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A Contribution to the Study of Palaeologan Magic

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One of the most striking and encouraging things about the study of magic in the Palaeologan period, as compared to some of the earlier phases of Byzantine history, is the fact that there seems to be, relatively speaking, an abundance of riches here. The great advantage of this is that it enables us to gain, in some measure at least, an overview of the great range and variety that clearly existed in the Byzantine magical spectrum. We are not confined to isolated and indistinct pieces of evidence which, although fascinating and revealing in themselves, are often incapable of doing more than providing the basis for scholarly speculation. Such fragments may, of course, be usefully related to each other over time and space, but they lack, in general, anything like a coherent or inclusive framework within which they may be placed and understood. This is not the case with the Palaeologan material which, although far from complete, is nevertheless sufficiently abundant to allow more general patterns to be observed in this particular historical context. It may therefore also be useful in helping us to see, if only by analogy, the earlier, more fragmentary material in a wider setting. The consequent disadvantage of such wealth, however, is that the constraints of space, in a paper such as this, mean that depth must inevitably be sacrificed for breadth and that the result cannot be a complete, thorough, or even detailed survey of all the available material. Nor is there room to venture, except in passing, into the vital and revealing area of the interpretation and analysis of this material; the consideration of what it tells us about late Byzantine people, about their religious beliefs in particular and about their outlook and society in general, must await subsequent study. I am thus intending to do no more here than simply provide an outline of the resources, an

overview of the content; this paper is, in other words, yet another contribution to a subject where contributions seem to be the norm but where studies with the depth and application it deserves have not yet materialized.[1] At least with the Palaeologan evidence we can assemble enough wood and stones to form the basis for a substantial magical meal, but by themselves these ingredients are perhaps rather unappetizing and indigestible; and unfortunately the conjurer, who is required to transform them into a succulent, well-seasoned, and sophisticated feast, is still somewhere on his way to the palace.

First of all, some consideration must be given to terminology and approach. Clearly this is not the place in which to enter in any depth into the sometimes tortuous debates surrounding several of the most important words which are to be used; I want simply to make clear the sense in which I am understanding and using them. The most important of these terms is definitely "magic" itself. In the context of late Byzantine thought (and this is certainly not to imply that the same is necessarily true anywhere else), magic is being taken as a particular form of religious belief and activity which did not conform to the doctrinally defined, dominant orthodox Christianity; it was, essentially, associated with the demons and/or with the notion of automatic control of desired outcome or response.[2] For the doctrinalists, magic was nothing but a delusion induced by evil spiritual powers; it was also necessarily false for, to

[1] Among the more important of such contributions for the Palaeologan period in particular are: C. Bruel, "Superstition et magie dans la mentalité religieuse byzantine sous les Paléologues," Mémoire de la Maîtrise d'Histoire (Toulouse, 1970); F. Cumont, "Demetrios Chloros et la tradition des Coiranides," *BAntFr* (1919), 175–81; C. Cupane, "La magia a Bisanzio nel secolo XIV: Azione e reazione," *JÖB* 29 (1980), 237–62; A. Delatte, *La catoptromancie grecque et ses dérivés,* Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres de l'Université de Liège 48 (Liège-Paris, 1932); A. Delatte and Ch. Josserand, "Contribution à l'étude de la démonologie byzantine," Mélanges Bidez, *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientales* 2 (1934), 207–32; R. Greenfield, *Traditions of Belief in Late Byzantine Demonology* (Amsterdam, 1988); Th. Hopfner, "Mittel- und neugriechische Lekano-, Lychno-, Katoptro- und Onychomantien," in *Studies Presented to F. Ll. Griffith,* Egypt Exploration Society (London, 1932), 218–32; D. Pingree, "The Astrological School of John Abramios," *DOP* 25 (1971), 191–215. In general see also Ph. Koukoules, βυζαντινῶν βίος καὶ πολιτισμός, Collection de l'Institut Français d'Athènes 11, I.2 (Athens, 1948).

[2] The question of the definition of "magic" and its relation to "religion" is given a very clear and helpful treatment by D. E. Aune, "Magic in Early Christianity," *ANRW,*

assume that an individual spirit or person possessed power to act in or by itself, as magic did in its notion of automatic control, was to challenge or deny the unique position of God as the ultimate and sole originator and controller of everything that happened and was done in the world. On the other hand, apparently for the great majority who were uninterested in or incapable of understanding the doctrinalists' approach, magic was an imposed category in the overall unbroken spectrum of Byzantine religious behavior which ran from extremes of supplication to manipulation and coercion. It is clear that most people believed, or at least saw nothing particularly wrong with believing, that spiritual powers, good and bad, and perhaps even human beings, had real power to act independently of divine control. Here magic was simply an alternative way, sometimes perceived as being more effective, sometimes as less effective, of getting things to happen by religious means; the forces used in magic were essentially irrelevant, as were moral valuations of its outcomes.

Within the overall range of late Byzantine magical practice and belief, "sorcery" is singled out and is intended to be distinguished from "witchcraft" in the sense that it operates through learned beliefs and rituals rather than through the innate, occult powers associated with the latter; it is belief and practice that is taught by word of mouth or transmitted by means of books and papers.[3] While ideas of witchcraft may perhaps have been more prevalent at lower levels of the late Byzantine religious spectrum, they seem to have been almost entirely absent from the higher levels except, perhaps, for the all-pervasive belief in the power of the evil eye; on the other hand, sorcery seems to have been the type of magical activity that was normally associated (both in fact and in popular opinion) with literate and educated people, and as such occupies a dominant role in the evidence that has survived from this period.

11.23.2 (Berlin-New York, 1980), 1510-16. Since he is primarily concerned with the Graeco-Roman and early Christian context, Aune's commentary and definition, to which my own working formula is clearly closely related, is particularly relevant for Byzantinists.

[3] A summary of the distinction is provided by M. Marwick, *Witchcraft and Sorcery* (Harmondsworth, 1970), 11-13. For a discussion of the evidence for the Palaeologan period, see Greenfield, *Demonology*, 249-51. A similar distinction is pursued by D. de F. Abrahamse, "Magic and Sorcery in the Hagiography of the Middle Byzantine Period," *ByzF* 7 (1982), 3-17; but not consistently by C. S. Galatariotou, "Holy Women and Witches: Aspects of Byzantine Conceptions of Gender," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 9 (1984-85), 62-65.

It should perhaps be pointed out that the English terminology outlined here does not reflect the use of particular Greek words in the Palaeologan sources. There are thus no Greek terms that correspond precisely to the distinction that has been drawn between sorcery and witchcraft, while quite a number of Greek words are employed to indicate the general activity which may be included in my use of the single English word "magic." The commonest of these are μαγεία and γοητεία, which, in most instances, are used simply as synonyms, although it is clear that they could also be distinguished from each other in certain circumstances, basically by reference to the types of demonic powers the activity was believed to involve.[4] Words like μαγεία and γοητεία, however, clearly had pejorative connotations and thus appear to have been used principally by the doctrinalists, while being avoided by people who were themselves involved in the practice of magic. Such practitioners, and probably most ordinary people too, tended simply to use the specific terms and phrases appropriate to particular "magical" activities, such as making an amulet (φυλακτήριον, χαρτί(ον)), performing a conjuration (ὁρκισμός), or carrying out

[4] Among the other words quite commonly found are μαγγανεία, φαρμακεία, and μαντεία, as well as reference to the use of ἐπῳδαί and the practices of the ἐπίκλησις (δαιμόνων) or the ἐπερώτησις (πνευμάτων); the adjective usually used to describe something as "magical" is μαγικός. Clear evidence that the doctrinalists did not distinguish between the terms γοητεία and μαγεία may be found, for example, in the documents of the patriarchal court (see below, note 18); there the two words are often used together as a standard phrase to refer to "magical" practices in general, while they rarely appear independently; compare also, e.g., the passages cited below (note 9) from Joseph Bryennios. Nikephoros Gregoras, in his commentary on the *de Insomniis* of Synesios of Cyrene (for full reference to this work, see below, note 15), refers to a distinction that may apparently be drawn among the terms γοητεία, μαγεία, and φαρμακεία: the first involves the use of material and unclean demons who do evil things; the second employs "middle" demons, both material and immaterial; while the third achieves its effects simply by using various substances that are eaten or drunk (cols. 542–43). Elsewhere in the same work (col. 605), Gregoras follows this distinction when discussing the idea that some demons have an irrational soul and a sort of materiality, maintaining that it is these that are subject to γοητεία. The alternative redaction of the *de Daemonibus* (see below, note 20), 128–29, and the other work attributed to Psellos which is largely dependent on it, *Graecorum opiniones de daemonibus* (see below, note 21), 100–102, contain a rather similar distinction, maintaining that γοητεία concerns material and earthly demons, while μαγεία has instead to do with the knowledge and employment of the whole range of natural sympathies and antipathies that run through the cosmos.

a lekanomancy (λεκανομαντεία); elsewhere, when referring to their practices in general, they would use much vaguer terms such as the plain, neutral phrases, the "art" (ἡ τέχνη) or the "practice" (ἡ πραγματεία).[5] In other words, as one would expect if my understanding of late Byzantine magic as outlined above is correct, "magic" was not a particularly well-defined category in the language of the period in general, and was really only distinguished from other related activities in the speech of the doctrinalists.

From what has been said above, it will also be clear that this paper deals with the subject of Palaeologan magic in the conceptual context of a continuum of religious belief, experience, and practice which is seen as shading from high to low levels. Inevitably here one is venturing into the minefield of great and little traditions, of orthodox and popular religion; basically the terms "standard orthodox" and "alternative" traditions of belief and practice will be used, and they will be understood as being related to a continuum lying between the poles of, on the one hand, learned or doctrinal and, on the other, local or practical religion.[6] It may also be useful to relate these terms to central and peripheral models, and to regard the whole ethos of the paper as an attempt to lay some foundations upon which it may ultimately be possible to develop a better understanding of the general late Byzantine religious *mentalité*.[7]

The Palaeologan period shares many of the initial problems that have to be faced in any medieval context concerning the availability and nature of the source material for the study of magic. The traditions are, in their nature, frag-

[5] The *Magic Treatise* (see below) thus very rarely refers to γοητεία, and then only when speaking of preventing or destroying it rather than actually performing it (e.g., A. Delatte, *Anecdota Atheniensia,* I, Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres de l'Université de Liège 36 [Liège-Paris, 1927], 398, 401); the catalogues this work provides here of magical practices proper to the days of the week and the signs of the zodiac (ibid., 397–99, 401–3) illustrate clearly the characteristic mixture of precision and vagueness in the language used in the textbooks of the practitioners themselves, and the almost complete avoidance of pejorative terms like μαγεία.

[6] On the problems see, e.g., E. Badone, *Religious Orthodoxy and Popular Faith in European Society* (Princeton, 1990); on distinctions within the religious spectrum and ways of describing these (in the perhaps not dissimilar modern Greek context), see C. Stewart, *Demons and the Devil: Moral Imagination in Modern Greek Culture* (Princeton, 1991), 11–12.

[7] On the former see B. Ankarloo and G. Henningsen, *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries* (Oxford, 1990), 3, 8, 10; on the latter in the context

mentary, and, precisely because they did not form a part of the dominant, standard orthodox tradition of Byzantine culture, they lack coherence and consistency. Since magic ran counter to the approved beliefs and practices of Byzantine society, many references to it in the usual surviving literature are made by writers who were concerned only to dismiss, ridicule, refute, or warn against it. In many cases these traditions undoubtedly represent popular, as opposed to learned, beliefs and practices and thus were held by people who, simply because of their illiteracy, were unable to record them for themselves even had they the desire to do so. There is, on the other hand, every reason to suppose that, in this period as in the others of Byzantine history, magic was certainly not confined to lower levels of society (whether defined in intellectual, cultural, or socioeconomic terms); however, it remains a fact that people at the higher levels who took magic seriously or who actually wanted to practice it themselves, people who would have been able to record it if they wished, had compelling reasons for not doing so, since it was generally considered illegal and association with it could bring ruinous, if not actually fatal, consequences. Finally, even when these traditions were recorded in detail, this same fact made the survival of such records unlikely for any period of time both because of the sort of places works of this type had to be kept and because they were liable to be destroyed if discovered. In this area the already hazardous processes of manuscript survival become dramatically worse, so that even when we do have copies of actual sorcery textbooks, as would appear to be the case for this period, there is very little opportunity to get any realistic idea of the extent or depth of tradition these represent, for they are confined to isolated and individual copies, rendering studies of textual transmission and integrity almost impossible.

At the bottom of the scale of material to be considered are the usual passing references to magic that occur in the literature of the Palaeologan period, as of all others. These references appear in general contexts which for the most part have nothing, or very little, to do with the specific subject as it is of concern here, but they are, nevertheless, vital sources of information in a number of ways. Obviously they often set out quite clearly the attitudes toward magic that were regarded as correct by standard orthodoxy. Given the contexts in which they appear, they may also, however, be useful in showing ways in which

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of medieval history, see particularly J. Le Goff, "Les mentalités: Une histoire ambiguë," in J. Le Goff and P. Nora, eds., *Faire de l'histoire,* III (Paris, 1974), 76–94.

the borders between the dominant Christianity and traditions of belief that can have been truly acceptable only at a lower, alternative level were often blurred or practically non-existent, even in the minds of educated people at the time. In other words, they may provide good evidence for precisely the sort of "magical Christianity" or "Christianized magic" that is dealt with in other papers in this volume. Even more important, such passing and frequently hostile references may give some idea, or at least some clues, as to how widespread these notions and practices may actually have been; as to what was believed and practiced at popular or local levels from which no real records survive at all; and as to the actual existence of particular beliefs and practices that are known only from descriptions in the technical, and therefore otherwise abstract, sorcery manuals of the time.

References of the most minor type may be found scattered through the whole range of Palaeologan writing, theological, liturgical, hagiographical, historical, philosophical, scientific, and purely literary; the following represent merely a few particularly clear examples which may also serve to illustrate the usefulness, and the limitations, of such evidence.[8] From literature that is primarily theological in its content, Joseph Bryennios' short work "What Are the Causes of Our Troubles?" may be mentioned since, while reciting a long catalogue of the ills of contemporary society, it refers in passing to many, obviously low-level practices of divination and magic, and comments on the evident frequency with which they were employed at the time.[9] Hagiographical

[8] Quite apart from references in the contemporary literature, there are, of course, a multitude of similar and parallel passages in the literature inherited from the past which was being read and used in this period. Clearly this should also be considered if one is to obtain anything approaching a true reflection of the ideas in circulation at the time. Unfortunately the constraints of the present paper prevent the pursuit of this ideal here.

[9] This short work, "Τίνες αἰτίαι τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς λυπηρῶν;" (Κεφάλαιον MZ΄ of his Κεφάλαια ἑπτάκις ἑπτά), is edited with a French translation and commentary by L. Oeconomos, "L'état intellectuel et moral des Byzantins vers le milieu du XIVe siècle d'après une page de Joseph Bryennios," *Mélanges C. Diehl,* I (Paris, 1932), 225–33 (hereafter Bryennios, *Keph.* 47). There are some rather similar, if shorter, passages in his "Περὶ ἐκπιπτόντων τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ βοηθείας" (Κεφάλαιον ΙΑ΄) and "Περὶ τῆς ἐν ταῖς πράξεσιν εἰδωλατρείας" (Κεφάλαιον ΚΕ΄), ed. E. Voulgaris and T. Mandrakases, Ἰωσὴφ μοναχοῦ τοῦ Βρυεννίου, τὰ εὑρεθέντα, III, (Leipzig, 1768–94), 58–59, 76–77 (hereafter Bryennios, *Keph.* 11, *Keph.* 25). See also on Bryennios here N. B. Tomadakes, Ὁ Ἰωσὴφ Βρυέννιος καὶ ἡ Κρήτη (Athens, 1947), 117–21. The problems of

works, of course, quite often contain important fragmentary evidence: here there is, for instance, John Staurakios' account of the *Miracles of St. Demetrios,* which includes quite a detailed description of a written amulet and an explanation of the theory behind it;[10] again, the *Life of St. Theodora of Arta* by the monk Job describes how the despot of Arta, Michael II Angelos, was supposedly persuaded to fall in love with his mistress Gangrene because of her sorcery and so send his saintly wife Theodora into exile;[11] and one story from the posthumous miracles of Patriarch Athanasios I may also be mentioned, where smoke from burnt pieces of the saint's garments was said to have been inhaled to effect a cure from fever.[12]

Turning to historical works, there is, for example, the reference made by

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using such references as evidence for contemporary magical practice and belief are, however, highlighted here by the fact (apparently previously unnoticed) that some of what Bryennios says is very close indeed to the wording of some passages in Pseudo-Chrysostom, Λόγος περὶ ψευδοπροφητῶν καὶ ψευδοδιδασκάλων καὶ ἀθέων αἱρετικῶν, PG 59, cols. 553–68. Compare, too, some of the lists of problems appearing in the unpublished encyclicals of Patriarch Athanasios I, on which see below, note 19.

[10] Λόγος εἰς τὰ θαύματα τοῦ μυροῤῥόα μεγάλου Δημητρίου, ed. I. Iberites, Μακεδονικά 1 (1940), chap. 6, 340–41. On this passage in particular see Greenfield, *Demonology,* 196–98, and on the work in general, I. Dujčev, "À quelle époque vécut l'hagiographe Jean Staurakios," *AnalBoll* 100 (1982), 677–81 and idem, "La miracula S. Demetrii Thessalonicensis di Giovanni Stauracio," *RSBN* 14–16 (1977–79), 239–47.

[11] The life was written by the monk Job Meles or Melias Iasites in the late 13th century. There is a short version, Job Monachos, *Life of Saint Theodora of Arta,* PG 127, cols. 903–8 (edited from A. Mustoxidi, *Hellenomnemon* [1843], 42–59); and a longer version which was published anonymously in Ἀκολουθία τῆς ὁσίας μητρὸς ἡμῶν Θεοδώρας τῆς βασιλίσσης . . . (Ioannina(?), 1772) and reprinted in Ἡ ἁγία Θεοδώρα βασιλίσσα τῆς Ἄρτης, prologue by Spyridon of Arta, notes by O. Peranthe and K. Bandalouka (Athens, 1938), 19–32. There is another edition, which I have been unable to see, in J. A. Buchon, *Nouvelles recherches,* II (Paris, 1843), 401–6. On the dating of this work see L. I. Vranousis, Χρονικὰ τῆς μεσαιωνικῆς καὶ τουρκοκρατουμένης Ἠπείρου (Ioannina, 1962), 49–54. On the historical context of the incident, see D. M. Nicol, *The Despotate of Epiros (1204–1267)* (Oxford, 1957), 128–34 and 215; also idem, *The Despotate of Epiros 1267–1479* (Cambridge, 1984), 4–6.

[12] Theoktistos the Stoudite, Λόγος εἰς τὴν ἀνακομιδὴν τοῦ λειψάνου τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀθανασίου πατριάρχου ΚΠ, ed. A.-M. Talbot, *Faith Healing in Late Byzantium* (Brookline, Mass., 1983), chaps. 31–32, pp. 82–85. Cf. below, note 55, and further on the fine line between the acceptability or unacceptability of practices like this, whether or not they involved members of the clergy; see also below, pp. 148–50 and note 106.

George Pachymeres to the accusations of sorcery leveled by Theodore II Laskaris against such people at the Nicene court as the Mouzalon brothers and Michael Palaeologus and his sister;[13] or again, there are the allegations by Nikephoros Gregoras that Patriarch John Kalekas attempted to inspire the assassination of John Kantakouzenos by magical means.[14] Outside his historical work, Gregoras is even more important here for the way in which he preserves some ancient ideas and provides pieces of contemporary information on both the theory and practice of magic in his commentary on the *de Insomniis* of Synesios of Cyrene.[15] Finally, in Palaeologan literary products themselves, there are, for example, fascinating references to witches and sorceresses and their activities in the verse romances *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* and *Libistros and Rhodamne,*[16] while the idea of the pierced wax figurine used in love magic is referred to in the contemporary translation of Ovid's *Heroides* by Maximos Planoudes.[17]

Now, clearly, if this was the only sort of information surviving from this period, as it unfortunately is for many other phases of Byzantine history, it would be difficult indeed to attempt to draw from it any very far-reaching or well-founded conclusions as to the actual beliefs and the practices of magic,

[13] *Georgii Pachymeris de Michaele et Andronico Palaeologis,* ed. I. Bekker, 2 vols. (Bonn, 1835), I.12; see also Theodore's letter to Nikephoros Blemmydes, ed. N. Festa, *Theodori Ducae Lascaris Epistulae CCXVII* (Florence, 1898), letter 48, pp. 64–66, where he discusses his illness.

[14] *Nicephori Gregorae byzantina historia,* ed. L. Schopen, 3 vols. (Bonn, 1829–55), XII, 10.5. For the association of Gregoras himself with sorcery by Patriarch Kallistos, see D. B. Gone, Τὸ Συγγραφικὸν Ἔργον τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχοῦ Καλλίστου Α΄ (Athens, 1980), 168, 194; cf. 293 and below, p. 151 note 113.

[15] Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὸν Συνεσίου περὶ ἐνυπνίων λόγον, PG149, cols. 521–642 (hereafter Gregoras, *de Insomniis*). See, e.g., the distinction between μαγεία, γοητεία, and φαρμακεία, referred to above (note 4), or cols. 615–19 where necromancy (νεκυομαντεία, here equated with ψυχοπομπία and ψυχαγωγία) is explained. On the dating and context of this work, see I. Ševčenko, "Some Autographs of Nikephorus Gregoras," *Mélanges Ostrogorsky,* II, *ZVI* 8.2 (1964), 435–42; and H. V. Beyer, ed., *Nikephoros Gregoras, Antirrhetika,* I, Wiener byzantinische Studien 12 (Vienna, 1976), 25–31.

[16] Τὸ μυθιστόρημα τοῦ Καλλιμάχου καὶ τῆς Χρυσορρόης, ed. E. Kriaras, Βυζαντινὰ Ἱπποτικὰ Μυθιστορήματα (Athens, 1955), 50, 53–54, 80; Τὸ μυθιστόρημα τοῦ Λιβίστρου καὶ τῆς Ῥοδάμνης, ed. J. A. Lambert, *Le roman de Libistros et Rhodamné* (Amsterdam, 1935), 221–22. On these figures see also Greenfield, *Demonology,* 250–51.

[17] A. Palmer, *Ovidi Heroides* (Oxford, 1898), 189.

or the part these played in the *mentalité* of different social groups in the Palaeologan context, let alone that of society as a whole. While such references may give some vague and haphazard indications of the range of ideas that were current concerning these things and even of some details associated with them, by themselves they cannot really support any definite conclusions.

Fortunately, however, there *is* far more to go on here. For instance, there are records of quite a number of trials held before the patriarchal court involving both practitioners of sorcery and their clients, which help to confirm the real existence of beliefs and perhaps even of practices to which reference is made not only in these trials but also in both the minor references illustrated above and, more important, in the detailed, technical works to be discussed below.[18] In short, there seem to be some good reasons for supposing that we are not dealing simply with myth and fantasy here but with the real beliefs and activities of real people.[19]

[18] These records are published by F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi Sacra et Profana,* 6 vols. (Vienna, 1860–90) (hereafter MM); on them see also V. Grumel, V. Laurent, and J. Darrouzès, *Les regestes des Actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople,* 6 vols. (Istanbul-Paris, 1932–79) (hereafter Dar. *Reg.*). They are MM I, 180–81, no. 79 (Dar. *Reg.* V, 140–41, no. 2183); MM I, 184–87, no. 85 (Dar. *Reg.* V, 143–44, no. 2187); MM I, 188–90, no. 86 (Dar. *Reg.* V, 144–45, no. 2188); MM I, 301–6, no. 134 (Dar. *Reg.* V, 260–61, no. 2318); MM I, 317–18, no. 137 (Dar. *Reg.* V, 276, no. 2331); MM I, 342–44, no. 153 (Dar. *Reg.* V, 277–78, no. 2334); MM I, 541–50, no. 292 (Dar. *Reg.* V, 480–86, nos. 2572–75; MM I, 560, no. 305 (Dar. *Reg.* V, 518, no. 2615); MM I, 594–95, no. 331 (Dar. *Reg.* V, 543, no. 2648); MM II, 84–85, no. 377 (Dar. *Reg.* VI, 78, no. 2770). These trials are studied in some detail by Cupane, "La magia"; on them see also Pingree, "Abramios," 192–93. Another trial, of 1315, also refers to the practice of magic: H. Hunger and O. Kresten, eds., *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel,* I, CFHB 19.1 (Vienna, 1981), 176–81, no. 11 (MM I, 14–16, no. 6 [Dar. *Reg.* V, 29, no. 2039]).

[19] Note, too, the evidence provided by the writings of Patriarch Kallistos I from the mid-14th century which relates closely to several of these trials; see Gone, *Kallistos,* 168, 194, 213–14, 218, 229–39, 293, 326. Also to be mentioned in this context are the references to magic, sorcery, divination, and other related practices found in a number of the encyclicals of Patriarch Athanasios I; these draw heavily on earlier canonical condemnations, and it is thus perhaps difficult to use them as evidence for particular practices, but they nevertheless would seem to provide a further indication of the continued popularity of magic in general in the early 14th century. The encyclicals are unpublished but are summarized in Dar. *Reg.* IV, 377 (#3), no. 1595; 519 (#7), no. 1738; 527

While the records of such trials are important in establishing the reality of magic at this time, other evidence provides considerably more detail concerning these matters. To be included here are relatively minor works which, although far from devoted to details of magical practice and belief, are still of considerable relevance. There is, for example, the well-known *de Daemonibus,* once attributed to Michael Psellos but now probably to be seen as belonging to this period, which preserves some interesting ideas about magic as well as the demonology for which it is renowned.[20] The same is true of the other pseudo-Psellian piece, *Graecorum opiniones de daemonibus,*[21] and also of the *Testament of Solomon,* a work inherited from much earlier times but which was certainly quite well-known in circles interested in such matters during the Palaeologan period if the manuscript tradition is anything to go by.[22]

More directly magical in nature are some isolated pieces such as the stories and amulets designed to ward off the female demon Gylou;[23] or surviving pieces of astrological material and detailed horoscopes,[24] in which context the

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(#20), no. 1747; 528–29 (#9), no. 1748; 530, no. 1749; 542 (#18), no. 1762; 553 (#3–5), no. 1777; 556 (#18), no. 1778; 557 (#11–12), no. 1779.

[20] Τιμόθεος ἢ περὶ δαιμόνων, ed. P. Gautier, "Le *de Daemonibus* du Pseudo-Psellos," *REB* 38 (1980), 105–94 (hereafter *de Daemonibus*); see also N. Papatriantaphyllou-Theodoridi, "«Τιμόθεος ἢ περὶ δαιμόνων», ἕνα νέο χειρόγραφο," Βυζαντιακά 8 (1988), 151–56. The substantially similar alternative redaction which survives in two manuscripts of the 14th and 15th centuries is edited by J. Bidez, *Catalogue des manuscrits alchimiques grecs,* VI (Brussels, 1928), 97–131.

[21] Ed. P. Gautier, "Pseudo-Psellos: Graecorum opiniones de daemonibus," *REB* 46 (1988), 85–107. This work draws much of its material on magic, sorcery, and divination directly from the later, alternative redaction of the *de Daemonibus,* on which see above.

[22] *The Testament of Solomon,* ed. C. C. McCown (Leipzig, 1922). There are 15th-century manuscripts belonging to all McCown's different recensions. There is an English translation of the 16th-century manuscript (P) edited by Migne (PG 122, cols. 1315–58): F. C. Conybeare, "The Testament of Solomon," *JQR* 11 (1898–99), 1–45. The earliest fragment of the work which has survived comes from the 6th century: K. Preisendanz, "Ein Wiener Papyrusfragment zum Testamentum Salomonis," *Symbolae Raphaeli Taubenschlag Dedicatae,* III (Warsaw-Bratislava, 1957), 161–67.

[23] The earliest surviving versions of these "literary amulets" come from the 15th century, although they were clearly current for centuries before then. See particularly R. P. H. Greenfield, "Saint Sisinnios, the Archangel Michael and the Female Demon Gylou: The Typology of the Greek Literary Stories," Βυζαντινά 15 (1989), 83–142. Also see D. B. Oikonomides, "Ἡ Γελλὼ εἰς τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν καὶ Ῥουμανικὴν λαο-

Hermippos of John Katrones must be mentioned, a short treatise that provides some theoretical treatment of the role of demons in the "science" of astrology.[25] Other works that were clearly in use at this time were the *Book of Wisdom,* a collection of various pieces of magical lore connected with the name of Apollonius of Tyana which probably originated in the fifth or sixth century,[26] and the well-known *Corpus Hermeticum* which seems to have enjoyed something of a vogue in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[27] Again, there are quite a number of scattered collections of spells and a great variety of other loosely connected magical or semi-magical material surviving in manuscripts from this period.[28]

γραφίαν," Λαογραφία 30 (1975–76), 246–78; and H. A. Winkler, *Salomo und die Karina* (Stuttgart, 1931). The most recent study to touch on the subject, although it shows no awareness of these three works, is that of I. Sorlin, "Striges et Géloudes: Histoire d'une croyance et d'une tradition," *TM* 11 (1991), 411–36.

[24] For references and the publication and English translation of some such material, see Pingree, "Abramios." The many 13–15th-century Greek manuscripts containing astrological material are described, and some passages published, in the *Catalogus codicum astrologorum Graecorum,* 12 vols. (Brussels, 1898–1936) (hereafter *CCAG*).

[25] Ἑρμιππος ἢ περὶ ἀστρολογίας, ed. G. Kroll and P. Viereck (Leipzig, 1895). On the attribution of this work to John Katrares (*PLP,* no. 11551) and its dating, see F. Jürss, "Iohannes Katrarios und der Dialog Hermippos oder über die Astrologie," *BZ* 59 (1966), 275–84; see also G. de Andrés, J. Irigoin, and W. Hörandner, "Iohannes Katrarios und seine dramatisch-poetische Produktion," *JÖB* 23 (1974), 201–14.

[26] The Βίβλος σοφίας has survived in fragmentary form, quite often in association with the *Magic Treatise* (on which see below); these fragments are edited by F. N. Nau, *Patrologia Syriaca* (Paris) II, 1362–92, from manuscripts that include, from the 15th century, Parisinus gr. 2419 and Parisinus gr. 2316; by Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 601–3 from Bononiensis 3632 of the 15th century; and by F. Boll, *CCAG,* VII, 174–81, from the similarly dated Berolinensis 173. Further on this work see D. Pingree, "Some Sources of the Ghayat al-hakim," *JWarb* 43 (1980), 9.

[27] Ed. A. D. Nock with a French translation by A. J. Festugière, 4 vols. (Paris, 1954); on its popularity at this time see I, li–liii. Note, too, the evidence provided by both the *de Insomniis* and the *Hermippos;* see Jürss, "Iohannes Katrarios," 281.

[28] Two examples of such manuscripts would be Parisinus gr. 2315, a 15th-century manuscript copied from a late 14th-century original, on which see *CCAG,* VIII.3, 27; Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 546–47; E. Legrand, *Bibliothèque grecque vulgaire,* 9 vols. (Paris, 1880–1913), II, 1–17; and Parisinus gr. 2316, again of the 15th century, on which see *CCAG,* VIII.3, 32; Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 549–53; Legrand, *Bibliothèque,* II, xviii-xxiii, 17–24 (cf. R. Reitzenstein, *Poimandres* [Leipzig, 1904], 298–99). For other major examples see the manuscripts cited below (note 33), which contain versions of the *Magic*

Finally, there are the major textbooks of practical magic or sorcery in which almost all the details necessary to a practitioner of these arts are recorded in one place or another: from ingredients, through relevant astronomical, astrological, botanical, and zoological information, explanations and patterns for magic symbols, signs, and codes, texts of spells and incantations, lists of suitable demonic and angelic powers and their properties, to complete and extremely elaborate ritual procedures. Here in particular are to be mentioned the *Kyranides,* basically a textbook of more or less magical medicine and natural lore which includes a considerable amount of material on the creation of amulets, and the broader collections which may be grouped under the loose title of *Solomon's Magic Treatise* (the Ἀποτελεσματικὴ πραγματεία or Ὑγρομαντεία).

The *Kyranides,*[29] which had their origin in the first or second century A.D. while including much earlier material, were clearly being copied relatively frequently during this period,[30] like the roughly contemporary *Testament of Solomon;* they are, however, also mentioned as being in use, both in a letter of Patriarch Athanasios I written in the period 1303–5[31] and in the records of a trial before the patriarchal court in 1370.[32] Such incontrovertible evidence for the use of the *Magic Treatise* is unfortunately not available, but there can be little doubt that it was being used by Byzantine sorcerers at this time. Versions of this work exist (or existed) in at least five fifteenth-century Greek manu-

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Treatise, but much other magical material as well. Several other lesser groups of material from various sources are also edited in Delatte, *Anecdota,* I.

[29] Ed. D. Kaimakis, *Die Kyraniden* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1980); see also M. Waegeman, *Amulet and Alphabet: Magical Amulets in the First Book of Cyranides* (Amsterdam, 1987), which presents extracts from the text together with an English translation and commentary on them.

[30] On the manuscript tradition see Kaimakis, *Kyraniden,* 5–8. The earliest Greek manuscript is dated to 1272, and there are in addition two from the 14th and four from the 15th century. Although the work is mentioned much earlier, the earliest version of the text is in fact a Latin translation made at Constantinople in 1169, which survives in an edition printed at Leipzig in 1638; see L. Delatte, *Textes latins et vieux français relatifs aux Cyranides,* Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres de l'Université de Liège 92 (Paris, 1942).

[31] Athanasios, letter 69, ed. A. M. Maffry Talbot, *The Correspondence of Athanasius I,* CFHB 7 (Washington, D.C., 1975), 168, lines 80–81.

[32] MM I, 541–50, no. 292. See further Cupane, "La magia," 251–57; Cumont, "Demetrios Chloros"; and Pingree, "Abramios," 192.

scripts, while its contents in some areas reveal an unbroken, if considerably altered, tradition which stretches back to the late antique Greek magical papyri as well as forward to the modern Greek "solomonaiki."[33] Many of the practices on which the *Magic Treatise* elaborates are also well known from Byzantine sources of various periods in forms that are apparently identical or very similar. Further references seem, moreover, to confirm that works which were at least very closely related were in circulation in and before this period: there is, for instance, Choniates' mention of the βίβλον Σολομώντειον found in the possession of Isaac Aaron in 1172, which was designed to summon the demons in legions and make them hurry to perform whatever task they were given,[34] or there are the references to the foul books of Phoudoulis, the magic books of Syropoulos and Gabrielopoulos and, more particularly, to the notebook of Chloros which was "filled with all manner of impiety including incantations, chants, and names of demons" in the trial referred to above.[35]

[33] In general on this work see Greenfield, *Demonology,* 159–63, where I argue that it may well have developed, prior to the 15th century, as a hydromancy textbook to which other elaborate methods of divination were appended together with collections of relevant astrological and other magical or medical material. The various versions and sections of material are edited by A. Delatte in a number of places: principally in Delatte, *Anecdota,* I; but also see "Le Traité des Plantes Planétaires d'un manuscrit de Leningrad," Mélanges H. Grégoire, I, *AIPHOS* 9 (1949), 145–77; "Un nouveau témoin de la littérature Solomonique, le codex Gennadianus 45 d'Athènes," *Bulletin de l'Académie Royale de Belgique, Classe des Lettres et des Sciences Morales et Politiques,* 5th ser., 45 (1959), 280–321. The manuscripts are described and some short extracts edited in the various volumes of the *CCAG;* for details see Greenfield, *Demonology,* 159–60; cf. Pingree, "Ghaya," 9. The 15th-century manuscripts are: Bononiensis Univers. 3632; British Museum, Harleianus 5596; Neapolitanus II C 33; Vindobonensis phil. gr. 108; and Taurinensis C VII 15 (destroyed). Most of Parisinus gr. 2419 is of the 15th century, but the portion in which the *Treatise* appears is in a later hand; Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 470.

There is still important work to be done on the connection of these traditions to those of both the Greek magic papyri and the western *Claviculae* and *Grimoires.* The only work on the former relationship to date was done by Hopfner, "Lekano-"; cf. Pingree, "Ghaya," 9–12; there has been no serious study of links with the latter. For the survival of this sort of book into modern times, quite apart from the 18th-century manuscripts edited by Delatte, see, e.g., R. and E. Blum, *Health and Healing in Rural Greece* (Stanford, 1965), 94 (narrative 57), 31 (24), 99 (15), 325.

[34] *Nicetae Choniatae Historia,* ed. I. A. van Dieten, CFHB 11 (Berlin-New York, 1975), 146, lines 45–47. The connection to this particular branch of the Solomonic literature is made, for instance, by K. Preisendanz, "Salomon," *RE,* Suppl. 8 (1956), col. 669, and by McCown, *Testament,* 101–2.

[35] MM I, 543–44, no. 292.

The problems of using this material as certain evidence for Palaeologan magic are, however, illustrated by the fact that one of the fifteenth-century manuscripts (Neapolitanus II C33) was written only ca. 1495. Nevertheless, what does seem clear is that one is working with ancient traditions here which were treated with similar respect to those of more orthodox religious beliefs and practices in the Byzantine world. It thus seems reasonable to take these manuscripts as providing a *general* idea of what was going on at this time, providing too much emphasis is not placed on particular details. The point is made by comparing the fifteenth-century manuscripts with those from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, also published by A. Delatte, where a very close general relationship is apparent. Caution is necessary nevertheless, for one of the problems with earlier studies, such as that by C. Bruel, must be the willingness to assume that evidence found only in these late writings indicates the existence of that specific belief or practice in the Byzantine period.[36]

Although it is a decidedly artificial arrangement and one that is not at all suggested by the sources being used, the late Byzantine beliefs and practices concerning magic are divided up in what follows into three general categories for purposes of examination: those of protection, manipulation, and the attainment of normally hidden knowledge.[37] In each case there is evidence of a wide range of levels of approach, from very sophisticated and complex ideas to simple, almost naive concepts.

The first category, then, involves magical practices and devices designed to render a person, his family, or his possessions safe from harm caused by evil spirits, other men, diseases, or the forces of nature. Perhaps the most obvious and widespread apotropaic practice which may be seen to have involved at least some degree of magical conception was the wearing of amulets or the deliberate location of related objects in specific places. Amulets, whether pri-

[36] Cf. L. Delatte, *Un office byzantin d'exorcisme*, Académie Royale de Belgique, Classe de Lettres, Mémoires, 2nd ser., 52.1 (Brussels, 1957), where an 18th-century manuscript is taken as indicating specific beliefs of "Byzantines."

[37] One of the most obvious problems with such a categorization is that in each case there is obviously significant overlap, particularly when the manipulation of spiritual powers is concerned. As will become apparent below, on some occasions it is almost entirely pointless to try to distinguish between rituals or devices designed to secure protection from such powers and those designed to enforce their cooperation, while the same sort of manipulation is necessarily seen to be involved in many of the more elaborate techniques and theories of divination.

marily Christian or of a less orthodox nature, are discussed elsewhere in this volume, so there is no need to elaborate on them here, although it should be pointed out that the evidence for them from the Palaeologan period rests almost entirely on literary rather than physical sources. Thus, while tangible and visible information is lacking, there is perhaps a greater conceptual depth to our understanding of these objects in this period and the way in which they were thought to operate.

It is clear that people at this time believed that a great range of objects could act as amulets and protect them from various ills and misfortunes in a multitude of situations.[38] At the most basic level, something like a particular stone, such as the rattling stone known as the "eagle stone" which was regarded as especially helpful in pregnancy, or a bunch of special roots could be thought to avert particular dangers.[39] More often, however, it would seem that amulets were more complicated and involved the combination of a variety of such basic elements. They would thus include bits of animals, fish, birds, minerals, and plants; these would normally be made into a ring or placed in a small leather bag which would be worn suspended round the neck or concealed elsewhere on the body.[40]

A further degree of complication was added by the inclusion of graphic elements in the amulet, whether inscribed or engraved on a piece of mineral or

[38] Comments on the general use of amulets are made by, for instance, Joseph Bryennios: see especially *Keph.* 25, 77, where the substitution of Christian symbols and acts is recommended, such as the wearing of the image of the Virgin or the cross; cf. *Keph.* 11, 59 and *Keph.* 47, 227. See also statements in the encyclicals of Athanasios I: Dar. *Reg.* IV, 519 (#7), no. 1738; 542 (#18), no. 1762; cf. 553–54 (#4–6), no. 1777; 556 (#18), no. 1778.

[39] Most stones are usually mentioned in the sort of combination amulets referred to below, and instructions usually call for them to be inscribed in some way, but it is clear that many were believed from antiquity to possess apotropaic powers and characteristics on their own. On the "eagle stone," which was also good for other things besides pregnancy, see *Kyranides,* I.1, 170–75; Waegeman, *Amulet,* 15–16; also C. N. Bromehead, "Aetites or the Eagle-stone," *Antiquity* 21 (1947), 16–22. See, in general, the "Orphic" Λιθικά and the other Greek works on stones published (with a French translation) by R. Halleux and J. Schamp, *Les lapidaires grecs* (Paris, 1985); all were copied in the Palaeologan period. For roots in general used as amulets, see again the condemnation by Bryennios, *Keph.* 25, 77.

[40] See most of the amulets described in the *Kyranides;* among good examples are those found at I.7, 97–121 or I.13, 16–26. On the latter see also Waegeman, *Amulet,* 103–9; and C. Bonner, "The Technique of Exorcism," *HThR* 36 (1943), 39–49. Bryennios mentions amulets specifically being worn round the neck, *Keph.* 47, 227 and *Keph.* 25, 77, which also indicates, apparently, that they are fastened elsewhere.

plant that it contained or on an added piece of paper or parchment. At one end of the possible range here were simple pictures, such as those of the birds, animals, or deities to be inscribed on the stones used in the amulets in the first book of the *Kyranides,* indicating either the power believed to be at work in the amulet or being associated with it.[41] Similar pictures would also sometimes provide a more or less crude depiction of the purpose behind the amulet, a kite tearing a snake to pieces in an amulet for indigestion and stomach complaints, for instance, or bound evil spirits in amulets against epilepsy, possession, and fever.[42] Other graphic elements employed in these amulets were relatively simple names, or signs such as the pentalpha of "Solomon's seal" or the Christian cross, but more complicated formulae and designs contrived out of magic symbols were also used. Here one may think of the case before the patriarchal court in which a certain Kappadokes was accused of having constructed a paper amulet containing names and characters with the intention of assisting a monk who wished to become a bishop,[43] or else of the episode from the *Miracles of St. Demetrios* by John Staurakios in which the eparch Marianus is given a parchment amulet to wear inscribed with "names of gods, drawings of circles and semicircles, images of all kinds of designs, and extraordinary pictures of *eidola.*"[44] Among the most complicated amulets of this type for which instructions survive is the "ourania" of Solomon, a device worn on the chest by the sorcerer during the major rituals of the *Magic Treatise.*[45] Eventually, at the end of the range, lie the long, written "amuletic" incantations or stories, most obviously those connected with the demoness Gylou, which, in themselves and without the presence of other physical elements, were clearly thought to be effective when properly empowered and utilized.[46]

[41] See, e.g., *Kyranides,* I.4, 45–46 (the woodpecker and the weever fish), or I.5, 27–31 and I.10 (Aphrodite).

[42] Indigestion: *Kyranides* I.9, 12; epilepsy, possession, fever: Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 486–87 and 489–90.

[43] MM I, 343–44, no. 153; cf. 180, no. 79.

[44] Staurakios, 340–41 and see above, note 10. There is a particularly good, illustrated example of a range of moderately sophisticated amulets of this type in Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 603–7. For a selection of further examples see Greenfield, *Demonology,* 278–79.

[45] Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 414–15, 477.

[46] On the Gylou stories see above, note 23. There are a number of versions of this story which are only distantly connected to the mainstream texts: see Greenfield, "Gylou," 117–20, and note especially the two published by A. A. Vasiliev, *Anecdota graeco-byzantina,* I (Moscow, 1893), lxviii (cf. Delatte, *Anecdota,* I 618–19) and 336–

The theory that lay behind these amulets evidently embraced a similarly wide range as the objects themselves. At one extreme, there is apparently a simple belief that certain objects, particularly sharp ones, may act as purely physical deterrents, even to essentially spiritual forces.[47] Other concepts come into play which hold that more or less complicated patterns of natural attraction and repulsion operate throughout the fabric of the physical and spiritual worlds.[48] Others, again, hold that knowledge of names and words of power, whether on the side of good or evil, gives control of lesser spiritual and physical beings.[49] Finally, elements of all such theoretical notions are woven together into extremely complicated systems that involve a knowledge of immensely detailed spiritual and physical hierarchies and their relation to complex astrologically dominated cosmologies.[50]

At the higher levels, rituals of preparation become increasingly important to the supposed efficacy of the amulet, even though these will obviously leave no trace at all in a description, or even the physical remains, of the completed object. The elements of which the amulet is composed will have to be gathered and combined at the right times; they will have to be prepared with the right incantations and ritual actions; and the practitioner will have to be in the correct ritual state. The cases of the sorcerers Kappadokes and Tzerentzes mentioned above both give a glimpse of such preparations, for the former was said

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37, both from 15th-century manuscripts. For other rather similar "amuletic stories" or prayers, see A. A. Barb, "Antaura and the Devil's Grandmother," *JWarb* 29 (1966), 2–4; and note the legendary letter of Jesus to King Abgar which was used in much the same way: Procopius, *Bell. Pers.* 2.12. See also Stewart, *Demons,* 225–32, for very similar modern spells or prayers used against erysipelas, jaundice, and sunstroke.

[47] Thus a quite wide variety of sharp objects is found in amulets against spiritual forces in the *Kyranides,* e.g., I.17. Note also the sharp implements believed to be used by sorcerers during their rituals: see below p. 142 note 83; and further, Greenfield, *Demonology,* 262.

[48] This is the principle, inherited from late antiquity and earlier, that lies behind the *Kyranides* and all related material. See in particular here Gregoras, *de Insomniis,* col. 538, for a clear restatement of the theory; cf. *Graecorum opiniones,* 103; Bidez, *Catalogue,* VI, 129. In general see Th. Hopfner, *Griechisch-ägyptischer Offenbarungszauber,* Studien zur Paläographie und Papyruskunde 21 (Leipzig, 1921; repr. Amsterdam, 1974), 211–12, 227–367; Koukoules, βίος, I.2, 259–63.

[49] See Greenfield, *Demonology,* 268–77.

[50] See in particular Greenfield, *Demonology,* 175–76, 219–36, and the many references provided there; lists of names of such beings are given at 336–51.

to have left his amulet lying beneath the stars all night, while the latter was alleged to have written, and then erased and trampled on, "God's holy name."[51] Characteristic detail is provided here by the *Magic Treatise,* which includes rituals for the procurement and preparation of the parchment needed to make such amulets using the skin of a newly born animal or, even better, one that has been killed before it has even set foot on the ground at birth, as well as instructions for the manufacture of the special pen and inks to be employed, the latter often requiring the blood of a ritually slaughtered animal or bird.[52] Clearly the level of sophistication in theory and practice necessarily matched the context in which the amulet was being used and the conceptual approach of the person by whom or for whom it was being made.

While amulets, in all their variety, were clearly the most usual and common magical apotropaic devices, there is, however, evidence of other magical procedures which were believed capable of protecting people from misfortune and particularly harm at the hands of evil spirits. At a simple level, offerings of various kinds, which are presumably related to the popular connection of demons with the ancient deities and ideas of their propitiation through sacrifice, could be thought to render evil spirits affable and docile;[53] the same was true of the "aromata," the incenses and smokes which could drive away as well as attract and satisfy such beings. An illustration of such notions may be found in the testimony of Joseph Bryennios who mentions people burning incense not only to their fig trees and cucumbers, but also to the "stoicheia" of their houses.[54] More particularly, the *Kyranides* refer on a number of occasions to certain smokes being useful in driving evil spirits away; burnt peony root or goose dung may be employed, but more common seems to be the smoke from the burnt bones of various fish.[55] This idea seems certainly to be related to the passages in the book of Tobit in the Septuagint where the demon Asmodaeus

[51] MM I, 343–44, no. 153, and 180, no. 79.

[52] For references and further details, see Greenfield, *Demonology,* 282–83.

[53] On the use of offerings as inducements to spiritual powers in magical rituals, rather than simply as means of rendering them affable and so providing protection from them, see below, pp. 140–41.

[54] Bryennios, *Keph.* 47, 227.

[55] *Kyranides,* I.3, 21 (peony root); III.51, 20–22 (wild goose dung); IV.13, 2–3 (bones of γλάνις, the sheat fish); IV.1, 6–7 (bones of "eagle" fish); IV.55, 4 (beak of garfish). Clearly to be compared here is the report, mentioned above, that a relic of Patriarch Athanasius I was burned to effect a cure for fever.

is said to have been put to flight by the burnt heart and liver of a fish,[56] an idea also present in the *Testament of Solomon.*[57]

In more complicated ways, magic circles of various kinds were believed to protect sorcerers during their conjurations. At times these could be extremely elaborate, such as one described in the *Magic Treatise* which consists of two concentric circles, capable of surrounding two people, drawn inside a square that is aligned with the points of the compass; the circumference of the circle is protected by magic names, words, and signs written around it, while more inscriptions are used to seal the entrance once the sorcerer and his assistant are within.[58] Special clothing, too, might be required for safety during the performance of magical rituals. These robes, which could include inner and outer garments, gloves, and headbands, were basically of white material which had to be either new or at least clean; detailed instructions are provided in the *Magic Treatise* as to the signs and symbols that are to be drawn on the various garments, significantly at points at which they opened or came into contact with the surrounding environment, such as at the neck, on the palms of the hands, or on the soles of the feet.[59] Furthermore ritual purity dependent on food, drink, ablutions, and sexual continence might be thought vital for the protection of those engaged in the conduct of magical practices.[60]

While protection may thus be the object of one broad group of late Byzantine magical beliefs and practices, a second group has to do with manipulation:

[56] Tobit 6:6–7, 8:2–3.

[57] *Testament of Solomon,* 23*-24*.

[58] Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 416–18; there is an (unpublished) illustration of the circle in the manuscript (Harleianus 5596, fol. 34v). For other complex designs see ibid., 425–26, 432, 493–95; for more simple ones, ibid., 432 (cf. 592–93), 480, 578, 580, 595. See further here Greenfield, *Demonology,* 286–87. There is no direct Palaeologan evidence for "magic circles" protecting communities and so forth, but note the popular ideas, apparent from later periods and quite probably in effect at this time (particularly if the analogy of the "holy defenses" of major cities like Constantinople and Thessaloniki is followed); see C. Stewart, *Demons and the Devil: Moral Imagination in Modern Greek Culture* (Princeton, 1991), 166–69, cf. 242; also J. du Boulay, "The Greek Vampire, a Study of Cyclical Symbolism in Marriage and Death," *Man* 17 (1982), 219–38.

[59] Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 412–13, 416, 425, 508, 590.

[60] See, e.g., Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 411–13. It might also, however, be useful in bringing about the necessary association of the sorcerer with the spiritual powers being employed. For further details and references, see Greenfield, *Demonology,* 287–91.

the manipulation of natural forces, of the physical well-being of people, animals, and crops, of human relationships, and the manipulation of supernatural beings themselves which lay at the heart of a large proportion of these magical processes. Again there is a great range of levels of conceptualization apparent here in both the techniques employed and the theories on which these depended.

It is clear, then, that people believed it was possible to effect cures, as well as prevent the onset of disease and illness, by magical means, although often, as with any medicine, it is hard to tell where prevention ends and cure begins. Magical medicine of one type or another seems to have been popular and relates most often either to notions (already mentioned in the context of amulets) of cosmic sympathy and antipathy or to ideas of possession and the exorcism of evil spiritual powers which are thought to be causing the problem. The *Kyranides* undoubtedly form the main source of evidence here, but there are also very many scattered medico-magical spells in the manuscripts designed to deal with all manner of everyday afflictions, from hair loss through toothache to more serious ailments such as fever, crushed bones, epilepsy, and deafness.[61] Much of this magical medicine is inherently bound up with the concept of such powers as the Decans, ideas of which survive in the *Testament of Solomon* and more vaguely elsewhere;[62] of the thirty-six Decans, three-quarters are thus linked to specific medical conditions, but other individual demons of disease are known from the *Testament,* the *Kyranides,* and the general late Byzantine magical tradition.[63]

Just as the physical well-being of people could be affected in the area of health, it was also believed that magic could provide them with physical wealth, could make them attractive, successful, and wise, and fulfill all the other myriad human desires and aspirations. Joseph Bryennios thus describes incantations being used both for agricultural prosperity of various sorts and to avert the opposite,[64] while clear examples of magic for gaining influence or

[61] See, e.g., Delatte, *Anecdota,* 481–93. Note that the *Graecorum opiniones,* 103, refers to magical figurines being used for health; Bidez, *Catalogue,* VI, 129.

[62] *Testament of Solomon,* 51*-59*; to which compare the first six demons of the West, Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 427, and see further Greenfield, *Demonology,* 227–29.

[63] E.g., Legrand, *Bibliothèque,* II, 17–19; Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 484–85; see further Greenfield, *Demonology,* 237–40; Delatte and Josserand, "Contribution," 229–30.

[64] Bryennios, *Keph.* 47, 228; *Keph.* 25, 76; in the *Magic Treatise* see, e.g., Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 398.19–23, 402.6–7, 424, 507–9; and in the *Testament of Solomon,* 78*, 82*.

favor may be found in the cases from the patriarchal court in which Kappadokes was accused of trying to help a monk become a bishop and where Syropoulos was alleged to have tried to secure pardon for a priest.[65]

By the same token, however, and in the same ways, magic could be used to bring about sickness, disability, or misfortune: people could be driven mad, rendered impotent, made to sicken and even to die; the same thing could be done to their animals, and their crops could be ruined by blight, insects, or storms.[66] Among the commonest notions that relate to such uses of magic were those of "binding," whereby some magical hindrance or block was applied to the victim,[67] or of piercing, wherein a sympathetic reaction was inspired in the victim by sticking pins, needles, or other sharp objects into a model of some sort, or where evil spirits were attached or "fixed" to a victim or to an object in a similar way.[68]

[65] MM I, 343–44, no. 153, and 547, no. 292; and see also Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 398–99, 401–3, 468. Many of the amulets in the *Kyranides* also have such ends in view, e.g., I.1, I.2, I.3, etc.

[66] Of course, success for one person necessarily means failure or harm for another; the two concepts go together. For a particularly clear example of this belief, note the fears of Theodore II Laskaris reported by Pachymeres (above, note 13); and the fears of Constantine Palates concerning his mother-in-law in a case before the patriarchal court: Hunger and Kresten, *Register,* 178.22–24, no. 11. Note, too, the allegations made by Gregoras against John Kalekas (see above, note 14); Gregoras also repeats the belief that demons can be called up by necromancy and made to work harm: *de Insomniis,* PG 149, col. 618. The *de Daemonibus,* 173, reports that sorcerers can make demons cause terrible evils; and the *Graecorum opiniones,* 103, states that magic is able to produce sickness; Bidez, *Catalogue,* VI, 129. See also in this context Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 397, 401–2. Particularly revealing, too, is the prayer for release from magic in Legrand, *Bibliothèque,* II, xviii-xix, which refers to the various places in which harmful magical potions and objects might be hidden and, indirectly, the things they might be thought to cause. For causing hatred by magic, see Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 402, 456, 467, 625.

[67] For binding see, e.g., Bryennios, *Keph.* 47, 228; Delatte, *Anecdota,* 402, 551–52, 581–82, 612; Legrand, *Bibliothèque,* II, xviii. In general see Ph. Koukoules, "Μεσαιωνικοὶ καὶ Νεοελληνικοὶ καταδεσμοί," Λαογραφία 8 (1921–25), 302–46, and 9 (1926–28), 52–108. Note that the *de Daemonibus,* 173, refers to *demons* being bound by sorcerers using such things as saliva, human nails and hair, lead, wax, and thread, and then being employed to do harm. See also *Graecorum opiniones,* 101–3; Bidez, *Catalogue,* VI, 128.

[68] See, for a particularly clear example, Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 461 (there is another version at 501); also 459–60. Note also the *Graecorum opiniones,* 103; Bidez, *Catalogue,*

This sort of technique was frequently associated with "love"—or, better, lust—magic,[69] although there were evidently many other practices that could be employed to the same end. Here a person was forced by magical means to comply with the sexual desires of the practitioner or the client, the penalty for failing to do so being various unpleasant forms of suffering. The victim was usually a woman, although there is evidence of this sort of magic also being used on a man in the case from the patriarchal court of Exotrochina, a wealthy woman who allegedly tried to obtain the hand of a nobleman by magical means.[70] Surviving texts reveal the same levels of complex and elaborate theoretical sophistication in some rituals of this type as was seen with some amulets. For instance, one set of instructions requires a wax figurine to be made before sunrise on the sixth day when the moon is waxing. The names of the victim (in this case a girl) and her mother, together with those of the practitioner (or client) and his mother have to be inscribed on specific parts of the body of the figurine, while the names of the demons Loutzipher, Beelzeboul, and Astaroth are written on paper which is then inserted into a slit cut into the wax. Further rituals involve piercing the heart of the figurine with a needle and then sweating it over coals for three nights while conjuring the demons in question, before it is cut into six separate sections and burnt while further conjurations are repeated nine times over each.[71] Other practices, however, either involved a rather crude simplification of the same type of theory or else operated on quite different and undeveloped principles. For instance, a woman who is touched with a magical parchment using dust taken from her right footprint will submit to the will of the magician, while an apple on which

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VI, 129; and the mention in the translation of Ovid referred to above. For fixing a spirit in a particular place so that it may be controlled for magical purposes, see Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 578; cf. 468, 580. See also Greenfield, *Demonology,* 263–64, 266–68.

[69] The moral ambiguity of such magic is clear here. When regarded from the point of view of sorcerer and client, it was beneficial, or at least useful (if perhaps only from a psychological point of view); from the standpoint of the victim, however, it was most definitely not, amounting to rape, since the woman was being forced into a sexual relationship against her will (always supposing the magic worked).

[70] MM I, 549–50, no. 292.

[71] Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 461. See also the other examples cited in note 68 above; and cf. ibid., 399, 401, 456, where love spells and astrological theory are again clearly combined. For a complex love spell apparently without figurines, see ibid., 422–24.

magic signs have been written will have the same effect on the victim if she eats it.[72]

As is clear here, it was also believed that spiritual as well as physical beings could be manipulated by the techniques of sorcery. Such manipulation, for whatever ends, was again thought to be possible through a wide range of methods which depended on a similarly wide range of theoretical justifications; demons, angels, and other minor spiritual powers could be bent to the will of the sorcerer either in isolation or more usually in combination.

The variety of means available to practitioners of this sort of magic thus included the invocation of either general groups or named individual spirits. The *Magic Treatise,* for instance, invokes such beings as "Lady Sympilia" in a katoptromancy or "Princess Todedide and the demons who control lust" in a love spell,[73] while both it and the *Testament of Solomon* contain long lists of individually named demons, categorized in various ways, for precisely this purpose.[74]

The use of inducements in the form of physical rewards such as sacrifices and offerings might also be employed. Nikephoros Gregoras, in his commentary on the *de Insomniis,* thus refers in general to the practice of sacrificing to demons to secure their help,[75] while the *Testament of Solomon* provides instructions for the sacrifice of fifty-one unborn black kids in order to obtain a list of demons.[76] The *Magic Treatise,* too, requires the sacrifice and employment of the blood of a white bird during an elaborate love charm,[77] and it also contains instructions for various feasts which are clearly intended to induce cooperation

[72] Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 456–58, 465. See also ibid., 466–67, where several simple (and garbled) love charms are given, including one that uses a loaf of bread inscribed with the magical female Anerada.

[73] Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 433 and 593–94 (Sympilia); 459 (Todedide); these are but two among many examples, for the naming of individuals or specific groups in magic rituals and spells is very common. For reference to naming in general, see MM I, 189, no. 86, and 544, no. 292.

[74] So, e.g., *Testament of Solomon,* 51*-59* (36 decans); 78*-82* (named demons); Delatte, *Anecdota,* I 403–4, 434–38 (demons and angels of days and hours); 426–27 (demons of the four quarters). See also Greenfield, *Demonology,* 219–36.

[75] Gregoras, *de Insomniis,* 616.

[76] *Testament of Solomon,* 77*.

[77] Delatte, *Anecdota,* I 459–60.

by the spirits: for instance, in a ritual designed to employ a "stoicheion" called Mortze, the sorcerer has to prepare a table for the spirit and cannot proceed with his conjuration until there is visible evidence of the food having been consumed; elsewhere elaborate feasts are prepared and enjoyed by spiritual powers, although here these are not physical but visionary, being perceived in great detail by a medium during the initial stages of some of the more complex forms of divination.[78]

Closely related here was the association of the sorcerer in various ways with the powers he was intending to use. In the case of evil spirits, this association might be thought to be achieved by acts of desecration, such as the rituals, referred to in two of the trials before the patriarchal court, that involved erasing and trampling on the name of God, or writing the Lord's prayer backwards and upside down.[79] The same end might also be achieved by acts of immorality, particularly of murder or the shedding of human blood, or even by signing a pact with the devil. It should be noted, however, that there is no firm evidence of this latter belief from the Palaeologan period, and most of these practices seem to have existed primarily or only in the minds of those who wished to discredit and refute magical activities.[80] In the case of good spirits, whether these were to be used directly or merely as means of controlling and curbing the evil ones, association was completed by the various rituals of purification already mentioned and by the use of pure (usually sexually pure or virgin) materials and assistants.[81] The location and timing of such operations, too, might be seen to be vital to ensure

[78] Ibid., 578, 433. Note here the recipes for various "incenses," designed to attract the demons in magic rituals, which contain such things as snake or vulture heads and polecat's blood, ibid., 404–6, 417; also the garlands or silk cloths referred to at ibid., 468, 600, apparently for the same purpose of inducement. The *de Daemonibus,* 149–51, provides an explanation, based on earlier speculation, as to how material sacrifices could be attractive and even nutritious to spiritual beings. Further here see Greenfield, *Demonology,* 213–15, 253–55.

[79] MM I, 180, no. 79, and 343–44, no. 153.

[80] In the material in Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, there are various references to the employment of instruments used for murder, e.g., 406; or to the use of human blood or bones, e.g., 405, 417, 457; cf. the *Testament of Solomon,* 77*. Note the rites alleged to be performed by the heretics of the *de Daemonibus,* 139–41, which certainly seem to belong to the stock of inherited labels for religious or social opponents. For further references and discussion, see Greenfield, *Demonology,* 255–57.

[81] See above, note 60; again protection and control are really indistinguishable. Further here see Pingree, "Ghaya," 13.

that the forces most appropriate to the needs of the particular operation were dominant and active, and here, at the more sophisticated levels, a great deal of complex astrological knowledge was required, as well as familiarity with the powers of literally myriad individual good and evil spirits.[82]

As well as such means for inducing or enticing the spiritual powers to do their will, sorcerers were also thought to have more direct, coercive means available to them. On the one hand, as both the *de Daemonibus* and Gregoras' commentary on the *de Insomniis* make clear, it was apparently believed in a rather crude way that physical force could be employed by sorcerers, who might thus make use of spits, swords, or other sharp objects to terrify and so control the evil spirits with which they were dealing.[83] Other objects or materials, which were held to terrify or subjugate these spiritual powers, were evidently used in a rather similar way.[84]

On the other hand, much more elaborated and intellectual notions were also apparently in circulation which depended on intimidating and threatening these beings by means of naming and invoking superior powers in their own

[82] For specific days of the week see, e.g., Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 397–99; for houses of the zodiac, ibid., 401–3; in relation to the lunar month, ibid., 430–31. Note again the long lists of demons and angels preserved there which are ordered either astrologically, chronologically, or geographically. For particular locations, usually the traditional crossroads, scene of a murder, or unfrequented place, see ibid., 416–17, 425, 432, 468, 578, 580, 590, 617. For another association of sorcery and crossroads in this period, see the encyclical of Athanasios I summarized in Dar. *Reg.*, IV, 553 (#3), no. 1777. See also Greenfield, *Demonology,* 257–60.

[83] *De Daemonibus,* 163, line 444 and 177, lines 637–41; Gregoras, *de Insomniis,* col. 618. Compare, too, the almost ubiquitous black-handled knife of the sorcerer in the rituals of the *Magic Treatise* and in later Greek magic, and what was said above about fixing evil spirits in place with knives so that they could be used in magic. On the necessary materiality of the demonic "body" that an aversion to sharp objects implies, and theories concerning it, see Greenfield, *Demonology,* 211–13.

[84] So, for example, the "aromata" used for compulsion rather than inducement, which were mentioned above. Also to be considered here are amuletic devices which are conceived primarily as compelling spirits, like Solomon's seal, *Testament of Solomon,* 15*, 16*; to which may be compared the sorcerer's ring found in Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 416; or, e.g., magical devices for curing possession, ibid., 406, 605. Note also the use of the magical symbols, signs, and names written on the sorcerer's robes, on his equipment, or in his circle which may have much to do with coercion as well as protection. Note here, too, the closely parallel orthodox practices of imposing the sign of cross, a crucifix, or something like the Gospels during exorcism.

hierarchies or in those of other dominant spiritual beings. Among the most powerful were the mysterious names of God himself, of which the commonest in the Palaeologan sources are Sabaoth, Adonai, Tetragrammaton, and variants of Iao and Eloi.[85] Also employed, however, were those of major and lesser angelic beings, named either as types, like the archangels or seraphim, or else as individuals, such as Raphael, Michael, Gabriel, and Ouriel, although there are also long and complex lists of minor angelic names.[86] Then there were the names of planetary and cosmic spirits, as well as those of heroic and particularly holy men; here Solomon's name is by far the most powerful and frequently invoked, although other patriarchs are also used, as are saints like Sisinnios in particular circumstances, such as in charms against Gylou. Finally, recourse might be had to the names of demonic princes and rulers.[87]

As well as being used in the areas of protection and manipulation, it was evidently an extremely common belief that magic could be employed to discover knowledge that was otherwise inaccessible. Divination was thus practiced in a vast variety of ways ranging, once again, from the crude to the sophisticated in technique and in theory. For the sake of analysis alone, these methods are here divided loosely into two groups: techniques that basically involve observation or experience of phenomena, and techniques that involve deliberate manipulation and intervention on the part of the diviner.[88]

At the simple end of the scale in the first group are methods that involved the direct interpretation of sensations felt in the body as indicating some distant or future action or outcome. Joseph Bryennios thus refers to people observing the natural movements of their legs, hands, and noses, or the fluttering of their eyelids and buzzing in their ears to predict the future, while detailed charts to

[85] Others, such as Emmanuel and Pantokrator, or sequences derived from Agla (see, e.g., Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 425) are also used relatively frequently, as are reminders of divine deeds, drawn equally from both Old and New Testaments.

[86] For types see, e.g., ibid., 419, 424; for lists of individuals, which are provided in parallel to those of demons, 420–21.

[87] See, for more detail and fuller references, Greenfield, *Demonology,* 271–74.

[88] In what follows reference is made only to some of the practices for which there is direct evidence in this period. The range of techniques and methods that existed in reality should be assumed to be far larger, judging from evidence from other periods of Byzantine and post-Byzantine history. See, e.g., Koukoules, βίος, I.2, 156–226.

be used in making such predictions have also survived from this period.[89] Slightly more elaborate, but still basically dependent only on the direct experience of the subject, was oneiromancy; here dreams were interpreted either by reference to a range of simple, common knowledge or else to detailed (and often ancient) written manuals that explained the symbolism and significance of what had been seen. Gregoras' commentary on *de Insomniis* obviously springs to mind here, but there are also multiple copies of all the major surviving Byzantine *oneirokritika* from the Palaeologan period or the later fifteenth century, indicating how popular this practice was. Of particular interest is the book assigned to Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus; unfortunately he cannot be firmly identified as the book's author, even though he is known from other sources to have had an interest in dream interpretation.[90]

Moving along the scale were other types of observation that could interpret human physical features, such as the lines on the hand, the placement of moles on the body, or even the effect of urine on a lentil as a test for virginity,[91] or that studied the markings on the shoulder blades of sheep (omoplatoscopy).[92] Others again, though still not involving deliberate intervention on the part of the diviner, made predictions based on external events such as those mentioned by Joseph Bryennios which include the movement of icons, the meetings and greetings of men, and the behavior of domestic and wild birds, particularly crows.[93]

[89] Bryennios, *Keph.* 47, 227; Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 628–30.

[90] See for details here S. Oberhelman, "Prolegomena to the Byzantine *Oneirokritika,*" *Byzantion* 50 (1980), 487–503; for the latter work see now G. Calofonos, "Manuel II Palaiologos: Interpreter of Dreams?" *ByzF* 16 (1991), 447–55; also Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 511–24. For other material on dream interpretation, see ibid., 525–47. Note ibid., e.g., 468, 507, where techniques for *causing* divinatory dreams are preserved, and a number of amulets in the *Kyranides* which are said to do the same, e.g., I.3, 38 or I.19, 14–16.

[91] Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 209–10 (palmistry); 627–28 (meaning of moles); 632 (test for virginity).

[92] See Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 206–9 for a 13th-century copy of short treatises on omoplatoscopy.

[93] Bryennios, *Keph.* 47, 227. In *Keph.* 11, 59, he condemns divination (μαντεῖαι) and "observations" of this sort (παρατηρήσεις) in general. Compare also the references to bears and snakes apparently being used in this way in the encyclicals of Athanasios I, Dar. *Reg.* IV, 542 (#18), no. 1762; 553 (#4), no. 1777; 556 (#18), no. 1778; 557 (#11), no. 1779.

Finally, in this class of techniques comes the extremely elaborate and developed practice of astrology, which was believed to depend on very precise astronomical observation and calculation as well as knowledge of the nature and occult powers of the celestial bodies and/or the spirits (good and bad) associated with them. By the "scientific" interpretation of such data in the light of a variety of astrological theories, it was believed that either accurate and detailed predictions of the future could be made or the most suitable moments for action be determined.[94]

In the second group, a variety of techniques involved the scattering of objects like grains (barley seems to have been a perennial favorite), beans, stones, or bones, and then reading the patterns into which they fell according to a range of different principles.[95] Rather similar was the extraction of prepared lots or other significant objects from some sort of container and interpretation of the sequence in which they appeared or their relation to the person who chose them. A clear example of this type of divination is the ritual of the κληδόνες, which is known from Joseph Bryennios as well as from references both before and after the Palaeologan period.[96] Other methods of divination

[94] For examples see Pingree, "Abramios," passim; on the distinction between the two kinds of astrology, see idem, "Ghaya," 7. Mention has been made on several occasions of the astrological considerations that were crucial to the performance of many of the more elaborate magic rituals; here the art is evidently being used for correct and propitious timing rather than prediction. Note the relatively frequent attacks on astrology which help to show how popular it was; so by Bryennios, *Keph.* 47, 227; but also by Gregoras, e.g., *Byz. Hist.* XVI, 8.5–7 in connection with a western astrologer who appeared at the Byzantine court; and by Symeon of Thessaloniki, Κατὰ αἱρεσέων, vi, PG 155, cols. 43–50. It was perhaps felt to be more dangerous than some other techniques because of the high intellectual level at which it operated in its more sophisticated forms, and it was thus attacked not only by Christian opponents but also by scholars fearful for their reputations and safety if their researches, particularly in astronomy and mathematics, were associated with it.

[95] Bryennios, *Keph.* 47, 227, mentions divination by means of barley. Barley or rye are also mentioned in the encyclicals of Athanasios I: Dar. *Reg.* IV, 530, no. 1749; 553 (#3), no. 1777; 557 (#12), no. 1779. See in particular here the cleromancy in Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 392–96; compare there, too, the various versions of arithromancy, 388–91, 451–55, 557–61, and cf. 104, 107–10; see further idem, "Traité byzantin de géomancie," *Mélanges Cumont* (1936), II, 575–658 (I have unfortunately been unable to see this work); Bruel, *Superstition,* 68–69.

[96] Bryennios, *Keph.* 47, 227; for other references see L. Oeconomos, *La vie religieuse dans l'empire Byzantin au temps des Comnènes et des Anges* (Paris, 1918),

could involve all manner of mechanisms, such as magic words written on various foods or dropped in water which a thief would be unable to eat or drink; or an amulet tied round the neck of a bird which would settle on the guilty person's shoulder.[97]

The most common forms of manipulative divination, however, involved the use of a shining, reflective surface in which the desired information was seen in some way. While some of the surviving methods are relatively crude and unelaborate,[98] it is in these practices, particularly of lekanomancy and katoptromancy, that some of the greatest complexity and sophistication could be found in late Byzantine divination.[99] This is because these practices, at more sophisticated levels of interpretation, were linked to supernatural powers and thus involved the invocation and manipulation of (usually evil) spirits and perhaps the souls of the dead.[100] Some of the most elaborate rituals that survive

226–28; Koukoules, βίος, I.2, 167–72. Some form of the ritual is also mentioned in Pseudo-Psellos, *Graecorum opiniones,* 6, 102–5.

[97] Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 608; see also here, e.g., 587, 609–11, 625. The discovery of thieves seems to have been a very popular area in which magic was used. Compare here, too, the higher level use of trial by ordeal, e.g., the incident involving Michael Palaeologus, George Akropolites, *Historia,* ed. A. Heisenberg (Leipzig, 1903), 95–98.

[98] So, e.g., Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 577, 586–87, 591.

[99] There is also evidence of the same or similar types of divination throughout Byzantine history. The practice is mentioned in some detail in the *Graecorum opiniones,* 105; Bidez, *Catalogue,* VI, 129–30. Many examples of rituals of varying complexity are to be found in Delatte, *Anecdota,* I: for lekanomancy (or hygromancy) see, e.g., 430–32, 480, 493–98, 504, 588–89, 595–96; for katoptromancy, 432–34, 479, 584–85, 593. In general here see Delatte, *Catoptromancie;* and Hopfner, "Lekano-"; also Greenfield, *Demonology,* 294–96.

[100] The assumption behind most of these rituals seems to be that demonic beings of one sort or another are seen in the surface of the water or the mirror, assuming the preparations have been correctly made and the magic incantations correctly said; they will then answer whatever questions the sorcerer has for them and perhaps even do other things as well. I have argued elsewhere (see above, note 33) that the main rite of the *Magic Treatise* itself is probably to be seen as a ritual of this type from which the central hydromancy is now missing; as it stands, it simply involves the summoning of demons to the magic circle and demanding their response or action: Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 417–28. Compare to this the ritual for dealing with the "stoicheion" at ibid., 578, or those at 429–30, 468, which involve trapping a demon or spirit in some sort of vessel and then questioning it directly. The ideas are clearly related but represent different branches of the same tradition. Another branch is also apparent in one or two rituals in which there is some vague hint of necromancy, ibid., 432.22, 589–90, 593.4, 617–18; cf. 403, where hydromancy and necromancy are directly linked. Indeed, some comparative

are thus lekanomancies and katoptromancies, designed to summon, control, and use the evil spirits to reveal the future (or whatever other knowledge is desired) in the shining surface of a specially prepared vessel of water or a mirror; other reflective or bright objects that could also be employed include oiled fingernails, an oiled egg, a crystal held up to the sun, or a candle flame.[101] Usually here the revelation is not given directly to the sorcerer himself but to a child (hence virgin and pure) medium, and usually it takes place within the confines of an elaborate magic circle. Once again the techniques may reach a level that is in some ways, at least, "scientific," involving minute and painstakingly detailed preparation and ritual activity, and considerable knowledge of complex astrological and cosmological theory. Furthermore, these rites would seem to include the deliberate manipulation of sense perception, parts of them, at least, being designed to induce an hypnotic or trance state in the young medium not only through such means as lengthy, meaningless repetition, light shining and flashing in the eyes, and so forth, but by the use at times of "aromata" which actually contain hallucinatory substances such as opium or sweet flag root.[102]

The use of evil spiritual powers has been mentioned specifically in connection with these latter operations, but it was, of course, possible to see such beings as active in all the many techniques of divination that existed; indeed, this was how the dominant orthodox tradition tended to view them and explain their supposed success. The association with such powers was certainly made at times by the practitioners of such arts themselves, not only with respect to lekanomancy and katoptromancy, but also to some other forms such as oneiromancy,[103] and there were some further methods that seem to have been thought to have actually involved direct revelation by demonic powers, such as the ven-

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material might suggest that most of these rituals originated as necromancies, though that element has been almost entirely lost by the late Byzantine period; note here especially Gregoras, *de Insomniis,* 615–19, and *Kyranides,* I.13. See also M. Ninck, *Die Bedeutung des Wassers im Kult und Leben der Alten, Philologus,* Supplementband 14, II (Leipzig, 1921; repr. Darmstadt, 1960), 70–80.

[101] Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 580, 591–92 (fingernails); 581 (egg); 500 (crystal); 576 (candle).

[102] See Greenfield, *Demonology,* 291–92. For opium and sweet flag see Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 405.6 and 22–23. Cf. the reference to the use of a herbal medicine and ointment for seeing demons in the *de Daemonibus,* 161.

[103] See, e.g., *Graecorum opiniones,* 105; Bidez, *Catalogue,* VI, 129–30; Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 397, 417–28, 429–30, 468, 480, 576, 578, 595–96.

triloquism of which the notorious female diviner Amarantina was condemned by the patriarchal court in the middle of the fourteenth century.[104] In general, however, it would appear likely that the many practitioners, certainly of the less sophisticated and elaborate techniques of divination, did not make direct or overt links to the powers of evil and regarded the processes of their divination as being somehow automatic or natural. The same general point applies not just to divination but to all the types and varieties of magic. This was undoubtedly seen by some as being entirely motivated and operated by demonic forces, but others, at least in some areas, never made this connection at all and saw the practices they were conducting either as using neutral, natural forces or as being some form of Christian, and therefore quite legitimate, activity.

This obviously brings up the question of the relationship between the dominant Christian tradition and the sort of beliefs and practices discussed above. It is clear, at least in this period, that for most people involved with these things, whether as clients or practitioners, there was no obvious barrier, no clear divide that distinguished what they were doing in their own minds or in those of their peers from any other religious, and so in this context Christian, activity. Only in the minds of highly trained theologians did such absolute distinctions exist, and even then, there often, if not always, seems to have been some other, ulterior motive at work when people were singled out and punished for alleged acts of sorcery and magic.[105]

Just as almost all the forms of magic noted above could be ascribed to the working of evil spiritual powers, so they could equally well be attributed to that of good powers. In some places there is a very broad and obvious gray area between practices and attitudes that are undeniably orthodox Christian and those that are incontrovertibly unorthodox. As has been seen elsewhere, Christian amulets abounded and enjoyed a comparable range of form and sophistication to those that were not specifically Christian. Relics or other holy objects could fulfill exactly the same functions as the concoctions found in

[104] For the case see MM I, 301–6, no. 134; cf. 317–18, no. 137; it is referred to again in no. 292, p. 542. See also Cupane, "La magia," 246–48, 256–57. Further on Amarantina see Gone, Καλλίστου Α΄, 133, 213–14, 230. Compare here the *de Daemonibus,* 161–63; and on the tradition of ventriloquism see Greenfield, *Demonology,* 128–29, 293.

[105] See below, p. 151. In general on the question of the relation between orthodox and unorthodox belief and practice, one of the most helpful treatments is to be found in A. Ducellier, *Le drame de Byzance* (Paris, 1976), pt. III, 183–272.

non-Christian amulets, and holy inscriptions could replace magical symbols and names.[106] Practices like exorcism,[107] blessing, or even the major sacraments could be viewed and used on the popular level in precisely the same ways as the magical operations designed to manipulate the material conditions of human life, while prayers and rituals dedicated to specific saints who would be used in specific circumstances could be thought to create similarly efficacious alterations in human relations to those of the magical practices described above.[108] Again, virtually the whole range of divinatory techniques could just as easily be seen as operating through the intervention of angelic or other spiritual powers approved by Christianity as it could through evil ones, and there is evidence of a number of methods that utilized specifically Christian objects such as Gospels or Psalters for discovering hidden knowledge.[109] Even more interesting, whether it should surprise us or not, is the fact that the practitioner of the more complicated arts laid out in the *Magic Treatise* actually visualizes himself as working in the name of God through angelic, spiritual powers, which he uses to control and command the evil ones.[110] Moreover, the rituals

[106] For clear examples of "magical" Christian amulets that have precisely the same form as their non-Christian counterparts but use names and invocations acceptable to orthodoxy, see, e.g., Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 465, 616, 622–24. For the recommendation by Bryennios that Christian symbols should be deliberately substituted for amulets, see above, note 38. Note again the reference to the burning of Athanasios' garment, above.

[107] There is no room in the present paper to enter in any detail into the particularly gray area of Christian exorcism. It is clear, however, that popular perception could stray quite easily into seeing evil spirits as being controlled and healings effected by the exorcist and his ritual activities in a purely "automatic" manner; it was evidently only too easy to forget that the *grace* of God was necessarily at work here if the practice was to remain acceptable to orthodoxy. Note especially much material in the later "Byzantine" exorcism published by L. Delatte; and see further here Greenfield, *Demonology,* 140–48.

[108] It is clearly hard to distinguish between the sort of "prayer" mentioned above to St. Sisinnios or Michael against the demon Gylou and something like the "Exorcism of St. Tryphon" found in the Εὐχολόγιον Μέγα, 500–503, used to protect fields and vines from natural or magical ills. For a list of saints to be approached for help with particular medical problems in the Orthodox tradition, see S. S. Harakas, *Health and Medicine in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition* (New York, 1990), 87.

[109] See, e.g., the arithromancy in Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 388–91, 557–61; cf. 104, 107, which utilizes these books.

[110] So, e.g., Delatte, *Anecdota,* I, 403–4, 406–10, 418–25, where there are frequent references to the fact that the powers used to subjugate the demons are angelic,

of purification, which he must undergo in order to render him both safe from the evil spirits and open to the knowledge he will receive, differ very little in some ways from standard practices of Christian asceticism, something that perhaps makes the involvement in magic of the renowned ascetic Gabrielopoulos, condemned in the trial of 1371, more understandable.[111]

It is clear that the relationship between the central Christian orthodoxy and the peripheral semi-Christian (or actually non-Christian) elements of belief and practice in the Palaeologan religious mentality is one that is complex and far-reaching. At the popular level, belief and practice embraced a range that simply did not recognize distinctions between religion and magic and was not only uninterested in separating areas of orthodoxy and unorthodoxy, but was almost entirely incapable of doing so. What is being described here is thus merely one end of a largely continuous spectrum which shades, as it were, quite smoothly from white to black. Any divisions in it are imposed either by subsequent historical misconceptions or by the views of the small minority of trained Christian theologians who believed in and were both capable of and interested in establishing such divisions. It is vital not to let the minority speak in place of the vast majority.

One final area relates to this point, and that is the evidence the sources provide for an understanding of the way in which such beliefs operated at all levels of late Byzantine society—intellectual, political, and economic, as well as religious. Some of these beliefs and practices are, it is true, so lacking in sophistication and theoretical support that they must have been capable of operating only at the very lowest levels. Others, however, are so elaborate, so complex, and demand such a range of knowledge and scholarship that they can have been held and practiced only by people at the very highest levels of society, especially given that education to such a standard was a prerogative of the privileged. The evidence that has been provided above from this period, like that from other eras of Byzantine history that have been examined, for the acceptance and indeed use of such ideas and practices even at the imperial

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and where the names and deeds of God are also utilized. Note especially the stipulation that wax to be used in making a magic figurine must be allowed to stand on the altar for three days while the priest is celebrating the liturgy, ibid., 410. Compare too the rituals at ibid., 493–500, 577.

[111] On Gabrielopoulos see MM I, 543–44 no. 292, and *PLP*, nos. 3431 and 3433.

court, even among leading intellectuals, and even by clergy and monks of high rank, should not, therefore, be surprising. One may think immediately here of men like Theodore II Laskaris or the despot Michael II Angelos at the court; of Nikephoros Gregoras, John Abramios, or perhaps Gabrielopoulos among intellectuals; and of the anonymous would-be bishop who had turned to Kappadokes for help, the *protonotarios* and former *kanstresios* Demetrios Chloros, or even (although only if Gregoras is to be believed) Patriarch John Kalekas among churchmen.[112]

It is true that a further cautionary fact should perhaps also be borne in mind: accusations of this type among leading social and intellectual figures may have as much to do with political infighting as with real involvement in magic. Those surrounding Kalekas, Gregoras, and perhaps at least some of the defendants in the trials before the patriarchal court need further examination in this light.[113] Nevertheless, when emperors accuse courtiers of making them sick by demonic magic and make use of astrology when making important decisions, when leading intellectuals and scholars seriously discuss magical practices and cast horoscopes, when manuscripts of sorcery that require extremely high levels of erudition are copied and employed, and when senior

[112] In this context it may be important to point out that it is hard to accept, without at least some reservations, the claim made by Carolina Cupane, "La magia," 260–61, e.g., that information in the trials at the patriarchal court relates primarily to the magic of the poorer and more ignorant classes. Abramios and Chloros (and probably also Gabrielopoulos) certainly cannot be put in this bracket. Exotrochina, who is specifically said to have been wealthy (as Cupane notes) and evidently moving in noble circles, paid five hyperpyra for the services of the magician she employed; this is the same sum as the lustful father Ioasaph was able to afford, although he also gave a piece of Alexandrian crystal, something which suggests that he too was not poor. Phoudoulis is said to have been accused of his crimes by a member of the nobility, which may suggest he, too, is unlikely to have came from the poorest level of society. Syropoulos was a doctor and so probably not to be counted among the ignorant, and neither, perhaps, was Ioannes Paradisios since he was the son of the "Primikerios ton anagnoston."

[113] Cf. Pingree, "Abramios," 193; R. Guilland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras* (Paris, 1926), 27. On earlier cases that make this point, see R. Greenfield, "Sorcery and Politics at the Byzantine Court in the Twelfth Century: Interpretations of History," in R. Beaton and C. Roueché, eds., *The Making of Byzantine History* (London, 1993), 73–85; cf. also idem, "Sorcery Accusation as a Political Weapon at the Byzantine Court in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries," *Byzantine Studies Conference, Abstracts of Papers,* 17 (1991), 26.

churchmen are condemned for using, and actually being, practitioners of magic, it is quite clear that what is being dealt with here is not to be dismissed as "superstition," as the misguided, ignorant, and unrepresentative beliefs of a lowly social group or a few isolated individuals, but is something that was an integral part of general Byzantine culture and thought.

Constraints of space and the wealth of available evidence have not only meant that some detail has had to be sacrificed but also that this paper has had to concern itself almost entirely with documenting and describing; an approach to Palaeologan magic at the analytical level is thus, unfortunately, not possible here and only to be glimpsed by way of conclusion.

What, for instance, does the undeniable evidence here that magical beliefs and practices found favor at the very highest levels of Byzantine society say about the real dominance and cohesion of the standard orthodox tradition? What was it that made alternative traditions more attractive and satisfying to some people than standard orthodox ones? To whom were they appealing, in what circumstances, and for what reasons? And what do we make of the fact that much of this magic was based on a concept of the nature of supernatural beings which was very different from that of the standard orthodox tradition?

Again, to what extent is the magic found at high levels to be compared and related to the magic of lower levels? What may be discovered about the interaction between the different levels of belief in the Palaeologan situation, as well as about the absorption of popular notions into more sophisticated areas and the percolation of standard, orthodox ideas down into less developed conceptions? What caused these movements? What patterns are there in the transformations and shifts of emphasis that take place?

What, too, may be determined from the contexts in which accusation of magic were made and pursued? To what extent was the accusation of magic merely a political weapon, at whatever level, as it undoubtedly was sometimes at the imperial court? To what extent was it ever a purely religious concern? And what then is to be made of the apparently unique appeal for an organized purge of magicians in Constantinople in the mid-fourteenth century?[114]

Finally, on another level again, there are the questions of how this magic was perceived to be empowered. On what symbolism did it depend for its efficacy, on what associations?[115]

[114] MM I, 184–87, no. 85; 188–90, no. 86.

[115] See, for a brief indication of what may be done, Greenfield, *Demonology,* 298–302.

This sort of questioning is, of course, pertinent to the whole range of late Byzantine religious belief and practice, not just to the subject of Palaeologan magic, but the importance of the latter lies, perhaps, in the fact that it is one area in which the answers to such questions may be particularly, and unusually, accessible. It is one of those rare historical situations in which it may indeed be possible to examine the development of practical religion in the hands of the learned and the conception of orthodox belief in the minds of the people. Let us hope it is not too long before the conjuror arrives at the palace and works his magic on the feast.

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