

The Fairy Seers of Eastern Serbia: Seeing Fairies—Speaking through Trance

Maria Vivod

The Fairy-Seer

The fairy-seers of southeastern Europe are (mostly) women who are able to communicate with women-like creatures from the supernatural world. Sometimes the fairy-seers induce a trance state in order to establish communication with these creatures. During their communication with the fairies the fairy-seers can prophesy about future events. The fairy-seers can also deliver messages to the living on behalf of their deceased relatives. Similarly, they advise about how to heal an ill individual or the treatment of that individual can proceed after consulting the fairies. These illnesses are usually a form of so called “fairy-illness”—a disorder that has its origins in a curse or a spell wrought by fairies offended by that individual. In the narratives of fairy-seers, fairies are described as three young, beautiful longhaired women, dressed either in white or in black. The women who can see and speak to the fairies have been chosen by them early on, usually in their childhood or adolescence. By dancing and singing on special days of the orthodox Christian calendar, these women fall into a trance state and then communicate with “their sisters,” as these invisible creatures are called by these women.

The fairy-seers are called numerous names in various languages across southeastern Europe. The semantic field of these varying designations is far from identical: sometimes the seers need not enter into a trance to see them, sometimes they fight (nocturnal) battles in the sky to ensure good crops for their region, where they live and work as any normal human being. But there is one common denominator to all of them: they undergo a process of initiation (prompted by these creatures) and the invisible creatures with whom they communicate are females. I choose to use this term in an attempt to cover and to depict a vast range of more or less similar phenomena across the Balkans with an English term, with the goal of creating an “umbrella term” in the English language (nowadays a *lingua franca*) for working purposes.

The Context

The phenomenon of individuals capable of communication with creatures of the invisible world—*vilarkas* (“the ones from the fairies”), *padalicas* (“the ones who fall”), *vilenicas* (“the ones from the fairies”)—and of doing good in their communities of birth in southeastern Europe

has been scientifically analyzed over the past five or six decades from several perspectives. First, as fragments of pre-Christian belief-systems that were mostly to be found in historical documents such as witch-hunt trials (see Ginzburg 1966 for Italy; Klaniczay 1983, 1984, and 2006 for Hungary; Henningsen 1993 and Čiča 2002a for Croatia). Second, as remnants of still existing complex popular belief systems about witches and fairies and the syncretism between these two female benevolent/malevolent creatures (for instance Pòcs 1986 and Zentai 1976 for Central Europe; Bošković-Štulli 1953 and 1960 for Croatia; Đorđević 1952 for Serbia and Yugoslavia). Third, from the ethnomedical standpoint as vestiges of traditional holistic beliefs about human health and its connection to nature and divinities (for Serbia see Tucakov 1965; Radenković 1996; Vivod 2014). Traces of this phenomenon, such as the texts of charms or fairy-tales, were often analyzed as bits and pieces of the local folklore (for Serbia see: Zečević 1981; Radenković 1996; Šešo 2003; Đorđević 1989).

Oral tradition studies was one of the main fields that produced a detailed description of and provided the most abundant bibliography about fairy-seeing individuals. The texts of charms and songs and healing procedures were one of the topics to which some of the best scientific pieces were consecrated (see Pòcs 1985 for the Hungarian speaking region or Radenković 1996 for the South-Slavic population). Majzner (1921), Luka Šešo (2003) and Bošković-Štulli (1953 and 1960) provided actual descriptions and collected narratives from individuals who either knew a fairy-seeing person or someone who consulted a fairy-seer. The phenomenon was usually elaborated from the point of view of the creatures as the most picturesque elements of oral literature and folklore. Described as fate-determining beings, deities, and dead souls who died without proper rites-of-passage, traces of these creatures remain in numerous tales, songs, and charms. The other angle—the one about the communicators—was, and still is, usually approached by ethnomedical studies from the angle of traditional healers and seers (see Pòcs 1971; Pòcs 1989; Radenković 1996). These studies covered either the illnesses the creatures inflicted on humans, the healers as mediators, or the nature of healers (the taxonomy of a healer) and the origins of the powers a healer claimed to have. Due to the numerous names, denominations of illness, creatures, healers, and areas in which the phenomena used to appear, these researchers covered a vast field that sometimes intermingled with other research interests (for instance Christianity, popular culture, or ethnobotanics, among others). In some regions the word for the healer is the same as the word used to name these creatures (for instance, *samovila* in Serbian) (Radenković 1996:14),¹ and it is this detail—that they communicate with the invisible female creatures—that distinguishes them from other healing and divination methods in the region.

¹The creatures and their mediators—or their “representatives” among the humans, or the healers against “their” illnesses—often have the same names, the same denominations. For instance, the female creatures (in Serbian popular beliefs) who attacked pregnant, parturient women, newly delivered, nursing mothers and infants are called with the same term as the midwife, or as the illnesses they bring to their victims: “*babice*” (see Zečević 1966 and Vivod 2008). Or the *rusalias* (singular, *rusalja*, and plural, *rusalje*) who are the creatures—sometimes the deceased humans who died before accomplishing an important “stage” in their life (baptism, marriage, successful childbirth) or are the female invisible creatures who can bring either health or illness to a community, or the individuals who see them and communicate with them by embodying them (see Radenković 2014; Majzner 1921; Taloş 2002; Gueorguieva 1990).

Earlier studies were done mainly from a diachronic perspective. That research relied chiefly on the investigation of historical documents such as documents from witch-hunt trials, archives, or, in the best case, ethnographic monographs or ethnographic collections of narratives given by individuals who themselves were not fairy-seers but who had the occasion to hear about a particular fairy-seer or visited or consulted one. In most of these cases, the research was based on second-hand and even third-hand testimonies or official documents, reflecting an etic perspective. More recent synchronic studies examine New-Age versions of once existing practices. Often “new traditions”—essentially re-created practices of older beliefs and practices—offered a more or less contemporary examples of once living customs (see Kis-Halas 2012; Vivod 2015).

My present aim is to analyze two actual, contemporary cases from the Vlach community² of eastern Serbia, where I had the opportunity to observe two women known to be “fairy-seers.” The fieldwork basis for this article was done in the spring and summer of 2015 in the region near the city of Majdanpek.³ The two women live in separate but neighboring villages and purposefully fall into trances on special days of the orthodox Christian calendar. Each has her own “technique” to deliberately achieve a trance state: one by dancing and singing, the other by lying down and reciting and singing. During their trance they communicate with their “sisters”—non-living creatures described as beautiful young women—who are invisible to other humans. Through their “sisters” both women can also communicate with deceased people.

In their main characteristics both cases are similar to the wider phenomena of “fairy-seers” throughout central and southeastern Europe.⁴ These seers are usually women who fall into a trance state by dancing or singing on special days under certain circumstances. After their communication with the fairies, the seer can proceed to treat individuals suffering from spells or from some kind of “fairy-illness” (Radenković 1996:48-50). Fairy-illnesses are emotional and/or physical disorders similar to states described in narratives as being under a spell or an evil-charm. Such states are induced by means of magic and can only be healed or treated through magic. Yugoslav ethnographers who described 1950s era communities in which fairy-seers regularly practiced their skills stressed they were vanishing and forecast the imminent disappearance of the fairy-seers as incompatible with the new, socialist era (see Knežević 1967; Tomić 1950). This essay first describes the notion of the “fairy-seer,” then reviews the usual appellations found in various Slavic and non-Slavic languages across southeastern Europe given to the phenomena of individuals, mediators with the world of fairies. I aim to explore the conditions of the trance and of initiation according to the first-hand testimony of two fairy-seers:

²Vlach language—a daco-rumanian dialect has about 100,000 speakers and is spoken by the Vlach community of eastern Serbia, known by the endonym *limba română*; more: http://lacito.vjf.cnrs.fr/ALC/Languages/Valaque_popup.htm

³Fieldwork was done during April, May, and July 2015; the methodology used was ethnography, observation, participant observation, informal interviews (the languages used were Vlach and Serbian) with the inhabitants of the villages : Crnajka, Kulma Topolnica, and Rudna Glava, in the region of the city of Majdanpek. During the trance of Ivanka, photographs and video footage was made (April 2015). All the relating visual material can be found in the archive of the University of Pécs, Hungary.

⁴I tackled the topic of healers claiming to be able to communicate with invisible (female) creatures in a couple of previous papers from other angles (Vivod 2014, 2008a, 2008b, and 2006).

the circumstances of their initiation—the moment when they started seeing these creatures—and the settings of their fall into trance in their own words.

The Concept

First, one must point out that the term “fairy-seer” is a term coined to incorporate the expressions and the notions found in various languages of southeastern Europe where the phenomenon of individuals who can communicate with women-shaped creatures existed or survived. The coined term aims to cover a multitude of expressions in various languages of this region (Croatian, Serbian, Vlach, Albanian, Bosnian, and so on). The names used to identify the individuals who are mediators with invisible female creatures depends in part on whether the ability to communicate is combined with the ability to heal. The creatures with whom the communication is established are called: (Serbo-Croatian-Bosnian-Montenegrin in the singular): *vila* (“fairy”), *diva* (“fairy”), *tetka* (“aunt”), *vilinica* (“small fairy”), *rusalja* (“water fairy”), *rusalka* (“water fairy”), *ona* (“she”), *lepa* (“the pretty one”), and so on.

While the healer—or the one who communicates with these creatures—is called (Serbo-Croatian-Bosnian-Montenegrin) in singular: *padalica* (“the one who falls”), *samovila* (“fairy,” “the one who can communicate with fairies”), *samodiva* (“fairy,” “the one who can communicate with fairies”), *vilenica* (“fairy,” “the one who can communicate with fairies”), *vilenjak*, *vilovita* (“the one who can communicate with fairies”), *bajalica* (“enchantress”), *rusalja* (“water fairy”), and so forth.

I am aware that the English term “fairy-seer” can potentially be understood as an attempt to equate the various terms and phenomena they designate, that is not my intent. My intent is to offer researchers unfamiliar with local, dialectal expressions and denominations a workable English umbrella term for the purpose of comparative studies. Therefore I first define the characteristics of who can be called a “fairy-seer.” The fairy-seers of central and southeastern Europe are usually women who are able to communicate with women-like creatures from the invisible world. In order to establish a successful communication they sometimes need to fall into a self-induced trance state, this is accomplished in several different ways. To describe the fairy-seers and their forms of practice I present an inventory of basic characteristics with the caveat that it is not exhaustive; the absence of one or more enumerated features does not indicate a fairy-seer of lesser status. The list is derived from descriptions provided by several ethnographical studies (see Pòcs 1971;⁵ Radenković 1996; Bošković-Štulli 1953; Čiča 2002a and b; Zentai 1976; Henningsen 1993; Eliade 1975, among others) and corroborated by fieldwork done in 2015.

These are individuals who can see creatures from the invisible world—sometimes in the bibliography described as demons in the spirit of Christian demonology (Pòcs 1989; Radenković 2014:14-17)—and who can communicate with them, meaning they can speak and also hear them. These creatures are described as female. They can be benevolent and helpful but can also

⁵Éva Pocs (1986:184) produced a very detailed list for the Balkans organized by the country where the scholar worked.

be harmful to humans sometimes. They are usually described as beautiful and young, long-haired, and dressed either in white or in black. They live in the nature (lakes, forests, mountains) in a parallel world. The fairy-seer is obliged to transmit the “messages” she receives, and should she fail to do so she can be “punished” by these creatures for the omission. The punishment usually comes in the form of some accident or illness. The punishment is often described as a temporary incapacity to move or speak.

Customarily, their first contact with fairies occur in childhood. They may have been kidnapped and spent time in the fairy world or it arose through an illness: the symptoms of the seer’s childhood illness are described as similar to a state of being under a charm or a spell.

The ability to see and communicate on a regular basis, on precise days, with these creatures is usually possessed by a woman. There are, nevertheless, recorded ethnographically described cases of men who receive messages from the female-like creatures.

In order to become a “fairy-seer” one must undergo an initiation. These initiations are described as “ecstatic” in the literature (see Klanizcay 2006; Čiča 2002a and b), and the leitmotif of climbing a mountain or climbing to the top of a tree (interestingly, it is often a pear-tree) is frequent. Alternately, the narrative may mention falling into a deep abyss in the mountains. The creatures choose the individual to be initiated. The chosen ones are the only one who can be initiated and who, from that point on, see and hear these creatures. The initiation happens in an imagined group: the individual is alone with several of the creatures and the atmosphere is described as festive: there is much singing of specific songs and dancing in a trance-like state. The initiated individuals become “family-bound” with these creatures. The appellation of “sisters” is a recurrent leitmotif in the verbal communication the seers address to these creatures.

The non-initiated may encounter these creatures at special places in nature: a special tree, a lake or a stream. Trees are particularly propitious places for such encounters. Although “normal” individuals cannot ordinarily see or hear these special creatures, they can trespass on their territory. The uninitiated can become ill as a sort of punishment if they trespass into a special place belonging to these creatures.

Communication between the initiated and the fairies takes place on specific days of the year (once or twice a year; rarely more often) that are foreseen in advance of that day; healing a fairy-illnesses may, nonetheless, occur throughout the year. The trance that enables communication must be induced at specific time of the special day: either in the early-morning or in the late-afternoon. Certain prohibitions obtain on preparing for the communication: absolute silence is required before the trance; certain articles of clothing must be worn (for instance, certain belts or light-colored clothes); the communicator has to be bodily “clean” (not menstruating; freshly washed). The mediator’s clients—either those wanting to consult the creatures or those healed during the past year—reward the seer for the communication adduced with presents (traditionally certain objects or more often money).

During the trance different emotional states are expressed: the communicator is crying, begging, or ecstatically happy. The emotional states are also “messages” about what the individual witnesses in the creature world or they anticipate information that is transmitted to the world of the living.

In the narratives given by the communicators or by those individuals who have heard or encountered them first-hand, the most recurrent leitmotif is that of climbing a tree and witnessing

what the fairies do, how they live, and how they look. Sometimes the creatures escort the initiated individual on a journey. In journey narratives falling into an abyss, or flying in the sky above the mountains are frequent motifs. The creatures have individual names: Ilona, Helena, Elena, Diana, Sinziana, Maria, *Muma*, *Majka Prečasa* (“the honorable/the most clean Mother”).

The communications are of various natures: a prediction about the future (future of a person who came for a “consultation” or a predilection about a whole region or country); advice about how to heal a person (a recipe of curative herbs or a charm against a spell); communication with the deceased relatives the fairy-seer’s clients. The seeing of hidden treasures during trance is possible. The act of seeing is strongly connected with the capacity of charming and spell-casting. The individuals who can see these creatures can also heal illnesses, particularly spells and ill-charms by means of spell-casting and charming.

Fairy-seeing is a group-phenomenon in two respects. The initiated are initiated by a group of creatures and they are aware of the existence of other initiates in their region. The initiated “know” each other, and can recognize familiar faces while in a trance state. The initiated can foresee the “coming” of a future initiate. And, finally, they maintain contact between themselves, often in their dreams. On the day of a trance event, people from the region flock to where the individual in question induces the trance in order to witness the trance and the divination. In that sense, the communities (village, region) of the fairy-seer are also active participants in a group phenomenon in which the trance-performer stands in one dimension while “public,” the observers and the consultants, stand in another.

*Šojmanje, Šojmanka, Šojmanosa*⁶

In a 1950 paper the Yugoslav ethnographer Persida Tomić conveys detailed descriptions of the fairy-seeing phenomena from Central Serbia among the ethnic minority of the “Vlach Gypsies” (*vlaški cigani* in Serbian), as I call them. She also refers to the fairy-seers as *šojmanose* (Vlach term) or the *vilarkas* (feminine form of a Serbian term) or *vilars* (masculine form of a Serbian term). Zoran Čica (2002a and b) mentions this particular word *šojmanosa* in a book whose topic is the phenomenon of fairy-seeing individuals from a historical perspective, particularly during the witch-hunting period of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Čiča writes about the Christian “contamination” of it; he particularly examines the Christian savant perspective on nightly gatherings of women initiates in practices of healing and charming that were labeled as the witches Sabbaths. He notes that Persida Tomić does not specify whether the *šojmanka* are the women (otherwise called *vilarka-s* or *vilars-s* in Serbian) who can see the women-like creatures—in the article termed “fairies” (*vile*)—or if this name can be also applied to the creatures who are seen by them. His excellent book deals precisely with the topic of fairy-seeing, fairy-communicating individuals while using the terms *vilenica-s* and *vilenjak-s*, which are the usual terms in Croatian speaking regions. In his study based on historical documents (mostly witch trials in Croatia), *vilenica-s* and *vilenjak-s* (Croatian terms) are identified as individuals who treated the sick and mediated between the human world and the invisible world.

⁶I use the Serbian transcription of the term relating to this phenomenon.

Čiča calls the phenomenon of “*vilenica* and *vilenjak* the remnants of a pre-Christian cult” (Čiča 2002a). In both cases, Tomić and Čiča do not dwell on the signification of the Vlach term *šojmanka*. It is treated as if this were the Vlach term for the same “fairy-seeing” phenomenon.

Nevertheless Tomić provides a detailed account of fairy-seeing related events that she witnessed in 1946 and 1947. She describes the main characteristics of the *šojmankas*, employing the term in parallel with the Serbian *vilarka* (feminine) and *vilar* (masculine). The fact that the healing and the communication happens in a state of the trance invites comparison of this phenomenon with another Vlach phenomena, the *rusaljes* of Duboko (*dubočke rusalje*—Serbian term, also known in Vlach and Romanian) village. These women regularly fall into a trance on specific days of the year. But she omits other characteristics of the *rusaljes* that fall outside her interests.

The foregoing list of fairy-seer characteristics is valid for the *šojmanke* in Central Serbia studied by Tomić as well. Three female “fairies” (*vile*) are seen by women who regularly fall into trance each year on specific days when fairy induced illnesses are treated by the *vilarkas*. Tomić notes that the fairy-seeing women usually have some physical impairment that, by her account, makes these women more suitable for an otherwise solitary profession. Tomić also traces the eighteenth-century migration of this Gipsy community from Romania, from the region where the Vlach communities originate. The name of the *šojmanke* isn’t elaborated. It is an unknown term from the Vlach language that I do not speak or understand.

Although Tomić’s study became a classic in Serbian ethnography, a “must-read” for all the Serbo-Croatian speaking ethnographers working in the field of fairy-seers or fairies, it has come to criticism specifically because of this detail. One of the main reasons the study of Vlach customs and communities in Serbia is difficult is the language. Vlach is a dialect of Romanian, thus Serbs, Croatian, Bosnians, or Montenegrans carrying out fieldwork require the services of an interpreter who may or may not recognize the importance of certain items in the nomenclature she is translating. According to a Serbian Vlach ethnographer whom I consulted,⁷ most of the “mistakes” in ethnographic descriptions and analysis of Vlach customs stem from Serbian ethnographers who are not fluent speakers of this eastern Romance language and confuse the Serbian Christian calendar with the traditional “Vlach calendar,” which is based on pre-Christian beliefs and calendar (see Durlić 2010). This same deficiency figures in Tomić’s article: she was not a Vlach speaker and did not query informants about word meanings or referents. The word *šojmanka* is unknown in Vlach.⁸ Eastern Serbian Vlach communities know and use the term *šojmanosa*; though its origin is unknown, it denotes the creatures a fairy-seer perceives. According to Es Durlić, the Vlach term *manosa* means “abundant,” but *šoj* is entirely unknown.⁹ In Temnić and Belica, the villages Tomić described, the “Vlach Gypsy” population became a

⁷Paun Es Durlić, a native speaker of Vlach, is a retired ethnographer who worked in the Museum of Majdanpek, Serbia and has written widely about Vlach language and culture in eastern Serbia. For his publications, online Vlach dictionary, and ethnographic collections, see <http://www.paundurlic.com>.

⁸Personal conversation with Paun Es Durlić.

⁹My ongoing research points toward a clairvoyance-custom widespread in the Hungarian-speaking area of Transylvania, present day Romania. The word *šoj* probably derives from the Hungarian word *sólyom* “falcon.”

“Gypsy” population and the Vlach language fell into disuse.¹⁰ Since the 1950s the practice of *šojmanje* has disappeared.

Fifty years after the paper written by Persida Tomić, a monograph dedicated to the description and the analysis of the *vilenica*-s (feminine) and the *vilenjak*-s (masculine) appeared (Čiča 2002a and b) that presents a more complete image of the fairy-seers and healers. Modeled on a table created by Ginzbourg (1996), Čiča furnishes a list of pan-European terms for healers or seers who, potentially, engage in nocturnal heavenly combat against malevolent seers who would plague their home region (Klaniczay 1991). These opponents are termed *benandanti* from Friul, the *armiere* from Ariège, the *punchiaduri* from Switzerland or the *krešnik/krsnik* from Istria (Ginzburg 1966; Klaniczay 1986; Bošković-Stulli 1960). The Croatian (Bosnian) *vilenica* or *vilenjak* also found among these common mortals who see and communicate with female creatures from the invisible world. Čiča’s table depicts the variegated abundance of terms and notions for this phenomenon of fairy-seeing healers. But *šojmanka* and *šojmanosa*, as well as the *rusalias*, are not represented there. The abundance of various ethnolinguistic groups in this region and the profusion of languages and dialects impede broadening of the chart.¹¹ There is a multitude of expressions, designations in various languages for a more or less similar phenomenon in a relatively small region (the Balkan Peninsula). There are at least a dozen languages spoken here and each language has no less than 5-6 dialects. The semantical field of each expression (idiom) covering a “fairy-seer” can be vast because it covers various kinds of “seers”: those who communicate with these creators and are able to fight with them by going up in the sky, or those who can communicate with them and heal through them, or those who are only able to see them, or those who communicate and predict the future through them. A detailed chart should hence encompass all the languages, all of their dialect and all the possible “types” and “subspecies.” Such research is doable, but its prerogative will be mastering all the languages and their dialects. Ginzburg created a table naming the phenomenon of the fairy-seeing individuals various languages of different regions (Central Europe, the Balkans . . .); while Čiča adopted Ginzburg’s table and supplemented additional details and specifications to it. Ginzburg’s-chart and Čiča’s table cover a vast geographical area identifying numerous names and variants. This article attempts to complement those two tables with contemporary findings on the already existing material and charts. My goal is to add just one detail to the Ginzburg-Čiča table: it is basically a detail which is both old and new. Persida Tomić’s paper the term *šojmanosa* is usually mentioned in the academic publications—as a reference to her paper and as an expression which could fit in the Ginzburg-Čiča table. However, since Tomić’s paper no traces have been found on the ground of the *šojmanosa* as described by her. My paper builds upon her work and demonstrates that the *šojmanosa*—the *šojmanka* still exist, and has its place in the Ginzburg-Čiča table. This same holds for the term *padalica* (Serbian feminine noun, “the falling-one”), which is found in the literature and in the field, too. It is probably a euphemistic

¹⁰ Second hand testimony (summer 2015) from villagers in Temnić and Belica. An acquaintance of mine—a social worker (initials B. M.), who worked with people from these villages, made this enquiry for me: no one speaks Vlach anymore in these villages; the Roma population speaks Roma and Serbian.

¹¹ In my research I have encountered some 20 different expressions for fairy-seeing. What makes the task difficult is that the expressions often do not belong to a congruent semantic field. There are individuals who can communicate and fly with fairies, other who cannot, and some who join them in their battles.

designation for those healers and/or communicators who fall into the mandatory trance. This term can also lead the researcher on the topic astray. Pronouncing the true name of these creatures is usually taboo (Čajkanović 1994:46), hence euphemisms multiply, increase the stock of names, and compound the conundrum about the abundance of denominations. *Padalica* is found in Central Serbia and even in eastern Serbia, thus among the Vlach speaking community of eastern Serbia. Coincidentally other practices structurally similar to the mediation with women-like creatures are known in Central Serbia. Srebrica Knežević (Knežević 1967) described one such ritual, euphemistically termed in Serbian as *slava tetkama*, “feast of aunts.” Description of the “aunts” coincides with that of the *šojmanje*: long-haired, beautiful women, who fly in the sky, and can be either benevolent or malevolent towards humans. This ritual is a group practice and involves no inducement of a trance state. It is performed by married adult women in the village who communicate with the “aunts,” these sometimes arrive in groups of three. This collective feast is held on special days at a “special” place outside the village, for instance, under a big tree, in a place the creatures prefer to linger. The feast serves to placate the aunts, and prevent them from visiting illness on the community.

The Case-Studies

Ivanka (1956), a Vlach farm woman from eastern Serbia, lives on an isolated farm with her husband and a grown-up son on top of a mountain called Pojenj near the village of Kulma Topolnica. She has three children and is twice married. The first husband left her, according to her words, he “disappeared.” His disappearance coincided with her initiation into the world of her “sisters.” In spite of being a *šojmanka* (“the one who is able to communicate with fairies” or the Vlach term for her social status) and a *padalica* she has managed to marry a second time, to her “great surprise” as she says. She says that she could never have imagined that she would have two husbands. When she was about 20-21 years old she was initiated. Her mother-in-law found her on top of a pear-tree, where she was singing in a stupefied state oblivious to her surroundings, and her two daughters became frightened by their mother’s behavior. She regularly sees what she describes as beautiful young long-blond-haired women dressed in white whom she has named Sinziana, Maria, and Majka Prečasa. They appear to her on specific days and speak to her, then she must transmit their messages and instructions to the living. Initially, she tried to avoid the fairies by hiding herself in a haystack to evade them but she says they always found her, physically punished her, and brought her to the top of a pear or cherry tree. They punished her transgressions by taking away her voice, paralyzing her or beating her. She reports that the beatings the creatures meted out left her with black and blue marks on her body. She reports: “[she] had to obey them.” While in the trance state she is oblivious to herself and the (human) world around her, seeing only the world these creatures inhabit: beautiful pastures and fields covered with flowers. She sings a particular song to induce the trance state: “In a field covered with flowers I climb, climb, with my sisters on the Krš up, up. In a field covered with flowers I go down with my sisters to the pear tree; my sisters make me climb the pear tree. And

they are young, my sisters. In a field covered with flowers I climb, I climb with my sisters on the Krš up, up.¹²”

She asserts that anyone who wants to see the creatures can, it is only a matter of will. Her “special” days—when she has to submit herself to the will and the demands of these creatures—are three specific days of the Christian orthodox calendar: Epiphany (*Bogojavljanje*—Three King’s Day), Palm Sunday (*Cveti*), and St. Peter’s Day (*Petrovdan*). On every occasion the “sisters” advise her as to when they will next appear.

The ritual of trance starts at dawn. Ivanka avoids working in the stables on the farm in order to stay clean. The creatures abhor filthy, unclean clothes, people, and places. She also washes herself, avoids speaking (the fairies prohibit her from speaking before the ritual) and she dresses in light-colored clothes. She leaves the house and stands in the yard facing east, then she closes her eyes. In her right hand she holds three branched basil (Lat. *Occimum basilicum*) that she continues holding during her trance and during consultations. She also has to be “clean” (not menstruating) and so too the women who attend the ritual or who come to consult her three sisters through her mediation. Her husband related two cases when women were sent away because they were “unclean” though the women did not admit they were menstruating. The period of her trance state varies: some days it lasts an hour, but four hour long trances were also witnessed. Ivanka sings “her” song, dances, shouts, whistles, and calls her sisters invoking their coming and whistles in turns. To those present, some from other regions come to consult the *šojmanje* or *t vlvas* (Vlach, “fairy”), she communicates what she is witnessing in their world. She describes a feast-like atmosphere that precedes the fairies’ arrival. First, she foretells the future of the region, giving accounts of future accidents, future sudden deaths or forthcoming misfortunes or imminent great events in the country. For instance, in 2006 she predicted the election of a president in the mold of Josip Broz Tito.

When she is completely “taken”—possessed by her sisters— she asks to be taken into her house, assisted, usually, by a neighbor-woman. The house must be clean, particularly the chair where she will sit that day. Seated in her bedroom with eyes closed, she receives her visitors one by one. The consultation initially addresses “the living” (Srb. *za žive*): Individuals or families ask the fairies about their personal or their family’s future. When this consultation ends, another “tour” begins: one by one, the guests re-enter and consult Ivanka about their deceased relatives. For this phase, “for the dead” (Srb. *za mrtve*), flowers and candles—the number of candles must equal the number of dead asked about—are brought. Along with her sisters, Ivanka, too, sees and speaks with the dead. The dead send the living requests: a visit to the grave site, flowers, candles or a commemoration bringing new clothes or a favorite food and drink to the dead at their graves, a *pomana* in Vlach.

The biggest “feast” (*slava* or *praznjik*) of the year when Ivanka sees her sisters is *Cveti* (Palm Sunday). Perched atop a mountain, Pojenj, her house is difficult to reach from outside. To navigate the muddy road that leads to her house in early spring required renting a jeep. At Epiphany, in winter, when the snowfall may reach to the knees and blankets the muddy road coming and going to her house is especially difficult. Ivanka’s trance states sometimes last for

¹² There is a short documentary created with the video material filmed during the fieldwork (April 2015). It’s actually a partial recording of the trance. The documentary is to be presented at the Kratovo Ethnological Film Festival in September 2016. The documentary can be seen at: <http://www.imdb.com/video/wab/vi796439833/>

hours and all the while she sings loudly, dances, whistles, and shouts out prophecies—activities that necessitate a tremendous amount of energy. I had the chance to observe Ivanka “fall” for the very last time in spring 2015. In the autumn of that same year Ivanka turned sixty years old. She revealed to me that only women between the ages of six to sixty can see the fairies. She would continue to heal people made ill by charms and spells, “fairy-illnesses,” but she would no longer transmit messages from her “sisters,” nor foresee the future, nor see the *šojmanje*.

Another female—*padalica* in the region is Mila was born in 1944. She lives in the village of Crnajka, about 15 kilometers from Kulma Topolnica. The two women know each other and they refer individuals/clients who seek to consult the *šojmanje* to one another. Ivanka even sent her son to Mila for a consultation. Because he has a speech impairment, is single and over the age of 30, Ivanka’s son passes for the village idiot. Her husband, too, is mocked and considered a bad person by the villagers.

Mila was married at the age of 15 and has one living son, having lost infant two children. She is a daughter of an unmarried mother. This personal circumstance adds to her reputation as a successful *padalica* because of the beliefs in the magical performances and characteristics of individuals born out of wedlock. This attitude is widespread in the Vlach community (for more see Durlić 1995). Their hair or nails are believed to have magical virtues and are components of talismans or magical beverages. Children born out of wedlock are believed to be born “from love” (*iz ljubavi* in Serbian) and not out of “obligation” (*moranje* in Serbian), which is a characteristic of children born in a marriage. Children born in a marriage are born “out of duty” (for more about this belief see Durlić 1995). Questioned about her parents, Mila answered that she never knew her father and he could have been anyone. Although this fact is advantageous for her professional reputation, answering this question slightly discomfited her.

Mila is illiterate: she can’t read or write. She said her marriage was a happy one, but when I met her in 2015 she had already been a widow for several years. Her husband actively supported her fairy-seer calling. In her youth Mila would fall into trance on 44 of the Vlach feast-days (*slava* or *praznjik*—this terms differs from Serbian orthodox *slava*,—for more see Durlić 1998). Her trance inducement technique differs from that of Ivanka: Mila lies down in her bedroom and coaxes herself into a trance by speaking and singing to her sisters. Like Ivanka, Mila sees three beautiful long-haired young women whose names she refused disclose. In fact, she suspected me of being a “seer” (*i ti vidiš nešto* in Serbian). She also falls into a trance in private. Once in a trance she receives her visitors one by one. A Vlach ethnographer convinced Mila’s son to hide a tape-recorder in the room where Mila, assisted by her husband, was abed, and secretly recorded her in trance state making recitations and singing.

Mila’s initiation also occurred in the top of a tree (pear tree). At 12 years old she first saw her sisters. She also tried to avoid them, hiding herself away from them. She also transgressed, disobeying the fairies, and was punished. The fairies paralyzed her, she could neither speak nor move. As she grew older, her “falls” became less frequent; nowadays she “falls” only a few times a year: on Epiphany, like Ivanka, and on Pentecost, too. She induces the trance in the evening because the day of the *slava* is considered started with nightfall.

Both women are respected in their community. Described as a gentle, kind woman, Ivanka is particularly loved and considered a good person. Mila is described as an ambiguous woman, people say that she engages in fairy-seeing for the money. In a way both are liminal

individuals: Mila is born out of wedlock, Ivanka was abandoned by her first husband, married a “strange” grungy second husband and has a son who is the laughing stock of the village. Both women fall into trance in different settings, both fear their sisters and the sickness and pain that ensue if they refuse to “fall” and “perform” in public. For Ivanka, trance inducement is particularly difficult. Sometimes she must achieve a trance state while outside in the cold standing in deep snow; in her mountainous region even spring temperatures can be quite cold.

During the year Ivanka as a *bajalica*, a Serbian term for “charmer” or *baca zrnevlje*, Serbian for “throwing seeds of corn from which she reads the future and the past and can detect a bad charm.” In the region, foretelling the future is done by the use of grains of corn. Since her “duty” to the *šojmanje* ended in spring 2015, she will remain a *bajalica* for the rest of her days. Mila is also known as a charmer: she “lifts” charms, reads cards and grains of corn. Mila’s *gatanje* (Srb. “act of divination”) via Hungarian cards or Tell cards, which are unusual in eastern Serbia, is in part disapproved of in her community.¹³ An older *gatalica* (Srb. “clairvoyant”) from the region declared that playing cards are the “devils” work, and that “the real ways” lie in “reading from the grains (of corn).”¹⁴

Both Mila and Ivanka stated that there is a third “fairy-seer” in this region: Crnajka-Topolnica, who is “expected” in the future. Both women predicted the (be)coming of a new *padalica*. In the village of Rudna Glava I asked about a possible third fairy-seer. It was rumored that a schoolgirl about age 12 or 13 “had fallen” while in the primary school building. Her parents and the community at large first interpreted it as a seizure, until they perceived the fairy-seeing pattern. She was not, contrary to what her parents and teacher thought, “talking gibberish,” rather, she was speaking to the fairies. In her early twenties she married and moved away from the region. I requested an interview but she answered that her father-in-law had forbidden her “falling”; she was unwilling to speak with me. Presumably, she is the “third” fairy-seer, the “new one,” who is expected to continue, now that Ivanka is “done with her duty” and Mila is growing older.

To my question, what is going on during the trance?, Ivanka and Mila replied with the same answer: they simply do not know what is going on. Both explained that they are oblivious to what is actually happening to them or what is going on around them. They are “taken” (*uzmu me pod svoje*). Mila moreover added: “you don’t what is happening to you when you faint, do you? It is the same for me. I don’t know what is going on.” The motivation both women consistently cited for continuing to “fall” is fear of the punishment the fairies mete out for transgressing, for eluding the obligation to mediate and transmit messages, and attend the fairies’ feasts. Fear of some physical accident, or illness, or certain misfortune obliges them to

¹³ Various individuals from the region, neighbors, and so on, have told me that Mila “is in this” (in divination and fairy-seeing) for the money (fieldwork performed during spring and summer of 2015 in the villages of Topolnica, Crnajka, and Rudna Glava).

¹⁴ There is a third woman in the region (near the village of Crnajka) who is the oldest among these three women (born 1938). Her name is Desanka and she is known not only in the region for her gift of divination. She is using grains of corn to predict the future, to see the past. She is also good in “lifting evil charms.” She stated that her gift of clairvoyance comes from three female angels that she saw as a child in the orchard of her parents’ house. She is not a *padalica* though. She is not falling into trance in order to communicate with the “angels.” She states that Mila’s divination with cards comes from the devil.

fall into a trance state. Even without a prompting question, “what happens if you refuse to fall”?, they usually mentioned and described in great detail past instances of such punishment. These appear to be a *sine qua non* experience of novice seers until they establish themselves as “career” fairy-seers. Material gain acquired from the practice is, indisputably, a factor, but only a secondary one.

Despite her protestations to the contrary, the desire for material gain is patently clear in the case of Mila. I once observed her receiving gifts of a key-holder and a jewelry-box from a client. She registered obvious disappointment by rejecting the gift with great disdain and disgust (although her words remained candid).

She is also one of the *padalicas* in the region who accepts money in a manner characterized as the traditional *modus operandi* of the *bajalica* (Dimkova 1980 cited in Radenković 1996:13). The *bajalica* asks that the money be placed on the ground then places one foot on it, thus avoiding “directly” touching the money, but rather claiming it “indirectly” (with her foot), a symbolic way to show disregard for money and financial gain.

There is a strong, often repeated, belief that a *bajalica* will lose her clairvoyant powers and charm if her motivation is pecuniary. In Ivanka’s case, on the day of her fall, I twice consulted her, once “for the living” and once “for the dead,” both times placing a Serbian dinars bill worth about 5 euros in her apron in recognition of her services—as custom requires. The second time, she returned the bill to my cameraman, whom she believed to be my husband, telling him it was “for the fairies and he should give it to them when he sees them.”

In the case of the third fairy-seer in the region, the young woman whose father-in-law had prohibited her from practicing this activity, the “door was left open”: she didn’t say that she cannot see the fairies, she said that it was prohibited for her to practice. This potentially means that sometime in the future she might engage in the activity, should her father-in-law die, or should divorce or some other imponderable develop.

The preliminary conclusion, then, regarding the fairy-seers’ main motivation for engaging in the trance activity, a public event that for the usually shy Ivanka is very challenging, would be that fear of physical harm in a form of illness, temporary paralysis or a physical accident.

Disappearing Phenomenon and Form of Shamanism

The Vlach clairvoyants are particularly admired in Serbia for their gift of clairvoyance and talent of “lifting evil charms” (Srb. *skidanje crne magije*). People from other regions of Serbia travel to the Vlach region to seek out help for their problems and doubts. In the region of the villages Rudna Glava—Topolnica—Crnajka there are at least four individuals, three women and one man, who are known for their gift of clairvoyance and regularly foretell the future, lift evil charms, and treat fairy induced illnesses. In of three of four these cases, the individuals claim to see, communicate, and obtain gifts from “three beautiful young women.” But only in two cases can we speak of *padalicas*, trance-induced divinations and communications that come through ecstatic initiation, not through illness. In that sense these two existing cases of “fairy-seers” or “fairy-communicators” belong to the scholarly tradition that examines the remnants of a pre-Christian fairy-cult that has its roots in a cult of dead and the worship of ancestors.

The study of diverse seers who communicate with invisible female creatures or of healers who in childhood were felled by some mysterious illness visited on them by invisible creatures roaming in nature who are compelled later to engage in healing activities to assure their own health are numerous and have been done in many forms. Mostly as singular cases in case studies or monographs or as comparative studies of similar phenomena in neighboring countries. In that sense the studies referenced above were in a diachronic perspective and were based on archival documents or monographs that provided ethnographic descriptions. The phenomenon of individuals who, following an experience of ecstatic initiation, claim to see three fairies who endow them with the power to predict the future and heal illness has “survived” in the Vlach region of eastern Serbia. The phenomenon certainly serves some practical function other than the economic advantage it gives these individuals living in a remote and poor region (Durlić 1999). The fact that it persists, and that the practitioners cannot conceive of it lapsing, indicates it performs another function, that the fairy-seers offer their community something significant. They bring additional revenue into the community through the clients who seek food and lodging in the villages and the communities are proud of the women and the tradition they represent. It is possible that this phenomenon has persisted in a very authentic form because the Vlach community engages in complex, extremely meticulous burial rites, commemoration of the dead, and ancestor worship¹⁵ involving food, clothing and special ritual-bread sacrifices called *zakoni*¹⁶ (Durlić 1995). The entranced fairy-seers enables communication with deceased relatives. This cult of the dead and ancestor worship element that make this hypothesis probable. The regular practice ensures a special social status to the practitioners that these women enjoy, making them a sort of intersection of the communities in which they live and act where individual problems, events, and, ultimately, secrets are treated and resolved. The persistence of the fairy-seeing goes beyond the limits of closely linked practices such as healing, charm-lifting, and ancestor worship, which still remain for analysis.

It may appear that the above described phenomenon share common characteristics with shamanism. This might be the case if we examine the general contours of the *šojmanka*—phenomenon. Preliminary and unverified findings indicate—beginning with the etymology of *šojmanka* from the Hungarian word *sólyom*, “falcon,” the phenomenon originated in a medieval Transylvanian divination practice in which individuals could foresee the future and “claimed to be able to fly as the falcons” (Durlić told me this in conversation but I have not yet corroborated it). The etymology of *šojmanka* might indicate a distant relation with some form of shamanism. The ability to “fly in the sky” and divine is one of the central and most frequently encountered characteristics of shaman-experiences. Features fairy-seers share with shamanism include the self-induced trance state, the ability to “climb to the sky,” initiation through illness, connection and mediation with the world of the dead, divination, and healing powers (Hoppál 2010, Hamayon 1990). Yet, the institution of *šojmanka* is marked by strict time-related constraints: healing and divination may be sought and offered throughout the year, but the *šojmanka* falls into

¹⁵ See, for instance, the dance of commemoration (*kolo za mrtve; priveg; krai*): https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=kolo+za+mrtve; or *pomana* (“commemoration:”) https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=vlaska+pomana.

¹⁶ This is not the Serbian word “*zakoni*,” which means “laws” in English.

a trance state only on specific days. These special days vary from one *šojmanka* to another. Similarly, the self-induced trance techniques vary: Ivanka sings, dances, whistles, speaks while Mila lies in bed, speaks and sings only occasionally. Also, the individuals who consults the fairy-seer do not experience their trance state. Finally, the “shaman-accessories” typical of Siberian or Vietnamese shamanism (drum, feathers, hats, special clothes, and so on) are absent in this case. All this indicates that the practice has loose forms and its articulation depends on the specific individual. Some elements of the *šojmanka*-phenomenon and of shamanism are similar, but any exact connection between them remains to be determined.

Research Laboratory “Dynamics of Europe,” UMR 7367, Strasbourg, France

References

- Bošković-Stulli 1953 _____ . “Splet naših narodnih praznovjerja oko vještice i popa.” *Bilten Instituta za proučavanje folkloru, Sarajevo*, 2:327-42.
- Bošković-Stulli 1960 Maja Bošković-Stulli. “Kresnik—Krsnik, ein Wesen aus der kroatischen und slovenischen Volksüberlieferung.” *Fabula*, 3:275-99.
- Čajkanović 1994 Veselin Čajkanović. *Iz srpske religije i mitologije 1910-1924*. Vol. 1. Beograd: Srpska Književna zadruga.
- Čiča 2002a Zoran Čiča. *Vilenica i vilenjak, Sudbina jednog pretkršćanskog kulta u doba progona vještica*. Zagreb: Etnografija.
- Čiča 2002b _____ . “Vilenica and Vilenjak: Bearers of an Extinct Fairy Cult.” *Narodna umjetnos*, 39.1:31-63.
- Đorđević 1952 Tihomir R. Đorđević. *Vampir i druga bića u našem narodnom predanju*. Vol. 4. Skup Odeljenja Društvenih Nauka SAN 11-IV-1952. pp.147-255.
- Đorđević 1989 _____ . “Vještica i vila u našem narodnom verovanju i predanju. Beograd: Narodna Knjiga.
- Eliade 1975 Mircea Eliade. “Some Observations on European Witchcraft.” *History of Religions*, 14.3:149-72.
- Eliade 2007 _____ . *Le chamanisme et les techniques archaïques de l'extase*. Paris: Payot.
- Es Durlić 1995 Paun Es Durlić. Kult mrtvih kao osnova za odredjenje religije Vlaha. *Etno-kulturološki zbornik*. Vol. 1. Svrlijig. pp. 232-40.

- Es Durlić 1996 _____ . Pokladni priveg. *Etno-kulturološki zbornik*. Vol. 2. Svrlijig. pp. 110-15.
- Es Durlić 1998 _____ . Slave, zavetine i druge srodne proslave Istočne Srbije i susednih oblasti. *Etno-kluturološki zbornik*. Vol. 4. Svrlijig. pp. 253-62.
- Es Durlić 1999 _____ . “Magijska statistika i alibi—dva aspekta dugovečnosti magije kod Vlaha ‘Za zdravlje.’” *Zbornik radova*. Zaječar: Museum of Zaječar. pp. 281-88.
- Es Durlić 2010 _____ . *Sveti jezik vlašskog hleba*. Beograd: Balkankult.
- Ginzburg 1983 Carlo Ginzburg. *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Baltimore, MD: Johns.
- Gueorguieva 1988 Ivanitchka Guerguieva. “La représentation de l’enfant dans les traditions bulgares.” *Ethnologies d’Europe et d’ailleurs* 2, 37.2:43-53.
- Gueorguieva 1990 _____ . “Rêver sous le dictame (Bulgarie).” In *Les plantes et les Saisons, Calendrier et Représentations*. Ed. by Marianne Mesnil. Brussels: Institut de Sociologie de l’Université Libre de Bruxelles. pp. 213-28.
- Hamayon 1990 Roberte Hamayon. *La Chasse à l’âme: Esquisse d’une théorie de chamanisme siberien*. Nanterre: Société d’ethnologie.
- Henningsen 1993 Gustav Henningsen. “The Ladies from Outside.” In *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries*. Ed. by Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen. New York: Oxford University Press. pp. 191-215.
- Hoppál 2010 Mihály Hoppál. *Sámánok világa*. Budapest: Püski Kiadó.
- Kis-Halas 2012 Judit Kis-Halas. “A wiccától a cyberboszorkákig: Újboszorkány kultuszok a 20. Században.” *Boszorkányság, mágia, lélektudás*, 1. *Rubicon*, 16.7:56-61.
- Klaniczay 1983 Gábor Klaniczay. “Benandante-kresnik-zduhač-táltos. Samanizmus és boszorkányhit érintkezési pontjai Közép-Európában.” *Ethnographia*, 94:116-34.
- Klaniczay 1984 _____ . “Shamanistic Elements in Central European Witchcraft.” In *Shamanism in Eurasia*. Ed. by Mihály Hoppál. Göttingen: Herodot. pp. 404-22.
- Klaniczay 2006 _____ . “Shamanism and Witchcraft.” *Magic, Ritual, Witchcraft*, 1:214-21.
- Knežević 1967 Srebrica Knežević. “Slava tetkama—arhaični ritual za zaštitu zdravlja.” *Razvitak*, 7.6:72-77.

- Majzner 1921 Milan Majzner. *Dubočke rusalje. Poslednji tragovi iz kulta Velike Majke bogova u Srbiji*, Knjiga XXXIV. Beograd: Izdanje Čupićeve zadužbine, Štamparija Davidović. pp. 226-57.
- Pòcs 1971 Éva Pòcs. *Elők és holtak, látok és boszorkányok—Mediàtori rendszerek a kora újkor forrásába*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Pòcs 1985 _____. *Magyar rövlasások*. Vol. 1. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, Néprajzi Kutatocoport, Akadémiai Könyvtár.
- Pòcs 1986 _____. *Tündér és boszorkány Délkelet- és Közép Europa hatàràn*. Folklor, folkorisztika es etnologica, 135. A Magyar Néprajzi Tàrsasàg Folyòirata, XCVII. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Pòcs 1989 _____. *Tündérek, démonok, boszorkányok*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Popova 1988 Assia Popova. “La naissance des dragons.” *Ethnologies d’Europe et d’ailleurs* 2, 37.2:55-85.
- Šešo 2003 Luka Šešo. “O krsniku: od tradicijske pojave u predajama do stvarnog iscelitelja.” *Studia ethnologica Croatica*, 14-15:23-53.
- Radenković 1996 Ljubinko Radenković. *Narodna bajanja kod južnih Slovena*, Beograd: Prosveta; Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts.
- Taloş 2002 Ion Taloş. *Petit dictionnaire de mythologie populaire roumaine*. Grenoble: ELLUG, Université Stendhal.
- Tomić 1950 Persida Tomić. “Vilarke i vilari kod vlaških Cigana u Temniću i Belici.” *Zbornik Radova*, SANU, 4.1:237-62.
- Tucakov 1965 Jovan Tucakov. *Psihosugestivni elementi u narodnoj medicini svrljiškog Timoka*. Beograd: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts.
- Vivod 2006 Maria Vivod. “Les guérisseuses de la Voïvodine, Serbie-Monténégro.” *Cahiers de Publications Doctorales de l’Université Marc Bloch de Strasbourg*, 7. Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires. pp. 129-40.
- Vivod 2008a _____. “A szerb *babice*-k—női démonok vagy mediátorok?” In *Démonok, látók, szentek: vallásetnológiai fogalmak tudományközi megközelítésben*. Ed. by Eva Pocs. Budapest: Ballassi Kiadó. pp. 204-09.

- Vivod 2008b _____ . “Die Beschwörerin (*Bajalica*) Biljana aus Budisava, Wojwodina. Rekonstruktionsversuche einer ethnischen Identität im postsozialistischen Nachkriegsserbien.” *Curare*, 30.2-3:153-62.
- Vivod 2014 _____ . “Radmila—the Fairy-clairvoyant. Rethinking Ethnopsychiatry—a Case Study from Serbia.” *Curare*, 37.1:55-64.
- Zečević 1966 Slobodan Zečević. “Zla porođajna mitska bića.” *Referati sa XIII Kongresa Saveza Folklorista Jugoslavije u Dojranu*. Dojran: Zdruzenie na folkloristite na SR Makedonija. pp. 333-38.
- Zečević 1981 _____ . *Mitska bića srpskih predanja*. Beograd: Vuk Karadžić, Etnografski muzej.
- Zentai 1976 Tünde Zentai. “The Figure of the “Szépasszony” in the Hungarian folk belief.” *Acta Ethnographica* 25:251-74.