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*The Magic Arts of Necromancy and Ventriloquism as Cited
in the First Byzantine Period Sources*

Introduction

1. Necromancy - Ventriloquism

Two of the most horrible kinds of black magic and demonic divination is the necromancy, and a subclass of it the ventriloquism that is the speaking of the demons and the dead through the belly of the people.

The necromancy is called otherwise “ψυχοπομπία or ψυχαγωγία”. A characteristic description cites Aeneas bishop of Gaza (VI. century). He refers that this art is exercised by the Chaldeans, the Egyptians and the Greeks. With magic rites which include epodes (magical prayers), sacrifices of cocks, engraving of magical letters and characters (maybe on skulls when it's about invocations of dead) they subdue the souls say Homer's, Orpheus', Foroneas', Kekrop's, they raise them from the netherworld and they manipulate them¹. The kinds of magic were shared out according to the place of the moon on every sign of the zodiac. So the right time for exercising necromancy was at Libra².

2. The use of necromancy and ventriloquism to the ancient Orient, Greece, and Rome, mostly as cited in the first Byzantine period sources

John Malalas attests that Perseus the son of Jupiter or Picus (who was the son of the king of Syria according to Malalas or the king of Italy according to the *Chronicon Paschale*) taught the Persians the “μαγγανείαν τοῦ μυσεροῦ σκύφους”, την “τελετήν τοῦ μυσεροῦ καὶ ἀθέου σκύφους τῆς Μεδοῦσης”, that is the craniomancy³.

He was taught this ceremony by his father with the promise that such knowledge could make him win all his enemies. When Perseus met a woman

1. Aeneias of Gaza, Θεόφραστος· ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνθρώπων προβιοτή καὶ ὅτι ἀθάνατος ἡ ψυχὴ, Enea di Gasa, Theofrasto, ed. M.-E. Colonna, Napoli 1958, p. 18, 21-19, 2.

2. K. Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, v. 2, Leipzig 1931, Stuttgart ²1974, VII. 286. - Th. Hopfner, *Griechisch-Ägyptischer Offenbarungszauber* v. I. Leipzig 1921, Impr. Amsterdam 1974, § 828.

3. John Malalas, Χρονογραφία, ed. L. Dindorf, CB. Bonnae, 1831, p. 35, 5-36, 4. - p. 37, 14-16. - Chronicon Paschale, ed. L. Dindorf, CB. I-II, Bonnae 1832, I. 69, 20-21.-72, 10-11. - Further information about these persons, and their role in religion and magic, see in A. D. Vakaloudi, *Η Μαγεία ως Κοινωνικό Φαινόμενο στο πρώιμο Βυζάντιο*, Διδακτορική Διατριβή του Τμήματος Ιστορίας και Αρχαιολογίας του Αριστοτελείου Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης, Thessaloniki 2000, pp. 109, 202 and notes.

named Medusa, he cut her head off, performed a mystic ceremony which was taught by his father Picus or Zeus (“εὐθέως ἐτέλεσε τὴν κάραν μυστικῶς καθὼς ἐδιδάχθη ὑπὸ τοῦ ἰδίου πατρὸς Πίκου τοῦ καὶ Διός”), and with the use of this magic skull called Gorgon, he succeeded to win and subdue all his rivals⁴.

According to the sources, Perseus performed a ritual of necromancy, every time he needed the soul of the dead woman (“νεκροδαίμων”), to come up from the underworld and help him with his plans. In order to dominate this soul and make it his servant, he used the skull, a substance which in magic is called “οὐσία”. In this way the Byzantine sources have turned the Greek mythology into black magic. It is also characteristic that the name Picus was a name of a demon who Plutarch refers to⁵.

a. *Chaldeans*: The Chaldeo-Persian Magi-priests were famous for exercising necromancy⁶ and ventriloquism⁷. Magousaioi (= an admixture of Chaldeans-Babylonians-Medoi-Perses) colonists of Lydia, Anatolia and Near East transferred and developed magic in their colonies, along with the fire-worship and the figure of Zoroaster as an astrologist and a prophet⁸. These at first, in order to achieve something evil⁹, had methodized the art of invoking the demons who frequented to the graves¹⁰, with epodes appropriate to them¹¹.

The Neoplatonic theurgist Iamblichus in a characteristic recitation of the Chaldeo-iranian magic which had been taught (along with the Babylonian

4. Chronicon Paschale I. 69, 20-21. - 70, 1-2. - 70, 13-21.

5. C. A. Lobeck, *Aglaophamus sive de theologiae mysticae Graecorum causis, Libri tres*, Königsberg 1829, 1163. - For further information, see A. D. Vakaloudi, *Η Μαγεία στο Πρώιμο Βυζάντιο*, pp. 109, 202.

6. Strabon, Γεωγραφικά, ed. H. L. Jones, *The Geography of Strabo, Books IV-XVI, The Loeb Classical Library*, 1930, Impr. 1966³, 16. 2, 39. - Plinius, *Naturalis Historia. Libri XX-XXXIII*, ed. W. H. S. Jones, *The Loeb Classical Library*, 1951, XXX. V. (14). - A. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire de la divination dans l'antiquité*, v. I, Paris 1879, Impr. New York 1975, pp. 338, 330-331, where he cites that *necromancy* came from *oneiromancy* (dream-divination) because those who slept near the graves in order to accept dreams from the spirits, didn't understand if they really saw dreams in their sleep or visions when they were awake.

7. Photius, Βιβλιοθήκη, ed. R. Henry, *Bibliothèque*, vols. 1-8, *Les Belles Lettres*, Paris 1959-1977, v. II, cod. 94, p. 40, Babylonians called every ventriloquist “Σάκχοισον”. - A. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire divination*, I, p. 338.

8. J. Bidez - F. Cumont, *Les Mages hellénisés*, t. I, Paris 1938, pp. 5-6.

9. J. Bidez - F. Cumont, *Mages hellénisés*, t. II. (Les textes), Paris 1938, fr. B9a-B9e, pp. 18-20. - F. Cumont, *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain*, Conférences faites au collège de France en 1905, Paris 1963 (Impr. 4th ed. 1929), p. 174.

10. J. Bidez - F. Cumont, *Mages hell. II. fr. B9a-B9e*, pp. 18-20. - F. Cumont, *Religions*, p. 174.

11. F. Pfister, “Epode”, in Paulys-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, IV. Suppl. (1924) col. 323-344, 324-326.

language and customs) by a Babylonian teacher—who possessed the “βάρβαρον σοφίαν” and was secretary of the Persian king— included necromancy and ventriloquism¹². This “μαγικὴν παιδείαν” (*magical education*) simulated Iamblichus with the Greek education. By receiving both of them he himself became a famous rhetor¹³.

b. Jews: Necromancy was a common practice for mantic purposes among ancient Jews, as they believed that the dead knew something that the livings didn't know¹⁴. A very famous example of necromancy, an art common to the Semitic paganism and very widespread in Babylonien, Palestine, Iran, but also in Egypt¹⁵, was that of Saul who asked for the advise of Samuel's ghost through a ventriloquist¹⁶. Jews were especially famous in Byzantium for their oneiromantic and necromantic abilities. By sleeping near the graves or inside caves, had the ability to see prophetic dreams¹⁷.

*c. Ὑπερβόρειοι (οἱ ὑπερβόρειοι ἀρκτικώτεροί εἰσι καὶ ἐνδότεροι τῶν Σκυθῶν)*¹⁸: The Hyperborean magicians used the demons as servants, planted passionate love into human hearts, and they also exercised necromancy. Their invocations were always addressed to the goddesses of the darkness, the demons and the dead, Selene and Hekate¹⁹.

d. Greeks: Necromancy seems to have been a very popular kind of magic in ancient Greece²⁰, but ventriloquism wasn't unknown too. Ventriloquists

12. J. Bidez - F. Cumont, *Mages hell.* II. fr. B10c, p. 23, fr. B30, p. 40, fr. O104, pp. 247-248.

13. Photius, Βιβλ., v. II, cod. 94, pp. 39-40 (Jamblique). - J. Bidez - F. Cumont, *Mages hell.* I. pp. 148-149.

14. M. D. Swartz, *Scholastic Magic, Ritual and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism*, Princeton, New Jersey 1996, p. 49.

15. G. Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, Austin, Texas 1994, pp. 45, 160.

16. Α' Σαμουήλ (ἡ Βασιλειῶν Α'), 28. - Gregory of Nyssa, Ἐπιστολὴ διὰ τὴν ἐγγαστρίμυθον πρὸς Θεοδοσίον ἐπίσκοπον, Origenes, Eustathius von Antiochien und Gregor von Nyssa über die Hexe von Endor, ed. E. Klostermann, *Kleine Texte für Theologie und Philologie*, 83, Bonn-Berlin 1912, p. 66, 9-19. - Asterius Sophista, *Commentariorum in Psalmos quae supersunt accedunt aliquot homiliae anonymae*, Hom. XXV. In *Psalmum XIII*, ed. M. Richard, Osloae 1856, p. 188, 3, 14-4. - F. Cumont, *Lux perpetua*, Paris 1949, p. 99. - G. Luck, *Arcana Mundi, Magic and the Occult in the Greek and Roman Worlds (A Collection of Ancient Texts Translated, Annotated and Introduced by Georg Luck)*, Baltimore and London 1985, Impr. 1986, p. 26.

17. Julian the Emperor, Κατὰ Γαλιλαίων, ed. W. C. Wright, *Against Galilaeans, The Loeb Classical Library (The Works of the Emperor Julian, III, 1923, impr. 1969³), 339E-340A.*

18. Cosmas of Jerusalem, Ἱστορίαι, PG, v. 38, col. 509.

19. Lucian, Φιλοψευδῆς ἢ ἀπίστων, ed. C. Iacobitz, *accedunt scholia auctiora et emendatiora*, v. III, Hildesheim 1966 (Impr. ed. 1839), 13.

20. F. Lenormant, *Les sciences occultes en Asie, La divination et la science des présages chez les Chaldéens*, Paris 1875, p. 159. - S. Eitrem, “La magie comme motif littéraire chez les Grecs et

were called those into whom a demon entered and spoke through them. The Athenians called them “Εὐρυκλίδας” from the name of the first person which the local tradition presented as such²¹. But the name which the ventriloquists were well known with, was Python (πυθόων), which meant that the spirit “Πύθων” or a dead man’s soul (Εὐρυκλές) had taken hold of them and gave information through them²².

Well known is the relation of the Pythagoreans with necromancy²³, maybe because their invocations to the spirits of the dead constituted a proof of their faith into the immortality of the soul and the demonology. They accepted that the idols of the dead appeared in the same form which they had when they were alive²⁴. Democritus was also attached to necromancy²⁵. Famous were the magicians and the witches of Thessaly for the very successful practice of necromancy and vegetative magic²⁶.

e. Tyrrhenians or Etruscans: This ancient nation of Italy was already known for exercising necromancy inside sanctuaries devoted to heroes²⁷. Ammian Marcelline considers Etruria as the birthplace of the mantic arts on the entrails of beasts²⁸.

f. Romans: Especially in the work of Virgil (BC. 70-19) we see the Romans’ belief in black magic²⁹ and ghosts, like the souls of those who died young, those who had remained unburied, and the victims of a violent death.

les Romains”, *Symbolae Osloenses* 21 (1941) 39-83, 45. - F. Cumont, Lux, p. 97.

21. Photius, Βιβλ., v. II, cod. 94, p. 40 (Jamblique). - F. Lenormant, *Divination Chaldéens*, p. 161.

22. F. Lenormant, *Divination Chaldéens*, p. 165.

23. Flavius Josephus, Κατὰ Ἀπίωνος ἢ περὶ ἀρχαιότητος Ἰουδαίων, ed. H. St. J. Thackeray, *Against Apion or on the antiquity of the Jews*, *The Loeb Classical Library*, 1926, Impr. 1956², I, 22, 164. - F. Cumont, Lux, pp. 78, 80. - A. Bouché - Leclercq, *Histoire divination*, I, pp. 340-342.

24. F. Cumont, Lux, pp. 98, 78, 80.

25. Diogenes Laertius, Βίων καὶ γνώμων τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ εὐδοκμησάντων, ed. R. D. Hicks, *Lives of eminent Philosophers*, t. II., *The Loeb Classical Library*, 1925, Impr. 1950³, IX, 38. - Th. Hopfner, *Griechisch-Ägyptischer Offenbarungszauber* v. II, 2, Leipzig 1924, Impr. Amsterdam 1990, § 360.

26. S. Eitrem, *Magie*, n. 1, p. 61.

27. Theodoretus of Cyr, Ἑλληνικῶν θεραπευτικῆ παθημάτων, ed. P. Canivet, Théodoret de Cyr, *Thérapeutique des maladies helléniques*, t. I, *Sources Chrétiens* 571, Paris 1958, p. 243, 10-13. - F. Lenormant, *Divination Chaldéens*, p. 159.

28. Ammian Marcelline, *Rerum gestarum libri qui supersunt*, t. II, ed. J. C. Rolfe, *The Loeb Classical Library*, 1940, Impr. 1963³, XXI, 1, 10.

29. Virgil, *Aeneis I-VI*, ed. H. R. Fairclough, *The Loeb Classical Library*, 1916, Impr. 1956⁷, IV, 504-521. - Virgil, *Eclogae, Ecloga VIII*, ed. H. R. Fairclough, *The Loeb Classical Library*, 1916, Impr. 1956⁷, 91-104. - S. Eitrem, *Magie*, pp. 61, 62. - R. Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge 1989, p. 29.

Those souls were not accepted in the netherworld and thus they remained convicted to wander in the world of living. They were attributed with special power, were thought of as ideal spirits for necromancy and took the form of harmful demons, called “νεκροδαίμονες”, who were invoked by the magicians to harm the humans³⁰.

The continuation in the early Byzantine Empire, as cited in the first Byzantine period sources

Necromancy and ventriloquism are always directly attached to the “ἐπαοιδία”, the “ἐπαοιδήν”, the “ἐπαοιδοί” (the magical prayers, the formulae and the magicians who recited them) and altogether are convicted as black magic³¹. The epode (ἐπώδη) was at first a part of “γοητεία” that is the lament for the dead³². Since Homeric times the dead already needed an attendant for their trip to the netherworld. This role was played by the “γόης”, the psychopomp man who wailed the dead and then he himself made an ecstatic journey as a real companion to them, searching for their souls to guide them into peace³³. Because of this, the epode became a basic element of the necromancy³⁴, the invocation of the dead, and so the necromancer was identified with the “γόης”³⁵.

According to Basilius of Caesarea, Joannes Chrysostomus, and Julian the theurgist emperor, the same ancient practice which is attested for Democritus (“καὶ ποικίλως δοκιμάζειν ταῖς φαντασίαις ἐρημάζων ἐνίοτε καὶ τοῖς τάφοις ἐνδιατρίβων”)³⁶ or for the Jews (coming, according to Julian, from Hesaias the prophet)³⁷ continues in Byzantium. Some men stayed next to the graves and

30. Virgil, *Aeneis* VI. 318-326, 370-371. - F. Cumont, *Lux*, p. 84. - R. Kieckhefer, *Magic Middle Ages*, p. 36. - Cf. H. Kees, “Nekromantie”, in *RE*. XVI₂. (1935) col. 2218-2234, 2219.

31. Eustathius of Antiocheia, *Κατὰ Ὠριγένους διαγνωστικὸς εἰς τὸ τῆς ἐγγαστριμύθου θεώρημα*, Origenes, Eustathius von Antiochien und Gregor von Nyssa über die Hexe von Endor, ed. E. Klostermann, *Kleine Texte für Theologie und Philologie*, 83, Bonn-Berlin 1912, 24. 54, 23-24. - 55, 6-7.

32. W. Burkert, “‘Γόης’ Zum griechischen Schamanismus”, in *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 105 (1962) 36-66.

33. Homer, *Ὀδύσσεια*, ed. A. T. Murray, t. I. (I-XII), *The Loeb Classical Library*, 1919, Impr. 1974⁹, V. 46-50. - t. II. (XII-XXIV), 1919, Impr. 1960⁸, XXIV. 1-3. - S. Eitrem, *Magie*, p. 39. - W. Burkert, “Γόης”, pp. 46-47.

34. Aeschylus, *Πέρσσαι*, ed. H. W. Smyth, *The Loeb Classical Library*, 1922, Impr. 1956⁶, 686-688, 697. - W. Burkert, “Γόης”, p. 44.

35. W. Burkert, “Γόης”, pp. 43-44.

36. Diogenes Laertius, *Δημόκριτος*, IX. 38.

37. Julian the Emperor, *Κατὰ Γαλιλαίων*, 339E-340A.

spoke all the time with the “νεκροδαίμονες” to whom they belonged; these men became the necromancers. Then the demons began to enter these people and talk through them. Sometimes this entrance was so violent that these people became mad and died³⁸.

In a magic formula which is called “Πίτυος ἀγωγή” (coming from the *Great Magical Papyrus of Paris*, IV. century AD.) the necromancy ends to an oneiromancy³⁹. The demon appears to the necromancer’s dream and says: “ὃ θέλεις ἐπίταξον, καὶ ποιῶ”⁴⁰ (*whatever you want me to do, I will do it*). This element affirms the theory that necromancy came from oneiromancy because those who were visiting the graves in order to achieve contact with the souls, couldn’t understand if they saw dreams in a state of sleep or the souls of the dead in a state of alertness⁴¹. This theory is also affirmed by Hesychius of Jerusalem who says that the necromancers were sleeping in graves or in caves after they had dined with meat from sacrifices. Then, they interpreted the dreams they had seen, as dead’s visits revealing the future⁴².

The necromancers alleged that with magic ceremonies of coercion and magic epodes could charm the souls of the dead, make them appear and answer to their questions. A magical formula of the IV. century AD. (coming also from the *Great Magical Papyrus of Paris*), named “Ξίφος Δαρδάνου”, which aims to necromancy, affirms this allegation: “Ξίφος Δαρδάνου· πρᾶξις ἢ καλουμένη ξίφος, ἧς οὐδέν ἐστιν ἴσον διὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν κλίνει γὰρ καὶ ἄγει ψυχὴν ἀντικρυς, οὗ ἂν θέλῃς, λέγων τὸν λόγον καὶ ὅτι· ‘κλίνω τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ δεῖνα’ ”⁴³.

Sometimes the ascent of the dead man’s soul, which is called “νεκροδαίμων”, was achieved by the possession of the dead man’s οὐσία, that is something which belonged to the deceased, e.g. a piece of cloth⁴⁴, or his skull⁴⁵ with threats of horrible tortures in case that the “νεκροδαίμων”

38. Basil of Caesareia, *Εἰς τὸν προφήτην Ἡσαΐαν*, PG. v. 30, col. 497-498. - John Chrysostom, *Εἰς Ματθαῖον*, PG. v. 57, col. 403-404. - Hesychius of Jerusalem, *Interpretatio Isaiae Prophetae*, (η), p. 28.

39. K. Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, v. 1, Leipzig 1931. 2nd ed. Stuttgart 1974, IV. 2051-2056.

40. K. Preisendanz, *PGM 1: IV. 2056*.

41. See, A. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire divination*, I, pp. 330-331.

42. Hesychius of Jerusalem, *Interpretatio Isaiae Prophetae*, 65, 4.

43. K. Preisendanz, *PGM 1: IV. 1718-1723*.

44. K. Preisendanz, *PGM 1: II. 49*.

45. Some characteristic examples are the magical formulae of the IV. century AD.: K. Preisendanz, *PGM 1: IV. “Ἀγωγή Πίτυος βασιλέως”*, 1930 ff.; “Πίτυος ἀγωγή”, 2005 ff.; “Πίτυος Θεσσαλοῦ ἀνάκρισις”, 2142 ff. - As it seems, the fame of the Thessalian magicians, witches and necromancers which we see in the work of Lucan, (I. century AD.), continues unhindered through

wouldn't obey to the magician's command, and with the help of an infernal demon who would force the dead man's soul to appear and soothsay⁴⁶.

The help the necromancers were getting from the infernal demon appears very clearly in a magic formula which is called "Κάτοχος σφραγίς" and is included also in the *Great Papyrus of Paris* of the IV. century AD. Here a detailed description of a demonic figure which must be engraved on a magical seal—ring of iron is cited. This figure will coerce the unwilling "νεκροδαίμων" to cooperate. This figure presents a headless lion, having in the place of its head the diadem of Isis, which steps on a skeleton (having his right foot on the skeleton's head) and between them stands a wild cat with the eyes of an owl, which holds the gorgon's head in its mouth⁴⁷.

It is obvious that this picture represents the coercion of the dead man's soul, from the demon who steps on him, to obey. The coercion of the demon must be ensured too, since he doesn't come willingly. The magic-mystic names of his, known only to the magicians, must be engraved in a circle around the figure. The quotation of these names forces the demon to follow the necromancer's orders and bring the "νεκροδαίμων"⁴⁸.

Noteworthy are the following elements: 1) the use of iron that operates for the apotropaic magic too⁴⁹ 2) the iron comes from *manacles*. This, I think, is also a symbolic material agent of captivity, imprisonment and coercion 3) the possession of the seal-ring reminds us of Solomon who had an alike object. The seal had the famous *pentacle*, one of the most powerful magical signs, on it. This seal-wring was given to Solomon by God through his archangel Michael, and with this the magician-king dominated the demons⁵⁰.

Joannes Chrysostomus clarified that in fact, the ghosts which the necromancers invoked, were not souls but chthonic, infernal and corporeal demons⁵¹.

the centuries. Cf. M. Annaeus Lucanus, *De bello civili*, Books I-X, ed. J. D. Duff, Lucan, *The Civil War*, *The Loeb Classical Library*, 1957, Book VI. 431 ff.

46. K. Preisendanz, *PGM* 1: II. 53-56.

47. K. Preisendanz, *PGM*. 1: IV. 2131-2141.

48. Above, 2140-2141.

49. See, Th. Hopfner, *OZ* I. § 601.

50. G. Vican, "Art, Medicine and Magic in Early Byzantium", *Symposium on Byzantine Medicine*, ed. J. Scarborough, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 38 (1984) 65-86, 69-70.

51. Athanase of Alexandria, *Πρὸς Ἀντίοχον ἄρχοντα*, *PG*. v. 28, col. 617C. - Basil of Caesarea, *Εἰς Ἡσαΐαν*, 497-498. - Eudocia Augusta, *De martyrio s. Cypriani* [*BHG*, 1, 459], ed. A. Ludwig, *Eudociae Augustae, Procli Lycii, Claudiani carminum graecorum reliquiae* (e cod. Florent. Laurent. VII. 10), *Bibliotheca Teubneriana*, Leipzig 1897, II, p. 64, 258 ff. - Gregory of Nazianze, *Θεολογικός πρῶτος, πρὸς τοὺς Εὐνομιανοὺς προδιάλεξις*, ed. P. Gallay - M. Jourjon, Grégoire de Nazianze, *Discours 27-31* (*Discours théologiques*), *SChr.* 250, Paris 1978, 10, 10-14 (p. 96). - Elias of Crete, *Ἐξήγησις μητροπολίτη Κρήτης Ἡλίας*, *PG*. v. 36, col. 765C-766A. - Aeneias of Gaza,

The necromancers were trying to use with their rites and invocations these demons for the ascent of the souls; because they couldn't make it, the demons took the figures of the dead, appeared, answered the clients' questions or did what the magicians commanded⁵².

The magicians manipulated the demons and forced them with secret invocations and epodes to serve them that is to realize every wish they or their clients had⁵³. They could for example, after an order, enter somebody and cause him a great damage⁵⁴. They also served the magician in a demonstration of power. Andreas of Caesareia (VI. century) reminds us of the necromantic power of Simon the Magus⁵⁵ who, after he subdued the soul of a dead child in front of witnesses to enforce his fame as an all-powerful magician, then used it as a servant to his purposes⁵⁶. Simon himself had alleged that the spirit he manipulated was not a dead man's soul but a demon whom he had terrorized with fearful threats⁵⁷.

1. *Craniomancy*

It was written earlier, that the manipulation of the dead man's soul was achieved by the possession of his "οὐσία", something that belonged to him. A very significant element was his skull ("κρανίον"), the best part of the human body. The head is considered as the seat of the intellect, the apprehension, and the soul, and there is also the mouth. The myth about the prophetic skull of Orpheus which foresaw the future after his death, represents the best proof of the head's significance⁵⁸.

Θεόφραστος, p. 53, 17 - 54, 10. - Nicephore Gregoras, Ἐρμηνεία εἰς τὸν Συνεσίου περὶ ἐνυπνίων λόγον, *PG*. v. 149, col. 615-616. - Cf. John Chrysostom, Λόγος εἰς τὸν μακάριον Βαβύλαν καὶ κατὰ Ἰουλιανοῦ καὶ πρὸς Ἕλληνας, [*BHG*, 1, 208], ed. M. A. Schatkin - C. Blanc - B. Grillet, Jean Chrysostome, Discours sur Babylas, *SChr*. 362, Paris 1990, XIV. 79, 4 - XV. 80, 5.

52. Athanase of Alexandria, Πρὸς Ἀντίοχον, 617C. - Basil of Caesareia, Εἰς Ἡσαΐαν, 497-498. - Ματῦριον Κυπριανοῦ, II, p. 64, 258 ff. - Nicephore Gregoras, Περὶ ἐνυπν., 618.

53. Pseudoclementina, Κλήμεντος ἐπισκόπου Ῥώμης, Περὶ τῶν πράξεων, ἐπιδημιῶν τε καὶ κηρυγμάτων τοῦ ἁγίου καὶ κορυφαίου τῶν ἀποστόλων Πέτρου ἐπιτομή, *PG*. v. 2, cap. 27, col. 492-493. - C. H. Kraeling, "Was Jesus Accused of Necromancy?", *Journal of Biblical Literature* 59, Part 1 (March 1940) 147-157, 156. - G. Luck, *Magic*, p. 34.

54. Nicephore Gregoras, Περὶ ἐνυπν., 618-619.

55. The founder of the Gnostic sect, II. century AD.

56. Andrew of Caesareia, Ἐρμηνεία εἰς τὴν Ἀποκάλυψιν Ἰωάννου τοῦ Θεολόγου, ed. J. Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypse-Textes*, 1. Teil. Der Apokalypse Kommentar des Andreas von Kaisareia, Text, *Münchener theologische Studien*, München 1955, 13. 17, p. 143, 9 - 144, 8.

57. Pseudoclementina, cap. 31, col. 493-496.

58. R. Ganschinietz, "Κρανομαντεία", *RE*. XI₂ (1922) col. 1578-1580, 1578-1579. - Th. Hopfner, *OZ* II,2, § 375.

Philostratus and Konon inform us that Orpheus' skull, after his death, remained in Lesbos where it was used by the Lesbians, Aioleis and Iones as a prophetic instrument. Its oracle prophesies were sent to Babylon. Where ever the skull was placed, a sanctuary was built and Orpheus was honored equally to the other gods with sacrifices⁵⁹.

Representative of the craniomancy's category is the magic formula of the IV. century AD. "Αγωγή Πίτυος βασιλέως" (coming from the *Great Magical Papyrus of Paris* too), which describes a necromantic ceremony by the use of a skull. The magician invokes the god Helios and announces pointedly that: (a) he subdues him with his epodes and for this reason the god is obliged to give him full power on the dead man's soul which the magician wishes to bind and (b) the magician himself has the power to subdue the soul because he possesses its skull. Thanks to the possession of this "οὐσία", the "νεκροδαίμων" will help him with all his affairs, carry out all his commands and reveal the future. The important is that the magician carves magical names on the skull. With the mystic power of these names he will try to subdue the "νεκροδαίμων"⁶⁰. The skull as magic "οὐσία" attracts the soul, and the god Helios guides it to the light⁶¹. In theurgy and magic, Helios is another figure of Hades, the Netherworld. Therefore he attracts the dead souls towards him⁶². Another characteristic element is that the magician uses supplejack's leaves, in order to write the epodes on them⁶³. The supplejack is a sacred plant which belongs to Osiris-Dionysus⁶⁴; also, the leaves are used analogically to invoke the two gods who are connected with the god Helios and together they have descended to netherworld and have been resurrected.

2. Ventriloquism

Ventriloquism, as a method of necromancy⁶⁵, is vividly described in the

59. O. Kern, *Orphicorum fragmenta*, Berlin 1922, fr. 134, p. 40. - fr. 115, p. 34. - Photius, Βιβλ., v. III, cod. 186, p. 34.

60. K. Preisendanz, *PGM 1: IV*. 1948-1977; 1970-1977; 1996-2006.

61. F. Graf, *Gottesnähe und Schadenzauber, die Magie in der griechisch-römischen Antike*, München 1996, p. 178.

62. Julian the Emperor, *Εἰς τὸν βασιλέα Ἡλίον πρὸς Σαλούστιον*, ed. W. C. Wright, *Hymn to the king Helios dedicated to Sallust, The Works of the Emperor Julian, The Loeb Classical Library*, t. I, 1913, Impr. 1954², 136A. - J. Bouffartique, *L'Empereur Julien et la culture de son temps*, Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Antiquité-133, Paris 1992, p. 650.

63. K. Preisendanz, *PGM 1: IV*. 1993-1996.

64. F. Graf, *Gottesnähe*, 178. - Cf. Plutarch, *Περὶ Ἰσιδος καὶ Ὀσίριδος*, ed. J. G. Griffiths, *De Iside et Osiride*, Wales 1970.

65. Athanase, of Alexandria, *Πρὸς Ἀντίοχον*, 617C. - Basil of Caesareia, *Εἰς Ἡσαΐαν*, 497-498. - Theodoretus of Cyr, *Ἐρμηνεία εἰς τὸν προφήτην Ἡσαΐαν*, ed. J. N. Guinot, Théodore de

Old Testament, in the story of the Jew king Saul, the ventriloquist witch, and the spirit of the prophet Samuel⁶⁶. The ventriloquists, who in Byzantium continue to be called “πύθωνες”⁶⁷, “στερνομάντις”⁶⁸ and “γνώσται”⁶⁹, alleged that they had the power to raise the souls of the dead from the netherworld. Actually, they saw shadows taking various shapes, and believed them as the dead⁷⁰.

The first Byzantine period Fathers give interesting information about ventriloquism. The story of the invocation of Samuel’s soul and in general the nature of the ghosts through whom the ventriloquists were exercising their mantic art, became in Byzantium a subject of discussion and different opinions⁷¹. Origen (confronted by Eustathius of Antiocheia and Gregorius of Nyssa), Apollinarius of Laodiceia, Diodorus of Tarsus, and Anastasius II. of Antiocheia alleged that the ventriloquist was in a position to invoke Samuel’s soul because all the souls —of the saints and the sinners— were obeisant to the devil until Christ’s descent to the underworld and their liberation⁷².

Cyr, *Commentaire sur Isaïe*, t. I. (Sections 1-3), *SChr.* 276, Paris 1980, p. 314. - Hesychius of Jerusalem, *Interpretatio Isaiae Prophetiae*, (ε), (στ), (η), pp. 27-28. - Anastasius II. of Antiocheia, *Ἐρωτήσεις καὶ ἀποκρίσεις*, *PG.* v. 89, col. 529C.

66. A’ Σαμουήλ (ἡ Βασιλειῶν Α’), 28. - Hippolyte, In *Reges*, *PG.* v. 10, col. 605-608. - Basil of Caesareia, *Εἰς Ἡσαΐαν*, 497-498. - Ephraim Syrus, *The Nisibene Hymns*, ed. J. Gwynn, *A Selected Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Second Series*, ed. P. Schaff - H. Wace, Vol. XIII, Part II, Gregory the Great, Ephraim Syrus, Aphrahat, Edinburgh 1989, LV. 14D, p. 209. - LVII. 16S, 17D, p. 211.

67. Eusebe of Caesareia, *Der Jesajakommentar*, ed. J. Ziegler, *Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte*, v. 9, Berlin 1975, p. 60, 25-27.

68. Theodoretus of Cyr, *Εἰς Ἡσαΐαν*, t. I, p. 314. - t. II. (Sections 4-13), *SChr.* 295, Paris 1982, p. 80, p. 130.

69. Eustathius of Antiocheia, *Κατὰ Ὠριγένους ἐγγαστρομύθου*, 2. 17, 15.

70. Basil of Caesareia, *Εἰς Ἡσαΐαν*, 497-498. - Gregory of Nyssa, *Ἐπιστολή διὰ τὴν ἐγγαστρομύθου*, p. 65, 21-23. - Eustathius of Antiocheia, *Κατὰ Ὠριγένους ἐγγαστρομύθου*, 5. 22, 28-30. - 6. 23, 31-32. - Ephraim Syrus, *The Nisibene Hymns*, LVII. 16S, p. 211. - Theodoretus of Cyr, *Εἰς Ἡσαΐαν*, I, p. 314. - Cf. Euagrius Ponticus, ed. R. Devreesse, *Les anciens commentateurs grecs de l’octateuque et des rois (Fragments tirés des chaînes)*, Évangre († 399), *Fragment sur la pythonisse d’Endor*, *Studi e Testi* 201, Città del Vaticano, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana 1959, p. 26.

71. Eustathius of Antiocheia, *Κατὰ Ὠριγένους ἐγγαστρομύθου*, 2. 17, 18.

72. Origenes, *Εἰς τὴν τῶν βασιλειῶν Α’*, Origenes, Eustathius von Antiochien und Gregor von Nyssa, *Über die hexe von Endor*, ed. E. Klostermann, *Kleine Texte für Theologie und Philologie*, 83, Bonn-Berlin 1912, 2. 4, 24-26. - Apollinarius of Laodiceia, ed. R. Devreesse, *Les anciens commentateurs grecs de l’octateuque et des rois (Fragments tirés des chaînes)*, Apollinaire de Laodicie († vers 390), *Fragments sur le Deutéronome*, *StT.* 201, Città del Vaticano, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana 1959, XXVIII, 11 ff., p. 154. - Diodorus of Tarsus, ed. R. Devreesse, *Les anciens commentateurs grecs de l’octateuque et des rois (Fragments tirés des chaînes)*, Diodore de Tarse, *Fragments sur la pythonisse d’Endor*, *StT.* 201, Città del Vaticano, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana 1959, p. 165, 64-67. - Anastasius II. of Antiocheia, *Ἐρωτήσεις καὶ ἀποκρίσεις*, 764D-765A.

Origen alleged that it was the prophet's soul, with the argument that the demons don't have the ability of prophesy while in Saul's case the spirit dictated to Saul his own and Israel's future⁷³. From the ventriloquist's words: "εἶδον θεοὺς ἀναβαίνοντας ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς", it was assumed that perhaps Samuel's soul was escorted by other prophets' souls or angels⁷⁴. Apollinarius cites that the spirit which responded to the ventriloquist's invocation, was Samuel's soul "ψυχαγωγηθεῖσα", guided to its rise from the underworld by a demon⁷⁵.

On the other hand, other Fathers clarified that the ventriloquists and generally the necromancers didn't have the capacity of presenting a dead man's soul. In fact there were the infernal demons who ascended from Hades, took by magic power the voice of familiar persons—simple or holy—and pretended to be them. The demons drove the ventriloquists to the state of madness ("ἐμβάκχενον αὐτοῖς [τοῖς ἐγγαστριμύθοις]") and so they believed that they raised the dead from the underworld (ἀλλ' εἶδεν ἢ παραπλήξ ὡς ἔπρεπεν αὐτῇ τὸ σχῆμα τῆς πεφαντασιοκοπημένης ὄψεως⁷⁶). The same happened with Samuel; the demon took the prophet's voice and talked to the "φαρμακίς" (the witch, the poisoner), predicting the future⁷⁷. Based on this theory Joannes Chrysostomus points out that the name *Python* which is connected with the ancient god of mantic Apollo, proves that finally this god was nothing else but a demon⁷⁸.

Diodorus of Tarsus (IV. century) gives interesting information about the way the ventriloquists-magicians exercised their art 1) They didn't really raise the dead but they *saw* them coming from the underworld. 2) The dead, they were calling, came out upside down—that is with the feet up and the head down—or in a supine position like the buried dead. That was the reason the

73. Origenes, Εἰς βασιλ., 8. 12, 28-31.

74. Above, 7. 10, 14-28.

75. Apollinarius of Laodiceia, Deutéron., XXVIII, 11 ff., p. 154.

76. Eustathius of Antiocheia, Κατὰ Ὁριγένους ἐγγαστριμύθου, 4. 21, 23-24.

77. Hippolyte, In Reges, 605-608. - Eusebe of Caesareia, Der Jesajakommentar, p. 60, 25-27. - Gregory of Nazianze, Κατὰ Ἰουλιανοῦ στηλιτευτικὸς λόγος Α', ed. J. Bernardi, Contre Julien, *SChr.* 309, Paris 1983, 54-55 (pp. 158-160). - Gregory of Nyssa, Ἐπιστολὴ διὰ τὴν ἐγγαστριμύθον, p. 66, 9-19. - Didyme of Alaxandria, Εἰς Ψαλμούς, Expositio in Psalmos, *PG.* v. 39, 76, col. 1473C. - Eustathius of Antiocheia, Κατὰ Ὁριγένους ἐγγαστριμύθου, 2. 17, 17-18. - 3. 19, 5-14. - 3. 20, 7-11. - 4. 21, 23-27. - Theodoretus of Cyr, Πρὸς τὰς ἐπενεχθείσας αὐτῷ ἐπερωτήσεις παρά τινος τῶν ἐξ Αἰγύπτου ἐπισκόπων ἀποκρίσεις, ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, Petropoli 1895, Impr. *Subsidia Byzantina lucis ope iterata*, vol. 13, Leipzig 1975 [= Pseudo-Justin, Responsiones ad orthodoxos, *PG.* v. 6, col. 1249-1490], 65, 18 - 66, 20. - 86, 25 - 87, 14.

78. Basil of Caesareia, Εἰς Ἡσαΐαν, 497-498. - John Chrysostom, Ὑπόμνημα εἰς τὰς πράξεις τῶν Ἀποστόλων, Ὀμιλία ΛΕ', *PG.* v. 60, col. 254-255.

ventriloquist that had called Samuel after Saul's order, was surprised when she saw the prophet in a standing position, and immediately thought of him as a god⁷⁹. Some said that what she saw, was a true God's involvement. It seems that God had finally allowed the ventriloquist to reveal the future to Saul, through Samuel's spirit⁸⁰.

The Fathers point out that the demons always lie when appearing to the humans; but when they are subjected to tortures and suffer, they are forced to tell the truth⁸¹.

The ventriloquist's phrase to Saul: "τίνα ἀνάγω σοι;" testifies that the clients pointed out the soul they wanted to contact with, and then the ventriloquist played the role of a medium to this contact⁸². In the story of another ventriloquist, the "παιδίσκηνη τὴν ἔχουσαν πνεῦμα Πύθωνος" (*a servant who had the spirit of the Python*) whom the Apostle Paul liberated from the demon's possession with an exorcism, it is cited that this woman obtained a great clientele and therefore a great deal of money for her masters. The cause was the kind of magic she exercised and with which she answered to every kind of questions. So big were the profits from those who wished to speak with their dead, that after the servant's exorcism and the loss of her necromantic ability, her masters were furious and they dragged Paul and Syllas to the prison⁸³.

Eustathius of Antiocheia marks that with the question: "ἵνα τί παρηνώχλησάς μου;" (*why did you bother me?*) Samuel's spirit implies that appeared against its will, as if it was commanded by a superior⁸⁴. This proves that the ventriloquists contacted with the demons, because only demons could be forced with threats and pressure to cooperate by magicians⁸⁵.

As the theurgist Iamblichus alleged, this method of invoking the demons

79. Diodore of Tarsus, *Pythonis.*, pp. 163, 4-5; 164, 16-22.

80. Basil of Caesarea, *Ἐπιστολαί*, ed. V. Courtonne, Saint Basile, *Lettres*, t. II. (*Ἐπιστολαί*: 101-218), *Les Belles Lettres*, Paris 1961, 217. *Ἐὐσταθίου ἀρχιάτρω*: 5, 50-56.

81. Eustathius of Antiocheia, *Κατὰ Ὠριγένους ἐγγαστριμύθου*, 4, 20, 29-31.

82. Above, 3, 19, 3-5.

83. *Πράξεις*, 16: 16-48; John Chrysostom, *Εἰς Ἀποστ., ΛΕ'*, 253, 254. - Severian of Gabala, *Εἰς τὴν δημιουργίαν τοῦ κόσμου*, In mundi creationem, *Λόγος Δ'*, *PG*. v. 56, col. 466. - Oecumenius of Trikki, *Κεφάλαια τῶν Πράξεων τῶν Ἀποστόλων*, *PG*. v. 118, col. 229A-B.

84. Eustathius of Antiocheia, *Κατὰ Ὠριγένους ἐγγαστριμύθου*, 11, 33, 14-17.

85. Clement of Alexandria, *Κλήμεντος ἐπισκόπου Ἀλεξανδρείας, Προτρεπτικός*, ed. C. Mondésert, *Clément d'Alexandrie, Le Protrepétique*², *SChr*. 2, Paris 1949, XI, 115, 2. - Origen, *Κατὰ Κέλσου*, ed. M. Borret, *Origène, Contre Celse*, t. I. (*Livres I et II*) *SChr*. 132, Paris 1967; t. II. (*Livres III et IV*), *SChr*. 136, Paris 1968; t. III. (*Livres V et VI*), *SChr*. 147, Paris 1969, III, 28. - V. 38. - VII. 5. - VII. 64. - Th. Hopfner, "Mageia", in *RE*. XIV.1. (1928) col. 301-393, 378. - M. Smith, "How Magic was Changed by the Triumph of Christianity" in *Graeco-arabica* 2 (1983) 51-58, 51-52. - A. Kazhdan, f. R. Trombley, "Magic", in A. P. Kazhdan, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 2, pp. 1265-1266. - Cf. Hippolyte, *Κατὰ πασῶν τῶν αἰρέσεων*, *PG*. v. 163, Δ', col. 3090.

was used by the Egyptians⁸⁶. He claimed that none dared to threaten the airy and the perigean demons but only the chthonic and infernal demons, spirits of “ὕλη” (*material*) without judgment and logic, which obeyed and were subdued to the threats of anyone. The reason was that they were unable to separate the truth from the lies, the possible from the impossible. The magician, based on his rites, didn’t command the invoked demons as a simple human but as if he was god. He felt and presented himself as superior to them, and acted as such. In order to succeed that, he directed suppressive threats towards the earthly and infernal spirits. The spirits were shocked and terrified from these fictitious tortures which they thought of as real, because of their unbalanced and disordered imagination⁸⁷.

The phrase of the Bible which is repeated into the sources of the early Byzantine Empire: “ζητήσατε τοὺς ἐγγαστριμύθους, καὶ τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς φωνοῦντας, τοὺς κενολογοῦντας οἱ ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας φωνοῦσιν” and the comment of Eustathius that “ἡ πυθόμαντις ἐθεάσατο τοὺς ὁμογαστρίους αὐτῆ δαίμονας, οἳα δὴ τινὰς ὁμοκοιλίους ἀδελφούς ἐπαίρουσα τὰ ὁμομήτρια γένη, βοᾷ ‘θεοὺς ἐόρακα ἀναβαίνοντας ἐκ τῆς γῆς’ ”⁸⁸ suggests that the ventriloquists preserved a demon in their belly. This demon —explained Eustathius of Antiocheia and Gregorius of Nyssa— affected the apprehension and the judgement of these people and 1) he spoke through them saying imaginative and untrue things, 2) he misled them by presenting other demons, supposed ghosts with the faces of the invoked dead impressed on them, for the shake of their clients. Characteristic is that the supposed souls saw only the ventriloquist and not the client⁸⁹.

Indeed the ventriloquist very often described the invoked soul as wearing the garments the owner used to wear when alive. In this way he deceived his clients. Therefore people were certain about ventriloquists’ supernatural abilities to contact the world of the dead. The general and shadowy resemblance of the demon with the dead person the client wished to communicate with, tricked the ventriloquist too. In case of public persons, the fact that the demon imitated their voices, was something that convinced even more the

86. Jamblich, *Περὶ τῶν αἰγυπτίων μυστηρίων*, ed. E. des Places, Jamblique, *Les mystères d’Égypte*, Paris 1966, VI, 7, 249 (p. 188). - G. Pinch, *Magic Egypt*, pp. 58, 64, 68, 73, 75, 79-80, 88, 97, 102-103, 152, 154-155, 159. - H. P. Georgoulis, “Μαγεία”, in P. Drandakis, *Μεγάλη Ελληνική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια*², Athens, XXII., pp. 412-414; 413.

87. Jamblich, *Περὶ μυστ.*, VI, 7, 249; 6, 246-247; 5, 245-246.

88. Basil of Caesareia, *Εἰς Ἡσαΐαν*, 497-498. - Eustathius of Antiocheia, *Κατὰ Ὀριγένους ἐγγαστριμύθου*, 25. 56, 19-21; 20. 47, 7-10.

89. Gregory of Nyssa, *Ἐπιστολή διὰ τὴν ἐγγαστριμύθου*, p. 65, 27-32. - 66, 9-19. - Eustathius of Antiocheia, *Κατὰ Ὀριγένους ἐγγαστριμύθου*, 30. 61, 19 - 62, 13.

magician. Afterwards it was easy for the demon to say whatever he wanted to him and through him to his client⁹⁰.

In *S. Symeon the Younger's Life* (AD. 521-592) there is an attestation that shows how solid was the Byzantines' confidence to ventriloquists and the role they played. When the emperor Justin II. got sick, the palace called a female ventriloquist, who examined the patient ("ἐφ' ᾧ διὰ τῆς ἀπάτης τοῦ ἐνεργούντος ἐν αὐτῇ δαίμονος τὰ περὶ τῆς νόσου γνωσθῆναι αὐτοῖς"). In this case, ventriloquism was used as a diagnostic method, and the ventriloquist played the role of a doctor⁹¹.

The archbishop of Antiocheia (AD. 599-610) Anastasius II. gives the explanation of the ventriloquists' medical diagnosis. He assures that the demons don't know the future; they reveal only what they see, hear, or derive from some symbols, exactly as the humans. Therefore, they examine medically the human bodies and diagnose their death, but not accurately. Then they transfer their information to the ventriloquists and they present them as doctors⁹². Basilius of Caesareia adds that the demons, beside their ability to advise about physical illnesses, they also know the right herbs for cures⁹³.

In this way the Jew doctor Timotheus, who undertook the treatment of the same emperor, is described in *S. Symeon's Life* as "ἦν γὰρ οὗτος καὶ δαιμόνων θεραπευτής, γοητείας ἐνασχολούμενος αἰεί". These empirical doctors and at the same time herb doctors and seers, although they were very high estimated, made some times fatal mistakes in the medicine's dosage with result to bring death to their patients. Consequently, the hagiographer relates the fact that the emperor finally got insane, instead of being cured, to the "φάρμακα" (a word which means either the medicine or the poison) the ventriloquist prepared and gave to the emperor⁹⁴.

Nevertheless the fact remains that the emperor himself trusted the ventriloquist. This proves that these people were thought of as inspired by God and very capable. The Byzantine sources remind us that already in *Leviticus* Moses had pointed out the spread of ventriloquism in Israel and the charm that these people exercised. For the misleading they imposed, he asked for

90. Gregory of Nyssa, Ἐπιστολή διὰ τὴν ἐγγαστριμυθον, p. 66, 1-6; 15-19.

91. The life of Saint Symeon the Stylites the Younger, ed. P. Van Den Ven, La vie ancienne de Symeon Stylite Jeune (521-592), [BHG, 2, 1689], t. 1er, Introduction et texte grec, *Subsidia Hagiographica* 32, Bruxelles 4, 1962, 209. 180, 15-18.

92. Eustathius of Antiocheia, Ἐρωτήσεις καὶ ἀποκρίσεις, 521.

93. Basil of Caesareia, Εἰς Ἡσαΐαν, 496β.

94. The life of Saint Symeon the Stylites the Younger, 208, p. 179 (especially 26-27); 211, p. 181. - For further information about magic and medicine, see A. D. Vakaloudi, *Ἡ Μαγεία στο Πρώιμο Βυζάντιο*, pp. 301-303.

their paradigmatic punishment by stoning until death⁹⁵. The importance of their presence and the popular confidence to their kind of mantic, was attested many times by Byzantine Church men⁹⁶ like Eusebius of Caesareia: “καὶ τοὺς εἰσέτι παρὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς τετιμημένους ἐγγαστριμύθους”⁹⁷, “μηδὲ θαυμάζετε δαίμονας ἀπὸ κοιλίας ἀνθρώπων φωνοῦντας τοὺς ὀνομαζομένους πύθωνας”⁹⁸.

The logical people of all times marked that the magicians who exercised necromancy or ventriloquism and other kinds of demonic divination, like theurgists (“τελεσταί”) whose rites were based on *occultism* (an attempt to approach and affect the supernatural forces with material agents, such as sacrifices of animals, use of plants and stones that have a direct connection —called “sympathy”— with the spirits⁹⁹) were imposters. The Christian Church repeated the warning of Artemidorus (II. century AD) that the necromancers and lecanomancers were magicians who literally “striped”¹⁰⁰ the naive with frauds¹⁰¹, clarifying that the supposed heavenly mantic voice of the ventriloquists was totally earthly¹⁰².

95. Eustathius of Antiocheia, Κατὰ Ὠριγένους ἐγγαστριμύθου, 11. 34, 3-5. - 24. 55, 6-8.

96. Eusebe of Caesareia, Der Jesajakommentar, p. 126, 25-26: “καὶ ἐπερωτήσουσι τοὺς θεοὺς αὐτῶν... καὶ τοὺς ἐγγαστριμύθους”. - p. 288, 4: “τίς ἕτερος διασκεδάσει σημεῖα ἐγγαστριμύθων”. - Eustathius of Antiocheia, Κατὰ Ὠριγένους ἐγγαστριμύθου, 11. 34, 9-10. - Leontius Presbyter of Constantinople, Ὁμιλία X. Λόγος εἰς τὴν Μεσοπεντηκοστήν καὶ εἰς τὸν ἐκ γενετῆς τυφλὸν καὶ εἰς τὸν ἅγιον Πέτρον ὑπὸ Ἡρώδου ἐν τῇ φυλακῇ ἀποκλεισθέντα, ed. C. Datema - P. Allen, Leontii Presbyteri Constantinopolitani, Homiliae, *Corpus Christianorum Orientalium*, Series Graeca v. 17, Brepols-Turnhout 1987, 333, 425-431. - Hesychius of Jerusalem, Interpretatio Isaiae Prophetiae, 44, 25. - Leontius Presbyter of Constantinople, [Ἰωάννου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως] Ὁμιλία XI. Εἰς τὴν γέννησιν τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ed. P. Allen - C. Datema, Fourteen Homilies, Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, *Byzantina Australiensia*, 9, Brisbane 1991, 382, 32-45.

97. Eusebe of Caesareia, Εὐαγγελικὴ προπαρασκευή, ed. E. des Places, Eusèbe de Césarée, La préparation évangélique, Livres II-III, *SChr.* 228, Paris 1976, II. 3, 4, 4-5.

98. Eusebe of Caesareia, Der Jesajakommentar, p. 60, 25-27.

99. F. Cumont, Religions, p. 108. - E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and Irrational*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1951, (Greek transl., G. Giatromanolakis, *Οἱ Ἕλληνες καὶ τὸ παράλογο*², Athens 1978), p. 207. - A. Vakaloudi, *Μαγεία, πολιτικὴ, θρησκεία καὶ φιλοσοφία στο πρόιμο Βυζάντιο*, in *Βυζαντικά* 19 (1999) 99-136, 99-104.

100. Artemidorus, Ὀνειροκριτικά, ed. R. J. White, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Oneirocritica* by Artemidorus, New Jersey 1975, II. 69: “...ἀποδιδύσκουσι τοὺς ἐντυγχάνοντας”.

101. Artemidorus, Ὀνειρ., II., 69. - Th. Hopfner, *OZ* I. §361.

102. Basil of Caesareia, Εἰς Ἡσαΐαν, 497-498. - Gregory of Nazianze, Ἀπολογητικός, ed. J. Bernardi, Grégoire de Nazianze, Discours 1-3, *SChr.* 247, Paris 1978, 46. 6-9 (p. 150). - Nicetas of Heracleia, Ἐρμηνεία εἰς τοὺς λόγους Γρηγορίου Ναζιανζηνοῦ, ed. K. Dyonouiotis, *Θεολογία*, v. XXI, issue 1, Athens 1950, p. 377. - Theodoretus of Cyr, Εἰς Ἡσαΐαν, p. 314. - Neilus Abbas, Ἐπιστολῶν βιβλία Δ', *PG.* v. 79, col. 177.