

# SUPERNATURAL BEINGS AND ‘SONG AND DANCE’: CELTIC AND SLAVIC EXEMPLARS

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“But Maggie stood there sair astonished  
Till by the heel and hand admonished  
She ventured forward on the light  
And vow! Tam saw an unco sight!  
Warlocks and witches in a dance,  
Nae cotillion brent-new frae France,  
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys and reels  
Put life and mettle in their heels.”

## **1. Music, dance and the supernatural**

That great Scot Robert Burns adds that Auld Nick, one of the names for the devil himself, provided the music for this horrid and unseemly event, playing the bagpipes. There are those who would say that the skirl of the Scottish war-pipes is sufficiently diabolical even if Satan weren’t playing them, but the point is that here in Kirk-Alloway beings infused with the supernatural - that is, “warlocks and witches” – are clearly depicted as enjoying the pleasures of ‘human’ music and dance.

Music and dance have, of course, had any number of uses in our human cultural cosmos: in courtship rituals, in socialization, of course for entertainment (cultural and countercultural), in religious ceremonial – and even in politics and, finally, in war. We would aver that the two are specifically, undeniably human – a product of the cultural world of humankind, and its agents.<sup>1</sup> Yet in myth, epic, and folktale and all the other works of the human imagination, music and dance can be, and often have been, handed over or assigned to supernatural (non-human) beings of various kinds and types, benign or malign or neutral, singular or in groups, and this brief effort of mine will try to identify, analyse, and contrast “supernatural song and dance” in our two familiar Indo-European contexts, the Celtic and the Slavic.

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<sup>1</sup> On the other hand: “An anthropologist observed a male chimpanzee performing a special fire-dance next to a huge blaze on the Senegalese savannah” (“Findings” endnote, *Harper’s*, March, 2010). All sorts of questions have to be raised about this alleged observation.

Burns's Ayrshire warlocks and witches are human, however evil (usually) their acts and intentions, and so human music (the pipes) and Scottish dances are in a sense appropriate for them. As we look elsewhere in the world of the Other, we find various explanations and aetiologies (and also some of the connections, or the lack of them, extending from the supernatural world to that of the human). The Russian/Eastern European *rusalky* are usually identified as "the souls of children, of girls and women who died prematurely" (Barber 1997: 9, cit. Niederle 1926: 132) – and the music they are associated with are the songs sung to "lure" these spirits out of the forest, their home and refuge, toward the fields where their beneficent effect on fertility (that is, the effect of a *potentially* fertile former human) is accounted as paramount (Barber 1997: 10).<sup>2</sup>

The supernatural *vila* figure with which these spirits may be confused, however – the Balkan, especially the Serbo-Croat *vila* – are rather different characters: they are not human (though they may dramatically interact with humans), they seemingly have little to do with any kind of fertility, human or otherwise, their origins are mysterious (certainly pre-Christian, and perhaps pre-Indo-European) and a particular kind of dance (and, to a somewhat puzzling extent, song) is very much a specific marker for them.

Moving westward, the described nature of the Breton *korrigaññed*, the Welsh *Tylweth Teg* (or 'The Fair Family') and the Irish *síthe* all point toward what might be called parallel existences to the human world (for the Irish and Welsh "fairies" this can include intermarriage with humans, at least as a temporary state).<sup>3</sup> One origin story for the Irish *síthe* identifies them as the pre-Goidelic *Tuatha dé Danaan*, the 'children of the goddess Dana,' conceived of as a once-human "race" to which the mythic kings and heroes of the island belonged, now having taken up residence elsewhere, possibly underground in some *rath* or *dun* or *bruig*, possibly in a land or island somewhere over-sea, to the west – or perhaps both. All these beings are, technically speaking, "trooping fairies," as William Butler Yeats would have it, that is, they make up a supernatural collective, a 'people' (Yeats 1888/1973: 11-12). The Scottish tales give us a similar supernatural grouping (of *sithan* or *sithiche*) with approximately the same sort of inclinations, dwelling places (mainly, again, underground or inside hills or mounds, from which they emerge at specific times) and a pronounced taste

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<sup>2</sup> Barber (1997: 18) also noted the medieval fertility celebrations called (in Russian) *rusalii*, which drew the ire and condemnation of various clerical authorities because of their nocturnal "demonic songs... and dancing."

<sup>3</sup> For sources regarding Irish fairies, of course see Tom Peete Cross (1953) and his Motif-Index, in which "fairy stories" are included under F200-299.

for music and dance.<sup>4</sup> The Welsh *Tylweth Teg* love “dancing, singing [naturally, being Welsh residents or inhabitants, of a sort] and music” (Briggs 1979: 150). Yeats is explicit: the Irish *síthe* have, as their chief occupations, “feasting, fighting, making love, and playing the most beautiful music” (Yeats 1888/1973: 12).<sup>5</sup> In Henry Glassie’s commodious modern folkloric classic, *Passing the Time in Ballymenone*, there is almost no mention of the *síthe* – except that it was known to his twentieth century Irish storytellers that “beautiful lights follow their movement, and fairies make the world’s loveliest music.”<sup>6</sup>

The musical instruments of these supernatural beings are those (mostly) familiar to us humans – fiddles are often mentioned; the Welsh “fair family” favours sweet singers and harping (Rhys 1901/1980: 457). Briggs says that the Cornish fairies (the Spriggans) can organize what would almost count as an entire orchestra to accompany their revelry: “mouth-organs... cymbals or tambourines... jew’s harps... May whistles and feapers.”<sup>7</sup> Sir Walter Scott is our source for “The Fairy-Boy of Leith” who plays a drum for a gathering of *sithain* near Carlton Hill, in (or formerly, near) Edinburgh city.<sup>8</sup> The only appearance of a supernatural musician in Fitzroy Maclean’s collection, *West Highland Tales*, involves an old, well-dressed piper whose skillfully-played music, coming from underground (in fact from Cnoc an t-Sithein, the “Knoll of the Fairies,” on the isle of Barra) lures a passing islander deep into the knoll.<sup>9</sup> The Breton *korrigañned* may dance to the music of the viol (Markale 1977: 76) while, elsewhere, the Breton sources simply say that the native supernatural beings “dance and sing,” not necessarily in celebration, however.<sup>10</sup> Finally, our Celtic sources

<sup>4</sup> The Breton *korrigañned* and the Cornish ‘Spriggan’ also have marine associations (see the Irish ‘Merrow’ or merman below); the Breton fairies (a different supernatural population, seemingly) may also be found secluded in the deepest forest (Markale 1977: 186).

<sup>5</sup> He adds (*ibid.*) that dancing was also their delight; that an old woman who “went with the fairies” for seven years had no toes – “she had danced them off.” Yeats gives the old woman’s village – Ballisodare – for confirmation of her story.

<sup>6</sup> Glassie 1982: 546. Glassie did his fieldwork in Northern Ireland in the 1970s.

<sup>7</sup> Briggs 1979: 73. A “feaper” is a split reed; “May whistles” I suspect are very similar to those whistles I remember from my own youth; about 15-20 cm long, cut (in the spring) from willow withes, the bark loosened and a mouth-hole carved out, and all this done by someone who knew the art. They whistled until the sap dried and the bark split. This particular tale also shows a feature shared with Burns’s poem: the possible peril attendant upon interrupting a fairy event, and also an observation about the size (variable) of the supernatural being.

<sup>8</sup> Douglas 1901-2000: 128-131, citing Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, who in turn cites, as his source, a seventeenth century gentleman named Captain George Burton.

<sup>9</sup> Maclean 1990: 127-129, citing J. L. Campbell 1960.

<sup>10</sup> In Seignolle 1979: 189, *korrigañned* (also called *tuez* or “dwarves”) dance and sing before cursing an ungenerous house-wife (and her house, which they then desert).

give us a *friendly* Manx spirit, the Dooinnie-Oie or 'Night-Man,' who blows a horn "sounding like an alpen-horn" to warn humans of approaching storms (Briggs 1979: 59, citing Broome 1951).

On the Slavic side (mainly citing Balkan and Serbo-Croat sources) we ought to note that the "epic" *vile* that D. Juri identifies (and that we are especially interested in) are great dancers – especially in the round-dance, the *kolo*. Their singing remains a bit of a mystery (though the *kolo* usually is accompanied by song); perhaps it is pertinent that, as compared to the Celtic supernatural beings, these *vile* are *created* by or in song, in or near our own time, songs invented, passed along, and sung by professional singers, the *gislari*; these songs were eventually collected by scholars and folkloric researchers, in the nineteenth century and later.<sup>11</sup> In the depictions we have of them these beautiful female (always female) supernaturals live and have their being far from humankind: on mountains and highlands, near remote mountain lakes (see Miller 2009: 11, 15). Yet they freely approach humans, especially human heroes, for good or sometimes malignant purposes, can act as counselors of advisors, or as a "warrior helper" and *poseštrime* ("sister in God"). The most famous citation for the effects of human song in the *vile* cosmos is displayed in the tale *Marko i Vila*, where the *vila* Ravijojla shoots "two white arrows" at Prince Marko's friend Miloš and wounds him almost mortally after he had sung too beautifully for her taste; the same theme occurs in the song *Vila Strijela Markova Pobratima*, where Marko (and we might ask why?) persuades another blood-brother of his to sing "to the mountains" and the hero's *pobratim* is then attacked by a posse of offended *vile* (Karad 1891: i II #38, #158). Some sort of jealousy (or artistic snobbery?) on the *vila*'s part seems to be obvious here, though in another song a human wedding cortège is advised to stop their traditional celebratory noise near "Eagle's Mountain," lest the mountain's resident *vila* object to it for some reason (Juri 2010: 181-182). A resentment of human interference or presence (or simply of human observation) is not uncommon elsewhere in what we see (or construct) as the broader realm of the supernatural being. As for dancing and the *vila*, this seems to be another, a different sort of magical operation for these creatures – perhaps even moving the *vila* toward a shamanistic posture (as a relic of an earlier stage in her mythology?).

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<sup>11</sup> Dorian Juri, a student of the historical linguist John Colarusso, is working on the "epic" *vile*, and I am grateful to be able to use his numerous citations of Serbo-Croat source materials: see Juri 2010.

## 2. Humans and supernaturals: Contacts and consequences

The human and the supernatural being come into contact: how does this happen and what are the consequences, and what rôle does song-and-dance play in these encounters? We can find the following scenarios:

### 2.1. *Luring, attraction*

Douglas, citing J. F. Campbell (one of the clan of “collecting” Scottish Campbells) gives us two tales where humans are lured into the world of the Other, by (first) “music and dancing... fiddling and singing” (this was “about Hallowe’en times” – that is, near a major Celtic holy-day) when one of two young plowmen enters the old mill where the supernatural revelry is taking place – and does not return.<sup>12</sup> A second Campbell tale (“The Smith and the Fairies”) is more complicated. It involves a changeling exchange, reveals the techniques to be used for exposing and expelling such a supernatural creature, and finally tells of the rescue of the smith’s real (human) infant son from the fairy *rath* or hillock. There, we are told, “piping, singing and joyous merriment” came from the rath, which the smith entered carrying a Bible, a dirk (that is, “cold iron”) and a crowing cock (evidently to signal the approach of dawn). One way and another the father’s appearance and interference so agitated the resident fairy folk that he and his son were thrown out of the hill; the kidnapped and rescued son eventually showed a preternatural skill at sword-smithing, a skill presumably ‘learned’ or acquired by *contactus* in the fairy *rath*. The Douglas collection also contains a “literary” tale (elegantly re-written in a nineteenth century high style) in which humans are enticed into joining the Annandale fairy host who “marched in midnight procession” while playing on wonderful instruments, not specified (but later called “flute and dulcimer”, Douglas 1901/2000: 328). The character in the title, “Elphin Irving,” is “taken” (recruited) by the fairies, as is another handsome lad, and some other narrative themes are laid out here.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> He is rescued by his companion, who carries his (protective) Bible: Douglas, “The Two Young Ploughmen,” 1901/2000: 133, citing Campbell 1892. Upon the rescue, the Otherworld celebration (cf. Burns’s Tam at Kirk-Alloway) ends suddenly, “and all was dark” (ibid., 133).

<sup>13</sup> Douglas 1901/2000: 319, citing Cunningham, *Traditional Tales of the English and Scottish Peasantry*. The Irvings (various spellings) of course were and are thick on the ground in Annandale (see Fraser 1995: 61). It is also alleged here (in Douglas) that “there has not been a fairy seen in the land since Donald Cargill, the Cameronian, conjured them into the Solway for playing the pipes during one of his nocturnal preachings...” (327), showing another citation for fairy music-making – and for an aversion to the Christian religion, or at least to this persecuted sect that held its conventiclers at night, a time the fairies seemingly liked to call their own.

Yeats's collection of Irish tales also gives us "Jamie Freel and the Young Lady," in which young Jamie is attracted to a ruined castle on Hallowe'en by the "elfin revelry" held there, in which (in this particular tale) he can freely join. He then is allowed to travel to Dublin with the elvin host (on flying horses – and the names of the various cities and towns they pass over are announced as if by a railway conductor) where the fairies steal away a lovely young woman whom Jamie subsequently tricks away from her abductors from the *síthe*. The theme of "fairy time" is involved here – one night's adventure with the *síthe* evidently spanned many human years (Yeats 1892/1973: 52-57, citing McLintock 1976).<sup>14</sup> Yeats also includes a long narrative from Croker's early nineteenth century Irish collection, "The Confessions of Tom Bourke" – and here young men are lured to a nocturnal gathering of the *síthe* because of the music and especially dance (on a riverside meadow, in a churchyard, both being taken to be liminal *loci*) and who end up, by supernatural contagion, with extraordinary dancing skills.<sup>15</sup>

## 2.2 Separation, occultation

The intervention of a human is not welcome in drunken Tam O'Shanter's case, at the witch-haunted kirk, and the same is true, as Briggs reports to us, in the case of the Cornish smugglers who happen to overlook the antics of the Spriggans – the fairy-folk of this seaside locality who not only resent the human intrusion, but grow larger and "turn ugly" as they advance on the intruders.<sup>16</sup> Even when humans are inveigled or invited to join the revelry, the violation of certain taboos or proscriptions can cause the entire fairy presence (or cast) to abruptly disappear, musicians and all. In the Balkan/Slavic context the distant or relatively inaccessible home territories of the *vila* (cloud, mountain, upland lake or tarn) are not usually invaded by humans, though the super-hero Prince Marko will pursue the jealous Ravijojla there – and beat her up. These supernatural beings descend from

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<sup>14</sup> Of the thirty-three "fairy-tales" included in the invaluable *Tales From Highland Perthshire* (Stuart Murray 2010) eleven involve humans attracted into a fairy hold by sweet music, and most of the eleven also emphasize "fairy time," that is, a year spent with the fairies could translate into a hundred or more human years: see Markale 1977: 197, for "three hundred years in the Chateau Vert" a Breton tales from Morbihan; see also Markale 1977: 262, and Markale's note on p. 264. American readers may recognize this theme from the 'Rip van Winkle' tale, by Washington Irving.

<sup>15</sup> Both supernatural events are ended abruptly, with the disappearance of the fairy-folk, and part of this tale has to do with the "fairy doctor" who can deal with those ills that can be brought on by contact with the "good people" (the reverse of the positive effect, such as dancing or smithing skills): Yeats 1892/1973: 154-166, citing Croker 1825-1828.

<sup>16</sup> See fn. 4 above.

their remote bases to interact with heroes or others – and we observe the restrictions placed on the wedding party near “Eagle Mountain,” where a very grouchy *vila* is resident.

### 2.3. *Reversals*

We can find cases in which the theme of human interposition into a supernatural musical site or event is reversed. In fact, Briggs gives us three examples. The Manx “Fenedoree,” identified as a sort of hard-working brownie or house-elf, is supposed to have once been one of the fair folk (the “Ferrishyn” in Manx), but he was one who, unfortunately for him, fell in love with a mortal girl and was dancing with her when he was supposed to be with his own people, at the fairies’ autumn festival (All-Hallows’ Eve, presumably) and so by stern fairy judgment he was made ugly and hairy and “expelled from Fairyland” (Briggs 1979: 80). Then the Shetland “Henkie,” a species of uncharacteristically friendly or harmless trow or troll, is so-called because he or she “henks” or walks all tapsilteerie (and “whose dance music was very catchy but their dancing was very queer”). One of these creatures is attracted to a Shetland *ceilidh* and wants to join the dancing, but no one will dance with her.<sup>17</sup> Finally, Briggs notes that the dangerous Scottish *each uisge* or Water-Horse can, in its human shape, be lulled to sleep by human song (not an uncommon theme in narratives where malignant supernatural beings are “tamed,” and one seen in other Celtic folkloric traditions).<sup>18</sup>

### 3. Supernatural song and dance: Characteristics and translations

Here I have the problem of setting forth what we can determine to be the specific characteristics – the “marks” – of supernatural song and dance; how the human imagination can re-code and then de-code (or translate) activities that may resemble the human, but are clearly in-human. This is not easy.<sup>19</sup> Effusive or banal or emotively-charged descriptions of fairy music-making as producing “the most beautiful music” or “strains of enchanting melody” do not get us very far at all. One Irish source repeats a baroque witch-tale collected by Lady Wilde (Oscar’s very eccentric mama) wherein twelve witches are seen and heard “singing together an ancient

<sup>17</sup> Briggs 1979: 100, cit. Saxby 1974. Briggs gives the “henkie’s” name (Cuttie) and her sad little rhyme, ending with “Sae I’ll henk awa’ mesel’”, so [quoth] Cuttie.”

<sup>18</sup> See Markale 1977: 262, for a Breton citation; in a tale (“Le basin d’or”) collected in Seignolle 1979: 196-198, the hero, “Lenik,” sings Breton songs to a threatening, murderous *korrigan nû* or “Black Dwarf” who dances – and then falls asleep.

<sup>19</sup> We ought to note, in passing, such ingenious modern inventions of the speech of non-humans as H. P. Lovecraft’s Cthulhu-cult speech, or J. R. R. Tolkien’s elvish – or orcish – languages.

rhyme” while spinning (Yeats 1888/1973: 150) and Yeats also reprints another tale collected and decorated by Thomas Crofton Croker, in which a hunchback overhears “an unearthly melody” and the words sung (which translate as “Monday, Tuesday” in Erse) to which he adds “Wednesday” and is promptly welcomed by the delighted *síthe* and is miraculously relieved of his disfiguring hump.<sup>20</sup> There seems to be no very unearthly mystery in the language used here. An Irish “Merrow” or merman sings a song in his underwater abode, but as recalled by a human guest the ditty is merely a string of what appear to be rhyming nonsense syllables.<sup>21</sup> The “chorus” of a song purportedly sung by a Scottish fairy is “ay lu lan dil y’u” which *could* be a sort of supernatural lilting (in Douglas 1901/2000: 150-151, and see his fn. 2). Perhaps the clearest or most obvious statement of difference is contained in another story in Yeats’s collection, namely “The Piper and the Púka,” where a piper (who is called a “half-fool”) is taken to the sacred, that is, sacred in terms of the Christian cosmos, hill-shrine of Croach Patrick by a fairy, a pooka (clearly the numinous or Otherworldly character of the site is not limited to a Christian point of view). There the pooka gives the piper another set of pipes which, when he returns to his family, cannot be persuaded to play ‘human’ music.<sup>22</sup> So we can say that, at least in most cases, what happens in Fairyland, in brugh, rath, hill or dun, *stays* in Fairyland. And yet the poet Yeats himself insisted that some Irish folk music, that is, certain tunes, had a supernatural origin. More, he avers that the great Irish blind harper Turlough O’Carolan had “slept on a rath” and so was able to be the literally inspired musician he became (Yeats 1888/1973: 12).<sup>23</sup>

Something should be added here as to the *physical* characteristics of the supernatural singers and dancers in the Celtic and Slavic traditions. The Balkan *vila* is invariably described as white – e.g., “Bela vila” (see

<sup>20</sup> Yeats 1892/1973: 44-45. The tale goes on: another hunchback makes the mistake of interrupting the fairies’ song (with “on Thursday”) and gets an additional hump for his pains. This “weekday” theme is repeated in the Highland Perthshire tales collected by Stuart Murray (2010: #24, #157).

<sup>21</sup> So: “rum fum boodle boo/ripple dipple nitty dob/rmdoo doodle coo/raffle taffle chittyboo!” This is not exceedingly mystical nor a betrayal of arcane knowledge, though it certainly could be called cryptic. In “The Soul Cages,” collected in Yeats 1892/1973: 66.

<sup>22</sup> Yeats 1892/1973: 89; the translation by Douglas Hyde. The pooka gave the piper “what he never had before - sense and music (*ciall agus céol*)” but the gold the piper had been given in the hill had turned to plant-leaves – a common folklore theme or *dénouement* (*ibid.*). By the reference to “buckling on” the pipes I conclude that these probably were “elbow” or uileann pipes, more likely to be found and played in Ireland.

<sup>23</sup> The famous piping MacCrimmons, of Skye, according to a Highland Perthshire tale, also got their gift of music from a fairy piper – a woman, no less: Stuart Murray 2010: #186 (345).



Miller 2009: 14); Juri says that she is often called *prebijela* or “more than white, very white, too white” even to her dress and hair (Juri 2010: 178). “Whiteness” in the Serbo-Croat context is an attribute or descriptive showing extraordinary importance, possibly an Otherworldly connection: so, we have a Sultan’s white city, a *beg*’s white castle, even the “two white arrows” in the tale of Prince Marko and the *vila* Ravijolja. We should note that one “family” of supernatural beings in the Breton tales, the fairies, seem to be specifically contrasted with the dark *korroganñed* and are fair-skinned and blonde and always female.<sup>24</sup> The size of our supernatural beings seems to vary according to the narrative – they are typically small, even dwarfish, but may be human-sized (and the Cornish Spriggans grow in size as their wrath grows). On the other hand, the description of the “fairy piper” given in the tale from Barra makes him an old, well-dressed (green-kilted), and rather aristocratic human, in appearance.

#### 4. Conclusion

If music and dance are identified as to specifically human cultural productions, invention – story-telling, the narrative art – obviously and emphatically another, or “narrative skills seem to be part of the basic human toolbox,” as Margaret Atwood, the genial (here, meaning superlatively talented) Canadian novelist put it – and she should know.<sup>25</sup>

In our sources, in the Celtic and the Slavic traditions, we have stories, songs, narratives, image-making inventions of all sorts, about supernatural beings and their interactions with humankind – and with “song and dance” in the foreground, seen as acts deeply involved in, forwarding or enabling, the process of interaction between the two realms. And yet: “song” is not simply speech, “dance” is not just walking or running – the two activities we have in view are of a slightly but significantly different quality: ordinary, and yet not ordinary at all (art, artifice, and artificiality are not ‘normal,’ nor should they be). What I think is happening here is, first, a display of the human urge to – in imagination – separate dangerous Otherworld beings and potencies from the human sphere, and then to somehow reconnect them (as is also true in our dealings

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<sup>24</sup> The two types or families seen as “frolicking” together are in Seignolle 1979: 179, 417 (and in the latter citation are dancing a *ronde* or Breton round-dance together – and compare the Balkan *vile* here).

<sup>25</sup> In her review of E. O. Wilson’s *Anthill* (*The New York Review of Books* LVII/6, 10 April 2010: 6).

with the numinous realm of the Dead – those Dead who may also somehow, even often, be themselves connected to the “fairy” world).<sup>26</sup>

Second, and perhaps more importantly, despite the reasonable (or frenzied) urging of clerics or religious authorities (priests, ministers, *dominees* – or, for that matter, rabbis or imams) demanding the acceptance of a rigid, absolute and orthodox monotheism, older – or at least *other* – beliefs or notions can be regarded as still active and still potent (“The old gods aren’t dead,” said the great Greek – Alexandrian – poet Constantine Cavafy, “they haven’t even left!”). The pre-Christian origin and archaic significance of the Balkan *vile* seems to be clear enough;<sup>27</sup> the Irish *síthe* and the other Celtic “communities” or troops of supernatural beings, and any number of other, singular supernatural figures (house-brownies, “elementals,” guardian “fairies” and so on) carry, possibly, traces or remnants of a polytheistic sacrality. Finally, extraordinary (= “superhuman”?) abilities – musical in the case of Turlough O’Carolan and the MacCrimmons on the Celtic side, heroic in the case of Prince Marko and other human heroes in the Balkans who are granted or given their exceptional status and powers by the *vile* – can be transmitted, transmuted, or inflected from the supernatural realm. What we regard as commonplace cultural marks, cultural creations or artifacts, are detached from “mere” human culture, and are inflated with other powers – another *explanatio* is provided. And human beings, we know, continually search for explanations.

As for us, we (especially if we are male) can perhaps attend to and learn from Rabbie Burns’s final poetical warning:

“Now, wha this tale o’ truth shall read,  
Ilk man and mother’s son, tak heed:  
Whene’er to drink ye are inclin’d,  
Or cutty sarks run in your mind,  
Think! Ye may buy the joys o’er dear;  
Remember Tam O’Shanter’s mare.”

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<sup>26</sup> See, e.g., Douglas 1901/2000: 328, where the dead are said to walk in a fairy “processional” on Midsummer’s Eve, while for processions of the dead on Hallow’een see Cross 1953: F241.1.0.1, and F211.1.1.1.

<sup>27</sup> Barber (1997: 37-38) connects the *vila* to the Minoan figure she calls “the Protectress” (Athena would be a later, Olympian reflex of this mode).

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