

N. Voitovych

DWELLING AS A LOCUS OF LIFE / TEMPORARY STAY OF THE CHARACTERS OF "LOWER" MYTHOLOGY (A STUDY BASED ON ETHNOGRAPHIC MATERIALS)

The primary focus of the article is on the mythological aspect of the building ritualism. According to the traditional Ukrainian worldview, dwelling is not only a place of residence of its living owners, but also "guests" from the "other" world, i.e. characters of the so-called "lower" mythology.

The author of the given ethnographic research carries out an in-depth analysis of the set of magical actions and preventative measures the residents of the house undertook in order to protect their dwelling, as well as disarm, invite or coax the representatives of the mythological world.

The article describes a number of rituals related to the choice of a "clean" place to build a house and rites connected with laying the foundation and the process of building. The article also pays attention to the fact of the ritual incompleteness of a building during the year and focuses on the very moment of moving into a new house. All the rituals described can be viewed as a proof of the belief that the house is inhabited not only by the living residents, but also by the domestic spirits – a group of different mythological characters that were thought to encourage livestock breeding and promote personal welfare. Ethnographic materials testify that the dwelling and its parts, doorstep in particular, are associated with the origin of the Carpathian spirit of enrichment (one of the types of the domestic spirits). The author concludes that the corners and the foundation below the doorstep of the house were the main loci of demonological characters, since, initially, they were burial places for all "their" "clean" dead. The house was also inhabited by other types of domestic spirits, such as the house adder/snake, hodovanets' and house spirit ("domovyk"). Temporary "guests" could also include "unclean" dead.

According to archaic beliefs, the successful construction of your own house, as well as the very fact of living there, depended on the assistance of the dead ancestors, who would become the guardians/temporary residents of the certain places in the house. That is why the significant part of the set of rituals was connected with magic, which aimed at both protecting members of the household from negative demonological influence and ensuring their happy life in the given house.

Keywords: *building ritualism, dwelling, domestic spirit ("domovyk"), house snake, hodovanets', demonological characters.*

House is not only the main space for life, but also a symbol of the family wealth and well-being, the locus of many ritual ceremonies. It is often contrasted with outside, "foreign" or the "other" world. Therefore, the house becomes an object of various rituals that residents carry out in attempt to protect it from evil forces. Taking into account traditional Ukrainian beliefs, the latter were often not only temporary guests, but, along with the main inhabitants, were viewed as full-fledged owners of the house. Such coexistence meant that earthly owners had

to perform a set of magical actions and take some preventative measures in order to protect, disarm, invite, coax, etc., certain demonological characters. It was commonly believed that following given rituals can ensure the success of the household and bring wealth and health to its members.

As a result, it is not uncommon for ethnologists to pay close attention to the national building traditions [17; 26; 36; 46]. However, we are not interested in the material aspect of the given issue (design, planning, heating, building materials, etc.). What interests us the most is the spiritual aspect of the problem. Therefore, the purpose of the article is to analyse the traditional Ukrainian ideas which closely correlate with the folk demonology. More specifically, we will try to find out in what way prosperity, wealth and health of the house owners depended on the mythical inhabitants of the house, and what "relationships" existed between them and the living members of the household. This research has been written on the basis of the ethnographic materials collected by the author herself during her field trips to the Ukrainian Carpathians.

A series of rituals are held even at the stage of the building site selection. Ethnographers have provided detailed descriptions of typical Ukrainian superstitions, customs and magical actions associated with the choice of "clean" site for the house, laying its foundation and the process of building, its ritual incompleteness during the year and the moment of moving into a new home [55, p. 184-188]. For instance, the most complete data on building ritualism of people living in Boykivshchyna (the Boyky) can be found in Mykhailo Zubrytsky's works (records of the folk beliefs and legends associated with the construction of the new houses and ideas people had about esoteric powers of the builders and millers) [19]. Studying this part of the folk life culture and having dedicated a monograph to the given topic, researcher Roman Siletsky pays considerable attention to the choice of the "clean" place for construction of the house and to philosophical ideas associated with the builder and the building sacrifice [44].

The choice of the site for construction was an incredibly important process that involved three stages: finding an optimal site from the practical point of view, "gathering information" about the chosen site based on omens and superstitions, and the final assessment of the symbolic appropriateness of the place with the help of fortune-telling [41, p. 83]. For assessing the symbolic appropriateness of the place, Ukrainian people who lived in the Carpathians addressed "the person who was good at finding the right place for construction" ("toho, khto rozymivsia na pliatsakh"). Thus, laying the foundation ("zakladschyna") is one of the most important moments of the construction works, since it was the thing the future of the inhabitants of the house depended on. At the stage of laying the foundation the future residents of the house were closely following the actions of the builder. They believed that "... as a building master hews the first chip, he knows how people will live in the hut" [4, p. 23]; "When the building master is laying foundation in the corners, it is necessary, so as not to make the master angry and be sure that everything will be all right, to give him money, because he can do something badly" [2, p. 4]; "For three houses (for three householders) he lays the foundation in the way to bring only good, and for the fourth house—to bring about something bad, otherwise he will not be a master" [6, p. 3]. Perhaps that is the reason why the foundation of a house is mentioned in many traditional legends. The foundation of the house was also viewed as a thing that could possibly harm people, as suggested by the following field data, "When the newlyweds came back from church, they both sat down and said, 'Let's sit on the foundation of the house so that we will be buried in one grave.' And they died the same day" [4, p. 11].

The process of the house building presupposed direct contact with the ground. Therefore, living people had to gain "permission" and "support" of their dead ancestors, as their world was believed to be located underground.

It is worth pointing out that Ukrainian mountaineers never built houses at the crossroads or places crossed by the pathways [22, p. 246]. Places, where the cattle loved to lie down, areas occupied by anthills, and sites, where the householder dreamed about a domestic animal, were considered to be good [12, p. 32]. Also, people were afraid to erect house on the sites which served as ancient burial places [42, p. 155] (given fact is connected with the notion of respect for the dead, who were thought to harm living people in case they were not their relatives) or on the old ruins of a heating stove, called "pechyshe" [41, p. 83] (since, in many cases, the heating stove was regarded as a place where the domestic spirit was thought to reside – as a result, it could have been "occupied" by another spirit). People who lived in Pokyttia (the Pokutiany) never built their houses on the sites where there were a lot of tree stumps or where some fruit trees used to grow, especially if the stumps became red after trees had been cut down – "because it is blood" [49, p. 53]. Before laying the foundation, the Ukrainians who lived in the Carpathians used to lay a loaf of bread and salt under each of the four corners of their future house – that was supposed to bring wealth and rapport into their home. In this context it is necessary to bear in mind that in Polissia bread and salt were essential attributes for inviting a *house spirit* ("*domovyk*") to a new dwelling [40, p. 120].

In the worldview of the people living in Lemkivshchyna (the Lemky) the heating stove was a place inhabited by the *house adder* that was said to bring happiness to the house dwellers. Therefore, when constructing the house people cut off the cock's head and then immured it into the wall. During that time it was forbidden to whistle [42, p. 158]. As long as the heating stove served as a locus of "life" of the domestic spirits, a person, who wanted to ask *spirits* for help in different situations (especially those, which were connected with the household), had to address the stove directly. For example, the Boyky knew "*that after you have bought a piglet and brought it home you should lean it to the heating stove, so it becomes as honest as a stove*" [4, p. 9]; in Lemkivshchyna people said, "*when eggs are lent to the village, you have to scratch the fore part of the stove, and your hens will lay eggs much better*" [8, p. 20].

The process of setting up the ceiling beam was also seen as extremely important, while the beam was believed to be one of the places where domestic spirits resided. Ceiling beam was considered sacred. At the beginning, the building master put it on someone's head, and while he was setting the beam up, bread and salt were brought [32, p. 62]. The Ukrainians who lived in the Carpathians never used old ceiling beams for constructing new houses and in Boikivshchyna such "hrahara" (ceiling beam) was burnt [43, p. 89]. Perhaps, it was due to the fact that the old ceiling beam had been already occupied by an "alien" domestic spirit, which could bring all the troubles and misfortunes, the inhabitants of the old house suffered from, to a new dwelling.

Some interesting rituals are connected with the completion of the stage of laying the foundation ("*zakladschyna*") in Polissia, where it is celebrated with a feast. Remarkably, when meeting guests, house owners were watching that the latter didn't step on the doorstep (!), "because under the doorstep there is a holy spirit that protects the house" [41, p. 93]. What is more, when moving the house this spirit had to be "bought over" or coaxed [41, p. 93]. The same rituals were followed by the Boyky who lived in Transcarpathian region – they put some wheat, which was consecrated on Christmas Eve, into a small hole in the doorstep of a new home [7, p. 215].

One of the requirements for the construction of a new dwelling was its ritual incompleteness which lasted for some time. For instance, in Boikivshchyna people used to leave a part of the roof unfinished for a year. Although the construction of the house itself had already been completed, the hole was left to let "all the evil things flyaway" [55, p. 186]. In Pokuttia building master did not nail the last patch of roof – it was thought that if he did, someone in the family would die [49, p.54]. People who lived in Polissia (the Polishchuks)

were not allowed to whitewash the ceiling in their new homes, "leaving some room for the *house spirit* ("*domovyk*")" [40, p. 117]. In Boikivshchyna region a ban to whitewash was directly linked with the late owner of the house – "In case there has been a dead man in the house, it should not be whitewashed for about a year, as the dead man's soul is still present in the walls" [19, p. 73], "if they are stripped off, the soul would be driven out" [35, p. 218]. In some cases, ritual incompleteness was also associated with the outbuildings. For instance, the Poles did not nail one of the planks in the barn. They also used to leave a special hole, which would allow *home-based spirits* to get inside [56, p. 128].

The Ukrainians who lived in the Carpathians believed that peaceful coexistence with *hodovanets*' (a type of a domestic spirit, typically found in the Carpathian and West Slavic traditions – *N.V.*), depended on feeding and coaxing it. What is more, places for such sacrifices, in most cases, coincided with the places of permanent or temporary location of the spirit of enrichment. Among these places were inner porch, attic, ceiling beam, heating stove and corner of the house ("you shouldn't stand in the corner so as not to stamp troubles with your feet" [31, p. 115]).

Therefore, the most important unearthly inhabitants of the houses, along with living householders, were domestic spirits – a group of various mythological characters, which was formed on the basis of three main features: location in human dwellings or other outbuildings; bringing prosperity in livestock breeding and promoting welfare; establishing genetic link with the souls of the dead ancestors [11, p. 153]. Researchers distinguish between several types of mythological characters:

1. zoomorphic – in the form of a snake which ensures the well-being of the family and livestock and that is genetically associated with a dead ancestor (so-called *house snake*).
2. zoomorphic character in the form of a weasel, which takes care of the cattle.
3. anthropomorphic male character – a spirit which acted as a guardian of the family, house and the entire household (namely the *house spirit* ("*domovyk*").
4. Spirit of enrichment, which is attendant on people and brings them wealth (*hovanets*' , *hodovanets*').
5. spirits that live underground or in the foundation of the house – they are responsible for the cattle and can promote well-being; their distinctive feature is a short stature (e.g. *karlyk* ("*dwarf*") and *krasnoliudok*) [11, p. 153].

The so-called domestic godlings (*besy-horomozhyteli* ("*demons that occupied the dwelling*"), which were met by the new house owner with a black cat and a black chicken, are also mentioned in the medieval Slavic resources [38, p. 40].

In the Ukrainian Carpathians a type of the spirit of enrichment (*hovanets*' , *hodovanets*') is dominant. Information about this kind of spirit is closely intertwined with the West Slavic demonological views. In these territories it was commonly believed that *hovanets*' inhabited the houses only of those people who "meddled" with evil spirits (at the same time, there is some evidence of presence of *hovanets*' in every house, though).

Ethnographic materials, collected in Boikivshchyna, show a great variety of local names given to this type of character: *zasidych*, *zasidach* (interestingly, *zasidych* means "the one who occupied a certain part of ground for residence" [24, p. 84]). Yuriy Kmit, conducting the study of the dialect of Boikivshchyna, recorded a word "*domoviy*", which was used to denote a snake that lived under the house and that people were afraid to kill [23, p. 64]. Obviously, this lexeme refers to a domestic spirit of another type, namely –*house snake* (in Boyko dialect "*pidtramnytsia*" – a snake that lives under the "tram" (foundation of the house. –*N.V.*) [34, p. 71]).

The dwelling and its parts, especially the doorstep, are associated with the origin of the Carpathian spirit of enrichment. Informants state, "*Zavytky* (girls who lost their virginity,

became pregnant and delivered a baby without being married. – *N.V.*) *buried their children under the doorstep of the house and in the corner of the house – hiding them from people*" [2, pp. 6]. Therefore, the spirit of enrichment is a soul of a stillborn or executed child that was buried under the doorstep (it is not surprising that this character did not like people who slept at the doorstep [25, p. 15], as long as the spirit itself owned the abovementioned place). The same ideas were widespread in other parts of the Slavic world, including Poland, where the soul of the child, who was buried under the doorstep, was said to turn into "*klobuk*" [29, p. 148].

Some researchers suggest that the original burial sites for all the dead family members (ancestors, who were supposed to become guardians of the house) could have been located right inside the dwellings, as well as in other places associated with the houses, such as corners, foundation or place under the doorstep [39, p. 74]. This is attested to by the information, recorded by V. Hnatiuk in Boikivshchyna, "*When daughter-in-law comes home after the marriage, she steps on the doorstep and says, "Is there such a hollow, where father and mother could hide?"*" [35, p. 211] and some other materials describing Boyko traditional wedding –there was a custom to "call the family together" – the ruler of the feast ("*starosta*") knocked three times on the doorstep with a stick and invited all the family to gather together, calling "*Rode, skhozhasia!*" [28, p. 257].

It might seem a paradox, but the dead children (especially preterm babies) were not buried in the same way as those, who died of unnatural causes ("*zalozhni mertsi*"). Having undergone the ritual of cremation, they were buried under the doorstep and the corners of the house as "full-fledged" ancestors of the family [20, p. 361]. Even D. Zelenin wrote, "There is a special burial place for unchristened dead children ("*poterchata*") that cannot be used for other people who died of unnatural causes ("*zalozhni*") (emphasis added. – *N.V.*). Despite the fact that in ancient times such burial sites as those inside the house or under it were typically used for "clean" dead (people, who died naturally), "*poterchata*" were buried there too. "*Poterchata*" were not expected to harm householders in any way, since their ancestors took them under protection – in other words, they did not allow "*poterchata*" to be governed by *evil spirits*" [18, p. 72]. As a result, we may suggest that unchristened dead children, who, along with their deceased relatives, were buried under the doorstep of the house, were thought to become guardian spirits, which protected the house. That might be the reason why the Polishchuks, when commemorating, on Wednesday before Easter, their stillborn children, who often appeared in their dreams, were eating some unsalted unleavened bread at the doorstep (emphasis added. – *N.V.*) [48, p. 247].

Similar ideas were widespread among the Hungarians, who dug some eggs into the ground under the house (identical to the method and place of burial of the child) "to encourage good fortune" [45, p. 20] (apparently, it was also done to attract the guardian spirit). The ancient custom of immuring eggs in the foundation of residential buildings was mentioned in the works by Julian Yavorski [52, p. 11]. The detailed information on the abovementioned custom can be found in the materials collected by I. Vahylevych, where it is specified that those were not simple eggs, but "*znosok*" (small eggs without yolks. – *N.V.*) which had to be "buried under the doorstep of the inner porch doors, and after nine years a house spirit will appear in the egg" [10, p. 127].

There was one more resident of the house, which represented a different type of domestic spirits – *house adder/snake*. The country, where *house adders* were traditionally respected, was ancient Lithuania. In the corner of the dwelling, householder usually kept an adder, which was considered to be the guardian of the household. It was also believed that adders bring success. Mind you, the story lines which picture the adder bringing wealth to its master can be found in many Ukrainian legends [9, p. 62]. Beliefs, which are associated with the *house snake* or *adder*, often show a strong genetic link with the dead ancestors and the fate of the family members, whose doorstep is occupied by the given spirits. It is worth noting that in the

Carpathian demonological tradition it was strictly forbidden to harm the *house snake* or *adder* in any way, let alone killing them. Ukrainian mountaineers thought that the *house snake* and *adder* "live in the wall (in the foundation. – N.V.) of every house and protect it [2, pp. 6], and their death will lead to death of all the cattle [47, p. 492], or even the mother [21, p. 141]. Relics of respect for *house adder*, which lives on the stove and brings happiness, are still preserved in the traditional worldview of people living in Boikivshchyna. Similar ideas are widespread among people living in Lemkivshchyna, too [42, p. 158].

Apart from the already mentioned "residents" of the house, there were other subtypes of domestic characters, including the *black cock* ("without a cock the house is deaf" [14, p. 6]). This fact can be clearly illustrated by the field material, collected in Turka district, Lviv region, "If a black cock after spending the first night in the house crows, everything will be fine. That cock is called "zasidyk", because it was the first to stay ("zasisty") in that place. It was not allowed to kill the cock, while it was almost equalled to the owner of the house" [3, pp. 28]. This lexeme emphasises the link of the domestic spirit not to the person who owns it, but to a specific place, including the house ("if somebody had been sitting at home for a long time, people said to him/her, "You are zasidyk" [3, pp. 6]). It is likely that, in this case, a black cock symbolically replaces the oldest member of the family, who had to be the first to enter a new house, and after death he was going to become its guardian.

Even today, on the territory of Boikivshchyna, we can find some information about the *house spirit* ("domovyk"), which is sure to be found in every house and whose staying there is evaluated quite positively, "It is present in every house – to protect the stove against thunder and storm, but nobody sees it"; "[House spirit] is the owner of the house. There is one in every house" [1, pp. 3; 6, pp. 12]. Such statements combined with information on construction rites suggest that Ukrainian mountaineers, when moving to a new dwelling, would invite a domestic spirit to go with them – otherwise, it would actively begin to destroy the household. On the whole, the harm it brings correlates with the nature of the dead ancestors, who are known to be easily offended by the household members. In order to lure the spirit into a new house, for example in Pokuttia, the owner of the dwelling put a spoonful of porridge on the doorstep, "so that the children will sleep" [49, p.54], i.e. so that peace and quiet establish in the house. In attempt to invite domestic spirit to a new house people who lived in Boikivshchyna started up the fire using embers taken from the old heating stove. That is the reason why building up the "live fire" was an essential magical act when settling in a new house [50, p. 18]. However, the invitation could only refer to the family's "personal" domestic spirit, meaning that the given spirit was a members of a particular family –under such circumstances it "did not do any harm to the household members, for it was "theirs", domestic, because it was the owner of the house" [5, pp. 6]. The Polischuks also believed that only "your own" *house spirit* ("domovyk") has to be invited, since "if it is your house spirit ("domovoy"), it will walk quietly and will not frighten you or make you worried. Otherwise, it is some kind of spook ("lyakaha)" [13, p.236].

Domestic spirit was seen not only as a "resident" of these loci, but also as their guardian and the full-fledged owner. Very often people were not able to change anything, so when *hodovanets*' started bothering them too much, they built a house in another, "clean" place [54, p. 193]. That is why the abovementioned places had always remained under the "rule" of the domestic character; any intervention in "its territory" could lead to fatal consequences, "As the house owner was dying, he asked them not to knockdown the stable and not to cut that apple tree with a hollow down, but they did everything their way – and then hanged themselves" [1, pp. 3]; "The stable was dismantled, but we had to leave the floor to it (to hovanets'. – N.V.), because our horse cart would not move an inch»[3, pp. 25]; "It was like a devil for the household – so, when dismantling the stable, we left a corner for it and put there a jar" [6, pp. 6]; "Sitting in the stove, zasidyk protects the house"[3, pp. 6].

The distinguishing feature of *hodovanets*' in Boikivshchyna was the ability to foresee death, see future and warn people about upcoming troubles – "When it did a pee in the attic opposite the corner and its urine soaked through the ceiling" [35, p. 405], when something banged in the attic [35, p. 211], when the ceiling beam cracked (in this case, the owner of the house was often expected to die) [30, p. 150] or the stove sank down [35, p. 304]. At the same time, in order to ease the pangs of death, either the ceiling beam or the inside part of the stove ("cherin" were drilled [53, p. 78], and the person was put in the middle of the house under the main ceiling beam [15, p. 332]. With great reverence the ceiling beam was treated by the Polishchuks, who called it "father" and "the household owner" [37, p. 82]. Great important was attached to the process of making a ceiling beam, and obeying certain magical rules was essential. People were afraid to beat it with an axe, because it could cause the death of the owner of the house. The "head" of the ceiling beam was carved in the form of projecting edges, the amount of which corresponded to the number of household members, and one more edge was added – for the *house spirit* ("*domovyk*") [37, p. 83, 85]. All these features are directly related to *hovanets*' – we should take into account the fact that the abovementioned places (corner, chimney, stove, ceiling beam) are "owned" by this spirit.

Domestic spirits were thought to reside in the houses of their masters – beyond the walls of the house they were often portrayed as powerless and completely harmless creatures (except when the owner sent them to play tricks on his neighbours). This may indirectly be linked to one of the names of domestic spirits in Hutsulshchyna – "*domar*" [51, p. 103], which in Boyko dialect is used to describe a man who works at home, not in the field [33, p. 227].

Temporary mythological guests of the house could appear in the form of the "unclean" deceased. What is peculiar about the characters of this category is the fact that their harmful deeds were directed on their family members, relatives and close friends (e.g. dead mother came to breastfeed her child; the deceased husband came to his wife and had sexual relationship with her). For example in Boikivshchyna, in order to protect the house against the unwanted deceased, in the early morning on the day of the Christmas Eve daughters-in-law were starting to spin to the left side and attached the spindle of yarn above the door or scattered the threads around the house [27, p. 337], etc.).

To sum up, dwelling has always been viewed as the main stage for personal and family life. It was a place where the major events of family life took place and household work was done. As a result, a close relationship between building ritualism and certain area of folk demonology were formed – including the ideas about the representatives of the otherworldly mythological system that live along with the house owners. The origin of the traditional beliefs that explain the impact of the demonological characters on lives of the dwellers, can be traced back to the ancient times of the early Slavic communities. Despite the relative unity and similarity of the ideas Ukrainian people share, there are some local features that manifest themselves in different ways: nomination of the ritual ceremonies, magical rituals, preventative measures and characters of the "lower" mythology, etc.

According to archaic beliefs, the successful construction of the house and the very living in it depended on the assistance of the deceased ancestors, which were going to become the guardians/temporary residents of certain places in the house. Therefore, the significant part of the set of rituals was connected with magic, which aimed at both protecting members of the household from negative demonological influence and ensuring their happy life in the given house. In the latter case, house owners always invited, coaxed and fed their dead ancestors.

These ideas evolved into beliefs which focused on the "domestic spirits" (*house spirit* ("*domovyk*"), *hovanets*', *hodovanets*', *house snake*, etc.), which, as the Ukrainians concluded, should be present in every house. In most cases, mythological inhabitants of the houses were traditionally located near the stove, smoke flap in the ceiling in the attic, in the corners of the

house and under the doorstep. This fact is connected with an ancient custom of cremation and burial of the dead under the doorstep.

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Н.М. Войтович

**ОСЕЛЯ ЯК ЛОКУС ПРОЖИВАННЯ / ТИМЧАСОВОГО ПЕРЕБУВАННЯ
ПЕРСОНАЖІВ «НИЖЧОЇ» МІФОЛОГІЇ (НА ОСНОВІ ЕТНОГРАФІЧНИХ
МАТЕРІАЛІВ)**

У статті основна увага присвячена міфологічному аспекту сфери будівельної обрядовості. Адже відповідно до традиційних світоглядних уявлень українців оселя була місцем проживання не лише живих її власників, а й «гостей» з «іншого» світу, тобто персонажів так званої «нижчої» міфології.

У даній етнографічній розвідці авторка детально аналізує комплекс магічних дій та превентивних засобів, які мешканці дому застосовували для його охорони, а також для знешкодження, запрошення, задобрення представників міфологічного світу.

У статті охарактеризовано низку ритуалів, пов'язаних із вибором «чистого» місця для оселі, закладами, побудовою, ритуальною незавершеністю її протягом року та вселенням у нове житло. Усі ці ритуали вказують на те, що потойбічними мешканцями оселі разом із живими домочадцями є домашні духи – група різних міфологічних персонажів, які забезпечували благополуччя у розведенні худоби та примноженні достатку. Етнографічні матеріали засвідчують, що саме з оселею та її елементами, зокрема, порогом, пов'язане походження карпатського духа-збагачувача – одного з типів домашнього духа. Авторка робить висновок, що кути, підвалини, місце під порогом хати і були основними локусами перебування демонологічних персонажів, оскільки первісно вони були місцем поховання для всіх «своїх» «чистих» покійників. «Мешканцями» дому були і інші типи домашнього духа – домашній вуж/змія, годованець, домовик. Тимчасовими «гостями» могли бути і «нечисті» покійники.

За архаїчними уявленнями, успішне будівництво власної домівки, проживання у ній залежали від сприяння покійних предків, які в майбутньому стануть опікунами / тимчасовими жителями певних місць домівки. Тому визначальною складовою комплексу ритуалів була магія, спрямована як на охорону домочадців від негативних демонологічних впливів, так і на забезпечення їх щасливого проживання в оселі.

Ключові слова: *будівельна обрядовість, оселя, домашній дух, домашня змія, годованець, персонажі демонології.*