ancient roots of the monastery in order to stress the importance of the place in discussions between convents about its rank. The belief in the former existence of this pagan cult place come to be in the 19th century as part of local folk tradition along with motif of witches gathering on the top of the Lysiec (Lysa Gora) for the Sabbath.



## **The Supernatural in Urban Spaces: Contemporary Legends**

Ingrida Šlepavičiūtė  
Vytautas Magnus University

The world of traditional legends is full of various extraordinary events and mythological creatures. Modern man tends to associate these legends with previous generations' lower education level, lack of knowledge about the world and confidence in fantasy and superstition, rather than rational facts based on scientific theories. It seems that intelligent and educated members of the urban community totally differ from their villager grandparents, who believed that mythical creatures can steal babies or an angry neighbour witch take away the cow's milk. Something definitely has changed in our minds, although various stories about unexplained supernatural events still exist in the contemporary urban environment.

I met a lot of people who told me about their own or their relative's mystical experiences, which they could not rationally explain, instead relating them with the afterlife world and its beings' manifestation in earth. It is interesting that such experiences don't have connections with the storyteller's age, sex or level of education. Our neighbours, relatives and friends, as well as strangers whom we meet on the street, tell us about ghosts and other supernatural phenomena. What does the abundance of such stories say about us? Are we tired from our own rationality, looking for unusual senses? Do we feel lonely and abandoned in this busy world? Do we desire a sign that other worlds exist behind this reality?

So the object of this paper is urban people's stories about strange, supernatural events in their environment – or in other words, contemporary legends. The purpose is to explain what determines the abundance of such stories and how witnesses to these extraordinary events react and behave when faced with an unusual supernatural world.

## Space in Contemporary Mongolian Demonology

Alevtina Solovyova

Russian State University for the Humanities

This research is dedicated to contemporary beliefs of devilry in Mongolia. It touches upon such matters as the rapport of tradition and mass culture, the transformation of folk plots within modern urban culture, preserving and transformation of demonological tradition within the new social and cultural conditions. The focus of attitude in this research is concentrated on the ghost story-telling – *chotgoriin yaria*. The author analyses the features of the forming and occurring of these texts in modern Mongolia, the image of demonological character *chotgor*, as well as the structure of ghost story-telling, its semantics and pragmatics. The author particularly touches such question as a space in contemporary Mongolian demonology, comparing the systems of demonological locus in traditional and contemporary urban cultures.

The research is based on materials and ghost stories collected by the author in 2009–2011 in Ulan-Bator. Materials of Russian-Mongolian expeditions (2006–2011, headed by S. Yu. Neklyudov) were also used, as well as published sources.

## **The Horse in Supernatural Places: From Seeing Ghosts to the Image of Hidden Treasure**

Giedrė Šukytė  
Šiauliai University

A horse, one of the first animals domesticated by humans, has various functions: it is used for working, riding, carrying and pulling loads. In traditional culture, the importance of the horse is prominent considering both the material and spiritual worlds. The horse could be distinguished as the most popular, and one of the most mythologised, animals in Lithuanian traditional folklore. Plenty of horse-related beliefs can also be found. Horses often played a significant role in various Lithuanian rituals and customs. As a result, the object of this paper is the horse, as mentioned in Lithuanian mythological and historical legends where supernatural places are described.

The first part of the paper analyses horse behaviour in Lithuanian narrative folklore texts: the horse's reaction to the supernatural environment. In the ancient worldview, there was a belief that animals can see more than the human eye. The behaviour of horses near places where ghosts are believed to dwell is analysed; as are the connection with other genre of Lithuanian folklore, such as proverbs or even folk songs.

The second part of the paper deals with the horse as a sign or image of hidden treasure, and ghost-horses. Narrative folklore texts tell of haunting horses, which are considered to signify a place where a treasure is hidden. In several genres of Lithuanian narrative folklore, a horse is associated with wealth and material welfare. In mythological and local legends, a horse is often understood as a sign of wealth. The features (colour, size, special marks, places and time of appearance, special physical capacities) of the ghost horses that are analysed strengthen the impression that a horse has connections with the other world and the devil.

## **Why were Legends about Changelings Told in 18th and 19th Century Sweden and Estonia (Poster presentation)**

Siiri Tomingas-Joandi  
University of Tartu

In the 18th and 19th century legends about changelings in Estonia and Sweden we hear about human children who supernatural beings exchanged with one of their own. In Sweden the child was changed by fairies, in Estonia it was the Devil who took the child and left a chunk of wood in the crib instead.

Human nature needs to explain the unexplainable even if the explanation means believing in supernatural forces. There are many different explanations of why these legends were told. One of them is that the legends are based on different illnesses that children were suffering from, and which made their appearance deformed, but which at that time were unknown to medicine, the most common being Down's syndrome. Simple malnutrition could also cause these symptoms and so the legends were told simply to explain away these illnesses. Children born with major physical defects have evoked a religious response since at least as early as 2000 BC.

The church could have made use of the common people's belief in the supernatural and the legends of changelings could have been one of the secret weapons used by the local ministers to make the parents christen their children sooner, and here it didn't matter if the antagonist is a fairy or the Devil. By scaring people with nature spirits or the Devil, the local ministers could influence the parents to christen their child sooner, as the child could be changed only if it wasn't christened. So there is another possible reason for the legends of changelings to be told and spread around the countryside.

Of course the legends were also told simply as amusement or entertainment, especially after urbanisation began in the second half of the 19th century. The legends, or at least the beliefs behind the legends, unfortunately started to die out more and more as the people were no longer in these situations and there was no use for the beliefs.

In my presentation I will shed some more light on the legend telling situations surrounding the legends of changelings, giving more detailed comparison materials between the two countries.

## **“He Comes up From the Cellar [Stairs], Sighs at the Door and Disappears Somewhere on the Stage”: About the Supernatural in Theatre**

Ave Tupits  
Estonian Literary Museum

The theatre has been seen as a magic place. This magic is not of course quite in accordance with the usual folkloric meaning, but it is not too far from it either. From a broader point of view, theatre is a place where magic can happen, often in terms of a fabulous performance or complicated technical tricks.

There is a certain loss of this magic as the stage doors are now open to public tours worldwide. This is a publicity stunt to gain wider attention, and is also a means of raising a new generation of future theatre-goers. The world of theatre magic is a way of creating interest behind the magic as far as the technical and practical sides of life in the theatre are concerned. Nevertheless, these excursions into the everyday practicalities and the interest in the theatre as a whole would not be alluring enough without occupational folklore, mainly stories about famous theatre people or incidents on stage. The theatre and the stage particularly is holy to most of those who are dedicated to their work in theatre and as usual this daily life creates a number of stories, songs, beliefs and traditions both within the walls of the theatre building as well as outside.

My presentation concentrates on some elements of the supernatural in theatre life, based on information gathered during an Estonian Folklore Archives project to collect theatre folklore as occupational lore. This project was conducted during the autumn and winter of 2010 and autumn of 2011, with the support from the Estonian Cultural Endowment.

## Comments on Snorri's Use of Ásgarðr, Miðgarðr and Útgarðr in the *Edda* and *Ynglingasaga*

Fjodor Uspenskij  
Russian Academy of Science

The Old Norse geographical names of European cities were usually formed with the help of the element *-borg*, 'city, fortified town' (Rómaborg = Rome, Jórsalaborg = Jerusalem, etc.). In contrast to these, the names of some Eastern European cities situated along the "Way from the Varangians to the Greeks" are characterised in Old Norse by the element *garðr* (Hólmgarðr = Novgorod, Kønugarðr = Kiev, and Miklagarðr = Constantinople). In Old Norse *garðr* was known to designate 'farmstead, estate, enclosure, yard', only in the place names mentioned above did the *garðr* element acquire the 'urban' colouring, which is intrinsic to the corresponding Slavonic words *grad* and *gorod*. The same *garðr* component was also used by Snorri Sturluson in his prosaic *Edda* and *Ynglingasaga* to denote the abodes of gods, as in Ásgarðr, Miðgarðr and Útgarðr, which were large towns and contrary to the meaning of *garðr*. This may reflect Snorri Sturluson's intention to localise mythological places somewhere in the East to portray them as exotic sites. In my paper I attempt to demonstrate how Snorri (according to his Euhemeristic approach to the heathen past) plays with the three mythological place names and models them after the Old Norse names of some East European localities.

## **Alternative Place-Lores? Belief Narratives of Kāmākhyā Temple in Silghat, Assam**

Ülo Valk  
University of Tartu

The place-lore of the Brahmaputra valley in Assam is rich in stories about the supreme deity Śiva, his consorts Satī and Pārvatī, and other goddesses. These narratives establish the mythic authority of many shrines, including the small temple of goddess Kāmākhyā in Silghat on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra in Nagaon district about 20 kilometres from the old city of Tezpur. The temple was established in 1745 by Emperor Pramatta Singha, who settled fifteen families there and donated them land to form the adjacent village, which today consists of about 70 households.

The paper is based on three field trips to the temple and village of Kāmākhyā during 2009–2012 period, and interviews with local people concentrating on the stories of three Brahmin families whose ancestors have been serving the temple since 1745. It explores the strategies and rhetoric devices of establishing the authority of the temple as a religious institution and enhancing the power of narrative gravitation in order to attract pilgrims and other visitors. Different versions of the mythic history of the temple and its stone images of deities (*murti*) display stability but also discrepancies and disagreements between the narrators. All these stories charge the venue and the surrounding landscape with memories and mythic events of the past and contribute towards making the place a “meaningful space” (T. Cresswell).



## **Notions of Barrows in the Language and Culture of the Don Cossacks**

Nina Vlaskina

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Barrow burials remained typical for the population of the south Russian steppe from the third millennium B.C. and up to the 13–14 centuries A.D. The quantity of the barrows built by different tribes at various times in the south of Russia is estimated in the thousands. Such a significant feature of a cultural landscape is reflected in the mythological notions of the population of the present territory. Notions of the barrows, reflected in the language and culture of the Don Cossacks, are considered in the paper on the extensive published and archival materials. Meanings of the lexeme “barrow” in dialect speech are analysed: namely the presence of the semes ‘man-made’ or ‘natural’, the relevance of the meaning of ‘a hillock, a hill, an elevation’, and uncharacteristic elements of Russian literary language like ‘earth-fill, a heap of the earth’. The functioning of the name “barrow” as a part of several types of place name is characterised: settlement names (steading Barrows, the city of Matveev the Barrow, etc.), the names of barrows on topographic maps (Babsky, the Bull, Island, Kamyshnyj, Sibirkov, etc.), folk names (Goretov, Drunk, Pundikov). Don Cossack genres of folklore in which the barrow is a significant locus are considered, the symbolical meanings inherent in a locus in texts of different types and common plots are analysed. In local legends the barrow figures as an element of the ‘own’ space (it is given the surname or nickname of a family living nearby: e.g. Pundikov) or as the marker of the border between the ‘own’ and the alien (people see off Cossacks leaving on service by accompanying them to a particular barrow). In fairy tales and mythological stories, barrows are associated with the kingdom to come (e.g. the hero buries Indigence under a barrow; the barrow is a place where treasure is buried); in charms with the sacral centre.

## **Taken into the Mountain**

Tora Wall  
The Nordic Museum

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the *mountain* as a supernatural place in Swedish folklore. The mountains were believed to be the home of ‘troll’ – a kind of supernatural being (who did not have anything in common with the trolls known from contemporary popular culture). A great mountain, out in the wilderness and far away from home, is of course a good place for a legend to take place both from a psychological and a dramatic perspective. From a folkloristic viewpoint the relationship between the place and the supernatural danger, is of great interest.

The lives of the troll were believed to be a lot like the lives of humans – they held cattle, baked bread, brewed beer and got married. Trolls and humans could be quite friendly with each other but many legends reminded the listener not to trust a supernatural being, as they belonged to ‘the other side’ and therefore were dangerous and unreliable.

People, especially women, could be taken by ‘trollen’ and forced to live with them in the mountain. The risk of this happening called for caution in everyday life, in particular if the woman was soon to get married or had just had a child. The popular beliefs and legends about trolls have many parallels with the folklore about elves in the Celtic islands.

This paper will focus mainly on legends about the passing between the world of the humans and the world of trollen and the inside of the mountain as a realm of fantasy. I will also discuss the psychological and the practical aspects of popular beliefs behind the legends in correlation with place.

## Localisation in Saga Dreams and Dreaming Scenes

Kendra Willson

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The persistent spatial anchoring of saga narrative, the spatial confusion of dreams and the prophetic nature of saga dreams interact in complex ways in the discourse structure of saga dream accounts and their narrative contexts.

Vagueness in spatial relations is typical of dream accounts cross-linguistically. Perelmutter (2008) describes their stance as gaze rather than narrative. She points out typical patterns in the use of motion verbs in Russian dream accounts found on internet web sites and their affinities to the narrative technique of Dostoevsky's *The Double*. It has also been observed that reports of dreams regarded as prophetic differ in their linguistic structure in Italian, involving more perfective tenses (Giorgi and Pianesi 2001; Perelmutter 2008: 82).

Icelandic sagas make extensive use of dreams as portents and psychological revelations (see e.g. Kelchner 1937; Lönnroth 2002 and references). Saga dreams also serve as schematic encapsulations of the narrative and have been compared to the Norwegian preludes found in several sagas (Andersson 1967: 8).

Sagas of Icelanders are also characterised by geographical specificity. This reflects their emphasis on the formation of the human landscape in the frontier society of Iceland, as well as techniques inherited from oral tradition which use specific place names and local details in order to establish the authority of the narrator and the verisimilitude of the narrative, related to the localisation of migratory legend.

Willson (forthcoming) points out that the only chapters in *Gísla saga Súrssonar* that do not contain overt references to locations are a subset of those involving Gísli's dream women. I suggest that this may reinforce the impression of the eroding line between dream and waking life in Gísli's perception as his mental condition deteriorates.

By contrast, the dream in the first chapter of Hrafnkels saga Freysgoða forms part of the settlement narrative of the region. It is embedded in spatially specific details presented using typical saga formulae for settlement narration. The dream itself contains reference to a specific direction and geographical point (*Vestr yfir Lagarfljót*, ‘west across Lagarfljót’), embedded in a command by a supernatural being which dictates the dreamer’s subsequent actions in waking life.

I will discuss further examples of spatial anchoring and its absence in saga dream accounts and the surrounding narrative. This will shed light on the extent to which these accounts are ‘realistic’, i.e. plausibly related to real dream-sharing practice (cf. e.g. Heijnen 2005), as well as on medieval Icelandic conceptualisations of dream space.

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