

ABSTRACT

Thérèse Charmasson, *The Medieval Geomancy: the treatises and their diffusion*

The geomancy as it was practised in the latin western Empire since the end of the XIIth century may have its origin in an Arabic tradition. However, the first preserved traces of this Arabic tradition are from the XIIIth century. As any other divinatory science, the purpose of geomancy is the knowledge of the past, the present and the future. The geomancer intends to attain this goal through the interpretation of sixteen figures composed of four levels of points, in even or uneven numbers, placed in squares called houses. By studiing the different latin geomantic treatises, one can put together the different phases of the construction and interpretation of geomantic theme during a consultation.

Thérèse Charmasson

Centre de recherche en histoire
des sciences et des techniques – Paris
therese.charmasson@expeditur.fr

Irene Zavattero, *Estimaverunt Indi: The Textual Tradition of an Anonymous Treatise on Geomancy*

This text, which, according to the first two words of its incipit is called *Estimaverunt Indi (E.I.)*, is one the earliest extant Latin treatises on geomancy. It is translated from Arabic, and its author is unknown. The present article accounts for the manuscript transmission of the treatise, particularly addressing the problem of its explicit. On the basis of the *tabula* occurring on fol. 12v of the MS London, British Library, Harley 4166 – which is here transcribed for the first time – the contents of the different sections of the *EI* are illustrated. A critical edition of the prologue, based on the collation of all extant witness, is included in the appendix.

Irene Zavattero

Università di Trento
irene.zavattero@unitn.it

Pasquale Arfè, *The Ars geomantiae of Hugo of Santalla: Text and Tradition*

One of the leading divinatory works of 12th-century Spain is the *Ars geomantiae*, first translated into Latin, out of a lost Arabic text, by Hugo of Santalla. In order to establish its critical edition a basic introduction in two main sections is here provided. Firstly, an attentive analysis of the short *Epilogus*, which appears in the form of a Boethian *accessus ad auctorem*, is carried out as the best way of understanding the text. Indeed, the didactic items of the *Epilogus* (*intentio, causa intentionis, utilitas, pars philosophiae, artifex, inuentor, titulus*) furnish information about the historical origins, meaning and position within the general system of sciences and the scientific method of geomancy, in a manner reflecting the typical speculative issues of the 12th-century. Secondly, the textual tradition, which is hitherto made up of thirteen witnesses, is described in detail by studying the genealogical relationships of the manuscripts, drawing from them the *stemma codicum*. Finally, in the Appendix a new diplomatic-interpretative edition of the Latin text of the *Epilogus* is published.

Pasquale Arfè

Università degli Studi di Bari «Aldo Moro»
pasquale.arfe@uniba.it

Elisa Rubino, *Toward the Edition of William of Moerbeke's Geomantia. The Text of the Proem and the Distinction of the First Part*

Fifteen manuscripts preserve a treatise attributed to William of Moerbeke under the title of *Geomantia*. This text bears an intriguing and complex testimony to the geomantic science in the Middle Ages. Although it was first examined by Thérèse Charmasson, no critical edition is currently available. The following pages focus on the first critical edition of the text, and contain a documentation of the results, based on a philological analysis conducted on 15 manuscript witnesses. Moreover, they present a strategy of the text edition, currently in progress. The critical edition is part of the project FIRB 2012 *Foreseeing Events and Dominating Nature: Models of Operative Rationality and the Circulation of Knowledge in the Arab, Hebrew and Latin Middle Ages*, (unit Lecce, directed by Alessandra Beccarisi).

Elisa Rubino

Università del Salento
Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici
elisa.rubino@unisalento.it

Charles Burnett, *Hermetic geomancy, ratione certis experimentis usitata*

This article considers how 'Hermetic' early Latin texts on geomancy are, and to what extent their authors consider that geomancy relies on reason rather than inspiration. It is based mainly on texts which have not yet been edited.

Charles Burnett

Warburg Institute, London
Charles.Burnett@sas.ac.uk

Pasquale Porro, *Divination and Geomancy in Thomas Aquinas: A Few Remarks on the De sortibus*

The paper deals with the philosophical and theological implications of Aquinas' short treatise *De sortibus* (*Lots*), by presenting and discussing its structure and themes: the place the lot has among things, what the end of lots is, their mode, their efficacy, and whether, in accordance with the teaching of the Christian faith, it is legitimate to use them. Attention is paid to the distinction between *sors consultoria*, *sors divisoria* and *sors divinatoria*, and to the role and status of geomancy. New elements for the correct dating of the work are also provided, together with the principal references to the parallel places in Aquinas' production. The conclusive remarks concern (i) Aquinas' unequivocal condemnation of the *sors divinatoria*, (ii) the relation between the *De sortibus* and the *Ars geomantiae* attributed to William of Moerbeke, and (iii) Aquinas' doctrine of providential determinism as opposed to fatalism or astrological determinism.

Pasquale Porro

Università degli Studi di Bari Aldo Moro
pasquale.porro@uniba.it

Université Paris-Sorbonne
pasquale.porro@paris-sorbonne.fr

Alessandro Palazzo, *The Estimaverunt Indi and the Condemnation of 1277*

The paper aims at explaining why the *Estimaverunt Indi* is among the texts condemned by bishop Étienne Tempier in 1277. It is argued that driven by a pastoral concern Tempier assembled a doctrinal corpus of theses and texts ranging from magic to the invocations of demons, from astral fatalism to divination. Within this body of knowledge, geomancy was assigned a peculiar status due to its dangerous doctrinal implications and because of its wide diffusion. The *Estimaverunt Indi* was singled out by Tempier as representative of the geomantic literature. We know that one manuscript of the treatise was present in Paris around the time of the condemnation, even though the one used by the bishop has gone lost. The treatise may have been chosen also on the ground of its prominent Islamic character, which made it be perceived as the result of the Koranic revelation and, accordingly, as the most authentic and authoritative example of the geomantic wisdom. The ideological and religious hostility to Islam made bitterer by the 2nd Council of Lyon in 1274 provided the ideal context for the condemnation of the *Estimaverunt Indi*, a text very proud of its Islamic roots.

Alessandro Palazzo

Università di Trento
alessandro.palazzo@unitn.it

Marienza Benedetto, *Geomancy and other Forms of Divination in the Jewish Middle Ages*

What role did geomancy, and divinatory practices in general, have in the Jewish Middle Ages? Approaches towards them seems to be all but uniform. On one hand, there are a series of treatises, often and significantly bearing the title *Sefer ha-Goralot* (*Book of Lots*), that supplied instructions regarding the predictive art of geomancy and seek to assign a degree of legitimacy, if not scientific value, to it; on the other hand, it is easy to find in Jewish philosophical literature arguments for the need to take distance from geomancy and other similar practices that, perversely aimed at foreseeing the future and controlling nature, create a dangerous confusion between magic and miracles, or even worse, between diviners and prophets.

Marienza Benedetto
Università degli Studi di Bari «Aldo Moro»
marienza.benedetto@uniba.it

Josefina Rodríguez-Arribas, *Divination according to Goralot: Lots and Geomancy in Hebrew Manuscripts*

In the catalogues of Hebrew manuscripts of libraries all around the world the title *Sefer ha-goralot* frequently emerges associated with folklore or astrology. This title refers in fact to two main types of divination. The first consists of different variations of the ancient practice of cleromancy, different forms of casting lots (Latin *sortes*, Arabic *sahām*, Hebrew *goralot*), while the second is a specific Arabic form of divination (*khatt* or *'ilm* or *z'arb al-raml*, literally «script», «science» or «hitting of the sand») that in the West received the name of geomancy (*geomantia*) and in Hebrew was called lots (*goralot*), the science of dots (*hokmat ha-nequdot*), or the science of the sand (*hokmat ha-hol*). I would like to explore the two divinatory practices implied in the Hebrew word *goral/goralot*, how they answered similar questions posed by someone inquiring about specific matters, and the way these divinatory techniques were accommodated in Jewish culture. This article is part of a work-in-progress on geomancy in Hebrew sources.

Josefina Rodríguez-Arribas
Institut für Jüdische Studien
Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster
rodriguezarribas@gmail.com

Blanca Villuendas Sabaté, *Arabic Geomancy in Jewish Hands: Specimens from the Cairo Genizah*

This article gives continuity to a research that the author has devoted to the specimens of the Judeo-Arabic Geomantic fragments from the Cairo Genizah. Given the chronological scope of the Cairo Genizah, these manuscripts are likely to be the oldest examples of Arabic Geomancy preserved. After a detailed introduction to the fragments, the article discusses the identification of some of them with a widely circulated but little known Arabic treatise titled *Kitāb al-Muṭallat(āt) fī l-raml*, attributed to a certain Ibn al-Maḥfūf. The discussion sheds light on the possible origins of this author and provides a description of the contents of his work. Furthermore, by confronting passages of this composition with the Genizah fragments, a clear correspondence is established with one of them. In contrast, while the rest of fragments do not allow their identification with the Arabic treatise, they exhibit striking similarities, suggesting the occurrence of editorial processes or the existence of a common source yet to be discovered.

Blanca Villuendas Sabaté
Zentrum für Islamische Theologie
Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen
blanca.villuendas-sabate@uni-tuebingen.de

David Juste, *A Medieval Treatise on Onomancy: the Spera Sancti Donati*

The *Spera sancti Donati* is a very rare, perhaps unique instance of a systematic treatise devoted to onomancy in the Latin Middle Ages. Made of at least 23 chapters, this text offers variations on the so-called spheres of life and death in an entirely original way. It is argued that the *Spera sancti Donati* was written in Catalonia towards the middle of the tenth century, so making it one of the earliest medieval Latin treatises of divination.

David Juste
Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Munich
djuste@ptolemaeus.badw.de

Danielle Jacquart, *The wide range of condemnations of divinatory techniques in biblical commentaries (12th-13th c.)*

In his *Liber cursuum planetarum*, written in 1141, Raymond of Marseille referred to Holy Scripture in order to defend astrology. By doing so, he reversed the ordinary arguments developed in exegesis. In this paper are presented few authors' comments on some biblical passages which might introduce a condemnation of astrology or of any kind of divination. After having reminded Augustine's and Ambrose of Milan's well known statements, are mentioned the diverse attitudes shown by Bede, Remi of Auxerre, Hugh and Andrew of Saint-Victor, Peter Abelard, Albert the Great and Thomas of Aquino. As for Bonaventure, in his *Collationes in Hexaëmeron*, he specifically alluded to geomancy, a technique which would be condemned, through the work known as *Estimaverunt indi*, by Stephan Tempier in 1277.

Danielle Jacquart

École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris
danielle.jacquart@ephe.sorbonne.fr

Irene Caiazzo, *Celestial Causality, Astrology and Predictions in the Twelfth Century: Some Reflections*

This article explores the attitude of some twelfth-century astrologers and philosophers toward celestial causality and astrology. Latin-arabic translations of astrological texts brings theoretical considerations concerning the validity of astrology. First of all, the very long and sophisticated defense of the validity of astrology in Abū Ma'shar's *Liber introductorii maioris ad scientiam judiciorum astrorum*, and, secondly, some reflections about necessity, freedom, and celestial influence in the prefaces to Hugh of Santalla's translations. Finally, the article focuses on Raymond of Marseille's defense of astrology and on Abelard's discussion concerning the future contingents and the validity of predictions in his *Expositio in Hexameron*.

Irene Caiazzo

CNRS, PSL Research University Paris LEM (UMR 8584)
caiazzo@vjf.cnrs.fr

Alessandra Beccarisi, *William of Moerbeke and Divination*

This paper presents the progress of current research regarding studies and critical edition of *Geomantia* (known as *De arte et scientia geomantiae*), until now almost unanimously attributed to William of Moerbeke in the manuscript tradition. In particular, new hypothesis are presented regarding the authorship, dating of the work, sources employed, and its possible relation to Thomas Aquinas' *De sortibus*.

Alessandra Beccarisi

Università del Salento
alessandra.beccarisi@unisalento.it

Sebastià Giralt, *The Astrological Works Attributed to Arnau de Vilanova: the Question of Their Authenticity*

There is no doubt that Arnau de Vilanova (c. 1240–1311) applied astrology in his medical practice, as shown by contemporaneous documentation and by a number of brief references scattered throughout his authentic works, but it is still not demonstrated that any of the works concerning medical astrology transmitted under his name in medieval manuscripts and early modern editions was really written by him. *De aqua vite simplicis et composita* as well as *De sigillis* and other treatises on astrological seals may be included in this category. However, the question remains open especially regarding the longest and most popular of them, the *Introductorium ad iudicia astrologie quantum pertinet ad medicinam*, which has been regarded as most likely authentic by scholars and which was one of the medieval Latin astrological treatises most copied. After reviewing the use of astrology in Arnau's medical activity, this paper examines the authenticity of these writings both by comparing their contents and those of his undisputed works and by analyzing their textual tradition. The conclusion is that in fact Arnau did not compose any treatise that could be qualified as astrological, but they were attributed to him because of his fame as a physician-astrologer.

Sebastià Giralt

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
Sebastia.Giralt@uab.cat

Stefano Rapisarda, *Anglo-Norman Chiromancy and Scapulomancy in MS British Library, Add. 18210*

The great novelty in the mid-twelfth century Western divination is the arrival of two new techniques, chiromancy and scapulomancy, which appear almost simultaneously in Mozarabic Spain and in Plantagenet England. Moreover, before the 15th century, manuals of divination are quite rare in the vernacular – as is true also of astrological and astronomical treatises, dream-books, geomancies, *sortes*, lists of favourable or «perilous» days, and the rarest of all, scapulomancy and palmoscopy (*salissatio*). The exceptions are typically Anglo-Norman. The Plantagenet court appears to be the most precocious in translating science in a «regional» language. In particular MS London, British Library, Add. 18210 is an exceptional witness of various divination techniques, some of which very rare, in vernacular language.

Stefano Rapisarda

Università di Catania - IKGF Erlangen-Nürnberg
stefano.rapisarda@unict.it

Jean-Patrice Boudet, *Nigromantia: a Short History of a Word*

Medieval *nigromantia* has never totally forgotten the necromancy of its origins. This article, however, proposes to see how and why the ancient *necromantia* turned into *nigromantia* during the Middle Ages. It also tries to measure the different meanings of the word *nigromantia*, particularly from the twelfth century, and to grasp broadly the significance of this development until the Renaissance.

Jean-Patrice Boudet
 Université d'Orléans CESFiMA
 boudetjp@gmail.com

Isabelle Draelants, *Magica vero sub philosophia non continetur*: Status of the Magic and Divinatory Arts in Encyclopaedic Compilations and Their sources ca. 1225–1250

This paper asks the question whether the various divinatory arts, or more specifically the magic arts, constituted part of the scholarly culture that the encyclopaedists of the second third of the thirteenth century intended to disseminate through their compilations (in particular, the *Speculum doctrinale et naturale* of Vincent of Beauvais, since these form two third of the biggest encyclopaedia of the time). A few years prior to the circulation of the *Speculum astronomiae* (c. 1255) which lists all astrological works as licit or illicit, this cultural part, although not abundant, is still significant and representative of the culture of the time, for three reasons reflecting three points of view. Firstly encyclopaedia have as objective the transmission in the form of quotations (*excerpta, flores*) of any kind of authoritative works useful, be these ancient or modern, written in Latin or translated from Greek or Arabic, theological or philosophical. Secondly, encyclopaedia perpetuate (through Hugh of Chartres, the *Decretum Gratiani* or Hugh and Richard of St-Victor, or contemporaneous legislators such as Raymund of Peñafort), the Canon law judgements concerning former condemned divinatory practices. Thirdly, aiming to explain the *nature and properties of things*, encyclopaedia also convey the concept of *nigromancia* as a «science of [natural] properties», according to scholars connected with Arabic medicine (such as Petrus Alfonsi or Michael Scot). In doing so, they opened the way towards consideration of works that collect «natural» properties – such as collections of *Experimenta* or astrological/magical virtues of the stones – as works of physics and as such, as having a certain degree of philosophical authority.

Isabelle Draelants
 CNRS, Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes, Paris
 isabelle.draelants@irht.cnrs.fr

Nicolas Weill-Parot, *Images foretelling the future and making the men foretelling the future? Talismans, divination and good fortune (13th-15th century)*

There is a complete difference between divination through images and efficient magic performed with talismanic images, although some medieval examples built bridges between them. However, from the theoretical viewpoint, the comparison between a geomancy figure and a purely astrological talisman (or “astrological image”) worked in completely different ways. First, a talismanic image useful for divination seems to imply that this image is able to speak – a rather unexplainable requirement within a purely naturalistic frame. Second, such an image could also perform a divinatory task by giving to a human being the ability to foretell future events – at the end of the 15th century, Jerome Torrella, faced such an issue. Moreover, since a talisman was an efficient thing, some authors argued that it could naturally influence man’s behavior, in such a way that it brought to him good fortune – an issue discussed by the physician Ugo Benzi and, according to Torrella, by his master Pierleoni of Spoleto.

Nicolas Weill-Parot
École Pratique des Hautes Études
Section des sciences historiques et philologiques
EA 4116 SAPRAT
nicolas.weill-parot@ephe.sorbonne.fr