Incantatio

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Charms, Charmers and Charming

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INTRODUCTION

The seventh issue of Incantatio continues the publication of research papers presented at the 9th conference of the Charms, Charmers and Charming Committee of the ISFNR, which was held at University College Cork (May 6th-7th, 2016), that began in our sixth issue, but it also contains additional research articles as well as reviews of important recent charms studies.

The first four articles in this issue deal with the written tradition and transmission of medieval English and German charms, with special attention being paid to manuscript contexts. In the first paper, Lea Olsan reviews the types of charms employed in order to relieve fevers in medieval England from the Anglo-Saxon period to the end of the fifteenth century, and turns an especial focus upon practical rituals (the method of writing sacred words on the hand with ink for consumption in a liquid potion) for healing fevers that involve inscribing and consuming communion hosts.

Patricia O' Connor focuses on the Anglo-Saxon Bee Charm, a charm which accompanies a passage from Chapter XVII of Book III of the *Old English Bede*. Her critical reconsideration of the Bee Charm within its immediate manuscript context contributes to our understanding both of the function of this type of charms within Anglo-Saxon society, especially of how these charms were perceived and circulated within late Anglo-Saxon England.

Continuing the theme of Anglo-Saxon charms, Katherine Hindley systematically approaches the techniques of charming found in England after the Norman Conquest. More specifically she deals with the sudden striking increase in the proportion of charms using written words and explores this post-Conquest change by examining examples preserved in manuscripts written or owned in England from the Anglo-Saxon period to 1350.

A medieval German love charm, the Pervinca love charm, is thoroughly examined by Eleonora Cianci. Her article is the first attempt to make the complete unedited 15th century German text available to researchers. The author does not only provide the transcription from the manuscript and translation into English, but also a brief description of its content as part of her holistic approach to the text.

The next two papers focus on the ethnographic context of charm practices. Sonja Petrović investigates how charming practices continue to be transmitted,

valued and questioned in contemporary Serbia, work based on field material and scholarly literature. Taking into account the constant motifs in the narrative accounts of charmers concerning not only their practice, receiving, passing on and protecting magical knowledge, but also their relation towards patients and official medicine, she sheds light on the social, cultural and symbolic roles of traditional charmers.

Laura Jiga Iliescu investigates a very interesting religious practice of hidden rituals, whose traces are preserved in the Christian churches' frescoes from the Romanian Orthodox space, which is represented by the act of voluntarily scratching the eyes of the saints painted on the wall. The paper systematizes the few references concerning this ritual entirety as well as seeking information about the relations established between the official dogma and the religious practices as actuated in the case of the icon and the saint's figure in the nineteenth century Romania.

Last but not least, Davor Nikolić and Josipa Tomašić offer an overview of critical reflections on charms in Croatian folkloristics and related disciplines, such as literary theory and history, and paleoslavistics. By highlighting the most important steps in the institutionalization of folklore research in Croatia, the authors cast light on the status of verbal charms both in the process of field research and the scholarly sphere.

I wish to express my gratitude to all the authors who have contributed with their papers to the successful completion of this issue. I am also immensely grateful to Jonathan Roper for all his kind advice and support in editing the journal, as well as to the anonymous reviewers of the journal for their suggestions and comments. Thanks to their cooperation, Incantatio remains a serious scholarly journal and a fascinatingly broad view on charm studies.

Haralampos Passalis, guest editor

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WRITING ON THE HAND IN INK: A LATE MEDIEVAL INNOVATION IN FEVER CHARMS IN ENGLAND

Lea T. Olsan

This paper reviews the types of charms employed to relieve fevers in medieval England from the Anglo-Saxon period to the end of the fifteenth century with attention to the manuscript contexts in which the charms are found. In the second part, the paper focuses more closely on charms and practical rituals for healing fevers that involve inscribing and consuming communion hosts. It argues that the method of writing sacred words on the hand with ink to be washed into a potion and consumed came into favour in the late Middle Ages at a time when writing on wafers was becoming problematic.

Keywords: verbal charms, textual amulets, medieval medicine, writing, fevers, medieval manuscripts

INTRODUCTION

Unlike charms to stop bleeding, which people expected to take effect quickly, fever charms offered relief from the symptoms of a sickness with an expectation that it would have an effect over time, often days, from the time of the performance. Unlike charms for toothache, which prevented painful attacks in the future, fever charms and some lengthy religious rituals including masses, addressed the possibility that the patient might die if the current fever did not abate. The variation known as the *Petrus ante portam* acted as a preventative. It relied on a narrative formula or *historiola* (Roper 2005, Bozoky 2003) that could be written down for use as a textual amulet (Skemer 2006). The amuletic use may be the reason that this charm was so popular that throughout the period it was repeatedly appended to or embedded in other fever charms.

Fever charms found in medieval English manuscripts differ from other healing charms in at least three ways: First, they employ a wide variety of forms and types of formulas, ranging from lengthy exorcistic rituals to inscriptions on the hand with ink; second, fever charms confronted an illness which healers

of all kinds understood to be more complex than many other illnesses treatable by charms[1]; third, the fever charms depending on the consumption of liturgical phrases on communion hosts or wafers seem to have flourished in English manuscripts to an extraordinary degree over the whole of the medieval period from the Anglo-Saxons before 1000 through to 1500.

FEVERS IN CHARMS

Medieval concepts of fever, whether of Anglo-Saxon, Norman, or later medieval origins, did not correspond to modern ones. The most obvious difference between ancient and medieval versus modern views of fever(s) is that medieval fevers were conceived by the medical authorities to be a disease, rather than a symptom of various diseases.[2] Fevers could manifest themselves as either hot or cold. Patients suffered repeated attacks alternating chills and feverishness over several days (Wilson 1993: 384-388). Modern English retains the phrase, "chills and fevers". Fevers were described in the medieval medical literature according to their recurring patterns, for example, daily (*quotidian / quotidiana*), every two (*biduana*) or three days (*tertian / tertiana*), every four days (*quartan / quartiana*).[3] From late antiquity and the early medieval period, those who cared for the sick understood that fevers often took the form of cyclical episodes of alternating chills and high heat. [4]

In charms the cyclical types stood for the names of fevers, which were conceived as evils, demons, or foreign invaders that could be exorcised by Christian formulas.[5] Moreover, charms extended the number of the cyclical fevers beyond the four types common to medical sources, naming seven types, often giving the names of the demon sisters, but also continuing to as many as twelve cyclical types (e.g., Louis 1980: 167). In one case, in a fifteenth-century manuscript, a charm intended to relieve a tertian fever states that the treatments start early on the day of an attack.[6] However, in charm titles, specific applications were often reduced to general terms, such as, "for fevers," "for all fevers" or "all manner of fevers," "against fevers" (*contra febres*), or "for fevers cold and hot." The English word "access" (or "axes") referred to the abrupt onset of recurring attacks of fevers.[7]

CHARMS AGAINST FEVERS

Roughly speaking, in manuscripts from England eleven categories of charms and longer rituals to curb fevers circulate during the medieval period. Distinct

motifs were often linked with each other in ways that reflect the cultural beliefs and sensibilities of a particular time. Thus, the contents surrounding fever charms, their popularity, and the mode of performance of a motif often changed over the centuries. In this section, I survey the range of charms for fevers that appear in the medieval manuscripts of England. In the next two sections, I aim to investigate how the three-fold verbal formulas that were written on hosts (communion wafers) in "wafer charms" might have come to be written in ink on the hands of fever sufferers.

Charms and rituals to relieve fevers are found in manuscripts of England written in Latin, Old English, Anglo-Norman French, and Middle English. The various languages do not necessarily signal historical shifts in the popularity of charms, although they sometimes point to different contexts for their use. Latin persists throughout the period as a language of charms, and charms in French and English appear in manuscripts alongside Latin versions.

The categories of fever charms that I have identified here do not correspond simply to verbal motifs or motif-types of charms, as understood by charms scholars.[8] Thus, in order to include, as far as possible, a full range of medieval verbal charms for fevers,[9] the categories below designate not only verbal formulas, but also efficacious images, and material rituals. I have noted the appeal to saints generally in one category, but also have discussed Architriclinus and the Seven Sleepers separately. Accordingly, a rough list of motifs for fever charms in manuscripts from England will include: (1) mythic attackers, (2) conjuration (exorcism) of cyclical fevers, (3) conjuration (exorcism) of fever sisters, (4) Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, (5) evocation of the cross and triumphant Christ,[10] (6) Christ trembling, (7) sacred names, unknown words, and letters, (8) saints, especially Peter (*Petrus ante portam*),[11] (9) stick ritual/Architriclinus, (10) writing on wafers, sage leaves, apples, etc., (11) writing on the hand in ink. These categories can be illustrated with representative examples.

Charms to relieve fevers were available in England before 1000 C.E. Charms and remedies for fevers implicate elves in the Old English *Bald's Leechbook*, *Leechbook III* (Hall 2007: 121-122) and *Lacnunga*. "Dweorh " which could be translated simply "dwarf" was also an Old English term for "fever" for which we have a protective charm.[12] The name suggests an early etiological association with a mythical attacker. This charm opens with elaborate instructions that the names of the Seven Sleepers be written on hosts, as discussed below; then it abruptly shifts to a metrical charm (*galdor*) featuring a dynamic mythic attacker (*inspiden wiht*) and subsequently his sister. The metrical charm was to be spoken into the ears and over the head of the feverish person and hung round the neck as an amulet.[13]

A long clerical ritual, in a twelfth-century manuscript containing works attributed to Pope Gregory the Great, conjures the fevers, named according to the patterns of recurring attacks, that is, daily, two-day, three-day or four-day (Appendix no. 1).[14] The list continues without a break, 'five-day, six-day, seven-day, eight,' adding 'and up to the ninth generation' (*et usque ad nonam generationem*). In this enumeration, the fever types are conceived as a family, generations of fevers, as if related in a family tree.[15] The cure is brought about by a series of conjurations that exorcise the fever, invoking, in turn, the Trinity and Mary, the mother of God; the seventy holy names of God; the powers of the heavens, all saints and creation.

The notion that cyclical fevers were evils and were generated in families resembles conceptions of fevers as sisters, or demons.[16] Latin prayers with other liturgical matter in Vatican Palatinus latinus MS 235[17] identify the fevers by their cyclical names and command them not to harm the fever sufferer. These prayers invoke the names of the Seven Sleepers (twice), the Trinity, Holy Mary, all the saints and several named saints including St. Sigismund. This insular collection of prayers goes on to identify the chills and fevers (*frigores et febres*) as the seven evil sisters. Their individual names are concealed in code, but they are conjured directly "from whatever region you are" (*de quacunque natione estis*) that "you" do not have the power to harm this servant of God who is named, "but you should return from whence you have come" (*sed redeatis, unde uenistis*).[18] The fever sisters can be found five hundred years later in England. In a late fifteenth century manuscript in a charm labelled "a good prayer," we read,

> . . . I conjure (*coniuro*) you who are seven sisters, the first Daliola, the second Vestulia, the third Fugalia, the fourth Suferalie, the fifth Affrecta, the sixth Lilia, the seventh Luctalia through the Father and Son and Holy Spirit and through the day of days and through the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ and through all the angels, archangels and through the apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins and all the saints of God though all the powers of heaven and earth and sea and all that are in them . . . [19]

Their names vary. In another, longer, more carefully written version of the charm from the fifteenth century, they are conjured as Ylya, Saytulia, Viole, Sursoralia, Seneya, Deneya, and Emyra in that order one to seven (Appendix no. 4). Moreover, this charm, like its early predecessor conjures the fevers from whatever nation (*nacione*) or world (*mundo*) they come from. It then addresses the fevers by their type-names starting with one-day, or daily recurring fever (*cotidianis)* up to a twelve-day fever (*duodecim*).[20]

The motif of the seven saints known as the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus opposes the demonic fever cycles and seven sisters.[21] The Sleepers' names were

invoked in prayers, written down on textual amulets, and consumed on small communion wafers. In the Anglo-Saxon charm for fever (*dweorh*) mentioned above, the first part of that two-part charm calls for the names of the Seven Sleepers to be written on communion wafers. It is likely, since fevers were seen to cause disruption to normal sleep, that this perception coalesced with the popularity of the saints' legend to appropriate this motif for use against fevers. This charm stipulates that each name be written on separate hosts "such as one is accustomed to offer" (*lytle oflætan swylce man mid ofraḍ*), meaning those offered at the mass.[22] The scribe joins this Sleepers narrative to a poetic mythic narrative in Old English. The mythic narrative is to be recited in the sick person's ears and over her or his head, then an unmarried young person is to tie the written text around the neck of the sick. This amulet should remain in place for three days, after which time, we are told, the client's health will improve. Although the two rituals, writing the names on wafers, on the one hand, and recitation and application of a written amulet, on the other, are drawn from different traditions, their joint use does not trouble the Anglo-Saxon scribe.[23]

During this period, the names of the Sleepers are sometimes changed, not only because spellings are misunderstood, such as Cerofyon for Serapion, but also because the lists descend from different sources. In one late tenth or early eleventh century manuscript, two different strings of names appear. The charm ends, "afterwards drink these names, written in sage leaves" (*postea bibat ista nomina in foliis saluie descripta*), + Achilleusus . + actellidis . + Diomedis . + Eugenius . + Stephan*us* .+ Sepati*us* . + probati*us* . + Quiric*us*. + maximian*us* .+ malch*us* . + martinian*us*. + dionisi*us* . + Ioh*anni*s . + Serapion . Constantin*us*.[24] The names through Quiricus/Quiriacus correspond in part to those used by Gregory of Tours.[25] The rest—Maximianus, Malchus, Martinianus, Dionisius, Iohannis, Serapion, and Constantinus—appear most commonly in early English manuscripts.[26]

Many fever charms invoke Christ's triumph over death in the crucifixion with the acclamation, "Christ conquers, Christ reigns, Christ commands" (*Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat*[27]). In addition, the power of the cross itself to heal fevers is expressed through the written sign as well as the verbal invocation.[28] A charm written in a twelfth-century hand in a manuscript dating from the eleventh and twelfth centuries[29] brings together Christ and the sign of the cross with the words "Depart, fevers" (*fugite febres*) to be written on a slip of parchment (*carta*) and hung around the neck of the sufferer.[30] The devotional invocation of the cross, "Behold the cross of the Lord, be gone, evil powers" *Ecce crucem domini, fugite partes aduerse*)[31] occurs in charms against fevers of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.[32] Yet Franz docu-

ments an address to the cross (*Crux Christi*) in a ninth-century benediction to free a "servant of God" from fevers.[33]

In sharp contrast to these early evocations of the triumphant power of Christ's crucifixion and its representation in the cross stands the image of Christ trembling (or not trembling) at the crucifixion. The formula, which has a remarkably long life, associates the fevers (*frigora*, literally "chills") with Christ shivering.[34] The healing power lies in Christ's trembling (or lack of trembling) before Pilate or the Jews. The trembling is analogous to the chills that were part of attacks of fevers ("access" or "ague") and these are resolved through the dialogue with Christ (Roper 2005: 102-103). This motif becomes the most popular fever charm in the English language during the post-medieval period. Davies (1996: 22-23) and Roper have shown that the charm, which seems to have emerged in the seventeenth century (Roper 2005: 101), survives through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Sacred names (*nomina sacra*) and unknown words and symbols (*voces magicae*) also serve as apotropaic motifs in charms against fevers. The "name above all names" is Christ; the acclamations (*Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat*) reinforce its authoritative, kingly power . In an ecclesiastical manuscript of the early twelfth century,[35] the names of the evangelists and the Seven Sleepers and the sign of the cross constitute an amulet to be kept on the person as a protection.[36] Fevers can also be sent away under the sign of the cross with words that name their own effects: "+ I burn + I freeze + I flee + I feel +" (+ *Ardeo* + *algeo* + *fugio* + *sentio* +).[37]

In addition, Greek and Hebrew names for Christ and God were called on to cast out demons. A long charm in a fifteenth-century manuscript casts out demons[38] with the formula, "In the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit Amen. + on + on + on + on + on + In my name saints cast out demons + Otheos + Accanatos [for Athanatos] + hyskyros +." "On" means "all" expressing the unity of the One. The other names are transliterations from Greek: "the God," "the Eternal," "the Mighty." This charm also names the evangelists and the Seven Sleepers and includes a supplicatory prayer addressed to Christ that asks that the woman (*maritam*) carrying this amulet (*hoc breue*) be free of fevers and all the plots of the devil, illusions, and enemies, visible and invisible, ending with the *Christus vincit* plus eleven repetitions of "on."

Thus, sacred names derive from unfamiliar languages, but include abbreviations of divine words or phrases, or employ signs and exotic characters. A fever remedy (*wiþ dweorh*) in the Anglo-Saxon *Lacnunga*, combines "+ T + p + T + N + ω + T + UI + M + ωA" to be written along the arms and accompanied by the administration of a medicinal herb drink and the invocation of two early Irish saints.[39] The crosses with T's for Tau are probably meant for apotropaic

markings such as in Exodus 12:7. The alpha and omega, here reversed (ωA), referring to God and Christ (Apoc. 1:8, 21:6, 22:13), appear on Greek healing amulets of the fifth and sixth centuries (Jones 2016: 66), as well as those of the Anglo-Saxons.[40]

Toward the end of the medieval period a variety of *nomina sacra* for God or Christ also appear in charms for fever. Often such names appear among the efficacious words on hosts, for example, Alpha and Omega, Emanuel, and Tetragrammaton.[41] In another fifteenth-century example, word clusters to be inscribed separately progress sequentially from Hebrew to Greek to Latin: "+ E + Eles + Sabaoth +, Adonay + Alpha and oo + Messias, + Pastor + Agnus + Fons +."[42]

Since antiquity, fevers had been relieved by diminishing formulas such as abracadabra (Dornseiff 1922: 64).[43] This technique continues, for example, on a thirteenth-to-fourteenth-century written amulet (*scedula)* against fever, where letters are dropped off somewhat irregularly (*braccalleus . braccalleu . braccall* [sic] + *.braccal . + . bracca . + bracc + brac + .bar + bea + be*). The scribe leaves off the sequence before it finishes and turns to *Christus vincit* etc.[44]

Thus, in the medieval period, names (known and unknown) call for and bespeak power, functioning variously as invocations, declarations of divine presence, word magic, or as signs of authority like seals attached to documents.

Fever charms that invoke the power of saints, as we have seen in the case of the Seven Sleepers, also call upon the apostles and evangelists, who are frequently named in fever charms. Other individual saints in fever charms include Machutus, Victoricius, John the evangelist, Michael the archangel, John the Baptist, and Agatha, through allusions to her veil and motto. Peter was by far the most important figure, after Christ, in rituals and charms to cure fevers. The biblical narrative of Christ healing Peter's mother-in-law from a fever (Matt. 8:14, Luke 4:38-39) opens a long exorcistic ritual to cure fevers that also conjures the fever sisters and the cyclical fevers.

> + And [entering] with them into the house of Simon Peter, Jesus saw his [Peter's] kinswoman lying sick and feverish. But standing over her he called out the fever and immediately it departed and she served Him. Syon + Syon + Syon. In memory of your beloved son, ruler of the world, free .N.[45]

The Latin charm known as "Peter before the gates" (*ante portas* or *ante portam*)[46] narrates an encounter and dialogue between Peter, who suffers from a fever and Christ who cures him and grants the efficacy of a written amulet against fevers. Variants place Peter lying or standing before gates in different locations: *ante portas Ierusalem*,[47] *ante portam Latinam,*[48]*ante portam Galilee*.[49]

Occasionally, Peter suffers fevers on a stone and the *super petram* motif and dialogue functions as the *historiola* to cure fevers, although it is most often favoured to prevent toothache[50]. The practice of wearing or carrying textual amulets written on parchment or paper was one of the most common forms of protection and healing through words (Skemer 2006:1-19).[51] This charm narrative of Peter's cure with its resulting textual amulet seems to have become an essential addition to certain verbal fever rituals.[52]

A charm invoking the elusive saint, Architriclinus, incorporates a ritual that appears in British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 112v (Thorndike 1923-1934, 1: 725-26). The ritual requires breaking a green stick or stem of hazel in two and rejoining the parts with an incantation.[53] In an early example (Appendix, no. 5), the ritual and charm were used against an enemy who has held back too much wine from his cellar.[54] The episode calls to mind the wine steward at the marriage of Cana. His title, *architriclinus*, in the vulgate New Testament (John 2:9) supplies the name of the central figure, subsequently the saint, in these charms. In the fever charms, the rejoining of the stem is the miraculous sign of the cure.[55] In a fifteenth-century version in English, French, and Latin, the joining or "kissing" of the joined stems becomes analogous to the priest at the high altar "making" the body of Christ or God "with his hands." I have translated into modern English:

> Take and shear a hazel [stem] off a growing hazel plant and when you shear it say a pater noster in the name of God and afterward say this charm that follows: 'Architricline sat on high, holding a branch of hazel in his hands and said, 'as truly as the priest makes God in his hands even so truly I command and conjure you, virgin branch of hazel, that you embrace in love and deliver this man or woman from this kind of fever.' In the name of the Father & Son & Holy Spirit amen. The Father is the beginning and end, the Son is truth, the Holy Spirit is the cure. In the name of the Father and Son' etc. And have the sick say 5 Paternosters in the worship of the 5 wounds of our Lord.[56]

In one Latin version, the two virgin stems are conjured to join by kissing just as Christ nursed from and was kissed by the unpolluted Virgin.[57] In another, the seven kisses Lady Saint Marie bestowed on Christ on the cross cures the fevers, while the hazel stem ritual serves as a sign of the cures ("in tokenyng of his hele"). This charm appears as one of several such fever charms in a manuscript belonging to the infirmarer of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Mary's Coventry.[58] This last charm makes clear that when the stems have joined, the healer takes that part where they were joined and, having cut off the ends, places the growing twig in a drink for the sick. In another Latin charm in the same manuscript,

the newly joined piece, once cut from the rest, should be hung around the neck of the patient for seven days (Hunt 1990: 360, note 115). This last method was favoured by the physician Thomas Fayreford.[59] Fifteenth-century Middle English charms in which Archidecline/Seynt architeclyn/Sent arche de clyne sat on a bank or bench holding a hazel stem are short and unelaborate (Roper 2005: 93-94); one has explicitly been repurposed for a horse that is "wranch"(*sic*, wrenched or sprained?).[60]

FEVER CHARMS WRITTEN ON COMMUNION WAFERS, PLANT LEAVES, APPLES, ALMONDS, AND PAPER

Adolf Franz called attention to a tenth-century benediction performed not only over salt and water, but also over apples or cheese to bring relief of the sufferings of chills and fevers (Franz 1909: II. 477-8). Swallowing, as one did when receiving pax bread or the host, was a fundamental way of accepting the power of salvation and healing.[61] In England during the long medieval period, the most frequently recurring fever charm in the manuscripts required performance over consecutive days and involved administering wafers[62] or sage leaves, apples or less obviously edible commodities, not excluding parchment and paper.

For use in charms, communion wafers were prepared by "writing" on them liturgical phrases, crosses, and sometimes pricking a hole. The "writing" in some cases may only have consisted of making the sign of the cross over the wafers while speaking the required words. Much longer ecclesiastical rituals to relieve fever sufferers existed very early. A mass devoted to St. Sigismund to cure fevers was mentioned by Gregory of Tours in the sixth century and votive masses have been identified outside of England between the eighth and the twelfth centuries (Paxton 1994: 26). In England an elaborate ritual, including masses, appears in the Anglo-Saxon medical writings.[63] However, a short, private, repeatable ritual employing inscribed wafers or other materials survived as a fever charm in England through the fifteenth century in manuscripts written in Old English, Anglo-Norman French, Latin, and Middle English.[64]

Instructions varied regarding the specific words to be written. The customary invocation of the The customary invocation of the Trinity is supplemented by phrases and divided to be written on three hosts: *Pater est alpha, Filius est vita, Spiritus Sanctus est remedium.*[65] Another trinitarian formula to be written on three hosts was *El elye sabaoth, Adonay alpha and* ω*, Messias, pastor, agnus fons.* The power of the cross to overcome fevers is conveyed by crosses inserted between the holy names usually in red ink, as in other charms. In addition to the crosses and Latin phrases, making a point or prick in the wafer

is indicated in one group of fifteenth-century charms in Middle English.[66] One Middle English example reads,

> ffor ye feueres . Take .iii. oblyes & wryte, *pater est alpha et oo* vpon oon & mak a poynte. and lat ye secke ete yt ye fyrste day. & the .ii. day wryte on yat oyer obely, *ffilius est vita* & make ii. poyntes. & gyfe ye seeke to ete. and on ye iii day wryte on yat oyer obly, *spiritus sanctus est remedium* & make .ii[i]. poyntes. & gyfe ye seke to ete. & ye fyrste day late ye seek saye a *pater noster* or he ete it, and ye ii. day .ii. *pater noster*. ar he ete it, and y*e* iii day iii *pater noster*, & a crede.[67]

The points ("poyntes") sometimes designated as one, two, or three may have served to mark which wafer was to be dispensed on each of the three successive days. A more likely possibility is that in these late medieval charms, the stabs represented the wounds received by Christ on the cross, as they were invoked in charms and appeared on amulets.[68] A fifteenth-century verse describes the two sides of the host "On one side well written/ On the other side lightly struck."[69] A fifteenth century charm from a vernacular medical collection (Morrissey 2014) is quite explicit about how one should write in three hosts (hostys): "In the first host, write around the edge, *Pater* + *est* + *Sanitas* + and a knot (nudde)," probably a dot of ink, which like the crosses in the manuscript could be in red ink, resembling the wounds.[70]

The practicing physician Thomas Fayreford[71] does not mention making points, but recommends a ritual of first writing (how we are not told) on three wafers (*oblata*), which are then moistened in holy water and given to the patient early in the morning. Afterwards, on each of the three days of treatment, the patient is also administered an herb drink mixed with beer.[72] In this way, the popular wafer charm could be tailored to the individual healer's practices or, as elsewhere, simply copied with minimum ritual or medicinal elaboration. The wafers in these charms were probably understood to be consecrated hosts because the power to heal largely resided in the wafers having been prepared for the Eucharist by a priest.[73]

However, various materials conveyed the holy words to the sick. For example, three Anglo-Norman charms in the same manuscript require inscriptions on apples[74] and *oblies*.[75] Fever charms written on plant leaves, especially sage, also employing trinitarian formulas, such as, *christus tonat, angelus nunciat, iohannes predicat*,[76] flourished in Middle English manuscripts during the fifteenth century (Keiser 1998: 3869). The sage plant (*salvia officinalis*) had appeal for use in charms because it was used in accompanying herbal drinks against fevers.[77] One charm reads, "Afterwards, let him drink these names [namely,

the Seven Sleepers'] written on sage leaves."[78] The Latin name *salvia* or *salgie*, could be associated with the adjective *salvus*, meaning "sound, unharmed, safe," and also meant spiritually "saved" in theological contexts, as in Psalm 17:14, *salvum me fac*.[79]

Other materials were options for use in these charms. An apple, divided and inscribed, was used very early instead of wafers. Such an alternative might be needed for healing where there was no easy access to a priest, as in female orders or laymen's home surroundings, and would have worked well in a remedy for a Jew (Saye 1935). We find, "Take three wafers or three almonds, write with a pen's point upon the first wafer . . ." [80] A fifteenth-century charm reads, "Write these nine words on paper and give the sick a drink of one word + *Christus* +." [81] The practice of writing holy words or crosses on some medium, then washing the words off into a medicinal drink was also an old one in England (Pettit 2001, 1: 16, 17).

Within a personal collection of medieval craft and medicinal texts from the middle of the fifteenth century, Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd.5.76, [82] on folio 24r, a rubric reads, "here beginnes medicines for all maneres of feveres proved." Under this title appear medicinal recipes and one charm to cure fevers to be discussed below. In the same manuscript, a Latin fever charm appears on folio 5v. It reads in translation:

> A good charm for the fevers proved. In the name of the father + and the son + and the holy spirit + Amen + *The Father is alpha* + *the Son is life* + *the Holy Spirit is the remedy* + This is the triumphal title + *Jesus Nazarenus King of the Jews* + I command (conjure) you fevers + daily + two-day + three-day + four-day + five + six + seven + eight + nine + that you depart instantly without delay from this servant of god, male or female, N [give the person's name] who carries upon his or her body that highest name that is above every name. + *Christ conquers* + *Christ rules* + *Christ reigns* + Christ in his great mercy and piety +. Free your servant, male or female, from every type of diverse fevers; everywhere always may He guard me day and night Amen.[83]

The opening formula of this charm corresponds to those written on hosts—except there are no wafers or hosts mentioned here. The rhetorical climax of this charm is an exorcism of fevers, "Depart instantly without delay" (*statim exeatis sine mora*) from this servant of God, who is named. Nine fevers are exorcised by name, their names being precisely the names of their cyclical types. The patient is to carry the divine name represented in the threefold acclamation of the power of Christ, *Christus vincit*+*Christus imperat*+*Christus regnat* with him

as a textual amulet.[84] The scribe of Cambridge, University Library MS Dd.5.76, fols. 1-27v evidently thought highly of this charm, because at the end of his list of fever remedies, he reminds his reader that he has already recorded this "fair charm for the fevers" and tells exactly where it is located twenty pages previous. Nevertheless, in this favorite charm, the scribe has relied on speaking the liturgical words in the place of writing on wafers. Here, instead of consuming the words on wafers, the patient carries an amulet. The production of an amulet seems reminiscent of the popular "Peter before the gates" (*Ante portas)* formula.

WRITING IN INK ON THE RIGHT HAND

The scribe of the Cambridge manuscript includes a second fever charm, which requires writing on the hand, washing and drinking sacred words and signs composed in a ritual performed three days in a row. The right hand of the healing saint was considered sacred and a means of salvation (Van Dam 1993: 259). Moreover, Christ first took the hand of Peter's mother-in-law, when he healed her of fevers: "he touched her hand and the fever left her"/ *tetigit manum ejus, et dimisit eam febris* in Mathew 8:15; also "And approaching he raised her, after taking her hand, and at once the fever left her"/ *Et accedens elevavit eam, apprehensa manu ejus : et continuo dimisit eam febris* at Mark 1:31. This scene is represented in an early charm (Appendix no. 2), without mention of Christ's act of touching the hand, but with emphasis on the spoken command as in Luke 4:38-39. The Cambridge manuscript ink charm, written in Middle English, reads,

> Take and write in his reght hande with ynke iii. crosses and in ilk[each] a quarter of his hande write + *xpc vincit* + *xpc regnat* + *xpc imperat* + and afte[r] on þe same hand write + *on pater* + *on filius* + on *spiritus sanctus* and wesche of þat writing in a litell water and drink it. þe seconde day þou schall write [f. 24v] +*on ar[i]es* + *on ouis* + *on Agnus* + and drinke þ*a*t as þe tother day yan*ne* Write þus + *on leo*+ *on vitulus* + *on vermis* + and drink þ*a*t as þe tother day.[85]

This medicine appears in the middle of a list of eight medicines, all for fevers. The fever remedies form a group introduced by its own title.[86] The two preceding recipes are for drinks prepared from plants; the charm is introduced as "another", so the scribe evidently thought of it as a third drink.

A comparable charm, requiring the healer to write on the right hand of the patient, appears in London, British Library, Harley MS 2558 in a part of the

manuscript written in the late fourteenth century. It appears within a cluster of familiar charms for fevers.[87] The Harley charm requires the healer to write on the right hand with ink for fevers. It, however, is written in Latin, which I have translated, except for the sacred words.

> On the right palm of the one suffering fevers make three crosses [and write] *Domine*, *christus vincit* + *christus regnat* + *christus imperat* +. And afterwards in the middle of his palm, write + *On pater* + *On filius* + *On spiritus sanctus* +. Then wash off the writing with holy water and have the patient drink it. And the next day write *On aries* + *On ovis* + *On agnus* + [that is, ram, ewe, and lamb]; and the third day write +*On leo* + *On vitulus* + *On vermis* + [lion, calf, worm]. Then it is proved, and without a doubt he will be freed from fevers.[88]

The Cambridge manuscript charm in English could be a rough translation of this Latin one.[89] But English is not the only vernacular language in which we find this charm. An Anglo-Norman version appears in a manuscript probably written for the private use of a gentry family in the last half of the fourteenth century (Hanna 1998: 108).

> For fevers, a good charm. Take the right hand of the sick person and make a cross with your right thumb on this hand and say 'In the name of the Father + and Son + and Holy Spirit Amen.' Then make the sign of the cross three times with the same thumb and each time say, 'Christ conquers + Christ reigns + Christ rules +' and then write in ink the first day on the same hand of the sick, ' + On Father + On Son + On Holy Spirit +.' The second day do as before and write '+ On Ewe + On Ram + On Lamb +'. The third day do as before and write 'On Lion + On Calf + On Worm +' Thus it will stop the attack of fever through the grace of God, and it is a good and proven charm for each type of fever. But do not charm anyone except as an act of charity.[90] [translated]

A charm for fevers to be written in ink on the hand appears in a fifteenth-century manuscript that contains various medical texts, benedictions, *experimenta*, and charms.[91] Sometimes this scribe uses codes to hide words.[92] The ink charm, like the Harley one, is written in Latin. Translated, it reads,

> Take the right hand of the sick and in the palm write three [crosses ?] and each time say, *Christ conquers, Christ reigns, Christ commands*. And afterwards in the same palm, write + *On pater* + *On filius* + *On Iesus*. And next dissolve what has been written with water and let the sick drink

> it. On the next day, write +*On* + *aries* + *On* + *ovis* + *On* + *agnus*. And similarly let him drink it. On the third day + *On leo* + *On vitulus* + *On vermis* +. And again have the sick drink without question. On the third day she (or he) will be cured. In the name of the father, etc.[93]

The *Petrus ante portas* with its amulet follows immediately. Another charm to write on and eat three wafers follows on the same folio; however, the word "oblates" for wafers in the instructions is coded into stacked dots leaving only "bl" legible.[94]

Writing sacred words on wafers, plant leaves, or apples to be consumed over days to cure a feverish patient or help a woman in childbirth has been well documented (Keiser 1998; Hunt 1990; Jones and Olsan 2015). The very act of writing acquires significance in these rituals as the means of conveying divine healing through words to the believing Christian. Not only were the words, written or spoken, a sign of divine presence, but the cross too, in gesture and written sign, did the same work as the sacred words and names in fever charms.[95] To the fever victim, the cross made Christ's protective power visible and present.

Writing Christian symbols on the body as a means of curing fevers appears in Anglo-Saxon fever remedies ("Write this along the arms against fever").[96] We also find directions for writing words to be washed off into a drink.[97] The Greek symbols for alpha and omega within an array of crosses, as found in British Library, Harley MS 585 (fol. 167r), could be written on a dish or paten and washed off. In the same ritual, longer texts were subsequently sung over the drink. The ritual required that the written words be washed into the herbs mixed with water, then sacred wine was added to it. The medium in which they were written is not mentioned in the Harley manuscript (*Lacnunga*). In the other Anglo-Saxon source, *Bald's Leechbook* (London, British Library, Royal MS 12.D.XVII, fol. 51r), the words are washed off with holy water into a drink made of herbs and ale and fresh water. In both these remedies, the performers focused on the words being consumed. The words were conveyed to the sick simultaneously with the healing power of the herbs and holy water. All parts of the recipe were medicinal, for body and soul were not conceived of separately. But in these early texts, even though ink was certainly available, at least to the scribes who recorded the recipes, the texts do not mention ink as an ingredient and writing symbolically may not have implied the necessity for it.

However, ink is specified in a fifteenth-century charm designated "A medicine for the access" (*axes*), that is, attacks of fevers: "Take a sawge (i.e., sage) lef that is not pierced and write thereon with a penne with ink"[98] (Appendix no. 7). The leaf, the pen, and the ink indicate a new materiality, even though the central feature remains the consumption of holy words containing the power

or virtue. The clean sage leaves, "not previously pierced," might mean they now carry pen-pricks with ink as the means of writing on the leaf. The patient takes the pricked leaves by mouth. Additional prayers are prescribed for each new leaf, and, as with other fever remedies, this ritual is repeated over three days.[99] This method moves a step away from the wafer charms, which were the most widespread and long-lasting remedies for fevers throughout the medieval period in England.

In Harley MS 2558 and in Cambridge, University Library MS Dd.5.76, the ink charms follow similar Latin versions of the Letter of Aristotle to Alexander. This Letter was part of the Secret of Secrets material; it circulated as knowledge useful to a ruler or great man. In its expanded forms, such knowledge ranged from how to take care of one's health to how to choose advisors and carry on war. Its subjects ranged from astronomy and alchemy to craft and medical recipes. All kinds of knowledge were thought to be suitable for the would-be educated man. The compiler of Cambridge, University Library MS Dd. 5.76, fols. 1- 27v evidently thought of his little book as a suitable collection of knowledge texts, even though his recipes dealt with inks, colours, and glues to decorate books and medical cures for cankers, sores, gout, and remedies for fevers, including two charms.

In the Harley collection, on the other hand, a wealth of fever charms are crowded together in various hands with an herbal remedy and a toothache charm.[100] The first six seem to be in the same hand: (1) *Petrus stabat ante portas* (2) *Crux sacra + Crux splendida + Crux salua . . .* (3) *In monte cebon requiescunt vii dormientes* (4) + *Hel + Heloy +ya* (5) *in dextera palmi . . . fac 3es cruces* (6) *In nomine . . . Christus vincit + christus regnat*. (7) *In nomine . . . on . + on . + on* . invokes holy names. (8) *In nomine . . . christus vincit + christus regnat + christus imperat* conjures the fevers by types. (9) *Cape et diuide in tres et scribe*, that is, divide into three parts and write paraliturgical words on each to be given to the patient over the course of three days, is familiar. But there is no mention of what to write on, and the something to be divided may be paper or parchment. (10) Last on the folio is a barely legible charm that opens with the exorcism, *fugite partes aduerse,* but then abruptly adds the *Petrus ante portas* formula. These Harley charms offer us a useful collection of late-fourteenth-century fever charms. While the charm ritual of writing on the hand in ink and washing it into a potion is included, the charm employing three wafers does not appear here. Moreover, no later scribe added it to the list, although other charms were added. One charm comes close, but it does not mention the medium of wafers; rather, some consumable medium is to be divided into three parts, inscribed with holy names, and given to the fever victim over three days. This is a ghost of the wafer charm. Thus, in this late medieval collection, the

long-term popularity of the wafer charm seems to be passing away. That is not to say devout piety has diminished by the fifteenth century.[101] A meditative, rhetorical piety dominates in these charms through the prevalent use of holy names and liturgical prayers, but the charm consuming "obleys," or wafers like the communion host, that Fayreford elaborates on for his patients a decade or two later is not found here.

CONCLUSION

Bringing a diachronic perspective to these charms to relieve fevers, we can tentatively draw together the following observations with regard to the materials and techniques: Writing on hosts or communion wafers for the patient to eat over several days—a formula and ritual prescribed from the tenth century—persists as a recommended remedy through the fifteenth century. But to what extent was writing in ink on the hand a new mode of treating fevers in the late medieval period? Charms that required writing on the body were known to the Anglo-Saxons before 1000CE.[102] Similarly, a charm from the fifteenth-century began, "Write in the right hand of him that bleeds with the blood of the same man that bleeds the word *Grecopolutum*."[103] Thus, writing on the body was not a new technique in the fifteenth century, although writing in ink may have been. If so, what might have given rise to this innovation in the performance of a ritual for writing on the body?

The charms and manuscript contexts explored in this paper indicate that writing in ink on the hand emerged relatively late in the English Middle Ages. Moreover, the manuscript contexts for the ink charms correspond to the period of growing vernacularization of medicine (Voigts 1995) and a growing interest in crafts and craft knowledge among the merchant and artisan classes, which included widespread familiarity with making inks (Clarke 2016). Since fevers were a perennial threat to the English in the fifteenth century, there persisted a call for medical recipes and palliative charms to cure them.

Popular fifteenth-century remedy books record traditional host charms (Appendix nos. 8 and 9) as the preferred charms against fevers (Olsan 2009: 217, 221-222, 226). However, charms characteristically preserve older traditions even as new forms develop.[104] Thus, while the specific verbal formulas applied in ink were the same as those traditionally "written" on hosts, the ink charms did not employ the ecclesiastical wafers, a move which might have been motivated by a number of things. Attitudes toward the host changed in the later Middle Ages. Within the Catholic Church, apprehension of abuse of the host increased, and access to hosts diminished. For example, at the Lateran Council of 1215,

decrees were passed to protect the consecrated hosts from theft for magical purposes (Browe 1930, 152). On the other hand, when the Feast of Corpus Christi was officially established in the West in the mid thirteenth century, reverence for the host grew and spread. Not only was a liturgy of the mass provided for its feast day, but it was also preached on, venerated publicly in processions, and celebrated in fraternities and plays (Rubin 1991, 213-287). Increased reverence for the host within church circles shaped its use in pious healing charms, such as those that implicate elements of the passion, while at the same time making aquisition and handling by lay women and men less common than previously. From the eleventh century, a side-effect of the doctrine of transubstantiation had been to imbue the host with transformative powers that could be employed for private magical purposes (Browe 1930, 134-149). At the same time, it also maintained its ancient attribute of miraculous healing (Browe1938: 58). In this regard, it seems significant that the fever charms employ a consumption ritual that mirrors the Eucharist itself. Nevertheless, from the late fourteenth-century, reform-minded Christians objected to the "superstitious" practices involving the host. In England Wycliffites and Lollards raised objections based on their rejection of faith in transubstantiation and therefore its physical transforming powers. Catholic reformers, as for example, the preacher Bernadino of Siena, specifically rejected the unholy use of the host for healing fevers, a practice he saw as venerating the devil. (cited in Foscati 2015: 217). By the second quarter of the sixteenth-century the English reformation, instigated by Henry VIII, was in full force. As a result, host charms that had been recorded in remedy books less than a hundred years earlier began to be blotted or crossed out (Olsan 2009:155-159).

The manuscripts in which we have found the technique of writing in ink on the hand are mainly personal collections or remedies put together by lay persons. Yet, since the ink charm occurs in Latin, as well as English, it is likely to have arisen within at least quasi-learned circles, although Latin does not necessarily restrict it to either ecclesiastical or professional ranks of society. The ink charm, while preserving the traditional Christian formulas and symbols to heal fevers, seems to have provided a medium for conveying the power of the incantation to the patient in a way that was less ecclesiastical than the wafer or host charms did. Writing on the hand in ink and washing the ink into a medicinal potion, confirms the reception of Christian healing power into the body of the fever sufferer as had long been practiced, while effectively transforming an ancient clerical ritual into a lay Christian's medical remedy.

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NOTES

[1] Compare, for example, epilepsy or "falling sickness" was more mysterious medically and spiritually.

[2] Timothy P. Newfield, "Malaria and malaria-like disease in the early Middle Ages," *Early Medieval Europe* 25, Issue 3 (August 2017), 251 300, http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/emed.12212/epdf

[3] Learned medieval medicine distinguished other kinds of fever as well; see Demaitre 2013: 35-60.

[4] e.g. a sixth-century Christian Greek ritual mentions the cyclical types of fevers in Jones 2016: 134-135. Also, see, the Latin ritual *Contra febres* in Cambridge, Queens' College, MS 19, fol. 142v (Appendix, no. 1).

[5] e.g.London, British Library, Sloane MS 405, fol. 48v, *Si estis cotidyane aut biduane aut treduane aut quartane aut quintane aut sextane aut septane aut ottane aut none aut qualiscumque estis* . . . . (Appendix, no. 2).

[6] "*ad febrem tercianam . . . quas tres oblatas mane ante accessionem egris commedat*" in Cambridge University Library, MS Dd. 5.53, fol.104v

[7] See "acces(se)" in the *Middle English Dictionary*.

[8] Elsewhere, I have used the term "semantic motifs" to refer to the central images in healing charms, as a means of understanding how medieval charms relate to their functions or puposes (Olsan 2004). On classification, see Ohrt 1929/1930, Agapkina and Toporkov 2013, Roper 2005, Pócs 1985-86, 2: 706-726 [in English].

[9] For a review of fever charms in German manuscripts, see Schulz 2003: 104-117.

[10] e.g. *Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat*.

[11] *Petrus super petram*, most common in the toothache charms, also appears for fevers, e.g., in London, British Library, Sloane MS 122, fol. 163r.

[12] Hutcheson 2012: 175-202. Cameron 1993: 152, Doyle 2008.

[13] London, British Library, Harley MS 585, fol. 167r-v. I translate the Old English section of the charm: Here came entering the 'spider' spirit/ He held his harness in his hands, said that you were his steed./ He laid his bridle on your neck, they began to move off over the land./ As soon as they went off the land, then his limbs began to cool./ Then entered the beast's sister./ Then she ended [it], and swore oaths/ that this

[one] might never harm the sick person/ nor one who could get this charm/or knew how to sing this charm. Amen. Let it be done. (*Her com ingangan inspiden wiht. / Hæfde him his haman on handa, cwæð þæt þu his hæncges wære. / Lege þe his teage an sweoran. Ongunnan him of þæm lande liþan. / Sona swa hy of þæn? lande coman þa ongunnan him ða liþu colian. / þa com ingangan deores sweorstar. / þa geændade heo, 7 aðas swor / ðæt næfre þis ðæm adlegan derian ne moste, / ne þæm þis galdor begytan mihte, oððe þe þis galdor ongalan cuþe. / Amen. Fiað*. Regarding the use of this metrical charm as an amulet, cf. Skemp 1911: 294; Hutcheson 2012: 182; Cameron 1993: 151. Communion wafers are usually distributed to be consumed by mouth, not hung on the body, while verbal charms are often worn as amulets, as well as sung over the sick.

[14] Cambridge, Queens College MS 19, fol. 142v. My transcription. I am grateful to Dr. Tim Eggington, the Librarian of Queens' College, for access to the manuscript. Cf. Storms 1948: 295-296, no. 64.

[15] A note, added in the manuscript in a smaller contemporary hand says, "This charm should be said nine times on the first day, eight times on the second, seven times on the third, six times on the fourth" and so on decreasing the number for nine days until only one recitation is left by which time the fevers will have abated."

[16] On fever sisters in other charm traditions, see Ryan 2006, Toporkov 2011, Timotin 2013: 77-132, Kencis 2011.

[17] Codex Vaticanus Palatinus Latinus 235, fols. 44r- 45r, printed in part in Franz 1909 2, 481-484, item VIII. Online at https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Pal.lat.235. The earliest part of the manuscript, written in England, contains the poetry of Paulinus of Nola and was used by Bede. The liturgical material that concerns us dates from the late ninth or tenth century (Brown and MacKay 1988: 24).

[18] Franz 1909: 2, 482: *orationes contra frigores*. *Coniuro uos, frigores et febres -- VII sorores sunt--siue meridianas, siue nocturnas, siue contidianas, siue secundarias, siue tercianas, siue quartanas, siue siluanas, siue iudeas, siue hebreas, uel qualicunque genere sitis, adiuro uos per patrem . . .* and ibid., 483, *Epistula contra frigores: . . . coniuro uos, de quacunque natione estis . . . coniuro uos, frigores et febres, ut non habeatis ullam licentiam, nocere huic famulo dei N. nec eum fatigare, sed redeatis, unde uenistis, nec potestatem habeatis nec locum in isto famulo dei amen.*

[19] London, British Library, Sloane MS 389, fol. 91v-92r. The relevant excerpt reads: *coniuro vos quo septem estis sorores prima daliola secunda vestulia tercian fugalia quarta suferalie quinta affrecta sexta lilia septema luc / talia per patrem + et filium et spiritum sanctum + et per diem in diebus et per misericordiam domini nostri Ihu xpi + per omnes angelos + archangelos + per apostolos + martires + confessores atque virgines + omnes sanctos dei per omnes virtutes celorum et per celum et terram + mare et omnes que in eis sunt.*

[20] The charm featuring "St. Peter before the gates" for fever follows on the last line and begins, *+ Ante portas galilee iacebat sanctus petrus . . . .*

[21] e.g., in Harley MS 585, fol. 167r-v. On the seven sleepers of Ephesus in charms and legend in Anglo-Saxon England, see Bonser 1945 and 1963: 403-405, Cubitt 2009, and Liuzza 2016. For an overview of the legend, see the *Catholic Encyclopedia* at http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05496a.htm

[22] The exact form that the eucharistic hosts took during Anglo-Saxon era has not been settled, since no molds for "mass bread" have been found in England.

[23] Scribes were not averse to appropriating materials from traditions other than their own. For example, Mesler 2013 has shown how Jewish translators of the Magi charm for epilepsy altered, adapted, or transmitted Christian matter. Cf. Jolly 1996: 146 on the *Lacnunga* scribe's lack of compulsion to "Christianize" the charm "for a sudden stitch."

[24] "A charm for fever. You should stand behind the fever patient and say, 'In the name of the father and son and holy spirit. May the right hand of heaven free you from this evil. amen.' Chant a Pater Noster [and say], 'In the name of the father and son and holy spirit. May the strength of heaven free and defend you. amen.' Again [chant] a Pater Noster. Afterwards have the patient drink these names, written in sage leaves. ++ Achilleusus . + actellidis . + Diomedis . + Eugenius . + Stephanus .+ Sepatius . + probatius . + Quiricus. + maximianus .+ malchus . + martinianus. + dionisius . + Iohannis . + Serapion . Constantin*us* ." London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 22v-23r. (Appendix, no. 6b).

[25] Achillides, Diomedes, Diogenus, Probatus, Stephanus, Sambatus, Quiriacus. *Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Seven Sleepers of Ephesus."

[26] e.g., London, British Library, Royal MS 2 A XX (flyleaf), London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius MS C III, fol. 83v, London, British Library, Royal MS 12 E XX, fol. 162v, London, British Library, Cotton Faustina MS A X fol. 116r (2 charms), Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby MS 86, fol. 29v. See Bonser 1945 and 1963:226, 403 n. 2; Pettit 2001, 2: 176-180, and Hunt 1990: 84,89.

[27] On this phrase opening eighth-century litanies, see Kantorowicz 1958: 21-31 and *Dictionnaire d'archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie* VIII, "Laudes Gallicanae."

[28] On the cross in Anglo-Saxon healing rituals and charms, see Jolly 2006.

[29] London, British Library, Cotton MS Faustina A X, fol. 116r. *Contra frigora omnibus horis scribis in carta & cum licio ligas ad collum egroti hora deficiente.* [In the left margin, a red cross] + *In nomine domini crucifixi sub pontio pilato . per signum crucis xri. fugite febres . seu frigora cotidiana . seu tertiana. uel nocturna. a seruo dei . N . septuaginta xiiii milia angeli per sequentur uos*. The large red cross introducing the next item (*Ista nomina scribe et super se portat qui patitur*) an amulet with the names of the seven sleepers, suggests that it was a separate text. Pettit 2001, 2: 177 prints them together as one charm in spite of the separate instructions.

[30] A charm similarly dependent on belief in Christ and the curative power of the sign of the cross appears in Sloane MS 475, fol. 22v. (Appendix, no. 6a)

[31] The words appear in a series of devotions to the cross found in London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius MS A III (Liuzza 2008: 316). Later they become associated with the Latin hymn (*Ecce crucem Domini / Fugite partes aduerse / Vivit Leo de tribu Iuda / Radix David Alleluia*) attributed to the Franciscan friar, Anthony of Padua (d. 1228).

[32] Oxford, Bodley, Digby MS 69, fol. 95; London, British Library, Harley MS 2558, fol. 195v.

[33] Franz 1909: 2, 480-81: *Crux Christi qui pendebat in cruce, liberet istum famulum dei . . . Ecce crucem domini, Ayos, Sanctus, sanctus inmortalis, qui per signum . . . Crux Christi qui pendebat in cruce liberet istum famulum dei ab omni malo et ab omni infirmitate febris uel frigoris.* Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14179, fol. 1. My transcription. MS is accessible online through https://app.digitale-sammlungen.de/bookshelf/

[34] The trembling may have been associated first with the earth quaking at the death on the cross (Matt. 27:35), subsequently developing into a *historiola* featuring a dialogue between Pilate and Christ. See Schulz's argument and documentation of the trembling/quaking motif in German charms in manuscripts dating from the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries (Schulz 2003:114-5).

[35] London, British Library, Sloane MS 475 has two parts: folios 1-124 have been dated to the twelfth century and folios 125-231 to the end of the eleventh or the beginning of the twelfth century. The manuscript is available online at http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=sloane_ms_475_f125r#

[36] London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, f. 22v. (Appendix 6a).

[37] Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby 69, fol. 95r: *Ad febres. + Ardeo + algeo + fugio + sentio + In nomine patris + et filij + spiritus + sancti + Ecce crucem domini fugite partes aduerse . + christus uincit + christus regnat + christus imperat . . . .* Cf. *Ardeo, sentio. fugio.* to be written on a lead cross to be worn by the fever patient in Durham, Cathedral, Hunter MS 100, fol. 117r (Skemer 2006: 80, note 11).

[38] London, British Library, Harley MS 2558, fol. 195va.

[39] London, British Library, Harley MS 585, fol. 165r. Online at http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=harley_ms_585_f130r.

[40] This is one of two versions of this fever remedy. For other interpretations of the letters, see Pettit 2001, 1: 70 and 2: 168-169.

[41] London, British Library, Sloane MS 2457/2458, fol. 29v. On this manuscript, see Morrissey 2014.

[42] London, British Library, Sloane MS 2584, fol. 25v. For to charme. Three obleys for the feveres. Tak .3. obleys and wryt on the on: *+ e + eles + sabaoth* +. And on the tothyr: *+ adonay + alpha and oo + messias*. And on the thrydde: *+ pastor + agnus + fons* +. And geue the syke to ete eche day on rygt as they ben ywryte, the first day the first obley, the secunde day the secunde, the thryd day the thrydde and at yche obley that he etyth lat hym saye that is syke .3. Pater Noster and .3. Aue Maria os he ete hyt.

[43] On abracadabra also see, Laurence Totelin, "Healing Words: Quintus Serenus' Pharmacological Poem" at The Recipes Project blog http://recipes.hypotheses.org/7342.

[44] Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby 69, fol. 22rb. *Ad febrem . terc . cotian . et quartan . In nomine patris etc.braccalleus . braccalleu . braccall + .braccal . + . bracca . + bracc + brac + .bar + bea. + be + christus uincit + christus . regit + christus imperat . + . christus me liberet +. christus me protegat + et ab omnibus febribus protegat et defindat . amen . + mentem sanctam spontaneum honorem domino et prime liberationem*

. amen . Scribantur hi: scedula et baiulet paciens . circa collum donec sanetur postea conburatur . uel . contra alius qui indigit modo predicto portet.

[45] "Syon" is the place where the Lamb of God was worshipped (Apocalypse 14:1) Cf. the eleventh-century "quasi-official liturgical healing" cited by Paxton 1994: 41-42, notes 85 and 86. London, British Library, Sloane MS 405, fol. 48v. (Appendix, no. 2)

[46] Roper (2005: 124) found one version in English from Hereford in the nineteenth century. A charm for toothache from Devon begins, "Peter stood by the gate of Jerusalem weeping." See Davies 1996: 22.

[47] London British Library, Harley MS 2558, fol. 195; London, British Library, Royal MS 12 B XXV, fol. 61v.

[48] Cambridge, Trinity College Library, MS O.1.13, fol. 53v, London, British Library, Additional MS 33996, fol. 112r, printed in Heinrich 1896, 166-167, and London, British Library, Harley MS 2558, fol. 195r.

[49] London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius MS C III, fol. 83v; also in the fifteenth century Commonplace Book of Robert Reynes, printed in Louis 1980: 167 and 384.

[50] London, British Library, Sloane MS 122, fol. 163r. London, British Library, Additional MS 33996, fol. 138v-139r, Heinrich 1896: 220-221.

[51] In sources influenced by late antique practices, words and signs were inscribed on thin metal plates called *lamellae* or *laminae*, e.g. in London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 111r.

[52] *Petrus ante portam* appears attached to conjurations/exorcisms of cyclical fevers and the fever sisters in London, British Library, Sloane MS 389, fols 91v-92r and in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Tanner MS 10, Robert Reynes' commonplace book (Louis 1980: 167), Sloane MS 140, fol. 45v (*ante portas*).

[53] The incantation begins *Ellum super illam sedebat. et uirgam uiridem in manu tenebat.* London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 112v.

[54] *Ibid. Si inimicus tuus aut plures modios habuerit uini in suo cellario. 7 non uis ut inde gaudead[for t] . hoc fac. . . .*

[55] Printed in Hunt 1990: 86, no. 21 from John of Greenborough, London, British Library, Royal MS 12.G.IV, fol. 156va.

[56] Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ashmole MS 1444, fol. 157v: "Tak & schere an hesell of azele growyng & when you schere it say a *paternoster* in ye nome of godde & afterward say þis charme yat folowes: 'Architricline seaunte en haute enteint vn vierge de coudre in sez maynys & dit auxy uerement le prestre fait deu en sez mayns & auxi uerement ieo[je] vous comaunde & coniure virgyne vierge de coudre que ensemble baysetz per charitee & aydetz cest home ou femme de cest manere fyvere.' *In nomine patris & filij & spiritus sancti amen. pater est alpha et O[mega], filius est veritas spiritus sanctus est remedium. In nomine patris et filij et etc.* & gar ye sek say v paternoster in ye worchip of ye v wowndes of owre lord." Cf. London, British Library, Sloane MS 962, fol. 38, printed in Hunt 1990: 93.

[57] London, British Library, Sloane MS 3160, fol. 168v, printed in Hunt 1990: 98.

[58] London, British Library, Royal MS 12 G IV, fol. 156va, printed in Hunt 1990: 86-87.

[59] London, British Library, Harley MS 2558, fol. 122. Fayreford writes the directions in Latin, but the incantation in French.

[60] London, British Library, Sloane MS 962, fol. 135v, "Item for an hors þat is wranch" printed in Hunt 1990: 97 and 361, note 146 on veterinary background.

[61] See Milner 2013 for a model for understanding the transfer of healing grace into the feed for a sick horse at the very end of the Middle Ages.

[62] "Wafers" translates the Latin noun, *oblata* from the past participle of *offerre*. Unconsecrated hosts were to be dispensed to the poor after mass on Maundy Thursday, according to Lanfranc's *Constitutions* (Knowles 2002: 46, 47). In most cases, the texts imply that the wafers are consecrated, therefore possessing the powers of the Eucharist.

[63] In London, British Library, Harley MS 585, fol. 137r-138r, the fever cure follows three stages: an herb drink is prepared with holy words written and washed into it; the drink is carried into the church, where masses are sung; the healer sings psalms and prayers and administers the drink to the sick.

[64] For examples, see Hunt 1990, Keiser 1998, Braekman 1997, Olsan 2009.

[65] For fifteen Middle English sources of this particular formula, see Keiser 1998: 3870. London, British Library, Sloane MS 3160, fol. 160r reads *filius est veritas* in the second position, but records the alternative in a comment: "But summe bocus sayn that man schuld write in this maner as her folous . *filius est vita + pater est alpha & o + spiritus sanctus est remedium*." The *filius est veritas* formula also occurs in a French version in London, British Library, Sloane MS 3564, fol.54v (Hunt 1990: 91, no. 44)

[66] Versions of this charm, one of two wafer charms, occur in ten Middle English remedy books (Olsan 2009: 226).

[67] Cambridge, Trinity College, MS 0.1.13, fol. 47v. My transcription closely represents the spellings in the manuscript. "y" sometimes stands for a late Middle English thorn, that is modern 'th'; the punctuation setting off numerals (.) is presented just as it appears in the manuscript; the ampersand (&) is the manuscript sign for both "and" and *et.* The words "or" and "ar" are alternative spellings for the same word, meaning "before."

[68] In a charm for fevers in London, British Library, Additional MS 33996, fol. 112r: *per vertutem + dei sint medicina mei pia crux et passio christi + quinque vulnera dei sint medicina mei .N.* Cf. Heinrich 1896: 166-167.

[69] "*In una parte dulcis descriptio*" translated in Middle English, "On þe to halfe wel y-wrete» and «*In alia parte levis percussio*," translated, "On þe tother halfe þynne ysmete" Wenzel 1978: 182-183, also 1991: 102.

[70] London, British Library, Sloane MS 2457, fol. 29r.

[71] On Thomas Fayreford the fifteenth-century physician, see Jones 1998. On his charms, see Olsan 2003 and Jones and Olsan 2015: 422-23.

[72] London, British Library, Harley MS 2558, in Fayreford's hand, *De Febribus* [top of leaf] *Pro omnibus febribus / / R*[*ecipe*] *.3. oblata et scribe in primo + pater + est + vita + In 2o filius est + virtus + nazarenus + In 3o + spiritus sanctus + est + remedium + rex + Iudeorum + et commedat paciens mane primum oblatum madefactum in aqua benedicta et bibat postea absinthium febrifugium et taniz*[*ur?*]*etur similiter cum servisia temperata teste arr.*[?] *plena / et sic fac per .3. dies continuens cum aliis oblatis in aqua benedicta intinctis ut prius / et probatum est* (fol.123)

[73] The availability of hosts within religious houses, or dispensed by the clergy to lay people after services or in their homes is beyond the scope of this paper. See Snoek 1995: esp. ch. 3 and pp. 341-44 on the development of the use of hosts as relics. Veneration of the host increased in England after the introduction of the feast of Corpus Christi in the 1320s, as did abusive uses (Rubin 1991: 199-204; 323, 334-342). On the production of wafers, see Kumler 2011. I am grateful to Martha Bayless for bringing Snoek and Kumler to my attention.

[74] For example, British Library, Sloane MS 3564, fol. 54r-v Hunt 1990: 91 "Pernez un poume et le trenchez en .iii. partyes, si escrivez en la primer partye *In principio erat verbum . . ."* ; Ibid.: "Pernez un poume et escrivez leyns ces treys vers *Increatus Pater, inmensus Pater, eternus Pater etc . . . .*"

[75] Ibid. "Pernez .iii. oblez et en le primer festes un croys, si escrivés *Pater est Alpha et Omega . . . .*"

[76] Cambridge, University Library, MS Ee.1.15, fol. 16v. (Appendix, no. 3). My transcription.

[77] For example, in the Anglo-Saxon cure for fevers called *lencten adle*. London, British Library, Royal MS 12.D.XVII, fol. 51r.

[78] London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 22v. See above note 24 and Appendix, no. 6 b.

[79] Vulg. *Sana me, Domine, et sanabor : salvum me fac, et salvus ero : quoniam laus mea tu es* and Psalms passim. See definitions 1 and 5 in *DMLBS*.

[80] Cambridge, Gonville and Caius Library MS 457, fol. 8v: "tak iij oblyis or iij almaundys wryte with a pynnys poynt vpon ye ffyrst oblyi."

[81] Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud misc. MS 553, fol. 71v. Cf. the Sator formula written on three bits of paper for malarial fever in Vaitkevičienė 2008: 844 no. 1388.

[82] On this manuscript, see Clarke 2016: 216-222 and Olsan 2019:107-17.

[83] A gode charme for þe feveres proofed. *In nomine patris+et filij+et spiritus sancti+ Amen +Pater est alpha+ Filius est vita+ Spiritus sanctus est remedium+ hic est titulus triumphalis + Jhs nazarenus rex iudeorum+Coniuro vos febres +cotindianas+bi duanas+triduanas+quartanas+quintanas+sextanas+septanas +octanas+nonanas vt statim exeatis sine mora ab hoc famulo vel famula dei .N qui* [*feminine que* above] *istud nomen altissimum quod est super omne nomen super se portaverit* [f.6r] + *christus vincit+christus imperat+christus regnat+christus pro sua maxima misericordia & sua pietate libera famulum tuum uel famulam tuam .N. ab omni specie diuersarum februm. vbicumque semper custodiat me die ac nocte Amen.*

[84] A verb may be missing, "*christus pro sua maxima misericordia*?" (Christ for his own deepest compassion [hanged/ *pependit*]).

[85] Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd 5.76, fol. 24r. This scribe writes the letters thorn (þ), an open thorn (y) or "th," where modern English would write "th." In this transcription, I have silently expanded abbreviations.

[86] "Here begynnes medicine for al manereres of feueres proued."

[87] The other charms on the leaf rely on motifs, such as, a) *Petrus ante portas ierusalem,* b)*Crux sacra, Crux splendida* (Roper's Crux Christi), c)Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, d) invocations of names of God, and e)triple acclamations beginning *Christus vincit* acompanied by conjurations. As in the Cambridge manuscript, fever charms are entered just after a Latin copy of the *Epistle of Aristotle to Alexander*.

[88] *Pro febres carmen* [title in red letters] *Ad ffebres res probata. in dextera palmi febret[an] tis fac 3es cruces. Domine christus vincit + christus regnat + chistus imperat + et postea medio palmis scribe + On pater + On filius + On spiritus sanctus + et mox in aqua benedicta ablue scripta. et bibat et alia die scribe . On aries + On ovis + on agnus + et tertia die scribe + On leo + On uitulus + on uermi*[*s*]+ [brown, not red] *tum probat et sine dubio liberabitur.* (London, British Library, Harley MS 2558, fol. 195rb)

[89] A little confusion is detectable, since the Latin version says write three crosses then offers the acclamations as if they are to be spoken, then 'afterwards' adds the three parts of the trinity are to be written 'in the middle of the palm'. The English version suggests that both the acclamations and the invocation to the trinity are to be written the washed off and drunk. It is not clear to me what 'in each quarter' of the hand means.

[90] Oxford, Digby MS 86, fol. 28v. My transcription slightly alters Hunt 1990: 84, no. 10. Pur febres bone charme. Pernez la main destre[sic] al malade . e fetes une croiz de vostre pouz Dextre . en cele main . e dites *In nomine Patris + et Filii + et Spiritus sancti, amen*. Pus[not r] treis feze le seynez de memes le pouz e a checune feze dites + *Cristus vincit* + *Cristus rengnad* [*sic*] + *Cristus imperad* + e pus escrivez od enke le premer jour en cele main au malade +*on Pater* + *on Filius* + *on Spiritus Sanntus*[sic]. +. Le secund jour fetes cum au premer. e escrivez +*on ovis* + *on aries* +*angnus* [sic] +. Le terz jour fetes cum au premer e si escrivez + *on leo* + *on vitu[lu]s* + *on vermis* .+. Si estaunchera l'accés par la grace Deu e a checune manere de fevre est bone charme e esprove. Mes ne charmez de ceste nuli si ne vous prie par charité. Amen..

[91] London, British Library, Royal MS 12 B XXV.

[92] e.g. in the title to his childbirth charm, fol. 61 and in the last of his fever charms.

[93] *Apprehende manum dextram egroti et in palma eius scribe ter* [*cruces* omitted?] *et in vnaquaque vice dicas, Christus vincit + Christus regnat + Christus imperat +. Et postmodum in eadem palma, scribe + on pater + on filius + on ihs. Et mox aqua dilue scripta et bibat egrotus. In alia die scribe + on + aries + on + ovis + on + agnus. Et similiter bibat. In 3d* [*tertio*] *die + on leo + on vitulus + on vermis +. Et iterum bibat procul dubio. In tercio /die sanabitur. In nomine patris, etc. Ante portas Ierusalem Petrus iacebat et superveniens Dominus dixit ei, Cur hic iaces Petre? Respondit ei Petrus, Iaceo de febre mala. Dixit ei Iesus, Surge, dimitte illam et dimissa febre mala. Ait illi Petrus, Obsecro, Domine, quicumque hoc secum scripta portaverit, non pos-*

sint ei nocere febres calide nec frigide. Et ait Jesus Petro, Fiat tibi sicut petisti. Iesu Nazarene Rex Iudeorum, libera famulum tuum N[*omen*] *a febribus et omnibus malis amen. Et dicatur ter pater noster in honore trinitatis.* (London, British Library Royal MS 12. B . XXV, fol. 61v).

[94] *Item scribe in iij.* [4 stacked dots]*bl [1 dot] t*[3dots] *xps vincit sabaoth In altera xpc regnat agios. In 3cia . xpc imperat saday*.

[95] Much has been written about the significance of the Cross in early medieval England, e.g. Jolly 2005, Keefer 2007, Liuzza 2007, Banham 2010.

[96] *Writ þis onlang ða earmas wiþ dweorh* in British Library, Harley MS 585, fol. 165; Storms 1948: 282, no. 44. See above pp. 14-15.

[97] London, British Library Royal MS 12.D.XVII, fol. 51r, for *lencten adle* containing an adjuration against chills and fevers; London, British Library MS Harley 585, fol. 137r-138 against *aelfsiden*, or elf-sickness, and fiends' temptations.

[98] Cambridge, University Library MS Dd. 4.44, fol. 29r.

[99] Compare the late fifteenth-century English charm in Cambridge, University Library MS Ee. 1. 15, fol. 16v. (Appendix no. 3)

[100] There are nine healing recipes in total. Besides seven charms for fevers, there is one, *sanctus Petrus sedebat super marmoram* for toothache and one herb drink with prayers for fever.

[101] In Cambridge, University Library MS Dd 5.53, fol. 104, both the ink charm and the *oblates* charm occur on the same folio for different kinds of fevers. The former recommends that if the patient is not cured in a week by the potion, she or he should be confessed, presumably as a preparation for death.

[102] As in the *Lacnunga* fever charm mentioned above (see note 39) in London, Harley MS 585, fol. 165r.

[103] British Library, Sloane MS 3160, fol. 145v: "ffor to staunche blode. Rite in the ryght honde of hym þat bledes with þe blode of the same mon þat bledes, this worde *Grecopolutum*" printed in Sheldon, 1978, no. 42. Also, British Library, Royal MS 17 A III, fol. 120r: "Wryte aboue hem that bledis, *veronix* and if it be a womman *veronixa* and it schal staunche anoon."

[104] Note the use of parchment in Lincoln, Lincoln Cathedral MS 91 (Thornton, *Liber de diversis medicinis*) fol. 306v: Or tak iij obles & write firste in ane + *Pater est Alpha & O+Filius+vita+Spiritus sanctus remedium*+& tak & write in percemyn +*Agios+O theos+Atanatos+yskiros+ymas+eleson+Ego sum Alpha+&O+Christus vincit+Christus regnat+Christus imperat*+and, when he es hale, caste þe charme in the fire.

MANUSCRIPTS

Cambridge, Gonville and Caius Library, MS 457/395
Cambridge, Queens' College Library, MS 19

Cambridge, Trinity College Library, MS O.1.13
Cambridge, University Library, Additional MS 9308
Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd. 4.44
Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd 5.53
Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd 5.76
Cambridge, University Library, MS Ee.1.15
Durham, Cathedral, Hunter MS 100
Lincoln, Lincoln Cathedral MS 91
London, British Library, Additional MS 33996
London, British Library, Cotton MS Faustina A X
London, British Library, Cotton MS Tiberius A III
London, British Library, Cotton MS Vitellius C III
London, British Library, Harley MS 585
London, British Library, Harley MS 2558
London, British Library, Royal MS 2 A XX
London, British Library, Royal MS 12 B XXV
London, British Library, Royal MS 12.D.XVII
London, British Library, Royal MS 12 E XX
London, British Library, Royal MS 12.G.IV
London, British Library, Royal MS 17 A III
London, British Library, Sloane MS 122
London, British Library, Sloane MS 140
London, British Library, Sloane MS 389
London, British Library, Sloane MS 405
London, British Library, Sloane MS 475
London, British Library, Sloane MS 962
London, British Library, Sloane MS 2457/2458
London, British Library, Sloane MS 2584
London, British Library, Sloane MS 3160
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Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS Clm 14179
Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ashmole MS 1444
Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby MS 69
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APPENDIX

Note on transcription: The transcriptions in this paper including the Appendix are not intended to serve as formally edited texts. They represent my readings of the texts from the manuscripts. Latin has been set in italics to distinguish it from vernacular languages. Abbreviations are expanded silently. Modern English "th" appears variously in Middle English as thorn "þ," open thorn "y" and "th." The ampersand (&) is sometimes used for English "and" and Latin "*et.*" The tironian sign (7) stands for Latin "*et*" or Old English "and." I have for the most part left unchanged the use of the point in the manuscripts, as it appears with numerals (. ii .) or with the abbreviation (.N.) for "Nomen,"(Name), indicating that a personal name should be inserted.

1. Cambridge, Queens' College Library, MS 19 (formerly Horne 19)fol. 142v

> +[1]*Contra febres. In nomine patris filij 7 spiritus sancti amen. Coniuro uos febres per patrem 7 filium 7 spiritum sanctum 7 per sanctam mariam genitricem dei ut non habeatis potestatem super hunc famulum dei. N . Coniuro uos febres per deum uerum per dominum sanctum per septuaginta nomina dei sancta et immaculata. elyon.*[2] *elyon . eloy . eloy. eloy. vs ne . te*[3] *Adonay . tetragramaton. immutabilis?*[4] *inuisibilis . eternus . simplex. summum bonum . incorporeus creator, perfectus christus messias . sother. emanuel. dominus . viii genitus . homo. vsyon. principium situs. imaculatus . altissimus. sapiencia. stella . omnum leticia . mercator . sponsus .othos . sebes . carus . agathos . primus 7 nouissimus . caritas. gaudium . fons.splendor . admirabilis. paraclitus. on . bonus . nobilissimus . aries . leo . uitulus . serpens . ouis . agnus . Per ista nomina. 7 per omnia cetera dei nomina coniuro uos febres 7 per angelos ac?per archangelos. thronos. 7 dominationes. principates 7 potestates per cherubin 7 seraphin. 7 per omnes. 7 per uirtutes celorum . ut non habeatis potestatem super [col. b] hunc famulum dei. N . Coniuro uos febres per omnes sanctos dei qui in celo et in terra sunt. 7 per omnia que creauit deus in septem diebus. 7 in septem noctibus ut non habeatis potestatem super hunc famulum dei. N . Coniuro uos febres. siue cotidianas. siue biduanas. siue triduanas. siue quartriduanas. siue quintanas .siue sextanas.siue septanas.siue octanas. et usque ad nonam generationam ut non habeatis potestatem super hunc famulum dei. N . Postea dican-*

[1] Red cross in the left margin opposite title, also in red.

[2] Hole in manuscript around which letters have been fitted.

[3] Storms 1948: 295 reads *Us .Ne. Te*. He cities the MS as, Queens' College 7, M. R. James's numbering in his 1905 *Catalogue of the Western Manuscripts of Queens College Cambridge.*

[4] Storms 1948: 295 reads *inimitabilis*.

tur hij tres psalmi. Ad te leueui oculos. Deus misereatur. Quincunque uult. cum gloria patri. et kyriel. Christeel. Kyriel[5]*. Pater noster. Et ne nos. Saluum fac seruum. Esto ei domine. Memor esto congregationis . Domine deus uirtutum. Domine exaudi. Dominus uobiscum. Oremus. Respice domine super hunc famulum tuum. N. in infirmitate corporis sui laborentem et animam refoue quem creasti ut dignis castigationibus emendetur et continuo se senciat esse saluatum. per dominum.*

[The charm is followed by the following note, added in smaller contemporary hand]:

Istud carmen debet dici in primo die nouies, in secundo viiies[6] *tercio septem. Quarto die . vi . Quinto die ves Sexto die quater Septinuo die ter. Octauo die .bis Nono die Semel*.[7]

2. London, British Library, Sloane MS 405 fol. 48v. *Pro febribus*

In nomine patris + [8] *et filii + et spiritus sancti Amen + Et inter istos Iesus in domum symonis Petri vidit socium*[9] *eius iacentem et febriscitatem. stans auc super illam vocauit febri et dimisit illum continuo et ministrauit illi syon + syon +syon*[10] *Pro commemorationem dilecti filii tui segra [sic] mundi regis libera* [11] *N. In nomine patris + dico vobis febres*[12] *+ In nomine filii + contradico vobis febres + In nomine spiritus sanctus + coniuro vos febres quorum sunt septem sorores. prima lya . secunda reptilia tercia fugalia quarta astrata [5th is missing], sexta ruta Septma Ignata.*

Si estis cotidyane aut biduane aut treduane aut quartane aut quintane aut sextane aut septane aut ottane aut none aut qualiscumque estis vos et contestor per patrem + et filium + et spiritum sanctum + per sedem magestatis per sanctam trinitatem et per sanctam mariam matrem domini nostri Jesu Christi et per sanctum raphaelem qui dicitur medicinam dei per sanctos angelos et Archangelos per thronos et dominaciones per

[5] MS] Xr*ist*el. kyriel*yson.*

[6] vi]MS 'es' above the numbers viij., vi., v.

[7] My transcription. Cf. Storms 1948: 295-96.

[8] Sloane MS 405, fol. 48v. Crosses are in red and have dots at the end of their branches.

[9] Luke 4.38-39: *Surgens autem Jesus de synagoga, introivit in domum Simonis. Socrus autem Simonis tenebatur magnis febribus: et rogaverunt illum pro ea. Et stans super illam imperavit febri : et dimisit illam. Et continuo surgens, ministrabat illis.*

[10] The place of the veneration of the Lamb of God in Apocalypse 14.1: *Et vidi : et ecce Agnus stabat supra montem Sion, et cum eo centum quadraginta quattuor milia, habentes nomen ejus, et nomen Patris ejus scriptum in frontibus suis*. This verse might serve a good precedent for the ritual of writing the names of God on the forehead of a patient as a mode of healing.

[11] Cf. Paxton 1994: 41, note 87.

[12] Sentence has been underlined by a subsequent reader.

principatus et potestates per virtutes celorum et per cherubyn et seraphyn Coniuro et contestor vos febres per quatuor ewangelistas per centum quadraginta quatuor milia innocentium per magnum filium dei patris et per omnes virtutes que in celo et in terra sunt et intra continentur per solem et lunam et per sanctum Johe?nnes Baptistam qui deum et hominem in Jurdanis fluminem Baptizauit. Coniuro et contestor uos febres et contradico uos per magistatem dei per Annunciationem et incarnacionem per natiuitatem et remissionem + per passionem et resurrexcionem + per gloriosam Ascencionem + per gratiam sancti spiritus paracliti per lumen et stellas celi per Apostolos + martires per confessores et per virgines et per omnes sanctos dei vt amplius non noceates huic famulo tuo N dic ter pater noster et tociens Aue maria + christus vincit + christus regnat + christus imperat + In nomine meo demonia eicient li[n]guis loquentur nouis serpentes collent et si morteforum quid biberint non eos nocebabit super egros manus imponent et benedicti habebunt [below]se altera patris

3. Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, MS Ee. 1.15, fol. 16v.

For the feuere a souereyne medcyne provyd.[13] Take a sauge leff and wrtye theron*n christus tonat* and gyff hit the syke to ete & charge hym to sey a *pater noster* and *aue maria* w*i*t*h* a credo // the secunde daye take another sawge leff & wryte ther on *Angelus nunciat* and gyf hit hym to ete & lete hym sey ij pater nosteris ij Aue maria & ij credys // The thyrde daye take Another sawge leff and wryte ther onn *Iohannes predicat* & gyff hit hymm to ete & let hymm sey iij pater nosteris iij aue maria and iij credys & he shall be hole // Charge hym to here a mass of the holy gost another of seynt mychell & the thyrde of se[y]nt Iohn baptiste and whan þou heryst any man speke of the feuer// lete hem blysse hym & sey & [sic] *aue maria* + *Saron* and + *Saronn* and +[14] *Sararionn*/ bere thyse iij namys abowte 3ow are gode for the feuer here 3owre mass whan 3e be hole etcetera.

4. London, British Library, Sloane MS 140 fol. 44v-45v. as in recto.

Add omnem febrem carmen boni [paragraphus] probatum In nomine patris et filij et spiritus sancti amen. omnipotens sempiterne deus qui fecisti mundum beatro petro apostulo tuo. N . famulo tuo vt non amplius febres nec dolores nec frigores habeant potestatem super famulum tuum + coniuro vos febres qui estis septem sorores. prima vocatur + ylya+ secunda saytulia + tertia + violecta + quarta + sursoralia + quinta + seneya

[13] After the title the charm is xed out, but completely readable.

[14] The crosses are distinctly thick and neatly made before the three words.

+ sexta + deneya + septima + emyra + coniuro vos febres de quacumque nacione et de quocumque mundo [erasure] *estis per patrem et filium + et spiritum sanctus + per pietatem dei + per aduentum suum* +[fol. 45r] *per nativitatem suam + per circumcissionem suam + per baptismum suum + per crucem suam + per nominem suum + per passionem suam + per mortem suam + per sepulturam + per statim resurrecionem suam + per admirabilem assencionem suam + per gratiam sancti spiritus paracliti + et per sanctam mariam + per omnes sanctos angelos + et per archangelos dei + per tuos*[15] *per diuinaciones + per cherubyn et seraphyn et per vigilati quartuor seniores qui stant ante tronum + per sanctum Johannem baptistam + per duodecim apostulos + et per quartuor evangelistas + per martires et confessores et omnes sanctos martires atque virgines in celis congregatos + per totam terram et lunam et stellas et solemet omnia que ferit deus in celo et in terra vt non amplius habeat .* [smudged] *potestatem* [word lined out and dotted for removal] *super hunc famulum tuum .N.* +[fol. 45verso] *cotidianis + biduanis + tertianis +quartanis + quintanis + sextianis + septemnani?s et ss*[abbreviation smudged] *s*[. . .]*do singularis vsque in duodecum +*

5. London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 112v

Si inimicus tuus aut plures modios habuerit uini in suo cellario. 7 non uis ut inde gaudead [d for t] *. hoc fac. Collige unam uirga[m] inde collura* [lu replaces e dotted] *cum oracione dominica 7 recide eam usque ad iiiior cubitos . Postea s*[*c*]*inde eam totam per medium . 7 fac illas duas partes a duobus hominibus per capitam a*[*m*]*barum . sublatam teneri. Et dec*[*i*] *ens signum crucis faciens. Sic* [*dicit*?] e*am carmina* [*sic*]*. Ellum . super ellam sedebat . et uirgam uiridem in manu tenebat. et dicebat. Uirgam uiridis. Reuertere in simul. et oracio dominica. Hoc tam diu dicit. usque sibi in uicem. ille due partes in medio iungantur. Statim autem ut uideris eas sibi in uicem copulari . stinge eas per medium pugno. et recede quod supra et infra manum. est . nisi illum durnum quem retinuisti de uirga . iacta* [illeg. letters]

6.a London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 22v *Contra FEBRES CARMEN.* [title lined with red]

[15] tuos? o abbr above t: t*er*nos ? [erasure] p*er* d*iui*nacio*n/nes.*

Christus est natus . et passus . christus iesus de morte: resurexit et celos ascendit . christus . est . uenturus ad diem iudicii christus dicit. Secundum fidem tuam fiad [for fiat] *tibi. Iupsius nomine signum hoc salutare:* + *. et hec sacra uerba mecum habeo ut intercedentibus sanctis dei. matheo . marco. luca Iohnnem. Maximiano . malcho malch*o *[sic]. Martiniano . dionisio . Iohannenes. serapione. constatino. a febri merear liberari. In nomine christi qui sanat infirmos iube deus pater ut quisquis hanc scripturam in tuo nomine portat a spiritu infirmitatis citius redi matur Amen*.

6.b London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 22v-23r. Ite*m*. *AD FEBREM CARMEN*.

Ad dorsum hominis febricitantis debes stare dicentis . In nomine patris . et filii . et spiritus sancti . Dextera de supernis te liberet a male . amen. Canta pater noster . In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti . Dextera de supernis te liberet et defendat . amen.

Item . Pater noster. postea bibat ista nomina . [fol.23r] in foliis saluie descripta . + Achilleus . + actellidis . + Diomedis . + Eugenius . + Stephanus .+ Sepatius . + probatius . + Quiricus. + maximianus .+ malchus . + martinianus. + dionisius . + Iohannis . + Serapion . Constantinus .

7. Cambridge, University Library, MS Dd. 4.44, fol. 29r. A medicyn ffor þe axes.

Take a sawge lef þat is not perced and write þeron with a penne with ynke. *In principio* [*principio* added] *yat verbum angelus nunciat amen*. þanne gif hit þe seke to ete and let þe seke seye ["first," inserted above] *pater noster* in þe worshippe of þe v woundes of oure lord iesu christe criste [*sic*] and v aueys in þe worship of þe v ioyes of oure lady and þanne In þe secunde day take a noþer lef . and write þeron *Et verbum* ["*bum*" added above the line] *erat apud deum*. *Iohannes Johannes* [*sic*] *preducat* and seye þe prayers forseyde and þe þridde day take a noþer lef and write þer on *Et deus erat verbum cristus tonat* and gif hit þe seke an[d] let hym seye þe prayers forseyde and by goddis grace he shal be hole.

8. Cambridge, University Library, Additional MS 9308 fol. 14v. For þe feuers

Tak thre obleyes & in þat on writ *pater est alpha & oo*. & mak a point . and ete þat þe ferst day. þe secunde day writ on þat oþer oblye *filius est vita* and mak two titelis & ete it. þe thridde day writ on þe thridde oblie *spiritus sanctus est remedium*. & mak iii points and ete it. but þe ferst day or þu ete þe oblie sey a pater noster and þe secund day two & þe thridde thre with as fele Ave and credo.

9. Cambridge, University Library, Additional MS 9308, fol. 53r. For þe feueres.

> Tak. iii. vbles & write on oon þerof + *el* + *elþe* + *Sabaoth* & ete þu þat þe ferst day. þe next day writ on þat oþer + *adonay* + *alpha & o*[*mega*] + *messias* . and ete it. þe thrid day writ on þat oþer + *pastor* + *agnus* + *fons* + & ete and it and aftir ech vble eting sey iii pater noster and iii aue maria . & i credo.

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"SITTE GE SIGEWIF, SIGAÐ TO EORÐE": SETTLING THE ANGLO-SAXON *BEE CHARM* WITHIN ITS CHRISTIAN MANUSCRIPT CONTEXT.

Patricia O'Connor

The Anglo-Saxon *Bee Charm* is one of a select number of Old English charms that were previously described as being "strange companions" to the *Old English Bede* (Grant 5). Written in the outer margin of page 182 of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 41 (CCCC41), the *Bee Charm* accompanies a passage from Chapter XVII of Book III of the *Old English Bede* which narrates the consecration of a monastic site. Curiously, however, the *Bee Charm*'s connection to this passage of the *Old English Bede* and its influence on our reading of this important text has hitherto been inadequately addressed. Consequently, the objective of this article is to critically reconsider the *Bee Charm* within its immediate manuscript context and to highlight and evaluate the correspondences shared between the Anglo-Saxon charm and the adjacent passage of the *Old English Bede*. This codicological reassessment seeks to present a new interpretation of the Anglo-Saxon *Bee Charm* through encouraging a more inclusive reading experience of CCCC41, which incorporates both the margins and the central text. In doing so, this study endeavours to offer significant insights into the function of the *Bee Charm* within Anglo-Saxon society and to contribute to our understanding of how these charms were perceived and circulated within late Anglo-Saxon England.

Keywords: Marginalia, Bees, Old English Bede, New Philology, Old English Literature, Palaeography, Scribal Practices.

The Anglo-Saxon *Bee Charm* is one of a number of interesting texts that were inserted anonymously into the margins of a well-known manuscript witness of the *Old English Bede*. The margins of this particular manuscript, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 41 (CCCC41), are famous for two reasons: first, for containing a considerable number of diverse Latin and Old English texts and second, because of the difficulty experienced by editors in representing the manuscript's remarkable record of textual engagement from Late Anglo-Saxon England in print editions.[1] One of four extant manuscript witnesses of the vernacular version of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, the main text of CCCC41 was written in the early eleventh century "by two scribes working simultaneously"

(Grant 1979: 1).[2] A third scribe, working sometime later in the first half of the eleventh century, returned to the wide margins of CCCC41 and added the *Bee Charm* and the rest of the manuscript's paratextual material.[3] Of the 490 pages of CCCC41, 108 pages exhibit a substantial amount of marginalia framing the central text. The peripheral placement of these paratextual elements concerned the top, side and bottom margins: the areas of the manuscript page offering the greatest available space for a medieval scribe to supplement the main text. The abundance and sheer variety of marginalia in CCCC41 distinguishes it within the wider field of medieval manuscript studies, as Pulsiano remarks that in general, "The margins of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts seem…rather barren fields." (2002: 189).[4]

The marginal material of CCCC41 combines a considerable selection of texts from different genres of Old English and Latin literature. Covering an impressive range, the Old English marginal components of CCCC41 feature charms, a medicinal recipe, a wisdom poem, martyrologies and homiletic texts. There are three Old English charms in CCCC41 which consist of: a charm to settle a swarm of bees on page 182, a charm concerned with the theft of cattle on page 206, as well as a medicinal recipe for sore eyes on page 208 and a charm seeking physical and spiritual protection on a journey on pages 350-3.[5] An extract from the opening lines of the Old English wisdom poem, *Solomon and Saturn*, which recounts the powers of the Pater Noster against the devil, fills the margins of CCCC41 on pages 196-8.[6] A marginal fragment of the *Old English Martyrology* is preserved on pages 122-132 and consists of brief notices on the Birth of Christ, St Anastasia, St Eugenia, St Stephen, St John the Evangelist, The Holy Innocents and an incomplete account of St Silvester.[7] The six Old English homiletic texts that enjoy a marginal existence in CCCC41 cover an equally wide thematic range that would have been of interest and use for communal worship, and include: the Soul and Body (pp. 254-280); an account of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin (pp. 280-287); Judgement Day (pp. 287-295); the Harrowing of Hell for Easter Day (pp. 295-301); a homily describing the various roles attributed to St Michael (pp. 402-417) and the Passion of Christ (pp. 484-488).[8]

Similarly, the Latin material of CCCC41 spans several genres of Latin literature, preserving five charms as well as a selection of devotional material comprised of masses, prayers and offices. The Latin charms of CCCC41 perpetuate the same concerns for personal physical and spiritual protection raised by their Old English counterparts and consist of a charm against evil spirits on page 272, a charm for sore eyes, ears and great sickness on page 326, a charm for safe delivery in childbirth on page 329 as well as two bilingual charms relating to the theft of livestock on pages 206-8.[9] The Latin masses found in the margins throughout CCCC41 share a similarity with mass items from

the Leofric Missal, the Missal of Robert Jumièges and the Red Book of Darley (CCCC422), as each item is drawn from the Temporale, Sanctorale and Votive masses from the Roman Sacramentary of the tenth and eleventh centuries.[10]

The predominance of textual engagement in CCCC41 has posed a considerable challenge for print editors of the *Old English Bede* to address, especially since the principal objective of scholarly editions is to produce a meticulously edited and carefully annotated best text from its manuscript witnesses. Including the multitude of marginal material in CCCC41 along with the textual variants of the *Old English Bede* would have lengthened the editorial process considerably. Furthermore, the necessity to edit and annotate both the central and marginal texts of CCCC41 equally would have, most likely, resulted in quite a large and costly edition. As a result, the more efficient means for studying the *Old English Bede* and the marginalia of CCCC41 within the bounds of print culture was to publish on the central and marginal texts separately. Print editions of the *Old English Bede* are, therefore, frequently constrained to include only a brief mention of the multitude of texts written in the margins of CCCC41.[11] For instance, Miller, in the introduction to his edition of the *Old English Bede*, provides a description of CCCC41, in which he sums up the rich selection of Latin and Old English texts in the manuscript's margins with a single sentence: "This book contains a variety of *other matter of interest* written on the wide margins" (1890: xvii).[12] Likewise, Hulme reports that Schipper, another editor of the *Old English Bede*:

> who has printed the Bede part of the MS in its entirety, with an extensive introduction and copious textual notes, *gives little information* about the marginal texts. In his description of the MS he speaks of the *various other interesting pieces* that it contains. (1904: 589)

The difficulties encountered by Miller and Schipper in accommodating the marginal texts of this complex manuscript in print was not restricted to the editors of the *Old English Bede*, but equally restrained editors engaged in publishing the marginal witnesses of various texts as separate works. Rauer provides a similarly succinct description of the manuscript's marginalia in her recent edition of the *Old English Martyrology*, where she wrote that: "The text of the Old English Martyrology is copied (*together with other texts*) probably by [a] single scribe into the margins of an Old English Translation of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*" (2013: 21).[13] In a more explicit manner Anlezark, in his edition of the marginal extract of *Solomon and Saturn* in CCCC41, referenced the confines of print technology in representing the remainder of the manuscript's marginal content when he stated simply: "The texts are *too many* to be listed here" (2009: 6). The translation process of CCCC41 from manuscript to print

format therefore necessitated a significant separation in relation to its manuscript context, as both its principal text and marginal material were published in separate volumes and increasingly thought of as unconnected to each other.[14]

Moreover, the continual categorisation of the texts contained within CCCC41 has had an equally adverse effect on how modern readers and literary critics perceive the manuscript's marginalia. Indeed, Raymond J. S. Grant, the first to print and categorise the marginal contents of CCCC41 remarked that some of the manuscript's marginalia struck him as being "rather strange bedfellows for the *Old English Bede*" (1979: 2). Similarly, Sarah Larratt Keefer, despite stating that the insertion of the marginalia in CCCC41 was "evidently planned" (1996: 147), concluded that she was "not persuaded that there was any connection between the main text of the *Old English Bede* and the marginal addenda" (1996: 166).[15] However, according to Genette's analysis of paratextual elements, these "liminal devices" can only be understood in relation to their physical relationship with the main text (1997: 2). Genette's seminal work on paratext argues for the non-diegetic elements of a text to be read with their context in mind, "because essentially, perhaps, *its being depends upon its site*" (1997: xvii).[16] With these considerations in mind, the removal of the *Bee Charm* and the remainder of CCCC41's marginal contents from their context or '*site*' imposes a limit to the interpretation of the text by distancing contemporary readers and researchers from the significance of their relationship with the *Old English Bede*. Therefore, the objective of this article is to critically reconsider the *Bee Charm* within its immediate manuscript context and to highlight and evaluate the correspondences shared between the Anglo-Saxon charm and the adjacent passage of the *Old English Bede*.[17] In doing so, this case study endeavours to offer significant insights into the function of the *Bee Charm* within Anglo-Saxon society and, more importantly, to contribute to our understanding of how charms were perceived and circulated within late Anglo-Saxon England.

The *Bee Charm* is the first Old English charm that the reader encounters in this remarkable manuscript.[18] Figure 1 shows that the *Bee Charm* was inserted by the marginal scribe into the lower portion of the outer margin on page 182.[19] Evidence that the charm's insertion was deliberately prepared by the marginal scribe was confirmed by Karen Jolly, who highlighted that the marginal scribe had employed drypoint ruling for inserting the charm.[20] Reinforcing the marginal scribe's considered approach, Thomas Bredehoft deduced that the scribe used wide rulings for adding the *Bee Charm* and stated that this was an attempt to emulate the main text rulings of the *Old English Bede.*[21] The wide ruling is most apparent at the beginning of the *Bee Charm* beside line 19 of the main text. The scribe's endeavour to replicate the central text's ruling, however, is short lived, as the scribe's evident intention to complete the charm in accord-

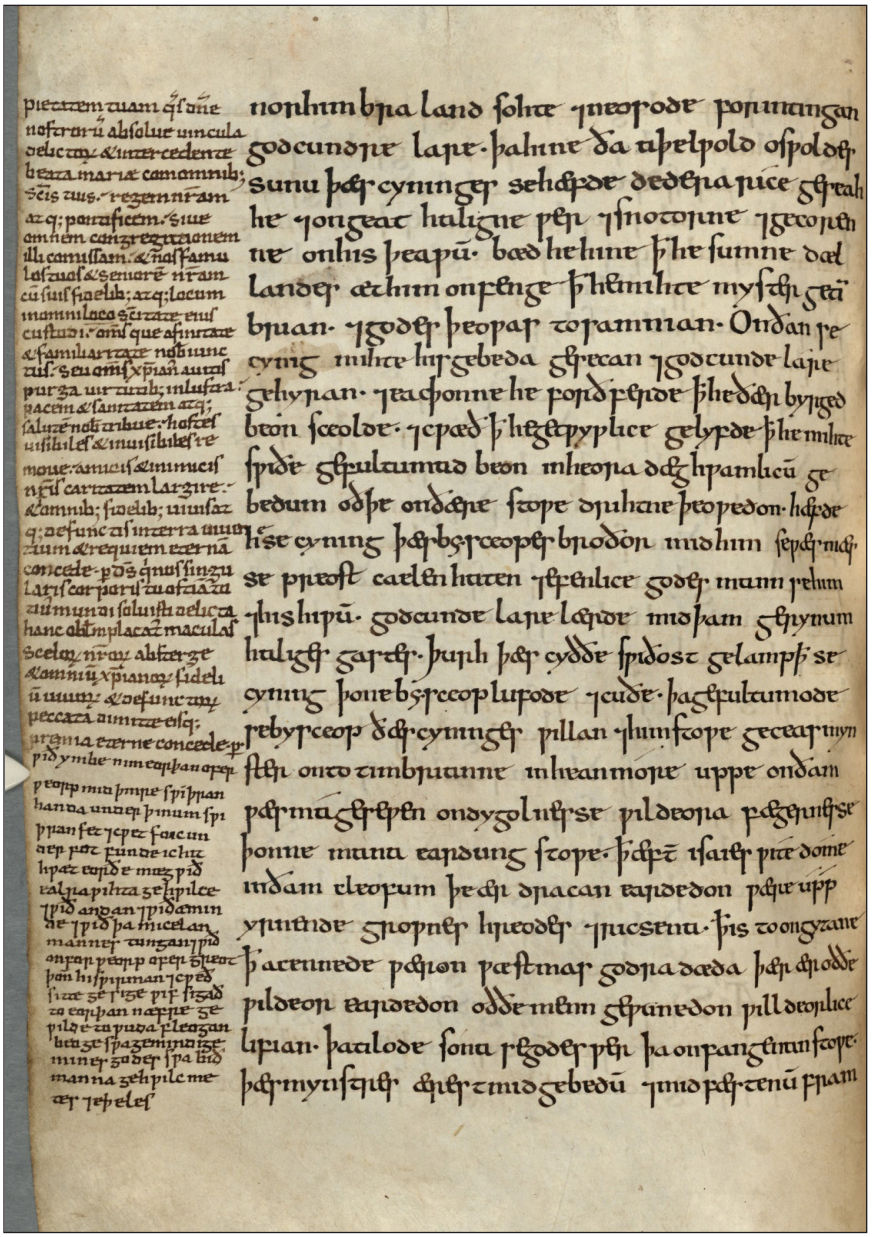

Figure 1: Latin Collect, Secret and the Old English Bee Charm, CCCC41, p. 182. Reproduced with permission from the Master and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

ance with the last line of page 182 requires the culminating lines to regress to a tighter ruling. Despite this regression, the execution of the *Bee Charm* strongly suggests that its insertion was well thought out by the scribe.

The content of this marginal charm offers further compelling evidence to support the argument that the scribe had premeditated its position in CCCC41. The *Bee Charm* reads:

> Wið[22] ymbe[23] nim eorþan, ofer/weorp mid þinre swiþran/ handa under þinum swi/þran fet, and cwet[24]: Fo ic un/der fot, funde ic hit/. Hwæt, eorðe mæg wið/ ealra wihta gehwilce/ and wið andan and wið æmin/de[25] and wið þa micelan mannes tungan.[26] And wið/<ð>on[27] forweorp ofer greot[28]/, þon*ne* hi swirman, and cweð/: Sitte ge, sigewif[29], sigað/ to eorþan! Næfre ge/ wilde to wuda fleogan/. Beo ge swa gemindige/ mines godes, swa bið/ manna gehwilc me/tes and eþeles.

For a swarm of bees. Take [some] earth, throw it with your right hand under your right foot, and say:

> "I catch it under foot, I have found it. Lo! Earth [has] power against all [and] every being, and against malice and against mindlessness, and against the mighty tongue of man." And then throw grit/sand/dust over [them] when they swarm, and say: "Sit you, victory women, settle to earth! Never must you fly wild to the wood. Be you as mindful of my welfare as each man is of [his] food and home/dwelling."[30]
>
> (CCCC41 *Bee Charm* 182. 19-27)

The *Bee Charm* accompanies a page from Chapter XVII of Book III of the *Old English Bede* which features two familiar figures: King Æthelwald, the King of East Anglia in the seventh century and Bishop Cedd, who was born in Northumbria, educated in Lindisfarne and is most noted for his successful conversion of the East Saxons under King Sigeberht.[31] Chapter XVII recounts how King Æthelwald asked Bishop Cedd to accept a grant of land and build a monastery upon it, and how upon accepting Bishop Cedd consecrated the land through prayer and fasting. The particular placement of the *Bee Charm* is significant as it is specifically written adjacent to the passage describing the location of the monastery. Beginning at line 19 and finishing alongside the final line of page 182, the passage from the *Old English Bede* reads: [32]

> ...myn/ster on to timbrianne in hean more uppe, on ðam/ wæs ma gesewen on dygolnesse wildeora fægernesse/ þonne mana[sic] eardungstowe. Þæt æft*er* Isaies witedome/, in ðam cleofum, þe ær dracan eardedon, wære upp/ yrnende grownes hreodes ond ricsena: þæt is to ongytane/, þæt acennede

> wæron wæstmas godra dæda, þær ær oððe/ wildeor eardedon oððe menn gewunedon willdeorlice/ lifian. Þa tilode sona se godes wer þa onfangenan stowe/ þæs mynsters ærest mid gebedu*m* ond fæstenu*m* fram…
> (CCCC41 *Old English Bede* 182. 19-27)

> ...the erection of a monastery high up upon the moors, in which place there seemed to be rather a retreat for robbers and a lair for beasts than habitation for man. There, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, sprang up a growth of reeds and rushes in the clefts, where formerly dragons dwelt: by which we should understand, that the fruits of good works were produced, where formerly either beasts dwelt or men were wont to live like beasts. Then at once the man of God strove first to cleanse the site of the monastery, which he had received...with prayer and with fasting...
> (Translation Miller 1890: 231. 17–25)

There is a striking similarity in the thematic content of the *Bee Charm* and the passage describing the location of Bishop Cedd's monastery: both are especially concerned with not only expressing the wildness of nature but in providing instructions as to how it can be tamed. The concise instructions of the *Bee Charm* direct the reader or practitioner through a two-step ritual and incantation that seeks to settle a swarm of bees. The charm commences with specific directions to take earth and with your right hand throw the earth under your right foot before acknowledging aloud the power of earth: "Hwæt, eorðe mæg wið ealra wihta gehwilce and wið andan and wið æminde" ("Lo! Earth [has] power against all [and] every being, and against malice and against mindlessness"). Following this invocation of the earth's power, the charm's ritual concludes in taking the "greot", the grit, dust or sand, and throwing it over the bees when they swarm: "wiððon forweorp ofer greot, þonne hi swirman". The concluding action of the charm was validated by beekeeping expert, Chuck Crimmins, who, during an interview with Garner and Miller, confirmed that dusting the swarm with "fine dust particles" would encourage swarms to settle in a nearby skep (2011: 366).[33] Given the efficacy of dusting the swarm, the charm's closing incantation: "Sitte ge, sigewif, sigað to eorþan! Næfre ge wilde to wuda fleogan" ("Sit you, victory women, settle to earth! Never must you fly wild to the wood"), functions as a performative speech-act which orally expresses the charm's desired result: the settling of the bees.[34]

Similarly, the passage detailing the site of the monastery high up upon the moors, makes explicit reference to how the site was previously occupied by dragons, "dracan", and is presently inhabited by wild beasts, "wildeor". The decision to seek out these uninhabited areas was a conscious one concerned

with driving out the demons and claiming the land for Christ. Christianising the land for a monastery or a church was an equally ritualistic and meditative process that was achieved through prayers and fasting, Bishop Cedd confirms as much on the next page of Chapter XVII when he states:

> "þætte þæt wære heora gewuna/, from ðam he þæt gemet geleornode regolices þeodscipes/, þætte ða onfangenun niwe stowe mynster to timbri/ anne ond cyrican rærun þætte ða man sceolde ærest mid ge/bedum ond mid fæstenum Dryhtne gehalgian"
>
> (CCCC41 *Old English Bede* 183. 9-13)

> "it was the habit of those from whom he learnt monastic discipline,[35] to hallow first to the Lord, by prayer and by fasting, the new sites they received for the erection of a monastery and a church"
>
> (Translation Miller 1890: 233. 3-6)

The *Old English Bede's* description of Bishop Cedd's consecration of uncivilised land resonates strongly with the Old English *Guthlac A* from the late eighth century. Similar to Bishop Cedd, Guthlac is portrayed as a *Milites Christes* or exemplary "Soldier of Christ" who sought out and christianised an uninhabited tract of land. The depiction of the natural world as being inhospitable to humankind was a common motif of Old English poets who reserved this "representation of the natural world for use as a force to oppose and test their saints' resolve and powers of resistance" (Neville 1999: 44). Guthlac and Bishop Cedd's ability to render these remote areas habitable acted as confirmation of the power of Christianity in the environment. In this context, it is clear that there is an affinity between the *Bee Charm* and Chapter XVII's description of Bishop Cedd's monastery: both texts are examples of operative communication in that both are assured in their ability to manipulate the natural world through language. Furthermore, the ritual described in the *Bee Charm* is similar to the prescribed practice of abstaining from food that is narrated in the *Old English Bede,* as both practices were centred on the fundamental belief in the possibility of non-human intervention. Thus, the effectiveness of the *Bee Charm* in "taming the wild to men's civilised purposes" parallels Bishop Cedd's devotional efforts in Chapter XVII to such an extent as to imply that the inclusion of this practical charm at this point on page 182 was not only significantly relevant but intentional (Olsan 2013: 147-8).[36]

The winged-subjects of the charm equally provide convincing evidence which further substantiates and settles the *Bee Charm* in a closer relationship with

its Christian manuscript context. In the wider tradition of Christian swarm charms from the ninth to the nineteenth centuries, Austin Fife explains that:

> the bee emerged among Christians as a symbol of the soul, since the life of the hive became a model of the ideal Christian society, and since beeswax served for centuries as the only substance worthy of the candles that were burned before Christian altars and the images of the saints. (1964: 154)[37]

Although there is no explicitly Christian reference in the *Bee Charm,* Fife's investigation revealed that the closing lines of the *Bee Charm* mirror the content of recognised Christian swarm charms. Consequently, Fife deduced that the *Bee Charm* is "a premature instance of a Christian swarm charm which has been partially secularised" (1964: 157). The association of bees with Christian practice was reinforced further by Jolly, who argued that when read in this context, "sigewif" or the bees of the Old English *Bee Charm* are interpreted as symbols of "virginity or innocence resonant with monastic values" (2007: 153).[38] Indeed, it is quite likely that in his consecration of the land for a monastic establishment, a device such as this may well have been used by Bishop Cedd to encourage a new swarm of bees to settle nearby to provide the requisite amount of beeswax to support candle-making in the monastery.[39]

The medicinal qualities of honey were also clearly valued by the Anglo-Saxons, with honey frequently being listed as a chief ingredient in the healing charms or recipes for curing ailments found in the *Lacnunga* and *Leechbook* medical miscellanies.[40] Thomas Charles-Edwards and Fergus Kelly confirmed the medicinal properties of honey explaining that: "Honey has antiseptic effects, and is of use in preventing infection of wounds burns, etc. Its consumption is also of help in restoring the strength of an invalid as it contains energy-giving carbohydrates." (1983: 100). Furthermore, according to Pettit's analysis of the *Lacnunga* manuscript, certain medicinal remedies contain proof which indicates that "priests were involved in the production and use of some of the remedies in the *Lacn*[*unga*]" (2001: 149).[41] That monasteries functioned as centres of healing, is established in the *Old English Bede*. Book IV Chapter XXIV describes that within the monastic settlement in which Cædmon was situated:

> Wæs þær in neaweste untrumra monna hus, in þæm heora þeaw wæs, þæt heo þa untrumran, [ond] þa ðe æt forðfore wæron, inlædon sceoldon [ond] him þær ætsomne þegnian.
>
> There was there close at hand a house for the sick, into which it was their custom to bring those who were more infirm, and those who were at the point of death, and tend them there together.
>
> (Miller 1890: 346-7. 26-8)

Considering this evidence from the *Old English Bede*, it is possible that the monastery being built by Bishop Cedd, which is referred to as Lastingham further on in the chapter, may also have included an infirmary. Indeed, the events narrated in the remainder of Book III Chapter XVII, which involve the death of Bishop Cedd and twenty-nine of his brethren, strongly suggest that an infirmary was either present or much needed at Lastingham. Starting on the bottom of page 183 and continuing on page 184, CCCC41 narrates how:

> þa gelamp þætte he to ðan sylfan myn/stre becom in þa tide þære miclan deaðlicnesse ond wales/ þe ofer mancynn wæs. Þa wæs he þær gestonden lichu*m*licre untrymnesse ond forðferde.
>
> (CCCC41 183. 26-7 - 184. 1-2)

> "he [Bishop Cedd] happened to arrive at this monastery [Lastingham] at the time of the great mortality and plague, which had come upon mankind. There he was attacked with bodily infirmity and died."
>
> (Miller 1890: 233. 17-20)

Far more compelling evidence for the presence of or need for an infirmary at Lastingham is provided at lines 21-3 of page 184, which relate how thirty of Bishop Cedd's East Saxon brethren came to Lastingham to be beside his body and how, subsequently, twenty-nine out of the thirty "were soon carried off by the ravages of the aforesaid plague" (Miller 1890: 235. 3-4). Within this context, the connections between the *Bee Charm* and Book III Chapter XVII once again seem to indicate that the scribe responsible for its insertion considered the charm as a practical addition. Considering the importance of honey in medieval medicinal practice, a private apiary would have provided Lastingham with unrestricted access to its own store of honey for ministering to Bishop Cedd, his East Saxon brethren and perhaps even the lay populace. It is reasonable to deduce that as a means of encouraging a swarm to reside in close proximity to the monastery, the *Bee Charm* would have been a most welcome inclusion to this point in the *Old English Bede's* narrative.

Moreover, medieval law offers conclusive evidence for the significance of apiculture in the medieval economy. The *Bechbretha,* an Old Irish law tract dedicated entirely to bees and beekeeping, contains numerous detailed laws on the issues of trepass (1983: 54-9), bee theft (1983: 84-9) and bee ownership, especially in the event of a swarm (1983: 52-5, 62-3).[42] Legal evidence also exists which confirms that the importance of bee maintenance was recognised by the medieval Irish Church, as "the ecclesiastical law text *Cáin Domnaig* ('Law of Sunday') … [listed the] … tracking of swarms as one of the few activities

which the church permitted on Sundays" (2013: 106). In fact, Alfred the Great specifically mentions bees in his own law tracts, stating:

> Geo was goldðeofe [ond] stódðeofe [ond] beoðeofe, [ond] manig witu maran ðonne oþru; nu sint eal gelic buton man-ðeofe: CXX scill.
>
> Formerly the fines to be paid by those who stole gold and horses and bees, and many other fines, were greater than the rest. Now all fines, with the exception of that for stealing men, are alike – 120 shillings. (Attenborough 1922: 68-71)

The above excerpt from Alfred's laws confirms that apiculture was highly-regarded in Anglo-Saxon society. According to this extract, in earlier English laws concerned with larceny, gold, horses and bees were singled out as the material goods which were entitled to the highest remuneration in the event of their theft. Being one of the few possessions which originally received compensation that was "greater than the rest", explicitly established bees as a valuable commodity (Attenborough 1922: 69-71). Despite standardising the compensation for the theft of bees to "120 shillings", Alfred's law tract still demonstrates that beekeeping was of considerable importance to early medieval economy and therefore, warranted legal protection (Attenborough 1922: 71). The legal evidence strongly suggests that incorporating an apiary would have been economically advantageous for a monastic estate. The inclusion, therefore, of a charm concerned with settling a swarm of bees beside a passage describing the founding of a new monastic centre, certainly seems to be indicative of economic consideration rather than any pagan interest on the part of the scribe.[43] In fact, Jolly maintains that research on the *Bee Charm* would be better served if scholars were "to consider the overwhelming Christian formulas [in CCCC41] as the dominant context and see the *Bee Charm* as part of the same mentality, as ritual agricultural protection" (2007: 153).

The presence of the two Latin prayers immediately above the *Bee Charm* on page 182 strengthen the case for a Christian reading of the *Bee Charm*. Despite being separated by language and genre from the *Bee Charm*, the proximity of the Christian prayers to the Old English charm suggests that the scribe responsible for their insertion did not perceive such a distinction. Indeed, the tendency of previous scholarship to consider the *Bee Charm* as disparate from the prayers which precede it was motivated by our modern inclination toward categorisation.[44] An examination of the manuscript context of both the *Bee Charm* and the Latin prayers emphasises that the *Bee Charm* makes "more sense when viewed in the context of the liturgical prayers and the homilies, and as part

of Christian devotional practice rather than as examples of deviant Christian magic" (Jolly 2007: 136).

Contrary to the *Bee Charm*, the aspect of the script employed for the two Latin prayers is straighter, and both are inserted neatly into the upper margin of page 182 using a lighter shade of ink and larger lettering. The scribe's use of drypoint ruling, as in the *Bee Charm*, renders the text of both prayers legible, despite their peripheral position in the manuscript. Cumulatively, the evidence of drypoint ruling and the neat appearance of both the Latin prayers and the *Bee Charm* signifies that the scribe showed the same level of consideration while adding the devotional texts and the charm, thereby implying that both the charm and the devotional prayers were of equal importance to the scribe. The same conclusion is articulated by Jolly in her own assessment of the Latin prayers and the Old English bee formula, where she states that: "the scribe accepted both as useful texts worth keeping" (2007: 146). Jolly's description of the Latin prayers and Old English formula as "useful texts" is particularly pertinent to this case study as it furthers the argument that the marginal texts of CCCC41 were intended as practical additions to the *Old English Bede*.

Exploring the associations between the Latin prayers and the main text reveals further evidence for reading the *Bee Charm* as part of a larger framework of Christian devotional texts. The two Latin prayers of page 182 parallel to an extent, the Collect and Secret prayers from a mass for the living and the dead found in *The Missal of Robert of Jumièges* and *The Leofric Missal* (Grant 1979: 160).[45] Despite Christopher Hohler specifying that this mass is of interest "since it sometimes mentions the patrons of the place where it is to be used and normally mentions in order the recognised administrative authorities", the relevance of a pair of prayers for the living and the dead to the main text has not received much attention. In an effort to illuminate the possible connections between the marginal prayers and the opening portion of Book III Chapter XVII, I have provided a transcription and translation of the prayers.[46] I will discuss each prayer and their connections to the central text of CCCC41 separately, starting with the Collect:

> [Collect]
>
> pietatem tuam, q*uaesumus*, D*omi*ne,/ nostrorum absolue uincula/ delictor*um*, & intercedente/ beata mariæ cum omnib*us*/ s*anctis* tuis; regem nostrum/ atq*ue* pontificem; siue/ omnem congregationem/ illi comissam; & nos famu/los tuos & seniore*m* nostram/ cu*m* suis fidelib*us* atq*ue* locum/ in omni loco[47] s*anct*itate eius/ custudi; om*ne*sque a<f>finitate/ & familiaritate nob*is* iunc/tus; seu om*nes Christ*ian*os* a uiti<i>s/ purge, uirtutib*us* inlustra;/ pacem & sanitatem atq*ue*/ salute*m* nob*is* tribue; hostes/ uisibiles

> & inuisibi<l>es re/moue; amicis & inimicis/ n*ostris* caritatem largire;/ & omnib*us* fidelib*us* uiuis at/q*ue* defunctis in terra uiuen/tium & requiem eterna*m*/ concede. P*er*
>
> Your goodness, we beseech thee, O Lord, free us from the chains of our sins and through the intercession of the blessed Mary, together with all your saints, guard our king and the pope, the whole congregation having been brought together by that man and us, your servants, and our oldest priest with his faithful as well as this place in all holiness, and all those, having been joined to us by marriage and friendship, cleanse all Christians from sin, shine virtues, grant to us peace, health and salvation; remove visible and invisible enemies, lavish charity/ love on our friends and foes, and grant everlasting rest to all the faithful, both the living and the dead, in the land of the living. Through…[48] (CCCC41 *Latin Collect* 182: 1-24)

The opening line of the Collect commences alongside the first line of Chapter XVII and continues for twenty-four lines in the outer margin of page 182. Similar to the *Bee Charm*, the premise of the Collect is based on non-human intervention. Beginning with an address to the Lord, the prayer solicits absolution from sin and an intercession with the Virgin Mary and all the Lord's saints. Additionally, the Collect specifies precisely for the following to receive divine protection:

> …guard our king and the pope, the whole congregation having been brought together by that man and us, your servants, and our oldest/priest with his faithful as well as this place in all holiness, and all those, having been joined to us by marriage and friendship… (CCCC41 *Latin Collect* 182: 5-14)

In her assessment of the Collect, Jolly asserted that the inclusive nature of the prayer implied that the scribe responsible for its inclusion had "a collegiate environment in mind, one that potentially include[d] several religious, at least one priest, and a lay community under their care" (2007: 151). An examination of the corresponding main text supports Jolly's reasoning, as the Collect's reference to "nos famulos tuos", "us, your servants", is alluded to in Book III Chapter XVII. Line 7 of the central text explicitly mentions that it was King Æthelwald's desire for Bishop Cedd to "godes þeowas tosamnian", "gather servants of God" to this new monastic site (Miller 1890: 231. 8). Furthermore, the

purpose of the Collect, as a prayer for a mass for the living and the dead, is also suggested in the principal text of the *Old English Bede*. Lines 7-10 describe that King Æthelwald intended the monastery for his own use throughout and at the culmination of his life:

> On ðan se/ cynig mihte his gebeda gesecan [ond] godcundre lare/ gehyran [ond] eac þonne he forðferde þæt he ðær byrged beon sceolde.
>
> (CCCC41 *Old English Bede* 182: 7-10)

> In which too the king might often come for his prayers and to hear the word of God, and also be buried on his decease.
>
> (Miller 1890: 231. 8-10)

The "king" and "us, your servants" that are highlighted and prayed for in the Latin prayer on the edge of page 182 recollect the king and the servants of God mentioned in the manuscript's central text. Additionally, Chapter XVII's allusion to the monastery's services for both the living and the dead touches tantalisingly close upon the theme of the mass for which the Collect was intended. The placement of the Collect at this point in the *Old English Bede's* narrative, therefore, seems to suggest that the scribe felt it would be a fitting addition to this account of King Æthelwald and Bishop Cedd. The connections between the Secret and the main text offer further connections between the margins and the centre in CCCC41.

Following immediately after the Collect's conclusion in the first half of line 24, the opening words of the Secret fill the remainder of line 24 and the prayer eventually culminates at line thirty-two. The text of the prayer is as follows:

> [Secret]
>
> D*eu*s q*ui* nos singu/laris corporis tu<i> <h>ostia*m* to/tius mundi soluisti delicta/ hanc obl*atione*m placat*us* maculas/ scelo*ru*m no*stro**rum* absterge/ & omniu*m* *Christ*iano*rum* fideli/u*m* uiuo*ru*m & defuncto*rum*/ peccata dimitte eisq*ue*/ premia eterne concede ·P*er*·
>
> God, who alone (for us), through the sacrifice of your body paid the sins of the whole world, cleanse/clean away the stains of our sins with this appeasing offering and forgive the sins of all faithful Christians, (both) the living and the dead, and grant them everlasting rewards. Through…[49]
>
> (CCCC41 *Latin Secret* 182. 24-32)

While the Collect highlighted certain individuals and groups of devote people, the Secret is more general in its plea for divine aid. Complementing the Collect, the content of the Secret is concerned with soliciting forgiveness "for all faithful Christians, (both) the living and the dead", "omnium Christianorum fidelium uiuorum & defunctorum". The relationship of the Secret to the Old English translation of Book III Chapter XVII lies in the prayer's function. As a prayer over gifts or "secrata super oblata", it is significant that the Secret is written next to a description of how King Æthelwald's priest, Cælin, served the King and his household:

> se him/ [ond] his hiwu*m* godcundre lare lærde mid þam gerynum/ haliges gastes[50]
>
> (CCCC41 *Old English Bede* 182: 14-6)

> he taught the word to himself and his household, and administered the sacraments of the holy faith.
>
> (Miller 1890: 231. 14-5)

There certainly seems to be a consistent relationship between the marginal texts of page 182 and the *Old English Bede*. The positioning of a marginal prayer over gifts directly opposite the main text's reference to the mysteries or the sacraments of the holy faith seems to counter Jolly's claim that the main text of page 182 does not "offer any meaningful context for the marginal texts" (2007: 149). Indeed, I would argue that reading the Latin Secret with its physical relationship to page 182 in mind provides sufficient context for interpreting the marginal prayer. Similar to the *Bee Charm* and the Latin Collect, the Secret is a practical parallel to the central text's narration of Cælin's duty in dispensing the blessed sacraments of the Christian faith to Æthelwald's royal household.

Furthermore, the palaeographical evidence suggests that the inclusion of the Latin Collect, Secret and the Old English *Bee Charm* on this particular page was not only relevant but planned. There is a distinct lack of marginalia in the pages preceding and following page 182, which offered the scribe a multitude of marginal space in which to write these Latin prayers and the Old English charm. Yet, the scribe chose to inscribe both Latin prayers from a mass for the living and the dead and an Old English charm for settling a swarm of bees in the outer margin of page 182. Reading the *Old English Bede* within its manuscript context suggests that the marginal scribe may have specifically selected page 182 for the Collect, the Secret and the *Bee Charm* because each text had a certain relevance to the opening page of Book III Chapter XVII.

The absence of marginalia in the pages preceding and following the *Bee Charm* and the parallels that reconcile the marginal charm with the central text's description of consecrating a wild location, are suggestive of an intentional textual relationship. Equally, the similarities shared between the main text and the Latin prayers in the margins of page 182 indicate that the scribe responsible for their insertion was well-acquainted with the Bede narrative. In other words, it may be conjectured that the marginal scribe purposely responded to this point of the *Old English Bede* by including marginal texts that not only complemented the passage but may have been considered as being related to it. Therefore, in my examination of this textual relationship within CCCC41, I contend that the *Bee Charm*, and the Latin prayers that precede it, should be considered as intentional and practical responses to the narrative contained within the *Old English Bede*. Although the scope of this article was limited to an analysis of page 182, such detailed examinations of the textual network of CCCC41 contribute to the discussion of the relevance of CCCC41's marginalia to the *Old English Bede*, and simultaneously uncover significant insights into the function of charms like the *Bee Charm* within this particular Anglo-Saxon community.

The importance of editorial decisions in relation to the representation of marginalia, whether they be displayed by print or digital means, cannot be overstated. This article began by delineating how print technology constrained editors from accurately conveying the complex marginalised textual network of CCCC41 which consequently influenced how marginalised texts, such as the *Bee Charm* and the Latin prayers for the living and the dead, were received. It concludes with the suggestion that the advancement in digital scholarly editions particularly, is indicative of our own growing ability to interact with marginalised discourses. As editors of both print and digital editions continue to experiment with and debate over the meaningful representation of marginalia in medieval manuscripts, they simultaneously continue to challenge our preconceptions about marginalised texts. In doing so, the translation from manuscript to print or digital media provides an opportunity where the *Bee Charm* and its marginalised companions in CCCC41 can be considered as being more than marginally important.

NOTES

[1] Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41 is noted as item number 39 in: Gneuss 2001. Ker records the manuscript as item number 32 in: Ker 1957. Despite bearing Bishop Leofric's inscription on page 488 of the manuscript, which places CCCC41 in Exeter

between 1050-1072, the *Old English Bede* is not listed as one of Leofric's gifts to Exeter in the Bodleian Auct. D. 2.16. (fols. 1-6). See: Earle 1888: 249.

[2] Initially there were five manuscript witnesses of the *Old English Bede* but due to a fire in 1731, the mid-tenth century London, British Library, Cotton Otho B. xi manuscript was badly damaged. Fortunately, Laurence Nowell made a transcription of the manuscript in 1562. Laurence Nowell's transcription is now housed in London's British Library as Additional MS. 43703. The remaining extant manuscript witnesses of the *Old English Bede* are: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Tanner 10; Oxford, Corpus Christi College, 279b and Cambridge, University Library Kk. 3.18. Three passages of the *OEB* also survive on a single leaf from London, British Library, Cotton Domitian A. ix f. 11 and provide the earliest evidence of the *OEB*. See: (Rowley 2011: 16) and (Miller 1890: xx).

[3] Genette defines and explains the term paratext in relation to printed texts in: Genette 1997. While Genette only considered early modern books in his seminal work, Genette's argument for a relationship between the central text and its paratext has a clear relevance for medieval manuscripts and their marginalia. My own research acknowledges that Genette does not take medieval manuscripts and marginalia into account but adopts the term throughout to signify the relevance of medieval marginalia to their respective manuscript contexts.

[4] Camille provides a general discussion on the significance of the medieval margin in art and literature. See: Camille 1992.

[5] Cockayne titled the Old English Cattle Theft Charm "To Find Lost Cattle" in: Cockayne 1864a 1: 384. This charm is No. 9 and titled "For Theft of Cattle" in: Dobbie 1942: 125-126. It is also included in Storms' edition: Storms 1948: 202-217. Storms titled the Cattle Theft Charms *Wiþ Þeofþe* and numbered this charm Storms 15. Barkley offers an insightful discussion on the connections between the liturgy and the Cattle Theft charms of CCCC41 consult: Barkley 1997. Dendle considers the Cattle Theft charms in CCCC41 within the wider context of Old English Cattle Charms in: Dendle 2006. Hollis explores the social uses and wider manuscript context of the Cattle Theft charms in: Hollis 1997. On the recurrence of the cross motif in the Cattle Theft Charms in CCCC41 see: Hill 1978. Cockayne provides a transcription and translation of the medical recipe for sore eyes under the title of "wið eahwræce (altered to wærce)" in: 1864a 1: 383. Storms lists the transcription and translation of the *Journey Charm* as no. 16 and discusses the charm in detail on pages 218-23. For a discussion of the *Journey Charm* see: Stuart 1981.

[6] Anlezark provides an informed and useful introduction to the important Old English wisdom poem in: Anlezark 2009.

[7] The marginal sequence from the *Old English Martyrology* was first printed under the title "Yule Week" by Cockayne in: Cockayne 1864b: 29-35. For more on the *Old English Martyrology* see: Herzfeld 1900 and Rauer 2013.

[8] Three of these homilies, the Assumption of the Holy Virgin (pp. 280-287), St Michael (pp.402-417), and the Passion of our Lord (pp. 484-488), were published by Raymond Grant and can be found in: Grant 1982. Only two homilies reoccur in another manuscript context. The first homily, the Soul and Body (pp.254-280), is also preserved in the Vercelli Book as Homily IV: Vercelli, Biblioteca Capitolare CXVII (Ker 1957: 394) and (Gneuss 2001: 941). The homily for Easter Day (pp. 295-301) is also found

in CCCC303 (Ker 1957: 57) and (Gneuss 2001: 86). The manuscript context of both homilies suggests that despite earning the censure of orthodox Anglo-Saxon church officials such as Ælfric, apocryphal material was disseminated.

[9] Cockayne offers a transcription of the charm against evil spirits from page 272 of CCCC41 in his edition under the title "wið feo(n)da grimnessum" in: 1864a 1: 386. Storms provides a transcription of the charm for safe delivery during childbirth (no. 43) under the title "The 'Sator' formula (For Childbirth)" on page 281. The charm for sore eyes is also found in the "Prayers used as charm formulas" Appendix of Storms' edition as number A4 on page 314, titled "Against eye-ache". Transcriptions for the three charms of page 326 concerning sore eyes, ears and great sickness are found in: 1864a 1: 387. Cockayne titled the bilingual charm which begins "Ðis man sceal cweðan…" as a "A charm to recover cattle" in: 1864a 1: 390. The same charm is listed as no. 10 in Dobbie's and no. 13 in Storms' editions. The final bilingual Cattle Theft charm which begins "Gif feoh sy undernumen..." is found under the same title "A charm to recover cattle" in: 1864a 1: 392. This charm is not listed alongside the metrical charms in Dobbie's edition. Storms includes it in his edition as no. 12 and discusses the Cattle Theft Charms from CCCC41 together on pages 210-7.

[10] Grant was the first to make this connection between CCCC41 and the Missal of Robert Jumièges, the Leofric Missal, and the Red Book of Darley (CCCC422) in: 1979: 27-50. Keefer concurs with the connections established by Grant but argues for the need for further research to focus on a wider range of missals for other possible correlations with CCCC41 in: Keefer 1996: 147–177. Jolly lists the individual masses in the appendix to her chapter: 2007: 174-183.

[11] Greg Waite and Sharon Rowley are currently in collaboration on a forthcoming edition of the *Old English Bede*. Waite and Rowley's edition seeks to address the following points: reassess the manuscript stemma in light of new evidence; supplement textual and codicological information concerning London, British Library, Cotton MS. Otho B. xi, thanks to the newly discovered collations made by John Smith; emphasise that the textual history of Oxford, Bodleian MS. Tanner 10 is more complex than has been recognised in previous editions; and finally, the edition will endeavour to "steer a course between 'two texts': the archetype and the best surviving manuscript" (Waite 2015 Leeds IMC).

[12] Emphasis is my own in this quote as well as in the following quotes taken from editions of the *Old English Bede* and the editions featuring the marginal texts in CCCC41.

[13] The first to print the *Old English Martyrology,* Cockayne wrote "When I copied þis "Yule Week" it attracted little of my attention, since it came from some marginal writing upon a copy of a larger work, þe Ecclesiastical History of þe Venerable Beda" (1864b: 33). Herzfeld provides a concise description of CCCC41 in his edition of the *Old English Martyrology* on page xii but makes no mention of the Martyrology's fellow marginal texts.

[14] A digital facsimile of CCCC41 is available via the *Parker Library on the Web 2.0* website: https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/catalog/qd527zm3425. The high-resolution facsimile enables researchers to examine both the marginal texts and Bede text of each page of each page of CCCC41. The Parker Library's website is a freely available open-access platform which complies with the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF) software: https:// parker.stanford.edu/parker/. The main advantage

of *Parker Library on the Web 2.0* is the IIIF-compliant Mirador manuscript viewer which allows researchers to zoom and annotate the high-resolution digital facsimile images: https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/catalog/qd527zm3425. My own research into the marginalia of CCCC41 involves a detailed Extensible MarkUp Language (XML) transcription which is principally concerned with accurately representing the textual and non-textual features of note in CCCC41 that could not be accommodated by print. First, instead of the textual hierarchy seen in print editions, I present a spatial organisation of text that accurately represents the configuration of texts as they occur in the manuscript. Achieving this involves mapping my transcription and translation of both the marginal and central text to their respective coordinates of the digital facsimile. I have shared my metadata with the Parker Library to contribute to the development of the website's digital archive. My project adheres to the standards of the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) and complies with the standards set out by the *Parker Library on the Web*.

[15] The scope of Keefer's study was limited to a specific sample from CCCC41, which was focused solely upon the manuscript's liturgical content on the first seventeen pages. Although Keefer's article may present a conclusive argument on the absence of a connection between the table of contents pages of CCCC41 and its marginalia, Keefer was not refuting the possibility of a connection between the *Old English Bede* and the marginalia of CCCC41. Rather, Keefer's article opened an important discussion by inviting other scholars to consider the remainder of the manuscript and to question whether the marginalia of CCCC41 are affiliated with the passages of the *Old English Bede* they are copied alongside. A thorough and comprehensive investigation into each marginal text and its adjacent passage is required in order to arrive at conclusive evidence to determine whether the marginalia of CCCC41 have a specific connection to the Old English Bede. See: Keefer 1996: 174-83.

[16] Genette's research on paratext was concerned with the non-diegetic elements added to printed books of the Early Modern period. Indeed, his chief work on the subject does not take medieval manuscript tradition and its use of marginalia into account. However, I contend that Genette's argument for scholars to seriously consider the relationship of paratextual material to their context has a clear relevance for medieval manuscript studies; and most especially, for CCCC41.

[17] Jolly and Olsan share the same view that there is more of a connection between the marginalia and the main text of CCCC41 than has hitherto been acknowledged. Find Jolly's discussion of the Anglo-Saxon *Bee Charm* and its manuscript context in: Jolly 2007. See also Lea Olsan's assessment of the *Bee Charm*'s relationship with the *Old English Bede* in: Olsan 2013: 135-164. Olsen has also published interesting insights into the connections between the Bede text and the manuscript's non-liturgical marginal material in: Olsen 2010: 133-45.

[18] Dobbie edited the metrical charms of CCCC41 in Dobbie. 1942. The *Bee Charm* is no. 8 in Dobbie's edition and titled "For a Swarm of Bees".

[19] Bredehoft has assigned the *Bee Charm* to the third copying stage in: Bredehoft 2006: 729-31. According to Bredehoft's stages of development the remaining Old English charms in this manuscript, the 'Cattle Theft Charms' and the *Journey Charm*, belong to the first stage of development.

[20] Jolly offers a detailed breakdown of the drypoint ruling used to insert both the Latin prayers and the *Bee Charm* in n. 40 on page 149 in: Jolly 2007. Thanks to the advanced image manipulation feature of the IIIF-compliant Mirador manuscript viewer of *Parker Library on the Web 2.0*, it is now easier to discern drypoint ruling in the digital facsimile images of CCCC41.

[21] Bredehoft distinguishes between narrow and wide ruling, light and dark ink, avoidance and non-avoidance of initial-space, and use of outer or full margins in the rough chronology he proposes in: Bredehoft 2006: 729-31.

[22] Typically translated as "against" in charms or as "with" in non-oppositional contexts, the plurality of meaning associated with the word "wið" has inspired a considerable degree of speculation. Namely, in relation to determining whether the swarming of the bees was perceived as a negative or positive event by the Anglo-Saxons. Spamer's analysis of the *Bee Charm* argued that swarming "was not only desirable, but absolutely necessary for the Anglo-Saxon beekeeper with his skep" (1978: 281). For this reason, Spamer translates "wið ymbe" as "In the case of a swarm" (1978: 281). Garner and Miller's discussion with experienced Beekeepers proved Spamer's argument that swarming was essential to honey-production. However, it also emphasised that swarming in itself was far more complex and that "certain kinds of swarms were to be assiduously avoided: most specifically, swarms late in summer after honey production has commenced", in: Garner and Miller 2011: 362. Garner and Miller adopt the oppositional meaning of "wið" and translate as "against" (2011: 358). I translate "wið" as "for" to convey the various connotations associated with the word and the complicated nature of swarming. Storms also translates "wið" as "for" (1948: 133), as does Jolly (2007: 152).

[23] For connections between the term "ymbe" and Old English charter descriptions, see: Jolly 2007: 152. n. 51.

[24] Storms and Grendon emend "cwet" to "cweð". Storms 1948: 136. See: Grendon 1909: 105-237.

[25] The Old English "aeminde" is defined by Bosworth and Toller as "want of care" or "neglect", see the *Bosworth-Toller Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* at: http://www.bosworthtoller.com/. See also "aemynd" in Dictionary of Old English A- H online at: http://tapor.library.utoronto.ca/doe/. The term has been translated differently by the various editors of the charm. Grendon translates as "forgetfulness" in: 1909: 169. Storms gives the translation "ungratefulness" in: 1948: 133. Jolly prints the translation as "unmindfulness" in 2007: 152. Garner and Miller offers the translation "enmity" in: Garner and Miller 2011: 368.

[26] The phrase "þa micelan mannes tungan" has also been subject to several different interpretations. Grendon translates as "the mighty spell of man" (1909: 169). In his discussion of the charm, Grendon suggests that the phrase "may be a flattering description of the sorcerer who is held responsible for the swarming" (1909: 217). Storms argued against Grendon's translation, stating: "Grendon's supposition that it was used to prevent their swarming at all is wrong, as the swarming of the bees is a good thing in itself and is necessary to increase the number of hives and the production of honey" (1948: 133). Garner and Miller confirmed the validity of Storms' argument for swarming in their interviews with two established Beekeepers in the United States in: 2011: 355-76.

[27] Storms emends "wið on" to "siððon" in his transcription of the charm on page 132, stating later that "The text has wið on at this point, which has no meaning. I have changed it to *siððon*, 'afterwards'" (1948: 136). Grendon notes the occurrence of "and wið on" and "and wiððon" but does not include it in his finished transcription. The second part of the incantation therefore reads "Forweorp" instead of "And wiððon forweorp" as above. See: Grendon. 1909: 168. Dobbie's transcription of the *Bee Charm* emends to "wiððon" in: 1942: 125.

[28] See Garner and Miller's discussion on the various translations of "greot" by different editors of the *Bee Charm* and the implications of each translation on the bees in: 2011: 366.

[29] Grimm interpreted the term "sigewif", translated here as "victory women", as a reference to the Valkyries in: Grimm 1875-8. Accepting Grimm's definition, Meyer read the latter half of the charm as a poetic reference to battle which had been mistakenly copied underneath the opening sequence of the charm in: Meyer 1903: 270. Storms, however, disagrees with Grimm's interpretation stating that "there is no proof given" to support such a supposition (1948: 137). In reference to Meyer's subsequent argument that the second portion of the *Bee Charm* is unconnected to the first half, Storms asserts: "There can be no question, however, of displacement. The second formula fits in completely with the rest of the charm" (1948: 137).

[30] Based on the translation provided by Jolly 2007: 152 n. 55.

[31] Book III Chapter XXIII in the Latin text of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. See: Colgrave and Mynors 1969.

[32] The *Bee Charm* commences on line 19 because it is preceded by a Latin prayer beginning: "Pietatem tuam quesumus domine nostrorum absolue uincula delictorum". According to Bredehoft, the Latin prayer belongs to the second stage of development while the *Bee Charm* was added by the marginal scribe after, along with other Old English texts placed elsewhere, during the third stage of adding to the manuscript's margins (2006: 730). Jolly maintains that the *Bee Charm* was, indeed, written after the Latin prayer, but asserts that both texts stem from the same period of writing, arguing that: "the slight change in ruling and the size of the script with the bee formula is insufficient evidence to suggest that the scribe copied it at a different time from the prayer" (2007: 149).

[33] As the Gardening and Forest Coordinator at Heifer International in Arkansas, Chuck Crimmins' role involves instructing visitors on the nature of bees, honey-production and beekeeping practices. See: Garner and Miller 2011: 355-76.

[34] I would like to thank Ciarán Arthur for sharing his own research on how Austin's theory of speech-acts highlights similarities between Anglo-Saxon charms and liturgical performances (Personal Communication). For Austin's theory of speech-acts, see: Austin: 1975. According to Austin's speech-act theory, the *Bee Charm* is an example of the third function of speech-acts, a perlocution, because the charm was performed with the intention of achieving the settling of bees by simultaneously reciting the words of the charm while dusting the bees (1975: 101).

[35] Here the *Old English Bede* is referring to Bishop Cedd's time in Lindisfarne.

[36] Olsan equally maintains that there is an apparent connection between the *Bee Charm* and Bishop Cedd's consecration of a monastic site in: Olsan 2013: 146-8. I expand on the *Bee Charm*'s relationship with the *Old English Bede* by offering further evidence to support its relevance to Chapter XVII, Book III and by taking into account the charm's proximity to the Latin prayers that precede it in the margins of page 182.

[37] Holton and Elsakkers are of the same opinion that "sigewif" is a metaphorical reference to the bees within a Christian context. See: (Elsakkers 1987: 447-61) and (Holton 1993: 49).

[38] Jolly describes the role of bees in producing considerable quantities of beeswax as being "essential for religious establishments to provide candles for worship" (2007: 152).

[39] The *Lacnunga* and the *Leechbook* are our main sources of information on Anglo-Saxon medicinal practices. Both manuscripts are housed in the British Library. The *Leechbook* as London, British Library, Royal MS 12 D XVII and the *Lacnunga* as London, British Library, Harley 585. Both manuscripts are also available to view online, the *Leechbook* at: http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Royal_MS_12_D_XVII&index=0 and the *Lacnunga* at: http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Harley_MS_585&index=0. Storms offers a discussion of each in: 1948: 12-24. Examples of when honey was used in both manuscripts are provided by Storms on pages 133-4.

[40] The extent to which medicinal charms were assimilated into Christian practice is still the subject of rigorous debate. Jolly states that the inclusion of the charms into the margins of CCCC41 "has contributed to a judgement that the marginal scribe was unorthodox at best" (2007: 135). Pettit also specifies that practitioners of the *Lacnunga* charms were "Christian, but probably not a model of orthodox piety" (2001: 148).

[41] I am indebted to Dr Shane Lordan and Dr Colm Ireland for introducing me to the Old Irish law tract at the 30th Irish Conference of Medievalists, Maynooth, 2016**.**

[42] Jolly adopts the word "formulas" as a unifying term of reference for the Latin and Old English charms and prayers (2007: 153).

[43] Ciaran Arthur also argues that the placement of the *Bee Charm* directly after the silently-performed Latin prayers illustrates that the scribe responsible for their inclusion did not differentiate between the charm and prayers in the same way as modern readers. For discussion of the connections between Old English charms and liturgical rites see: Arthur 2018.

[44] The Latin prayers of CCCC41 share similarities with the "Missa Pro Uiuis Atque Defunctis" on page 311 of *The Missal of Robert of Jumièges* and the "Missa Generalis Pro Uiuis et Defunctis" on page 251 of Leofric C in *The Leofric Missal*. An online facsimile of: Warren 1883: 251 is available at https://archive.org/stream/theleofricmissal00unknuoft#page/n9/mode/2up. A facsimile reproduction of Wilson 1896: 311 is also accessible via https://archive.org/stream/missalrobertjum00wilsgoog#page/n3/mode/2up.

[45] Jolly also offers a transcription of both Latin prayers on page 150 and an accompanying translation in note 43 (2007: 150).

[46] "Loco" is underlined in the manuscript, presumably by the scribe who inserted the Latin prayers into the margin of page 182. Jolly explains that the Latin prayers contain a considerable amount of grammar and syntactical errors throughout; yet, "the scribe seemed to be aware of these erroneous tendencies, since he underlined a superfluous 'loco'" (2007: 150).

[47] My translation of the Collect is based on the translation supplied by Jolly in: 2007: 150 n.43.

[48] Based on Jolly's translation of the Secret in: 2007: 150 n. 43.

[49] In Miller's edition, the text is drawn first from Oxford, Bodleian Library, Tanner 10 and in order of preference from: London, British Library, Cotton Otho B. xi; Oxford, Corpus Christi College, 279 and Cambridge, University Library Kk. 3.18. Miller did not consult CCCC41 to supply the text for his edition (1890: xxii). The transcription I have provided above is from CCCC41 and therefore varies from the transcription provided by Miller which, reads: "se him 7 his hiwum godcundre lare lærde 7 þa geryno þegnade þæs halgan geleafan" (1890: 230. 14-5).

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TEXT OVER TIME: THE WRITTEN WORD IN ENGLISH CHARMS BEFORE 1350

Katherine Hindley

After the Norman Conquest, many of the charms that had circulated in Anglo-Saxon England disappeared from the written record, while new charming techniques emerged. Among the most striking changes was a sudden increase in the proportion of charms using written words. This paper explores this post-Conquest change in the use of charms by examining examples preserved in manuscripts written or owned in England from the Anglo-Saxon period to 1350. It begins by arguing that in Anglo-Saxon England different types of words were used to treat different kinds of illness or injury. Turning to the post-Conquest period, it identifies not only an increase in the proportionate use of written charms, but also emerging interest in the idea of textuality.

Keywords: Anglo-Saxon, *caracteres*, post-Conquest, Sloane MS 475, textuality, written charms.

T. M. Smallwood, writing in 2004, presented the medieval history of English charms as one of rupture. In an article drawing attention to the disappearance of English-language charms after the Norman Conquest, he notes as well the disappearance of charms in other languages, stating that:

> [a]fter the mid-twelfth century there is, for the most part, a hiatus in the surviving record of charms in England. For a period of nearly a hundred and fifty years we have no more than a scattering of charm-copies in Latin and very few in Anglo-Norman French (Smallwood 2004: 13).

From the twelfth century until the second half of the fourteenth century, English-language charms are indeed largely absent from the surviving record. However, closer examination of the manuscript record does not bear out this claim for other languages. Where Smallwood suggests a hiatus in the copying of charms, I have found a rich and flourishing tradition. This tradition displays a rupture of another kind: after the Norman Conquest the types of charm circulating in England changed rapidly and dramatically, in ways that persisted at least until the end of the medieval period. Many of the charms that had circulated in Anglo-Saxon England disappeared from the written record

entirely. French, the new language of the nobility in England, soon appeared as a language for charming.[1] At the same time, novel techniques for charming emerged. Among the most striking changes, and the one I focus primarily on here, is a sudden increase in the proportion of surviving charms that instruct the practitioner to make use of powerful written words. This may indicate a shift in the way that text was perceived in medieval England.

In making this argument, I draw on my own database of more than five hundred charms copied in manuscripts written or owned in England from the Anglo-Saxon period to the mid-fourteenth century. For the purpose of this study I define charms as spoken or written words, in any language, that were expected to have an effect on the physical world. Although my database includes charms to stop babies from crying, to make pots break themselves, and to ensure permanent happiness, the vast majority either promise protection from harm or aim to restore a sick person to health.[2]

All of the charms I have recorded are in some sense written charms, in that they have survived to the present day in written form, and may not therefore be representative of actual charm practices. As the spoken performance of a charm is a temporary and transient phenomenon, such written instructions are the only evidence of spoken charms that can possibly survive. However, just as a cake recipe is not a cake, a written instruction for using a charm is not a charm. The terms "written charm" and "efficacious text" as I use them here refer therefore not to written charm instructions, but to charms whose words must be written down in order for the charm to perform its function. This is in contrast to spoken charms in which the words must be said or sung.[3]

The text of written charms is used performatively, as a necessary component of a ritual or as a necessary ingredient in a medicine. Often the writing does not need to be read either by the patient or by the practitioner, but transmits its power through ink, form, materiality, or physical contact. Spoken charms may use individual words or more complex formulae, including the performance of the full Christian mass. In these liturgical examples the importance of the mass as an expression of the Church's power cannot be overlooked: the spoken words of the mass differ from spoken words of other kinds because of their religious significance, and their power cannot be separated from the power of the Church. It is not uncommon for charms to combine several kinds of words, for example by using both spoken and written words, or by requiring the words of the mass to be spoken along with words of other kinds.

THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

To demonstrate the change in charming practices between the Anglo-Saxon and post-Conquest periods, I begin in the Anglo-Saxon period. By my count, the surviving manuscripts owned in England before 1100 record one hundred and ninety-three verbal charms used for protection or to treat a wide range of medical conditions.[4] The three major medical compilations which survive in Old English - *Bald's Leechbook*, *Leechbook III*, and *Lacnunga* - all include both spoken and written charms.[5] Charms also appear in Latin medical books, in books of prayers or computus, or written into margins and onto flyleaves. Close analysis of these Anglo-Saxon verbal charms reveals that words of different kinds influenced subtly different categories of disease.

Remedies which rely on the spoken words of the mass were used primarily for diseases with supernatural causes. Twenty-four examples survive in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts.[6] Five of these explicitly claim to treat diseases associated with elves ("ælfe"), representing half of all the verbal 'treatments for such conditions in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts.[7] Six say that they will protect their users from the temptations of the devil or from diseases caused by fiends ("feondas") and devils ("deoflu").[8] Five treat some form of insanity, which could be attributed in Anglo-Saxon England to the actions of demons or elves.[9] Several of the remedies which treat insanity or illnesses caused by elves or demons treat more than one of those conditions, further reinforcing the possibility that these diseases were seen as having related causes. While there are remedies which use the words of the mass to treat diseases which were not obviously seen as supernaturally-caused, such as "lencten adle" or "þeor," the primary use of liturgical words in Anglo-Saxon charming seems to have been to counteract the malicious actions of supernatural beings.[10] This association did not survive into the post-Conquest period. Only thirteen of the three hundred and sixty-nine charms I have collected from the period between 1100 and 1350 use the words of the full mass, and only one of these makes reference to supernatural illness.[11]

In the Anglo-Saxon period non-liturgical spoken words were, unlike their liturgical counterparts, used only rarely against elves, demons, or mental illness: just eight out of the one hundred and twenty-seven that survive were so directed.[12] As these charms frequently make use of Christian words, including prayers, litanies, the Creed, and excerpts from hymns, the strong association between remedies using the mass and supernatural diseases in Anglo-Saxon England seems to stem neither from their words alone nor from their general Christian context, but from the specific ritual of the mass. Although they were not often directed against supernatural diseases, charms using non-liturgical spoken words could be used for a wide range of purposes, from ensuring victory

to treating headaches, and from treating lung disease in cattle to providing protection during travel.[13]

Although written words treated many conditions, they had narrower applications in Anglo-Saxon England than did spoken remedies. Among the one hundred and ninety-three verbal charms I am aware of in manuscripts from before 1100, forty-two - or just over twenty percent - specifically require the use of written text.[14] About a quarter of these also use spoken words. Excluding the written charms found in Sloane MS 475, which I discuss in more detail below, Anglo-Saxon written charms most commonly require practitioners to write out Biblical phrases or narratives, or the names of Christian figures. Even where practitioners are instructed to write out unknown words, Anglo-Saxon charms rarely make use of letters not recognisable from the Greek, Latin, or, rarely, the runic alphabet. As I discuss below, this is in contrast to post-Conquest usage.

The most common use for written charms, the treatment of fever, accounts for more than twenty percent of the surviving examples.[15] Written charms could also be used, although more rarely, for protection against elves and demons.[16]However, the patterns of use differ depending on the type of manuscript in which the charms survive. In the three main Old English medical codices – *Lacnunga*, *Bald's Leechbook*, and *Leechbook III* – written words are overwhelmingly used to treat supernatural conditions or fevers.[17] A wider application of written texts can be found in books that show continental influence or that are not primarily medical: for example, manuscripts of sermons, of prayers, and of tables for calculating astronomical events and moveable feasts.[18] These non-medical books, in which the remedies have often been added to flyleaves or margins by their users, may represent a more extensive application of written charms among literate non-specialists than among medical practitioners themselves.

Although no evidence survives of Anglo-Saxon attitudes towards the use of text for medical purposes, the use of textual amulets for protection was not generally viewed with enthusiasm. Amulets containing some sort of writing are specifically mentioned in the *Egbert Penitential*, which condemns diviners and sorcerers who "hang devilish amulets or devilish characters or herbs or amber on themselves."[19] The penalty given is five years of penance for a cleric, and three for a layman. However, this passage appears to have been taken directly from the fifth paragraph of *Sermo 13* of Caesarius of Arles (469/70-542), and may therefore give more information about practices from Gaul in the fifth century, where *Sermo 13* was written, than about Britain in the eighth (Meaney 1992: 109). Furthermore, neither "devilish amulets" nor "devilish characters" seem likely to refer to the heavily Christian text used in the majority of the surviving recipes.

A letter of Alcuin, written after 793 but before his death in 804, condemns the practice of wearing Christian texts. In it, Alcuin complains to an English archbishop about:

> Ligaturas vero, quas plurimi homines illis in partibus habere solent et sancta quaeque in collo portare, non in corde desiderant: et cum illis Dei verbis sanctissimis vel reliquiis sanctorum vadunt ad inmunditias suas vel etiam uxoribus debitum solvunt: quod magis est peccatum quam premium, magisque maledicto quam benedictio (Dümmler 1895: no. 291).
>
> The amulets which many men in those parts are in the habit of wearing, wanting to carry sacred things around their necks, not in their heart: and with these most sacred words of God or the relics of the saints they go to their dirty acts and even do their duty by their wives: which is more a sin than a benefit, and more a curse than a blessing. (Translation mine)

In this account, Alcuin's primary concern about the use of textual amulets is the sin caused by disrespectfully exposing the sacred words to the degradations of daily life. This, he suggests, could have the opposite effect to the one intended, harming rather than protecting the user's soul.

One remedy from *Leechbook III* - the only written charm in that compilation - suggests that Anglo-Saxon practitioners may have had similar concerns about the use of text in medicine. This remedy is for "elf-hiccup," and is also said to be a powerful remedy against the temptations of the Devil.[20] The recipe first gives a text to be written out, which reads: "Scriptu*m* est rex r*egu*m *et* d*omin*u*s* dominantiu*m*. byrnice. beronice. lurlure iehe. aius. aius. aius. S*anctu*s. S*anctu*s. S*anctu*s. D*omin*u*s* d*eu*s Sabooth. am*en*. all*eluiah*." ["It is written, king of kings and lord of lords. Byrnice, Beronice, lurlure iehe aius, aius, aius. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts. Amen. Alleluiah"].[21] It then gives a sequence of prayers to be sung over the writing. The written text, like the prayers that accompany it, is clearly theological. "Byrnice" is a form of the name Veronica, referring to the woman who touched the edge of Christ's robe and was healed of bleeding.[22] "Iehe" may be a corrupt form of the name "Yahweh", while "aius" is a version of "agios," the Greek word for "sacred," and its triple repetition is drawn directly from the liturgy. This sequence – "agios, agios, agios, sanctus, sanctus, sanctus" – also appears quite commonly in later text-based remedies and in at least one other Anglo-Saxon example.[23]

In the final sentences of the recipe the author reveals some unease about the use of efficacious text. He instructs his reader to wet the writing in a drink made with holy water and various herbs, and use it to make the sign of the cross on each of the patient's limbs while saying "signum crucis Christi conserva te

in vitam eternam. Amen." ["May the sign of the cross of Christ preserve you until life eternal. Amen"].[24] The sign of the cross is used for medical purposes at least four other times in *Leechbook III*, including other instances in which each of the limbs is crossed.[25] Interestingly, however, the author comments: "Gif þe ne lyfte hat hine selfne oþþe swa *ge*subne swa he gesibbost hæbbe 7 senige swa he selost cunne" ["If you do not wish to do this, ask him to do it himself, or a close relative, and make the sign of the cross as best he can"].[26]

Although no other remedy in *Leechbook III* or in the other leechbooks suggests the possibility of reluctance on the part of the practitioner, this comment seems to have been prompted by the need to use text. It is clear that the use of written text was considered necessary in order for the remedy to be effective. The remedy gives no instructions for avoiding the use of text entirely: if the medical practitioner will not make crosses with the writing, the crosses must be made by someone else, even if they are made poorly. The prayer that must be said over the drink and the writing also refers explicitly to the fact that the remedy will function "per inpositionem huius scriptura" ["through the imposition of this writing"].[27] It is possible that this remedy records a moment of genuine concern about the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the use of text in Anglo-Saxon medicine, since it seems unlikely that the practitioner would ask the patient or the patient's relative to perform an action he knew to be truly unacceptable. The use of text in this remedy may well have been a matter of conscience. Evidently, the practice was not considered troubling enough to warrant absolute removal from the collection.

THE PERIOD FROM 1100 TO 1350

Any anxiety that Anglo-Saxon practitioners may have felt about using written words in medical charms seems to disappear immediately post-Conquest, as will become clear from the discussion of London, British Library, Sloane MS 475 below. For the period between 1100 and 1350 I have collected three hundred and sixty-nine charm-copies. Although the palaeographic dating of manuscripts is rarely precise, at least one hundred and eighty of these charm copies appear to have been written during the period of Smallwood's "hiatus" from 1150 to 1300. Many of these come from large collections of charms. For example, one section of London, British Library, Sloane MS 431, written in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, contains thirty-seven separate charm-copies, intended to treat conditions ranging from snakebite to fever to rabies. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 86, which dates from the last quarter of the thirteenth century, includes a recipe collection stretching over seven folios in which almost

every remedy is a charm.[28] Charms were included in the main body of medical collections such as these, and were also copied onto blank flyleaves and into margins.[29] The practices of charming and recording charms therefore appear to have continued consistently throughout the medieval period, as far as it is possible to tell from the surviving evidence. However, the character of the charms being copied changed. Most notably, the proportion of written charms increased dramatically.[30] Furthermore, after the Norman Conquest, written charms increasingly made use of unknown words and letters, demonstrating interest not only in text as a method of transmitting power but also in the limits of textual communication.

In surviving manuscripts from before 1100, forty-two charms – just over twenty percent of the total – specifically require the use of written text, either alone or in combination with spoken words or masses.[31] In the period from 1100 to 1350, however, that percentage almost doubles.[32] Indeed, the shift towards written charms was probably still more dramatic and still more closely linked to the Norman Conquest than these figures suggest: London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, the pre-1100 manuscript with the highest number of written charms, was copied after the Conquest and shows continental influence.[33] This manuscript may therefore be an early representative of new charm traditions that produced the decisive shift towards the use of written, rather than spoken, charms.

As the earliest surviving example of the shift towards written charms, Sloane MS 475 will serve as a useful case study. It is a composite miscellany, written almost entirely in Latin.[34] It consists of two parts, written in several related hands (Beccaria 1956: 255). Part One, which begins imperfectly and runs from fol. 1 to fol. 124, dates from the first quarter of the twelfth century. It contains a medical treatise in five books, a treatise on weights and measures, texts on prognostication, and numerous medical recipes and charms. Scholars disagree as to whether this part of the manuscript was produced in England, with some arguing that the scribe may have written on the Continent even if the manuscript was owned in England.[35]

Part One of the manuscript shows considerable interest in text and writing systems. Several recipes have been written in cipher, using up to three forms of letter substitution in combination. In the first of these, the scribe replaces vowels with the consonant that follows them in the alphabet. The phrase "kn kllb dif," for example, should be read as "in illa die" ["on that day"].[36] The second letter substitution uses Greek letters in the place of their Roman counterparts, so that "Adkxρω te pxx*m* p*e*r d*eu*μ xkxx*m*" can be read as "Adiuro te ouu*m* p*e*r d*eu*m uuiu*m*" ["I adjure you, egg, by the living God"].[37] Finally, a third layer of substitution replaces vowels with different numbers of dots, so that "tfcta

c::ρNkc" reads "testa cornis" ["the skull of a crow"], while "ːnːμːcːːc" reads "inimicos" ["enemies"].[38] The majority of the charms in this portion of the manuscript are in Latin, although two use French - making them, to the best of my knowledge, the earliest examples of French charms to survive from England. Several more use unknown words or characters.

The second part of the manuscript, spanning folios 125 to 231, may be slightly earlier than Part One. It was copied by an English scribe in the last quarter of the eleventh century or the first quarter of the twelfth.[39] This section of the manuscript contains medical and prognostic texts including the Sphere of Pythagoras, a Latin translation of Galen's *Epistola de febribus*, a treatise on urines, and the *Somniale Danielis*. Its charms are either in Latin or in invented characters. Both sections of the manuscript are roughly written, with variations in the size of the hand and the ruling of the pages. The Latin of the manuscript is poor, with inconsistent spelling and word division (Liuzza 2010: 16). Most importantly for the study of written charms, more than half of the manuscript's charms require writing. This includes ten of the twelve charms in the section of the manuscript copied by an English scribe.

As well as demonstrating an increased emphasis on the use of written words in charming, Sloane MS 475 contains the earliest English examples of charms using non-alphabetic characters. These are particularly common in the second, English section of the manuscript. Their shapes follow the tradition of *charaktêres* or *caracteres*, symbols that seem to have developed among Graeco-Egyptian magicians in the second century A.D. as the ability to read and write hieroglyphs declined (Gordon 2014: 257-61). The Greek intellectual reception of hieroglyphs as divine symbols representing complete ideas led to the development of a method for creating hieroglyph-like characters for use in magical ritual (Ibid., 262). Richard Gordon even argues that "the pseudo-hieroglyphics that are so common in mortuary contexts (mummy-cases) indicate that by the Roman period it was often the idea of hieroglyphs rather than the text they communicated that was important" (Ibid., 260-61).

The interpretation that the idea of writing was more important than the text it communicated is equally valid when considering the pseudo-alphabetic charms of post-Conquest England. On fol. 137r-v of Sloane MS 475, for example, is a charm for protection. The text reads:

> Vt non timeus. aliqu*em* non inimicu*m* non iudice*m*. no*n* maleficium. non erberum non potione malu*m* non serpentem. non demonium non pestem.
>
> In order that you not fear anything, neither enemy nor judge nor wrongdoing nor witch nor harmful drink nor serpent nor demon nor pestilence.[40]

The charm itself consists of two lines of distinct shapes [Figure 1].

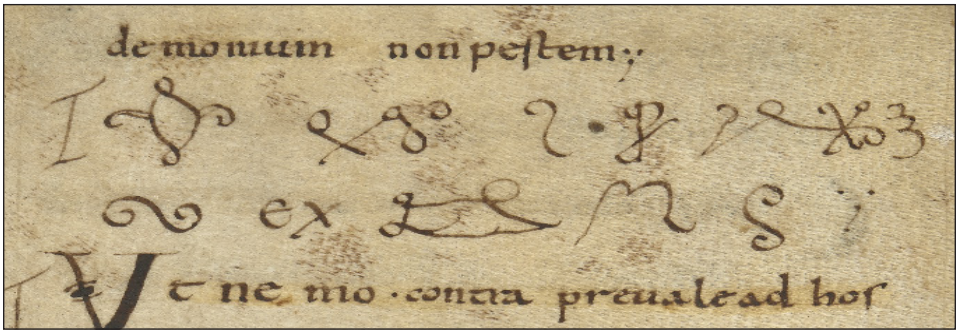

Figure 1: © British Library Board, London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 137v (detail).

Some of the characters in the lower line resemble letters from the Roman alphabet. Others resemble elaborated or conjoined versions of letters. Still others bear no similarity either to the Roman alphabet or to the alphabet of any other language. However, in their separation into individual units and in their linear organisation they mimic the appearance of an alphabet, albeit an illegible one which cannot be read aloud.

Sloane MS 475 is the earliest surviving example of charms of this type from England. The set of individual *caracteres* does not align with any recognisable alphabet, but still imitates the letter separation of an alphabetic or hieroglyphic writing system. The signs have no known phonetic value. They convey the idea of a communicative system, but are inherently unpronounceable and visibly differentiated from standard alphabets (Ibid., 266-7). As a result, they cannot be understood either by the patient or – if the two are different – by the practitioner.

I have identified two further types of incomprehensible text, both of which appear to have been introduced or elaborated after the Conquest. In the Anglo-Saxon period, as mentioned above, written charms occasionally made use of letters that were not part of the Roman alphabet. However, in all of the Anglo-Saxon examples the letters were taken from Greek or from the runic alphabet.[41]This technique, taking a string of recognisable letters from the Roman, runic, or Greek alphabets, is the earliest and simplest form of incomprehensible writing. While pre-Conquest examples might include up to ten Greek letters, post-Conquest examples can be significantly longer.[42] An early English example of a charm that uses this technique, recorded in the second half of the eleventh century, is an amulet to ensure favour during a meeting with a king or lord.It includes the sequence: "xx. h. d. e. o. e. o. o. e. e. e. laf. d. R. U. fa. ð. f. þ. Λ. x. Box. Nux ."[43]

In some cases, such strings of letters were used as mnemonic devices for familiar texts, as in the early twelfth-century scientific miscellany Durham,

Durham Cathedral Library, MS Hunter 100. Here, a charm to stop nosebleeds reads:

> **Ad restringnendu*m* sanguin*em* de uena nar*is* effluent*is*. I**n no*min*e. p. 7. f. 7. s. s. **S**ta sta stagnu*m* fluxus sanguinis sicut stetit iordan in q*uo* ioh*anne*s ih*esu*m xp*istu*m baptizauit. **K**yriel*eison* .iii. **P**at*er* n*oster*. **E**cce cruc*em*. d. f. p. a. u. l. d. t. i. r. d. in no*min*e d*omi*ni.[44]
>
> To restrain blood flowing from the vein of the nose. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Stand, stand, pool of the flow of blood, as stood the Jordan in which John baptized Jesus Christ. Kyrie eleison .iii. Pater Noster. Behold the cross of the Lord! Be gone all evil powers! The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David. In the name of the Lord.

At the beginning of the charm, the scribe has abbreviated the common phrase "patris et filii et spiritus sancti" ["of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost"] to "p. 7. f. 7. s. s.," assuming that the reader will recognise the sentence from the opening words "In nomine" ["in the name..."]. The later string of characters works in much the same way: the opening words "Ecce cruce*m*" ["behold the cross"] serve as a cue for the reader, who will call to mind the rest of the familiar prayer "Ecce crucem domini! Fugite partes adversae! Vicit Leo de tribu Iuda, radix David!" ["Behold the cross of the Lord! Be gone all evil powers! The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David"]. The initials of each word ensure accurate recollection of the text.

Although the eleventh-century charm to ensure favour looks similar, it gives no opening cue. The presence of the runic letters ð and þ mean that any text expanded from it in the manner described above would have to be in English or a Scandinavian language. However, as two words supposedly begin with *x*, and another with the Greek letter lambda, this would be impossible. Instead, the string of letters gives the visual impression of being an abbreviation of a longer text, borrowing the trappings of learning to imply a verbal meaning that is inaccessible to its user. The power of the inscription appears to derive not from the actual presence of a longer text to be decoded from the abbreviation, but from the suggestion that one might be present - in other words, from its illegibility.

The third and final type of incomprehensible written charm is the most distinct from ordinary writing. These "texts" take the form of magical seals, blurring the boundary between text and image. They are often depicted within a circular frame, and are neither alphabetic nor attempting to appear alpha-

betic, but have complex symbolic forms. In one particularly common layout, the body of the seal takes the form of a branching, weather-vane-like symbol with decorative extensions at the end of each branch. In some cases these extensions take shapes that are reminiscent of Roman letters, and in some cases the seals incorporate legible text. However, the obviously non-alphabetic layout and the non-textual appearance of the seal as a whole prevent the reader from viewing it as a piece of ordinary writing. These "texts" cannot be read. Their power is accessed through physical contact, by carrying them as an amulet, or by looking at their designs.

A series of excellent examples can be found in the mid-thirteenth-century Canterbury amulet.[45] The amulet's single large sheet of parchment (51.2 x 42.7 cm) was folded vertically into eight columns, and horizontally into four rows, making it small enough to be easily carried or worn around the neck. A single scribe copied its text in a neat and readable *textualis* hand, complete with scribal corrections (Skemer 2006: 199). The seals are found along the top of the recto and on part of the dorse of the amulet. Most of them sit within circular roundels, but two on the recto are shaped like an almond or mandorla, similar to depictions of the side wound of Christ, and others stand alone with no border. Still other seals appear within the body text of the amulet. The legible text of the amulet specifies that these should be understood as a form of writing. For instance, one symbol in the fifth column on the recto, which incorporates the word for the four-letter Hebrew name of God "tetragrammaton," is explained as follows [Figure 2]:

Figure 2: Canterbury, Canterbury Cathedral Archives, Dean and Chapter Collections, Additional MS 23, recto (detail). Reproduced courtesy of The Chapter of Canterbury.

> Hoc signu*m* dedit angelus domini s*anct*o colu*m*bano ep*iscop*o siquis fidelis hanc figuram in qua scripta sunt nomina dei ineffabilia sup*er* se habuerit nulla uis dyaboli aduersus eum preualebit [...].[46]
>
> The angel of the Lord gave this sign to St Columbanus, bishop. If any of the faithful has upon him this figure in which are written the ineffable names of God, no power of the devil will prevail against him [...].

The opening information, asserting that the seal has a heavenly origin, is not unusual: several other seals or charms in this amulet alone make the same claim. The claim that the ineffable names of God are written within the seal is less common. Taken together, these statements imply not only that this particular seal represents a form of heavenly writing that can convey information and power beyond the scope of the human alphabet, but also that other similar seals may represent other unknown texts.

Although the seals of the Canterbury amulet cannot be read as ordinary text, they use alphabetic forms to draw the reader towards the experience of textuality. This technique is most evident in the seal at the top left on the recto of the amulet [Figure 3]. This sign is clearly not legible in any standard fashion. However, the symbol at the top of the seal resembles the letter P, while the symbol directly below it can be read as an A. The cross on the branch to their right could resemble a T, while the three cross-bars on the branch to their left could be a reflected letter E. The symbol to the left of that branch is an R.

Figure 3: Canterbury, Canterbury Cathedral Archives, Dean and Chapter Collections, Additional MS 23, recto. Reproduced courtesy of The Chapter of Canterbury.

If these branches are read as "Pater," other symbols suggest further letters: the bottom branch, for examples, includes an N, a black circle that could hint at an O, and a finial whose curves might remind a viewer of the shape of an S. Alternatively, the letters could be read as spelling out "Pax" ["peace"], or as an elaborate form of the chi-rho christogram. The seal simultaneously resists and invites reading. It uses the viewer's potential familiarity with alphabetic signs and Christian symbols to encourage engagement with the seal in a search for meaning, thereby creating a space between legibility and illegibility. This seal is positioned at the top left of the amulet where it will be the first to be encountered by a viewer. Its suggestion of a textual meaning therefore influences the viewer's approach to the remaining seals, even those that cannot be as easily resolved into possible words.

Each of these three types of illegible writing relies on its distance from ordinary text to create an impression of hidden power. Although little information about the reception of charms survives, the evidence of one early fourteenth-century medical miscellany does suggest that the users of written charms may have perceived power in their illegibility. On fol. 74v of Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson C 814, there are brief instructions for a charm that promises that whatever the reader wants he will get [Figure 4].[47] The charm gives a

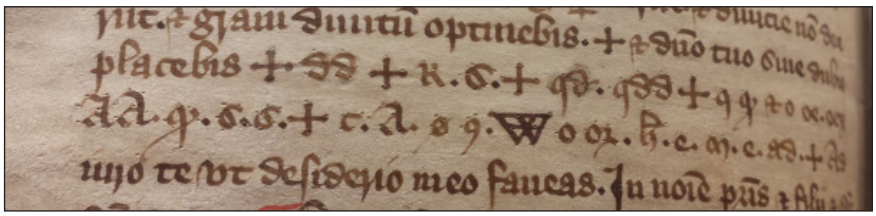

Figure 4: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson C 814, fol. 74v.

string of letters, interspersed with crosses, to be written and carried in the left hand: "+ dd + K. S. + qd. qdd + q q*ui* 7 o oe. oex AA. q*ui*. s. s. + c. A. ø 9. W o or. hæc. e. m. e. ad. +." It also offers a short prayer, although it is unclear whether this was to be written or read. The charm is of the first type discussed above: although the letters cannot be resolved into meaningful text, they are all easily recognisable as characters from the Roman alphabet or common forms of abbreviation. These characters, however, have been accorded special treatment: their user appears to have copied them not as text, which could by copied by eye, but as images or *caracteres*.

At some point during the manuscript's history, a reader pricked pinholes around each of the letters of the charm and each of the crosses between the letters. While it is impossible to know when these pinholes were made, the

fact that they only affect the letters that should be copied as part of the charm suggests that they were made by someone who intended to put the charm to use. They may have been made by a medieval technique for transferring images known as pouncing, in which holes were pricked through the original image onto a second sheet of parchment or paper (Miner 1967: 87-107). Chalk or charcoal could then be rubbed through the holes in the second sheet onto a third sheet, transferring the outline of the image to be copied. This method of copying prioritises the letter as a shape to be precisely transferred over the letter as a symbol for conveying linguistic meaning. The illegible texts of the charms begin, therefore, to disrupt our sense of what certain medieval people might have viewed as a text.

CONCLUSIONS

As Debby Banham has demonstrated, the mid-eleventh century marked the point at which sophisticated Continental medical texts reached England (Banham 2011: 341-52). In the same period, techniques of charming in England altered dramatically. Among other changes, the late-eleventh and early-twelfth centuries saw a marked increase in the use of the written word as an efficacious medium, and the powerful textual elements of written charms became increasingly illegible. The twelfth century is also the period identified by Michael Clanchy as marking the shift from oral to written testimony (Clanchy 1993: 260). This change represents the penetration of literate culture into wider society: by the thirteenth century even serfs, whether or not they were literate themselves, used written charters as titles of property (Ibid., 2). Text, even for those who could not read it, had both symbolic and practical power. As more people began to embrace literate culture and the power of text for the purposes of business and administration, however, composers of written charms developed ways of distancing charms from "ordinary" text in order to preserve the mystery of their power.

Discussing later charms, Owen Davies has argued that England, unlike France, placed a heavy emphasis on written charms in the nineteenth century. He suggests that this could be linked to religious influence, arguing that "the Protestant emphasis on the importance of the written word in worship, and as a vehicle of religious instruction, led to a concomitantly greater popular emphasis on the power of literacy and literary forms in early modern folk magic" (Davies 2004: 109 and 2007: 183-4). The changes first seen in Sloane MS 475, however, indicate that England's preference for written charms started well before the emergence of Protestantism, and possibly under Norman French influence. As

I have tried to show, there was no late-twelfth-century hiatus in the copying of charms. Instead charm techniques evolved, responding to growing literacy by embracing increasingly complex versions and abstractions of the written word.

NOTES

[1] The earliest surviving French charms recorded in a manuscript made or owned in England date from the first quarter of the twelfth century. They appear in London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fols 109r-v and 109v. Both are intended to treat diseases of horses. French charms continued to circulate at least until the end of the medieval period: see, for instance, the late fifteenth-century examples in London, British Library, Egerton MS 833, fols 9v, 12v, and 18r-v.

[2] A charm to stop babies crying appears in London, British Library, Sloane MS 431, fol. 44v (first half of the thirteenth century). A charm to make pots break themselves is recorded in London, British Library, Sloane MS 146 (c.1300), while a charm that promises happiness can be found in the first column on the recto of Canterbury, Canterbury Cathedral Library, Additional MS 23 (first half of the thirteenth century).

[3] For discussion of the idea that spoken charms derive some of their power from sound or rhythm see, for example, Delaurenti 2015: 477-9.

[4] I base this count on an examination of every manuscript catalogued as containing charms or medical texts in Gneuss & Lapidge 2014. I am aware of charms appearing in Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, MS Ll.1.10 (one example) and Corpus Christi College MSS 41 (ten examples), 190 (one), and 383 (one); in London, British Library, Cotton MSS Caligula A vii (one) and A xv (six), Faustina A x (four), Galba A xiv (three), Tiberius A iii (one), Vespasian D xx (one), Vitellius C iii (eight), Vitellius E xviii (five); MSS Harley 585 (fifty-five) and 2965 (three); Royal MSS 2 A xx (eight) and 12 D xvii (thirty-nine), and Sloane MS 475 (thirteen in the earlier section of the manuscript, discussed further below); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 1431 (four); MS Auct F.3.6 (two); MS Barlow 35 (one); MSS Bodley 130 (seven) and 163 (one); MS Hatton 76 (eight), and MS Junius 85 (four); Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Reg. Lat. 338 (two); Worcester, Worcester Cathedral Library MS Q.5 (one), and in the now-destroyed Herrnstein near Siegburg, Bibliothek der Grafen Nesselrode, MS 192 (three). A description of this last manuscript can be found in Sudhoff 1917: 265-313.

[5] *Bald's Leechbook* and *Leechbook III* are both contained within the same mid-tenth-century manuscript, London, British Library, Royal MS 12 D xvii. *Bald's Leechbook* consists of two parts, one dealing primarily with external illnesses and wounds, and one more interested in internal illnesses. The manuscript may have been written at Winchester, since the same scribe wrote the annals for 925-55 in the Parker manuscript of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 173. See Wright 1955: 13 and 20-23. *Lacnunga* is a collection of medical recipes and charms found in London, British Library, Harley MS 585, a medical miscellany dating from the late tenth or early eleventh century. It also contains, perhaps written in the same scribal hand, English translations of the *Herbarium* of Pseudo-Apuleius and the *De herbis feminis* and *Curae herbarum* of Pseudo-Dioscorides, as well as the *Medicina de quadrupedibus*. See Pettit 2001: 133-50.

[6] *Bald's Leechbook*, fols 51v-52r, 52r, 52r-v, 52v, 53r, 53v, 58r-v, and 107v; *Leechbook III*, fols 120r, 120r-v, 123r-v, 123v, 124r-v, 125v, 126v, and 126v-127r; *Lacnunga*, fols 134r-v, 137r-138r, 157v-158r, 171r, and 178r. Outside the main compilations, charms that use the words of the mass can be found in London, British Library, Cotton MSS Vitellius E xviii, fol. 15v (to treat lung disease in cattle), Caligula A vii, fols 176r-178r (the Æcerbot field blessing), and Galba A xiv, fol. 118r (for the preservation of health).

[7] *Lacnunga* contains one example, against elvish influence ("ælf siden," fol. 137r-v). In *Leechbook III* there are four instances: against the temptations of the fiend, the influence of elves ("ælf siden") and spring sickness ("lenctenadle"), on fol. 120r-v; against elves and night-goers ("ælfcynna" and "nihtgengan"), on fol. 123r-v; and two against elf disease ("ælfadle"), on fols. 123v and 124r-v. Remedies including the words of the mass are also used to treat "ofscoten" horses: this has often been interpreted to mean "elf-shot" horses, but Alaric Hall has argued persuasively that the presence of elves should not be assumed. See Hall 2005: 197-201.

[8] In *Lacnunga*, one recipe on fols 137r-138r is used to treat the temptations of the devil as well as elvish influence. In *Leechbook III*, recipes against temptations of the fiend appear on fols 120r and 120r-v, and against devils and insanity on 125v. *Leechbook I* contains a remedy for fiend-sick men (fols 51v-52r), while *Leechbook II* contains one against temptations of the fiend (107v).

[9] London, British Library, Royal MS 12 D xvii. *Leechbook I*, fols 51v-52r, for madness or a fiend-sick person, fol. 52r, and fol. 52r-v. *Leechbook III*, fol. 125v, which can also be used against devils, and fols 126v-127r.

[10] Cameron 1988: 129 suggests that "þeor" might refer to dryness or roughness of the skin or internal tissues. Earlier scholars have suggested a variety of other possibilities.

[11] London, British Library, Harley MS 273, fol. 215v, which also uses written and non-liturgical spoken words, promises protection from a range of undesirable experiences including "illusionib*us* diaboli nocturnis" ["nocturnal illusions of the devil"].

[12] London, British Library, Royal MS 12 D xvii, *Leechbook II*, fol. 107v; *Leechbook III*, fols 123v-124r, 125r-v, 125v-126r; London, British Library, Harley MS 585, *Lacnunga*, fols 96r-97r; London, British Library, Cotton MS Vitellius C iii, fol. 72v; Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 41, p.272; and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton MS 76, fol. 122r.

[13] The most common uses are general protection (sixteen examples), treatment for eye pain (thirteen examples), fever (eight), snakebite (seven), and charms to be used when livestock has been stolen (seven).

[14] Written remedies appear in London, British Library, Cotton MSS Caligula A vii (one) and A xv (two), Faustina A x (one), Galba A xiv (one), and Vitellius E xviii (three); Harley MS 585 (six); Royal MSS 2 A xx (three) and 12 D xvii (seven); and MS Sloane 475 (ten); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MSS Auct. F.3.6 (two), Barlow 35 (one), and Junius 85 (two); Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Reg. Lat. 338 (two); and Worcester, Worcester Cathedral Library, MS Q.5 (one).

[15] Nine of the forty-two written charms treat fever: London, British Library, Cotton MS Faustina A x, fol. 116r; Harley MS 585, fols 165r (two examples) and 167r-v; Royal MS

12 D xvii, fols 51r and 53r; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auct F.3.6, fol. ii r; Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Reg. Lat. 338, fol. 90r; and Worcester, Worcester Cathedral Library MS Q.5, "on a blank leaf at the end": see Napier 1890: 323-7.

[16] Against elves or demons, see: London, British Library, Royal MS 2 A xx, fol. 45v; Harley MS 585, fols 137r-8r (also using the words of the mass) and 146v-50v (also using spoken words); Royal MS 12 D xvii, fols 52v, 106r, and 124v-125r (also using spoken words).

[17] The treatment of supernatural conditions or fevers accounts for ten of the thirteen examples. In *Lacnunga* (London, British Library, Harley MS 585) there are remedies for elvish influence and the temptations of the Devil (fols 137r-138v), a holy salve against the Devil (fols 146v-150v), and three for fever (two on fol. 165r and one on fol. 167r-v). In *Leechbook I* (London, British Library, Royal MS 12 D xvii) there are two remedies for fever (fols 51r and 53r) and one against elvish magic or runes (fol. 52v). *Leechbook II* contains a remedy for an "ofscoten" horse on fol. 106r which mentions the possibility that the condition might be caused by an elf, while in *Leechbook III* there is a remedy for "elf-hiccup" ("ælfsogoða") and the temptations of the Devil (fols 124v-125r).

[18] In some cases, such as London, British Library, Cotton MS Caligula A vii or Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Barlow 35, the charms have been added to non-medical manuscripts. In other cases the charm is part of the main text of the manuscript. London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, which I discuss elsewhere in this article, is an example of a book which shows continental influence.

[19] "filecteria etiam diabolica vel characteres diabolicas vel erbas vel succinum suum vel sibi inpendere." Schmitz 1883-98: II 668. Although the reading "vel caracteres diabolicas" only appears in Vatican Library Pal. Lat. 294, Meaney 1992: 109 notes that this reading is present in similar passages in Caesarius of Arles and Burchard's *Decretum*, and so may be the intended reading. The *Egbert Penitential* may contain a core of Anglo-Saxon material, perhaps written by Egbert, the first archbishop of York (735-66).

[20] "ælfsogoða." *Leechbook III*, London, British Library, Royal MS 12 D xvii, fols 124v-125r.

[21] *Leechbook III*, London, British Library, Royal MS 12 D xvii, fol. 124v.

[22] Mark 5:24-34, Luke 8:42-48, and Matthew 9:19-22.

[23] See, for example, the fifteenth-century manuscripts London, Wellcome Library, MS 542, fol. 6r, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Wood empt. 18, fol. 1r. The Anglo-Saxon remedy is found in *Bald's Leechbook*, London, British Library, Royal MS 12 D xvii, fol. 51r.

[24] *Leechbook III*, London, British Library, Royal MS 12 D xvii, fol. 125r.

[25] For example, see *Leechbook III*, London, British Library, Royal MS 12 D xvii, fol. 123v. In a remedy for "elf disease" ("ælfadle"), the practitioner is instructed to dip various plants into holy water, have three masses sung over them, and them place them on embers to smoke the patient while singing the litany, Creed, and Lord's prayer and making the sign of the cross on each of the patient's limbs.

[26] *Leechbook III*, London, British Library, Royal MS 12 D xvii, fol. 125r. See Olds 1984: 146-8.

[27] *Leechbook III*, London, British Library, Royal MS D 12 xvii, fol. 125r.

[28] A facsimile edition of MS Digby 86 is available in Tschann & Parkes 1996. The section with the most charms occurs on fols 28r-34v.

[29] For example, the four charms added in a twelfth-century hand to fol. 162v of London, British Library, Royal MS 12 E xx, or the charm for wounds added in the thirteenth century to the last leaf (fol. 415r) of London, British Library, Royal MS 1 A xvii.

[30] Only thirteen of the three hundred and sixty-nine charms I have collected from the period between 1100 and 1350 make use of the words of the mass.

[31] Written remedies appear in *Lacnunga* (London, British Library, Harley MS 585), *Bald's Leechbook* and *Leechbook III* (both contained in London, British Library, Royal MS 12 D xvii); London, British Library, Cotton MSS Caligula A vii and A xv, Faustina A x, Galba A xiv, and Vitellius E xviii; Royal MS 2 A xx and Sloane MS 475; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MSS Auct. F.3.6, Barlow 35, and Junius 85; Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Reg. Lat. 338; and Worcester, Worcester Cathedral Library, MS Q.5.

[32] Forty-three percent of the charms, or one hundred and fifty-eight out of the three hundred and sixty-nine I have collected from this period, require the use of writing.

[33] London, British Library, Sloane MS 475. The earlier section of this composite manuscript is dated to between 1075 and 1125, and contains ten written charms on fols 133v, 135v-136r, 136v (two examples), 137r, 137r-v, 137v (two examples), 137v-138r, and 138r-v. Newly digitised at http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Sloane_MS_475 (accessed 17 May 2017).

[34] For a description of this manuscript see Beccaria 1956: 255-9; Liuzza 2010: 16-19.

[35] Beccaria 1956: 255-9 argues that both parts of the manuscript have a British origin. Cameron 1982: 144 argues, on the basis of confusion between r and n, that even if Sloane MS 475 itself is not an English production it was copied from an exemplar in Anglo-Saxon minuscule. Gneuss & Lapidge 2014, which I have used as my primary catalogue for identifying relevant manuscripts, includes both Part One and Part Two as manuscripts made or owned in England before 1100.

[36] London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 111v.

[37] London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 112r.

[38] London, British Library, Sloane MS 475, fol. 112r and 111r.

[39] Part Two of the manuscript may also have a continental connection. Chardonnens 2007: 42-5 argues, because of the dissimilarity between the prognostic texts in Sloane MS 475 and in other English manuscripts of the period, for a Continental origin either for fols 125-231 or for its exemplar.

[40] In the words "timeus" and "erberum" the scribe seems to have confused an *a* in his exemplar for a *u* ("timeas"; "erberam").

[41] See, for example, the single rune in *Bald's Leechbook*, fol. 20r-v, or the Greek letters in *Bald's Leechbook*, fol. 53r and *Lacnunga*, fol. 165r.

[42] A remedy against "dweorh," possibly a type of fever, in *Lacnunga*, fol. 165r, uses ten Greek letters, divided by crosses.

[43] London, British Library, Cotton MS Caligula A xv, fol. 140r. The text is illegible in places, and I have partially relied on the transcription in Jolly 2006: 64.

[44] Durham, Durham Cathedral Library, MS Hunter 100, fol. 118r. I am grateful to Sarah Gilbert for bringing this charm, and others in the manuscript, to my attention.

[45] Canterbury, Canterbury Cathedral Library, Additional MS 23. This amulet is discussed in detail in Skemer 2006: 199-214. There is an edition of the text at 285-304.

[46] Canterbury, Canterbury Cathedral Library, Additional MS 23, recto, column 5.

[47] "Vt quicq*uid* volue*r*is accipias . 7 q*uicquid* pecieris g*ra*tu*m* fiat" ["That whatever you want you will get, and whatever you ask for will be freely given"].

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Cotton MS Vespasian D xx
Cotton MS Vitellius C iii
Cotton MS Vitellius E xviii
Egerton MS 833
Harley MS 273
Harley MS 585 (*Lacnunga*)
Harley MS 2965
Royal MS 1 A xvii
Royal MS 2 A xx
Royal MS 12 D xvii (*Bald's Leechbook*; *Leechbook III*)
Royal MS 12 E xx
Sloane MS 146
Sloane MS 431
Sloane MS 475
Wellcome Library, MS 542
Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 1431
MS Auct. F.3.6
MS Barlow 35
MS Bodley 130
MS Bodley 163
MS Digby 86
MS Hatton 76
MS Junius 85

MS Rawlinson C 814
MS Wood empt. 18
Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Pal. Lat. 294
Reg. Lat. 338
Worcester, Worcester Cathedral Library, MS Q.5

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THE PERVINCA CHARM: A MEDIEVAL GERMAN LOVE CHARM

Eleonora Cianci

The Pervinca love charm is a 15th century German text, preserved in clm. 7021, ff. 165v-166r. This article is the first attempt to provide a complete transcription of it, a translation and a description of its content. The Pervinca charm displays a perfectly coherent rhetorical structure enriched by Christian images of brightness and fire; the structure lays on a large set of non-Christian motifs, like: "*as the wax melts, let N. melt / neither eat nor drink / neither sleep nor be awake*", as well as on ancient rituals with silver, gold, salt and wax. The theological frame gives even more power to the Pervinca, whose (Latin) name is here the key device of its irresistible magical power. A part of this charm is based on ancient curses and maledictions meant as a punishment if the beloved tried to resist the love charm. The performer needs the efficacy of the Pervinca in order to gain emotional, physical and mental power over a woman.

Keywords: *"as the wax melts, let N. melt"*, Clm 7021, *"neither eat nor drink"*, *"neither sleep nor be awake"*, lovesickness, Medieval Love charm, mental control, Periwinkle, Pervinca, Power of words, Seraphim and Cherubim, Verbena, voces magicae.

1.0. INTRODUCTION

Omnia vincit Amor; et nos cedamus Amori.
(Virgil, Eclogues X, 69)

Love is magic, and there probably is nothing more suitable to incantations and rituals than love itself. German love charms are not older than the 14th century. Before this time, a vast number of German charms has indeed come down to us. Some of them are very old, dating back to the beginning of literacy in Germany in the 9th century. But these earliest texts are mainly verbal remedies to recover health, to heal wounds, to staunch bleedings. New types of charms find their way into the manuscrips only after the 13th century[1]. They are meant to solve a broader range of problems like finding a thief, bringing back a bee swarm, gaining protection against wolves or other evil creatures.

Verbal remedies written in manuscripts have very little to do with the Germanic pagan magic; they are rooted in the Mediterranean and Christian world.

It is only with the coming of Christianity to Germany and Northern Europe that charms and other verbal remedies became increasingly popular among Germanic people.

Blending the Mediterranean love charm tradition into the Germanic society was not as simple as one would imagine. The old Germanic society was based on trust, honour and, of course, on oral transmission of texts. As far as love poems and love charms are concerned, one cannot fail to notice that they were not easily accepted, at least at the beginning. In fact, some written documents of legal history, as for example the Old Icelandic *Landnámabók*[2], prescribe that performers of love poems and charmers incur into a very severe punishment, the so called *Friedlosigkeit*, which means that they must be banned from the society. In the same fashion, love poems and love charms were considered as texts with a negative potential.

Probably the most important feature of a verbal charm is the power of its words, which were believed to produce an effect in the real world, precisely as actions do. This fits Austin's speech act theory perfectly. The power of words of poetry, as well as that of charms, can indeed arouse interest, desire, fantasy. Now, if we consider the act of falling in love, there is little doubt that the words between lovers contribute to the magical transformation of strangers into lovers. As a matter of fact, love words have always been thought to bear a strong erotic potential. In the love charm, this is represented as a sort of mental power. As we shall see, mental control over the object of love and desire is always evoked by the performer of a love charm.

2.0. THE MANUSCRIPT

The *Pervinca charm* is written by a 15th century hand in a Gothic *Bastarda* cursive script on four columns at ff. 165v and 166r of the Clm 7021 preserved in München[3] (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek).

Clm 7021 (14th century- 1st half of the 15th century) is made of 231 *in folio* paper pages measuring 295 x 210 mm[4]. Some pages are divided in two columns: ff. 105r-120v and 123r-231v.

Clm 7021 contains[5] a miscellany of texts in Latin and in German (Bavarian dialect) dealing with rhetoric, prose composition, and medicine:

ff. 1-69v: *Ars dictatoria* (Incipit: Cupientes rivulos scaturientis artis oratoriae);

ff. 70r-93v: *Tractatus dictandi* (Incipit: Nota quod ad perfectum oratorem requiritur latinitatis copia);

f. 94r: blank;

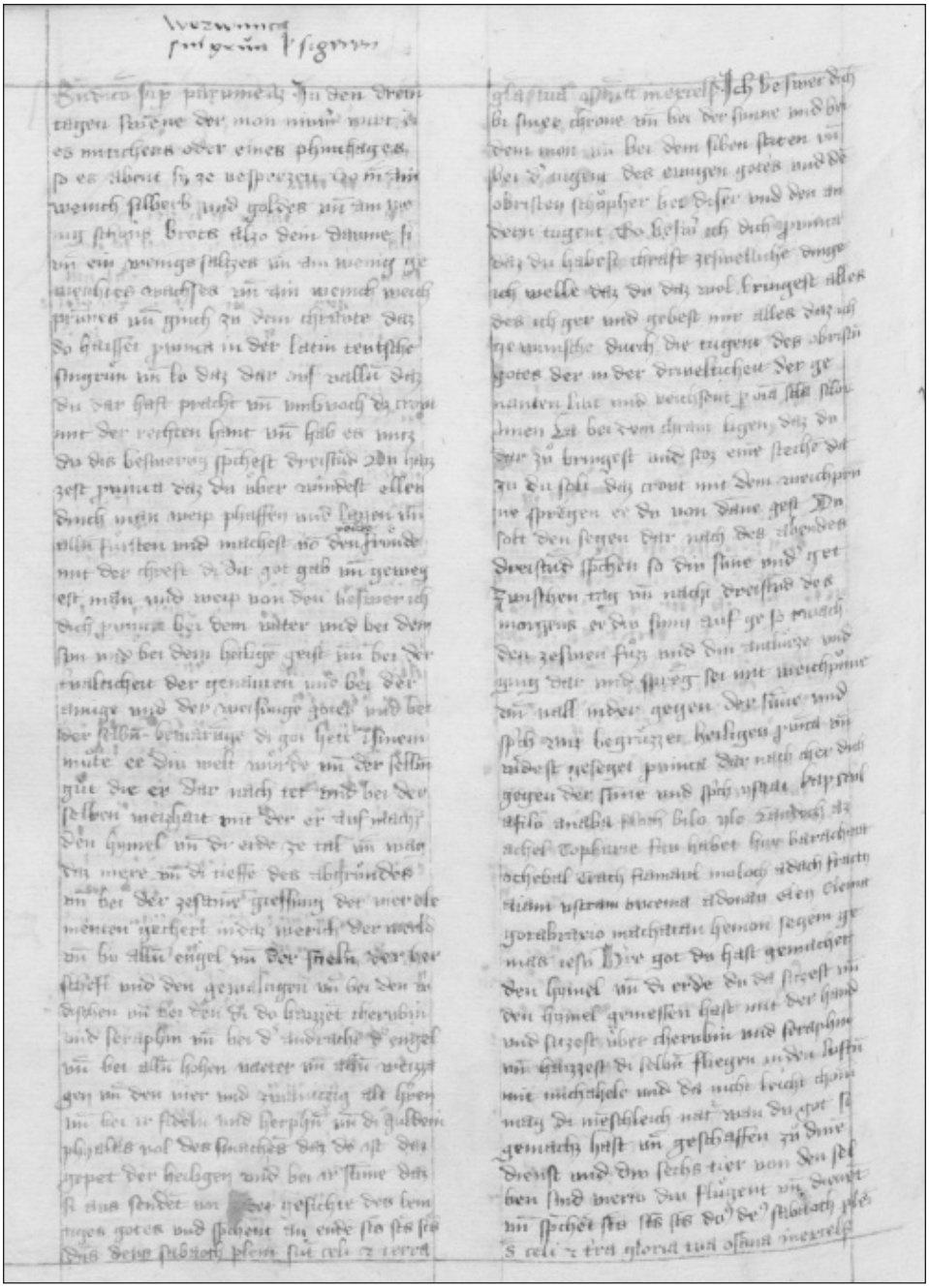

Figure 1: München (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek) Clm 7021, f. 165v

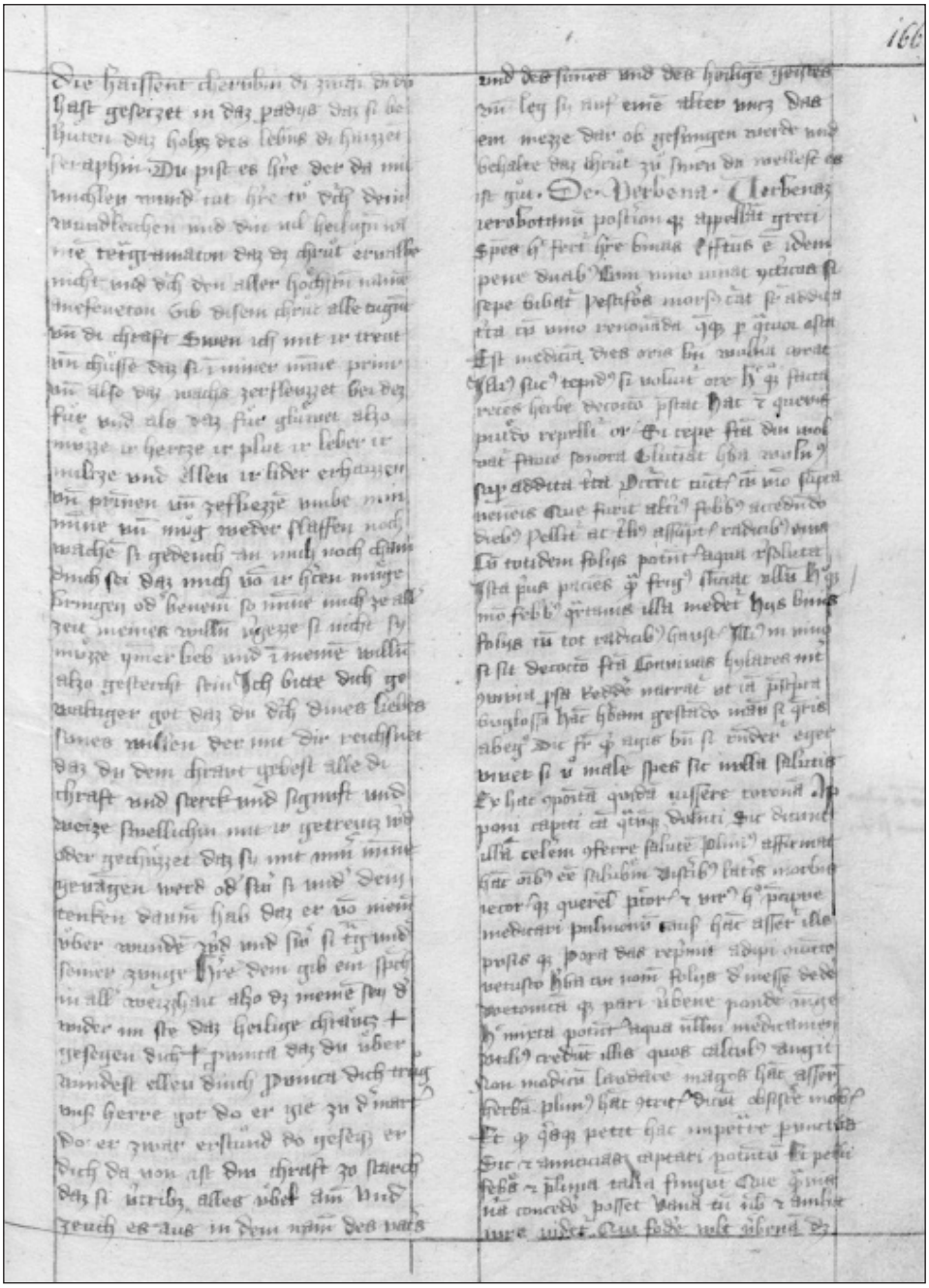

Figure 2: München (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek) Clm 7021, f. 166r.

ff. 94v-103r: Laurentii de Aquileia, *Summa dictaminis*;

ff. 103v-104v: scribbles and a *probatio pennae*;

ff. 105ra-113ra: (in German) *Erkenntnis der Sünde* by Heinrich von Hezzen (Henry of Langenstein 1325-1397);

f. 113v: blank;

ff. 114ra-120v: (German version of the *Distichs of Cato*) *Catonis disticha moralia cum introductione et explicatione germanica* (Incipit: Waren die küdiger gůter red nit geuär);
f. 121: Formulae epistolares;

f. 122v: (15th century) Eberhardi episc. Salzburgensis litterae ad concilium provinciale a. 1418 convocantes;

ff. 123r-127v: von Erczney (Medicine book in German);

ff. 128r-133r: *De herbis* (Medicine book in Latin with some German glosses);

ff. 133v-157v: *Mauritii liber medicinalis* (Latin medical treatise by Mauritius with various recipes and charms, as well as historical, medical and astronomical notes-with some German glosses);

ff. 157v-179 and 181-183r: Latin and German remedies and charms;

ff. 165v-166r: *Benedictio super pervinca* (the ***Pervinca charm*:** the text is written in German, except the title and some usual expressions of invocation in Latin, with some common abbreviations);

ff. 166r-171r: Latin and German remedies and charms;

f. 171v: German legend: *Zwölf goldene Freitage*;

ff. 172r-182r: Latin and German remedies and charms;

ff. 182r-192: German version of the *Practica* by Bartholomaeus Salernitanus (medical treatise) with some parts in Latin (includes: ff. 180v-181r: *De pervinca*: a short Latin version comparable to the *Pervinca charm*; f.183v: left blank);

f. 193r: Lodovici abbatis litterae ad monasteria confoederata a. 1418;

f. 193v: blank;

ff. 195r-196r: blank;

ff. 197r-224: Martini Minoritae, *Chronica minor* (also known as *Flores temporum*, a. 1349 in Latin[6]);

ff. 225-227: Chronik von Scheiern (in German);

ff. 227-229: De IV ventis cardinalibus, de planetis, de terra, de signis coelestibus, de zonis (f. 228r: a picture displays the four elements of the earth);

f. 229-231v: *De balneis*, de diatae et aliis medicinalibus.

Texts of rethorics may have been used to compose sermons and homilies. Medical texts focus on describing, treating and preventing diseases and injuries. The ***Pervinca charm*** appears in the medical section.

3.0. TRANSCRIPTION AND TRANSLATION OF THE *PERVINCA CHARM*

This is the first attempt to present the complete text of the *Pervinca charm*. So far, only a small portion of it has been mentioned in studies on charms. The oldest transcription of it appears in Schönbach 1900: 142-144, who prints only lines 10-23 (f. 166ra). Schönbach, however, uses a foliation system which might confuse the reader. Nevertheless, the same part of the text and the same wrong foliation has been often reproduced also by other scholars up to the present time[7].

In my transcription, abbreviations are given solutions by means of italics, and italics are used for Latin words, too. Indications of page, column and, when necessary, corresponding line in the manuscript are always provided. Sentences and paragraphs are presented in a way that makes the best possible sense, but the manuscript line breaks are always indicated with a slash. An English translation of the German text has been provided. I discuss my translation choices, as well as some lesser common words, in the notes. I mainly refer to the Middle High German dictionaries of Lexer and Benecke, Müller, Zancke (BMZ).

f. 165va:

(Line 1)	**[First part]**
Benedictio super pervincaz.	*Benedictio super Pervincas.*
In den drein/ tagen swenne[8] der mon nimmer wirt[9]	On the third day, when the Moon does not grow anymore,
ein/es mitichens[10] oder eines phinthages[11]/	on Wednesday or on Thursday,
so es abent sy ze vesperzeit	and it should be evening, at dusk.
Lone[12] ain/ wenich silbers und goldes	Bring a bit of silver and gold,
und ain we/nig schoens brots[13] alzo dein davme si/	and a bit of white bread as big as your thumb,
vnd ein wenigs saltzes und	and a bit of salt and
ain wenig ge/weichtes wachses	a bit of soften wax
und ain wenich weich/prunnes[14]	and some Holy Water
und ginch zů dem chraute	and go to the herb

daz/ **(Line 10)** so haisset pervinca in der latin

teutsche/ singruen[15]

und la daz dar auf vallun[16] daz/ du hast pracht[17]

und umbvoch[18] daz crout/mit der rechten

hant

und hab es wicz/

du dis beswerung sprechest dreistund

(Line 14)

Du[19] haiz/zest pervinca

daz du ueber windest[20] allen/ dinch

man weip phaffen und layen und/ allen fürsten

und machest von den [veinde[21]] freonde/

(Line 18) mit der chreft di dir got gab

und geweg/est[22] man und weip

von den beswer ich/dich pervinca

bei dem vater und bei dem/son und bei dem heiligen geist

und bei der/trivalticheit[23] der genanten

und bei der/ainige[24]

und der weisunge gotes

und bei/der selbin bewarnungen[25]

di got heit in sinem/

which is called *Pervinca* in Latin

and *Singruen* in German,

and put there what you brought

and spread it all over the herb with the

right hand

and make sure

you say this charm three times:

[Second part]

You are called *Pervinca*,

because you overcome all the things:

men, women, clergy and laymen and all the princes,

and you turn the enemies into friends,

with the power that God gave you,

and protect men and women.

Therefore I adjure you *Pervinca*,

by the Father, by the Son, and by the Holy Spirit,

and by the trinity of the above-named

and by the unity,

and by the wisdom of God,

and by the same attention,

that God had in his soul when your world

(Line 25) můte[26] ce din welt[27] wuerde	was created,
und der selbin/gůt die er dar nach tet[28]	and by the same good things he did afterwards,
und bei der/selben weizhait	and by the same wisdom
mit der er aufmachz/den hymel und di erde ze tal[29]	by which he made the sky part of the Earth
und mag[30]/ daz mere und di tieffe des abgruendes/	and originated the see and the depth of the abysses,
und bei der zesamen giessung[31]	and by the outpour
der vier ele/menten gechert[32] in daz werich[33] der werld[34]/	by which the four elements entered the creation of the world,
(Line 32) und by alliun engel	and by all the angels,
und der stieln[35] der her/scheft[36]	and by the rank of the authority,
und den gewaltigen und bei den ir/dischen[37]	and by the heavenly and earthly powers,
und bei den di do haizzent cherubini/und seraphin	and by those who are called Cherubim and Seraphim,
und bei der andtacht[38] der engel/	and by the devotion of the angels,
und bei alliu hohen vaeter	and by all the high fathers,
und alliu weizza/gen	and all the prophecies,
und den vier und zwanzig alt herren/	and the twenty-four elder men[39] ,
und bei ir fideln[40] und herphn[41]	and by their lyre and harp,
und di guldein[42]/ phyalas[43] vol des smaches[44]	and the golden vessels filled with fragrance:
daz do ist daz/ gepet der heiligen	this is the prayer of the Saints,
und bei ir stimme daz/si ans sendet	and by their voice that they direct
vor der gesichte[45] des lew/tuges[46] gotes	towards the pleasing face of God,

und sp*r*echent am ende	and say at the end:
sa*n*ct*u*s s*a*nct*u*s s*a*nct*u*s /	*Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus*,
(Line 43) do*min*u*s* deus sabaoth pleni su*n*t celi *et* terra/	*Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt celi et terra,*
f. 165vb:	
glo*r*ia tua osan*n*a in excels*is*	*Gloria tua Osanna in excelsis.*
Ich beswer dich/bi swer chrone[47]	I conjure you by this crown,
un*d* bei der sunne und bei/dem mon un*d* bei dem siben steren[48]	and by the Sun and by the Moon and by the seven stars[49] ,
un*d*/bei d*er* tugent des ewigen gotes	and by the virtue of the eternal God,
und dem/obristen[50] schoepher[51]	and the Highest Creator,
bei disen und den an/dern tugent	by these and the other virtues.
(Line 6)	
So besw*er* ich dich pe*r*vinca/	So I conjure you *Pervinca*,
daz du habest chraft zeswellichen[52] dinge/	because you have the power of the right things:
ich welle daz du wol bringest alles/ des ich ger	I want you to bring me everything that I desire,
und gebest mir alles daz ich/ gewunsche	and give me all I wish,
durch die tugent des obristn/gotes	through the virtue of the highest God,
der in der drivelticheit der ge/ nanten liht und reichsent[53]	who reigns in the trinity of the above- named light,
per o*mn*ia s*æcu*la s*æcu*lo*rum*. / **(Line 14)** amen	per omnia sæcula sæculorum, Amen.
	[Third part]
La[54] bei dem chraut ligen daz du/ dar zů bringest	Let what you are carrying lie there by the herb,

und stoz[55] eine*n* stechen*n*[56] da/zu	and cast there a stick.
du solt daz crout mit dem weich-prunn[57]/ne spre*n*gen[58]	You should not sprinkle the herb with the Holy Water
ee du von danne[59] gest	before you go back.
Du/solst den segen dar nach des abendes/dreistund sp*re*chen	You should say the charm three times the evening after,
so diu sunne und*er* get/	when the sun goes down;
Zwischen tag und nacht dreis-tu*n*d	between day and night three times,
des/morgens er diu sunne auf ge	in the morning before the sun goes up,
so wach[60]/den zeswen fůzz und din anchüzze[61]	so move the right foot and your face and
und/ ging dar und spreng sei mit weichprunne/	go there and sprinkle it with the Holy Water,
und vall nider gegen der sunne und/sprich	and kneel down towards the sun and say:
wiz begrüzzet heiligen pervinca und/	Holy *Pervinca*, be welcome and
wi*r*dest geseget p*e*rvinca	be blessed, *Pervinca*.
dar nach cher dich/gegen der su*n*ne und sp*ri*ch	Afterwards, turn towards the sun and say:
(Line 26):	
ysaac bapsiul/afilo anaba floch bilo ylo sandoch az/	*Ysaac bapsiul / afilo anaba floch bilo ylo sandoch az /*
achel topharie fan habet hyy barachaist/	*Achel topharie fan habet hyy barachaist /*
ochebal trach flamaul moloch adach frach/	*Ochebal trach flamaul moloch adach frach /*
aiam ustram bucema adonay eley elenist/	*Aiam ustram bucema adonay eley elenist /*
gorabraxio machatan hemon segein ge/mas iesu	*Gorabraxio machatan hemon segein ge / mas Iesu*

(Line 32):

Herre got du hast gemachet/den hymel und di erde	Lord God, you have made Heaven and Earth,
du da sitzest und/den hymel gemessen hast mit der hand/	you, who sit there and have measured Heaven with your hand,
und sitzest über cherubin und seraphyni/	and sit above the Cherubim and Seraphim
und haizzest di selbu*n* fliegen in den luftin/mit michahele	and order them to fly in the air with Michael
und da nicht leicht chom*en*/ mag di me*n*schleich vat*er*	and there, where the human father cannot come easily,
wan du got si/gemachz hast und geschaffen zů do*mi*ne/dienst	You, God, have made them and shaped as Lord's attendants,
und ain sechstier von den sel/ ben sind werio diu flůgent un*d* diowe*n*t/	and six of them are those who fly and serve;
und sp*r*ech*en*t	and say:
sa*n*ct*u*s sa*n*ct*u*s sa*n*ct*u*s do*minus* de*us* sabaoth ple*ni*/*sunt* celi et terra gloria tua osa*n*na inexcels*is*/	*Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt celi et terra. Gloria tua Osanna in excelsis.*

f. 166 ra:

die haissent cherubin	They are called Cherubim
di zwai di du/ hast gesetzet in daz p*ar*adys	the two that you set in Paradise,
daz si be/hůten daz hohez des leb*e*ns	those who protect the Highest Life[62],
di haizze*n*t/ seraphini.	they are called Seraphim.

(Line 4)

Du[63] pist es herre der da mit/ michlen wunder tut	You are the Lord, who makes powerful wonders,

herre tue d*ur*ch dein/ wunderleichen

Lord, through your

und din vil heilegen na/men tetragramaton

wonderful and very holy name *Tetragrammaton*[64],

daz daz chruot ervalbe[65]/ nicht

make the herb not weaken

und durch den aller höchsten namen/ anefeneton

and through the highest name *Anefeneton*[66]

gib disem chrůt alle tugent/ und di chraft

give this herb all the virtues and the power:

(Line 10)

[Fourth part]

Swen[67] ich mit ir treut[68]/ und chüsse[69]

Every time I embrace and kiss her

daz si in miner minne prinn/

so that she burns in my love,

und also daz wachs zerfleuzzet[70] bei dez/ fůr

and melts down like wax by fire

und als daz fůr glüwet

and glows like fire,

alzo/ müzze ir hercze ir plut ir leber ir/ milcze

so must her heart, her blood, her liver, her spleen,

und ellen ir lider[71] erhaizzen[72]/

and all her limbs warm up,

und prinnen und zefliezzen umbe min/ **(Line 17)** minne

and burn and melt down because of my love,

und müg weder slaffen noch/ wachen

and may she neither sleep nor be awake

si gedench an mich[73]

whenever she thinks about me,

noch chain/ dinch sei daz mich

there may never be anything that move or

von ir h*er*cen müge/ bringen od*er* benemen

take me away from her heart.

so minne mich ze aller/ zeit meines will*i*n

So– love me all the time at my own will.

vergesse si nicht sy/ müzze ymmer lieb	May she never forget that she must love me forever,
und in meinem willin/ also gestercht sein	and this must grow stronger according to my own will.
(Line 23)	**[Fifth part]**
Ich bitte dich ge/waltiger got	I beg you, Mighty God, that you,
daz du durch dines liebes/ sunes willen	by the will of your beloved son
der mit dir reichsnet[74]/	who reigns with you,
daz du dem chraut gebest	that you give the herb
alle di/ chraft und sterch und signuft[75] und/ weize	all the power and the strength and the triumph and the wisdom,
swellichin[76] mit ir getreutz w*er*d/ oder gechüzzet	so that if anyone is embraced or kissed by her
daz sy mit miner minne/ gevangen werd	she be captured by my love,
oder sw*er*[77] si under dem/ tenken[78] dawen[79] hab	or, whoever keeps her under control[80] ,
daz er von niem*er*/ über winde*n* werd	never be overcome by anyone
und sw*er* si tung[81] und*er*/ seiner zunge	and whatever be hidden under his tongue,
H*er*re dem gib ein sprech/ in aller weizzhait	Lord, grant him a very wise speech
also daz meine*n*[82] sey	as if it means
der/under im ste[83] daz heilige chräucz +/	that the Holy Cross supports him.
(Line 35) gesegen dich + p*er*vinca	Bless you + *Pervinca*,
daz du über/windest ellen dinch	you that overcome all the things.

p*er*vinca dich trůg[84]/uns herre got	*Pervinca*, Our Lord God carried you
do er gie zu d*er* marter/	as he went to the martyrdom,
do er zwar erstůnd	from which he then resurrected.
do geseyz[85] er/ dich	He certainly seized you,
da von ist diu chraft zo starch/	therefore is your power so strong
daz si v*er*tribz alles übel amen	that it dispels evil. Amen.
und/ **(Line 42)** zeuch es aus	And testify it
in dem namen des vaters/	in the name of the Father
f. 166rb:	
und des sunes und des heilig*en* geistes/	and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Am*en*	Amen.
Ley sy auf einen alter wicz[86]	Let it lie on a white altar where
das/ ein mezze dar ob gesungen werde	a mass has been sung,
und/ behalte daz chrůt zů swen[87] du wellest.	and keep the herb as long as you will.
es/ **(Line 5)** ist gůt.	That is good.

4.0. THE STRUCTURE OF THE CHARM AND ITS MOTIFS

I divide the text into five parts. The first part (4.1.) includes the beginning of the ritual and the explanation of the name *Pervinca*. In this case, Paragraphs are organised in order to single out the different elements of the ritual (silver, bread, wax and so on).

The second part (4.2.) consists of three long invocations to the Pervinca and of a request.

The third part (4.3.) contains the second part of the ritual, followed by gibberish words and two invocations to God.

The fourth part (4.4.) conveys the actual love charm and contains some recurrent motifs (Lovesickness, neither sleep nor be awake).

The fifth and final part (4.5.) contains new invocations to God and to the herb and the final ritual.

4.1.0. FIRST PART: LINES 1-13 (F. 1665VA)

4.1.1. The title of the charm

The Latin title of the charm: *Benedictio super pervincas* describes the text as a Roman Catholic benediction, that is, a blessing, not a *carmen*. We might therefore expect regular liturgical elements such as: the invocation of the divine blessing, the singing of Eucharistic hymns and prayers and we might imagine all that as a part of a religious ceremony. Even though many of those elements are indeed included in the text, the scribe or compiler of this text did not consider it a regular benediction, because it contains clear evidence of ancient non Christian rituals and magic formulae.

The Latin word ***pervinca*** means "Periwinkle" (Old English *pervince,* Middle English *pervinkle*, *pervinke,* a loanword from Late Latin *pervinca*). The Latin name is a key word in this text, because it is related to the Latin verb *vinco*, *vincere* "to win, to overcome, to conquer, to prevail" preceded by the intensive prefix *per-*. Moreover, the sound of this word is very similar to another Latin verb: *vincio, vincire* "to bind, hold fast", but also "to enchant". The periwinkle is a trailing plant having a glossy, evergreen foliage and blue-violet flowers. Its scientific name is *Vinca minor* and it appears in other Medieval medical remedies. It is mentioned in the Old English *Nine Herbs Charm*, too. The efficacy of the charm seems to be due exactly to the overcoming power evoked by the name *Pervinca*. The importance of the name is clearly stated in the explanation given at line 10, where the Latin and its German counterpart are thoroughly discussed. Moreover, in the invocation following the description of the ritual, the performer is well aware of the power coming from the name of the plant and addresses it celebrating precisely its power of overcoming everything (see 4.2.1).

Besides our Pervinca charm, also other charms mention plants: the Verbena and the Mandrake (*Mandragora officinarum*) or the Gentian (*Gentiana cruciata*). Those charms may have other aims or functions, but they share some common elements with our *Pervinca charm*. See for example the following charm of the *Madelgêr*, the Gentian, written in a 15th century manuscript preserved in Gießen (Ms. 992, f. 143v):

Madelgêr[88] ist ein guot crût wrtz.

swer si graben wil der grab si an sant Johans tag ze sübenden an dem âbent vnd beswer si also dristund:
ich beswer dich madelgêr ain wurtz so hêr
ich mannen dich dez **gehaizz** den dir sant Petter **gehiez**
do er sînen stab dristund durch dich stiez. der dich ûsgruob vnd dich haim trug,
wen er mit dir vmbfauht ez sy frâw oder mân
der müg ez **in lieb oder in minn** nimmer gelaun
in gotz namen amen wihe si mit anderen crütern.

4.1.2. THE RITUAL (FIRST PART)

4.1.2.1. When and how

In the *Pervinca charm*, the performer must take gold, silver, bread, salt, wax and Holy Water, and sprinkle them over the herb.

The ritual begins with some common magical elements. First: time precision: the action must be performed on a Wednesday or a Thursday, the third day after full moon (*In den drein tagen swenne der mon nimmer wirt*, line 1 of f. 165va), at sunset. The twilight hour is indeed a "threshold" time and therefore it is a perfect time for any magical activity.

All the gestures must be performed with the right hand (*mit der rechten hant*, line 13 of f. 165va) and the charm must be repeated three times (*dis beswerung sprechest dreistund*, line 14 of f. 165va).

Also the Dutch Love charm *Ad amorem*, written in the 14th century, contains a ritual prescribing that it must be performed on a Wednesday, the *dies Mercuri*.

This charm, which is found in a manuscript today at Erfurt, *Bibliotheca Amploniana*, Hs. Duodez 17, f. 37v-38r, also contains other recurrent motifs (such as the formula *Let her neither sleep nor stay awake* see 4.4.4).

Ad amorem[89]**.**

In ***die mercurij*** vel nocte visu perqueras Venerem, teutonice Avonsterre, et illam carminabis sic pro tribus vicibus, et certe appropinquabit tibi voluntas tua:
Hele, vrouwe Avonsterre, Hele, vrouwe lieve,

> langhe hebbic u gesocht, nu hebbic u vonden.
> nu manic u, vrouwe, wel diere, dat ghi mi lonet mine stont.
> Ic mane u bi den banne, ende bi den goeden sente Janne, […]
> Schynt hem in tsine oren, schynt hem uut ten ogen,
> benemt hem allen lust van wive, sonder alleene van mine live,
> schynt hem onder zine voete ende wectene zo onzoete,
> ***dat hi en mach slapen, no waken, no eten, no drinken,***
> ***hi en moet om mi dinken***!
> ende comen to mi, ende doen dat mi lief zy
> ende niet dat mi leet zy. In Gods namen, Amen.

4.1.2.2. Silver and Gold

Silver and gold (*ain wenich silbers und goldes*, line 5 of f. 165va) may be seen as precious gifts for God who gives the herb its magic power.

These elements can likewise be found in the so-called German Verbena charms, which are multi-purpose charms (*fur manic dinch gut*), and contain a ritual equivalent to the *Pervinca charm*. See for example the following Verbena charm of the 14th century preserved in Breslau[90]:

> Ein krut heizet **uerbena**, daz ist fur manic dinch gut vnde nutze. […] Der di selben wurtz graben will, der sal des abendes gen dar di wurtz stet vnde sal di vmbe rizen mit **gold** oder **silber** vnde **sal** da vber sprechen ein pater noster vnde Credo, vnde spreche: Ich gebiete dir edele wurtz verbena […].

4.1.2.3. Bread

The performer of the *Pervinca charm* needs, together with silver and gold, a piece of white bread as big as his thumb (*ain wenig schoens brots alzo dein davme ist*, line 6 of f. 165va). This part of the text has an analogue in an ancient Greek love spell (*Greek magical papyrus*) where some crumbs of bread must be brought to a gladiator field or somewhere where blood was shed, in order to ask heroes and gladiators for help. In this text, the aim of bringing gifts is a clear act of feeding supernatural powers, who, in return, should help holding control over a girl's mind. This Greek love charm likewise mentions the pain and the torture of sleepless eyes (see 4.4.4.).

> **PGM** (*Papyri Graecae Magicae*) **IV 1390-1495**[91]
> **Love spell of attraction performed with the help of heroes or**

gladiators or those who have died a violent death.
Leave a **little of the bread** which you eat; break it up and form it into seven bite-size pieces. And go to where heroes and gladiators and those who have died a violent death were slain. Say the spell to the pieces of bread and throw them. And pick up some polluted dirt from the place where you perform the ritual and throw it inside the house of the woman whom you desire, go on home and go to sleep.
The spell which is said upon the pieces of bread is this:
To Moirai, Destinies, Malignities,
To Famine, Jealousy, to those who died
Untimely deaths and those dead violently,
I'm sending food: [...] so that you, O luckless heroes
Who are confined there in the NN place,
May bring success to him who is beset
With torments. [...]
Unlucky heroes, luckless heroines,
Who in this place, who on this day, who in
This hour, who in coffins of myrtlewood, Give heed to me and rouse her, NN, on This night and from her eyes **remove sweet sleep**,
And cause her wretched care and fearful pain,
Cause her to follow after my footsteps,
And for my will give her a willingness
Until she does what I command of her. [...] come today, Moirai and Destiny; accomplish the purpose with the help of the love spell of attraction, that you may **attract to me her**, NN whose mother is NN, to me NN, whose mother is NN [...]

4.1.2.4. Salt

A little bit of salt (*ein wenig saltzes*, line 7 of f. 165va) is also needed. Salt might be a symbol of purification or might be considered, like the pieces of bread in the previous section, food for God.

Salt is kind of universal tool in magic: its use is widely distributed in almost every ritual in many cultures[92].

4.1.2.5. Wax

Wax is likewise a very common tool in ancient magical rituals.

In the *Pervinca charm*, the performer must bring soft wax (*ein wenich geweichtes wachses*, line 8 of f. 165va) and the other ingredients to the herb and leave it there.

The use of soft wax in the ritual might derive from Mediterranean pre-Christian magic practices like the one described in another *Greek love spell*, where wax or clay are used to create a human shape that must be pierced with thirteen needles. The Greek charm is conceived and structured as a curse: the girl should suffer pain if she does not fall in love. As we shall see, the text also contains the formula *Let her neither eat nor drink* (see 4.4.4.).

In the *Pervinca charm*, wax seems to have lost the original (negative) connotation: it appears again in the final part of the text, where it is used as a symbol of burning passion. See for examole the following Greek love spell in PGM.

> **PGM IV 296-466**[93]
> **Wondrous spell for binding a lover:**
> Take **wax** [or clay] from a potter's wheel and make two figures, a male and a female. [...] And take thirteen copper needles and stick 1 in the brain while saying, "I am piercing your brain, NN" [...] And take a lead tablet and write the same spell and recite it. And tie the lead leaf to the figures with thread from the loom after making 365 knots while saying as you have learned, "ABRASAX, hold her fast!" You place it, as the sun is setting, beside the grave of one who has died untimely or violently, [...]
> Let her be in love with me, NN whom she, NN bore. Let her not be had in a promiscuous way, let her not be had in her ass, nor let her do anything with another man for pleasure, just with me alone, NN, so that she, NN, be unable either to **drink or eat**, that she not be contented, not be strong, not have peace of mind, that she, NN, **not** find **sleep** without me, NN, [...] attract her, bind her, NN, filled with love, desire and yearning [...]

4.1.2.6. Holy Water

Water is the symbol of purification well before Christianity.

In the *Pervinca charm*, Holy Water (*ain wenich weichtes prunes*, line 9 of f. 165va) is one of the gifts that the performer must bring to the plant. It closes the first part of the ritual and, after the invocations, it reappears in the second part, when the performer must sprinkle the herb with Holy Water according to an exact set of actions (see 4.3.1.).

4.2.0. SECOND PART: FROM LINE 14 OF F. 1665VA TO LINE 14 OF F. 165VB

4.2.1. Invocation and conjuration of the herb (first part)

As we have seen, the ritual ends mentioning the Latin and the German name of the *Pervinca* (*haisset pervinca in der latin teutsche sigruen*, line 10 of 165va).

After this, a very long invocation begins. This invocation starts with an interpretation of the Latin name (*Du haizzest pervinca daz du ueberwindest*, line 14 of f. 165va). According to this explanation (see 4.1.1.), the *Pervinca* is able to overcome all the things and win over every kind of person: *man, weip, phaffen, layen, fürsten* (line 16 of f. 165va). The *Pervinca* can even turn enemies into friends[94].

This power was given to the herb by God himself (*mit der chreft di dir got gab*, line 18 of f. 165va) in order to protect mankind (*gewegest man und weip*, line 19 of f. 165va). God showed thus the same wisdom (*bei der selben wizhait*, line 27 of f. 165va) that he used as he created the world. We are then informed of the things that God created (*hymel, erde, mere, tieffe des abgruendes*) with a special attention to the four elements, whose flowing gave start to the creation itself (*vier elementen gechert in daz werich der werld*, line 31 of f. 165va).

After listing what God created on Earth, the performer invokes the power of Heaven and of its creatures, i.e. the angels (*by alliun engel*, line 32 of f. 165va), the Cherubim, the Seraphim (*bei den di do haizzent cherubini und seraphin und bei der andtacht der engel*, line 34 of f. 165va), the twenty-four elder men (*den vier und zwanzig alt herren*, line 37 of f. 165va) and their instruments (*bei ir fideln und herphn*, line 38 of f. 165va): all of them are called to give strength to the plant. The characters evoked have all biblical origin: Seraphim and Cherubim, from the Apocalypse, are in the highest place. Seraphs or Seraphim, according to the prophet Isaiah, stand above the Throne of God. A Seraph has six wings, two of them cover his face, two his feet, and two are used to fly. The Seraphim are regarded as an order of angels distinguished for fervent zeal and religious ardour and are hence associated with the image of fire. Their name comes in fact from the Semitic root *śrp*, which means "burn". As we shall see, the symbol of fire plays a very important role in this charm (see 4.4.2.).

Fire, ardour and heat are likewise connected to the idea of brightness, which may suggest the ability of enlightening others, of giving spiritual guidance. The act of instructing might even include the intention of convincing someone to do something against his will (see 4.4.5.).

4.2.2. Invocation and conjuration of the herb (second part)

The performer addresses directly the herb (*Ich beswer dich bi swer chrone*, line 1 of f. 165vb) and evokes again the divine act of the creation. The performer mainly invokes celestial bodies (*bei der sunne und bei dem mon und bei dem siben steren*, line 2 of f. 165vb) and the Creator itself, reaching thus the top of the universe.

4.2.3. Invocation, conjuration of the herb (third part) and request

This is the final invocation of the herb (*So beswer ich dich pervinca*, line 6 of f. 165vb). What follows is a kind of summary of all its virtues and includes a clear order: since God gave you the power, now I want you to fulfil all my wishes (*ich welle daz du wol bringest alles des ich ger*, line 8 of f. 165vb).

Let me mention at this point, before continuing with our German *Pervinca charm*, a Latin *Pervinca charm*, which shares a lot of elements with ours (gold, silver, bread, salt, sunrise, images of fire and celestial bodies, and so on).

The text is written in a paper manuscript of the 15th century preserved in London (British Library), Ms. Sloane 962, at f. 17v:

> Hic est **de pervinca**[95]
> In prima luna cum ad uesperem stit accipe parum **auri** et aliquautulum **argenti** et **crustam panis** tritaei ad mensuram digiti et parum **salis** addis et omnia subpone et dimitte iacere sub radice pervince et veniens ad eam ante ortum solis dicens: In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti amen. O **pervinca**, patrem et matrem occidisti, Romam ambulasti pacatum delesti et portas intrasti per hostium exivisti. Propter hoc tibi dico, ut vincas omnes homines, clericos et laycos, potestates masculinas, et feminias, et cum veniam ad pallacium omnes sint mihi placiti, qui mihi nocere volunt; quamdiu te mecum portauero **semper me amant** omnes homines et femine ante et retro. **Vincas** etiam omnes **inimicos** meos mihi mala volentibus vincasque potestates masculinas et femininas et omnes gentes et totam orbem terrarum. Vinca ideodicis et omnes karactheres, vincas et omnes homines, viros et mulieres, malum indicentes et malum dominum et malam dominam.
> Super ripam riue sorores sedebant pervincam manibus tenebant carmina reuoluebant sed nesciebant pre mala domina, quam habebant. Tunc supervenit sancta maria et dixit: super ripam riui tres sorores sedent. Respondit una[96]: pervincam sendens (l. sedentes) manibus

tenemus carminare eam nescimus. Tunc sancta maria respiciens videt ihesum stantem et dixit: Ihesus fili karissime, hanc pervincam mihi carmina. Ihesus xpus ut audivit, dextera sua manu benedixit, dextero suo pede calcavit, dextera sua manu signavit, dextera sua manu benedixit, dextero pede calcavit et dixit: **pervinca** benedicta sis super omnes herbas, sis hoc carmine carminata, ut ad omnes res faciendas sis bona. Si quis te in nomine meo portauerit, sit securus in omnibus locis ubicumque ambulauerit. In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti domini nostri ihn xpi adiuro te herba vulgariter appellata **pervinca** quam in manu mea teneo eo quod cuncta vincas per deum patrem omnipotentem, qui pro salute generis humani descendit de celo et natus ex maria virgine passus sub poncio pylato cru. mor. et se. desce. ad inf. tertia die res. a mor. asce. ad celos. se. ad dex, dei patris om. inde ven. et iudi. vivas et mor. 7 seculum p. igne [...] invoco te **pervinca** per dei tonitrua necnon per coruscationes et fulgora. Adiuro te per septem candelabra, quae in suis luminaribus ante altare dei aureum sunt lucencia [...] Coniuro te per patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum et per sanctam mariam matrem dni ni Jhu xpi per celum et terram et herbas et flores et per **lucernas solis et lune** et per aquas turricutes et per **focas ardentes** et per lignum verum et per omnes creaturas et per omnes papas romanos et per cunctos episcopos et abbates et per cunctas viduas et virgines et per cunctas undas maris et per vii. dormientes.

Coniuro te per **maxima luminaria** celi et terrae die et nocte lucencia et per claritatem celi el per cuncta cetera sydera et per cuncta terrena dei deo plena, que per terram sunt serpentia et per omnia maria et per cuncta piscium genera, quae in maribus omnibus sunt natantia, et per quatuor elementa scilicet aquam, terram, aerem, ignem, et per omnia terrestria et infernalia [...] Coniuro te per nomen dei sanctissimum, quod est compositum hys iiiior a. g. l. a. Coniuro te per sanctum, qui hodie celebratur per universum mundum, ut qualemcunque puellam sive feminam te manu mea habens tetigero illico **in amore meo ardeat inextinguabiliter nec praeter me aliquem diligat nec concupiscat.** Etiam quamdiu te super me habuero omnes inimicos meos prevaleam et potentes devincam et quasi perterriti omnes omnes voluntatem meam faciant et impleant. Et si te mecum habuero coram aliquo episcopo siue rege aut alio principe sive magnate et etiam quocunque homine clerico uel muliere sive viro sim illis placens. Et si aliquod negotium sive beneficium uel experimentum et aliquod experiri [?], statim ardentes sint tam homines quam spiritus ad illum

> perficiendum pro mea voluntate; et quamdiu te super me habeam non mihi arasci valeant sed semper me ament et quidcunque agavi sit illis placens et si aliquis uel aliqua mea licentia te gerat sive super se habeat voluntatem sam tamquam meam perficiat. Et si aliquis uel aliqua te furatus fuerit, non illi proficias sed semper inpedias. **pervinca nomen omne imple vincas** et vim habeas contra omnia illa, pro quibus te invocavi et coniuravi per virtutem et potestatem domini nr ihu xpi qui in trinitate vnus regnas in secula seculorum amen. pr. nr. Credo. Deinde amputa superiorem ramum omni auro quod ibi tenes et repone in ceram benedictam et feras tecum honeste.

4.3.0. THIRD PART: FROM LINE 14 OF. F. 165VB TO LINE 10 OF F. 166RA

4.3.1. Ritual (second part)

After the invocations and adjurations, which form the second part of the ritual, the performer must bring all the ingredients and the precious tools to the herb and leave them there (*La bei dem chraut ligen daz du dar zuo bringest*, line 14 of f. 165vb). He must recite the charm three times before sunrise (*zwischen tag und nacht dreistund*, line 19 of f. 165vb) and, moving towards the sun starting with his right foot, he must sprinkle it with Holy Water. This part of the ritual deals with already mentioned elements, hence, all these actions must be performed in the "threshold hours" (*so diu sunne under get*: sunset, *er diu sunne auf ge*: sunrise) facing the sun (*gegen der sunne*, line 25 of f. 165vb). Again, an image of light, of brightness, of fire.

4.3.2. Magic nonsense

Once the performer has accomplished the ritual and repeated the charm three times, he must also repeat a set of words and names (*Ysaac bapsiul afilo anaba floch bilo ylo*, lines 26-32 of f. 165vb). This particular sequence, also known as *voces magicae*, is in fact a sequence of words having no relation to the language of the text in which they appear. And even if the modern linguists can trace some of them back to Greek or Hebrew, their importance in the charm lies not in their actual meaning, but in their supposed magical power[97].

The use of gibberish formulas was very common in ancient Greek and Latin charms, but it is seldom used in Old High German charms. The number of gibberish formulas increases only after the 13th century, when also the number and the types of charms transcribed in manuscripts increases.

As Passalis (2012) points out, nonsense or pseudo-nonsense words are very common in charms and are usually mixed with intelligible speech. In the *Pervinca charm* we might recognise some names such as *Ysaac, Adonay, Eloy, Iesu*, but the other words are probably distorted names of some ancient deity.

4.3.3. Invocation of God (first part)

The performer talks directly to God. He repeats the importance of the creation of Heaven, (*herre got du hast gemachet den hymel*, line 32 of f. 165vb), of Earth, and of all the angels, repeating the importance of the role of the Seraphim and Cherubim who protect the Throne of God by flying around it singing *Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus*.

4.3.4. Invocation of God (second part)

One more invocation (*Du pist es herre der da mit michlen wunder tut*, line 4 of f. 166ra) reinforces the power and the virtues of the herb (*alle tugent und di chraft*, line 9 of f. 166ra) through the power of all the names of God (*Tetragrammaton*, line 7 of f. 166ra; *Anefeneton*, line 9 of f. 166ra).

4.4.0. FOURTH PART: FROM LINE 10 TO LINE 23 OF F. 166RA

4.4.1. Love charm

This small portion of text (from line 10 to line 23 of f. 166ra) is the only one of the *Pervinca charm* that has been repeatedly published and is hence well known. This section has been often referred to because it contains a set of motifs comparable with other love charms in different times, languages and cultures[98].

The segment contains the core of the whole ritual: so far the performer has collected and prepared his tools; the creation, the creatures and the Creator gave power to them: proper and actual magic must happen now. The performer summons the angels of God, the Seraphim as main symbol of fire and of the glowing glory of God.

A vivid and figurative language represents here objects, actions and ideas related to fire. The performer speaks in the first person now and begins demanding that every time he hugs and kisses the girl (*Swer ich mit ir treut und chüsse*, line 10 of f. 166ra), she be enflamed with passion (*daz si in miner minne prinn*, line 11 of f. 166ra).

The idea that the girl should burn because of love evokes indeed an impressive erotic imagery. We could argue that a physical reaction is expected, not only a sentimental one.

If our charm had been a literary text, we would speak of the power of love words as fictional device. If this text had been a love poem or a love letter, we could have compared it, for example, to the effect of Cyrano's words on Roxana. Nonetheless, our text also has other interpretations.

4.4.2. The formula of the melting wax

The performer repeats what he has already said: the girl should burn of love after every kiss and hug. But he now adds a set of examples in which the image of fire becomes more vivid and realistic. The performer demands that the girl must melt down like wax in the fire (*und also daz wachs zerfluezzet bei dez fuor*, line 12 of f. 166ra).

The Russian scholar Andrej Toporkov studied the dissemination of love charms in Russia and compared them to similar charms in other cultures and languages. He argues that the formula "as the wax melts, let N. melt" was known to almost all Mediterranean cultures (Hittite, Assyrian, Aramaic and ancient Greek) since the 2d millennium B.C.[99].

At that time, the formula was used in oaths and maledictions and it was usually followed by a ritual with wax figures (see the already mentioned Greek papyrus too, above at 4.1.2.5.).

4.4.3. Lovesickness

The performer adds more details to the fire imagery. The comparison between the effect of wax as it comes close to fire and the body of the girl as she approaches the man includes now a detailed list of all the organs involved in the action. It is a very simple comparison: as fire burns, her heart, her blood, her liver, her spleen and all her limbs must take fire (*als das fuor glüwet alszo müzze ir hercze, ir plut, ir leber it milcze und ellen ir lider erhaizzen* line 13 of. f. 166ra). They all must burn and melt because of the performer's love (*und prinnen und zefliezzen umbe min mine*, line 16 of f. 166ra).

This list of organs finds striking analogues in more than a medical or verbal remedy to cure diseases or wounds: a clear mention of every part of the body involved in the cure or in the ritual is extremely important to make sure that the cure effectively works. In this case, the list resembles the description of the symptoms of a severe illness which has been known for centuries as "Love-sickness", and as such it is described and cured. *'To fall in love'* has been seen parallel to *'to fall sick'* and this particular illness could bring men and women to insanity. That is why lovesickness is listed together with other severe illnesses in many medical treatises of the Middle Ages[100].

This formula, however, as we have already seen, is based on ancient curses and maledictions. The pains are the punishment for the one who resists the love charm. The burning of the organs is not considered as a symbol of erotic and passion, but a real and painful torture, as it appears in the Greek malediction on lead tablets. See for example the curse on the lover in:

> **PGM II, 16 (1st cent. AD):**
> may his heart burn, melt and his blood dry if he does not fulfil my love wish[101].

The German charm tradition knows this kind of arranging the organs in a sort of list, see for example a love charm written in a 15th century manuscript preserved in Heidelberg, (Codex Palatinum germanicum 691, f. 79v)[102]:

> **Biß gotwilkum, du liebeu abentsun**! du scheinst mir in meins herczen wund, du scheinst mir an ir bett und an irn arm und an iren atom warm und an ir trüb,
> das ich ir zum herczen ziech ***durch ir lungen und durch ir leber, durch ir flayisch und ir plut:*** dy sey mir fur all man gut, und fur mein lib müßestu versegnot sein!
> […]

The following text, dating to the 15th century, is contained in a manuscript preserved in Stuttgart, (Württembergische Landesbibliothek, cod. med. et phys. 4°, nr. 29, f. 8v) and it shares some common elements with our ritual: the use of salt, the sunrise, the fire. The herb is here the (stinging) nettle and it must be thrown in burning ashes at the end, in order to trigger the simile with the heart of the beloved (*also machent zerbrinnen in hertzen vnd in sinnen*):

> Item du solt gan an ainem fritag fruo **so die sunn vf gat** zuo ainer **nesel** vnd besich die nesel in dem nam der du hold bist **vnd bespreng die nesel mit saltz** vnd gang dar nach zuo aubent so die sunn vnder gat so gang wider dar zuo vnd grabe die nesel us gancz mit der wurcz

> vnd **leg sy in daz für in die haisen eschen** vnd sprich dise wort:
> oel vnd amel vnd ingimm ich beswer üch vnd gebüt üch **als diese nesel hie brinnet** in der haisen eschen das ir also machent **zerbrinnen in hertzen vnd in sinnen** das jr nimer ruo mogent gewinnen vnd haben bis das sie drinnen wil laun (so) bringen in der minnen[103].

Another 15th century German love charm (Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Mondsee Perg. Cod. 1953, f. 65v, 66r) uses a variation of this formula[104]:

> Perunder pawun, ich vmbvach dich, Sensucht, ich sach dich,
> **in ir fleisch vnd in ir pain**, Sensucht, ich sent dich
> dem lieb N. haim in irn sin vnd irn můt, in ir **fleisch** v[nd] in ir **plůt**
> un[d] m[ů]z dem [lieb] N. nach mir ha[im]
> alz we nach mir sein, als ir m[ů]tter waz […]

4.4.4. Sleep and stay awake

The formula is connected to the previous one. The performer wishes that the girl should not sleep nor be awake if she does not think about him (*und müg weder slaffen noch wachen si gedench an mich*, line 17 of f.166ra).

The *topos* is very frequent in love charms[105] and it has a very old origin. It has been used for centuries (combined with the previous motif of the burning organs) to convey the symptoms of insanity caused by love. Thus, Hildegard of Bingen recommends the use of specific herbs in order to avoid love insanity[106].

Toporkov[107] and other scholars thoroughly analysed the use of this peculiar formula and its evolution from the Greek medical papyri to the late Medieval charms in different cultures and languages. This motif is often combined with the formula: *Let her neither eat nor drink,* which has been described by Jonathan Roper[108].

Compare this part also to the already mentioned charms at 4.2.1.1, 4.1.2.3., 4.1.2.5.

4.4.5. Command

The performer addresses directly the woman and orders her: "love me forever at my own will, as long as I want" (*so minne mich ze aller zeit menes willin*, line 20 of f. 166ra). Here, the use of speech act is of remarkable efficacy. Nonetheless, the idea is repeated once again: she should never forget that she must love forever (*vergesse si nicht sy müzze ymmer lieb*, line 21 of f. 166ra).

Unlike the previous passages, there is a specific attention not only to the passion and the physical reactions to it, but to the psychological and emotional response.

The last part of the ritual has lesser to do with love and romantic. It is a sort of ill use of the power of words in order to gain mental power over the girl. Love and to be loved are seen by the performer as power devices, the power to force the girl do something against her own will, the power of restricting the freedom of her mind, the power of preventing her to fall in love with someone else.

4.5.0. FINAL PART: FROM LINE 23 F. 166RA TO LINE 5 OF. F. 166RB

4.5.1. Invocation of God (third part)

The performer invokes God (*Ich bitte dich gewaltigen got,* line 23 of f. 166ra) and focuses this time to the exact goal of this charm: he wishes that every time he is with her, she is tied to him by the force of his love (*daz sy mit miner minne gavangen werd,* line 30 of f. 166ra). She should not desire anyone, even if she had an interest in another man. Even if she was kissed by someone (*swellichin mit ir getreutz werd oder gechüzzet*, line 28 of f. 166ra), still, she must be captured by his love (*daz sy mit miner mine gevangen werd*, line 30 of f. 166ra).

The performer attempts to gain control. He is clearly more interested in the psychological constriction (*gevangen*) over her rather than in a love feeling. To this end, the immense power of Almighty God is invoked.

4.5.2. Invocation of the herb (fourth part)

The final invocation summarizes what was asked and stated before: the herb is called *Pervinca* and the name means "to win" (*gesegen dich pervinca daz du überwindest ellen dinch*, from line 35 to line 1 of f. 166rb). We know that the power of the Pervinca was enhanced by the Lord who carried the plant as he was going to his sacrifice (*dich truog uns here got do er gie zu der marter*, line 36 of f. 166ra), and its power was made even greater (*da von ist diu chraft zo strarch*, line 39 of f. 166ra).

4.5.3. Final Ritual

The final ritual must be performed on an altar.

The precision of the description is once again very striking: the altar must be white (*auf einen alter wicz,* line 2 of f. 166rb) and it must have been recently used for the regular Roman Catholic office (*das ein mezze dar ob gesungen werde*, line 3).

We are informed that the ritual in now finished by the final remark "this is good", a formul that (*Es ist guot*, line 5): is often used at the end of Medieval medical remedies and recipes: that's it.

5.0. CONCLUSION

The *Pervinca charm* may be considered a *Sammelsegen*, i.e. the result of a collection of magical themes and motifs from different times and places, often of non-Christian origin. Whereas this characteristic is shared by other Medieval charms, one cannot fail to notice that the compiler of the *Pervinca charm* works with remarkable skill and consistency in assembling and presenting his magical text. To enhance the magical power of the *Pervinca* herb, elements of distinctive non-Christian tradition are included in a framework which is largely based on conventional Christian symbols ensuring that the *Pervinca* herb effectively finds its way to the Lord's table.

Not surprisingly, the charm is based on an act of faith in the power of the words. Indeed, the *Pervinca* herb derives its power precisely from its name. Hence the first, very elaborate invocation is centred on the origin of the *Pervinca* name: the very power of the herb comes from God because it was God Himself who gave the name to it. The performer is required to recall the circumstances of this event: he must state when this happened, that is at the very beginning of time, during the process of Creation, when God created the world and named each creature.

A direct connection between the Pervinca herb and Heaven is thus established, moving from the things which occupy the lowest position in the order of Creation to those placed in the higher ranks of Universe. In the course of this description, the compiler makes sure that a number of supernatural powers be listed according to their importance to further enhance the power of the herb. Even the traditional magical gibberish, typical of this kind of charm, finds its proper place in this setting: the drivel is presented as a list containing the unspeakable names of God, which the performer must utter in order to properly increase the power of the herb.

As far as the aim of the charm is concerned, i.e. controlling a woman's body and mind, a climax can be observed in the *Pervinca Charm*. At first, the performer appeals to the power of the *Pervinca* to make sure that the woman he likes burn in passion for him: he wants that she melts down like wax by fire. He asks for physical control over her. But then, again, the charm moves to a higher level: the performer does not content himself with the mere control on the woman's body, but he wants control over her mind. She must accept his unlimited power over her soul and body forever. She is captured and locked in the lover's love cage helplessly.

A series of themes, motifs, biblical passages and magical instruments are arranged here in order of increasing intensity. The compiler shows a notable skill in combining very different magical elements into a consistent textual frame based on the equation of the Pervinca herb and the Almighty God. Like God, Pervinca can do everything, as love does.

NOTES

[1] For further references on German charms see: Cianci 2004, Cianci 2013, Franz 1960, Holzmann 2001, Schulz 2003.

[2] *The Book of Settlements*, see Scovazzi 1961: 169-170, see also Mitchell 2011: 67.

[3] The digitized manuscript is available at: http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/~db/0009/bsb00095997/images/index.html?id=00095997&groesser=&fip=eayayztssdasyztswwyztseayafsdren&no=4&seite=1.

[4] http://www.handschriftencensus.de/6376.

[5] http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/~db/bsb00008267/images/index.html?fip=193.174.98.30&seite=142&pdfseitex=.

[6] The *Flores temporum* was a world chronicle compendium, used for preparing homilies and sermons. It was one of the most well known and widely spread chronicles of the Middle Ages in Southern Germany.

[7] Ernst 2011: 164, Mertens 1995: 54, Ruff 2003: 210.

[8] *swenne, wenne, swanne, swan* (conj.) "when, whenever, if" (BMZ 3: 503-504).

[9] *wirde, wart, wurden, worden* (sv.) "to turn, to become" (BMZ 2: 728-732).

[10] *mideche, mittewoche, mitache, mittiche, mitiche* "Wednesday" (Lexer 1: 2191).

[11] *phinztac, pfingstag* "Thursday" (Lexer 2: 247), or *phingesttac, phingestac, pfingstac* "Pentecost".

[12] Probably imperative of *lônen* (wv.) "to give, bring" (BMZ 1: 1042, Lexer 1: 1953).

[13] *schoenes brot* "white bread" (BMZ 2: 191, Lexer 2: 768).

[14] *wîch-brunne, wîh-brunne, weichbrunne, weichprunne* (m.) "Holy water" (Lexer 3: 817).

[15] *singrüene, singruen* (f.) "periwinkle", (adj.) "evergreen" (BMZ 1: 580, Lexer 2: 931), OHG *singruona* (f.), Lat. *pervinca*.

[16] vallen (sv.) "to fall" (BMZ 3: 217, Lexer 3: 11).

[17] Past of *bringen, brâhte, brâhten, brâht* (sv.) "to bring" (BMZ 1: 248, Lexer 1: 353).

[18] *umbevâhen* (sv.) "to spread, diffuse" (BMZ 3: 203, Lexer 2: 1726).

[19] <D> rubricated.

[20] *überwinden* (sv.) "to win, to overcome, to conquer, to prevail" (Lexer 2: 1680).

[21] written upon <den>.

[22] *gewëgen* (sv.) "to estimate, regard; to protect" (BMZ 3: 634, Lexer 1: 980).

[23] *drîvaltecheit* (f.) "trinity" (BMZ 3: 233, Lexer 1: 467).

[24] *einunge* "unity" (BMZ 1: 423, Lexer 1: 529).

[25] *bewarnunge* "attention, care" (Lexer 1: 252).

[26] *muot* (m.) "soul, mood, feelings" (BMZ 2: 242, Lexer 1: 224).

[27] *wërlt* (f.) "world" (Lexer 3: 272).

[28] Past of *tuon* (v.) "to do, make" (Lexer 2: 1575).

[29] *tal* (n.) "valley", *ze tal* "downwards" (Lexer 2: 1397).

[30] *mac* (BMZ 2: 3).

[31] *gieszung* (f.) "outpouring, flowing" (Grimm 7: 7422).

[32] Past of *kêre* (wv.) "to turn" (BMZ 1: 796).

[33] *wërc* (n.) "work, creation" (BMZ 3: 586).

[34] *wërlt* (f.) "world" (BMZ 2: 577).

[35] *stal* (n.) "place, position, home, setting" (BMZ 2: 558, Lexer 2: 1130), might also be read as *stieln* or *sitelin*.

[36] *hêrschaft* (f.) "lordship, authority" (Lexer 1: 1261).

[37] *irdisch, irdesch* (adj.) "earthly, terrene" (BMZ 1: 442, Lexer 1: 1449).

[38] *andâht* (f./m.) "devotion" (Lexer 1: 54).

[39] According to the Apocalypse of John (Book of Revelation), twenty-four elder men sit on twenty-four thrones around the Throne of God. In Medieval imagery, they are often represented around four Seraphim.

[40] *videle* (f.) "lyre" (BMZ 3: 305).

[41] *harpfe, herpfe, harfe* (f.) "harp" (BMZ 1: 636).

[42] *guldîn* (adj.) "golden" (BMZ 3: 553).

[43] *phiole, viole* (f.) "ampulla, vessel, vial" (Lexer 3: 361, Grimm 13: 1833).

[44] *smac, smache* (m.) "smell, odor, fragrance, taste" (Lexer 2: 994).

[45] *gesiht* (f.) "face, sight, vision" (BMZ 2: 2).

[46] *lâwes, lew* (adj.) "mild", *lawe tugend* (Lexer 1: 1806).

[47] *krône, krôn, krân* (f.) "crown" (BMZ 1: 886, Lexer 1: 1746).

[48] *stërne, stërre* (m.) "star", *sibenstërn* "Pleiades" (BMZ 2: 621, Lexer 2: 1182).

[49] The Pleiades.

[50] Superlative form of *obere* (adj.) "upper", *oberist, oberôst, oberst* (BMZ 2: 428, Lexer 2: 132).

[51] *schephære, schepfære* (m.) "creator" (Lexer 2: 705).

[52] *willec* (adj.) "willing, inclined" (BMZ 3: 663).

[53] *rîchesen, rîchsen* (wv.) "to reign, dominate" (Lexer 2: 419).

[54] Imperative form of *lâȝen* "to let" (BMZ 1: 944, Lexer 1: 1843).

[55] *stôȝen, stâȝen* (sv.) "to push, put, cast" (BMZ 2: 665, Lexer 2: 1218).

[56] *stecke* (m.) "stick, stock" (BMZ 2: 625).

[57] *wîch-brunne, wîh-brunne, weichbrunne, weichprunne* (m.) "Holy water" (Lexer 3: 817).

[58] *sprengen* (wv.) "sprinkle, asperse" (BMZ 2: 544, Lexer 2: 1115).

[59] *danne* (adv.) (Lexer 1: 409).

[60] *wagen*, (wv.) "to move, shake" (BMZ 3: 641, Lexer 3: 636).

[61] *antlütte, antlütze* (n.) "face" (BMZ 1: 1060).

[62] In Christianity, the six-winged angels Seraphim (or Seraphs) protect the Throne of God by flying around it and singing "Holy, Holy, Holy". According to Medieval belief, the four Seraphim create indeed a connection between God and men.

[63] Ernst 2011, Mertens 1995: 54, Ruff 2003: 210.

[64] "Tetragrammaton" refers to the four letters name of God YHWH.

[65] *ervalwe* (wv.) "become livid, to weaken" (BMZ 3: 213).

[66] "Anefeneton", "anaphenaton, anaphaxeton" refer to God, too.

[67] See also the transcription in Braekman 1997: 421-22 and Schum 1887.

[68] *triute, trouten* (wv.) "to love, make love, hug" (BMZ 3: 112).

[69] *küssen* (wv.) "to kiss" (BMZ 1: 918).

[70] *zervliezen* (sv.) "to melt down, liquefy" (Lexer 3: 1092).

[71] *lit* (n.) "limb" (Lexer 1: 1938).

[72] *erheizen* (wv.) "to warm up, become hot, excite" (Lexer 1: 636).

[73] Holzmann 2001: 172-173, http://www.handschriftencensus.de/4805, http://geb.uni-giessen.de/geb/volltexte/2007/4985/, Weigand 1855: 170-173.

[74] *rîchsen, reichsen, reichsnen, reychszen* (wv.) "to reign" (BMZ 2: 696, Grimm 14: 598).

[75] *sigenunft, sigenuft* "triumph" (BMZ 2: 272, Lexer 2: 917).

[76] *swëlch, sôwilch, swilich, swelch sô* (pron.) "anyone, if someone" (Lexer 3: 750, BMZ 3: 577).

[77] *swër, wër, sô wer so* (pron.) "who, anyone, if anybody" (BMZ 3: 567, Lexer 2. 1361).

[78] *tenc, tenk, denk* (adj.) "left" (BMZ 3: 29, Lexer, 2: 1422), or *tenken, denken* (n.) "thought" (Lexer 1: 418).

[79] *dûmo, daum, duom* "thumb" (Lexer 1: 474-475): in this case, it has a metaphoric meaning of "power, control": *unter dem daumen sein* "to be under someone's control" (Grimm 2: 845-851). The word can likewise be read as *döuwen, douwen, däwen, dewen* (wv.) "to digest, expiate, suffer" (Lexer 1: 455) so the whole sentence would be "or if she suffered worry".

[80] Lit.: "Under the left thumb".

[81] *tougen* (adj., adv. and n.) "secret, concealed, hidden" (BMZ 3: 59, Lexer 2: 1481), or *tauchen, tauge*n "to do" (Grimm 21: 181).

[82] *meinen* (wv.) "to think, mind, focus, mean" (BMZ 2: 107).

[83] Conj. (*stê*) of *stân* (sv.) "to stay, stand" (BMZ 2: 567).

[84] Past (*truoc*) of *tragen, trân* (sv.) "to carry, wear, bear" (BMZ 3: 67, Lexer 2: 1482).

[85] *gesetzen* (wv.) "to determine, arrange, set" (BMZ 2: 354).

[86] *wîz* (adj.) "white" (BMZ 3: 780, Lexer 3: 957).

[87] *swenne, swan* (conj.) "when, whenever" (BMZ 3: 501, Lexer 2: 1337).

[88] Holzmann 2001: 163, Mone 1838: 423, Priebsch ZfdA1894: 19. The plant is here the gentian, MHG. *madalgêr, madelgêr, modelgêr*, Germ. *kreuzwurz* (Grimm 12: 1427).

[89] Holzmann 2001: 163-164.

[90] Holzmann 2001: 164-167 transcribes this and other similar *Verbena charms* (14th-15th century).

[91] English translation of the *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, in Betz 1986: 64-66.

[92] For further reference see HWA 7: 898.

[93] English translation of the *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, in Betz 1986: 44-47.

[94] In the manuscript, the word *veinde* is written in the interlinear (it looks like a correction). Without this word, the sense of the whole sentence would have been unintelligible. This simple fact of a scribe correcting the text, might be worth further research, since it is an important clue in understanding both the process of composing/compiling and of performing/using the charm.

[95] According to Priebsch 1894: 18-21: ms. Add. 17527, f. 17v. See also: Pfeiffer 1854: 191.

[96] About the relationship among "*una*", the pervinca and the *Nine Herbs charm* see: Braekman 1980: 464.

[97] The bibliography on this peculiar topic is very dense, from Wittgenstein to Malinowsky to many other linguistic and folkloristic studies. A recent work of Passalis gives a summary of the main points and a list of fundamental reference works (Passalis 2012).

[98] Borsje 2012, Roper 2009.

[99] At a certain point, the formula of melting wax began to be related to love charms and it began even to be mentioned and described by some literary sources, such as: Theocritus (2nd Idyll), Virgil (8th Eclogue) and Horace (Satire 1.8.43-44). See: Toporkov 2009.

[100] Battista 2011, Crohns 1905, Pachumi 2012, Wack 1990: 38-46.

[101] Önnerfors 1991: 34-35.

[102] Holzmann 2001: 164.

[103] Ernst 2011: 160, see also: Holzmann 2001: 136, Menhardt 1951-52: 367.

[104] Holzmann 2001: 136.

[105] Borsje 2012, Roper 2009.

[106] Crohns 1905, Ruff 2003.

[107] Toporkov 2009: 127-129.

[108] Roper 2009: 127-139.

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CHARMERS ON THE FOLK PRACTICE OF CHARMING IN SERBIA

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Based on field interviews and written sources on charming in Serbia, this paper examines the social, cultural and symbolic roles of traditional charmers. Charmers speak of their practice, receiving, passing on and protecting magical knowledge, their relation towards patients and official medicine, and their relation towards the tradition of charming. Charmers perceive their role as being very important and fear that charming will become lost in the modern world.

Keywords: charmers, charming in Serbia, context, discourse, folk healing, magical practice, social and ritual roles

INTRODUCTION

The article informs our understanding of how charming practices continue to be transmitted, valued and questioned in contemporary Serbia. The introductory section reviews the development of ethno-medicine, the collecting and study of charms in Serbia and goes on to explain the research methodology and terminological differences with reference to traditional beliefs on the origin and diagnostics of illnesses. Based on contemporary field material and literature, the main section examines some of the constant motifs in the narrative accounts of charmers which contribute to the shaping of their social and gender roles and identities, such as the acquisition, transmission and preservation of secret knowledge, the charmer's practice, their attitudes towards the tradition of charming in their work, and towards official medicine.

Various kinds of traditional healing rituals, charming and magical practices are widely present in Serbia to this day, co-existing with heterogeneous forms of contemporary alternative medicine. The oldest records of apocryphal prayers for healing, magical formulae, sooth-saying, fortune-telling and other astrological texts among the Serbs date to the 13th and 14th centuries. Up to the late 19th century, various medicinal collections were translated and compiled (The Hilandar Medical Codex, the Hodoch Code, Philip Monotropos' Dioptra,

John the Exarch's Hexaemeron) and *lekaruše* (books on folk medicine), which beside writings on practical medicine and pharmacotherapy, also contained prayers and other texts from religious medicine. The basis of Serbian medieval medicine were the teachings of Hippocrates, Galen, Aristides and other ancient Greek physicians, Byzantine and Western European writings from the Salerno-Montpellier school, supplemented by empirical experience and ethnomedicine. In medieval times, the transmission of medicinal knowledge was mainly through Serbian monks on Mt. Athos and physicians of Italian origin – later Greek and Turkish – working in Serbia. At the time of the Serbian medieval state, the places where medical knowledge was exchanged were the monastery hospitals at Studenica, Dečani, Hilandar on Mount Athos and St. John Prodrome in Constantinople, where a school of medicine was founded alongside the hospital (Katić 1990: 16–17).

The 19th century saw the emergence of Serbia as an independent state when the first medical institutions were established along with schools and a medical corps. From the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans in the mid-15th century until that time, however, officially recognised physicians were in short supply and not readily available. Parallel to this, there was a general reliance on traditional ways of treatment, dominated by an animist view of the world and the use of magical practices. Even in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, despite medical advances, the introduction of regulations and legal prosecution of quacks, sorcerers and charmers, it was less popular to visit an officially recognised practitioner in a medical institution than to consult a folk healer, herbalist or charmer, of whom there were vast numbers. This particularly applied in rural environments, but also among the poorer classes in towns and their outlying areas. The reasons were various. It was not only lack of education, information or money that led to this situation – sometimes expenditure on treatment and transport would be less than the cost to the family caused by the illness of a bread-winning member (Fabijanić 123). From the mid-20th century to today, with an ever-spreading network of medical institutions and the extension of health insurance to the agricultural population, attitudes towards officially recognised treatment have changed, and the number of folk doctors and charmers periodically waxes and wanes, depending on the political, social, economic and other circumstances. At the time of writing this article, the tendency is for many healers and charmers to maintain traditional forms of healing, while at the same time appropriating and compiling methods and ideas from contemporary alternative medicine, new-age beliefs and practices. At the centre of these fluctuations remains the figure of the practitioner – the charmer, conjurer, healer, who with his or her charisma and social cachet attracts the attention of patients and those who study them.

Collection and investigation of Serbian and South Slavic folk incantations began in the mid-19th century and continues to this day. Incantations were written down in all parts of Serbia, most importantly from a research point of view in the east and south, areas that are more open towards charms and where the taboo on magical texts has to a certain extent been lifted.[1] According to Radenković (1996), from the mid-19th to the late 20th century, ca. 2,650 charms were recorded along with several thousand descriptions of magical procedures. The number increases if we count contemporary field studies over the past two decades. In accordance with the goals of earlier research and the scientific methodology of that time, the emphasis was on collecting texts of charms, prayers, and other forms of folk medicine, and possibly on descriptions of the healing attributes of herbs. Information about practitioners and the context of performing is meagre and at times omitted altogether. The study of charms was primarily directed at analysing the texts of the charms. This was usually within a framework of folklore-directed language and literary-aesthetic research, or from the standpoint of structural linguistics, cultural anthropology and semiotics. In older literature, there are only a few articles on charmers and folk healers, and rare mention of specific practitioners as part of a general reference to folk medicine and charming in a certain region. Only over the past three decades has closer research begun into the context of charming, the discourse of charmers, the relation of the text to magical practice from various theoretical approaches and in an inter-disciplinary context. Although valuable individual contributions and material have been collected, there is still a need for a systematic study of the position and role of charmers, practitioners of traditional medicine and those who make use of their services. This needs to cover the broader cultural, historical and social context, since not enough attention has been paid to them in terms of daily life, behaviour, beliefs and rituals, gender ideology and attitudes towards health and the body. This would establish the demographic and social characteristics of charmers and practitioners of folk medicine (their number, age, occupation, education, degree of professionalism, income, cultural profile), and the legal, social and psychological aspects of their activity, thus providing a more reliable picture of the numerous aspects of their engagement and interaction with the people who use their services.

NOTES ON METHODOLOGY AND TERMINOLOGY

The focus of this article will be charming as a social and cultural practice. Depending on the degree of desacralization of the magical text in the particular

ethno-cultural environment, the field interviews covered written records of charms and spells, the performance of rituals, their content, or the context in which the charming took place. In cases where charming was the topic of conversation, the description of ritual practice intermeshes with the life story of the charmer who explains, for instance, how she learned her craft, the illnesses she can cure, to whom she intends to pass on her knowledge etc. Conversations about charming are seen as a specific aspect of communication and psychological transfer with clients on one hand, and field researchers on the other.

Portions of the discourse of charmers presented in this article have been taken from field research and printed studies.[2] Several interviews have been chosen to illustrate how charmers see their own position and role in society, magical practice, their attitudes towards the medical profession, the Church and official medicine. Typical fragments have been included that cast light on the reception and results of charming from the standpoint of participants or observers of the healing rituals.

Our customary procedure when documenting practice in the field is to set up semi-structured interviews with the charmers without a strictly established questionnaire, which enables an active dialogue and spontaneous development of certain topics. As some incantations or descriptions of magical acts can be passed on by family members, witnesses or participants in the rituals, we intend to present folkloristic, ethno-linguistic and qualitative interviews with each type of source. The methodology enables researchers to gather the words of incantations and description of rituals, as well as providing autobiographical details and other information on relations within the society, behaviour, interactions, views, emotions and beliefs.

The use of terms referring to charmers and charming varies depending on the cultural and spoken context. Serbian has numerous appellations, but their meaning is similar and because of this they are sometimes wrongly taken as being identical. *Bajalica* or *basmara* – a charmer – is the term generally used to denote a woman who deals in charming for the purpose of healing and removing spells; for a man it is *bajač*, *basmar*. *Basma* – incantation – is the magical text which is spoken during charming. Both words originate from the Indo-European root *bha- meaning "to speak". Unlike charming, činjenje, vračanje, čaranje, madjijanje (conjuring) point to the infliction of evil, the casting of spells (čini) or evil magic (*madjije*), and are carried out by a conjurer or sorceress (*vračara* – Indo-European *ver- to turn around), činilica, madjosnica or *madjijarka, samovila*. The terms *bajanje* and *vračanje* are used both emically within the community and etically as categories in academic research. The charmers themselves differentiate between *vračanje* ("black magic") and *bajanje* or charming ("white magic"): "I don't know how to do black magic. I know

only how to charm. There's a big difference. Oooo!" (Radenković 1996: 15). The term *baba* (old woman, grandmother) is used synonymously for both charmer and sorceress, and is often added as an attribute to a personal name; also the diminutive *babica,* a midwife who helps women in childbirth.[3] In fairytales and legends, "old woman" is a common euphemism for a witch. The terms witch and warlock (*veštica* and *veštac*, *ved- to know, to possess secret knowledge) relate to a person who is "in cahoots with the devil and does evil, particularly to small children, possesses supernatural powers, turns into a bird or a butterfly, casts spells, performs tricks" (RMS). They also denote mythological beings. The practitioners of some specialised forms of magical practice have special appellations, e.g., diviners foretell the future by divining with seeds (of corn, beans, broad beans), cards etc.; herbalists use medicinal plants for healing. Finally, folk healers and curers may also include some aspects of magical practice. (For more detail on these terms see: Djordjević 1985 [1938]; Radenković 1996; Levkievskaya 1999; Conrad 1983).

The meanings of the terms given above can be more general, can change or be opaque in direct speech. For instance, the term *samovila* (a variant of the term *vila* – a fairy), which otherwise denotes a familiar Slavic mythological being, when used for charmers points to their special connection with them. There are numerous records of charmers from southern Serbia and Kosovo who claimed to have received the gift of healing from the fairies and regularly turned to them for help (Djordjević 1985; Vukanović 1986). Or the term *gatanje* – divination, soothsaying, which is used not only to denote prediction of the future, but also for extinguishing hot coals when the cause of the sickness is sought in this way. In one record from Dubočica,[4] the respondent uses the term *gatara* for a woman who extinguished coal so as to heal a cow from an evil eye (*urok*, *zle oči*), and for a charmer who had caused his parents to bear male children and later advised them to pass the children through a wolf's yawn (*vučji zev*, the jaw of a wolf, the skin around the mouth) so that they would be healthy and magically protected.[5]

In some cases even the mere mention of the conjurer or witch is taboo, so that descriptive or euphemistic terms are used. In one record from the Banat, the conjurers are marked as "those who do it":

> That happened with us [for the women to ride the spindle],[6] and the people run. You know her, A…'s wife, what's her name… The people see her, and she threatens them: if you betray me, harm will come to the house. And then he wouldn't tell. And so, *those that did it*, none of them prospered. With all of them the household went – phtt, collapsed (Pavković & Matić 2009: 601).

In translation, shift and overlap in meaning may occur with the terms *charmer* and *conjurer* (see different terms in: Kerewsky-Halpern 1983; Vivod 2007; Ilić 2007). Additional explanations are necessary, therefore, to specify their characteristics and areas of activity. The typologies of practitioners of traditional medicine (Baer 1982; Davies 1998; Horsley 1979; Lovelace 2011; Popovkina 2008; Dobrovolskaya 2011) recognise similar measures for systematization, among which the most important are: the professionalism of the charmer, the range of activities (the illnesses they heal) and the frequency of their practice. In this paper I have used conversations with charmers who heal only their own or neighbourhood children (some are close to the term *cunning folk*, see Thomas 1973; Davies 1998; Magliocco 2004), but also with professional charmers who are known outside their village.

UNDERSTANDING AND DIAGNOSING ILLNESS

In clarifying the discourse and terminology distinguishing between charmers and conjurers, we should, if we are to avoid vagueness, also consider the term "illness"[7] and how doctors, healers and patients approach it. According to Kleinman, disease is culturally constructed and shaped by cultural factors, so that there are numerous causes and approaches. Patients and doctors have differing, insufficient views of illness,[8] and traditional healers turn out to be more successful since they are "principally concerned with illness, that is, with treating the human experience of sickness ... Healers seek to provide a meaningful explanation for illness and to respond to the personal, family, and community issues surrounding illness" (Kleinman et al. 1978: 2). In the case of charming, the success of the charmer and the healing of the sick person depend on the diagnosis of the illness, finding its cause or sender, and the manner of treatment. Understanding the illness, ritual procedure and the texts of the charms are marked by a religious syncretism characteristic of Serbian folk religion.[9] According to traditional notions of the Slavs and many others, illnesses come from demonic beings (evil spirits), whether by entering the body or by inadvertently coming in touch with them; from sorceresses who inflict them by conjuring (through worms, snakes or spiders which they send downwind), or from certain people with demonic characteristics (the curse, the evil eye). Such illnesses occur suddenly, mysteriously and incomprehensibly and are treated by charming, whereas illnesses occurring from visible consequences (cuts, broken bones, a bullet etc.) are not charmed away (Petrović 1948: 352).

Parallel with these notions, it was also believed that illnesses came from God and the saints as atonement for sin, or that man was predestined to illness, so

that healing implied prayers and the leaving of endowments to churches and monasteries. The prognosis depended on the will of God which gave rise to sayings such as: "if there is life there is also a cure", "it was fated so", "thus God giveth". Therefore it is not unusual that Christian attributes and symbolic acts (icons, frankincense, perfuming with incense, sending the sick person to visit churches, prayers) are mixed with the typical requisites of the charmer (a knife, basil, a broom, various funereal objects, stone, animal parts etc.), amulets and periapts which she or he prepares for protection and healing. However, it turns out that the interdependence between the cause of the illness and the use of Christian symbols and attributes varies, since the piety of the charmers and their belief in the sacral nature of their work also determine some elements of the treatment. It has been recorded, for instance, that some charmers in the vicinity of Knjaževac insisted on the fact that their "patient" be baptized in the church, while others did not raise the question (Kostić 1998: 142). Trust in the charmer is of enormous significance for attitude towards the illness and success of the healing. It has long been noticed that charmers like to say that they have "a light hand" given to them by God, that they rely on His help, "and if the sick person thinks the same, then he is already on the way to being healed" (Pavlović 1921: 138).

Charmers diagnose the illness by regarding the visible symptoms or by extinguishing coals (*gašenje ugljevlja*), melting lead (*salivanje strave*) in water and many other techniques. The diagnosis itself is arbitrary, a matter of how the charmer judges the position of the object in the water: an eastward or westward movement means that the illness is serious or less serious; whether the coal floats or sinks, the heating (hissing) of the coal, or the figures formed by melted lead or tin are divined. If the position of the item in the water is ambiguous, the answer of the charmer may be likewise, so it is recommended that some follow-up sign be shown (Djordjević 1985 [1938]). For instance, in a record from Dubočica (central Serbia), the charmer gave a charm and a cure to return the milk to a cow ("You go home and run your left hand down her back, saying three times: The left hand has no cross, my cow – what was her name? Balja – has no cure… And pour water on it") but she allowed that the illness could be physical, not from a curse: "If she is naturally sensitive, she will not give [milk] anymore, but if someone has put a [curse] on her, then she will allow herself to be milked." The respondent's commentary shows that he distances himself from the charmer and the healing, seeing that it was unsuccessful:

> She did not give [milk] anymore, I sold her. Those are all stories. I'm not convinced that I believe, or that I don't believe. This is the first time that I made use of this, the wife says: Go, go. I went. How much there is in it, how much there isn't...

DISCOURSE OF CHARMERS

There is much to be discovered in the discourse[10] of charmers such as ritual practice and magical texts along with the constants which make up the programme: the repertoire of illnesses to be healed, the manner in which charmers act and behave (so-called *opposite behaviour* compared to the usual), the props they use and the temporal, spatial and other symbolic forms they adhere to when performing the charm. Frequent motifs and commonplace items recounted by charmers include how and from whom they received the secret knowledge or magical texts, what motivates them to charm and heal, while some also mention those who come to them for help, their degree of success in healing, where their clients come from, how they charge for their services, their understanding of the job, their attitude towards formal medicine, the church and God. In some interviews, charmers also talk about what happens behind the scenes within their own families, particularly when the family does not approve of what they do.

The openness of the charmer and how the narration develops in the interview depends on various factors. In itself a sensitive and specific practice, the charming is not equally taboo in every environment, and the distance or reserve of the charmer points to significant changes in traditional culture and the destabilization of magical practice. The attitude, official or otherwise, of the local community and institutions (public opinion, church, the authorities) towards charming, affects how charmers work and determines their power, both symbolic and in society. The condemnation of magical practice as backward and harmful directly reflects on the reputation of the charmers and relegates them to the margins. As always in field research, the way in which charmers conceive and present their narratives and the extent to which auto-censorship is present are determined by subjective and contextual factors: how they interact with the researcher, the researcher's status and approach, the specific circumstances in which the recording takes place and the possible presence of an audience – the charmer's family, other clients, etc.

Charmers' roles and expressiveness

Charmers can be conscious of the performativeness of magical ritual, the importance of their own role and the needs of the clients, and this awareness – sometimes a subconscious feeling – influences how they shape their performance. As Goffman writes, the individual may sincerely believe in his performance or he may be cynical about it. Between these two extremes are transitional forms, maintained by the force of a kind of self-illusion:

We find that the individual may attempt to induce the audience to judge him and the situation in a particular way, and he may seek this judgement as an ultimate end in itself, and yet he may not completely believe that he deserves the valuation of self which he asks for or that the impression of reality which he fosters is valid. (Goffman 1956: 12–13).

With some shamans, as Kroeber cites, this self-illusion, whether it be a consequence of suppression or not, borders on delusion. "Field ethnographers seem quite generally convinced that even shamans who know that they add fraud nevertheless also believe in their powers, and especially in those of other shamans: they consult them when they themselves or their children are ill" (Kroeber 1952: 311).

Some charmers express sincerity and belief in magical practice. One famous charmer, Velja from Ošljane (eastern Serbia), healed people suffering from *crveni vetar* ("red wind", erysipelas or St. Anthony's fire) which affects the soft parts of the body, including the genitals, and manifests itself in a red rash with blisters filled with yellow fluid. The procedure requires that the patient be naked, as the affected area is circled by a hen's feather dipped in red paint; the sign of the cross is made and the charm recited. According to Velja's words: "The one who applies this procedure has to be interested, but also careful and civilized, since he is working with naked persons, he has to guarantee discretion ('not to give anyone away or gossip')" (Krstić 2001: 198).

The ritual and social roles of the charmer are mutually connected, but are also ambivalent. As the Bulgarian folklorist Todorova-Pirgova (2015) points out, the social status of the charmer is connected to the social hierarchy (the charmer is an old woman/man, a widow/widower, which implies a high position), but also to the ritual status (ritual purity is required, sexual inactivity, the menstrual cycle must have ended). The charmer has reached the highest degree of socialization in the company of the living and ascended to the last step towards the world of the dead, the world of the ancestors. The situation is due to the special gift and dedication of the charmer, which enables her to make contact with the other world and places her as the mediator. Because of this ability she has an ambivalent role in the community. As charmers can both heal and inflict harm, the community acknowledges their powers but also fears them. Therefore, in social terms, charmers are both the chosen ones and the impure, both sought out and avoided, as Pirgova writes (2015: 59–60). Their social and ritual role implies that they constantly approach and

distance themselves from "their own" and "the other", which makes their position a borderline one – they are present both "here" and "there" (in this world and the next), and on the social and spatial-ritual borderline.

Charmers from the aspect of gender

In order better to understand the gender aspects of the charming practice and various power-related discourses in folk religion reflected in both social and ritual roles, it should be borne in mind that in traditional Serbian culture, notions about women are ambivalent. They stem from the idea that a woman is in some situations dangerous and powerful, that her touch or proximity can endanger males, but also that in other situations she is susceptible to the curse and therefore in danger (e.g. during pregnancy or at a wedding). A number of restrictions and bans existed on female movement and behaviour, on contacts with certain categories of people and animals, participation in male work, rituals and entertainments. In traditional culture, the female space is separated from the male. When a woman moves into the male space and performs male work, she appropriates the role of a man with its rights and social status. Therefore society uses various taboos to defend itself from such "aggression" (Bandić 2008: 166). The symbolical power and ritual status of the woman are constructed on the grounds of notions about her body (menstrual blood, pregnancy, giving birth), and also her ability to communicate with the other world, or with God.

Religion maintains that women are ritually impure, which leads to society also construing them as inferior (Radulović 2009: 187). Some scholars interpret this as a means of justifying misogyny and the submissive position of women in a traditional patriarchal society (Blagojević 2002). The patriarchal model considerably influenced the shaping of discourse on social and ritual roles and the religious status of women. Since in the patriarchate patrilineality, patrilocality, the principle of men's dominance over women and of old over young were characteristic, the position of women was unfavourable, women's roles were strictly determined and accompanied by various gender prejudices. In Serbia the patriarchal model held sway for a long time and was reflected in virtually all spheres of life. A characteristic form of the patriarchate was the clan commune (*zadruga*), "the basic form of a complex family organisation and the foundation of all aspects of social life" (Tripković 2007: 390), where women's duties were to bear children (only male heirs were valued, female children were marginalized), to raise them and take care of the family, perform domestic tasks and some of the agricultural work, to please her husband and submit to him, to behave in accordance with traditional customary and moral norms and thus

represent the family with honour. Since property and work in the commune were collective, women were economically dependent and disempowered. In traditional Serbian society only mothers, girls (virgins) and good housewives were shown as positive female roles, while a negative status was ascribed to barren women, those who bore only female children or women whose behaviour in some way disturbed the patriarchal order.

The social role of a charmer is connected to gender, implying certain gender and cultural stereotypes. In the Slavic context, men usually recite charms for snake bites, issue *zapis*, a charm periapt, or act as herbalists and healers (here we will not go into their connection with various kinds of cattle, calendar magic or magic associated with specific pursuits such as hunting and fishing). Women are the bearers and transmitters of the charm tradition, and it is customary, if not obligatory, for the knowledge to be handed down through the female line. The connection of women with magic, and in some cases the designation of evil magic as the exclusive purlieu of women, are part of the broadly accepted discourse and have virtually become commonplace without sufficient argument to back the assumptions. Anthropological research shows that gender magic is treated as "a feminine instrument in constructing the social reality of gender relations" (Radulović 2009: 237). In societies where patriarchal cultural models dominate, evil magic, as lower and subordinate, is associated with the female domain and negative principles as opposed to the male principle, which has positive value connotations. Feminist anthropologists consider gender magic a strategy of symbolic power which plays a significant part in determining role and power in gender relations. The mystical powers of the female charmer are connected here to authority. Mary Douglas (2001) points out, however, that the nature of the authority differs depending on whether the powers of the charmer are unconscious and uncontrolled, as in witchcraft and prophetic visions, or if they are controlled, conscious and approved, when certain authorities possess the power to bless or curse. According to Serbian anthropologist Lidija Radulović (2009: 250), the community or authorities who accuse charmers of witchcraft wish to make symbolic use of the informal power of the woman, or to restrict it, thus protecting the social conventions on the roles of women and men, very prominent in the patriarchal South Slavic context. This author cites many examples showing that "folk religion was used as a powerful ideological and symbolical means to diminish the significance of women in the sacral sphere or assign them second-rate importance" (2009: 352), as the type of power and the treatment of women and men who communicated with the supernatural differed. As the exponents of God or a supernatural power, prophetic and healing powers are ascribed to men, or the religious office of a priest. Unlike male power which is controlled, feminine power is described as uncontrolled, as in

the case of the Rusalja of eastern Serbia – women who fall into trances to communicate with the dead and utter prophecies.

> "The Rusalja are enabled to encroach into the male 'professionalised' sphere due to the special status of women in the cult of the dead, based on which the Rusalja receive prophetic powers in communication with the spirits of the deceased. In the case of an epidemic, sickness or misfortune, a need for communication with the dead or foretelling the future, there is recourse to female magic or other forms in which women are the religious functionaries and even exponents of God in the discourse of folk concepts... Power may manifest itself in various forms and dimensions, and women, even though they do not have political or economic authority, may be 'permitted' a moment of spiritual supremacy in the community or group. In this case, the gender category is also understood as multidimensional and variable; in other words, there are different levels in the gender category. In these terms, it is easier to understand the various ritual and religious statuses of women, as for example pregnant women, witches, nuns, prophetesses – Rusalje, charmers, mothers" (Radulović 2009: 354).

Acquiring, transmitting and guarding the secret knowledge

Interviews with charmers in Serbia together with the voluminous literature show that the charmer begins to separate herself from the community by the very act of acquiring magical knowledge or the power of charming (Radenković 1996; Ilić 2005; the same may also be observed in other traditions, see eg: Kõiva 1996; Passalis 2001). The knowledge is usually received from a mother, grandmother or husband's mother, more rarely from distant relatives; it may also come along a male-to-female line. Knowledge may be passed on by a neighbour from the same community or learned from foreigners of the same or different faith (in the present material there are examples of receiving secret knowledge from Russians, Vlachs/Romanians and Turks). A charm can also be stolen by being overheard and memorised without the possessor of the sacral knowledge being aware. Knowledge may be received in a dream, a borderline state such as a trance, or when the neophyte is caught by the wind or struck by some misfortune or illness. Knowledge is also received from God, the Virgin Mary, St. Petka (Parasceve) and other saints or from the fairies (in this case, the charmer is in a trance for several days when speaking with the fairies, who instruct her how to cure the sick). Special birthmarks on the body may mean that a child is predestined to have magical abilities.

In an example from eastern Serbia, a charmer from Ranovac (eastern Serbia) received her magical knowledge in early childhood as a song, and learned magical actions in the family, where the knowledge was passed on "since ancient times."

> – From whom did you learn [charming]?
>
> – From an old man. He taught it to us. We had a summer cattle pasture in the mountains. And when he came, we fed them all [the cattle], and then we all went out there in the shade. Come, children, he says, sit by me a little, and granddad will sing you a pretty song. He talks, talks this, talks that. There were various [songs].
>
> …..
>
> – Was there anyone else in your family who [read the future in seeds]?
>
> – Yes, both my great grandmother and my father. I too [learned] this, not from the one who taught me how to cast charms, but from my family, since the old days. That is from the old days, I know how to [read the future in] seeds. And the charms which one man taught me, well I was, who can tell, second, third grade when we learnt it. He [spoke] to all of us, but only I remembered. Well there you have it.[11]

The receiving of magical knowledge in some cases requires a special ritual, a so-called "marriage" with the incantation. A female charmer from the village of Vidrovac (eastern Serbia) describes it as follows:

> – Oh, I know a lot of that, I know a lot of those songs. But, you know, you need to keep them in your mind. My grandmother stepped on my foot, but it will not work for everyone.
>
> – Aha, what do you mean?
>
> – When you go to church to get married…, and [you should] think at the wedding [of the incantation], [for otherwise] it will not work; if you know how to weave charms, but when you didn't think of it at the wedding in church. And my grandmother stepped on me in the church, at the wedding, when I got married… for me to remember it, the incantations. (Ćirković 2007: 163)

> A ritual has also been recorded in which a small girl or boy is prepared to receive a charm. Together with the charmer who will transfer it, they go to a meadow and look for a young, grafted fruit tree. There they hold the twig on one side, the charmer on the other. The charmer recites the charm aloud and they repeat it (Radovanović 1997: 12, 44).

The power of charming may be received in a dream from God, the Virgin Mary and the saints.

> – Who did you learn it from?
>
> – God gave it to me, a gift from God. I didn't inherit it, I didn't buy it, I didn't steal it, this work of mine. I was sick and it was God who gave it to me. I give help to others, because there is no way back.
>
> – Did somebody come to you in a dream to show you?
>
> – It is God's will. God's will, I am not allowed to tell anything. And I work, I work, child. It's been twenty and eight years that I've been doing this job. (Ilić 2007: 151)

In this manner, knowledge is received not only by charmers and herbalists but also clairvoyants and church persons.[12] Thus the sacral nature of the knowledge is emphasised, now characterised as a gift from God, and the charmer must follow the instructions she/he receives in the dream. Charmers who have received knowledge in this manner are usually extremely pious and include Christian prayers in their healing. A famous clairvoyant healer, Kata Gorinka (southern Serbia), "made a great number of her 'patients' vow to take a round loaf on St. Paul's day to the Turekovac church," and sometimes she herself would take them to have a prayer of St. Basil read over them; the healer, Old Mother Mita from Vlasotince, instructed her grateful patients to donate money for the building of a church in Vlasotince (Djordjević 1985: 147, 152).

When magical knowledge is not received from within the family, it can be preceded by the testing of the neophyte. The charmer who passes on the knowledge judges whether the recipient is worthy of receiving knowledge. A charmer from the vicinity of Užice (western Serbia) tells how she received the knowledge unexpectedly, when the giver decided that she had been selected by fate for this gift:

> – An old woman from Bukovik told me here … And I said to her: Well I don't know whether I will be able to bring happiness to someone … And

she says: You will, you will, you have some kind of *novaka* [fatal predetermination] in you. I saw it. You have some *novaka* in you and you will bring happiness. And you believe in God and you will bring happiness. And really, just as she told me, whoever came to me I saved him. Well, four of them I didn't save, I said what it was, but the doctor saved them, they are all alive. …

– How old were you when she passed on that knowledge to you?

– She passed it on to me… well, now it'll be forty-seven or eight years that I've been doing this. There. When that sister-in-law's little son came, we took him to her and then she showed it to me. There.

– So, this is not some gift from God, you learned it from…

– She wrote it down for me. She wrote everything down… and told me so and so, this and that, you will do this like this and then she told me this: – I will come to your home and I will show you medicine for the cattle. And she showed me some incantations for the cattle. I stick to it to this day, for the cattle also. And that is how I do it, there. And for making cheese, for brewing, the old woman showed me all this.[13]

The passing on of magical knowledge is linked to the belief that afterwards, the previous possessor loses his or her powers. If an incantation is told to someone else, then it will no longer have the power to heal. Also, once the knowledge has been passed on, the novice will not have success until the older one ceases working (Ilić 2005). Some people believe that charmers pass on their knowledge before they die in order to have an easier death (since those who practice magic, especially maleficent, are considered impure and sinful, being in contact with the evil spirits), and that this explains their donating to churches (Tucakov & Knežević 1960: 90).

Some charmers do not wish to recite charms, not because they are afraid they will be ineffective, but because they are protecting family knowledge passed on from their ancestors. This knowledge is protectively guarded even when the charmers do not understand the text of the charm. Thus, Velja from Ošljane learned charms from his grandfather, the text of which he does not understand (probably because the charms are in Romanian), since the grandfather learned them in Wallachia where he worked as a guest worker (Krstić 2001: 198-199).

Participating in the charming tradition

In contrast to concealing the text of a charm on the pretext of its being a family heirloom, in another case it was a wish to preserve tradition that was the incentive for the charm to be written down and handed to the researcher. Barbara Kerewsky-Halpern shares accounts of her experience with Branko from Orašac (central Serbia) who received from his cousin, Baba Vida, a healing charm for snakebite. Vida's daughters lived away from the village in the town while Branko remained, so she explained her decision thus: "They don't need the charm. They are no longer peasants." At the point when he received it, however, Branko was not open towards charming: "Branko confided at that time that he did not feel comfortable with 'these female things'" (Kerewsky-Halpern 1983: 312). When she asked about the charm, Branko was not sure that he would continue in the tradition and was distant in his attitude towards magical healing. At the time, it appears, he did not understand the charm as a component of healing but more as evidence of olden times which should be archived:

> He tore a page from his son's copybook and wrote down the charm, explaining, '... I wrote it down so that these old things would be preserved.' Part of his reason for writing it, I feel, was to relieve him of some of the responsibility he had inherited." (Kerewsky-Halpern 1983: 313)

However, an about-turn followed quickly, since Kerewsky-Halpern reports that by the following year, villagers from Orašac and the surrounding villages of Stojnik and Vrbica were trustingly bringing their afflicted cows to Branko, so it may be assumed that with the acceptance of his new role, Branko's experience of the text of the charm had also changed.

In this case, the growth of trust in the effectiveness of charming may be viewed as a process. Trust is acquired through repeating the rituals of charming and implies that positive results are sufficiently predictable and consistent, and that the practice is judged to be beneficial. With charmers who practise only occasionally within a small circle, there may be doubt of success. There is the interesting example of Milena, whose attitude towards charming varied with her level of confidence in the process and her own abilities, where conflicting emotions swung between acceptance of charming and admiration for the old mother charmer on the one hand, and shame and fear of punishment and social exclusion on the other. As a girl, she received from her grandmother a charm for curing styes and at the same time the power of healing, acquired by touching a snail at a certain time of year:

> Listen, in the spring when you see before [the feast of] Cosmas and Damian, when you see a snail naked, the one that carries its house on its back, you are to use your finger to return them when he puts out his two horns, and afterwards I will tell you the charm, you will succeed in this, since this silly [daughter] of mine and my two silly daughters-in-law do not believe, and it is a pity not to help the people.[14]

Healing procedure envisages the charmer using the same finger to touch the painful spot and say three times: "Left hand has no cross and there is no place for pain [illness] there, retreat, pain!"[15] With the help of the snail, styes and cataracts on the eyes are cured, and the snail is sown into a hat to protect the owner from the evil eye. The symbolism of the snail among the Serbs has positive connotations since, according to legend, it was created from the spittle of Christ or the Virgin Mary, or from a piece of the host which was scattered around the church during a marauding attack by the Turks (Djordjević 1958/II: 206).

Milena, as she says, from a young age observed the work of her grandmother. On one occasion, while castrating a pig, worms appeared. The grandmother worked a charm with the help of a small stake which she stuck into the ground backwards, chanting the charm, after which the girl saw that the worms had exited one by one, leaving a trail. Milena also cites other cases of successful healing (her grandmother cured hernia, styes, stomach ache and other illnesses). She herself was probably already deeply convinced of the successfulness of charming at that time. However, she also noticed suspicion and obstruction within the family, and with persons who for her represented authority:

> And she [the grandmother] again [takes] that little stake, always so, backwards [she turns it], and my mother and aunt do not believe, and so they dig up all these stakes of my grandmother, and then she scolds them and puts them back again. For… if this happens, then they have to come again.

Growing up surrounded by this contradictory attitude of her family towards charming, Milena doubted that the charm which she received would be effective. She was only persuaded when she succeeded in helping a friend, but at the same time felt shame and fear of rejection. Because of this, she did not tell anyone what she knew. In later years, after she got a job as a teacher, she continued to hide her magical knowledge. Still, she worked charms for some acquaintances and cured their styes, but was hesitant each time, ashamed and afraid she might lose her job. She asked them not to reveal her secret. Since the charm proved effective, after several successful healings Milena gradually rid herself

of fear and shame and accepted her sporadic role of charmer. In conversation, with each new example of healing her self-confidence grows and a certain satisfaction is felt with her success, since helping others has enabled her to live in accordance with her ego ideal. Uneasiness is replaced by a benevolent and slightly amused attitude towards her own role in healing a female neighbour.

> My neighbour the priest's wife came, she did not know that I knew how to charm. She came, the woman could not see out of one eye. She says: I have to go to the doctor tomorrow. She came, since my daughter is a doctor, she came to complain to her. And I take her by the hand. – Never mind the doctor, I say, you come to another doctor who will fix it for you, cure it…. Let me charm it for you, but don't go away now and talk about it: she recited a charm for me and it went away. – Well, says [the priest's wife], save me. I work the charm for her, and so in the same way she got rid of it.

Summing up her experience, Milena returns to the discourse of giving presents modelled on a form of reciprocity: a gift from God (the knowledge of charming) should be repaid by curing the ill, where the charmer is the intermediary of the received power:

> I know, to my grandmother they used to bring from the village. Sugar, coffee, but she never took money. Is it that she must not take it, is it perhaps God who has given you the gift and how are you to charge someone for it.[16]

According to widespread custom, charmers do not take money for their healing and so emphasise their role as intermediary and at the same time the sacral nature of the secret knowledge.

In some places, the custom still survives of placing gifts brought by clients on the ground (Ilić 2007: 154), thus symbolically purchasing the favor of chthonic beings whose representative on earth is believed to be the charmer.

Charmers' opinions of their practice and the official medicine

In self-representation and when forming their role in society, it is typical for charmers to generalise and idealise some of their characteristics, thus constructing an ideal-typical form with a set of desirable features. Such widespread stereotypes include the emphasising of the charmer's special nature. He or she should have good fortune and be destined by fate, but should also believe

in God and go to church. Besides, it is necessary to be of moral character and not to reject professional medicine but rather to cooperate with the doctors.

> – You know, child, not everyone can do it. This has to be embraced by a person who believes in everything: both in faith, and in the doctors, and in all that [is] possible. The second thing, the work is done by a woman who is really honest, well-known, and like the elders say, a respectable woman. … This has to enter into your soul, you have to love doing this work, and then you begin doing it. You have to do it wholeheartedly, it's not a problem about money but rather to help people; yes, really, for people to thank you, for you to really help people, for them to recover their health, for the people to move forward.[17]

Many charmers make a clear distinction between their area of healing and the domain of official medicine. Charmer Vera from Vrbovac in the Serbian enclave Vitina in Kosovo enumerates:

> – I can't cure leukaemia, cancer, the kidneys, the heart – these are not mine – diabetes. Those five diseases are not mine, those are the doctor's. (Ilić 2007: 150)

Charmers frequently point out their successes in healing and present themselves as a moral, humane person, graced by God. Typical motifs are that the charmer wants to help and unselfishly makes sacrifices, healing people even on a holiday or her own patron saint's day, and also waving aside the importance of financial compensation for her services.

> – And can [you work] every day?
>
> – Well let me tell you something, I avoid major holidays, but when a patient comes to me, I can't turn him back, even though it is a holiday… I pray to God three times on the holiday to forgive me. For I work for God, or I ask the holiday to forgive me. (Djordjević 2011: 185–186)

Formulas of sincere gratitude to the charmer develop, where her professional and social roles are elevated to the maximum. A typical procedure is the citing of places from which the clients come, and so the towns and villages of her own and foreign countries enter the map of "her own" symbolically-drawn social space. This renown of the charmer is explained by both her missionary role and the benefit she brings to people:

> – Here, you see, everyone I did [healing] to, it helped everyone, everyone thanked me and everyone appreciates me, and here the word about me has been, as the old women say, spread to the ends of the earth almost, the word has spread. Here, they come now, for instance, from Niš, from Belgrade, from Novi Sad, from Vršac. And I won't even mention the surrounding area… You see, there isn't a single village that hasn't heard of me! I swear to you, my child. Not a single, not a single village! Yes. And I mean, that if it, if it was not successful, if it was not beneficial for the people, I believe that no one would have approached you. All the people come, no matter who and what they are, daughter…. looking for salvation. No matter what religion. They came … even those from Germany, from Switzerland… our people who are there.[18]
>
> …
>
> – They used to come from America to me, looking for help. I gave to everyone, I didn't spare my soul. But I was rewarded. When I help them, they reward me, afterwards. Yes. (Ilić 2007: 162)

The charmer is thanked not only by happily cured clients of all ages and religions, she is also given recognition by doctors and other representatives in important state positions.

> – But in this [charming] I have really, it helped everyone: both children, and the old, and the small. Doctors came, for instance medical nurses, policemen, from the municipality, from the court … from all sides the people came, and as they say, also those who work in medicine, and in all. I mean everyone who came, couldn't… couldn't find any remedy for those frights and for that ransom [from the deceased], for example, and for that intention (spell).[19]

In the stories about the gratitude of doctors, typical motifs are that the patient had sought a cure for a long time and that the doctors had written him off, or had even advised him to contact a charmer. In a short time, however, the charmer succeeds in completely curing the patient:

> – A woman came to me, she was from Switzerland. And she was ill, and then that Kraut, the doctor, said in their kind [= in their language]: You have a great fear inside of you! And you should seek a cure from that fear, but we can't help you, we have no medicines for that. And then she came here, and I melt that fear of hers, and I make a ransom and that

> fear – she had both, and here she is to this day healthy as a ducat! She has no problems at all![20]

In some examples there is a tendency to make out the role of the charmer as superior and unassailable in relation to the doctors of official medicine. Such self-elevation not only has the pragmatic function of establishing the charmer's own status, but also plays a magical role in preserving her healing powers:

> – And I used to get people out of hospital who… couldn't ever be healed. And that doctor cannot find anything, and he [the patient] is not well. I do water casting [tin casting] and the child leaves the hospital, finishes with it… And the doctor in Belgrade says: – Well you are, he says, a bigger doctor than… She, that woman, is a bigger doctor than we are. (Djordjević 2011: 183)

Apart from proving herself as a professional healer, the charmer has to maintain her everyday roles of wife, mother, grandmother, neighbour etc. in her normal environment, which is often traditional, patriarchal and parochial. In the case of Vera from Vrbovac, her healing practice "could have undermined the dignity of her husband who would have normally been supposed to be the bread-winner in the family", as Ilić noted (2007: 148). However, since Vera received her healing powers as a gift from God ("I was ill and it was God who gave it to me"), the higher power interfered on Vera's behalf like a supernatural helper in fairy tales, and the husband was punished.

> – Is it true that it is considered a sin to prevent a gifted person from helping others?
>
> – I was forbidden to do it by my husband. Once he went to the grocery, and people told him, it was a long time ago, and he said: "Woman, people are laughing at me. They say: His wife conjures to put food on the table. They have a horde of children, her husband is a drunk, so she lies to people to support the family". And my husband stopped me doing it. I cried and cried and said: "Please, don't stand in my way, I beg you, I have to work. It's my duty to work." But no, no way. I was forbidden to conjure for six months by my husband. But then I swore to him: "God will send you a disease and it will make you sick. The time will come for me to cure you and then you will let me work." And that's how it was. (Ilić 2007: 148)

In one recording, the motif of marginalization and persecution of charmers is tinged by humour and turned into the subject of an anecdote.

> – Well, the police come to me, I do water casting for the police, and their children, two police cars parked here at my [place]. Now I had done casting for one boy and his children once before, well, well he came again and brought his colleague. And my neighbours say, they say: – Look, the police have come, they say, maybe they will lock Ivanka up for, they say, well, doing those things. And I laugh, I went out before them there, I say: – If you have come to arrest me, I say, I will not resist, arrest me. – He says: – We haven't come to arrest you, but rather we have come for your help if you are willing. – This one says: – You have helped my children, he says, now help his children, and my family were frightened again. (Djordjević 2011: 184–185)

As the bearer of magical knowledge, the charmer is conscious of her role as the guardian of tradition. Knowledge is worth passing on since its origin is perceived as divine, and the knowledge itself as being old, i.e. ancestral, unique and irreplaceable. So, charmer Milunka points out that the knowledge she received from her mother-in-law is a hundred years old, and that it had reached her mother-in-law when it was at least two hundred years old. It is valuable in itself and has always served for the healing of certain illnesses which the doctors cannot cure. Therefore she does not want it to be lost:

> – But the doctors could never, even before, heal fright, ransom, *namera* [intention spells, illness that one comes across accidentally] it has always been old-wives. There, the bathing of children, for instance, the incantations for red wind, the charm for snake bite, well, there that fright, this little ransom, the big one, it had to be done… only old-wives' [medications were used to cure]. For I, we do not work like the sorceresses, making witchcraft… causing conflicts between people and that. This is healing just like it would be according to the doctors; the doctor finds a cure for this illness, we so we have found a cure... There, that's it, my child, very good, it is successful and I would not like it to be lost.[21]

CONCLUSION

Analysis of interviews with charmers, besides confirming and expanding knowledge about magical practice, also offers insights into the social and cultural

context of charming, the psychological dimension of healing, the gender position of charmers and their share in the distribution of social power. The figure of the traditional charmer at the beginning of the 21st century in Serbia, as presented in this paper, still survives even against stiff competition from numerous practitioners of alternative medicine and new age religion. Contributing to this are the dualistic metaphors and symbolical role of the charmer which, in feminist interpretations, bring her close to the character of the "mythic Great Mother, embodying the polar forces of evil and good" (Kerewsky-Halpern 1989: 120). On the other hand, interpretations directed towards an anthropological analysis of the discourse, such as research by Lidija Radulović on the construction of gender in the folk religion of the Serbs, point out that the "area of the holy is an area of redistribution of religious power, situational and changeable", and so the "connection of religion with the male domain and magic exclusively with the female field of action is a theoretical construction" such as "does not exist in social reality" (2009: 137). Ambivalent ideas about women are interpreted in this sense – they are imagined as being in connection with both the sacral and the demonic, as being dangerous and endangered, as embodying the life principle and death, whereby the various meanings are construed in various discourses and contexts. Similarly, we can understand the ambivalent roles of the charmer to heal and to inflict evil, since they possess various kinds of magical and other powers through which they communicate with the other world or with God.

It may be concluded that not only rituals and incantations contribute to the living practice of charming, but the entire discourse and narratives of charmers, with their established motifs and structure, starting from the receiving of knowledge and training, through pointing out their exceptional role, to stories of experiences and successful healing. Such narratives confirm the social status of the charmer, represent their various roles, and enable their magical practice to continue.

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NOTES

[1] Since the second half of the 19th century to this day, about a thousand charms have been recorded in eastern and southern Serbia. This fact and the published research show that traditional ways of healing and various kinds of sooth-saying and fortune telling in these parts were widespread in villages and towns, in both Serbian and Vlach environments, while some reputable charmers enjoyed respect. A multitude of factors led to the gradual discovery of parts of the charmers' practice and the desacralisation of the magical text, so the changing relationship of charmers to the text may be discussed only with reservations. This varies considerably even in the same area, including the form of the magical text (eg. the text is spoken in the ritual, or is dictated to the researcher, or he/she is given it in writing, cf. Djordjević 2011). Further, the degree of desacralisation of the magical text is closely connected to its purpose (protection of the individual or community) and the type of illness. The texts of some charms, such as those for healing minor skin diseases, childish illnesses and the like, is felt to be partially desacralised due to their frequent use in domestic conditions and researchers commonly encounter them in the field. Changing attitudes towards magical healing and its accompanying texts are also affected by a vanishing belief in demonic beings as the cause of illness and a preference for institutional medical treatment. Different individual reasons contribute to the charmers' changing attitudes towards magical texts, such as the type of knowledge (active or passive) and practice (professional or amateur), the degree of respect for tradition and in particular the relationship established between charmer and researcher when recording an interview. The broader social, economic and cultural context also plays a significant role, including level of education and degree of modernisation, the type of community, its ethical and religious make-up, compactness, ethos, accessibility of medical assistance etc.

[2] Apart from my own field material, I shall refer to material recorded over the past ten years by some of my students at the Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade. Records by students contain certain shortcomings related to subject coverage and interview technique, but also certain advantages. Students occasionally made use of family members or acquaintances which enabled more direct contact with the respondents.

[3] *Old woman, bloody midwife,* was the term for a woman who illegally performed abortions. For people who heal inexpertly and illegally the term *fušeri* (from the German *Pfuscher*) is also used (Tucakov & Knežević 1960).

[4] Personal archive, audio recording, interview with a man from Dubočica (24. 8. 2012).

[5] Passing through the wolf's yawn in charming is also used when the children are sick because of the *babice* (*babice* or *navi* are demonic beings, witches, who attack young mothers forty days after childbirth), or if they cry a lot (Vukanović 1986: 489, Radovanović 1997: 17, Radenković 1996: 81). The wolf's yawn is also mentioned in a charm "of every ailment" from Kragujevačka Jasenica: "The wolf has four legs, two ears, a tail and a yawn. The wolf has a terrible yawn, he will swallow the sickness. Retreat and run away!" (Pavlović 1921: 144).

[6] In folk beliefs the spindle has magical power and is used in various apotropaic rituals, rituals for giving birth and gaining fertility, as well as in black magic. A widely-held belief among the South Slavs is that the witch takes the crops from other people's

fields and the milk from their cows on St. George's Day or St. John's Eve by riding naked on a spindle around the neighbours' land.

[7] In the Serbian language the same word is used for illness and disease – *bolest*. For survey of some Serbian and South Slavic traditional diseases see Djordjević 1965.

[8] "For patients, illness problems – the difficulties in living resulting from sickness – are usually viewed as constituting the entire disorder. Conversely, doctors often disregard illness problems because they look upon the disease as the disorder. Both views are insufficient" (Kleinman et al. 1978: 2).

[9] Study of the few sources on Slavic pagan systems of belief and the relatively limited penetration of Christianity among the people has shown that Serbian folk religion is syncretic: "It is at the same time monistic and dualistic, both manistic and theistic, Christian monotheistic and polytheistic, and above all richly permeated by magic" (Filipović 1986: 10). This syncretism is the product of cultural, historic, political and economic factors, among which occurrences of bi-confessionalism and multi-confessionalism among the Serbs and other Balkan peoples are of particular interest. The heterogeneous and frequently contradictory elements in the system of beliefs are the natural result of acculturation, contamination and the mixing of animist, Christian and oriental ideas and customs. In this complex and long-term process, certain beliefs changed, merged or disappeared.

[10] From numerous definitions of discourse, we have opted for a broad understanding of the term which includes aspects of language and identity (discourse as a way of speaking and as a means of forming opinions and identity): "A discourse refers to a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events. It refers to a particular picture that is painted of an event, person or class of persons, a particular way of representing it in a certain light" (Burr 2003: 64).

[11] Folklore Archive, Faculty of Philology, audio recording (14. 12. 2013), interview with a charmer from Ranovac by Bojana Milosavljević.

[12] A church person (*crkvar*), according to Sinani (2007: 148), represents "key religious functionary in a community, where he/she, besides communicating with the other world, healing, and foreseeing the future, also organizes religious life and offers religious, moral and ethical sermons, which play an important role in the community through the foundation and maintenance of important places of cult. Church persons are upwardly socially mobile, in terms of economy and status."

[13] Folklore Archive, Faculty of Philology, audio recording (16. 11. 2013), interview with a charmer from Stapari by Mladen Stanić.

[14] Folklore Archive, Faculty of Philology, audio recording (31. 7. 2015), interview with a charmer from Valjevo by Jelena Arsenijević.

[15] Ibid. Djordjević (1958/II: 207) cites a variant text: "Retreat! Retreat! This finger has no cross and there is no place for pain there!".

[16] Folklore Archive, Faculty of Philology, audio recording (31. 7. 2015), interview with a charmer from Valjevo by Jelena Arsenijević.

[17] Folklore Archive, Faculty of Philology, audio recording (15. 5. 2011), interview with a charmer from Ravni by Nataša Djuričić.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

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WHAT TO SAY WHILE USING DUST FROM THE SAINTS' EYES? - A ROMANIAN CASE

Laura Jiga Iliescu

Hidden rituals are a category of religious practices, whose disclosure is not easy to be made by an outsider ethnologist. In this frame, a relatively less studied ensemble of gestures, which nowadays are almost perished, but whose traces are preserved in the Christian churches' frescos from Orthodox space is represented by the act of voluntarily scratching the eyes of the saints painted on the wall. The paper systematizes the few references concerning this ritual entirety and also inquires about the relations established between the official dogma and the religious practices as actuated in the very case of the icon and the saint's figure, in the 19th century Romanian milieu.

Keywords: church's walls, theology of icons, saints'body, magic, love songs, popular religious praxis.

The walls, the objects and the paintings of a church are related to each other and to a set of gestures, rituals, beliefs, stories, as well, all of them being expressions of the religious view of those who create, receive and use the sanctuaries – founders, builders, monks, clergymen, lay believers, pilgrims, tourists, charmers, etc. Its space (inside or outside the area delimited by walls, but in connection with the very body of the church), consecrated to liturgical rituals and prayers, also support a complex of individual gestures that, canonically speaking, sometime are placed on the border between permission and interdiction or even could slide towards the second side. Covering a large thematic field, from moving churches, to writing names on the walls or to the gesture of touching the wall with the forehead, the topics are challenging. This article is focused on a relatively less studied ensemble of gestures, which nowadays are almost perished, but whose traces are preserved in some Christian churches' frescos: the voluntarily scratching of the saints eyes or body, and the use of the collected mortar in charming rituals. We'll approach concrete cases from the Romanian Orthodox milieus, as attested in the 19th century.

The first goal here is to systematize the few references to this ritual, which I shall analyse from the perspective of the dynamic relations established between the official dogma and the religious practices as actuated in the very

case of the icon and the saint's figure. This relation gets different hypostases in different historical times.

For the Eastern Orthodox Church, scriptures and images are two ways in which the faith is carried and expressed. After the 9th century iconodule's victory (inside the Easter Christianity), icons became part of liturgical tradition, "so they cannot be used merely as an aide or be shunted aside" (Dillenberger 2004: 60). St. John of Damascus regarded icons as "books for illiterates and silent heralds of the honor of the saints, teaching those who see with a soundless voice and sanctifying the sight" (St. John of Damascus 2003: 46). The fact that they *sanctify* the sight expresses the Byzantine view according to which icons are not simple illustrations of scriptures or material support for catechetical purposes (function shared with the Western Christian Confessions), but living liturgical objects, hence central to the worship experience. "The visual and the verbal are two fundamental realities, neither of which can be elevated over the other. That view of the visual makes the eastern Orthodox development unique" (Dillenberger 2004: 61).

In the very case of icons, St. John of Damascus turned the difference-identity contradictory couple into a coincidence and the general relation between figure and the figured person was postulated as a relation between prototype and variant (the image). "Because of the difference, we do not worship the image, but because of the image, we adore the reality expressed through it. Because of the identity, we know we have to do with God's presence through a mediating reality. The image and God's reality are conjoined, but they are not identical" (Dillenberger 2004: 59). As St. Basil already pointed, through image, we glorify God's presence. "Frontal and partially stylized figures suggest the mysterious presence of the prototype. Questions of faith are central to the making of icons in a way that is not characteristic of the West" (Dillenberger 2004: 62). Nor the 8th- 9th century iconoclasts neither the ulterior Reform iconoclastic aversion against icons and saints do not accept such distinctions and for them idolatry and image are identical.

Consequently, the figures painted in a sanctuary represent vivid presences involved in the rituals officiated there and, in the mean time, enter in relation with the faithful people who interactively take part to these rituals (see Boscani Leoni 2006).

Icons are expressions of the sacredness embodiment. So, why should somebody destroy or damage them voluntary? Does, in these certain situations, still work the subtle distinction between image and its unseen prototype, or, on the contrary, it was dissolved and image enters in a synecdochic relation with the prototype? Which might be the relation between the official dogma, on the one hand, and the folk practices, on the other hand? Do vernacular developments

of canonic praxis necessarily express a deflection from the dogmatic tradition, as well?

In the study *Les images abîmées: entre iconoclasm, pratiques religieuses et rituels 'magique',* Simona Boscani Leoni identified three categories of reasons that could drive somebody to voluntary damage the sacred paintings. Her researches referred to a limited area in the Alps, whose inhabitants belong to Protestant confession. "En ces territoires, nous pouvons indiquer au moins trois typologies distinctes d'images abîmées. La première concerne l'image endommagée et dissimulée pour des motivations religieuses (lors de la Réforme, mais aussi lors d'interventions de censure totale décidées par les autorités ecclésiastiques catholiques" (Boscani Leoni 2006:2). In Romanian territories, iconoclastic successive movements, of what the Protestant Reformation (then the Counter-Reformation time) wave, with its aversion to the relics and to the intercessions of the saints, concretely cut the sacred painted figures, or covered them under an overlay of chalk.

Non-Christians attacks, especially the Turks' and Tartars' scimitars also hurt the painted saints (eyes, mouths, legs, arms, faces). From the Orthodox part, all these actions are seen as profanation.

"La deuxième a trait à la manipulation de l'image par égratignure ou écriture sur la couche picturale. (...). Le troisième type d'image abîmée est l'image repeinte ou réadaptée" (Boscani Leoni 2006:2). This sort of damage may also occur under the restaurateurs' brush (who usually brings to light the first painted lay).

Even if all three situations are attested in Romania, the practices I will discuss are not included in the above classification, namely the popular ritual of taking out pieces of binder from the icons painted on the churchs'walls.

Figure 1: The porch wall of Polovragi Monastery church, North Oltenia. Photo made by Șerban Bonciocat in 2013

THE SAINTS'EYES

Among the answers to B.P. Hasdeu's *Mythologic* and *Juridic* questionnaires, launched in 1878 and 1884 all around (actual) Romania, there are 56 mentioning the *eyes of the saints painted on the churches*, meaning "the dust taken from their eyes, soil taken out from the wall, part of the wall peeled off for the eyes painted on it and used under the name of *eyes*" (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010: 468). These questionnaires were sent by post mail and most of the answers were given by priests and primary school teachers; few answers came from Transylvania and North Moldavia and the most from South Romania.

56 attestations do not represent a high amount of information and I must say that they cover only one page in a volume of almost 600 pages. This situation might reflect the unpopular character of the practice, but, just as well, it may be due to the fact that the respondents might have suppressed information that they did not considered adequate to be forwarded. "In the majority of cases, the saint's eyes are taken away for making charms (Ro. *farmece*)" (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010: 468).

Apart from the answers to the Hasdeu questionnaire, I found extremely few references to this practice.

1. Surpatele Monastery (Vâlcea County, Oltenia,Wallachia) was founded by the princiar familly in 18th century. At the end of the 19th century, the edifice passed through a period when it was deserted and the church mouldered. At the beginning of the 20th century it was restored and the monastic life was recommence. In 1933 priest Constantin Dănescu published a monography dedicated to it. On that occasion he learned "from local people" that during the period when it was abandoned "the gypsies living around, its former slaves, have stolen the briks from its decaying walls and even took out the saints' eyes from the church's porch in order to use them in their charms and incantations" (Dănescu 1933: 88).

On the base of this attestation, in 2015 I conducted fieldwork at the monastery and in the village from it vicinity, but didn't get any answer to the question "why are the saints' eyes and faces damaged", nor to the expression *saints' eyes* or *dust from their eyes.*

2. In a fieldwork prospection conducted in the same South Carpathic area, I visited the St. Stephen skete belonging to Hurez great monastery (Vâlcea county) and, having under the eyes the damaged images of some saints' painted on the walls, in the church, I had a short conversation with one of the (three) nuns living there. She imputed the situation to the Turks, who violated the sacred paintings, the eyes, the face and other parts of some saints' bodies.

Figure 2: The exterior wall of Surpatele Monastery church, North Oltenia. Photo taken by Șerban Bonciocat

There is an intriguing coincidence between the two cases: both (the monastery and the skete) have been deserted from the end of the 19th century (exactely the period of the ritual's attestations in Hasdeu questionnaires) untill the beginning of the 20th century. Even if we can not generalize, it's for sure that the lack of the edifice surveillance favoured gestures which should have been performed secretly before (and after), since they probably were forbiden otherwise. In the mean time, the special status assigned to the ruins of a church - a liminal space characterized through a sort of ambiguous sacredness (neither an active church, nor a common place) – probably encuraged the practice of rituals which are, at their turn, ambiguous and with a borderline character.

Secondly, in both cases, the damaging gestures are ascribed to *Others*: pagan Turkeys or Gypsy wizards. But, on the base of these two specifications, we cannot speculate on the general ethnic or religious appurtenance of those who practiced the ritual (the questionnaires contain no mention about this; the respondents are Romanians); possible to have an example of the stranger's demonization process.

3. The walls explorations give us some additional information. We identified, in the field, few other churches (they are more, for sure) in Oltenia, whose frescos have been voluntarily damaged: Horezu (Vâlcea; the village parish church), Izverna (Mehedinți; the village parish church), Gura Motrului (Mehedinți; monastery church, whose original fresco, made between 1702-1704, was covered by

a lay of grout and repainted in 1852. Hence, the damages we noticed come from an ensuing period in the same 19th century), Crainici (Mehedinți; the village parish church), Brosteni (Mehedinți; the village parish church), Curtișoara (Gorj; the village parish church). Except St. Stephen skete, all other mentioned churches have the damaged figures painted on the exteriour walls of the porch, a space which is accesible even when the church is closed (and there are no spectators for a presumed illicite gesture). But the explanation of accesibility is not enough, because the paintings on the lateral exteriour walls are intact: so, the reason of this location might be represented by the porch itself. At St. Stephen sket the damaged images are in the interiour of the church and all the destroyed faces are located by the windows or on the pillows that separate the nave by the narthex: together with the porch, they all are passage spaces between inside and outside, between different religious qualifications.

Unfortutanelly, neither the answers to the above quoted questionnaires, nor the few written attestations, nor our own fieldwork (probably it was conducted too late or it last too short for convincing people to speak about the *saints' eyes*) contain details regarding the very ritual of collecting and stowing the dust taken from the church's walls: who - genre, age, ethnical and confessional appurtenance (for example, we suppose the collector was a layman/laywomen, but, anyhow, did he/she need the help of the priest or of other person *inside*?); why; when - which moment of the day/night? which day of the week? during the Holly Liturgy (for this last question we can presume that, in case of ruins, there isn't any mass officiated inside); the very gestures - scratching, clawing, washing, effacing, carving - and the associated tools; the restriction and incumbencies the collector had/has to observe; possible verbal formulae breathed while the person acted over the wall and its icons.

I am tempted to consider that we deal with a forbiden ritual, with his own rules, secreted both from the clergy, the monastic and the lay community. This hypothesis is sustained by the existence of a substituting ritual: "There might be removen not only the saint's eyes from the churches' wall – the overhelming majority of cases -, but also from the painted crosses or from the icon inside the house, especially when it is not possible to take them Sfrom the church" (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010: 469). I am also tempted to consider that this ritual isn't practiced anymore.

4. An oblique method for collecting data about a perished ritual, insufficient described while it was alive, might consist in putting it into a adjoined contexts represented by other practices and verbal formulae that indirectly or directly make references to it. In this regard, I will take folk texts which, methaphorically or concretly, use a repertoire of images and verbs that send us to a reality that resonates with the *saints'eyes* rituals. I'll deal with words, but not with

the specific verbal charms which (possible, but unattested) join the gesture of taking and using the dust extracted from the holly painted, but with texts that are involved in other charming rituals or even in texts belonging to different genres (lyric).

Therefore, we'll deal with three categories of sources:

a. Small ethnographic descriptions of the rituals, as given in the Hasdeu questionnaire's answers (the final part of the 19th century); other ethnographic mentions have been made after a 50 years gap (the third decade of the 20th century) or even later (our fieldwork conducted in 2015-2016).

b. The very frescos. Sometime we have the chance to observe succesive layers of paintings, hence to draw hypothesis concerning the period when the damage has been made.

c. Oral structures recorded in the same areas with those of the practice we deal with. Because the answers to Hasdeu's questionnaire belong to the 19th century, and because the other few references to the practice send to churches that have been deserted in the same 19th century, we'll look for texts recorded in the temporal period framed by the end of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century.

Comming back to the Hasdeu questionnaires, let's systematize what we know (not only what we lack) in order to discover the multilayered meaning assigned to the couple of painted image in relation with the figured sacred entity (the prototype, the saint), when dogma meets the popular practices.

From the very beginning, there is to specify that the goal which generally stayed behind the gestures involved in the rituals we speak about was not to hurt or to damage the saint's corporal identity and integrity, but to achieve a provision of holiness, a ritual ingredient. The *prototype,* namely the very saint, *contaminates* the image (the icon, the fresco) and its support (the mortar) with numinous power. In this regard, the dust or the small piece of mortar represents extensions of the saint's person, which will be ritually re-contextualized. This is not the unique situation when "pieces" involved in liturgical rituals are dislocated and re-placed in the *outside* context of the popular practices of religiosity: holly water, holly bread, holly basil, drops of Eucharistic wine, chrism, slivers from the altar cross – all of them are used as parts of what may be considered *secondary* rituals, whose efficiency is intensified by the original, *primary* context.

"The saints' eyes amplify, accomplish the charms' power"; "confer them divine power"; "assure their success" (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010:469). The use of this special dust as amulets, as attested in 13th century France (Bartholey, Dit-

tmar and Jolivet, 2006:2), is not mentioned in our questionnaire, even if such handling looks very plausible.

Dependent on the manner in which the relation between image and prototype is valorized, on the one hand, and on the ritual finality and purpose, on the other hand, I classified the answers in the following groups:

1) Charms that, through distorting the reality, *covered* or took away from the within sight facts that the ritual's beneficiary wants to remain hidden:

> a. Adulterous wives or husbands: "The most charms aim the husbands, for blinding them (figuratively speaking), hoodwinking them, as they won't be able to see what their unloyal wives do", or aim the women with a similar purpose (there is a single atestation for this second situation) (Ostrovul Mare, Hunedoara county, South Transylvania; Mușlea, Bîrlea, 2010: 468);
>
> b. Spinters or ugly maidens ordered such charms in order to marry with "young men", that consequently became unable to *see* the real face of their further spouses;
>
> c. In a different domain, but with a similar function, the saints' eyes were used for "binding the witnesses mouths and for closing the lawyers' eyes, in order to escape a certain sinner from being punished" (Mușlea, Bîrlea, 2010: 469) (we notice the process of overlaping parts of the painted body with their correspondent of the human body; in the mean time, we also notice that not only the eye, but the mouth is a source for the magic ingredient, as well).

In the above charm, saints do not work as religious divine intercessors. More than this, through magic like conjures, they are forced to act against the religious and lay moral prescriptions, which they usually have to guard. The verbal formula - "As the saints don't see and hear anything, as my husband won't see and hear anything" – can be decoded in two contradictory manners: a) the expression refers to the painted person, the saint, who, through the icon damage, becomes himself blind, hence can not see the reality and, consequently, can not exert his natural functions. If the relation between representation (icon) and prototype (the saint) is understood as they are sharing a common nature, then the formula doesn't express a magic act (based on *similia similibus* structure), but a re-contextualisation of the canonic principle of the difference and identity simultaneity, as asserted by St. John of Damascus; b) the expression refers only to the image, understood as a common object deserted by any sacred (or alive)

presence, which, as any object, is blind and deaf. In both interpretations, the dogma about icons is not broken.

2) Therapeutical practices: "in order to recover their sight, the sufferings went by themselves to the church and, taking some dust from the saint's eyes, from the light of the saints' eyes, they strewed it into their own eyes (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010: 469). The painted image seems to be imbued with the divine curative power or, according to a different interpretation, it seems that the holly esence of the prototype is extended over its representation. Both situations comply with the dogmatic principle and the popular practice is not a (contact) magic act, but a development of the canonic ideas.

Here is an interesting charm against eye affections and pains, which I don't know if it was delivered in connection with the therapeutical use of the dust taken from the saints' eyes, but whose lexical repertoire and ritual objects send us to the conjugate gestures of taking something evil out from an eye and putting something good in turn:

> De isbitură: Copită copitărită,/Cal negru din picior te lepădă/Pe Cutare peste ochi îl isbișsi,/Și leacul că i-l găsi:/Cu fulg negru te râcâi,/Cu busuioc te limpezi,/Cu fir roșu turburarea o scosei,/Junghiurile, cuțitele, usturimele/ Din vederea Cutăruia le scosei…., se descântă în apă cu busuioc și cu fir de mătură. Cu apa se stropește la ochi. Dela Baba Stana Reșică.
>
> *For **eye pain**: You, hoof! /Black horse threw you out from its leg. /You hit That over his/her eyes,/But I found the remedy:/With black barb I raked you,/With basil I cleaned you,/With red strand I took out the eye's cloudy,/ I took out the pangs, the knives, the stings/from That's sight". The charmer use holly basil, water and a besom strand; the patient's eyes will be dabbled with this water.*

The charm comes from an old woman from Drăgănești, Teleorman County, South Romania (Tocilescu 1900: 434).

3) The third category of saints' eyes rituals belongs to "for beauty" erotic magic. Actually, not the beauty by itself is desired, but its seductive power, the power of catching others' sights, which, wherefore, remain under the power and the control of the charm's beneficiary (the enchanted victims can only keep their eyes glued on her/him).

The contradictory nature of these charms consists in the fact that they encompass the Christian concept of the saint's beauty – as a reflection of the supreme, invariable, impalpable never evil, beauty of God – on the one hand and, and, on the other hand, the (not only Christian) beliefs and ideas about

the fascinating nature of art (even of the beauty of art), a charming force (with good or evil consequences) that connect the eyes that look at with the eyes that are watched: being captive, the victim' eyes become a channel for invading his/her person. Beliefs in the *evil eye* are not far from this mechanism, even if they articulate it backward. Therefore, the saints are the ones who bewitch, through their beauty. "The woman will be adored as the saints are worshiped by everyone" (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010: 469).

We can seize here a tendency to assign saints with power by their own, not as God's intercessors: such deviation may encourage the charmer to attract saints into magic games.

At its turn, Romanian erotic lyrics contain metaphorical samples that refer to the same mechanisms of substituting the holly painted entity with the charm beneficiary who, thanks to this position, can exert a fascinating force:

> Foaie verde boabă coarnă/Ioană, Ioană, dică Ioană,/Naiba te scoase-n poiană,/Frumoasă ca o icoană?/Pupu-ți ochii ș-o sprânceană/Și-alunița de sub geană.
>
> *Green leaf, grain of rose berry / Joanna, Joanna, dear Joanna / Which evil spirit has sent you to the clearing, / Beautiful like an icon? / Let me kiss your eyes and one eyebrow / And the beauty spot under your eyelas.* (Târpezița, Dolj County, Oltenia region, South Romania) (Ispas, Truță 1985: 273, 58).

Furthermore, there are love songs that make references to situations in which the religious object, the icon, works as a support for magic practices: e.g.

> Nu găsesc o vrăjitoare/Să-mi descânte la icoane

Shall I find a sorceress / To disenchant me at the icons (Suceava, North Moldavia region, North-East Romania) (Ispas, Truță 1985: 118). Other songs contain allusion to love charms in which the lover becomes the possessed victim of the beloved's *charmant* sight and to eyes damage, as well. Again, the verbal expressions send us to the practice we deal with:

> Frunză verde ș-o lalea/Costică, inima mea,/De te-aș prinde undeva,/ Numai ochii ți i-aș lua.
>
> *Green leaf and a tulip / Costica, my dear heart / If I caught you somewhere / I would only take out your eyes* (Dioști, Romanați, South Romania) (Tocilescu 1900: 229);
>
> Puica neichii cu doniță/Mânca-ți-aș gurița friptă;/ Ochișorii să ți-i beau,/ După drumuri nu mai stau!

> *My little beloved birdy with the tub / I would eat your little broiled mouth / I would drink your eyes* (Bistrița, Vâlcea county, Oltenia region, South Romania) (Tocilescu 1900: 278).

May we warily suppose that these songs (the examples are more) indirectly refers to the use of saints' eyes in erotic, *eye-to-eye* charms?

4) Having a similar effect with the one produced by charms from the previous category (victims are out of their self control and decision), but for different purposes and, in the meantime, with different valorizations of the painted figure qualities, the forth category is represented by the formula:

> "toate ființele să stea înaintea babelor ca niște sfinți".
> *Let all people stand still as a saint in front the old ladies charmers* (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010: 469).

At a first glance, we identify here a *similia similibus* mechanism, whose term for comparison is the very immobility of any painted figure. But, at a deeper decoding level, the (un-expressed or dissembled) meanings and finalities of such a ritual consists in hijacking the saints who, from God's intercessors and subalterns become obedient servants of the magic specialist. The image's immobility is extended over the prototype, the very saint, who, consequently, is constrained to remain still: in other words, at the charmer's disposal. We have here a magic and dangerous valorization of the difference and identity dialectics, as it defines the relation between the image and the imaged reality, in the case of the icon (as mediating channel): again, the dogmatic principle is (more or less consciously) followed (!), but the developed ritual practices aren't canonic anymore!

5) Confronted with the still "reasonable" previous situations, the next category represents a real turning point: "The eyes of some saints are removed, because they say that there are few with horns" (Buzău County, East Romania) (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010:470). The allusion is obvious and the saints' involvement into devil's part is detailed by the below answer (which also deliver some details regarding the ritual gestures, objects and procedures): "the dust removed from the fresco is mixed in the man's drink or dish together with an egg that was brood by a woman for an entire week" (Olt County, Oltenia region, South Romania) (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010:470). We recognize here sequences and ingredients that also occur in narratives describing certain techniques, which, at their turn, are characterized by secrecy: the under arm incubation of an egg procures to the

women who practice this ritual a devilish helper, a sort of goblin, a servant who also has erotic attribution.

In the same demonic magic frames, the next answers are connected with the third category of our classification. "The dust taken from the saints' eyes is used for stealing the cow's milk" (Argeș County) (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010:470) or "it is used for bad purposes, for lose animal pregnancy" (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010:470): it seems that saint's caught glance got the dangerous status of any evil eye.

5.1) Appart from the damage inflicted on the *saints'eyes* or on parts of their body, the following situations of catching the negative sacred are isomorphic with the practices we spoke about above: a) "Sometime they also remove the devils'eyes painted on the churches'walls, either 'of hatred' (Orlat, Sibiu County) (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010: 470), or for using them in witcheries" (Dolj County) (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010: 470); b) If Death is painted there, they carve out its eyes or cut its legs, saying that it took a child"(idem). The actions are both of revenge and evil expulsion. But these are not icons!

The dogmatic principle of the relation between image and imaged doesn't work as an identity-difference simultaneity, and the image becomes a simple double of the figured entity.

Figure 3: The porch wall, Măldărești parish church, North Oltenia. Photo taken by Șerban Bonciocat

6) Back to the registre of the benefic power, the last category is opposed to the former one[1] and is represented by situations in which the *saints'eyes* are used in order to neutralize the evil eyes effects or those induces by demonic attacks. The expected results have therapeutical nature – "the *dust* is mixed in the water where the possessed children are washed", or, in opposition with the animals' lack of fruition (the *stolen milk* from the 5th category) provoked by evil magic, the results consists in getting vitality and fertility – "it is mixed in hen's food for hatching many chicken" (Prut, Moldavia, North Romania) (Mușlea, Bîrlea 2010:470).

CONCLUSION

The classyfication we made above, led us to some observations:

1. The interess was to make a step forward into the understanding of the manner through which the Christian Orthodox theology of icons – the relation between prototype and representation - and the doctrine according to which the miraculous power of both icons and saints comes only from God are taken on, internalized, interpreted, modified and put in practiced by some people from the 19th century Romania, in the very case of a practice generically named the *saints'eyes*.

2. Even if we have only few attestations (and small descriptions) of the practice(s), their diversity is remarkable. There is also to be noted the coherence of an heterogenous corpus of documents referring to the saints status changing in concordance with the very nature – magic or religious – of the frames in which the sacred ingredient (the piece of mortar dislocated from the church's wall) is re-contextualised.

3. More or less unexpectable, we marked out situations when uncanonical (even prohibited) practices are yet articulated in compliance with the dogmatic theology of icons and saints: the uncanonical praxis does not necessaly means *against* dogma.

4. Anyhow, as we can see in the images below, not only the saints, but also other figures, probably the church's founders were the victima of damage.

5. Last, but not least, we discussed cases that show the palimpsest attribute of the church's walls, in which traces of both liturgical and forbidden rituals that was formerly performed there, remain visibly preserved in the fresco's and mortar's texture.

Figure 4: The porch of Curtișoara parich church, North Oltenia. Photo taken by Șerban Bonciocat

Figure 5: The same porch of Curtișoara parich church, North Oltenia. Photo taken by Șerban Bonciocat

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A HIDDEN POT OF CHARM SCHOLARSHIP: THE HISTORY OF CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON CHARMS IN CROATIAN FOLKLORISTICS

Davor Nikolić, Josipa Tomašić

The paper offers an overview of critical reflections on charms in Croatian folkloristics and related disciplines (literary theory and history, paleoslavistics). By highlighting the most important steps in the institutionalization of folklore research in Croatia we are showing the status of verbal charm both in the process of field research and the critical reflection. The most important contribution of Croatian scholars is classification of verbal charm as an oral rhetorical genre, which offered the possibility for different methodological approaches to the study of charms.

Keywords: charm, Croatian folkloristics, folk belief, folk prayer, rhetorical genre

There is a long history of recorded verbal charms in Croatian culture before the official institutionalization of ethnology and folkloristics: from medieval Glagolitic codices and manuscripts to texts recorded during the Croatian National Revival in the 19th century. The first scholarly reflections on the subject appeared in the second part of the 19th century, when the great ethnographic collections were made. Charms were regularly incorporated in the sections concerning folk beliefs and superstitions while scholars themselves were influenced by the ideas of Enlightenment. The landmark publication of Croatian ethnology and folkloristics was *Osnove za sabiranje i proučavanje građe o narodnom životu* (*Questionnaire for Collecting and Studying Material on Folk Life*, 1897) by Antun Radić. From that point onward it is possible to trace changes in the scholarly approaches to the subject of charms, charmers and charming. The first decades of the 20th century saw an increased interest in publicizing material from old manuscripts and the methodology was dominated by textual and philological criticism. In the second half of the 20th century charms were recognized as one of the rhetorical genres, along with counting-out rhymes, tongue-twisters, curses, blessings and toasts. This important innovation paved the way for many different methodological approaches: from rhetorical criticism and stylistics to pragmatics. The classical folkloristic approach continued to be

fruitful, especially in the research of the folk prayer as a genre which incorporated most of the traditional charm motifs and strategies. Besides offering a historical review, this paper tries to trace the influence of international charm research on Croatian folklorists. Although a reversal of influence did not occur, current charm scholars could benefit from insights into the relatively rich tradition of Croatian research on charms, charmers and charming.

RECORDS OF OLD CROATIAN VERBAL CHARMS: A SHORT HISTORY

Before discussing beginnings of institutionalized folklore research in Croatia, we will provide a short history of the most important records of Croatian verbal charms before the 19th century. As far as it is known the earliest recorded charm in Croatian language comes from the late 14th century. It was found in the Croatian Glagolitic breviary-missal (*Code slave 11*, Bibliothèque nationale de France) by Valentin Putanec, who offered the first philological analysis. The charm could be classified as an apotropaic charm against snakebite. It was written subsequently in the calendar at the bottom of the month of April, probably in the 14th or 15th century (Putanec 1962: 409). This is Putanec's reading in modern Croatian:

> U ime Oca + i sina + i Duha + Svetoga. Amen. Šita + šita + šita +. Zaklinjem vas zmije Bogom živim, budite pokorne meni sluzi Božjemu /ime/ kao što je pokoran vosak ognju, a oganj vosku.
>
> *In the name of the Father + and of the Son + and of the Holy + Spirit. Amen.* Šita[1] + šita + šita +. *I charge you snakes by the living God, be obedient to me, servant of God /name/, as wax is obedient to fire, and as fire is obedient to wax.*

Putanec tried to solve the meaning of seemingly nonsense opening formula *šita, šita, šita* by offering two possible explanations. The one explanation is that it is derived from Latin phrase *sit ita* (*May it be so*), which in itself is a paraphrase of word *amen*. The other explanation is that the formula comes from Vulgar Latin charm formula of enhancement: *cito, cito, cito* (Putanec 1962: 410).

The most important medieval amulet recorded in Croatian language dates from the first half of the 15th century. It is written in calligraphy on a large parchment, probably in Istria. The amulet was often analysed by many Croatian and international scholars (cf. Pantelić 1973). It contains prayers that

seek peace and protection from the evil spirits followed by the long exorcism, seeking help from all celestial powers, angels and saints (Štefanić 1969: 180). The next and the visually most beautiful part of the amulet is the apocryphal legend of St. Sisinnius, known in many European traditions (cf. Passalis 2014). It is interesting that two Croatian scholars (Štefanić 1969: 181; Kekez 1993: 9) noticed counting-out elements in repeating the name (or names) of the Saint at the beginning of the legend: *Sveti Sisin Sisinos, Sikinor, Sikisanos, Têodor* (*Saint Sisinnius, Sissinios, Sikinor, Sikisanos, Theodor…*). Štefanić connected this feature with medieval usage of name endings in a cantillating manner.

The next three collections represent the most important material for studying old Croatian charms and for tracing linguistic and other elements which survived to modern times. One important scholar was first to publicize this material – it was Rudolf Strohal who tried to connect interest in old literary material with the interest in contemporary folklore research. The first collection is the oldest known Croatian collection of charms and it probably dates from the same time as the Amulet of St. Sisinnius. The collection was found by Strohal in the Archive of Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts (today Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts) and contains remedies, prayers and bewitchments written in Glagolitic letters on ten parchment folios. At the front page of the first folio there are notes which indicate that the owners of the folios were members of the Benković family. Father Matija started writing, probably in the 14th century, his son Ivan, the priest, continued writing, and the third author was most likely Matija's grandson and Ivan's nephew Antun (Strohal 1910: 121). Vjekoslav Štefanić, Croatian scholar who later dealt with this manuscript, opposed the idea of Benkovićs being the writers of the booklet (Štefanić 1969a: 169). Judging by the linguistic traits, the manuscript was made somewhere in the Croatian Littoral. Strohal believed that the major part of magical formulae comes from old Bogomil books, relying on the fact that many charm texts are accompanied by signs and citations that are today unintelligible. The charms found in the manuscript vary both in structure and in function, but all show great similarities with later records, inferring that the majority of charm formulae were formed in the Middle Ages (cf. Ćupković 2010).

The biggest number of charms and folk prayers with charm elements before the institutionalized collecting of verbal folklore are found in manuscript notebook known under the title Razgovor od vetra i dažda i nižita i sičca (*The Talk of Wind and Rain and Demons*), made by Glagolitic priest[2] Anton Brzac somewhere in the area of Istria and Croatian Littoral at the end of the 17th or at the beginning of the 18th century. Diseases are shown in this manuscript as evil spirits that attack the human body and torture it in many different ways (Strohal 1910: 153).

We will end this short overview with a booklet from the town of Sali on Dugi otok written in the 18th century. The booklet contains records made by an unknown Glagolitic priest under the title *Ovo su versi ot husov, zavijač i gusinic i oda svega, ča čini zlo žitku čovičanskomu* (*These are the verses of bugs, worms and caterpillars, and of everything that causes harm to human life*) (Bonifačić Rožin 1963: 204–205).

BEGINNINGS OF INSTITUTIONALIZED FOLKLORE RESEARCH

The 19th century is considered to be the beginning of institutionalized folklore research. This corresponds with the interest in gathering folklore which emerged in the pre-Romantic period (cf. Botica 2013: 64, 67). The formal year which marks the beginning of the Croatian national revival is 1835, but even earlier there are already the first field collections mostly done by Roman Catholic priests of the Zagreb diocese. The bishop of Zagreb, Maksimilijan Vrhovac, issued a circular letter in 1813 to all the "spiritual shepherds of his diocese" calling them to collect folk treasure (proverbs and folk poetry in particular). The letter, printed in Latin, motivated early field collectors and very soon first collections of popular songs and toasts emerged (Bošković-Stulli 1978: 277–279; Botica 2013:70).

The letter was re-published (with a Croatian translation) in 1837 in journal *Danica*, which was one of the key publications of the Croatian national revival. The call is now addressed to all patriots, with an emphasis on collecting folk poetry in accordance to Herder's conception of folk poetry (Bošković-Stulli 1978: 276; Botica 2013: 76-77). As a result, most of the researchers during the 19th century focused on lyric and epic poetry and fairy tales. Charm collections and studies were unsystematic and the genre was not recognized. The common trait of all early field research is that charming is seen as a part of folk beliefs or folk medicine. Early collectors were often influenced by ideas of the Enlightenment so they saw this practice as pure superstition. Similar situation occurred with belief legends.

A good example is the first Croatian ethnographic collection (Botica 2013: 77), made by Luka Ilić Oriovčanin and published in 1846. He was a Roman Catholic priest born in Slavonia (the Eastern Croatian region) who was highly involved in the Croatian national revival. As a contributor to *Danica* and other important journals of the period, he published literary, ethnological, archaeological and historical papers. His papers published in *Danica*, concentrated on folk customs in the region of Slavonia, had an important role in the construction of the national identity (Tomašić Jurić 2014: 83). The already mentioned

circular letter of bishop Vrhovac probably motivated his interest in folkloristics and ethnology.

His ethnography is divided in two parts: the first is concentrated on folk customs and the second on folk beliefs, proverbs, riddles, games etc. Ilić Oriovčanin offers interesting data on charming and on the belief in the magical power of the word. As an illustrating example, he uses a charm procedure with an apotropaic effect which should be done by a young child in order to preserve healthy teeth. There is other information about charming but it is always treated as a folk superstition. The genre of verbal charm is also recognized in the sections on belief legends about supernatural beings (fairies, witches, werewolves, nightmare, plague etc.). When he describes these folk beliefs, Ilić Oriovčanin does not hide his distrust in the stories which he labels as superstition (Tomašić Jurić 2014: 160–161).

The first attempt to instruct potential collectors in systematic folklore research was the *Questionnaire*[3] composed in 1850 by Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski and published a year later. Among his other contributions, Kukuljević Sakcinski is famous for being the first Member of Croatian Parliament to hold his speech in Croatian, instead of Latin, which he did in 1843. Out of the 26 questions for field researchers, two (19 and 21) show the possibility of recognizing charms as an independent genre, but are still tightly related to folk beliefs. These two questions aim to gather information about fantastic, demonic and mythological beings and creatures (fairies, witches, elves etc.), personified phenomena (death, nightmare, plague etc.) or natural phenomena related to weather (clouds, thunder or hail). The experience of consequent collectors showed that these phenomena are tightly connected with belief legends and with the practice of charming, even up to early 21st century (Rudan 2011; 2016; Rudan Kapec 2010).

The central figure of the Croatian national revival, Ljudevit Gaj, was also involved in early folklore field research as he passionately recorded folk poetry, proverbs and belief legends (Bošković-Stulli 1978: 287). Among his manuscripts, unpublished during his lifetime[4], there are *Questions (Pitanja)*, which he designed as a young man in 1818. They should serve as a reminder for potential collectors of what they should look for when in the field. The biggest part of the 73 questions concerns with the history of his hometown of Krapina. Among other subjects, Gaj is particularly interested in old Slavic mythology and beliefs (Gaj 1973; Šešo 2006: 12). Again, verbal charms are not mentioned as an individual and separate genre. Although not published in the 19th century, and therefore without direct influence on researchers of the period, Gaj's Questions are nevertheless considered one of the cornerstones of Croatian folkloristics (Bošković-Stulli 1978: 290).

Founded in 1842, Matica hrvatska (Latin: Matrix Croatica) is the oldest Croatian cultural institution. It became the cornerstone of folklore research in the second part of the 19th century, especially in collecting resources in the field. In 1877, Matica issued *Poziv za sabiranje hrvatskih narodnih pjesama (Call for collecting Croatian folk poetry)* which was published in all Croatian contemporary newspapers. The call was a beginning of an initiative which resulted in a large number of contributors (Šešo 2006: 14). Although it was not explicitly concerned with verbal charms and the process of charming, some of the contributors (e.g. Mihovil Pavlinović) added some types of verbal charms and folk prayers to their collections, namely those which, in their opinion, had strong lyrical elements.

Towards the end of the century, the Academy of Sciences and Arts issued the Call for Folkloristic Collection (1895) with the goal of founding an annual journal that would publicly present results of field research on a more modern basis. Again, two questions (now out of 12) deal with charming practices, which are primarily seen as a folk healing devices. Question number 9 is concerned with folk medicine, but it makes an explicit distinction between healing which uses remedies and the one which uses verbal charms. In question number 12, a similar distinction is made between fortune telling and charming, with additional remarks concerning the context (losing personal objects, falling in love etc.).

Questionnaire (Foundation) by Antun Radić (1897)

Antun Radić is considered to be the father of modern Croatian ethnology. He obtained this title mostly because of his highly influential *Questionnaire* which was published in 1897 under the full title *Osnove za sabiranje i proučavanje građe o narodnom životu (Questionnaire for Collecting and Studying Material on Folk Life)*. It contains the most systematic and detailed instructions for folk collectors to date. It was to be used by all those who wanted to present their research in the newly founded Academy's journal. The charming practice is mentioned many times. Radić is mostly concerned with the distinctions and similarities between healing and charming, so many instructions and comments aim to make the distinction (if possible) between these two practices (Radić 1897: 25). Charming is seen as a part of folk belief, such as charms connected with the deceased (Radić 1897: 60), but Radić explicitly states that there is no strict borderline between poetry and belief (Radić 1897: 64). Josip Lovretić (1902: 150) later made a similar statement in his ethnography.

Radić instructs future collectors to pay special attention to people with special powers in the communities, charmers being one of them (Radić 1897: 68). Concerning the function of charming, Radić makes an implicit distinction

between charming, seen as a healing device, and different practices of bewitching and enchanting (Radić 1897: 69), though many of the latter are now also treated as charms. Collectors were also instructed to gather prayers taught outside the church (Radić 1897: 70). The result of this instruction are records of many charms spoken or recited as prayers.

From the contemporary point of view, it is very interesting to notice that Antun Radić had very strong ethical principles. For instance, he instructs collectors not to deceive their informants and always reveal the true motive of their research. When it comes to dealing with secrets that informants are not willing to share, he leaves it for the collector to decide how to approach the problem (Radić 1897: 74). When analysing ethnographic contributions made in the following decades, it is clear that the collectors followed the instructions.

> *Zbornik za narodni* život *i običaje* (*Collection for the Folk Life and Customs*)

The journal was established in 1896 under the title *Collection for the Folk Life and Customs of South Slavs*, and it still published, using the shorter, abovementioned title. Radić's Questionnaire was published in the second volume, which resulted in continuous large- and small-scale ethnographic contributions from all Croatian regions, other South Slavic countries and South Slavic communities in other neighbouring countries.

The most important large-scale ethnographies from the first decades of the 20th century originally published in the journal were later published separately. Such are the ethnographies by Josip Lovretić (village Otok near Vinkovci in Slavonia), Frano Ivanišević (area of Poljica in Dalmatia) and Milan Lang (town of Samobor near Zagreb). They followed principles stated in the Questionnaire very faithfully[5] so we can survey them and look for information on charms and charming practices at the turn of century. Along with the first publications of charm collections from earlier periods (Strohal 1910), these are the most precious sources for contemporary charm scholars.

Antun Radić's implicit dichotomy between charmers (*bajalice*) and sorcerers (*vračare*) was often explicit in these ethnographies. Sorcerers were seen as people who use special powers to affect nature and other people, in both a positive and negative manner. Charmers were always seen as folk healers. We can find many valuable pieces of information on charmers, especially regarding their status in the local community. Charming practice is often very precisely described with the emphasis on the secrecy of the process. Many charm texts were recorded during these investigations but it is obvious that some collectors were not always certain if they got the "right stuff", being aware of the importance of keeping charms secret.

Besides large ethnographies, *Collection for the Folk Life and Customs* continuously published so-called smaller contributions that contained all folklore genres, including records of charms and charming practice. However, it should be noted that the genre still did not gain its independence because, again, it was tightly connected with descriptions of different folk beliefs.

MODERN FOLKLORE SCHOLARSHIP (1960s AND 1970s)

The journal continued to fulfil its mission in the following decades but folkloristics was not yet established as a discipline. This would start to change after the Second World War when scholars started to adopt different theoretical perspectives, mostly Structuralism (cf. Lozica 1979; Marks and Lozica 1998). The study of folklore continued to be intertwined with the study of literature, but during the 1960s, the prevalent term *folk poetry (narodna književnost)* started to lose its prestige and was very soon replaced with the still functional term *oral literature (usmena književnost)*. The focus on orality as a defining media of both creation and the transfer of verbal folklore meant that the collectivistic conception is slowly being abandoned.

Instead of searching for great national narratives in epic poetry, scholars became free to explore other areas of word art. The first monograph which offered both an anthological collection and a systematic scholarly survey of previously neglected forms was *Narodne drame, poslovice i zagonetke (Folk Drama, Proverbs and Riddles)* by Nikola Bonifačić Rožin (1963). It was also the first folkloristic monograph that showed the diachronic continuity of verbal charms and related genres, especially counting-out rhymes, blessings and curses. It has to be said, though, that it was very modest, just a couple of pages towards the end of the book. Bonifačić Rožin (1963: 203) states at the beginning of the section that these genres were seldom published but that they are nevertheless much known among folk. He does not give any umbrella term for these genres (term *rhetorical (retorički)* is never mentioned) but he considers the use of irrational words as their common trait, along with the ceremony of motion during the recitation.

In the book's appendix, Bonifačić Rožin (1963: 352) emphasises the novelty of publicising "counting-out rhymes and similar folk literary genres extending to folk prayers and verbal charms". The monograph was the first to offer insights into then contemporary records, coming from the biggest 20th century collection of folk prayers (over twelve hundred records, among which we can find charm-like prayers[6] and full charms). This collection was compiled by friar Jeronim Šetka and submitted to the Academy of Sciences and Arts in 1954.

Besides field and compilatory work, he also published an important and well-documented study about the diachronic continuity of interweaving religious and folk practices (Šetka 1970). Although folk prayers are the central object of this extensive study, it nevertheless offers many valuable comments and comparative insights concerning the practice of charming and related folk beliefs.

The pioneer work of Bonifačić Rožin soon received recognition by peer scholars who further explored genre similarities between verbal charms and other so-called minor or simple folklore genres. The first Croatian folklorist who used the umbrella term *folk rhetoric (narodna retorika)* was Tvrtko Čubelić (Nikolić 2015: 168). In his book *Usmena narodna retorika i teatrologija (Oral Folk Rhetoric and Theatrology)* (1970) he published a selection of rhetorical and theatrical genres accompanied by an introductory study on oral folk rhetoric and theatrology. Čubelić's premise is that besides established genres of oral literature, such as poetry, folk tales, proverbs and riddles, there are texts whose primary features are rhetorical delivery of a certain thought and the persuasion in its credibility (Čubelić 1970: XIX). In Čubelić's conception of oral rhetorical genres, persuasion is the basic component. Following this concept, he offered an implicit four-part classification of rhetorical genres.

Čubelić's decision to use the terms *rhetoric (retorika)* and *rhetorical (retorički)* can be seen as way of establishing continuity with Ancient rhetoric. However, his understanding of rhetoric was narrowed to the "art of oratory", or in Cicero's view as the art of speaking accommodated for persuasion (*ars dicendi ad persuadendum accommodate)*, which in turn caused unnecessary equation between the concepts of oratorical practice and the poetics of folk rhetorical genres. Some of the subsequent scholars of oral rhetoric (e.g. Dragić 2006; 2007b; Botica 2013), fully or partially influenced by this concept, found it necessary to argue the distinction of rhetorical genres using Ancient rhetoric (with a focus on practical side, i.e. oratory) as the ground (Nikolić 2015: 169).

In his introductory study, Čubelić talks about five rhetorical genres: toast, swearing *(zaklinjanje)*[7] (this is an umbrella term for verbal charm, curse and oath), praise, counting-out rhyme and mockery rhyme. When discussing ritual swearing, he insists that the basic component of persuasion is more emphasized than in toasts because charming seeks trust and affection from the listeners. This is a good illustration of how Čubelić does not differentiate between *belief* (a component which can be shared by the participants in the communication) and *persuasion*[8] (rhetorical procedure which uses both rational and emotional means to gain recipient's acceptance of a certain idea or claim) (Nikolić 2015: 170). Regardless of that and other similar methodological flaws, Tvrtko Čubelić greatly contributed to Croatian folkloristics with his introduction of the umbrella

term *oral rhetoric* and by insisting that rhetorical genres should be studied as equals of the long established folklore genres.

Maja Bošković-Stulli, the most important Croatian folklorist of the 20th century, did not use the umbrella term *rhetorical genres* in her history of Croatian oral literature (1978) but she nevertheless dedicated considerable attention to rhetorical genres both in the continuity of the records and their interference with the written literature (Nikolić 2015: 170). The charms were mostly discussed in the section on the medieval epoch where she presents information about the most important records of verbal charms before the Renaissance, following the work of Bonifačić Rožin.

SCHOLARLY WORK OF JOSIP KEKEZ

Josip Kekez (1937–2003), professor of oral literature at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, was the scholar whose research of Croatian oral rhetoric was without doubt the most continuous and the most fruitful. His influential synthetic treatise *Usmena književnost* (*Oral Literature*), published for the first time in 1983[9], offers comprehensive synchronic and diachronic insight into Croatian oral literature. In the section dedicated to oral rhetoric, Kekez establishes the most systematic classification of rhetorical genres to date. His subsequent papers and books will affirm his position as the most important researcher of Croatian oral rhetorical genres (Nikolić 2015: 171).

Following the pioneer work of Bonifačić Rožin and Čubelić, Kekez highlights late scholarly interest in oral rhetorical genres. He finds the main reason for that in the previous classification approaches that treated rhetorical genres as either poetry or narrative. His firm belief is that language in verbal folklore (or oral literature in his approach) is capable of producing genres that share certain poetic elements different from lyrical, epic or narrative genres. Kekez (1998: 160) defines oral rhetorical genres as text texts that: a) persuade somebody, b) are used for speech exercise or c) are a verbal creation aesthetically built on asemantic language features. Although influenced by Čubelić's view on Ancient rhetoric, his authorial approach relied on the contemporary structural stylistic framework. For Kekez, the stylistic features and the communication effect of oral rhetorical text are considered to be inseparable. This insight led the path for further theoretical research that focused on the performativity of folklore texts (Nikolić 2015: 171).

Kekez (1998: 161) treated verbal charm as a prototypical rhetorical genre that relies on highly functional power of persuasion in order to protect a person from a disease or to expel it. He further states that charm is a form of folk magi-

cal medicine where poetic word is a remedy. In Kekez's view, the strength of persuasion is the primary condition for any charming procedure and therefore the rhetorical component becomes especially emphasised. It is interesting to notice how this insight on importance of rhetorical aspect is very similar to the approach of contemporary international scholars on charms, charmers and charming (e.g. Passalis 2012; Roper 2003).

Kekez discusses the neglect of a diachronic account of recorded Croatian verbal charm before the institutionalised folklore research in his book *Prva hrvatska rečenica* (*The First Croatian Sentence*) (1988). He argues that the long tradition and the secretiveness of performance caused strong similarity between medieval and contemporary records of verbal charms (Kekez 1988: 35). The rhetorical argumentation of using religious authority is seen as an important component of persuasion, immanent to the genre of verbal charm (Kekez 1988: 36–37). Stylistic similarities of verbal charms and counting-out rhymes are discussed in his book on counting-out rhymes *Naizred* (1993). These relations are clearly visible in the group of texts labelled as "holy numbers" (*sveti brojevi*) or "Unity" (*Jedinstvo*). Starting from establishing the oneness of God, these texts with charm function in most cases reach the number twelve or thirteen by repeating all the previous elements. From the emic perspective, they are mostly seen as prayers.

Kekez made an important classificatory innovation in his treatise *O govorničkim oblicima* (*On Rhetorical Genres*) (1996) where he further elaborated ideas from his previous studies. The curses and blessings are now treated as rhetorical genres (previously he considered them to be paremiological genres), and verbal charms are considered to be tightly related to curses (Kekez 1996: 288).

Working consistently under the structuralist paradigm and immanent approach to literature, Kekez's theoretical work on verbal charms and related genres is by far the most elaborate and continuous in Croatian folkloristics. His legacy is clearly visible in all subsequent research of oral rhetoric and verbal charms, especially those concerned with stylistic and pragmatic aspects.

CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARSHIP: STATUS OF VERBAL CHARM AS A GENRE

In his *Hrvatska usmenoknjiževna* čitanka (*Reader of Croatian Oral Literature*) (1995) Stipe Botica followed Kekez's definitions and classification system of oral rhetorical genres. This was the first case of rhetorical genres to be presented in a folkloristic anthology under a separate section, titled *Retorički oblici* (*Rhetori-*

cal Forms). In addition to Čubelić's and Kekez's insistence on the persuasive component, Botica emphasises the achievement of desired effects by text and by art of speaking (Botica 1995: 261). When speaking about particular genres, he uses both performative and structural criteria. Verbal charms are described as a mixture of religious invocation and magical formulation with a strong component of secretiveness (Botica 1995: 267–268).

In his recent *Povijest hrvatske usmene književnosti* (*History of Croatian Oral Literature*) (2013), Botica pays considerate attention to rhetorical genres (pp. 475–488) acknowledging that these genres are probably the most underrepresented in Croatian publications. In his description of this group of genres, he emphasises "magical word power" and epideictic style of speaking, especially in the case of toasts. Verbal charms are described both theoretically and by highlighting the most illustrating examples (pp. 480–484). Expelling of evil eye (*uroci*) is seen as a central motif of Croatian verbal charms (Botica 2013: 483).

Synthetic overview of Croatian oral rhetoric in Bosnia and Herzegovina was made by Marko Dragić (2006). He directly repeats Čubelić's approach using the concept of Ancient rhetoric and expanding this with comparative insights from old Middle-Eastern civilizations. Similar though more elaborate approach was used in his electronic handbook of Croatian oral literature (Dragić 2007b). His special interest in verbal charms and related folk prayers as an original creation of Croatian traditional culture can be traced back to the collection of folk prayers *Duša tilu besidila* (*Soul spoke unto body*) (1997). His more recent work (Dragić 2007a; 2011) attempts to establish a classification system of verbal charms, combining emic and etic approaches with an emphasis on verbal charm as a part of traditional culture, not just aesthetically and pragmatically interesting part of verbal folklore.

Renewal of interest in verbal charms among Croatian folklorists during the past two decades is visible in publication of ethnographic collections focused on folk prayers (Dragić 1997; Jurić Arambašić 2001; Marks 2011). Some of the accompanying folkloristic studies (e.g. Marks 2011) can be viewed as short histories of records of verbal charms and related genres, while others (e.g. Jurić-Arambašić 2001) emphasise popular religious aspects. Verbal charms are also discussed in relation to magical formulae in Croatian belief legends (Marks 2007) or more generally as a type of traditional verbal magic (Vukelić 2014). In his doctoral dissertation, Davor Nikolić (2013) used a phonostylistic approach in the analysis of oral rhetorical genres but verbal charms were left out of direct focus due to the interest in contemporary field records. The proposed classification system which distinguishes phonosemantic genres (counting-out rhymes and tongue-twisters) from pragmasemantic genres (curses and blessings) views verbal charm as a transitory genre, sharing elements from both groups. Further

outlined research is focused on pragmatic and rhetorical argumentative aspects of verbal charms and other rhetorical genres.

* * *

Two centuries after bishop Vrhovac's call it can be concluded that verbal charm is a recognized genre of Croatian folkloristics and related disciplines. First systematic accounts and analyses came from paleoslavistic and medievistic background using philological approach that were later incorporated in folkloristic studies. The second part of the 20th century was especially fruitful bringing structuralist stylistic insights that are still influential in contemporary Croatian scholarship of the subject. Classification of verbal charm as part of the group of oral rhetorical genres can be seen as the most fruitful innovation. Although it lacked international impact, mainly due to publishing in Croatian, it can still serve as an important and potentially valuable theoretical framework in the research of verbal charms. Symbolically, the recognition of verbal charm, both as folklore and literary genre, is the entry "Basma" (Verbal charm) in *Croatian Literary Encyclopaedia* (Endstrasser 2010: 120). The entry summarises studies of previous Croatian scholars and combines philological, literary and folkloristic approach, affirming verbal charm as a recognizable and valuable element of Croatian oral and literary tradition.

NOTES

[1] The formula šita, šita, šita should be read as if it is written in English like *shitta, shitta, shitta*.

[2] Glagolitic priests (Croatian: popovi glagoljaši) were Roman Catholic priests who used Old Church Slavonic language and Glagolitic script in the liturgical worship. They were active in Croatian territories from 9th to 19th century. Although constantly attacked by the Latin priests, they were granted formal permission by pope Innocent IV in the 13th century to continue their liturgical practices. After this permission their activity spread over Croatian coast and hinterland leading to production of numerous Glagolitic manuscripts (liturgical books, homilies, breviaries, Biblical excerpts etc.) (cf. Bratulić 2005). *Misal po zakonu rimskoga dvora* (*Missale Romanum Glagolitice*), printed in Glagolitic script in 1483, is the first printed Croatian book and the first missal in Europe not published in Latin language or in Latin script.

[3] Full title in Croatian: *Pitanja na sve priatelje domaćih starinah i jugoslavesne pověstnice* (*Questions for all friends of friends of domestic antiquities and Yugoslavian history*)

[4] Unpublished manuscripts of Ljudevit Gaj were collected and published in 1973 by Nikola Bonifačić Rožin in the book *Gajuša*.

[5] Lovretić's ethnography was originally conceived before publication of Radić's Questionnaire but it was adapted to the Questionnaire's principles when published in the *Collection for the Folk Life and Customs*.

[6] Charm-like prayer is the term we gave to folk prayers which resemble the verbal charms or share some common elements. This sub-genre deserves further research because it is relatively well documented in ethnographic collections.

[7] Croatian word *zaklinjanje* (swearing, binding oneself by oath) shares the root with the noun *kletva* (curse) and the verb *zakleti se* (to take an oath).

[8] This miscomprehension is clearer in Croatian, where word *belief* (*vjerovanje*) and word *persuasion* (*uvjeravanje*) share the same root, which is word *vjera* (*faith, trust*).

[9] The treatise was part of the third edition of the editorial handbook *Uvod u književnost* (*Introduction to Literature*) and it was republished in its two subsequent editions (1986; 1998).

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BOOK REVIEWS

Emanuela Timotin : Paroles protectrices, paroles guérisseuses. La tradition manuscrite des charmes roumains (XVII^e-XIX^e siècle), Paris, P.U.P.S., 2015 (collection Traditions et croyances), 385 p., 4 illustrations, 8 cartes.

Version remaniée de sa thèse soutenue à Grenoble en 2009, le livre d'E. Timotin se compose de huit chapitres qui obéissent grosso modo à une même structure : texte et traduction du / des charme(s), datation, signification du terme, commentaires et conclusions. L'introduction fait le point sur les recherches, souligne que les recettes médicales et les charmes manuscrits ont une fonction thérapeutique, qu'il est difficile de distinguer charmes (*descântec*) et prières car les premiers sont souvent appelés *molitvă*, *rugă[ciune]*[1], et une attention particulière est portée à la typologie des charmes. Mme Timotin conclut son introduction en notant : « En envisageant les charmes comme des véhicules d'un savoir traditionnel, la présente analyse se propose de circonscrire le savoir qu'ils transmettent et la manière dont ils se perpétuent au cours de la diffusion manuscrite. La construction des motifs textuels est examinée pour comprendre leur sémantisme et, implicitement, les raisons pour lesquelles ils sont devenus des *topoi* des textes magiques » (p. 18). Son analyse s'appuie sur soixante-dix charmes.

Dans l'ordre sont examinés :

1 Les charmes contre le *năjit, maladie dont la forme est une inflammation*[2].

2 Contre la *mătrice*.

3 Contre la fièvre, dont un témoin s'ouvre par les paroles de l'Évangile selon saint Jean, très utilisé en magie protectrice (p. 83)[3].

4 Contre la *brâncă*, terme que l'on a rapproché du grec βράγχος « enrouement, angine diphtérique, érysipèle, étranguillon des chevaux, angine diphtérique des porcs et des chevaux, maladie des porcs », inflammation au cou ou à la tête (des chevaux et des porcs), ce qui donne une idée de la polysémie des termes utilisés dans les charmes ! On y relève un très ancien *adynaton* : « Ils la virent

[1] Cf. aussi Timotin, « Ieşi, năjite, pricăjite... De la „molitvele minciunoase" la descântece" », *Limba română* 55 (2006), p. 72–83.

[2] Timotin, « The năjit between Prayers and Charms. A Study on the Romanian Manuscript Tradition », dans J. Kapalo, É. Pócs, W. F. Ryan (éd.), *The Power of Words. Studies on Charms and Charming in Europe*, Budapest-New York, CEU Press, 2012, p. 216–230.

[3] Voir aussi Timotin, « Les noms de la fièvre en roumain ancien (XVI^e – XVIII^e siècles) », dans M. Iliescu, H. Siller-Runggaldier, P. Danler (Hrsg.), *Actes du XXV e Congrès International de Linguistique et de Philologie Romanes (3-8 septembre 2007, Innsbruck)*, t. VI, BerlinNew York, De Gruyter Verlag, 2010, p. 583–592.

sans yeux, ils la trouvèrent sans pieds, ils la prirent sans mains, ils la firent rôtir sans feu, ils la firent saler sans sel, ils la mangèrent sans bouche » (p. 134).
5 Contre le mauvais œil (*deochi*), charme qui comprend une formule introductive, un schéma d'expulsion de la maladie et la formule finale (p. 164).
6 Les exorcismes contre le diable des eaux (*Rugăciune de scoatere a dracului*), provocateurs d'intempéries. Là sont convoqués Jésus, Marie, les quatre Évangélistes, les seize prophètes…
7 Les charmes contre les fées (*Ielele*, *Dânsele*, *Ale Frumoase*) qui apportent la maladie par le biais d'un couteau.
8 Les charmes contre le maléfice (*fapt*) dans lesquels la Lune est invoquée[4].

En bonne philologue, E. Timotin prête une attention soutenue aux termes qu'utilisent les scribes, souvent des prêtres ou des clercs, et définit les champs sémantiques avec précision. Elle se penche aussi sur les rituels qui accompagnent paroles guérisseuses et prières à la lune (p. 270-274).

La richesse de l'étude d'E. Timotin tient, entre autres choses, à son approche pluridisciplinaire car, outre la philologie, elle mobilise les ressources de l'anthropologie culturelle et ses réflexions construisent une histoire des mentalités qui ont produit ces charmes et ces exorcismes, voyez par exemple son développement sur les tempestaires (p. 213-225) ou ce qu'elle dit des nœuds et du liage (p.119-121). À chaque fois, elle ouvre la perspective en rapprochant les textes roumains de textes latins du Moyen Âge. Dans son analyse du bestiaire magique (p. 292-295), avec le loup, le chat, la grenouille, le cheval, E. Timotin met au jour une évolution : plus on s'approche des temps modernes, plus nombreux sont les animaux évoqués.

In fine, on trouve une liste des abréviations utilisées, des annexes où sont cartographiées les occurrences du *năjit, de la mătrice, de la fièvre,* de la *brâncă,* du mauvais œil, du diable des eaux, des *Ielele* (des fées)[5] et des maléfices. Une bibliographie qui montre l'ampleur des dépouillements de Mme Timotin qui a eu recours à de nombreux manuscrits dont elle donne la liste p. 371 sq. Suivent un index des passages bibliques et un index thématique qui permet une orientation rapide.

Les charmes roumains sont très différents de ceux recueillis en Europe occidentale et écrits dans diverses langues. Ils fournissent une autre image des procédés utilisés pour les guérisons et s'écartent notablement de ceux que

[4] Cf. Timotin, « L'invocation à la lune dans les charmes roumains. Tradition manuscrite et tradition orale », dans A Branda, I. Cuceu (éd.), *Romania occidentalis – Romania orientalis. Volum omagial dedicat lui Ion Taloş*, Cluj, Editura Mega, 2009 (Editura Fundaţiei pentru Studii Europene), p. 651-660.
[5] Timotin, « Un aspect méconnu des fées roumaines. Observations sur un texte magique manuscrit », *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes* 45 (2007), p. 433–443.

nous avons recensés dans les pays romans et germaniques[6]. Il semble exister une véritable césure entre les pays de religion orthodoxe et ceux de religion catholique. Si, par exemple, les charmes roumains ont recours au grec et au slavon pour accentuer le caractère magique des charmes, en Occident sont utilisés des signes appelés *charakteres* et des mots magiques inventés ou empruntés à l'arabe, l'hébreu, etc.

L'étude d'Emanuela Timotin fera sans nul doute date au sein des recherches sur la magie roumaines car elle met à la disposition des chercheurs un corpus inédit en grande partie et commenté avec une grande perspicacité. Les ponts qu'elle jette vers d'autres cultures, la dimension diachronique et chronologique des analyses et la rigueur de sa méthodologie font de son livre un exemple à suivre.

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[6] C. Lecouteux, *Le livre des guérisons et des protections magiques. Deux mille ans de croyances*, Paris, Imago, 2016.

Jesús Suárez López, *Fórmulas mágicas de la tradición oral asturiana. Invocaciones, ensalmos, conjuros*, Gobierno del Principado de Asturias, Ediciones Trea, 2016, 701 p.

We are dealing here with a remarkable book, which will undoubtedly mark the future researches on the history of the verbal magical formulae and on the practices of charming. It focuses on the magical formulae which have been used in the province of Asturias up to nowadays, and presents an impressive inventory of 600 texts. An important part of this corpus had been published in scattered books and journals since the 19th century. The book also includes an important amount of 343 recently collected, unedited formulae: Jesús Suárez López has been collecting them since 1990, and his most recent field work which gave him the opportunity to collect magical formulae took place in 2014 (see p. 36, 170, 227, etc.). Xosé Antón Fernández Ambás and Ramsés Ilesies occasionally collaborated to this impressive work, and their contribution consists of magical formulae they collected after 2013, which are published here for the first time (p. 36).

The book has an important comparative dimension in so far as the Asturias texts are constantly compared to other similar texts, in Spanish and in other European language, which are used mainly in Spain, but also in other regions of Europe or in South America. The diachronic dimension of the analysis is also significant, and the author often brings into discussion ancient formulae (mainly Latin), medieval or 16th century texts in order to establish the tradition of the Asturias texts.

The book is divided into three parts: a short methodological introduction (p. 15-63), the anthology of texts (p. 63-670), and the bibliography (p. 671-695).

In the *Introduction*, the magical formulae are defined in opposition to other oral formulae in respect to three criteria: the performer's attitude, the attitude of the Church toward their use and their transmission. According to Jesús Suárez López, the magical formula, the performer of which aims to control and manipulate the nature, is opposed to the prayer (*oración*) and the supplication (*plegaria*), the performer of which shows an attitude of submission and reverence in agreement with the religious feeling. Moreover, prayers and supplications can be known by the whole community, their use for granting a certain grace or favour is accepted and even encouraged by the Church, while the verbal formula with a magical character is prohibited by the church, is usually secret and is transmitted from generation to generation, in the strictest familiar intimacy (p. 20).

The author establishes three main categories of magical formulae: invocations (*invocaciones*), conjurations (*conjuros*) and charms (*ensalmos*).

The invocations are defined as usually short requests, most of which are addressed to celestial bodies.

The conjurations are described as verbal formulae directed to a demonical or mythical character, a meteorological phenomenon, a harmful animal or a maleficent agent in order to counteract its negative influence or destructive power (p. 21); they are considered to be more complex than the invocations, they are imperative, and are usually accompanied by ritual acts charged with a basic symbolism (p. 22).

The verbal formulae oriented to a divine figure, a saint or a holy figure, in order to acquire the recovery of an illness or of a pain through supernatural meanings are labelled as charms (*ensalmos*). They have a curative function, their performance also includes the use of natural elements (of animal, mineral, or vegetal), and they must be performed repeatedly for a specific number of (consecutive) days. In opposition with the invocations and the conjurations, they have a more complex structure both in respect to verbal formulae and the execution of the ritual. Hence their typology is more varied, according to the variety of diseases meant to be healed (p. 22-23). Although the author organises the charms according to their function, in the *Introduction* he also lists eight categories of charms, established according with the typology of the verbal formulation and the *modus operandi* of the healing ritual: narrative charms (*ensalmos narrativos* or *historiolae*), imperative charms (*ensalmos imperativos*), supplicatory charms (*ensalmos rogativos*), *sympathetic charms* (*ensalmos simpateticos*), *analogic charms* (*ensalmos analogicos*), transfer charms (*ensalmos transferenciales*), enumerative charms (*ensalmos enumerativos*), figurative charms (*ensalmos figurativos*) (p. 24-28).

In the final part of the *Introduction*, the author focuses on the charmers, whose ages can vary from 12 (see p. 135: an invocation to a flute) to 94 (see p. 160: an invocation to find a lost needle), and on their narratives about the circumstances in which they learnt the magical formulae, about their functions and the decline of their use (p. 44-61).

The anthology of texts is the largest part of the book (p. 63-670). Each text is accompanied by information about the informant (name, age, origin), about the year it was collected and its editor(s), if any. Each group of texts with the same thematic is complemented by information about their function, the ritual context of their use, their geographic distribution, the earliest testimonies; the analysis also offers an important bibliography about other similar texts attested in other European regions.

The texts are organised according to the three categories delimited in the *Introduction*. Their variety is impressive, and the author's numerous comments help the reader to understand them, to perceive their originality, their inner

poetry and to connect them to other European charms. Many times however, a reader less experienced in reading this dialectal variety of Spanish might feel overwhelmed by the frequent alliterations and by the vocabulary of the texts, which either has regional features or displays a range array of new lexical creations.

Most of the invocations are organised in respect with the addressee. There are numerous invocations to stars (the sun, the (new) moon, the shooting star), but also to various animals (snails, ladybird, cricket, toad, turkey, hen, cuckoo, eagle, vulture, porcupine). Extremely interesting are the invocations addressed to musical instruments, such as the rustic flutes; in this case, the formulae are meant to ease the cut of the brunches of which these instruments are made, and to make the instruments sound good (p. 129-140).

Other formulae are used while seeding the hemp, or in order to find a lost needle or other small objects, to dry a wet sheet of paper. According to the author, most of this sub-category of texts are nowadays mere songs, but their comparison with similar ancient and modern texts proves their magical origin and function (p. 21).

Several texts similar to nursery rhymes are also considered to have a magical character and are included in the category of invocations. They are meant to attract swarms of bees, to induce refractory cows to give their milk, to make butter (p. 169-184).

The conjurations form a rich category (p. 185-368). They are meteorological (against tempest, lightning, heavy rain, fog, for wolfs not to attack the cattle, against whirlwinds which are considered to be malefic), or are meant to protect against harmful animals (rodents, vermin, serpents, weasels, wolves) and mythological beings (the spirits which produce nightmares, the devilish assaults). The formulae against evil eye have an important place in the Asturias tradition (p. 348-368).

The most important category of magical formulae have a curative function. Many of these charms (*ensalmos*) (p. 369-670) refer to children's illnesses (aphthae, pinworms, hernia, children's muteness), to skin diseases (*e.g.* erysipelas, herpes zoster, ulcers, chilblains, burns), to eye illnesses (macula, sty), dislocations, fistulae, mastitis, haemorrhage, toothache, etc. An important part of them is supposed to heal cattle illnesses (p. 611-670).

The Asturias rich tradition of verbal magical formulae, in particular, and the Spanish tradition of verbal magical formulae, in general, mostly ignored before, are brought to light by this impressive book. Jesús Suárez López's efforts to gather a vast number of variable texts, his interest in the relation of the Asturias tradition with other (Spanish) traditions make this volume a

significant contribution for the study of charms, for the history of religion and, last but not least, of the Romance languages.

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Jukka Saarinen, *Runolaulun poetiikka. Säe, syntaksi ja parallelismi Arhippa Perttusen runoissa*. Akateeminen väitöskirja. Helsinki 2018.- 417 lk.

Arhippa Iivananpoika Perttunen (Arhip Ivanov Pertujev 1762 Latvajärvi – 1841 Latvajärvi), the remarkable runosinger from White Sea Karelia who is believed to be the source of approximately a third or the runosongs in *Kalevala* as Jukka Saarinen (2013) has written based on his analysis.

During his spring collection tour in 1834, Elias Lönnrot, the author of *Kalevala*, paid a special visit to the renowned singer and spent three days writing down his songs. In his writings of the 80-year-old singer, Lönnrot has also referred to him as an expert in other types of folklore, admiring his excellent memory. F. J. Cajan and M. A. Castrén also collected songs from Arhippa – altogether 85 texts or 5,995 verses have been written down and comprise epic, lyric texts and incantations. A number of folklorists have written about Arhippa Perttunen and his songs, including Anna-Leena Siikala, Lotte Tarkka, Martti Haavio and others.

Jukka Saarinen's dissertation "Runolaulun poetiikka. Säe, syntaksi ja parallelismi Arhippa Perttusen runoissa" [The poetics of oral poetry: verse structure, syntax, and parallelism in the texts of Arhippa Perttunen], which he defended on 20 January 2018, is comprehensive (317 pages of the 417-page dissertation contains research and literature, the rest is divided between various annexes and analysis results) and thorough. Saarinen used all the songs written down from Arhippa Perttunen in an attempt to reconstruct the texts that had remained somewhat fragmented at the time they were written down. Saarinen's goal was to follow as closely as possible the poetic and linguistic aspect of the songs. The dissertation is characterised by thorough understanding and consideration of previous as well as the latest theoretical positions and approaches and by its remarkably meticulous consideration of matters of linguistics and form.

The material has been treated from the viewpoint of folkloristics and linguistics as a way to get an overview of how Perttunen used language. Saarinen makes use of the oral-formulaic theory and the studies of Milman Parry and Albert B. Lord. The author admits that one single theoretical school only allows for partial treatment of Kalevalaic verses. He finds the concept of register as developed by linguist Roman Jakobson to be productive, and his syntax analysis is based on the theoretical approach of and the rules of runosongs phrased by Matti Kuusi. Particular rules restrict the choices made by singers and the verse process, but at the same time, established expressions can be used more than once, e.g. for expressing similar ideas. In terms of parallelism as a characteristic feature of Kalevalaic verses, the author observed the use of parallel verses in the creation of complex poetical imagery that is richer in semantic substance than single verses.

The formal features (metre, alliteration and parallelism) of Kalevalaic poetry function within the framework of a verse. Arhippa Perttunen takes these formal features into account, but his texts also contain secondary poetic features (unusual word order and archaic words). They function together to form a distinctive register.

Since Arhippa was known as a performer of narrative songs, Saarinen admits that his songs were structured in a stable form while diverging from the versions sung by other singers. Arhippa probably shaped them as he acquired them. His repertoire also included religious songs. He is known to have had a special relationship with religion. Although he was not a healer and considered incantation to be a sin he knew lengthy healing charms. Lyrical songs indicate that the singer was good at combining new texts using his existing knowledge and different types of texts, e.g. proverbs.

It is also clear that the singer performed the texts differently for different collectors, but by using closed verses *Ylittsi tahon Jumalan* - 'against God's will' *Kyllä mie sukusi tiijän* – 'I should know your blood/decent'). For example, he performed lumbago charms for Lönnrot in the form of a historiola, making use of the epic song of the Great Oak (Saarinen 2018:127).

The singer was familiar with incantations such as charms related to healing and livelihood (hunting and cattle-breeding). Altogether 1,553-1,300 incantation verses and 1,022 incantation verse types have been recorded. The number of single line verses amounts to 836 or 64.0% of the entire repertoire, which is reminiscent of a similar dispersion in the list of plots of Russian incantations by V. Kljaus (1997). 186 verses occur most frequently, and most of them appear in the same incantation text (96, 51.6%). It is noteworthy that there are only seven verses which appear in more than two incantations.

It is interesting to see how the singer referred to himself: as a rune-singer, wise man or seer. There is no doubt that Saarinen's thorough overview of linguistic forms and syntax will assist anyone analysing Karelian-Finnish incantations in the future, although the main emphasis of his dissertation is on runosongs.

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Sorcery texts from Ancient Mesopotamia by Amar Annus Bibliotheca Antiqua. Tallinn 2017: TLÜ Kirjastus.

> tu-ur-rat amât-sa ana pî-šá lišân-šá qa-
>
> in elî kiš-pi-šá lim-ha-su-ši ilimeš mu-ši ti
>
> The spell of the sorceress is hateful;
>
> let her word come back in her mouth,
>
> let as-rat her tongue be tied!
>
> Let the Gods of the Night overcome her spell! (http://www.rosscaldwell.com/babylonian/MAQLURIT.pdf)

Considering academic interest and the number of academic books published annually on the subject of witchcraft/witches, the translation into Estonian of Mesopotamian incantations is not exactly surprising, but unique nonetheless. Unlike the works referred to above, half of the volume of the publication in the Antiqua series is designated for famous original text, texts inhibiting the actualisation of witchcraft. Namely, the publication on the Mesopotamian incantation ceremony "Burning" with translations of a complete ceremony of roughly a hundred incantations and two curse texts contains relevant commentary and a longer essay on the topic written by Amar Annus.

The last century has been a success story for researchers of ancient history as evidenced by archaeological findings and the number of academic studies, but text corpora as well as translations of original texts made available online also serve as a guide to ancient culture. New opportunities for restoring texts – a large part of clay tablets has been fund in fragments – and a general increase in awareness about cuneiform writing and the societies that used it has led to new publications employing textual criticism in addition to what has been published before. The ever-growing online sharing of Mesopotamian texts, translations and commentaries is also a gratifying source of information and gives cause to assume that the knowledge base of modern readers goes deeper than the Code of Hammurabi and the flood story in Gilgamesh. Although there have been no geographical restrictions on academic research over the last decades, scholars can work in every corner of the world and the number of public databases has increased, we still must admit that the bases for funding research are nefariously restrictive and do not favour in-depth research. For example, the funding period for "The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (ETCSL)" founded by the Faculty of Oriental studies at Oxford University lasted from 1997 to 2006, after which further funding was found for software updates in 2015. This text corpus contains Sumerian literature in all its forms, meaning that

it includes poetry, hymns, letters, songs, writing exercises, older mythological compositions and dialogues, examples of proverbs, riddles, etc. The project site provides access to four hundred Mesopotamian texts (with translations) which illustrate compositions from the third and second millennia BCE. A team of excellent researchers including Graham Cunningham, Eleanor Robson, Gabor Zolyomi, Miguel Civil, Bendt Alster, Joachim Krecher, Piotr Michalowski *et al.* have published shared approaches and separate academic writings, incl. on the subject of incantations The database referred to above could be used as compulsory reading for students in humanities (especially folkloristics and literature). Preferably with references to additional literature. By now, there are also a number of environments providing generalised information (e.g. the site https://www.revolvy.com/main/index.php?s=Miscellaneous%20Babylonian%20Inscriptions and many other sites are helpful in finding answers to various questions).

The compilers of ETCSL state that predictions, omens and a large body of incantation texts are not within their scope. According to various assessments, the number of texts related to omens and divination account for up to thirty per cent or more of all preserved texts. Predictions contain several practices still used today: divination based on animal organs, divination based on signs of nature and in the sky, dream interpretation, astrological omens, etc. as well as teachings on diagnostics.

The instructions in the writings indicate that the people were able to generalise processes and the phenomena relate thereto, making it easier to understand the achievements of Greek and other subsequent cultures and their connections with Babylonian and Egyptian cultures. The divination practices listed above were used until quite recently or are still used today and continue to be passed on in verbal tradition in many cultures. Sumerian texts also bear ontological importance – in order to explain human psychology and cognitive abilities, the stability of religious fantasies, the dialogue nature and variability of written and verbal ritual and text and many other issues still relevant in this day and age.

In addition to incantations, herbal therapy served an important role in healing. Texts of verbal charms and incantations from the period 2600-100 BCE can be found in writings, literary texts and other sources in the Sumerian and Akkadian languages, where they appear alongside personal life occurrences entwined with symptoms of illnesses, etiologies and diagnoses. There are also instructions on what to do in the event of suffering or upon becoming a victim of evil.

The form of the text has been perfected over millennia and the cycle "Burning" is considered to be the best example of this. Graham Cunningham's incantation studies open up a world of verbal charms where incantations against

sorcerers and sorcery also make room for texts against curses, the repelling of bad omens, exorcism of demons, charms for silencing snakes and evil dogs, sauna and cleansing ceremony incantations, love charms for increasing potency, etc. As is characteristic of the geographical location, there are many incantations against agricultural pests, incl. locusts. The incantations are a reflection of the society where they were used and the environment in which the people involved in the culture lived.

Prayers and incantations belonging to therapies and healing rituals were either performed by the person himself/herself or he/she used the help of a professional incantator, e.g. when performing Maqlû. Maqlû was discovered during the height of archaeological studies in the Middle East in the 19th century. Anyone interested can find the original text along with its English translation on the Internet, but it is also possible to look up its core translations. *Knut L. Tallqvist's translation was published as early as 1895, Gerhard Meier's translation was published in 1937* and the most recent academic edition of the Maqlû was published in 2015. The last edition was put together by Tzvi Abusch, professor of Assyriology and Ancient Middle Eastern Religion at Harvard University and his "The Magical Ceremony Maqlû: A Critical Edition", Leiden: Brill is also the basis of Amar Annus' translation.

Maqlû tablets and the fragments thereof are preserved in numerous museums across Europe and America: in the British Museum, Berlin, Chicago, Pennsylvania, Oxford, Istanbul, etc., making it incredibly cumbersome to restore the text. In his treatment of the subject matter, Tzvi Abusch considers it important that the definitions of Mesopotamian magic and sorcery differ from biblical literature and several subsequent approaches. According to him, magic was a legitimate part of religion, corresponding to "the human needs, crises and wishes of individuals and the king". Sorcery in Mesopotamian context (kišpū, ruḫû, rusû, upšāšû lemnūtu) was not related to magical behaviour but hostile conduct, i.e. it was related to practices that served an anti-social and destructive purpose.

Maqlû incantations include instructions for the appropriate performance of the ritual. Incantations were originally performed during a single night in July or August – this was seen as a particularly dangerous time when spirits from the netherworld made people vulnerable to their sorcery. The ritual lasted from sunset to sunrise and began by burning figurines of sorcerers, drowning the figurines in black liquid, placing them face down on the ground and crushing them while reciting the texts on the first four clay tablets. Descriptions if this ritual and other rituals reveal the relationships between ceremonial practices and texts. Remarkably, many of the techniques from back then have parallels

in contemporary societies, starting from the practice of drawing a circle around the sick person.

The most renowned medical researchers of ancient Mesopotamia, including Markham Gelleri and Zack Kotzé, believe that the Maqlû ceremony was used for treating paranoid schizophrenia, although at that time the development of the condition was explained with the evil eye, bewitching and sorcery. Which brings us to an important part of the publication. The translator's tale of sorcery, facts, liberal parallels drawn with the traditions of the Livonians (the situation in the 1920s, based on the collection of texts by Oskar Loorits) and other arbitrary examples presented in the beautiful linguistic interpretation of Amar Annus. The placement of acts of sorcery in the territory of Livonian in the beginning of the 20th century, and the Komi people, in the beginning of the 21st century, somewhere in the vast fields of Russia, is reminiscent of the Viking tradition. Vikings placed one-eyed giants, dragons and other supernatural creatures on the Eastern Route – we do not have any, but they still dwell in the wilderness of the fringe areas. This explains the use of Art Leete's articles from the daily paper Postimees as sources, although similar servicing texts of sorcerers can be found in Estonian journals or advertisements in central Tartu – the person writing them has decided to position real sorcery further away in time and space.

If we exclude unexpectedly common references to autism, then it is a matter of taste whether the phenomenon of the evil eye should be explained by hyper-mentalism or whether we should stick with the explanations provided by psychologists and researchers of social relationships. The influence of ethnic explanations on the course of the illness and the sick person is an important aspect. At the initiative of Arthur Kleinmann and other researchers of ethno-psychiatrical phenomena and due to the influence of popular cultural etiologies, they have found a place in the international nomenclature of the World Health Organisation (WHO) as ethno-psychiatric diagnoses which should be taken into account in ethnic communities.

The foreword in its current form is a separate (artistic) work and everyone is free to select an explanation on facts and the interpretation thereof. For example, in his descriptions of witch trials Annus rationalises and marginalises them, although the litigations were conducted in accordance with legal practices supported by contemporary mundane and religious authorities. The foreword repeatedly makes irritating references to the sempiternity of modern problems, not to mention magical practices. The source of the illness and sick persons are still constrained by drawing a circle around them. The practice of using a plough to draw a protective circle around villages facing the danger of a pandemic as was once customary in the heart of Europe is still very much alive as are many other practices. This indicates that magical thought and behaviour cannot be

easily rationalised and that old structural methods apply across different eras. During his lifetime, Plato admired the healing abilities of Greek incantations and the power of word over the body and mind of people. He found the texts at the time to be poetical and beautiful, which is undoubtedly also true of the Maqlû and Mesopotamian incantations that were perfected over millennia.

The conclusion made from the above is that we could use reading books, textbooks, academic anthologies and academic monographs about sorcery texts as well as about the variegated Mesopotamian literary tradition as such, regardless of the order of publication of such works. Scholars specialised on more particular fields have no issue with finding originals, translations and commentaries for their own personal use, but only Assyriologists could help clarify the broader cultural context, intellectual aspects and development of different categories of texts.

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