Agency: How Manuscripts Affect and Create Social Realities
Edited by Michael Kohs and Sabine Kienitz

Every volume of manuscript cultures has been peer-reviewed and is also openly accessible on CSMC’s website <https://www.csmc.uni-hamburg.de/publications/mc.html>. We would like to thank the German Research Foundation (DFG) for its generous support of the Cluster of Excellence EXC 2176 ‘Understanding Written Artefacts’, which has made the printing of this journal volume possible.

A ‘letter from Heaven’, ID no. I (33 J) 176/1963, Berlin, Museum of European Cultures (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Museum Europäischer Kulturen). Written in Emnstroda near Gotha, Thuringia, and dated 1776. The original sheet of paper was folded once, making four pages. Here we can see p. 1 with the title ‘Himmels-Brief, welchen, Gott selber geschrieben’ (‘Letter from Heaven, which God Himself has written’) and page 4. The written bifolium was then folded four times. Two words were visible on the two outer sides resulting from this: ‘Gottes Brief’ (‘God’s letter’), shown on p. 4. The upper part of the letter has been cropped and part of the illumination has been cut off. Photography: Christian Krug.

ISSN (Print) 1867-9617
ISSN (Online) 2749-1021
© 2022
Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures
Universität Hamburg
Warburgstr. 26
20354 Hamburg
## CONTENTS

### INTRODUCTION

2 | Agency: How Manuscripts Affect and Create Social Realities  
Michael Kohs and Sabine Kienitz

### SECTION I: Manuscripts as Magical Agents

8 | Manuscripts as Magical Agents: A General Outline  
Michael Kohs

31 | Paper Wheels with Strings Used for Divination from Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula  
Farouk Yahya

55 | Textual Amulets in Context: Was the Early Modern German Manuscript Mscr. Dresd. M 206 Used as a Magical Agent?  
Marco Heiles

81 | Can Miniature Qur’ans Be Considered Magical Agents?  
Cornelius Berthold

102 | ‘… even the bravest person has his own little superstition.’ On the Material Nature and Magical Purpose of Heavenly Letters in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century  
Sabine Kienitz

149 | Malleable Magic: Medieval Arabic Block Printed Amulets and Their Audiences  
Karl Schaefer

### SECTION II: Manuscripts Shaping Communities

168 | Following a Form: The Transmission Path of a Graphic Artefact in a Compensation Procedure in the Post-war German Fiscal Administration  
Sina Sauer

183 | Customised Manuscripts to Shape a Community of Readers? Overbeck’s Collection of Rental Manuscripts from Palembang (Indonesia)  
Jan van der Putten

195 | Baiben Zhang (Hundred Volumes Zhang): A Scribal Publisher in Nineteenth-century Beijing  
Zhenzhen Lu

245 | Contributors
Textual Amulets in Context: Was the Early Modern German Manuscript Mscr. Dresd. M 206 Used as a Magical Agent?

Marco Heiles | Aachen

The manuscript Mscr. Dresd. M 206 of the Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden (SLUB) is a paper manuscript in a small quarto format. The main part of the manuscript was written in about 1515 and contains several texts in the German dialect Thuringian-East Franconian and in Latin. The textual composition of this part is without precedent in the history of German literature. Three hands collected here only texts that the majority of the clerics in this time would classify as superstition or magic: texts on divination, instructions for ritual magic and a huge collection of textual amulets. This amulet collection, which an explicit (the last words of a textual unit, from the Latin explicitus, meaning ‘unrolled’) calls ‘fundamentum Leonis pape super omnes caracteres’ (‘the fundamental teaching of Pope Leo about all characteres’), is the focus of this study. What was the function of this collection of amulets? Was it used as a catalogue for verbal charms or for the production of textual amulets? Or was this collection meant to give the book itself apotropaic agency? Was the codex itself used as a magical agent?

Codicology

The quarto codex Mscr. Dresd. M 206 consists of 136 leaves. It measures 155 × 200 × 32 mm. The codex is still preserved in its sixteenth-century binding (Fig. 1). The boards are pasteboard and covered with white leather, which is decorated with blind lines and blind stamping. The leather covering of the lower board was left larger to build a fore-edge flap. This flap protects the fore edge and covers 5 cm of the upper cover.

---

1 This paper is based on a detailed manuscript description by Werner Hoffmann and Marco Heiles: Hoffmann and Heiles 2016. The manuscript is digitised and available online on the web page of the Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek (SLUB) <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/id278681387>.


4 SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 64v. The Word characteres is used here as a terminus technicus meaning magical signs, magical characters or magical writing.

5 Similar blind stamping is known from workshops in Saxony. Cf. Hoffmann and Heiles 2016.

6 This type of binding is more common in the Islamic world. Cf. Schep 2015, 115–118. In late mediaeval Germany, top-edge flaps and fore-edge flaps are known from the Nuremberg Dominican (1433–1522) and Augustinian (1464–1526) workshops. Cf. Szirmai 2000, 236; Kyrriss 1940, 33, 46; Bock 1928, Fig. 1.
There is a textile strap attached to the flap. This strap is the fastening: it can be wrapped around the book two times.

The manuscript is a composite and consists of three parts or codicological units that were produced separately. This can be easily deduced from the quire structure and the watermarks. The book block consists of 13 quires. The first two quires (fols 1–11) are made from paper that can be dated to c. 1495/96 (Fig. 2). These form the first codicological unit. The paper in the following eleven quires (fols 12–134) can be dated to the years around 1515, but the quire structure is not consistent. The fourth quire (fols 23–31) separates the third quire into two parts (fols 12–22, 32–33). The paper of this inserted quire is not used in other quires and does not have the foliation numbers common to all the other quires (Fig. 3). So quire three and quires five to thirteen form the second codicological unit (fol. 12–22, 32–134). This second unit consists of different kinds of paper. The fourth quire, added later, is the third codicological unit. Each unit was written by a different group of scribes. The first codicological unit was written by three scribal hands. The main text of this unit is a Latin mass for the Feast of the Annunciation (\textit{Haec est dies}, Ps 117,24) on fols 2r–10r. The rubric of this text by hand 2 tells us in German that this mass should be said for the protection of life, goods and honour (Fig. 2). The other two mass texts on fol. 1v written by hand 1 and on fols 10v–11r by hand 3 were added a short time later.

The second codicological unit was written by three hands in Thuringian-East Franconian. Hand 4 writes a geomantic book of sorts on fols 12r–22r, the \textit{Dresdener Sandkunst der 16 Richter}. Hand 5 gives us a collection of magical signs on fol. 32r and a short instruction on treasure hunting in Latin on fol. 32v. All other texts of this unit were written by hand 6: onomantic and other divinatory texts on fols 34v–38r, the aforementioned collection of text amulets on fols 40r–64v, detailed instructions on ritual magic on fols 65r–111r and further onomantic texts attributed to Nanno Philosophus on fols 119r–130r. The \textit{Dresdener Sandkunst der 16 Richter} (Fig. 4) can be used to answer sixteen questions like: ‘Will someone live for a long time or briefly?’, ‘Will someone come into an inheritance?’ or ‘Will the pregnant woman give birth to a son or a daughter?’ The onomantic texts can be consulted for similar questions, for example, whether an ill person will die or recover, or who will win a tournament.

---

7 The textile strap is a modern reconstruction.
8 For a description of this type of fastening (Untergesteckter Wickelverschluss), which is known from fifteenth-century Germany, cf. Adler 2010, 7 (B.V.1.1.1.), 75 (Abb. 4–14 and Abb. 4–15).
10 'Wer in grossen ängsten oder nötten sey des leibs des güts oder der eren, der lasz im dine mez sprechen als her nach geschrieben stet, das im got ausz solllichen nötten erlösen wülle' (‘Whoever is in great fear and distress for life, goods or honour, let this Mass be said as it is written in the following, so that God may deliver him from this distress.’), SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 2r. The orthography has deliberately been simplified in the transliterated version of the German text, with words generally being written uniformly in lower case rather than lower and upper as in the original (apart from proper nouns and the beginning of a sentence).
12 Fol. 32 consists of two leaves that were glued together. The drawing on the reverse side of the first leaf shines through. It might be the drawing of the Almandal. Cf. Veenstra 2002, Figs 1–3.
14 ‘Jn der figur fýndet man, war eyn mensch an eynem thag siech wýrt, ob er des sichthums sterb adder nitt’ (‘If a person falls ill one day, you will find in this diagram whether he dies of the disease or not.’), SLUB, Mscr.
texts on ritual magic, in contrast, give detailed instructions for communicating with devils. One of these texts tells the reader how to find treasures with the help of devils and the ghost of King Solomon. The text explains how a virgin boy should be used as a medium for scrying, how magic circles are cast with a conjured sword and how devils are conjured and forced to help (Fig. 5).15

The third codicological unit, which was added after the first and second unit were brought together and foliated, was written by two hands, also in Thuringian-East Franco- nian, and contains texts and tables on geomancy (Fig. 3).

---

17 SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fols 40r, 40v, 41r, 42v, 43r, 44r, 45r, 47r, 49r, 51r, 51v, 52v, 53r, 55r, 55v.
18 SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fols 56r, 58r, 58v, 59r, 60r, 60v, 61r, 62r, 63r, 64r, 64v.
Some of the inscriptions are (liturgical) invocations or Biblical verses, and some inform the reader about the agency (Wirkmacht) of the respective seal. The first two seals of the collection, for example, protect the one who looks at them against sudden death and trouble (Fig. 8).

In general, there is no recognizable connection between the seals and the content of the paragraphs following them. But some of the paragraphs are illustrated by pen drawings of a sword (Figs 6 and 7), a cross (Fig. 12), a ruler (Fig. 7) or a hand (Figs 10 and 11). And on two pages there are full-colour pen drawings glued into the codex. The first one on fol. 45 shows the Crucifixion of Jesus (Fig. 9), the second one on fol. 59 the Adoration of the Magi (Fig. 10). In both cases the text next to the drawings refers to the depicted scene.

The title of the compilation is given only in an explicit on its last page: ‘Finis fundamentum Leonis pape super omnes caracteres’ ('End of the fundamental teaching of Pope Leo about all characteres') (Fig. 11). The origin of this unique entitlement is unclear. Characteres are non-standard signs with magical power. The term can refer to ‘a strange and incomprehensible script, astrological signs, symbols without verbal equivalents, or [...] long series of ordinary

---


20 E.g. ‘Consummatum est’ (‘It is finished.’) (John 19:30), SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 40r.

21 ‘Contra subitaneam mortem hoc signum si inspexeris’ (‘If you will have seen this sign, it [will help] against sudden death.’) and ‘In quacumque die hoc signum videris, sine molestia permanebis’ (‘The day you see this sign, it will last without difficulty.’), both SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 40r.


23 SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fols 45 and 59. There is no text lost. The writer left some blank space for these (or other perhaps now covered) images.

24 SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 64r.
Pope Leo I Magnus (440–461), later editions are attributed to Pope Leo III (795–816) or Leo X (1515–1521). The Pope Leo in the Fundamentum Leonis pape (Fig. 12) is also Pope Leo III, who was a contemporary of Charlemagne (742/747–814):


This is the letter Pope Leo gave to King and Emperor Carolus Magnus and this letter was taught to Saint George by God’s angel. Everyone who is in combat should carry them [!] with himself. In the honour of Saint Veronica. In the honour of the holy Corpus Christi and the holy blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the honour of God’s righteousness. You sole fighter of my life. The righteousness of the Lord has made virtue and unity. The righteousness shall protect and shelter me in all virtues. Amen.

Like this Kaiser-Karl-Segen (‘Blessing of Emperor Charles’),30 most of the texts in this collection tell us that they have the ability, not to say agency, to protect a person who carries the text on his body. Phrases like ‘szolllen szie bey yn tragen’ (‘they should carry them with themselves’)31 can be found 21 times.32 These texts effect invincibility, salvation from all hardships and affection.33 They protect against all weapons,34

Latin letters’.25 But it can also stand for ‘magic seal’ or ‘textual amulet’.26 In this sense, our extensive collection of magic seals and amuletic texts might be called a ‘fundamental teaching’ of all (or at least plenty of) characteres. The connection to a Pope Leo seems arbitrary, since a Pope Leo occurs only in one short text of the collection. But in the sixteenth century, another Latin collection of amuletic texts connected to a Pope Leo is known. The Leonis papae enchiridion (‘Handbook of Pope Leo’) was first printed in 1525 in Rome.27 Although the text was listed in the Index librorum prohibitorum (‘List of prohibited books’), it was frequently reprinted, enriched and translated until the nineteenth century.28 While the first printing was ascribed to Pope Leo I Magnus (440–461), later editions are attributed to Pope Leo III (795–816) or Leo X (1515–1521). The Pope Leo in the Fundamentum Leonis pape (Fig. 12) is also Pope Leo III, who was a contemporary of Charlemagne (742/747–814):


This is the letter Pope Leo gave to King and Emperor Carolus Magnus and this letter was taught to Saint George by God’s angel. Everyone who is in combat should carry them [!] with himself. In the honour of Saint Veronica. In the honour of the holy Corpus Christi and the holy blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the honour of God’s righteousness. You sole fighter of my life. The righteousness of the Lord has made virtue and unity. The righteousness shall protect and shelter me in all virtues. Amen.

Like this Kaiser-Karl-Segen (‘Blessing of Emperor Charles’),30 most of the texts in this collection tell us that they have the ability, not to say agency, to protect a person who carries the text on his body. Phrases like ‘szolllen szie bey yn tragen’ (‘they should carry them with themselves’)31 can be found 21 times.32 These texts effect invincibility, salvation from all hardships and affection.33 They protect against all weapons,34

29 SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 48r.
31 SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 48r.
32 SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fols 40r, 41r (2×), 42r, 43r, 45r (2×), 46r, 46v, 47r, 48r, 49r, 52r, 56r (2×), 57r (2×), 59r, 63r, 63v.
33 Cf. SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 42r.
34 Cf. SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 43r.
Fig. 6: Dresden, Landesbibliothek, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fols 40r/41v, original size.
Fig. 7: Dresden, Landesbibliothek, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fols 55v/56r, original size.
The text contains a medieval manuscript with Latin and German script. The text appears to be part of a larger work, possibly a religious or philosophical text, given the use of the cross and other symbols. The handwriting is typical of medieval manuscripts, with crowded and sometimes difficult-to-read script. The context suggests it might be a treatise or a prayer, common in medieval manuscript culture.
against every kind of physical or spiritual captivity,\textsuperscript{35} against all enemies,\textsuperscript{36} against the devil, sorcery (‘czoubernis’) and thunderstorms\textsuperscript{37} etcetera. In contrast, there are only three texts that take effect in a different way. In the first one, the reader needs to pronounce certain holy names.\textsuperscript{38} In the second one, he needs to look at the figure of the ‘Measure of the Holy Cross’ (\textit{Longitudo Corporis Christi}) every day (Fig. 7).\textsuperscript{39} The third text takes effect if somebody carries the text with him or reads the texts or hears the text being read.\textsuperscript{40}

The agency of the textual amulets is explained and justified by a number of historical narratives (\textit{historiolae}). Already the first text of the \textit{Fundamentum} gives ‘the letters, which the almighty God taught Emperor Constantine, the son of Queen Helena. He shall write them down and carry them with him. Whenever he fights against the barbarians, he will be victorious and win the battle.’ (Fig. 8).\textsuperscript{41} Other texts are said to go back to an unnamed angel,\textsuperscript{42} the archangel Raphael\textsuperscript{43} or Saint Coloman\textsuperscript{44} and one even to Jesus Christ himself. This text is ‘the letter of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he wrote with his divine hands to King Abgar’.\textsuperscript{45} Like these, all texts profess that their agency is based on the power of God. Two texts give the aforementioned measurements of the holy cross\textsuperscript{46} and at least eleven texts use holy names.\textsuperscript{47} Others are just excerpts or pericopes from the Gospels: Luke 1:5–17, Luke 3:1–6, John 1:1–14 (Fig. 13) and Mathew 1:1–16.\textsuperscript{48} But in one way or

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Cf. SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 45v.
\item Cf. SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 46v.
\item Cf. SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 47v.
\item ‘Cum aliquis vadat ad pugnandum dicat + Anthipa + Arabrast + Asta…’ (‘When someone goes to fight, he shall say + Anthipa + Arabrast + Asta …’) SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 44v.
\item ‘Vnde wer die leng eret vnde zeie alle thage ansicht der mag nicht gedöf nach ermordt …’ (‘And whoever honours this length and worships it every day cannot be killed or murdered …’), SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 56v. This textual amulet belongs to the tradition of the \textit{Longitudo Corporis Christi}, in which a fraction of the measure of the body of Christ or of the Holy Cross is depicted. For the textual history of the \textit{Longitudo Corporis Christi}, cf. Boroffka 2017, 77–176; Spilling 2014, 184–217.
\item ‘Das zeyn heylige nhamen [] wur szý geschrieben bey im tregt adder sý liest adder horet lezen, deme mag nit geschaden vnde wirt erlediget von allen szeynen veýnden szie szeyn sighafft vnde gewýn in dem streidt.’ SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 46r.
\item Cf. SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 46v.
\item Cf. SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 56v.
\item SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 61r. In German literature, Columbanus is identified with St. Columban of Stockerau (d. 543–615), cf. Skemer 2006, 202–203, 208–209, fig. 81.
\item ‘Hi vaht ahn die epistel vnszers herren Ihesi Cristi, die er mit szeÿnen Fundamentum der kunfigen Helena szone gelert hot. Er sol szí schreiben vnde die beý ym tragen. Wen er szolle streitten widder die barbarischen szo werde er sighafft vnde gewýn in dem streidt.’ SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 46v.
\item Cf. SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 46v.
\item ‘Das szeind die buchstaben die gott der almechtigk dem keyszer Constantino der kunfigen Helena szone gelert hot. Er sol szí schreiben vnde die beý ym tragen. Wen er szolle streitten widder die barbarischen szo werde er sighafft vnde gewýn in dem streidt.’ SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 61v.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Fig. 9: Dresden, Landesbibliothek, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 45v, original size.
Fig. 10: Dresden, Landesbibliothek, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 59v, original size.
Das seyn die waren szegen für alle waffen, ‘• a • g • c • n • m • c • b • E • p • k • s • p • q • s • Amen in panna • fameth sol • c • b • c • o • t • y • o • parilis emanuel by arit • E • est • c • ci •’, das sie nit mögen dyr geschaden an fleisch an bluthe vnde an allen deynen geliedern þ [drawing of a sword] Ich bit dich heyliger got, das du mich Reÿnhart Trügszes behuttest durch die heylligen karacrtes vnde durch die heyligen wort, ‘Þ ‘Thobal þ gut þ guth þ gathan’, vor allem vbell leýbs vnd der szelen. Amen. Herre ewiger gott hymlicher vather nit verlas mich, wan dw bist eyn färer meynes lebens, das ich nit valle in die angesicht meyney veýnendt. Vnd behúth mich fur dem gewalt meyners feynedt, das sie sich nit frewen meynen trübsal, szunder gib fried der disse wort bey im szey tragen. Friede vnde heyl der szie béy im ist haben vnd geszüntheýt des leýbes vnde des lebens der warlicher dor an ist gelöiben. In dem namen gottes vathers vnde des szühns vnde des heyligen geystes. Amen.

This is the true benediction against all weapons, ‘• a • g • c • n • m • c • b • E • p • k • s • p • q • s • Amen in panna • fameth sol • c • b • c • o • t • y • o • parilis emanuel by arit • E • est • c • ci •’, that they should not harm your body, your blood or your limbs. þ [drawing of a sword] I beseech you holy God that you protect me through the holy characteres and through the holy words, ‘Þ Thobal þ gut þ guth þ gathan’, against all evil of the body and the soul. Amen. Lord, eternal God, heavenly Father don’t leave me, because you are a guide of my life, so that I don’t fall into control of my enemies. And protect me against the force of my enemies, so that they will not be delighted by my misery. But give peace to him who carries these words with him. [Give] peace and salvation to him who has them with him and [give] health of body and life to him who truly believes in it. In the name of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Reynhart’s name appears especially in the beginning of the collection in almost every text and altogether 18 times. Unspecific phrases like ‘der disze wort bey im szey tragen’ (‘who carries this word on his person’) are used only to specify the terms of the agency of the texts. Other names or a placeholder for names are never used.

The whole collection is arranged for one person, Reynhard Trugses, who might have written the text, too. Reynhard is the ‘speaker’ of the texts, which often have the form of petitionary prayers (Fig. 6):

Das seyn die waren szegen für alle waffen, ‘• a • g • c • n • m • c • b • E • p • k • s • p • q • s • Amen in panna • fameth sol • c • b • c • o • t • y • o • parilis emanuel by arit • E • est • c • ci •’, das sie nit mögen dyr geschaden an fleisch an bluthe vnde an allen deynen geliedern þ [drawing of a sword] Ich bit dich heyliger got, das du mich Reÿnhart Trügszes behuttest durch die heylligen karacrtes vnde durch die heyligen wort, ‘Þ ‘Thobal þ gut þ guth þ gathan’, vor allem vbell leýbs vnd der szelen. Amen. Herre ewiger gott hymlicher vather nit verlas mich, wan dw bist eyn färer meynes lebens, das ich nit valle in die angesicht meyney veýnendt. Vnd behúth mich fur dem gewalt meyners feynedt, das sie sich nit frewen meynen trübsal, szunder gib fried der disse wort bey im szey tragen. Friede vnde heyl

Reynhart’s name appears especially in the beginning of the collection in almost every text and altogether 18 times. Unspecific phrases like ‘der disze wort bey im szey tragen’ (‘who carries this word on his person’) are used only to specify the terms of the agency of the texts. Other names or a placeholder for names are never used.

The textual and pictorial composition of our collection is very similar to that of single-leaf textual amulets from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century. According to Page ‘the earliest surviving textual amulets with multiple figures date from the thirteenth century and are portable, densely written objects folded multiple times and intended to be carried on the body.’ Comparable German-Latin artefacts from the fifteenth and sixteenth/seventeenth centuries were studied and published by Pogliani and Klapper, exemplars

Fig. 11: Dresden, Landesbibliothek, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 64r.

another, all texts relate to God, who is often explicitly asked for help and protection.

The whole collection is arranged for one person, Reynhard Trugses, who might have written the text, too. Reynhard is the ‘speaker’ of the texts, which often have the form of petitionary prayers (Fig. 6):

Das seyn die waren szegen für alle waffen, ‘• a • g • c • n • m • c • b • E • p • k • s • p • q • s • Amen in panna • fameth sol • c • b • c • o • t • y • o • parilis emanuel by arit • E • est • c • ci •’, das sie nit mögen dyr geschaden an fleisch an bluthe vnde an allen deynen geliedern þ [drawing of a sword] Ich bit dich heyliger got, das du mich Reÿnhart Trügszes behuttest durch die heylligen karacrtes vnde durch die heyligen wort, ‘Þ ‘Thobal þ gut þ guth þ gathan’, vor allem vbell leýbs vnd der szelen. Amen. Herre ewiger gott hymlicher vather nit verlas mich, wan dw bist eyn färer meynes lebens, das ich nit valle in die angesicht meyney veýnendt. Vnd behúth mich fur dem gewalt meyners feynedt, das sie sich nit frewen meynen trübsal, szunder gib fried der disse wort bey im szey tragen. Friede vnde heyl

Reynhart’s name appears especially in the beginning of the collection in almost every text and altogether 18 times. Unspecific phrases like ‘der disze wort bey im szey tragen’ (‘who carries this word on his person’) are used only to specify the terms of the agency of the texts. Other names or a placeholder for names are never used.

The textual and pictorial composition of our collection is very similar to that of single-leaf textual amulets from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century. According to Page ‘the earliest surviving textual amulets with multiple figures date from the thirteenth century and are portable, densely written objects folded multiple times and intended to be carried on the body.’ Comparable German-Latin artefacts from the fifteenth and sixteenth/seventeenth centuries were studied and published by Pogliani and Klapper, exemplars

---

50 Cf. SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fols 40v, 41r, 42r, 42v, 43r, 43v, 44r, 45r, 49r, 51r, 52r, 53r, 57r, 60 (2×), 62r, 64r, 64v.
51 SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 40r.
52 Page 2019, 440.
53 Pogliani 2009.
54 Klapper 1929, 164–167.
Fig. 12: Dresden, Landesbibliothek, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206 fol. 48r, original size.
from fourteenth- to seventeenth-century England by Skemer. Like these, our collection is a ‘concatenation of scriptural quotations, divine names, common prayers, liturgical formulas, Christian apocrypha, narrative charms or historiolae, magic seals, word and number squares, characters (non-standard or magical script), devotional images, crosses and other religious symbols’. 

The Fundamentum Leonis pape super omnes caracters shares, for example, several texts and features with a Latin parchment amulet of the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg (SUBHH) (Figs 14 and 15). The textual amulet with the shelf mark Cod. in scrin. 31, Fragm. 19 was produced in Southern Germany in the first half of the fifteenth century. It is a large-format sheet of parchment (66 × 51 cm) with five closely written columns and a frame in which magic seals and depictions of the twelve apostles alternate with texts in red and black. The amulet is also illustrated with depictions of the Passion, including the Crucifixion of Jesus, and the four evangelists. In the centre of the bottom half there is an extensive circular diagram of magic seals. The sheet was folded seven times to a format of 33.5 × 9.5 cm. Judging from the wear on the reverse side of the amulet, it was most probably worn on the body. It was made to protect a certain Heinricus, whose name is marked in red several times and who is the speaker of the petitionary prayers of this amulet. Like the Fundamentum, the text includes the beginnings of the Gospels of John and Mathew and other biblical texts, the heavenly letter from Jesus to King Abgar and the Kaiser-Karl-Segen that Pope Leo gave to Carolus Magnus. There are also two versions of the Longitudo Corporis Christi and several texts with holy names, also including Hebrew names of God and the 72 names of Christ.

There are no structural differences between the composition of the textual amulet for Heinricus and the text for Reynhard Trugses. Both compilations were produced to protect one specific person and both tell us that they were meant to be carried on the body of this person. But unlike the amulet for Heinricus, the amuletic texts for Reynhard are just one part of a codex. Was the whole codex meant to be carried around? And how does this amulet compilation relate to the other texts of the codex?

Context

Although some parts of the codex Mscr. Dresd. M. 206 existed separately for some time, this is not true for the amulet compilation. It begins in the middle of a quire and ends in the middle of another quire. In its codicological unit, it is surrounded by texts on divination and ritual magic. There is no evidence that the amulets ever existed without the other texts of the second codicological unit. In fact, they are not only connected by materiality and the caprice of the scribes: the amuletic texts and the texts on ritual magic were written by the same author or translator. The beginning of the Gospel of John is used three times in this manuscript. On fols 54v–55v it is part of the Fundamentum Leonis pape super omnes caracters. Here, the text of the Gospel (John 1:1–14) is framed by the Latin phrases that the priest (Inicium sancti ewangelii secündum Johannem, ‘The beginning of the Holy Gospel according to John’) and the server (Gloria tibi, domine / Deo gracias, ‘Glory be yours, O Lord! / Thanks be to God’) would say when the priest read the Gospel as the Last Gospel at the end of mass. The server’s prayer ‘Et verbum caro factum est (‘And the Word was made flesh’), which are marked at fol. 55v by its Latin wording. The excerpt of the Gospel of John is here...
Fig. 13: Dresden, Landesbibliothek, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fols 54v/55r, original size.
omnium gestuissent unde diei velut gaped incolunt. eum in locum est.

unde diei gestuissent unde diem gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

deum incolunt unde diei gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

unde diei gestuissent unde diem gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

deum incolunt unde diei gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

unde diei gestuissent unde diem gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

deum incolunt unde diei gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

unde diei gestuissent unde diem gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

deum incolunt unde diei gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

unde diei gestuissent unde diem gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

deum incolunt unde diei gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

unde diei gestuissent unde diem gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

deum incolunt unde diei gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

unde diei gestuissent unde diem gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

deum incolunt unde diei gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

unde diei gestuissent unde diem gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

deum incolunt unde diei gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

unde diei gestuissent unde diem gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

deum incolunt unde diei gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

unde diei gestuissent unde diem gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.

deum incolunt unde diei gestuissent unde gaped incolunt.
Fig. 14: Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. in scrin. 31, Fragm. 19, recto, 66.0 x 51.0 cm.
Fig. 15: Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. in scrin. 31, Fragn. 19, recto (detail).
second-person singular imperatives, and the placeholder ‘N’ is used instead of the practitioner’s name or the concrete place name of the destination. The conjurations have no agency until they are spoken in the right ritual, in the centre of a distinct magic circle and in combination with other conjuring texts. However, the wording of all three versions of John 1:1–14 is almost the same. All versions derive


69 SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fol. 100v.


71 Sprich diszu nachgeschrieben wort vdne prejt den mantel vff die erden vnde sprech alszo: “Ich beschwere dich Sathan … Nuͦ beschwer ich euͦ ch alle vier Belczebub Sathan Ruffe Ruvbin, das jr kommet szchnel vnd stille vnd fuͦ ret mich vff disszem mantel gehn N adder wo hÿn ich will haben … Alszo szolt jr mich N füren vdne leûtten vff disszem Mantell …” Vnde sprich fünf pater noster vnde fünf Hail Marys vnde setze dich evff den mantell. Vnde wie du dich szetzest also bleyb sztezen vnde kreütz dich niecht mehr vnd sprech: “Wolauͦ ff Belczebub, Sathan, Ruffe, Ruvbin. Das er Lücip er walit” (‘Speak these following words and spread your coat out on the earth and speak thusly: “I invoke you, Satan … Now I invoke you all four: Beelzebub, Satan, Ruffe and Rubin, that you come swiftly and quietly to bring me on this coat to N or wherever else I want … So shall you guide and lead me N on this coat …” And speak five “Our Fathers” and five “Hail Marys” and sit down on the coat. And when you have sat down, so remain seated and do not make the sign of the cross any more and speak: “Good health, Beelzebub, Satan, Ruffe, Rubin. Lucifer shall command it.”’), SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206, fols 108–110v.
from the same German template, as the transcription and the
variant list in the appendix show. Especially the texts on fols
54v–55r and 109r–109v are almost identical, while all three
versions differ significantly from other German translations.72
Therefore, both the amulet collection and the collection of
instructions on ritual magic were most probably composed
by the same man and most likely for Reynhard Trugses
and this manuscript. The Fundamentum Leonis pape
super omnes cararacteres was meant from the beginning to
be accompanied by other texts with magical agency. Even if
these texts needed to be spoken out in mass73 or in magical
ritual, they are powerful and should possibly potentiate the
apotropaic agency of this codex.

The Codex Dresden, Landesbibliothek, Mscr. Dresd. M. 206
was certainly produced to have (at least) two functions.
On the one hand, it functioned as a manual for divination
and ritual magic. On the other hand, it was meant to
be a powerful apotropaic magical agent. Its sheer presence
effected supernatural protection. Despite its 136 leaves,
the codex – 20 centimetres high and just three centimetres
thick – is still small enough to be carried around by someone
on his body. The requirements of travelling might also
explain the extraordinary binding: it spares the usual but
bulky wooden boards and its flap protects even the fore edge
of the book block against dirt and destruction. In this form,
the codex was a perfect vade mecum offering both advice and
protection in every difficult situation.

72 Cf. Rosenfeld 1962; Schönbach 1904, 124–137.
APPENDIX

Translation of the Last Gospel (John 1:1–14) from fols 54v–55r (A), with textual variants from fols 100r–100v (B) and 109r–109v (C)

1. *Inicium sancti ewangelii secundum Johannem. Gloria tibi, domine.*

Translation

*Beginning of the Gospel of John. Glory be to the Lord.*

2. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made. What was made in him, that was life; and the life shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men might believe through the light. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (*Et verbum caro factum est.*) And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

3. In dem anfang was das wort. Vnd das wort was bey got. Vnde got was das wort. Das was von anfanck bey got. Alle dinck szeÿn durch ohn gemacht vnde ane ohn ist nichts gemacht. Das do gemacht ist in ohm, das ist gewest das leben. Vnde das leben was eyn licht der menschen. Vnd das licht hat in der fynsternis geleuchtet vnde die fynsternissze hat szeÿn nicht begriffen. Es was ein mensch von gotte geszandt, des nhame was Johannes. Der kam in ein geczewgnis, das er geczewgnis gebe von dem lichte, vff das alle menschen geloubten durch das liecht. Er was nicht das licht, szünder das geczewgnis gebe von dem licht. Es was das ware licht, das do erleuchtet alle menschen, kommende in dissse weldt. Er ist gewezen in der weldt vnde die weldt ist durch [fol. 55r] ohn geschaffen vnde die weldt hat szeÿn nitt erkant. Er qwam in szeyn eÿgen vnde die szeÿnen haben ohn nicht entpfangen Die ohn aber entpfÿngen, den gab er gewalt gottes kinder zcw werden. Die do geloubten in szeÿnen nhamen, die do nicht waren aus deme blute, nach ÿs dem willen des fleysszes, noch aus dem willen des mannes, szünder ÿs got geboren szeÿn. (*Et verbûm ca ÿ ro factum est.*) Vnde das wort ist fleisch worden. Vnde hot in vns gewonet. Vnde wïr haben geszehen szeÿn ere als die ere des eingeboren von dem vather vol genaden vnd der warheý

4. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made. What was made in him, that was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men might believe through the light. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (*Et verbum caro factum est.*) And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.


6. Thanks be to God. Through these words of the Holy Gospel our Lord Jesus Christ absolves us for all our sins and vices Amen.4

---

4 The English translation is based on the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible. It was altered in a number of places to correspond better to the original text in Early New High German.
Variants

1 Inicium … 2 domine: vacat BC.
3 anfang: anfang A, anbegyn B, anfangk C.
5 Alle: Vnde alle B.
5 ohn¹: jen C.
5 gemacht: geschaffen B.
5 ohn²: Jhen C.
6 gemacht: gemacht worden B.
6 Das do gemacht: das gemacht B.
6 ohm: ÿme B, ÿem C.
6 das ... 7 ist: ist B.
8 Vnd das licht ... geleuchtet: Vnd das licht hot geleuhtet in der finsternis B.
12 vff das: das B.
12 gelouβten ... 13 liecht: durch ynyn gelöbten B.
13 szünder: szûn= C.
14 Es: Er C.
15 kommende: die di kommen B.
16 Er ist gewezen: Es was B.
16 vnде ... 17 geschaffen: vacat B.
17 ohn: Jenen C.
17 szeñ: es B.
18 erkant: erkennen. Vnde die welt ist durch ÿnen geschaffen B.
18 qwam: ist kummt B.
18 eγen: eγenthûm BC.
19 ohn: jnen B, jen C.
19 entpfangen: erkant B.
19 Die ... entpfêngen: Aber die yhnen entpfangen han B.
19 ohn: Jen C.
20 den: das C.
20 gab er: hot er geben B.
22 fleyszes: fleisches BC.
23 szünde: alleynë B.
24 szeñ ... est: vacat B.
24 das ... 25 fleisch: der szohn gottes ist mensche B.
25 Vnde ... gewonet: vacat B.
27 von dem: des B.
28 Deo ... 30 delicta: vacat BC.
30 Amen: vacat C.
REFERENCES

Manuscripts


Early prints


Secondary literature


Jungmann, Josef Andreas (1962), Missarum Sollemnia: Eine genetische Erklärung der römischen Messe, 5th edn (Freiburg: Nova & Vetera).


Kyriss, Ernst (1940), Nürnberger Klostereinbände der Jahre 1433 bis 1525 (Bamberg: Reindl).


Schönbach, Anton E. (1904), Studien zur Geschichte der altdutschen Predigt 3: Das Wirken Bertholds von Regensburg gegen die Ketzer (Wien: Gerold; Sitzungsberichte der Philosophisch-Historischen Classe der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 147,5).


**PICTURE CREDITS**


Figs 14–15: © Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek (State and University Library).