Magic Beliefs and Practices of Holy Thursday in the Modern Tradition of the Peasant Population of the Russian North (based on materials of the XXI century)

Abstract. In the imagination of the inhabitants of the Russian North Holy Thursday is saturated with magic practices directed at achieving the well-being, prosperity and health of the people for the whole of the coming year, at increasing the fertility of soil and animals and the production of crops. It is connected with many charms, interdictions and signs and is accompanied by prevention, protection and cleansing magic acts. The materials collected at the beginning of the 21st century among the peasant population of the Russian North show that many traditional practices known to be efficient, functional and stable in the past, are still applied by the inhabitants up to the present day.

Key words: Holy Week, Holy Thursday, Russian tradition in the Komi Republic, magic ritual practice, charm, incantation, well-wishing, ritual dialogue

In the imagination of the inhabitants of the Russian North Holy Thursday is saturated with magic practices directed at achieving the well-being, prosperity and health of the people for the whole coming year, at increasing the fertility of soil and animals and the production of crops. It is connected with many charms, interdictions and signs and is accompanied by prevention, protection and cleansing magic acts. The materials collected at the beginning of the 21st century among the peasant population of the Russian North show that many traditional practices known to be efficient, functional and stable in the past, are still applied by the inhabitants up to the present day.

We are concentrating on one local, compact area of Russian tradition in the Komi Republic – the village of Loima and other settlements belonging to the Loima rural administration. The village
of Loima was first mentioned in 1620 in the Census Book of the Sol’vychevodsk district. It belonged at different times to the Sol’vychevodsk, Lal’sk and Ust'-Sysol’sk districts of Vologda province and it was attached to the Komi Republic in 1921 (Zherebtsov 1994: 139).

When evaluating their ethnic, territorial and linguistic affiliation the inhabitants of this area align themselves with the Vologda-Vyatka territories of the Russian North and may refer to the “falsity” of attaching themselves to the Komi republic:

The Komi [people] were there, then [the Russian people] came over here from the Kirov and Vologda regions. Loima became Russian. It belonged to the Vologda province earlier […] then when the revolution happened, it was attached to the Komi Republic. (2004, ILLH: AF 1541-1)

Vyatka [province] was closer than the Komi [Republic]. In fact, we were only recently attached to Komi. We were in Archangelsk or Vologda […]. We are Russian, we do not know anything about Komi. Because we are Russian. (2004, ILLH: AF 1547-5)

All our customs are from Luza [region], our vocabulary comes from the Kirov region, we were concerned with Kirov more, than with Komi… (2004, ILLH: AF 1550-21)

The folk tradition of Loima was formed by Russian migrants moving from northern and north-eastern Russian provinces into an alien ethnic environment, in close contact with the Komi population. This factor promoted the maintenance of “traditional forms of folk culture as a means of reinforcing ‘otherness’ amidst the indigenous [Komi] population” (Vlasov and Kaneva 2006: 24–25) and this phenomenon occurred within the historical memory of the Loima Russians. Living in close proximity to the Komi population promoted the conservation of many elements of folk culture and the mythological picture of the world from the historical motherland of the immigrants. These elements are manifest in ritual folklore, in tales, in mythological personages as well as in other folklore forms (Ibid: 25).

Our expeditionary records from Loima concerning the present situation support and supplement known data collected earlier in the Russian North. All our materials were gathered in the years 2004, 2009 and 2010 from the native Russian population born between 1909–1940 who were at that time living in Loima.

In the popular terminology of Loima Holy Week is called Velikoden-nya (2004, ILLH: AF 1539-29). Holy Thursday is referred to variously as Great, Big, Clean, Terrible, each of which titles contains an aspect of the whole complex of notions concerning this day of the national calendar.

Magic actions performed on Holy Thursday are referred to as kolodovat’ (koldovat’sya) (2004, ILLH: AF 1539-29) dekovatsya [all the terms being pronounced with the stress on the first syllable] (2004, ILLH: AF 1549-13), meaning ‘to perform some magical actions in order to harm a human or animal’, ‘to perform some magical actions to ensure well-being, prosperity and marriage’.

The noted magical practices are divided into preventive, precautionary, cleansing, protective and others. Some general rules must
be followed: All magic actions must be carried out before sunrise; magic actions must not be talked about, otherwise they will not work (AA, 2009).

Magical practices aimed at prosperity and prevention form the largest group. Thus, in order to promote their own marriage, girls would “sweep” the road with a broom for their prospective bridegrooms (2004, ILLH: AF 1538-9). They would take a wooden harrow, chop it up and scatter the pieces at the crossroads (2004, ILLH: AF 1539-29). Girls would also sweep out the rubbish and watch to see which way the wind would blow it. From this direction their bridegroom would come (2004, SA KomiSC: F.5. Op.2. D.742. L.94). They would walk around the house with a broom and invite the bridegrooms, saying: 

\[\text{Suzhenyy, ryazhenyy, naydis', privedis', prikhodi svatat'sya} \]


The girls practiced witchcraft on this day; e.g. fortune-telling similar to the Christmas divinations. For example, the girls would try to find out about their future bridegroom in the bath-house (banya) at night: if a girl found something smooth on the stove, even a stone, her bridegroom would be handsome, good-looking (2004, ILLH: AF 1548-5).

When the mistress of the house stirred the sour cream she would say “these are not pots, they are pails” in order to have an abundance of sour cream in the next year; when she churned butter (2004, ILLH: AF 1541-19) or sifted flour she would use incantations aimed at increasing the amount of butter and ensuring a rich corn harvest in the following year (AA, 2006). Women prepared bread and large amounts of tasty baked goods/pastries (“everything tasty”) so that “all these products will be there for the whole year” (2004, ILLH: AF 1544-28). This rule also applied in certain portents. For example, if you had bread on Holy Thursday, there would be bread for the whole of the coming year (2004, ILLH: AF 1545-13). Women would also steal soil from other people’s gardens to ensure a good crop in their own (2004, ILLH: VF 1518-29).

Women put bread and salt on the icon shelf (bozhnitsa) before the icons so that it would “spend the night” near the icons on Holy Thursday (2004, ILLH: AF 1544-28). This rule also applied in certain portents. For example, if you had bread on Holy Thursday, there would be bread for the whole of the coming year (2004, ILLH: AF 1545-13). Salt was used in a variety of different situations (see below).

On Holy Thursday men simulated fishing: they climbed onto the roof or into the attic (povit’, podvoloka) and placed logs in their
fishing nets, so that “much fish would be caught” (variant: “large pikes would be caught”) (2004, ILLH: AF 1545-12). Imitation of fishing was sometimes accompanied by the exhortation Louis’, rybka, bol’shaya i malen’kaya “Be caught, fish, big and small” (AA, 2010). To ensure a successful hunt hunters repeated the spell: Volki, medvedi – vdal’, vdal’, vdal’, zaytsy, lisitsy – k nam, k nam, k nam “Wolves, bears, go away, away, away, hares, foxes [go] come to us, to us, to us” (AA, 2010).

Some actions were aimed at acquiring beauty, health, “general love, honour and respect”. In the early morning of Holy Thursday villagers climbed onto the roof and watched the sun rise (AA, 2009). In the morning, too, girls washed the windows with the words Kak na okoshko glyadyat, tak by i na devushku glyadeli “Just as people look at the window, so should they look at me, the girl” (AA, 2009). They would try to dress beautifully on this day of Holy Week (2004, ILLH: AF 1541-19). Girls also climbed onto the roof where they would push the eaves an upper log on the roof (ohlupen’) in order to gain for themselves “the respect of all” (AA, 2009).

Early in the morning kids turned somersaults on the thin crust of ice over snow to make sure they would always be lively and active (AA, 2009). Villagers washed themselves in fresh river water so that their “eyes would see well” (2004, ILLH: AF 1544-11) or used water with a silver or gold coin in it (2004, ILLH: VF 1524-26).

A number of magic practices were oriented towards boosting the fertility and health of domestic animals. Stones were placed on the fence so that the hawks would not carry off hens and chickens from the yard in summer (2010, SA KomiSC: F.5. Op.2. D.789. L.26). Fence stakes were bound up in pairs and then the villagers would perform a ritual dialogue: Odin sprashivaet: “Chto delaesh?” Yemu otvechali: “Ne kol’ya svyazyvayu, a u korshuna nogi” “One [man] asks: “What are you doing?” The second [man] answers: “I am not binding the stakes; I am binding the hawk’s feet”” (2010, SA KomiSC: F.5. Op.2. D.789. L.65).

Women cut off animals’ tails and placed the wool in the cattle-shed under the matitsa ‘upper beam’ (2004, ILLH: AF 1541-19), to ensure the animals would return home. Also at the time when cattle were sent out to pasture for the first time on the 6th of May (Yegoryev day) wool was put into the ear of the leading cow to ensure it would come home (AA, 2009).

Ritual dialogues spoken by the master and mistress of the house on Holy Thursday have been recorded. The purpose of these dialogues was to encourage cattle to come home from pasture and to recognize their own cattle-shed. The mistress of the house stood in the street before an open window and asked: “Is the cow at home?” The master stood near the window and answered, “At home”. This dialogue was repeated until all the animals of the farmstead were counted. In one such dialogue all the members of the family were mentioned, followed by all the animals (for more about this type of ritual dialogue see Tolstoy 1984: 26–30).

Some magic practices were aimed at cleansing, at the creation of “borders” between one’s own space and “other” spaces for the protection of the house, farm and members of the household. On Holy Thursday the villagers washed and cleaned their own houses (2004, ILLH: VF 1518-15). Early in the morning women would take water from three streams and spray the house and other buildings (2004, ILLH: AF 1554-11). Before sunrise they would walk around their own house with a prayer, having closed all doors and windows (2004, ILLH: AF 1550-31). With the aim of protecting themselves from harm and the evil eye, people drew crosses on the doors of cattle-sheds and houses (AA, 2006). The mistress of the house would seat herself on a broomstick and run round the outside of her house, chanting Krug domu, krug domu, krug nashego dvora bud’ kamenna stena, zheleznyy tyn “Around my house, around my house let there be a stone wall and an iron fence” (AA, 2009). This was done to protect the house from burglary.

People would toss a log, wood chip or small stone up onto the roof, crying Kladu gnet na tselyy god “I’m laying a weight on you for the whole year” (2004, ILLH: AF 1545-12) in the belief that the wind would not blow the roof off after that.

It is necessary to mention the belief in the active power of salt placed near the icons on Holy Thursday (velikodennaya, chetverizhnaya). Salt was kept there until the following Holy Thursday. It was accepted that salt had therapeutic, protective functions. People treated tonsillitis and gingivitis (zhaba) (2004, ILLH: AF 1545-14a) with
this salt and they also used it to wash dishes that had been tainted by mice, cockroaches, etc (2004, ILLH: VF 1544-28). Salt that had been kept for three years was thrown into the footprints of any person thought capable of causing harm (2004, ILLH: AF 1550-31).

In cattle-breeding rites the salt which had “stayed overnight” near the icons was kept for the entire year. It was given to ailing cattle and used at calving-time as a protection against the evil eye or harm. The salt was sprinkled around the cattle-shed to keep the animals safe from the evil eye (2004, ILLH: AF 1544-12).

An important characteristic of salt, the fact that it does not spoil, is emphasized in numerous short incantatory texts (charms and incantations) suggesting that “just as salt does not spoil, so no person/ no object will be spoiled”\(^2\). For example, to prevent “spoiling” an animal was salted from head to tail with the words *Kak eta sol’ domu derzhalas’, ne portilas’, tak chtoby u menia skotinushka ne portilas’, derzhalas’ by domu*. *Budte moi slova krepki, lepki naveki. Amin* “As this salt was kept in the house and did not spoil, so the cattle will not be spoiled, and will keep to their house. Let my words be strong and binding for ever. Amen” (AA, 2006). On Holy Thursday morning a small piece of salted bread was eaten with the words *Kak eta sol’ stoyala, ne urochilas’, khlebok ne urochilsya, tak chtoby raba Bozhiya ya, NN, ne urochilas*. *Budte moi slova krepki, lepki* “As this salt stayed the same and did not spoil and this piece of bread did not spoil so shall I, servant of God N. N. not be spoiled. May my words be strong and binding” (AA, 2010)). And a circle of salt was made around the cattle-shed and house with the words *Kak sol’ ne portitsya, tak zhe moy dom ne portis* “As salt does not spoil, so my house will not be spoiled” (2004, ILLH: AF 1550-32).

Holy Thursday moreover is called Terrible. In the popular imagination it became linked with the activity of sorcerers and with the special vulnerability of cattle and people at this time. A great deal of material collected during field-work presents examples of “harming” or “spoiling” as the special province of wizards (damage to people or animals, to make the girl to remain an old maid through the whole life, etc), which are connected with this particular day of Holy Week (for example, the ability to turn into a werewolf, the transmission of magic knowledge, etc). Some texts provide examples of regulations, prohibitions and rules relating to these activities.

It was accepted that nothing should be borrowed or lent on this day (2004, ILLH: AF 1548-28). Informants explain the existing interdiction against giving anything away as mitigating the danger of losing one’s property, suffering damage or losing happiness. For example, in one oral narrative the informant stated that his giving away a small amount of hay was the reason for the subsequent loss of all the hay and cattle in the household (2004, ILLH: VF 1521-55). An unknown object found in one’s own household on this day must be consumed or burnt with the words *Kak ogon’ gorit, tak chtoby u nego [u togo, kto podbrosil – Yu.K.] use gorelo vezde* “As fire burns, so shall everything everywhere belonging to that man [the one who left the object there – Yu.K.] be consumed by fire” (2010, SA KomiSC: F.5. Op.2. D.789. L.46).

Talking or yawning on the street was forbidden, otherwise the harm created through witchcraft would enters the body (AA, 2009). Animals could be spoiled by a sorcerer if hair or wool was cut from an animal’s coat or if its excrement was collected on this day (AA, 2006). Similarly, spouses could be separated if they drank something containing dog faeces collected on Holy Thursday (2004, ILLH: AF 1545-80).

Thus, the magic practices of Holy Thursday are diverse, but they are concentrated on achieving the well-being, prosperity and health of the people for the whole of the coming year, to encouraging fertility both in the land and in animals, a more abundant crop and protection from sorcerers. Comparative analysis of calendar ritual and folklore texts reveals specific and typical features deriving from the local tradition with its own individual profile but at the same time organically “embedded” in the culture of the Russian North. Analysis of the rituals and poetry of Holy Thursday in Loima reveals many “references” to the parent folk traditions of the Russian North, particularly the northern areas of the Kirov region (Luzsky, Oparinsky, Juryansky, Murashinsky districts) and the Vilegodsky district of Arkhangelsk region.
Acknowledgements

The article is written for the project of RFH (No 14-04-00077a).

Notes

1 All translations of texts from Russian into English are the work of the author. All local terms, folklore texts and quotations from interviews are in italics. Our explanations are given in the square brackets. The archive number and year of the folklore record are given in the round brackets.

2 In this case the term portit’ sa means ‘to get spoilt’, ‘to spoil’ or ‘go bad’; it differs from the portit’ ‘to spoil or harm by witchcraft’.

References


Abbreviations

AA – Author’s personal archive, records of 2006, 2009, 2010 years.

ILLH – Folklore collection of the Institute of Language, Literature, and History of the Komi Research Centre, Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Syktyvkar), AF – audio collection, VF – video collection.

SA KomiSC – Scientific Archive of Komi Scientific Centre, Ural Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Syktyvkar). F – fond (collection), op. – opis’ (list), d. – delo (file), l. – straniza (page).

Ekaterina Iagafova, Valeria Bondareva
Samara State Academy of Social Sciences and Humanities, Samara, Russia

Traditional Festive Rituals in Modern Chuvash Culture

Abstract. The paper describes traditional elements of the ritual, represented in the current calendar holidays and customs of the two ethno-religious groups of the Chuvash – adherents of traditional beliefs (“pagans”) and the Orthodox Chuvash. In the modern ritual practice of both groups there still exist a number of traditional elements. The rituals described here represent the actual practice of modern festive and ceremonial life of both pagan and Orthodox Chuvash. They contribute to developing and strengthening of ethnic identity and to the consolidation of the community on various levels of social interaction (family and family-related groups, rural community, regional community).

Key words: ritual, festive ceremonial culture, the Chuvash, pagans, Orthodox, traditional elements, syncretism

Ritual practice in the culture of any people is determined by their way of life, economic and cultural activities and at the same time reflects historical milestones. The formation of the festive ritual of Chuvash farmers was influenced by the seasonality of agricultural cycles. The majority of these ceremonies were held in the spring, summer and autumn months, as periods of the most intensive agricultural work (Salmin 2004: 162–174). Rituals preceded farming activities, sanctioned them and were believed to ensure the welfare and material prosperity of the people who participated in the rites.

By “traditional rituals” we mean items of cult practice dating back to the religious beliefs and practices within the so-called Chuvash “folk religion” – Chuvash faith (chavash tene); the latter is often referred to as “paganism” in scientific literature.

Contrary to the opinion of Chuvash ethnographer Anton K. Salmin, who believes there is some “terminological awkwardness” in the concept of “traditional rituals” (Salmin 2007: 57), the authors of the paper think it is possible to use it in the meaning of well-established
THE RITUAL YEAR 10
Magic in Rituals and Rituals in Magic
The Yearbook of the SIEF (Société Internationale d’Ethnologie et de Folklore) Working Group on the Ritual Year

General Editor: Emily Lyle
Editors for this Issue: Tatiana Minniyakhmetova, Kamila Velkoborská

Language Editors: Jenny Butler, Molly Carter, Cozette Griffin-Kremer, John Helsloot, Billy Mag Fhloinn, Emily Lyle, Thomas McKeen, Neill Martin, Elisabeth Warner

Layout: Liisa Vesik
Front Cover Photo: Yuri Lisovskiy “Four Houses – Four Seasons”
Front Cover Design: Andres Kuperjanov

Advisory Board: Maria Teresa Agozzino, Marion Bowman, Jenny Butler, Molly Carter, Kinga Gáspár, Evy Håland, Aado Lintrop, Neill Martin, Lina Midholm, Tatiana Minniyakhmetova, David Stanley, Elizabeth Warner

ISSN 2228-1347
ISBN (paper) 978-9949-544-54-7

The Yearbook was established in 2011 by merging former periodicals dedicated to the study of the Ritual Year: 9 volumes in 2005–2014.

Innsbruck, Tartu: ELM Scholarly Press.
Publication is supported by the authors and the project IRG 225, Estonian Folklore Institute.

© Authors
SIEF Working Group on the Ritual Year

| Contents |
|----------|-------------------------|
| **Foreword** | 13 |
| **The Ritual Year and Magical Features** |  |
| Lyle Emily (Edinburgh, Scotland) | 19 |
| *The Cosmic Connections of the Eight Key Points in the Indo-European Ritual Year* |
| Gunnell Terry (Reykjavik, Iceland) | 28 |
| *The Background and Nature of the Annual and Occasional Rituals of the Ásatráarfélag in Iceland* |
| Håland Evy Johanne (Bergen, Norway; Athens, Greece) | 41 |
| *Magical Ceremonies during the Ritual Year of the Greek Farmer* |
| Mihaylova Katya (Sofia, Bulgaria) | 61 |
| *The Fortune-Telling Customs of Andrzejki and Katarzynki in the Polish Ritual Year* |
| Gierek Bożena (Kraków, Poland) | 70 |
| *Rituals of the Easter Period in Poland* |
| Multari Anna (Messina, Italy) | 83 |
| *Coptic Magic and Its Phases* |
| Lielbārdis Aigars (Riga, Latvia) | 91 |
| *Catholic Saints in the Latvian Calendar* |
| Testa Alessandro (Pardubice, Czech Republic) | 100 |
| *The Re-Enchantment of Europe: “Traditional” Carnivals and the Belief in Propitiatory Magic (Two Ethnographic Cases from Italy and Czechia)* |
| Mifsud Chircop Marlene (Msida, Malta) | 110 |
| *Good Friday Processions on Contemporary Malta* |
Griffin-Kremer Cozette (Rambouillet, France) 121
*Doing Things Rightways and Three Times. From Maying Practices to Standard Procedures*

Mag Fhloinn Billy (Limerick, Ireland) 130
*Sacrificial Magic and the Twofold Division of the Irish Ritual Year*

Sedakova Irina (Moscow, Russia) 141
*Magico-Religious Symbolism of a Candle in the Slavic Calendar Rituals*

Minniyakhmetova Tatiana (Innsbruck, Austria) 152
*Ritual Fire in the Annual Cycle of Udmurt Calendar Customs*

Wilk Urszula (Warsaw, Poland) 162
*The Valencian Festival of Las Fallas as an Example of Symbolic Violence*

Ek-Nilsson Katarina (Uppsala, Sweden) 171
*Folk Belief and Rituals about Bread in Sweden. Some Interpretations and Comparisons with Today's Hipster Culture*

Ramšak Mojca (Ljubljana, Slovenia) 177
*The Magic of Wine Marketing: Invented Rituals of Slovene Wine Queens*

Rychkov Sergey (Kazan, Russia) 187
*Magic of a Toast*

Sánchez Natalías Celia (Zaragoza, Spain) 194
*Magical Poppets in the Western Roman Empire: a Case Study from the Fountain of Anna Perenna*

Kuhn Konrad (Basel, Switzerland) 203
*Relics from the 'Lost Valley' – Discourses on the Magic of Masks*

Shutova Nadezhda (Izhevsk, Russia) 213
*Ritual as a Means of Organizing the Traditional Udmurt Sacred Space (The late 19th – early 20th century)*

Khudyayev Andrey (Arkhangelsk, Russia) 220
*Magic Ritual and its Spatial Structure in Archaic Cultures of the North*

Verebélyi Kincső (Budapest, Hungary) 230
*Das Haus als geistiges Kraftfeld*

Ek-Nilsson Katarina (Uppsala, Sweden) 171
*Folk Belief and Rituals about Bread in Sweden. Some Interpretations and Comparisons with Today's Hipster Culture*

Gareís Iris (Frankfurt on Main, Germany) 239
*Politics and Magic in the Ritual Year: Case Studies from Pre-Columbian Peru to the Present*

Rancane Aida (Riga, Latvia) 248
*Motifs of Sacrifice in the Context of the Present-Day Search for Spiritual Experience in Latvia: Traditions and Innovations*

Urboniene Skaidre (Vilnius, Lithuania) 258
*The Destruction of Religious Monuments in Lithuania in Soviet Times: Stories, Magic and Beliefs*

Ek-Nilsson Katarina (Uppsala, Sweden) 171
*Folk Belief and Rituals about Bread in Sweden. Some Interpretations and Comparisons with Today's Hipster Culture*

Rancane Aida (Riga, Latvia) 248
*Motifs of Sacrifice in the Context of the Present-Day Search for Spiritual Experience in Latvia: Traditions and Innovations*

Urboniene Skaidre (Vilnius, Lithuania) 258
*The Destruction of Religious Monuments in Lithuania in Soviet Times: Stories, Magic and Beliefs*

**Innovations in Traditions**

Voigt Vilmos (Budapest, Hungary) 269
*Rebus – Charms – Evil Forces – Magic*

Tuczay Christa Agnes (Vienna, Austria) 275
*Necromancy from Antiquity to Medieval and Modern Times*

Šaknys Žilvytis (Vilnius, Lithuania) 286
*Magic or Entertainment? Marriage Divination and the Ritual Year in Lithuania*

Klimova Ksenia (Moscow, Russia) 294
*Fortune Telling in the Modern Greek Ritual Year*
The Types of Divination Used by the Don Cossacks: Highlighting Areas of Distribution

The Moon, Astronomic Objects and Symbolic Rites in Healing Strategies

Lunar Magic in the Modern Greek Folk Tradition

Where Do You Come From, Ash? – I Come From a Pure Place. Magical Healing Practices from the Region of the Thracian Cult Center of Starosel, Plovdiv region, Bulgaria

Circumscription Ritual in Russian Herbals of the 17th–early 20th Centuries

The Magic Herbs in the Modern Greek and Italian Calendar Customs

Magic as practised by the Brotherhood of Wolves (Czech Republic)

Magic in Everyday Life of Polish Wiccans

Reasoning Supernatural Experiences: Rationalism and Intuition

The Magic of Traditional Games: From Anthropological Theory to Contemporary Case Studies

Embodiment and Gender: Constructing Balkan Masculinities

Constructing the Image of Witch in Contemporary Russian Mythological Beliefs and Magical Practices

Magical Beliefs for Stealing the Milk of Animals. A Case-study on the Romanian Villages in Transylvania (18th–19th Centuries)

Treasure and Drache. Ritual and Economy in the Early Modern Period

Magic versus Rational Reasoning in Anecdotal Tale
Magic and Rituals in Family Tradition

Paukštytė–Šaknienė Rasa (Vilnius, Lithuania)  471
Ritual Year of Godparents and Godchildren in Contemporary Society in Lithuania

Stolyarova Guzel (Kazan, Russia),  479
Danilova Olga (Yoshkar-Ola, Russia)
Magic in the Traditional Culture of the Russian Population in the Mari Region

Mykytenko Oksana (Kiev, Ukraine)  487
Padlock and Key as Attributes of the Wedding Ceremony: Traditional Symbolism and Contemporary Magic (on the Material of the Slavic Tradition)

Rychkova Nadezhda (Kazan, Russia)  497
Magic as Communication in Family Rituals of Russians in Tatarstan

Beyond the Threshold and Magic Value

Pócs Éva (Budapest, Hungary)  507
The Living and the Dead at the Time of the Winter Solstice in Central Eastern European Beliefs

Stahl Irina (Bucharest, Romania)  519
The Nine Miraculous Graves: Seeking Help from Beyond

Neubauer-Petzoldt Ruth (Erlangen, Germany)  532
The Year of Magical Thinking – Rituals and Magical Thinking in Autobiographical Literature of Mourning

Analysing Magic in Rituals and New Field Researches

Krasheninnikova Yulia (Syktyvkar, Russia)  547
Magic Beliefs and Practices of Holy Thursday in the Modern Tradition of the Peasant Population of the Russian North (based on materials of the XXI century)

Iagafova Ekaterina, Bondareva Valeria (Samara, Russia)  557
Traditional Festive Rituals in Modern Chuvash Culture

Koval-Fuchylo Iryna (Kyiv, Ukraine)  568
Ukrainian Calendar Cry: the Magical Value and Functional Features of the Tradition

Graden Dorothy Clark (Valparaiso, USA)  579
Archaic Magic as Background to Artistic Inspiration and Interpretation

The Authors  583

SIEF Working Group on the Ritual Year

Inaugural Meeting  589
The Conferences  589
The Publications  590
Conference Memories  592