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MAGIC, DEMONS, AND HERETICS: THREE PUZZLING CASES IN *THE LETTER OF EUTHYMIUS OF AKMONIA*

Abstract. This study explores the theme of magic and demons in the anti-heretical *Letter* written by Euthymius, an 11th-century monk from the Monastery of Theotokos Perivleptos in Constantinople. *The Letter* was aimed at his fellow countrymen from Acmonia and primarily targeted the Phundagiagites, also known as the Bogomils, along with the Armenians. Given the significant role of the demonic nature of heresies in his accusations, it is crucial to examine the Christian Church's perception of how heretics are believed to communicate with demons.

The paper argues that Euthymius used accusatory arguments about demons in two main ways: first, through a general characterisation of heresies, and second, by recounting several fictional stories involving levitation, lycanthropy, lecanomancy, and teleportation. It aims to provide an interpretation of three of these stories that have been previously misunderstood or overlooked in research: the desecration of a newly constructed church by a priest at Hieron, the lecanomancy involving teleportation performed by a magus for the heretic Lycopetros, and the unsuccessful attempt at teleportation by Terevinthos.

By analysing these cases, the author aims to deepen our understanding of the rhetorical strategy of heresiological texts, which incorporate narratives about sacrilege, magic, and demons to condemn heresies.

Keywords: Euthymius of Acmonia, Bogomils, Phundagiagites, magic, demons, possession, lecanomancy, teleportation

The subject of my paper – magic and demons in the anti-heretical *Letter* written by Euthymius, an 11th-century monk from the Monastery of Theotokos Perivleptos in Constantinople¹, emerged during my involvement in the research

¹ Among the secondary literature on *The Letter* as a source for Bogomilism, see the foundational study by D. OBOLENSKI, *The Bogomils. A Study in Balkan Neo-Manichaeism*, Cambridge 1948 (reprint 1972), p. 174–183.



team of the international project “Bogomilism in History and our Days” of Prof. Ivan Hristov from the Theological Faculty of the Sofia University, funded by the Scientific Research Fund in Bulgaria. One of the project’s main aims is to correct, edit, and update the existing translations of primary sources on the Bogomils, specifically within the volumes of the *Greek Sources for Bulgarian History* series. They have been translated into six series volumes, published from 1964 to 1983. However, some original texts utilised in the existing translations have undergone new editions, necessitating a comparative analysis. In contrast, the translation of other sources requires corrections, additions, and editorial refinement according to the general opinion of the country’s medievalists. Translation of new sources from Greek will be incorporated as well. *The Letter* of Euthymius, already translated, still warrants further scrutiny and refinement.

The desecration of a church by a priest

Euthymius tells the story of a heretical clergyman to demonstrate that the Phundagiagites do not view churches as sacred places. Instead, they consider them merely as dwellings – even those of demons – and therefore profane them. The incident was reported to him by an eyewitness who saw it with his own eyes. It occurred in Hieron on the Strait, where a priest (or monk) built a church and decorated it nicely inside and out, but behind the sacred table, he made a pit with a slab, leaving a small hole and using it for his bodily needs. In fact, Hieron (ἱερόν *sanctuary*) was an ancient sanctuary at the northern end of the Bosphorus on the Asiatic shore before entering the Euxine Pontus, where *Zeus Ourios*, the patron of favourable winds, was worshipped (today Anadolu Kavağı). The strategic position of the port and the settlement that emerged there made it an essential customs and military post during the Byzantine era². An act of the Holy Synod in Constantinople in 1140, which condemned the writings of Constantine Chrysomalus, discovered by the monks of the monastery of kyr Nicholas located there, testifies to the existence of an actual convent in Hieron³.

Before providing information about the pit behind the table, however, Euthymius clarifies another point using a phrase containing an anacoluthon, where the sentence starts with one grammatical structure but then shifts into a different one, creating a deliberate inconsistency in syntax, which is omitted or mistranslated in modern translations.

² TIB 13, s.v.; R. JANIN, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins. (Bithynie, Hellespont, Latros, Galesios, Trebizonde, Athenes, Thessalonique)*, Paris 1975, p. 10.

³ G.D. MANSI, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, vol. XXI, Venetiis 1776, col. 553.

Euthymius' text:

συνέβη οὖν τὸν τοιοῦτον κακὸν ἀλιτήριον ψοφῆσαι καὶ εὐρών ἐν τῇ κτισθείσῃ παρ' αὐτοῦ τῇ εἰρημένῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ ὀπισθεν τῆς τραπέζης – ἀγίαν γὰρ εἰπεῖν αὐτὴν οὐ δυνάμεθα διὰ τὸ μιανθῆναι ταύτην παρὰ τοῦ ἀσεβοῦς, ὅτι ἐποίησεν λάκκον μέγαν καὶ ἔθηκεν ἐπάνω τοῦ λάκκου πλάκα, ἀφείς μικρὰν ὀπὴν ὡς ὀμφαλὴν δῆθην, καὶ ἐποίει ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ λάκκῳ τῷ ὀπισθεν τῆς τραπέζης τῆς ἐκκλησίας τὴν σωματικὴν χρεῖαν ὁ κατάρατος⁴.

English translation:

Now, it happened that this evil sinner was revealed. It was discovered in the church that he had built behind the altar... because he had made a great pit and had put above the pit a bench, leaving a little hole in it; in that hole behind the table of the altar, the accursed man performed his bodily functions⁵.

Bulgarian translation:

И така се случило, гласът на такъв пагубен злодей да прокънти там. И измислил в построената от него спомената църква зад олтара, който ние не можем да наречем свят поради това, че е бил осквернен от нечестивецъ, и издълбал голяма яма и поставил отгоре на ямата плоча поставил малка дупка, подобна на пъп, и нечестивецът извършвал естествените и нужди в самата яма зад олтара на църквата⁶.

The two troublesome points in the Greek text here are the aorist infinitive ψοφῆσαι and the aorist participle εὐρών of εὐρίσκω (*find*)⁷ which lacks a direct object due to the sentence placed between the dashes.

Initially, I believed the infinitive came from the verb ψοφέω (*to make an unarticulated noise*, opposite to φωνέω, which means *to produce an articulated sound*); therefore, I interpreted the passage as describing a situation where the unfortunate priest was possessed by a demon that forced him to make unarticulated sounds. However, a more appropriate interpretation would be that, behind the infinitive ψοφῆσαι, the verb ψοφάω, meaning 'to die'⁸, is implied, and that the eyewitness

⁴ EUTHYMIUS, *The Letter*, [in:] *Die Phundagiagiten. Ein Beitrag zur Ketzergeschichte des byzantinischen Mittelalters*, ed. G. FICKER, Leipzig 1908 (cetera: EUTHYMIUS), p. 27.

⁵ J. HAMILTON, B. HAMILTON, *Christian Dualist Heresies in the Byzantine World C. 650–C. 1450. Selected Sources*, trans. and annotated by J. HAMILTON and B. HAMILTON; assistance with the translation of Old Slavonic texts by Y. STOYANOV, Manchester 1998, p. 148–149.

⁶ Translation by Г. БАТАКЛИЕВ, *Писмо на монаха Евтимий от манастира Перивлента*, [in:] *Гръцки извори за българската история*, vol. X, София 1980, p. 17.

⁷ According to FICKER's edition, there are different readings of ψοφῆσαι and εὐρών. Still, they only reflect the isochronism and psilosis in the Postclassical Greek and do not contribute to understanding the text: Cod. Vindob. theol. Graec. 193 gives ψωφῆσαι and Cod. Vindob. theol. Graec. 307 – εὔρον.

⁸ Λεξικό της κοινῆς νεοελληνικῆς, Triantafyllidis Foundation, 1998, s.v.

himself carried out the action indicated by the participle. The verb ψοφάω, usually used for an animal, was employed by Euthymius in a derogatory sense towards a person⁹.

Following these clarifications, the most appropriate translation appears to be as follows:

И се случило тоя безсрамен грешник да умре. И след като онзи го открил, в съградената от него спомената църква зад трапезата – свещена не мога да я нарека, защото е осквернена от нечестивец – {понеже} направил голяма яма и поставил над ямата плоча, като оставил малка дупка колкото един пъп. И вършел телесните си нужди в самата яма зад трапезата в църквата, проклетникът!

And it happened that this shameless sinner died. And after he had found it, in the said church which he had built behind the table, holy I cannot call it, for a wicked man profaned it, {for} he had made a large pit, and placed a slab over the pit, leaving a small hole as big as a navel. And he did his bodily needs in the very pit behind the table in the church, the accursed one!

The story about the monk in Hieron is significant in Euthymius' invective against the Phundagiagites, because it reflects their belief that the church is not a sacred place. Many Byzantine sources, starting with Zigabenus' *Dogmatic Panoply*, highlight the heretical disgrace associated with Christian temples, which they perceive as the dwellings of demons. Zigabenus states that the Bogomils dishonour the sacred secrets of the liturgy and the holy communion of the body and blood of the Lord, referring to it as the sacrifice to the demons that inhabit the temples according to their rank and power¹⁰. The sermon of Presbyter Cosmas supported Zigabenus' testimony, with the statement that the Bogomils considered the churches to be распутья and the abode of the Devil¹¹.

The lecanomancy

Another enigmatic narrative in Euthymius' *Letter* concerns Lycopetros, who allegedly achieved teleportation to Armenia with the aid of a magician¹². The story is as

⁹ I am indebted to one of the anonymous reviewers for this idea, for which I thank him.

¹⁰ ZIGABENUS, *Panoplia dogmatica ad Alexium Comnenum*, [in:] PG, vol. CXXX, ed. J.-P. MIGNE, Paris 1865 (cetera: ZIGABENUS), col. 27.7: Ἀτιμάζουσι τὴν μυστικὴν καὶ φρικτὴν ἱερουργίαν, καὶ τὴν τοῦ Δεσποτικοῦ σώματος καὶ αἵματος ἀγίαν μετάληψιν, θυσίαν τῶν ἐνοικούντων τοῖς ναοῖς δαιμόνων ταύτην ἀποκαλοῦντες; ZIGABENUS, col. 27.8: Λέγουσιν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἱεροῖς ναοῖς κατοκεῖν τοὺς δαίμονας διαλαχόντας αὐτοὺς ἀναλόγως τῆς ἐκάστου τάξεως καὶ δυνάμεως.

¹¹ M.G. ПОПРУЖЕНКО, *Козма Пресвитеръ. Болгарскій писателъ X вѣка*, София 1936, p. 34; D. OBOLENSKI, *The Bogomils...*, p. 130.

¹² The description of the magician and the scene is concise and sparse; it seems that Euthymius is recounting a heresiological source of his own. Conversely, the Lives of the Saints from that time offer

follows: after Emperor Marcian¹³ ordered Lycopetros to be captured, he sought the help of a magician of his acquaintance. The magician, following a ritualistic procedure, invited Lycopetros and his companions to his residence after sunset, where he performed a ritual, filling a basin with water and reciting incantations accompanied by demonic invocations and gestures. Subsequently, the magician provided Lycopetros with a vessel containing a liquid, a written incantation, and instructions on its use in Armenia. The magician then instructed him and his attendants to perform an unusual task. Once they had completed this, the wretch and his servants were snatched away by demons and found themselves in Great Armenia early the next morning. The previously omitted or unclear text in the available translations reads as follows:

Euthymius' text:

Ταῦτα καὶ τοιαῦτα πρὸς τὸν δειλαιὸν ὁ μάγος εἰπὼν καὶ διδάξας ἐκέλευσεν εὐθὺς αὐτὸν ἔφιππον μετὰ καὶ τῶν συνόντων αὐτῷ ὑπηρετῶν αὐτοῦ διελθεῖν πλησίον τῆς μεμαγευμένης λεκάνης¹⁴.

English translation:

The wizard... bade him and the servants go immediately to the jar which had been bewitched¹⁵.

Bulgarian translation:

Магът каза тези и други подобни [думи] на окаяника, поучи го и нареди той заедно със съпровождачите си да мине на кон покрай съда с магиите¹⁶.

The séance in the magician's home reminds me of a lecanomancy ritual intended to summon a demon, in this case, not for divination but to facilitate teleportation. However, it is somewhat unexpected for Lycopetros and his attendants to ride past the enchanted basin on horseback (ἔφιππον). This detail is particularly puzzling considering that the lecanomancy was performed indoors, which could imply that they were only imitating riding.

a more detailed account of magical practices. See D. ABRAHAMSE, *Magic and Sorcery in Byzantine Hagiography of the Middle Byzantine Period*, BF 8, 1982, p. 3–17, with bibliography.

¹³ Emperor from 450 to 457, best known for strengthening the Byzantine Empire's theological foundations and administrative and military reforms. One of his most significant contributions was convening the Council of Chalcedon in 451, which declared that Christ has two natures in one person and hypostasis.

¹⁴ EUTHYMIUS, p. 53.

¹⁵ J. HAMILTON, B. HAMILTON, *Christian Dualist Heresies...*, p. 153–154.

¹⁶ Translation by Г. БАТАКЛИЕВ, *Писмо...*, p. 35.

Two suggestions could help clarify the true intention behind this ritual.

The first is the concept of imitative magic, which James Frazer discusses in *The Golden Bough*. He defines imitative magic as a fundamental type of sympathetic magic based on the idea that “like produces like”¹⁷. In this context, horse riding may symbolise or imitate a journey to the distant land of Armenia.

The second consideration that can enhance the interpretation of the ritual in question is lexical. The adjective ἔφιππος (LSJ, *s.v. on horseback; riding*) used in the description of the act is strikingly similar to the name of one of the demons mentioned in the *Hygromancy of Solomon* and the *Testament of Solomon*: Ephippas. The manuscript tradition gives different name variants such as Ἐφιππας or Ἐφίππας, Ἐφιπάς or Ἐφιπᾶς¹⁸.

In the *Hygromancy of Solomon*, a grimoire whose dating is debated, ranging from the first centuries AD to the 15th century AD, Solomon teaches his son, Rehoboam, a divination technique involving water. Although the method of divination is not explicitly explained, it is shown how this way of divination is linked with the exact knowledge of the planets, zodiac signs, and the hours when each of them gives its power. Ephippas is listed as the demon that can be summoned at the nineteenth hour on the fourth day of the week, Wednesday¹⁹.

Τῆς τετάρτης ἄγγελοι καὶ δαίμονες.

ὥρα ιθ'

ἄγγελος Περανιήλ

δαίμων Ἐφιππας.

Angels and demons of the fourth day.

At the nineteenth hour

angel Peraniel

demon Ephippas.

In the passage in question of Euthymius' *Letter*, this information aligns well with the sorcerer's explicit request to Lycopetros and his companions to visit his home after sunset in the passage in question.

In the second treaty on magic, the *Testament of Solomon*, written perhaps in the 5th century AD²⁰, Ephippas is mentioned several times but only in connection with moving and transporting, described most often as a πονηρὸν πνεῦμα, αὔρα or ἄνεμος, whose hot breath devastated the land of Adares, the King of Arabia. He was caught by one of Solomon's servants through Solomon's magic ring in a skin

¹⁷ J. FRAZER, *The Golden Bough. A Study in Magic and Religion*, London 1925, p. 11.

¹⁸ *Testamentum Salomonis*, 95, [in:] *The Testament of Solomon. Vita Salomonis (cod. 132 Monasterii sancti Dionysii in Monte Atho)*, ed. C.C. MCCOWN, Leipzig 1922 (cetera: *Testamentum Salomonis*); R.P.H. GREENFIELD, *Traditions of Belief in Late Byzantine Demonology*, Amsterdam 1988, p. 343.

¹⁹ *The Hygromancy of Solomon. A New Translation and Introduction*, ed. P.A. TORIJANO, [in:] *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, vol. I, ed. R. BAUCKHAM, J. DAVILA, A.I. PANAYOTOV, Grand Rapids 2013, p. 288. Cf. also the Open Siddur Project: *The Hygromancy of Solomon*. Greek text by E. KESSELMAN (art & transcription), P.A. TORIJANO (trans.), <https://open-siddur.org/readings-and-sourcetexts/mekorot/noncanonical/esoteric/incantation/the-hygromancy-of-solomon/> [18 V 2025].

²⁰ F.C. CONYBEARE, *The Testament of Solomon*, JQR 11.1, 1898, p. 1.

bag (ἄσκός) and brought into the Temple, where he was utilised to raise into its place the headstone of the corner, which the workmen had abandoned because of its weight (ἄραι τὸν λίθον τὸν ἀκρογωνιαῖον ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν ἄνθρωποι τε καὶ δαίμονες καὶ θεῖναι τοῦτον εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας). The same demon, after raising the headstone of the corner to its place, aided the demon of the Red Sea, Abesit-hibod, son of Beelzeboul, to bring up from that sea an enormous column and raise it aloft in the Temple (βαστάζειν τὸν κίονα καὶ κρέμασθαι εἰς τὸν ἀέρα μέχρι τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος)²¹.

The onomastic similarity of the name and the alignment of the demon's abilities with the heretic's expected teleportation suggest that the coincidence of ἔφιππος and Ἐφιππας could not be a coincidence. It seems quite probable that the unusual and startling adjective ἔφιππος in the passage under consideration is a distant echo of specific magical practices and refers to the demon Ehippas, whom the magician summoned after sunset, the time when it was his power to move his protégé Lycopetros to Armenia.

Consequently, the translation should read as follows:

След като магът казал и обяснил такива и подобни неща на нещастника, той веднага го накарал заедно със слугите, които го придружават, да премине край омагьосания леген сякаш на кон.

After the magician said and explained such and similar things to the wretch, he immediately made him, with the servants who accompanied him, pass by the enchanted basin as if on horseback.

The evocation of aerial demons

The third and last passage, which requires attention and correction in the available Bulgarian translation of Euthymius' *Letter*, is as follows:

Euthymius' text:

Ὁ δὲ τῆς κακίας μαθητῆς Τερέβινθος, κληρόνομος καταληφθεὶς τοῦ χρυσοῦ καὶ βιβλίων τῆς αἰρέσεως, παρεγένετο εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν κάκεϊ διαγνωσθεὶς καὶ ἐκδιωχθεὶς ἔκρινεν εἰς τὴν Περσίδα μετελθεῖν. Ἴνα δὲ ἐκ τῆς προσηγορίας μὴ ἐπιγνωσθῆ κάκεϊ διωχθῆ, Βοδάνον ἑαυτὸν ὠνόμασεν. Ὅμως κάκεϊ διαγνωσθεὶς ἐδιώχθη καὶ προσφεύγει γυναικί τινι χήρα. Εἶτα ἐπὶ δώματος ἀνελθὼν καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος τοὺς ἀερίους δαίμονας θεόπληκτος γενόμενος καταβληθεὶς ἀπὸ τοῦ δώματος ἐξέψυξε. Καὶ οὕτως ἔκοψεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ θηρίον τὸ δεύτερον²².

The story has been overlooked and not translated by the Hamiltons.

²¹ *Testamentum Salomonis*, 95.

²² ΕΥΘΥΜΙΟΥΣ, p. 58–60.

Bulgarian translation:

А ученикът на злината Теревинт, оставен за наследник на богатството и книгите на ереста, отишъл в Юдея, но там, разпознат и изгонен, намислил да се пресели в Персия. Но за да не го познаят по прякора му и да не го преследват там, той се преименувал Водан. Все пак и там бил разпознат и се приютява при някаква вдовица. После се върнал у дома си, призовал небесните дяволи и станал богохулник, но прогонен от дома си, издъхнал. И така бог погубил втория звяр²³.

In the Bulgarian translation, two notable errors can be identified. The first error occurs with the translation of δῶμα as δόμος, likely influenced by the *faux ami* дом, which means “house” in the translator’s native language. The second mistake stems from oversimplifying and inaccurately translating τοὺς ἀερίους δαίμονας as “sky devils”, which reflects a lack of understanding of demonology²⁴.

There are two ways to interpret the adjective ἀέριος here: the substance from which the demons are made or the location where they reside. The context supports the latter, as Terevinthos specifically seeks the space revealed by the roof of the widow’s house to summon the demons²⁵.

Who are the aerial demons? According to the eleventh chapter of Michael Psellus’ dialogue Περὶ ἐνεργείας δαιμόνων²⁶, the demonic army presents a hexad and is divided into six classes²⁷. The first one is the fiery demon, Leliurion (τὸ διάπυρον), who dwells high above the Earth in the air but outside the moon’s space. The second class comprises the aerial demons, who reside closer to us (δεύτερον δέ, τὸ περὶ τὸν προσεχέστατον ἡμῖν ἀέρα πλαζόμενον, ὃ καὶ καλεῖσθαι παρὰ πολλοῖς ἰδίως ἀέριον). They were distinct from the other types that exist: terrestrial, aquatic and maritime, subterranean, and those that detest light and lack sensibility

²³ Translation by Г. БАТАКЛИЕВ, *Писмо...*, p. 39.

²⁴ Recently, Г. ПЕТРИНСКИ’s comprehensive study *Образът на демона във византийската житиеника (VI–X век)*, София 2018, provides an in-depth overview of research and sources concerning Byzantine demonology.

²⁵ Euthymius has selectively retold the story of Terevinthos, omitting two details from CYRILLUS HIÉROSOLYMITANUS, *Catecheses ad illuminandos*, VI, 23, [in:] *Cyrrilli Hierosolymorum archiepiscopi opera quae supersunt omnia*, vol. II, ed. W.C. REISCHL, J. RUPP, Munich 1860, which he was following here. The first is that even in Persia, he had opponents among the followers of the god Mithras, with whom he had disputes and was rebuked. The second has to do with the specification of the summoned demons, *whom the Manichaeans to this day summon in their sacred ritual with the dried fig*, adds Cyril of Jerusalem, and further specifies in § 33: *I dare not say in what they dip the dried fig and give it to the unfortunate ones*.

²⁶ MICHAEL PSELLUS, *De daemonum energia seu operatione*, [in:] PG, vol. CXXII, ed. J.-P. MIGNE, Paris 1889, col. 844B–845A.

²⁷ Psellus theorises that the number six is selected because it is the first triangle number that is also uneven (τῷ πρώτῳ εἶναι τὸν ἀριθμὸν τοῦτον τρίγωνον скаληρόν). He notes that scalene triangles are associated with the demonic (τὸ δαιμόνιον), while equilateral triangles represent the divine, and isosceles triangles are linked to the human.

(referred to as τὸ μισοφαῆς καὶ δυσαίσθητος γένος). Together with the terrestrial ones, they show some skills and capacity of reflection (τοὺς δ' ἀερίους τε καὶ χθονίους τέχνη καὶ περινοίᾳ μετιέναι). It was these aerial demons whom Terevinthos summoned to escape from his chasers²⁸. However, the omnipotent and omniscient God prevails over them and ultimately defeats Terevinthos.

Consequently, the translation of the passage should be:

Обаче ученикът му в злото, Теревинт, понеже останал наследник на парите и еретическите му книги, пристигнал в Юдея. Но тъй като там бил разпознат и изгонен, решил да отиде в Персия. И за да не бъде разпознат по името си и да бъде изгонен и оттам, нарекъл се Водан. Обаче и там бил разкрит и изгонен, та избягал да се скрие при една вдовица. После се качил на покрива ѝ и се помолил на демоните от въздушните селения, но Бог го поразил, той бил съборен долу и издъхнал. Така Бог посякъл и втория звяр.

But his disciple in evil, Terebinth, being heir of the money and of his heretical books, came to Judea. But since he was recognised and expelled there, he decided to go to Persia. So that he might not be identified by his name and be expelled from there as well, he called himself Vodan. But he was also discovered and cast out there, so he fled to hide at a widow's. Then he went up to her roof and prayed to the aerial demons, but God smote him; he was cast down below, and he breathed his last. Thus, God smote the second beast as well.

It is worth highlighting a laconic remark made by Zigabenus regarding the Bogomils' demonic division²⁹. They believe that “(fallen angelic powers or demons) now inhabit waters, streams, rivers, harbours, seas, and dwell underground as immaterial spirits”³⁰. In this account, the absence of the first three classes of demons likely stems from the specific sources Zigabenus was referencing. From several other places in the same chapter of the *Panoply*, however³¹, there remains no doubt that, for the Bogomils, demons inhabited the entire visible world, nature and society, from man to the church temple.

Conclusion

The textual analysis of the three previously misunderstood passages in Euthymius of Acmonia's 11th-century *Letter* highlights the importance of understanding contemporary magical practices and demonological classifications when translating Byzantine heresiological sources. The story of the priest at Hieron, Lycopetros' lecanomancy ritual involving the demon Ephippas, and Terevinthos' failed

²⁸ For more about the daemonic classification, see R.P.H. GREENFIELD, *Traditions of Belief...*, p. 15–16, 202–206, along with the bibliography. For a focus on aerial demons specifically, refer to Г. ПЕТРИНСКИ, *Образът на демона...*, p. 335–371.

²⁹ ZIGABENUS, 27, col. 1300.

³⁰ R.P.H. GREENFIELD, *Traditions of Belief...*, p. 204, note 620.

³¹ ZIGABENUS, 27, col. 1309, 1312–1313, 1316, 1329.

summoning of aerial demons shows how heretics were portrayed as desecrating sacred spaces and engaging in magical practices. The vehement condemnation expressed by Euthymius reflects the stance of the ecclesiastical institution, which regards heretics as both servants and beneficiaries of demons. A thorough understanding of the narratives of these practices is essential for accurately translating existing heresiological sources and avoiding reductionist interpretation. The revised textual interpretation offers new insights into the complex relationship between magic, demonology, and heresy, highlighting how the accusations and their stigmatising served as a powerful rhetorical tool in Christian heresiological discourse.

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