



## Finnish magic songs

By John Abercromby

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### Finnish magic songs By John Abercromby

The Finns possess a considerable number of words and epithets for wizard, sorcerer, witch, seer, ecstatic and the like. Some of these are native words like *noita* 'a sorcerer,' *tieto-mies* or *tietäjä* 'the knower,' *loitsija* 'the reciter of a magic song (*loitsu*), *arpoja* 'a diviner,' *näkijä* 'a seer,' *myrrys-mies* or *into-mies* 'an ecstatic,' *lumoja* 'a stupefier,' *lukija* 'a reciter,' *katselija* 'an observer,' *laulu-mies* 'a song-man,' *ampuja* 'an archer,' *kukkaro-mies* a bag-man.' Others are of foreign origin like *mahti-mies* or *mahtaja* < Goth. *mahts* or Sw. *magt* 'might,' *taikuri* 'he that uses *taika*' < Goth. *taikns* 'a token, a wonder,' *velho* 'a witch,' is probably an early Slav loan, while a latter one is *poppa-mies* 'priest-man' from the Rus. pop. Though between these appellations no hard and fast line can be drawn, dividing them into good and bad categories, yet on the whole, injurious or black magic would generally be the work of the *noita*, the *ampuja*, the *velho*, and the *kukkaromies*. Beneficial or white magic, like the great bulk of the Magic Songs, was used for ejecting evil spirits of disease, etc., and would be practised by a *loitsija*, a *tietäjä*, a *lukija*, or a *laulu-mies*; in some instances by a *lumoja*, *näkijä* or an *arpoja*. Yet we have an example of an exorcist terming himself a *noita* and a Lapp (12 b). As a rule there is nothing in a Magic Song to show what sort of wizard the reciter of it might be; so as his function is to drive away disease, I shall term him the exorcist.

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## **Finnish magic songs** By John Abercromby Bibliography

- Rank: #2050584 in eBooks
- Published on: 2016-07-29
- Released on: 2016-07-29
- Format: Kindle eBook

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