

3. THE BASHKIRS

1. Incantations

BashText 72-73²⁷⁶

One soul, two souls, three souls!
Where is thy abode?
Inside a stone palace.
I kill two souls,
I leave one.
One soul, two souls, three souls!
Whence thou came, thither go,
begone, begone, begone!

BashText 84²⁷⁷

The Moon is gone,
the Sun is gone,
osyan-disease,
thou begone, too!
Spell-charm, may the healing be this!
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1
Begone from one!
Whence thou came,
go thither!

BashText 91

Black *büðer*,
white *büðer*,
Lie not there,
lie here!
Come, come out!

²⁷⁶ Incantation against *ösyän*.

²⁷⁷ Incantation against *osyan* (*ösyän?*).

BashText 94²⁷⁸

Near a white cloud:
a white sheep,
near a blue cloud:
a blue sheep,
near a black cloud:
a black sheep.
Their horns are in the sky,
their udders are in the ground.
When the *büðer* eats their bellies,
only then may it cling to this child!

BashText 95²⁷⁹

White *büðer*,
black *büðer*,
yellow *büðer*,
old *büðer*!
Lo, if thou art old,
lie down, *büðer*!
I cut it with a knife,
I cut it with a scythe.
White *büðer*,
black *büðer*,
Begone, *büðer*!
Begone, *büðer*!

BashText 96²⁸⁰

As the fat solidifies,
so thou must lie down in thy place!
Yellow *büðer*,
white *büðer*!
Stay in thy place, *büðer*!

²⁷⁸ Incantation against *büðer*.

²⁷⁹ Incantation against *büðer*.

²⁸⁰ Incantation against *büðer*.

BashText 131²⁸¹

Give me my previous eyes!
I give thee food, I give thee water.
If thou art thirsty, I give thee water,
if thou art hungry, I give thee food.

BashText 134²⁸²

Ubir, swallow my eyes, swallow them!
Mäskäy, swallow not my eyes, swallow them not!
Ubir, swallow my eyes, swallow them!
Mäskäy, swallow not my eyes, swallow them not!
Ubir, swallow my eyes, swallow them!
Mäskäy, swallow not my eyes, swallow them not!

BashText 141²⁸³

“What art thou incanting upon?”
“I’m incanting upon a sty.”
“What art thou incanting upon?”
“I’m incanting upon a sty.”
“What art thou incanting upon?”
“I’m incanting upon a sty.”

Stye, round pirog,
here’s a fig!
Stye, round pirog,
here’s a fig!
Stye, round pirog,
here’s a fig!
The Moon goes,

²⁸¹ If somebody was hit in the eye by a tree branch, this incantation was recited in order to gain the favour of the forest’s master (*urman eyähe*). They would pour water and sometimes also put porridge on the ground under the tree branch.

²⁸² Incantation recited in the case of eye disease. The text is also published by Khisamitdinova (Khis. 124); in shorter form: Khis. 155, 157.

²⁸³ Incantation against sty.

the Sun goes,
the guest also goes.
Thou go, too!

Stye *mälek*, *mämälek*,²⁸⁴
stye *mälek*, here's a fig!
If thou came from the wind, go to the wind!
If thou came from the water, go to the water!
Whence thou came, thither go!
Not my hand,
Gäyşä-Fatima's hand.
May the incantation be this!

BashText 142²⁸⁵

Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!
Whence thou came, thither go!
If thou came from the Sun, go to the Sun!
If thou came from the Moon, go to the Moon!
If thou came from the wind, go to the wind!
If thou came from the water, go to the water!
Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!

BashText 145²⁸⁶

Go to the tree's branch!²⁸⁷
Go to the tree!
Whence thou came, thither go!
Not my hand,
Gäyşä-Fatima's hand.
Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!

²⁸⁴ We cannot interpret the words *mälek* and *mämälek*; Khisamitdinova does not know their meaning either.

²⁸⁵ Incantation against stye.

²⁸⁶ Incantation against stye. The healer performing the incantation holds a tree branch in his hand and pulls it right and left in front of the patient's eye while reciting this incantation.

²⁸⁷ The Bashkir word *botaq* means tree branch as well as a wart growing on a sick tree (BRS2 109).

BashText 146/1²⁸⁸

The styē goes,
 thou return, too!
 The Moon returns,
 the Sun returns.
 If thou art a styē,
 thou return, too!

BashText 146/2²⁸⁹

Whence thou came,
 thither go!
 If thou came from the wind,
 go to the wind!
 If thou came from the mountain,
 Go to the mountain!
 Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!

BashText 150²⁹⁰

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1
 One – begone first!
 The Moon goes,
 the Sun goes.
 Thou begone, too!
 If thou came from the wind,
 go to the wind!
 If thou came from the water,
 go to the water!
 Not my hand,
Gäyşä-Fatima's hand.
 Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!

²⁸⁸ Incantation against styē. They cook barley porridge, which they touch to the patient's eye while reciting this incantation. At the end of the healing, they give the barley porridge to the dog.

²⁸⁹ Incantation against styē.

²⁹⁰ Incantation against styē.

BashText 154-156²⁹¹

“What art thou poking?”

“I’m poking the styē.”

“What art thou poking?”

“I’m poking the styē.”

“What art thou poking?”

“I’m poking the styē.”

I caught a thief,
I blackened his face.

The Moon goes,
the Sun goes.
Thou go, too,
begone, begone!

Styē-mälek-mämälek,
here thou art five figs!
Styē-mälek-mämälek,
here thou art four figs!
Styē-mälek-mämälek,
here thou art three figs!
Styē-mälek-mämälek,
here thou art two figs!
Styē-mälek-mämälek,
Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!

The styē is blind,
I am blind, too.
Whence thou came,
thither go!
If thou came from the Sun,
go to the Sun!

²⁹¹ Incantation against styē.

If thou came from the Moon,
go to the Moon!
If thou came from the wind,
go to the wind!
If thou came from the water,
go to the water!

Stye-mälek-mämälek,
here thou art a fig!
10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 fig!
Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!
Āpsen töpsön,²⁹²
begone from me!
Go to the Moon,
grow there!
Āpsen töpsön,
begone quickly!
Phwoo!

Stye-mälek-mämälek,
here's a fig!
Äübaš, Äbzät, Häübäs,²⁹³
Qarasät, Koydi(s), Kälämäs, Säbägäs,
Qaramat, Ġarizilan, ħata-bäräkät,²⁹⁴
Ġazigolan, Äxsälim,

²⁹² We do not know the meaning of this line.

²⁹³ The thirteen names appearing in this verse (*Äübaš, Äbzät, Häübäs, Qarasät, Koydi(s), Kälämäs, Säbägäs, Qaramat, Ġarizilan, (ħata-bäräkät), Ġazigolan, Äxsälim, Bilgäzizi, Äqsälim*) are not known from any other texts. Such lists, containing several (12-13) names not known from anywhere else are typical of various other mythical texts, too. Mészáros provides two lists in his collection in Turkey: one of them lists the princes of *deyeüs* and *päreys*, and the other lists the mates of the being called *yarim adam* ('half-man') (Mészáros 1906, 21, 26–27).

²⁹⁴ *Xata* means 'mistake, faulty', and *bäräkät* means 'abundance, wealth'. We cannot exclude that, spelt as one word, this form can be interpreted as a name.

Bilgäzizi, Äqsälim!
*Räxmän! Rraxim!*²⁹⁵

Begone, begone, begone, stye!
Why appearest thou on my eye?!
Appear on the dog's dick!²⁹⁶

BashText 164²⁹⁷

If thou came from the wind,
go to the wind!
If thou came from the water,
go to the water!
Whence thou came,
thither go!
Eeho-ho-ho!

BashText 186²⁹⁸

Sweet²⁹⁹ bird called *Tatran*,
fiery bird at its horns,
milky bird at its udder!
Tat-tatran,
go over, go over, go over!

²⁹⁵ Two typical attributes of Allah ('compassionate, merciful'), which also appear in the *basmala* formula. This is also said in Arabic by the Bashkirs, although in Bashkir form.

²⁹⁶ In the Bashkir original, three dots appear instead of the word; in the Russian translation, the word 'tail' appears. However, the unprintable word is much more accurate, and is a natural part of incantations.

²⁹⁷ Incantation against *auïðlik*.

²⁹⁸ Incantation against *tatran* (earache).

²⁹⁹ The Bashkir word *tatli*, meaning 'sweet', probably stands here as the attribute of *tatran* because of its phonetic character rather than its meaning.

BashText 187-188³⁰⁰

Tat,³⁰¹ *tatran*, *tatran*!

I won't make thee taste it.

I have a yellow, a colourful bear,

I won't put it in thy mouth.

Tatran, go over!

Tatran, go over!

The sieve-maker's two daughters:

like a bear, strong girl,

like a mare, milky girl.

Tatran, go over!

Tatran, go over!

Let us take the bark off the stone,

let us take the bark off the stone!

I won't make thee taste it.

Tatran, go over!

Tatran, go over!

Taste it, *tatran*, it tastes sweet!³⁰²

I won't put it in thy mouth.

When seeing a traveller, my husband, she says,

fallen tree root, my house, she says.

The Moon's returned,

the Sun's returned, too.

Tatran ear,

thou return, too!

³⁰⁰ Incantation against *tatran* (earache).

³⁰¹ Here, *tat* can be a simple rhythmic element (we can see such syllable-repeating forms, for example, in incantations against *timräi*: BashText 281, 284-285, 285); or it can also be the imperative of the verb *tat*- ('try it!' or 'taste it!').

³⁰² The meaning of the line is not clear. The Bashkir original is *tat, tatran, tatli ikän*, which can be translated as '*tat, tatran* seems sweet', or as 'taste it, *tatran*, it seems sweet'.

Tat, tatran, tatran!

If thou art the one called *tatran*,
I am the one crossing the Volga.

Tat, tatran, tatran!

If thou art the one called *tatran*,
I am the one crossing the Urals.

Tat, tatran, tatran!

If thou art the one called *tatran*,
I am the one crossing the Irtis.

Tat-tat tatran!

Tatran, I shout at thee!

She did not put fat on the road,
she did not get full from the fat,
her father-mother did not suspect,
she did not carry on her way.

Tatran go over, go over, go over!

Tatran go over, go over, go over!

Tat-tat tatiran!

Tatran-named sweet girl,
in her two breasts milky girl,
seeing a bath, my house, she says,
seeing a snake, my whip, she says,
seeing an ant, my husband, she says.
Like an oak tree, she seems strong.
Tatran, lie down, *tatran*, lie down!

BashText 218-220³⁰³

Like a cow, come mooing!
 My *qorayt qot*, my *qorayt qot*!³⁰⁴
 Come, my *qot*, come, my *qot*!
 Come through the door,
 and come through the chink,
 come, my *qot*, come, my *qot*!
 Thy masters are here, my *qot*!
 Come like the (flowing) flood,
 come swimming as a white fish!
 Thy masters are here, my *qot*!
 My *qorayt qot*, come, my *qot*!
 Ġazrail Färeštä, bring me my *qot*!
 Thy master's here, thy master's here!
 Come, my *qot*!

If thou came from the Moon,
 go to the Moon!
 If thou came from the Sun,
 go to the Sun!
 If thou came from the earth,
 go to the earth!
 If thou came from the wind,
 go to the wind!

Hey, my *qot*, come, my *qot*!
 Come if I call thee!
 An illness has attacked me,
 find thy master, my *qot*!

³⁰³ Incantation recited while healing a frightened state or diseases originating from fright. At this time, they make pastry with one egg, cut it to forty-one pieces and boil it in water. They recite this incantation while feeding the patient.

³⁰⁴ The word *qorayt* only appears in incantations, always together with the word *qot*. *Qot* is a kind of soul-notion (→ *Färeštä*).

At my *qot*'s inspiration,
Korkut's inspiration,
Grandfather Korkut, give me thy *qot*!
Grandfather Tul'ka, give me thy *qot*!
I am where my *qot* is,
I am where my *qot* is.

Return, *my qot*!
Return, *my qot*!
Return, *my qot*!
Reach me swimming,
cross the stormy flood!
Gölbikä's *qot* has flown away.
Come through the reeds!
Return, return, *my qot*!
Come back, return, *my qot*, come back!
*Bismillāhir-raḫmānir-raḫim*³⁰⁵
Come back, return, *my qot*!
Come back!
Come through the door!
Come through the chink!

My *qorayt qot*, my *qorayt qot*!
If thou flew from the wind,
come from the wind!
If thou flew from the dog,
come from the dog!
If thou flew from the livestock,
come from the livestock!
My *qorayt qot*, my *qorayt qot*,
my *qorayt qot*, my *qorayt qot*!
If thou flew from the country,
come from the country!

³⁰⁵ The Arabic *basmala* formula ('in the name of the compassionate and merciful Allah') is given in Bashkir form.

If thou flew from the water,
 come from the water!
My qorayt qot, come, *my qot*!
 Give me healing, help me!
 Give me health!
 Come back, *my qot*,
 return!
 Wherever thou hast been,
 Return thence!

“What art thou pouring?”
 “I am pouring *qot*.”
 “What art thou pouring?”
 “I am pouring *qot*.”
 “What art thou pouring?”
 “I am pouring *qot*.”
 “What art thou pouring?”
 “I am pouring *qot*,
 looking for a heart!”
 May the motive be from me,
 may the healing be from Allah!
 Huff-huff-huff!³⁰⁶

Ägüdü bil-lähi šäytanir-ražim
*Bismillähir-raḫmänir-raḫim*³⁰⁷
 Hey, my Lord!
 Heal thy servant!
 Now! His strength!
 The pouring of his *qot* had to be forced,
 may the disease leave this man!

³⁰⁶ In Bashkir, *köf-köf-köf*.

³⁰⁷ The first of the lines in italics is hard to interpret, and the second one is the Arabic *basmala* formula, meaning ‘in the name of the compassionate and merciful Allah’ (with a spelling reflecting its Bashkir pronunciation), which appears in incantations relatively frequently.

BashText 235-236³⁰⁸

The father-in-law's son has grown numb,
I've come to ask for curds.
The father-in-law's son's back hurts,
I've come to ask for *birtek*!

The head of the village is Möharräm,
he can't even stand up.
Give us *birtek*-grass!

The father-in-law's son has grown old,
give us dry bark!
The son's back has hardened,
I come, bringing curds.
The daughter-in-law's back hurts,
I come, bringing curds.
Even if it's milk, pour it on it!
Whatever it is, put it on it!

The khan's son's back hurts.
I'll go to collect *birtek*.
"What art thou collecting?"
"I'm collecting *birtek*."
The khan's son's back hurts.
"What art thou collecting?"
"I'm collecting *birtek*."
The khan's son's back hurts.
"What art thou collecting?"
"I'm collecting *birtek*."
The khan's son's back hurts.
"What art thou collecting?"
"I'm collecting *birtek*."
The khan's son's back hurts.

³⁰⁸ Incantation against *birtek*.

The khan's daughter's back hurts.
 I'll go to collect *birtek*.
 "What art thou collecting?"
 "I'm collecting *birtek*."
 The khan's daughter's back hurts.
 "What art thou collecting?"
 "I'm collecting *birtek*."
 The khan's daughter's back hurts.
 "What art thou collecting?"
 "I'm collecting *birtek*."
 The khan's daughter's back hurts.
 "What art thou collecting?"
 "I'm collecting *birtek*."
 The khan's daughter's back hurts.

BashText 250³⁰⁹

A black cloud is coming,
 a black cloud is coming.
 Under the black cloud,
 a black cow is coming,
 its horns reach the sky,
 its udder reaches the ground,
 from one teat comes blood,
 from the other teat comes butter.
 Eat this, hold this!
 May the healing be this!

³⁰⁹ Incantation against *būma*. The text is also published by Khisamitdinova: Khisam. I, 130. As regards its content and symbolism, this incantation shows a lot of similarities with the incantation against epilepsy, recorded among Tatars, where this disease demon is called *zīyandaš*.

BashText 257³¹⁰

May this be thy healing-cure!
If thou came from the earth,
go to the earth!
If thou came from the wind,
go to the wind!
If thou came from the *osoq* disease,
fly away!

BashText 262-263³¹¹

If thou art *osoq*, fly away!
Go to thy earth, go to thy water!
Whence thou came, thither go!
Amen, may it be so!
If thou art *osoq*, fly away!
If thou came from the mountain, go to the
mountain!
If thou came from stone, go to stone!
Whence thou came, thither go!
What dost thou want from this poor man?
Thou hast a house under the bank,
go, begone, fly away!
Thou hast tormented me a lot,
now go to a fat man!
Go to the one whose feather bed is soft!

BashText 277³¹²

Water's father *Söläymän*!
Water's mother *Hiubikä*!

³¹⁰ Incantation against *osoq* (if somebody fell down and then became ill, this incantation was recited).

³¹¹ Incantation against *osoq*.

³¹² Incantation used for tumors. They would fetch water on a Tuesday night and bathe the patient in it on Wednesday, while reciting this incantation. Also published by Khisamitdinova (Khisam. III, 38).

Health from ye,
a kerchief from me.³¹³

BashText 279³¹⁴

Whence thou came,
thither go!
Go to the ones with pretty houses!
May the incantation be this!

BashText 281³¹⁵

Tim-tim-timrämün
*äm-äm-ämrämün*³¹⁶
I have painted thy face black,
I have shamed thee.³¹⁷
Whence thou came in,
thither go out!
Go out through the door!
Go out through the chink!
Go out through the window!
Go out through the airing-hole!
Whichever chink thou hast come through,
go out through that!

³¹³ It is worth mentioning that in Bashkir, the words ‘health’ and ‘kerchief’ rhyme: *haulıq–yaulıq*.

³¹⁴ Incantation against scabies and itchiness. Its text is also cited by Khisamitdinova: Khis. 61.

³¹⁵ Incantation against ringworm (*timräü*).

³¹⁶ In Bashkir, these are two lines of gibberish; however, they include a phonetic pun on the word ringworm (*timräü*).

³¹⁷ This line and the previous line are very similar in Bashkir: literally “I painted your face black / I called your face black”. The latter is a phrase meaning ‘I shamed you’ (cf. BashText 281).

BashText 284-285³¹⁸

Äm-äm-ämeräü
tim-timtim(e)räü
let it be over, may thou dry out!
May the incantation be this!
Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!

BashText 285³¹⁹

Tim-tim tim(e)räü
*miṇ-miṇ-miṇeräü*³²⁰
unto thy face, black,
unto thy cheeks, black!
Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!
Run, go, let it be over!

BashText 287³²¹

Where is thy toy?
Here is my toy!
How many is thy toy?
One (two, three...) is my toy!

BashText 289³²²

I caught the thief,
I blackened his face.
The Moon's returned,
the Sun's returned.

³¹⁸ Incantation against ringworm (*timräü*).

³¹⁹ Incantation against ringworm (*timräü*).

³²⁰ These two lines are full of puns. The first line includes the name of ringworm (*timräü*), which rhymes with *miṇ*, meaning 'birth-mark' and *miṇräü*, meaning 'silly, stupid', in the second line.

³²¹ Incantation against warts (*söyäl/höyäl*), which had to be recited while holding the wart towards the Moon. They tied as many knots on a piece of thread as they had warts, and hung this thread in a clearly visible place. The incantation had to be repeated three times.

³²² Incantation against warts (*söyäl/höyäl*).

Thou return, too!
I incant one,
return from one!

BashText 291³²³

Man³²⁴ is sinful,
God³²⁵ is healer.
Man is sinful,
God is healer.
Man is sinful,
God is healer.
My God, help (is) from thee!
Give healing!

BashText 293³²⁶

Qïðamïq, qïðamïq!
Only in thee is extreme power!
Jump off (N. N.)'s body,
come over to this red kerchief!

BashText 294³²⁷

May it fly like ashes!
May it dry out like chaff!
May it disperse like a cloud!
May the healing be thus!

³²³ Incantation against measles (*qïðïlsa*).

³²⁴ The Bashkir word *bānde*, which appears in the text here, is not the most commonly used word meaning 'man'. In a religious context, it means 'God's servant', whereas if used to mean 'man' in an everyday context, it has a pejorative connotation. In addition, it also has a meaning 'slave, prisoner' (BRS2).

³²⁵ Throughout the Bashkir text, as *Allah*.

³²⁶ Incantation against *qïðamïq* ('rubella'). It is recited while the patient is wrapped in a red cloth.

³²⁷ Incantation against *säsäk* ('smallpox'), recited when they cook porridge for the smallpox-mother.

BashText 295³²⁸

Water's father *Söläymän!*
Water's mother *Hüubikä!*
Grab me not,
grab that one!
Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!

BashText 297³²⁹

Qïrmalï, qïrmalï!
I scrape it with an iron shovel,
I rake it with an iron rake,
I chop it with an iron axe.
Begone hence, begone hence!
Uf-f-f!

BashText 303³³⁰

(big child:)
“Mother, what art thou buying?”
(mother:)
“I am buying *öðlök*.”
(big child:)
“Mother, what art thou drinking?”
(mother:)
“I am drinking *öðlök*.”
(big child:)
“Mother, what art thou buying?”
(mother:)
“I am buying *öðlök*.”
(big child:)
“Mother, what art thou drinking?”
(mother:)
“I am drinking *öðlök*.”

³²⁸ Incantation against *hüüsäsäk* (‘chicken-pox’).

³²⁹ Incantation against *qïrmalik* (‘allergy’).

³³⁰ Incantation against *öðlök*, also published in: Khis. 243.

BashText 305³³¹

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
 into the earth!
 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
 into the wind and water!
 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 let it be over, let it go away!
 1, 2, 3
 let it fly away, let it go away!
 1
 let not even one remain!

BashText 306-307³³²

(N. N.'s) son (or daughter) has got complications
 (*öðlök*).
 360 blood-vessels hurt,
 340 bones have come apart.
 I collect them.
 Let it be potion!
 Let it be healing!
 I steam the morning complications,
 I steam the daytime complications,
 I steam the new complications,
 I steam the flesh's complications,
 I steam the (blood)vessels' complications.
 Months have gone,
 begone!
 Days have gone,
 begone!
 Not my hands,
 the healer's hands
 (*Äyšä-Fatima's* hands).

³³¹ Incantation against *öðlök*.

³³² Incantation against *öðlök*.

Healer-incanter,
my only God helper!

BashText 315³³³

My man, touched by the devil (*yen*),
hath dried out.
With the power of God (*Täŋre*),
thy servant's light
lo, hath returned with luck.

BashText 320³³⁴

Earth's mother – red beard,
water's mother – brown beard.
Grab me not, grab this one!

BashText 321³³⁵

Earth's mother – red beard,
water's mother – cold beard.
If thou came from the earth, go to the earth!
If thou came from the water, go to the water!
Lo, a kerchief for thee!
Give (N. N.) health!

BashText 322-323³³⁶

Grab me not, grab that one!
Eat that, drink that!
Be content with that!

BashText 325

Earth's mother – red horse,
water's mother – fair maiden!

³³³ Incantation recited in the case of diseases caught from the touch of the *yen*.

³³⁴ Incantation against *yer zäχmät*.

³³⁵ Incantation against *zäχmät*.

³³⁶ Incantation against a disease caused by the water (*hïu zäχmät*).

Eat me not,
 Drink me not!
 A kerchief from me,
 health from thee!

BashText 327³³⁷

Earth's mother becomes earth,
 water's mother becomes water!
 Eat me not,
 Drink me not!
 A gift kerchief from me,
 health from thee!
 Eat that, drink that!

BashText 329-330³³⁸

“What happened?”
 “*Sarpīu* happened.”
 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
 1, let it be nonsense!
 2, 3, let it fly away, let it go away!
 4, 5, let it be bored, let it go away!
 6, 7, to wind, to embers!
 8, 9, to frozen earth!
 10, to the right!
 If the incantation fails,
 shame on me.
 If the incantation works,
 shame on thee.
 Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!

³³⁷ Against diseases caused by the earth, they pour water out in front of the gate on a Wednesday after sunset, while reciting this incantation.

³³⁸ Incantation against *sarpīu*. It had to be recited when somebody was injured due to falling down. At this time, they would recite the incantation, and threw away its written form at the place where they had fallen. Such an incantation text had to be carried by everybody (BashText 329).

Not my words,³³⁹
Gäyşä-Fatima's words.
Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!
May the incantation be this!

BashText 330³⁴⁰

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Return from seven!
Go to wind, to embers!
Begone, let it be over!³⁴¹
Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!

BashText 332³⁴²

1, 2, 3
Let it return from three!
Let it go to the crossing of three roads!
Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!
Let it go, let it be over!

BashText 339

Yellow beard, which came from the water,
copper beard, which came from the earth,
grab me not, grab that one!

The Moon is gone, the Sun is gone,
lo, thou begone, too!
If thou sayst it in the morning, it's already evening.
If thou came from the water, go to the water!
If thou came from the earth, go to the earth!
Whence thou came, thither go!

³³⁹ The original Bashkir word, *tel*, which is here translated as 'words', has three meanings: 'tongue, language, incantation'; see → *Gäyşä-Fatima*.

³⁴⁰ Incantation against *yelpeü*.

³⁴¹ Literally: 'be finished'.

³⁴² Incantation against *zıyandaş*, written on a saucer which the patient is made to drink out of.

BashText 339-340³⁴³

Earth's mother – red beard,
water's mother – cold beard.
Grab me not, grab that one!
The earth's navel is only one.

BashText 341-342³⁴⁴

Grab me not, grab that one!
A kerchief from me, health from thee!
If thou came from the water, go to the water!
If thou came from the earth, go to the earth!
(then they add:)
The earth's navel is only one.

BashText 345³⁴⁵

Eat this, drink this!
Health from thee,
a kerchief from me.
And this is the healing.

Khis. 15³⁴⁶

White *büðer*,
black *büðer*,
yellow *büðer*,
old *büðer*!
Stay in thy place, *büðer*!

³⁴³ Recited during the healing of a disease caught from the earth. This healing is performed with an *osoq*-doll.

³⁴⁴ During the healing of a disease caught from the earth, the patient's nail, hair and saliva were put into water, then taken out and circled around his waist three times, then buried with these words.

³⁴⁵ When the earth "grabs" one's legs his nail, hair and a piece of cloth must be buried while reciting this.

³⁴⁶ Incantation against *büðer*.

Khis. 63³⁴⁷

I scrape it with an iron shovel,
I rake it with an iron rake,
I chop it with an iron axe,
I sweep it with an iron broom.
Scrape it, rake it,
chop it, sweep it.
The *biðgāk* is gone.
It is over!

Khis. 100³⁴⁸

Wade across the Volga!
Zāṅgä, run!
Old belly, new food.
Zāṅgä, *zāṅgä*!
Run from me!

Khis. 101³⁴⁹

I am tired, I am exhausted.
I asked the earth for forgiveness,
I touched the merciful earth.

May Satan's eyes find me not!
Earth-mother I hurt not,
run, disease, run!
Lo, here is a stone for thee!

³⁴⁷ Incantation against *biðgāk*.

³⁴⁸ Incantation against *zāṅgä*, recited when freshly grown vegetables and fruit are eaten for the first time.

³⁴⁹ Incantation against *zāḡmāt*, which must be recited when somebody stumbles and falls at night.

Khis. 113³⁵⁰

Old mouth,
new food.
Zāṅgā disease,
run away from me!

Khis. 132³⁵¹

If *šaytan* comes,
stab it in the eye!
If *šaytan* comes,
stab into its place!

Khis. 175³⁵²

Earth's mother – red horse,
water's mother – fair maiden.
Eat me not,
drink me not!
A kerchief from me,
health from thee!

Khis. 183³⁵³

Touch not the stone,
touch me not,
descend on to thy church!

Khis. 239³⁵⁴

If thou art *osoq*,
fly away!
Go to thy country!

³⁵⁰ The same incantation against *zāṅgā* can also be found in Khis. 197.

³⁵¹ So-called “lightning-incantation”, recited during a thunderstorm.

³⁵² Incantation against *osoq*. The same text is published in BashText 325 as an incantation against *yen-zāḫmāt*.

³⁵³ Incantation against the whirlwind (*qoyon*).

³⁵⁴ Incantation against *osoq*.

Go to thy water!
Whence thou came,
thither go!

Khis. 242-243³⁵⁵

I steam the morning complications.
I steam the evening complications.
I steam the new complications.
I steam the flesh's complications.
I steam the (blood)vessels' complications.
(N. N.)'s son has complications.
360 blood-vessels are tangled up,
340 bones have come apart.
I collect them,
I join them together.
Let it be healing!
Let it be potion!
Let my incantation be thus!

Khis. 267³⁵⁶

God on high!
Höppi xuža!
Zäŋki baba!
*Söbxi baba!*³⁵⁷
Protect us!

Khis. 268³⁵⁸

Let the wart
Become a piece of decayed wood!
Let the piece of decayed wood
Become embers!

³⁵⁵ Incantation against *ödlök*, performed in the bath.

³⁵⁶ Not an incantation but a prayer, which must be recited while the livestock is locked in the pen or stable.

³⁵⁷ All three are names of the farmyard's guardian spirit.

³⁵⁸ Incantation against warts (*söyäl*), recited while poking the wart with a stick.

Khis. 276³⁵⁹

Unto this flowing water,
trouble-disease, flow!
His soul be cleansed,
his eyes be opened,
may his ears hear!
Let the sick man('s head) be healthy!
I cut his hair, put it on the water,
put it on the flowing water.

Khis. 279³⁶⁰

To body, blood,
to blood, soul,
to soul, sense.
Let the healing be thus!
Phwoo, phwoo, phwoo!

Khis. 285³⁶¹

The Moon is gone,
the Sun is gone.
Tatran ear,
begone!

Khis. 304³⁶²

Törtkö, begone!
Hence begone, thither go!
Go with the water's flow,
go until sunset!

³⁵⁹ Incantation recited when healing a disease by putting a lock of hair in water.

³⁶⁰ Incantation against *biðgāk*.

³⁶¹ Incantation against *tatran* (ear disease).

³⁶² Incantation against the disease *törtkö* (anthrax), which they recited on the bank of a stream or river, to the disease demon chased all the way there.

Khis. 327³⁶³

Fire's mother is blue,³⁶⁴
fire's mother is yellow,
fire's daughter is red.
Come here not!
Begone!
Uf-uf-uf!

Khis. 375³⁶⁵

May *Xizir Il'yas* be thy travelling companion!
May the angels,
with their wings spread out,
protect thee!

Khis. 379³⁶⁶

Aunt rain,
fall, fall!
May the grain become
a mountain, a mountain!
Pretty spoon in the bazaar,
buttered porridge in the oven.

Khis. 383

Aunt *Yauimbikä*,
give rain!
Aunt *Yauimbikä*,
give precipitation!
Give from the front,

³⁶³ Fire incantation.

³⁶⁴ Khisamitdinova translates the Bashkir word *kük* as 'sky'. Thus, the first line for her is: "Sky – fire's mother". Although in Bashkir, *kük* indeed has both the meanings 'blue' and 'sky' (BRS 312), the translation would be hard to interpret in this way; what is more, the rest of the text does not support this, either.

³⁶⁵ Blessing said to those embarking on a long journey.

³⁶⁶ Incantation recited at a rain-sacrifice held during a draught.

give from the back,
give from the right,
give from the left!

Khis. 383/2

My rain, fall, my rain, fall!
I give thee a buttered spoon.
If the buttered spoon thou takest not,
I give thee buttered porridge.
If the buttered porridge thou takest not,
I give thee a handsome lad.
If the handsome lad thou takest not,
I give thee a pretty maiden.

Khisam. I, 60³⁶⁷

Whence thou came,
thither go!
Go to full breasts!
Go to a light feather bed!
Go to a stormy flood!
Go to decline!
There's no place here for thee.
Whence thou came,
thither go!

Khisam. I, 104³⁶⁸

Lo, here is a soul for thee!
A soul for a soul,
a head for a head.
Now begone hence,
go over to the doll!
Grab the doll!

³⁶⁷ Incantation against the *albatī*. Earlier publication: BKI 1995, 54-55.

³⁶⁸ Incantation against *biḍgāk*.

Khisam. I, 110³⁶⁹

The father-in-law's son has become numb,
I've come to ask for curds.
The father-in-law's son has become numb.
I've come to ask for *birtek*.
Möhärräm is the head of the village,
He sits, he cannot stand.

Khisam. I, 143-144³⁷⁰

Hop-hop-hop!
Bath-stone, beam-head,
call the old woman thy grandmother,
call the old man thy grandfather!
Bear's child,
wolf's child,
may the pan be sweet!
May there be perch!
May the water be clean!
Let him be stately as a leech!³⁷¹
Not my hand,
Gäyşä-Fatima's hand!
Hop-hop-hop!

Khisam. I. 144³⁷²

"What art thou touching?"
"I am touching *sarpïu*."
"What art thou incanting upon?"
"I am incanting upon *sarpïu*."
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
1, let it disappear!

³⁶⁹ Incantation against *birtek*, recorded in Burzyan district in 1960.

³⁷⁰ Incantation recited when bathing the new-born baby for the first time.

³⁷¹ The leech has a complex meaning. It was used in folk medicine; it could mean an impure force as well as be the symbol of beauty and stately bearing (Khis. 345).

³⁷² Incantation against *sarpïu*.

2, 3, let it fly away, let it go away!
 4, 5, let it go cold, let it leave him!
 6, 7, to the wind, to the embers!
 8, 9, into the earth!
 If thou goest not home after the incantation,
 Shame on me.
 Phwoo-Phwoo!
 Not my incantation,
Ġäyşä-Fatima's incantation.
 Phwoo-phwoo!
 May the healing be this!

Khisam. I, 144-145³⁷³

*Bismillahi-r – raḡmani-r – räḡim,*³⁷⁴
 appear not here,
 appear out there!
 May the cure be this!
 This is not my healing,
 it's *Ġäyşä-Fatima's* healing!

Khisam. II, 3³⁷⁵

That the *şaytan* may not come in,
 That the banned one may not come in,
 That the gossip may not push him,
 That the riches may not leave him!

³⁷³ Incantation against ringworm and impetigo (*timräü*).

³⁷⁴ The Arabic formula, meaning 'in the name of the compassionate and merciful Allah' appears in Bashkir incantations relatively frequently; the notation reflects the Bashkir pronunciation.

³⁷⁵ They put a horseshoe in the door or under the doorstep of the stable or the pen so that it would protect the livestock from evil spirits and diseases. That is when this incantation was recited.

Khisam. II, 19

Earth's mother – red beard,³⁷⁶
water's mother – cold beard.
Grab me not, grab that one!
The earth's navel is only one.

Khisam. II, 19/2

Earth's father, earth's mother,
if thou holdest him, let him go!
Thou art so beautiful,
thou art so gorgeous!³⁷⁷

Khisam. II, 27/1³⁷⁸

Old mouth,
new food.
Zäŋge's disease,
run away from me!

Khisam. II, 27/2³⁷⁹

Däŋgelä, run, run!
Däŋgelä, old belly,
new food.
Neigh-neigh!

³⁷⁶ Khisamitdinova interprets it as the earth's mother having a red beard and the water's mother having a cold beard. I do not support this opinion; see Dallos 2021.

³⁷⁷ In the last two lines of the Bashkir original, two synonyms are used for 'beautiful': *matur* and *sibär*. Both mean 'beautiful' and this pair of synonyms also appear in other incantations (see, e.g. Khis. 383).

³⁷⁸ To prevent scurvy, before they eat fresh fruit for the first time in spring, they recite this incantation. In the meantime, they imitate the horse's neighing.

³⁷⁹ Recited at the ritual of "ousting the *zäŋgä* (here: *däŋgelä*)", held in spring.

Khisam. II, 29³⁸⁰

Earth's father, earth's mother,
If thou grabbed him, let him go!
Thou art so beautiful,
thou art so gorgeous!
I will give thee food.
I will give thee honey.
Thou give me health!
Thou give me lightness!

Khisam. II, 42³⁸¹

Earth's mother – red beard,
Water's master – limp beard,
grab not (N. N.)!
Grab the *yen*!
The earth's navel is only one.

or.³⁸²

To the earth, a green kerchief,
to me, health!

³⁸⁰ Incantation against *zäxmät* from Karaidel' district. After sunset, they would drive a nail into the ground in a clear part of the garden and sprinkle salt on it through the neck of the patient's shirt while reciting this incantation. Similar processes were discovered among the Tatars, recorded at the time of healing the disease caused by the Tat. → *Džir iyäse*. Although Khisamitdinova regards it as an incantation against *zäxmät*, its text suggests that the Bashkirs also incanted upon the disease caused by the earth (or one of the earth's spirits) in this way.

³⁸¹ Incantation against *yelpēü* or *sarpīu* from the Salavat district. During a disease caught from the earth, the patient was healed by putting seven different things into a glass of water: ashes, coal, an old horseshoe nail, copper or silver shavings, human hair, fingernails and paraffin. They circled it around the patient three times while reciting the above incantation, and then poured the contents of the glass into a pit at an out-of-the-way place.

³⁸² The last two lines can be replaced with the two lines below.

Khisam. II, 43³⁸³

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9,
into the earth!
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7,
into the wind and water!
1, 2, 3, 4, 5,
let it be over, let it go away!
1, 2, 3,
let it fly away, let it go away!
1
let not even one remain!

Khisam. II, 69³⁸⁴

Lightning, lightning, neigh not!
Bite not anybody!
Do not any evil!
Here are five things for thee!³⁸⁵

Khisam. III, 6³⁸⁶

Now comes that one,
now comes this one.

(or:)

Now nobody comes.
Bath's master,
angels (*färeštälär*),
come inside!

³⁸³ Incantation against *yelpeü* from the Meleuzov district.

³⁸⁴ Incantation recited during a thunderstorm to avert damage by lightning.

³⁸⁵ At the time of storms, they scattered around hairs, juniper or rowan branches, needles, thread and salt.

³⁸⁶ It is not a real incantation – these words had to be said when coming out of the bath in order not to anger the bath's master.

Khisam. III, 12³⁸⁷

If thou came from the wind, go to the wind!
 If thou came from the water, go to the water!
 (If thou came from the earth, go to the earth!)³⁸⁸
 Water's mother – cold beard,
 earth's mother – red beard.
 Whence thou came, thither go!
 Return no more!

Khisam. III, 36.

A styne appeared on thy eye.
 Styne *mälek mämälek*,
 styne, fig, here, a fig!
 If it came from the wind,
 may it go to the wind!
 If it came from the water,
 may it go to the water!
 Whence it came,
 may it go thither!
 Not my hand,
Ġäyşä-Fatima's hand.
 May the healing-cure be this!

Khisam. III, 38

Water's father, *Söläymän*,
 water's mother *Hiubikä*!
 Health from ye,
 a kerchief from me!

Khisam. III, 42–43³⁸⁹

I caught a thief,
 I blackened his face.

³⁸⁷ Incantation against *näŋtā*.

³⁸⁸ This line is missing from the Bashkir text, but appears in the Russian translation.

³⁸⁹ Incantation against *sirtmä*.

The Moon's returned,
the Sun's returned,
thou return, too!
What art thou circling?
White *sirtmä*
white *sirtmä*
white *sirtmä*.
Return to thy place!
Return to thy place!
Phwoo-phwoo-phwoo!

Khisam. III. 81³⁹⁰

Shup-shop³⁹¹ sieve,
shuck-shock bucket,
scythe's blade
asking thee.
Run, run hence
ugly *ülät*!

Tor. 84³⁹²

The sieve-maker's two daughters:
strong girl like a bear,
hairy girl like a bull.
Tatiran go over,
tatiran go over!

³⁹⁰ Incantation recited while ousting pestilence (*ülät*).

³⁹¹ These and the ones at the beginning of the next line are meaningless words (possibly for the sake of onomatopoeia).

³⁹² Incantation against *tatran* 'earache', which Torma cites from Kiräy Märgän (1976, 75) – unfortunately, rather inaccurately. The first word of the Bashkir text, provided by Torma, appears inaccurately as *üläkseneñ*, which in the original is in fact *iläkseneñ*, and the final verb in the imperative mood is not *qus*, but *küs*. I used the original text as the basis for my translation.

Tor. 84/2³⁹³

Yellow *büðer*, black *büðer*,
 Black-headed yellow *büðer*,
 yellow *büðer*, smart *büðer*!
 Come out from inside, *büðer*!
 Go over *büðer*!
 Go away *büðer*!
 Begone *büðer*!

Tor. 87/1

Earth's mother – earth-brown beard,
 water's mother – water-cooled beard.
 If thou grabbed him, let him go!
 If thou came from the earth, go to the earth!
 If thou came from the water, go thither!

Tor. 87/2³⁹⁴

Water, grab me not!
 Here, grab this thread!

Tor. 116

Earth's master – red beard,
 water's master – wet beard.
 Grab not (N. N.)!
 Grab the *yen*!
 The *yen*'s navel is only one.

³⁹³ Incantation against *büðer*.

³⁹⁴ When they go to bathe in a body of water for the first time, they pull a thread from their shirt or scarf and put it in the water while incanting (nowadays, only as a joke, according to Torma).

2. Mythical stories

Ami. 10³⁹⁵

[Šüräle]

Back in those days, Mount Irändek,³⁹⁶ where now lies the village of Fayzulla, was covered by a thick forest, and the stream did not yet have a name. There, a lad from the Burzyan tribe grazed his horses. It so happened that one morning, the lad's best horse was sweating and foaming heavily. The lad was very surprised. The same thing was repeated on the second day, and for some days after that. He decided to find out the reason for this, so he smeared tar on his horse's back. The next morning, when he got to his horses, he saw that a *šüräle*-girl was stuck to the back of his favourite horse. The lad took her off the horse, grabbed her by the hair and gave her a good whipping to teach her a lesson once and for all. The *šüräle*-girl cried and begged him not to beat her and then she'd marry him. With that, she turned into a beautiful young maiden. The lad liked her and married her. They settled on the bank of that nameless stream where he had found her. Later, they named both the village and the stream *Šüräle*. The girl gave birth to a lot of children, and later they called the village Fayzulla, in honour of one of her sons.

Ami. 11³⁹⁷

[Šüräle]

Once I was mowing hay on the meadow by the stream *Šüräle* when I suddenly felt that somebody was looking at me. I looked around and saw the *šüräle*, which was watching me. It was very tall, hairy, ugly and had long arms. Although I was frightened, I did not show it but

³⁹⁵ Khalitova Magira (born in 1910) told Z. G. Aminev in 1986 about the history of the foundation of her home village, in the way she had heard it from her mother. The folk name of Fayzulla was *Šüräle*.

³⁹⁶ One of the easternmost mountain ridges of Bashkiria.

³⁹⁷ Khalitova Magira (born in 1910) told Z. G. Aminev in 1986 how she had met a *šüräle*.

hurried towards the stream with the scythe in my hand. I reached the stream and quickly crossed over it. The *šüräle* also got to the stream, but it didn't dare cross it, as the *šüräles* are afraid of water. As it didn't dare go across, the *šüräle* asked how it could get over to the other side. I told it to go downstream.³⁹⁸

BashText 92-93³⁹⁹

[*Büðer*]

People from various villages used to visit my grandfather so that he would heal the *büðer*. He had *büðer*-stone. Grandfather had taken this stone from a cave in the mountainside. We, children also went there. We, too, put our hands into the cleft and tried to scrape it off. It was a sandy kind of stone, sort of bitter tasting. Grandfather scraped off that stone, said some kind of a prayer and gave the stone to the sick person to eat. And the people would be healed from the *büðer*. Now, what helped them, the prayer or the stone, well, that I do not know.

BashText 302⁴⁰⁰

[*Öðlök*]

In the olden days, the elders said that for forty days after giving birth, the woman is in the same status as the child. Therefore, the new mother was not allowed to leave the house on her own, go out to the yard or the street or go to the market. She must not sleep in one bed with her husband or bathe together in the bath. All of this was forbidden. It was also not allowed to nurse the new-born in the presence of strangers or wear scanty clothing and go bareheaded, that is, without a headscarf. Those who did not keep these regulations would develop complications (*öðlök*) after giving birth.

³⁹⁸ This text was recorded in the third person singular, but in the translation, I “put it back” into the first person singular because of the experience-like character of the text.

³⁹⁹ Healing story recorded from Z. Akbalinova in the Akyar Khaybullin district.

⁴⁰⁰ Healing-story recorded from Z. Akbalinova in the Akyar Khaybullin district.

I, too, had *ödlök*. My breasts were swollen. I had a fever. We did not know that it was the *ödlök* until there was a stabbing pain. My father called a healer by the name of Safura. She tied ashes in knots in three places at the bottom of my dress, then she prayed and whispered and cupped me. Only then did the *ödlök* go away. It is a very severe disease.

BashText 323⁴⁰¹

Healing lameness caused by water with a stone

Once they grabbed me and threw me into the water from the little bridge. Screaming in terror, I fought my way to the shore. By the time I got home, my arms and legs would not obey me. The medicine-woman said that I was paralysed from the water. She performed an incantation. She heated a stone and sat me upon the warm stone. Then the healer told me to take the stone with me and bury it. I did so. Thus, with the stone, the healer sent into the earth the disease that had been caused by the water.

BKI XII, 90

Muslim *bäri*

There are such devilish wizardly people who know the secrets of life and other wisdom. They even make the *bäris* obey them and put them to their service: they recite the appropriate prayers and those beings will do for them this and that.

“What do you wish?” they ask the man, and they are ready to grant the man’s wishes. He says:

“Move that mountain!” and at that moment, the *bäris* take the mountain where they must. The man says:

“Carry the hay there!” and at that moment, they fly the whole stack of hay through the air to the other place. Such beings are called Muslim *bäris*.

⁴⁰¹ Healing-story recorded from G. Valieva in the Syurbaevo-Kiginsky district.

One can make them carry water in a sieve and make a rope from sand or sunrays. They can cause a whirlwind or calm down a storm. What can they not do!?

BKI XII, 91-92

Satan appears as a milkmaid

Once I went to the co-operative farm early in the morning for the morning milking. Alas, as I was walking towards my own cows, I saw that my friend Tutay was sitting there, milking my cows. I started grumbling; I didn't talk to her or even greet her. She would not leave that job for the world. I thought she'd arrived early and beat me to the work. Then I went to milk the cows. When the pail was full I took it to the tub to empty it, and I see Tutay standing in the door. I asked her in surprise:

"Well, now, what are you doing here, where are you coming from?"

She answered:

"I've just come to work."

Then I told her everything, that I'd seen her as I was going to the milking-post. Just then, the others started gathering, the other milkmaids. I learnt from them that Satan would sometimes appear in the form of a milkmaid, who arrives at work first. I also learnt that I did well not to call her by name.

BKI XII, 96/B

Ubir

If you see the man-eating fire-witch in flight and sparks flying everywhere, unbutton your shirt at once and start incanting! Only never ever think of spitting, as is customary, to spit! To it, spit is like that water of life. If it senses that you spit, it thinks happily: "Oh, so good that he spat, he just wetted my throat. My mouth was growing dry." And it flies on to continue its beastly business.

BKI XII, 96/V

Ubîr

When smoke rises from the cemetery, they say that the *ubîr* is flying. In order to weaken its strength, one must break off a forking tree branch.

BKI XII, 96-97

Ubîr

If somebody accidentally touched the fire of the man-eating night-witch and fell ill, then his relatives would buy salt for incantation and scattered a small pinch after sunset, then locked the door carefully and went to bed. This was the way to heal someone who had been harmed by the *ubîr*.

BKI XII, 98.

Bisura

This happened at the time when I was a small child, yet I remember it as if it was yesterday.

My uncle Kutlugilde, who later fell in the war, just at that time married a girl from the neighbouring village. We would visit them often. They lived nicely. But then two years passed and things began to go badly for them. My father pondered: "Kutlugilde seems to have been made ill."

And indeed, he became very skinny and yellow and he spoke incoherently. And then, as our mother told us, he began to sleep separately from his wife. Kutlugilde's father, grandfather Kutluyar was very worried about his son. Not knowing what to do, one day he went to the mullah of the village called Sultan. The next day, the mullah came, looked at my uncle and said that he had been harmed by the water *bisura*. He told them to make my uncle tell three times a day what he had dreamt at night. If he resists and wouldn't tell, they should whip him up to twelve times a day. Grandfather Kutluyar did so. As he could see that his son was indeed reluctant to do it, he whipped him as instructed, for twelve days. Finally, the son, not able to bear it any longer, told everything to his father with tears

in his eyes. Then they called the mullah again and he ousted the impure force. For a long time afterwards, a woman could be heard crying at night in the house and at the gate. They say that is how the water *bisura* mourned her lover.

BKI XII, 101

Šüräle

The *šüräle* is a red-haired, unkempt female being, which has drooping breasts and the soles of her feet are turned forward. She usually seduces people, primarily men, and tickles them until they breathe their last. But she has a vulnerably point. It is in her armpit, where you can see all the way to her heart.

When it starts tickling the man, he cannot stay upright and falls. But the man who is really smart would then slide his foot through the *šüräle*'s armpit and then he can escape. And it kills the *šüräle* immediately.

BKI XII, 105

The treasure's master

The treasure buried in the ground will rise as a treasure spirit after a few years. At this time, it appears to people as a little lamb, dog, man or other living creature. If somebody decides to get this wealth, he must spread ashes, dry earth or dust over the place where the master-spirit had been. Later, you must dig where you can see the master spirit's footprints, and you will certainly find the treasure.

Khis. 184⁴⁰²

[The whirlwind-devil]

Once the whirlwind tore the headscarf from my head. I picked it up from the ground and put it on a child's head. The child's belly became swollen, he vomited and wailed. I took the child to the healer and he said:

⁴⁰² Memorat collected in 2003 in Yılayır district.

“He was touched by the whirlwind-devil. Why did you cover his head with that scarf?!”

Khisam. I, 26-27⁴⁰³

[The yard’s master]

It was the month of March. A snowstorm had been roaring ceaselessly all week. My cow was to calve soon. I would get up several times a night to go and see if the cow was calving yet, to keep the calf from freezing. That night, I also went out to see my cow, then I went back to bed and fell fast asleep. I suddenly woke up because there was a knock on the window. I jumped up, lit the lamp, looked at the clock, lo, it was two a. m. and I asked:

“Who’s there?”

My neighbour was shouting at the window:

“Get up, what are you lying for? The calf will freeze!”

I ran to the stable. And indeed, the calf, next to the cow, was already growing cold. I wanted to take it into the house quickly, but I didn’t have enough strength, because it was a big calf. Azat was not home then. So I ran to the neighbour’s. That is, it was impossible to run because of the deep snow. At last, I got over the heaps of snow to the neighbour’s and thought:

“Well, how it has snowed over, even though the neighbour has just come over.” I could hardly get through!

Finally, my neighbour opened the door and I said:

“How deeply you have been sleeping, even though a little while ago you woke me up!”

My neighbour was very surprised:

“I certainly did not wake you, where would I have gone on a night like this?!”

That’s how I knew that I had been awakened by the yard’s master (*kärtä eyähe*). It was the yard’s master. If the livestock falls ill, it also comes and warns you.

⁴⁰³ From data provider Ġaliäkbärova, of the Zilair district.

Khisam. I, 28⁴⁰⁴

[Aždaha]

This happened in the meadow. It was a very hot day. The sun was scorching. There was not a cloud in the sky. Suddenly, from somewhere, a ragged black cloud appeared. Thunder roared, lightning flashed and the rain began to pour. It became dark. You could hear the trees rustling and cracking in the rain. There was a swamp not far from the meadow. Well, we see the black cloud, where it all started, descending on the swamp. At that moment, a terrifying sound of thunder was heard. And from the swamp, a terrifying monster rose to the cloud. It twisted and the tail of this beast seemed to branch out into a fork. As it rose, it slapped its tail uncontrollably. Wherever it hit, the trees just rolled to the side of the mountain. We were all very scared of what this creature was doing. But Allah was merciful and the cloud went to the side of Mount Kōrkāk. In the village they said “the dragon has risen”.

Khisam. I, 29⁴⁰⁵

[Aždaha]

As soon as the cloud touched the water, the water immediately began to rage, rose slightly, then descended, swirling, almost stepping out of its bed, and the head of the terrible monster appeared, with its eyes swollen from roaring, looking like large wooden cups. The cloud, picking up and embracing the monster’s head, lifted it high up in the air, carrying its huge body.

Khisam. I, 46⁴⁰⁶

[The old man with a white cane]

This was in 1937. We boys started to play hide and seek at dusk. Once I ran to hide behind the corner of the house because one could see the whole yard from there. As I was standing there behind the

⁴⁰⁴ Recorded by Khisamitdinova in Beloresky district, after a great hurricane.

⁴⁰⁵ Excerpt from B. G. Yuluev’s record from 1892.

⁴⁰⁶ From data provider M. Tashbulatov, of Fedorov district.

corner, peeking out, lo, I saw an old man go into our stable with a long, white cane, dressed in a wide, white kaftan with a stand-up collar. Our stable was built upon large stones. The old man did not stop but disappeared between the stones. However, hardly a fist fits through there. That put me off playing hide and seek. When I told my mother about the old man, and she said yes, it was the old man with a white cane. He can be seen sometimes, there's no need to be afraid of him.

In 1944, when I was coming home from the lower end of the village, I saw the same old man again, dressed the same. On the top of the mountain, among the rocks grows a black pine, he was sitting under that. When I approached him, the old man got up, descended towards the river and disappeared.

Khisam. I, 47⁴⁰⁷

[The house's master]

I was a child then. Once I said to my brothers:

“Let's go outside, who'll come with me?”

They replied:

“Boys are not afraid at night, or else the girls will laugh at them!”

We went out, and lo, I see that right by our hedge stands an old man in a white coat and a white turban. I could see in the dark that he would start toward us and then went back where he was. And so, back and forth a few times. Well, I thought I'd find out where this unknown mullah was going. He was toing and froing a little more and then disappeared behind the house. When I asked my grandmother about the old man she said:

“It was the house's master (*yort eyähe*), son. He always appears to people dressed like that. You must never go near him, shout at him or try to talk to him!”

After this event, when I was nearly sick with fear, I was not allowed out to the yard at night.

⁴⁰⁷ Memorat recorded from K. Yakhin.

Khisam. I, 59⁴⁰⁸

[*Albaðti*]

After my father and I left home, a little girl appeared to my brother just before he fell asleep, standing by the stove and calling my brother to her. This girl was the *albaðti*-old-woman, our neighbour. She came two more times but then our dog ate her. My brother said that he himself had seen the bloodstains.

Khisam. I, 66⁴⁰⁹

[The changeling]

Earlier, there was a child in our village. He had bulging eyes, a bloated belly and long arms and legs, as long as a whip. Even in the cold and frost, he would go barefoot and bareheaded. He was always munching on some bread.

“He is an insatiable glutton!” his mother would complain.

He lived until age 13 and then he died. In the village, the story went that he was a *bäre* (devil) child, that the *bäre* had changed him.

Khisam. I, 97⁴¹⁰

[*Beðmoron*]

The *beðmorons*, just like people, can be male or female. They say that they also talk, just like people, and they also leave footprints in the snow. They usually live in caves in the mountains. But they say that they sometimes go into the villages. They move into empty houses. If somebody moves into a house like that, the *beðmoron* spirits get angry with them and try to oust him. In such houses, people can't get any rest, and even children and animals can die. The people don't have a choice but to move out or tear down the house right down to its foundations.

⁴⁰⁸ Recorded by Shunkarov from F. S. Agosheva in the Orenburg district in 1906.

⁴⁰⁹ Recorded by Khisamitdinova in the Beloresky district.

⁴¹⁰ Recorded from A. Allayarov (born in 1912) in the Meleuzov district.

They also say that the *beđmoron* is very greedy and it eats a lot. Therefore, in the farmyards often visited by the *beđmoron*, the animals become weak and emaciated.

Khisam. I, 104⁴¹¹

[*Biögak*]

The Orenburg Bashkirs make a doll in the shape of a beautiful girl. They dress it in colourful ribbons and rags. They put the doll to the patient's chest and then throw it out to the street. In other places, they circle the doll around the patient's head while reciting an incantation: "Here is a soul for thee / a soul for a soul / a head for a head / now begone hence / go over to the doll / grab the doll!"

Khisam. I, 112⁴¹²

[*Bisura*]

It happened in 1964. A stream flows around our village. At the lower end of the village, there is a ford, from where the stream flows down steeply along the foot of the mountain. Down there, on one bank grows a willow forest and the other is limestone. So, this place is quiet and calm, and the animals don't go there, either. That's where we used to collect the clay to make bricks, and also dry and store it there. It was August then, and it was already getting dark when we got home.

On one of those days, when it was getting really dark, it started drizzling. I hurried to cover the bricks with a frieze cloth. Suddenly I saw a woman come out from among the young willows, her head covered with a white scarf. The bottom of her black skirt was so uneven as if it had been cut with a knife, her legs snow-white. She walked along the stream, wading in the shallow water, and then disappeared in the dip at the bottom of the mountain. Who could it be, in weather like that?

⁴¹¹ Recorded from K. Tuisheva (born in 1931) in Orenburg county.

⁴¹² Memorat recorded from S. Devletbaeva.

When I told my father about this woman at home, he said:

“Next time you go to the stream or the bath after dark, make a noise, pray loudly or sing!”

Khisam. I, 129⁴¹³

[*Bïuma*]

I have seen the *bïuma* myself. A child in our village fell ill. One day, I happened to be visiting his family. They were sitting having tea. The child was running around, playing. Suddenly, he fell down with a great noise and started twitching. I saw that his mother stripped his shirt and pants off him and put them on the boy's face. Then, she shut these clothes in the door a few times and then hid them under the cow dung. I don't know why she buried them there. But I saw her squeeze the child's clothes in the door three times and murmur something.

Khisam. I, 142⁴¹⁴

[*Ġazrail*]

Ġazrail Firäšte can slay a man as if he was livestock. When the man dies, blood is splashed everywhere around him, so after the funeral, they wash and clean everything in the house. According to the beliefs of the Bashkirs, people wade in blood up to their knees beside the deceased. Except that blood is not visible to humans.

For some, it is easily separated, they are called God's servants. But others suffer, they cannot die, of these it is said around here: “poor thing, he seems to have a lot of sins”, and they read out *suras* from the Koran. The prayer makes the transition to the other world easier. But whether it was easy or difficult, you will be held accountable in any case. They say that if he had a lot of sins, he will go to hell, if only a few, to heaven.

⁴¹³ Healing story recorded from M. B. Yakupova (born in 1928), in Irbakayev village.

⁴¹⁴ Recorded from Abdullina Manavara, from Yuldashevo, Uchalym district.

Khisam. II, 5⁴¹⁵

[*Däžžäl*]

They say that *Täžäl* will appear before the end of the world. The *Täžäl*'s voice and music will be so beautiful that it will entice people to follow it. In order not to hear and follow the *Täžäl*'s enchanting voice, one must be turning a hand mill; they say that only those turning a hand mill will remain. The others, who follow the voice, will go until they are exhausted and their feet are worn off. And although the voice will still be heard, nothing will be seen.

Khisam. II, 5-6⁴¹⁶

[*Däržžäl*]

End of the world. When the end of the world comes, the mountains will be laid flat, the forests will disappear and the sky and earth will collide. At that time, that thing will come, the *Däržžäl*, which comes, dancing to various different tunes and clawing at the earth. All kinds of people follow it. And the *Däržžäl* will devour each and every one of them from the face of the earth. Only red clay will be left after it. The elders say that therefore, the dead will also be buried in clay.

Khisam. II, 10-11

[The wandering of the *džinns*]

One we were picking potatoes three kilometres from the village. Suddenly, at around two or three o' clock, we heard some kind of noise. This noise was coming from the forest, which was about 100-150 metres from us towards the village. There was the whirring of a car, music, singing, loud human voices, a new-born crying, a horse neighing, a cow mooing, a dog barking, a cart's wheel rattling. Every sound could be clearly made out. We stood as if our feet were rooted to the ground. My father said that the *džinns* were moving. On the way home, we looked carefully, but found no traces at all.

⁴¹⁵ Collected by F. G. Khisamitdinova in the Beloretsky district.

⁴¹⁶ Collected by R. Sharapov and N. Sharapova in the Beloretsky district.

Khisam. II, 11-12⁴¹⁷

[*Yen*]

My grandmother was 13 years old at the time. As the sun set, she got ready to go out to the farmyard. As she opened the door, an unkempt woman wearing a long coat sneaked in and went to the front corner. Then my grandmother suddenly collapsed and was very ill for three full months. One time during her illness, her dead girlfriend appeared to her in her sleep, crawling from under the bunk where she slept and shaking her hard. Following this, my grandmother became even worse. They called to mullah to incant upon her. My grandmother was only healed after that. And that unkempt woman was a *yen*.

Khisam. II, 42⁴¹⁸

[*The water-sarpïu*]

Once your aunt Vaspïy went out to the yard with her mother-in-law. She says to her mother-in-law in the yard:

“What nice warm rain is falling!”

“What rain? There’s no rain falling!” said her mother-in-law, surprised.

As soon as they went into the house, your aunt Vaspïy collapsed and started breathing heavily, even her mouth was foaming. For her disease to go away, they called a powerful mullah-healer, who incanted on her twice. Only in this way could your aunt be healed.

Khisam. II, 43⁴¹⁹

[*Sarpïu*]

Aunt Igenaz and Zolḡoya were travelling to Raḡmat village. They were passing an old cemetery when Aunt Inegaz shouted:

⁴¹⁷ Collected by F. G. Khisamitdinova from A. Khayretdinova, in the Beloretsky district.

⁴¹⁸ Collected by F. G. Khisamitdinova from Galia Khisametdinova (born in 1924) in the Beloretsky district.

⁴¹⁹ Collected by F. G. Khisamitdinova in the Beloretsky district.

“Wait a moment! Look what a pretty little bottle is lying there! Let’s take it home so Salima can play with it!”

She jumped off the wagon and picked up the bottle. And at that moment, her legs gave way and she fell, out of breath.

After this was over and they all arrived home, Aunt Igenaz remembered the little bottle. She wanted to give it to Salime, but the bottle was nowhere to be found. Zolxoya then said that it was the spirit of the *sarpïu*.

Khisam. III, 4-5⁴²⁰

[Grandmother *Möstän*]

We were just setting out to go down from the mountain when we saw an old woman. In a white dress and white headscarf. She didn’t even look towards us, she was just walking into the forest. We shouted after her:

“Where are you going?”

Never mind, we couldn’t see her any longer.

Afterwards we learnt that it was grandmother *Möstän* herself, spirit of the disease *törtkö*. She was coming from a man called *Ġälimirða*, whose calf she had killed.

Khisam. III, 20⁴²¹

[The house spirit]

Every house has such a master. It would always wake me up:

“The cow is calving, Bibiyamal!”

I can thank the house’s master (*öy eyähe*) that none of my calves or lambs have ever been frozen! And it’s never scared me, either, it has always helped me.

⁴²⁰ Collected by F. G. Khisamitdinova in the Beloretsky district.

⁴²¹ Provided by Bibiyamal Murzagitova from Ibrakaevo, Sterlibashev district.

Khisam. III, 20-21⁴²²

[The house spirit]

The house's master (*öy eyähe*) has only done good to us. In 1932, all my father's wealth was confiscated. Our house was given to the kolkhoz. But nobody could live there in peace – the house spirit (*öy eyähe*) would appear on the ceiling every night, banging on the beam, not letting the people sleep, mocking everyone. Therefore, perhaps, nobody lived there any longer.

My father taught me like this:

When you move to a new house, call it like this: "Let's go, house's master, do not lag behind!"

Then in the new house, you must say:

House's master! Let's live in friendship and help each other!

Khisam. III, 98⁴²³

[Šaytan]

At that time, I was a shepherd. Once I was driving the whole flock across the cemetery. It was an autumn day. Alas, I see that on the grave of Uncle Išmuḡamet, who had recently died, lies a big snake. Black as pitch. It's lying there with its mouth wide open, staring at me. I thought: "How hostile it looks, it probably opens its mouth because of that". I hit it once, it doesn't die, I hit it twice, it doesn't die still. After that, I fell really ill. My mother took me to the village of Batal, where they incanted upon my illness and healed me. Apparently, it wasn't a snake, but a devil (*šaytan*)."

⁴²² Provided by A. Valieva.

⁴²³ Provided by S. G. Safin (born in 1936) from Aslaevo, Uchalin district.