

УДК 398.3 (477.85)

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MAGIC PRACTICE OF THE AVERTING HYDROATMOSPHERIC DISASTERS OF ROMANIANS IN BUKOVINA

The article is devoted to the study of magical acts and practices, the purpose of which was the removal of hail clouds from settlements. The most common are those ritual acts: spells, prayers, subject to the previous ritual or complex ritual (medium of esoteric knowledge is preparing for a magical rite observing a strict fast on certain calendar holidays, performing daily prayers in a certain order; etc.), The use of domestic and Christian sacred objects (church bells, Easter dishes, icons, wooden amulets, etc.).

Keywords: *Bukovina, Romanians of Bukovina, Eastern Roman population, grindinar, gradovnik, prevention of hail beating in iron, in the beating of the church bells.*

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МАГИЧЕСКАЯ ПРАКТИКА ПРЕДОТВРАЩЕНИЯ ГИДРОАТМОСФЕРНЫХ КАТАКЛИЗМОВ У РУМЫН БУКОВИНЫ

Статья посвящена изучению магических действий и обрядов, целью которых был отвод градовых туч от населенных пунктов. Наиболее распространенными являются такие ритуальные акты: заклинания, молитвы, при условии выполнения предыдущего обряда или комплекса ритуальных действий (носитель эзотерических знаний готовится к магическому обряду соблюдая строгий пост на определенные календарные праздники, выполняет ежедневные молитвы в определенном порядке и др.), использование бытовых и христианских священных предметов (церковные колокола, пасхальные блюда, иконы, деревянные амулеты и др.).

Ключевые слова: *Буковина, румыны Буковины, восточнороманское население, grindinar, gradovnik, предотвращения града, биение в железо, биение в церковные колокола.*

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МАГІЧНА ПРАКТИКА ВІДВЕРНЕННЯ ГІДРОАТМОСФЕРНИХ КАТАКЛІЗМІВ У РУМУНІВ БУКОВИНИ

Відведення градових хмар та інших гідроатмосферних катаклізмів для етносів, що населяли територію Буковини, залишалось в кінці XIX – на поч. XX ст. своєрідним професійним заняттям. Так, у правових документах та індивідуальних свідченнях мешканців збереглися дані про так званих гріндінарів (укр. градівників) – носіїв езотеричних знань, які вміли за допомогою спеціальних обрядів і заклинань відвертати градові хмари від населених пунктів, які могли зашкодити урожаю та майну.

Серед східних романців персонаж гріндінаря ототожнюється з міфічною істотою соломонаря, сам термін гріндінар розповсюджений переважно на Буковині та у деяких регіонах Трансільванії. На всьому ж румунському етнічному

просторі соломонар поглинає у собі дві іпостасі: міфічної істоти, що керує градом (подорожуючий хмарами) та носія езотеричних знань, здатного відвернути градові хмари, бурю та інші природні катаклізми.

Градівники є членами сільської громади, що володіли езотеричними знаннями та отримували платню за відвернення граду чи інших атмосферних явищ від односельців. Подібні персонажі зафіксовані і в інших сусідніх слов'янських народів (особливо у східних та південних слов'ян). Звертає на себе увагу ідентичність обрядів відвернення градових хмар буковинських румунів із карпатськими гуцулами.

Магічні дії та обряди, що приводять до очікуваного результату, різняться на різних територіях. Найпоширенішими є заклинання, молитви за умови виконання попереднього обряду або комплексу ритуальних дій (особа, що готується до магічного обряду тримає суворий піст на певні календарні свята, виконує щоденні молитви у певному порядку та ін.), використання побутових та християнських сакральних предметів (церковні дзвони, великодні страви, ікони, дерев'яні амулети та ін.). Характерним чинником у мистецтві гріндінаря був принцип успадкування цих надприродних умінь і здібностей.

Ключові слова: Буковина, румуни Буковини, східнороманське населення, носії езотеричних знань, гріндінар, градівник, соломонар, відвернення граду, биття у залізо, биття у церковні дзвони.

The necessity to have anthropologic influence on the atmospheric phenomena gave rise to many rites and rituals based on meteorological magic. The magic rituals were realized with collecting efforts of community members. However, this tradition did not exclude the possibility of participating in common deal the persons with individual talent. It was recorded the special occupation of people who «drive away the storm-clouds» from villages and fields and they did that with greater or lesser success in the second part of the XIX – at the beginning of XX century in Bukovina. This is the kind of caste people endowed with supernatural properties (carriers of esoteric knowledge) able; according to the community opinion to influence upon atmospheric phenomena These people were called hradivnyk (so called «hail-man»). They probably should be attributed to «driving away the storm-clouds», the term was certified by pre-Christian Roman authors. In modern times the Eastern Romanian population of Bukovina just only case of hradivnyk remained being recorded by us in the village called Krasnoyiłsk, Storozhynetsky district, Chernivtsi region.

There were tested only evidences of the existence hradivnyk in other villages while in some Hutsul villages hradivnyky (molfars) exist and are respected people. The reality of our days is the fact that in several villages of the Romanian Bucovina is the custom to employ men at a certain calendar period of time whose duty is to prevent the village from hail clouds and other atmospheric disasters.

On the vast eastern territory of the Romans' residence the character of

hradivnyk is identified with another character mythical creature the character solomonar – , because the term hradivnyk is commonly used only in Bukovina and some parts of Transylvania. At around the same ethnic Romanian space solomonar is absorbing two characters at one: a mythical creature that controls hail («traveler of Clouds») and a carrier of esoteric knowledge that can avert hail clouds, storm and other natural disasters. In Bukovina people clearly distinguishes between two characters associated with meteorological magic: hradivnyk as medium of esoteric knowledge and solomonar who can fly on dragons and bring hail. Therefore, historiographical literature dedicated to hradivnyk is identical to the one that belongs to solomonar (I. Hinoyu, L. Berdan, V. Beltyanu, A. Oyishtyanu, I. Talosh etc.). Some opportunities to study the matter in comparative aspect is provide by N. Tolstoy, A. Hura, R. Kaindl, Y. Fisher, T. Demeter, N. Listova and others.

The practice of prevention from hail clouds more fully described in the Ukrainian Carpathians. Materials of this is found in the works of Vladimir Gnatyuk [7], Ivan Franko [15], A. Kolberg [17], A. Kurochkin [11], P. Bilyakivskiy [6] and others. Oskar Kolberg in that work pays special attention to common to all Slavs motive magical acts of hradivnyk and Principles of making up spells to drain the clouds. But metaphorical ranks in comparison to the actions of atmospheric phenomena anthropomorphic creatures in Ukrainian, Polish and Romanian Bukovina qualitatively is different, as it was noted by Vladimir Gnatyuk and Ivan Franco.

Theritualstoavert hail performed by hradivnyk in Romanian villages of Bukovina were not the subject of a special study which apparently updates the research.

Today, the Eastern Roman population of Bukovina has almost forgotten the tradition of hrindinar. In other villages we only managed to collect oral stories about the existence of the hrindinar in the past. The reality of our days is also the fact that in several villages Romanian Bukovina the custom is recorded to hire for a certain period of time calendar men whose duties are to advert hail clouds from the village clouds and other natural disasters with the help of church bells.

We recorded the only case of the existence of «profession hradivnyk» in our village Krasnoyilsk Storozhynets District. Savyeta Iliuts, born in 1944 inherited her knowledge from the mother Rahira Samoylivna Iliuts, born in 1910, who has already died. According to her testimony, she cooks 12 meatless dishes on the eve of such holidays as New Year, Christmas, Jordan. These days Savyeta Iliuts observed a strict fast. The rite for adverting hail begins with the fact that she comes out from home, sits near the tree with ritual foods, praying («Our Father»), and then says three special spells addressed to hydroatmospherical demonic characters and accompanied by spreading up ritual meals. After performing this ritual during the winter holidays, in summer

with the approaching of hail clouds Savyeta Iliuts goes out with «Easter» candle and basket, and, crossing herself spell: «...Călători! Călători! / V-am poftit pe la sărbători / Când erau mesele-ncărcate / Și bucatele fierte / Dacă n-ați venit atunci / Acum dute prin pustii, păduri / Unde nu locuiește nimeni, / Căci acolo-i pregătit pentru tine» / «...Travelers! Travelers! / Invite you to events, / When the tables were laid out / And the food is cooked. / If not then came, / Now go into the wilderness woods, / a recluse place, / Because harvested there for you». And having crossed herself with the «Easter» candle, she points the direction where hail clouds should be directed. At the end she kept saying: «Cum se împrăștie oamenii cu blidul acasă / Așa să se împrăștie furtuna și piatra...» / «As people run with Easter baskets home / So let dissipate storm and hail...» [1].

Considerable scientific interest in this context is represented in the court proceeding against Nicholas and Iwon Mehley in the village Ropcha (Storozhynetsky district now) that is one of the first mentions of people who were believed to be endowed with supernatural properties to advert hail, storm and other atmospheric disasters.

In the lawsuit motive of action is stated that there was the application to Storozhynetsky county court, signed June 23, 1869 15-th with the locals of Ropcha village. The plaintiffs complained Mehleyiv brothers who, in their opinion, misleading people they claimed to be «the Charmers of the hail» and that they are able to prevent that phenomenon and got paid for that a considerable amount of money from rural communities every year. The complaint essentially denies not only the ability to charm, but people expressed their dissatisfaction for the enormous fee (cash and payment in kind) which were taken for their services to farmers. They were demanding the court to impose a fine on their income [2, p.115-117]. At trial, Yvonne Mehley claimed that the knowledge and skills to advert hail he inherited from his grandfather Vasyl and father Elias. With the guidance of his father, he followed 13 large fasts during the year. He dispersed hail clouds with the movements of his hands turning to God through blessing. In the court file the text of that prayer is presented in Romanian: «Slavă mare la pâni și la darul sfinției sale, să bem, să mâncăm, și să ne veselim amândoi. O slavă mare, să fie duși de pe ocoalele noastre și de pe hotarele noastre, să fie duși pe codri, acolo să le (resle) și acolo să le veselești, și acolo să le topești, unde cocoșul negru nu cântă, unde fata mare nu știe a împleti coada» / «Oh, great glory to bread and the gift of His holiness, that we were drinking, eating and having fun together. Oh great glory to advert them out of our suburbs and our borders to be taken into the woods where they were fun where they melt, where black rooster does not sing, where the girl of marriageable cannot braid her hair» (Translation of the author). Accused affirmed that the clouds were dispersed after that prayer [2, p.118].

Comparing the text with the well-known spells of the bearers of esoteric knowledge aimed at preventing hail from the village and typical for Eastern Romanian population of Bukovina during the second half of XIX – early XX century we can argue that Yvonne Mehley kept silent in court the true destination of magical appeal. There is currently a spell to prevent hail, typical for Eastern Romanian population of Bukovina mentioned period, addressed mainly to solomonar, or the personification of hail clouds – the dragon, bull, etc.

Due to judicial inquiry of Iwon Mehley's material we learn out the fact that community members in Ropcha village and Storozhinets paid remuneration to his grandfather, father and him for 40 years since he used his gift. According to him, only from each household in Ropcha village every year he received «a quarter of a hundred of corn on the cob» and was dismissed from all public duties and obligations. Storozhynets community members paid him an annual salary which amounted to 12 florins a year. In conclusion, he noted another fact that can cure fractures and dislocations, and healed over a hundred people.

The Court humanly stated that Yvonne Mehley misled sincerely that he really had the power to divert hail from the fields, so doing that as his craft, collecting money every year and the food from the deceived with superstition locals. And taking into account that Yvonne Mehley hadn't evil intent to cause harm to people, the court released him from punishment [2, p.115, 120, 123].

Nowadays we are able to collect only fragmentary information about the practice of existed hrindinars. This fact, in particular, appears in the Central Scientific Archive Academy of Sciences of Moldova. Thus, in 1975 the members of a scientific expedition led by E. Zhunhiyetu learned from locals of Voloka village Hlybotskyi district the evidence of human existence, popularly called pyetrar who to advert hail clouds went out naked on the outskirts of a village or in the field with a scythe in his hand [4, p. 95-96]. Among ethnographic expedition materials collected in the village Malynivka Novoselytsia district in 1971, refers to the beating of church bells when approaching hail [45, c.90].

The Korchivtsi villagers remember fragmentary data on the existence of hrindinars in the past as well as the inhabitants of the villages of Yordaneshty, Suchevely and Valya Kuzmin, Kolinkivtsi of Hlybotskyi, Khotynskyi districts in Chernivtsi region and in Ukrainian villages Dermeneshty and Velyka Marytseya of Suceava County (Romania) [1]. Old-timers in Korchivtsi remember even person – Ivan Tkachuk, born in 1901. According to the witness of old residents when Ivan Tkachuk got his strength having mowed grass in the mountains and rescued the frog from the jaws of the snake. Later he began to turn away from the village hail clouds with that stick. In the village Yordaneshty people still remember that during the approach to the village hail clouds the man got naked and with certain movements of his hands and special spells averted the clouds

from the village. In Ukrainian villages and Dermeneshty and Velyka Marytseya that man was called «hradovyi».

The tradition of hiring men to avert hail with the help of church bells is still kept and was recorded by us in a number of Romanian and Ukrainian villages in Bukovina. According to the stories of Andronicus Tsughuy, born in 1934, whom we interviewed in the village Kupka he is appointed by the community as a shepherd for 4-5 months (April – September). Money to pay for him was collected by 2-3 people from every corner of the village. In the 1950-s the person was given bucket of corn, potatoes and some money. When storms approach he with the help of a sexton ring four bells of two bell towers simultaneously. And there is also a specially consecrated church bell for preventing from hail in Korchivtsi. This position is considered to be very honorable. The people believe that the bell tower has the cleanest air even without radiation. Ordinary people are allowed to ring bells in the church only once a year, on the third day after Easter [1].

Details of this custom to ring church bells with the aim of preventing from hail were described in the late nineteenth century by S.F. Marian. Thus, one of his manuscripts which is kept in the National Library of the Romanian Academy of Sciences provides the information on hiring two people named guardians of the castle (*păzitori de grindine*), who rang the bells when hail clouds were approaching the outskirts of the village. For their work they received in the fall of each countryman a number of ears of corn. But if, in the opinion of the community, the village suffered from severe storms because this man was too lazy to drive away the clouds using the bell, he could be bring to justice including to a fine [3, p.12].

The custom as common in Bukovina was also described by E. Nikulitse-Voronca [20, c.160]. Apart from the Eastern Romans ritual bell for averting hail clouds was also famous for Serbs, Croats, Poles and other nations [14, c.146].

During the field research we found out another way to avert hail, so-called «beating of iron». In particular, the custom is recorded both in the Romanian villages such as Kolinkivtsi, Khotyn district and Valya Kuzmin of Hlybotskyi district and in the Ukrainian village Dermeneshty Suceava County. According to the witnesses of an old-timer, Nikolai Nastas, born in 1928, he remembered from his childhood while approaching hail clouds, he beat the iron, believing that in that way he would avert hail clouds from the village. He beat the rail tied to one of the trees in the courtyard with an iron rod. He had chosen the iron himself due to its sounding. According to witnesses this tradition in Kolinkivtsi was inherited from generation to generation. As field researches have shown, there are more than a dozen such people [1]. We can assume that the «beating of iron» is the pagan practice, and «the chiming of the bells» replaced it in times of Christianity.

It should be noted that the practice of «beat of iron» or to ring into church bells prevails in most territories of living the Eastern Romans. And they used to beat iron as to prevent from hail clouds as well as to cause rain. We can find the evidence of this old tradition of the Romans in the East in the text dated back III century B.C. It tells us that the ancient Gets used to avert storm by beating the drums: «Gets met the thunder of Zeus with their drums» [22, p.635].

Apparently, the practice of averting hail formerly was known to all the owners. Eventually under the influence of Christianity it had become the privilege of individuals. We also can find some meaningful material on the rites performed by hrindinars of Romanians in Bukovina in the second half of XIX – early XX century in scientific papers of S.F. Marian, E. Nikulitse-Voronca, A. Gorovey, T. Pamphile, T. Herman, in the responses to ethnographic questionnaires of B.P. Hazhdeu, N. Densushanu, etc. The available sources enable us to reconstruct some ritual practices that were carried out with a view to preventing hail clouds by hrindinars. Thus, the most common was a ritual according to which hrindinar came to the outskirts of the village and averted hail clouds with some ritual objects (hazel branch, twig, which saved the frog from the jaws of the snake, metal products). Sometimes they used a more sophisticated magical practices, used willow rod, which saved the frog out of the mouth of a snake [18, p. 30-31, 34, 51, 159], went into the field only in housing, clothed the naked body fur inside, turned hail away with the specially made stick which at one end has a special hollow filled with consecrated wheat [21, p.806].

In this context, we must remember that the Eastern Slavs endowed twig which saved from the jaws of the snake frog special magical properties. This rod dispersed hail clouds in the north of Belarus, the Belarusian Polesie in the Lublin province, in Zhytomyr region, Galicia, Transcarpathia, Hutsul. In Malopolska such stick to dispel the hail clouds sometimes put into the field [9, c. 332; 57,102-103; 58, 454]. Ukrainian Bukovina also believed that stick through which snake had passed or it was killed with can avert hail and storm [12, c. 107].

The performance of ritual actions for averting hail clouds by women was recorded of the Eastern Romanian population in Bukovina. Thus, In Seret (southern Bukovina) one of the older women used to get naked, went behind her house and touched consecrated willow buds with her hands when hail clouds were approaching to the village [19, p.185-186]. Old-timers of Valya Kuzmin village in Hlybtskyi district still remember how in the 80's. XX century when hail clouds approaching the outskirts of the village the woman in a white shirt went to the field and started to raise his hands to the cloud guiding them to the forests [1]. Often hrindinar took some training before the ritual to avert hail clouds. He fasted on Christmas Eve, St. Basil and Epiphany. Thus, sitting at a table in that place where the priest had sat who went with icons of the village,

he preached the special spell against mythical creatures that ruled hail clouds: «Voi solomonarilor, / Dușmanii creștinilor! / Poftim azi la mine-n casă / Și veți sta l-această masă / Și cu mine veți mânca, / Din bucate veți gusta, / Câte sunt pe masa mea. / Poftim azi de ospătați / Ca nimic să nu-mi stricați...» / «You solomonari, / Enemies Christians! / Today I invite you to my house / I'll sit at this table / Help yourself, / Try dishes / Which are on my desk. / I invite to help yourself now, / not to destroy anything ... » [19, c. 32-33].

Learning the source material about magical practices of hrindinars makes it possible to reconstruct the main features of ritual to avert hail. So, first hrindinar invited dead ancestors, hail and other atmospheric disasters to a New Year's or Christmas 'Eve holly meal and then people who were in charge of the elements (solomonar, dragon and others.). He lured them with ritual meals and special spells (ritual offering). The settled contact with them had to work in the summer when the weather was bad. Then he directed approaching hail storm with the ritual objects to the other side into deserted places. Hrindinar used such ritual objects as hazel branch, twig, which he delivered from the mouth of frog snake, metal things and others.

The Carpathian hrdivnyks are also famous for their symbolic invitation for a storm to ritual meal [16, c. 228].

So, speaking about the term hrdivnyk used by the Eastern Romanian population in Bukovina we should determine the local character of dissemination of this term. In most areas of residence of the Eastern Romanians, it was replaced by the term solomonar that led to the identification of these two different functional characters associated with meteorological magic. Even in the works of S.F. Marian, I.H. Sbiyera, Ye. Nikulitse-Voronca we can find the folk beliefs and rituals in which people begin to identify these characters. As for the genesis of rites performed by hrdivnyk, that unlike solomonar which scientists believe to be the successor Dako-Gets priests, being mentioned by Strabon as the term «kapnobatay», so hrdivnyk should be considered a member of the rural community, which had some esoteric knowledge and was paid for prevention of hail or other weather phenomena. This is evidenced by the existence in other neighboring Slavic peoples the same characters (especially in eastern and southern Slavs). We also should note the identity of the ceremonies for preventing of hail clouds of Romanians from Bukovina and the Carpathian Hutsuls where the activities of such persons were of a purely professional nature of the late XIX – early XX century. Since at the beginning of the twentieth century Romanian population in Bukovyna this term is gradually losing its meaning, in some cases it is identified with the term solomonar.

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