

Sequentia - ensemble for medieval music (Paris)

*Monks Singing Pagans*

*Medieval songs of heroes, gods and strong women*

## Sources and Comments

Note: The source information here has been provided by the performers, with each one writing (in their language of choice) about the piece she/he was most involved in creating and/or developing. Due to the detailed and space-consuming nature of these remarks, they have been placed here and not in the printed programs given to concert audiences.

NOTE: Parts of this program were developed within a research project on the Boethian *metra*, organized and led by musicologist Sam Barrett (Cambridge University). Thanks to Sam Barrett for his generous invitation to Sequentia to participate in a working week at Pembroke College, Cambridge, in April 2016, during which the final rehearsals for this program were held, and thanks for his generous assistance with the transcription of the Boethian *metra* and other songs. <https://performinglostsongs.wordpress.com>

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### I. Woden and Christ: Cohabitation in the Northlands

Charms and incantations from German and Anglo-Saxon sources (9th-10th centuries):

**Forsahhistu unholdun?** (Saxon baptismal oath for pagan converts)

Music: (see remarks below)

Text: Merseburg, Domstiftsbibliothek, Cod. 136, fol. 84 (9<sup>th</sup> century)

Text Edition: Walter Haug und Benedikt Konrad Vollmann (herausg.), *Frühe Deutsche Literatur 800-1150*, (Frankfurt, 1999), p. 18.

Remarks: This text is actually a combination of parts from two different oaths: the Altsächsisches Taufgelöbnis and the Fränkisches Taufgelöbnis. Reconstruction: B. Bagby;

Music: flute solo: N. Rodenkirchen.

Norbert Rodenkirchen writes: "Das Schafsknochen Flötensolo zu Beginn der Zaubersprüche und Beschwörungen ist eine Improvisation, die jedoch von einem konkreten historischen Melodiemodell inspiriert ist. Es handelt sich bei dem Modell um die früheste nordische Melodie in einer eindeutigen Notenüberlieferung, "Dromte mig en drom i nat", überliefert in einem juristischen Codex des 14. Jh.s in Dänemark, dem Codex Runicus. Es ist ein Liedfragment, welches zusätzlich zu den Textrunen mit Quadratneumen aus der Choralnotation versehen wurde, wohl von einem Mönch aus Langeweile an den Rand der Rechtsabhandlung gekritzelt. Vermutlich war die Melodie allseits bekannt, sonst hätte der Schreiber sie trotz der spontanen Beiläufigkeit nicht so fehlerfrei und ohne Korrektur aufgeschrieben. Das Textfragment lautet äußerst rätselhaft: "Ich träumte des Nachts von Seide und feinsten Stoffen". Die Melodie übersteigt ebenso wie viele nordische traditionelle Melodien den Ambitus einer Quinte nicht und sie besitzt ferner einige motivische Eigenarten und Intervallkombinationen, wie man sie heute noch aus skandinavischen Volksesängen, vor allem in entlegeneren Gegenden, heraushören kann. Vielleicht sind sie sogar ein kleines Bruchstück eines archetypischen Erbes der heidnischen Wikingerzeit."

**Gang uz, nesso, mid niun nessimilnon** (Old High German charm against worms)

Music: recitation-formulae based on tuning of 8th-century harp: G-a-c-d-f-g.

Text: München, Bayr. Staatsbibl. clm 18524 (9<sup>th</sup> century).

Text edition: Walter Haug und Benedikt Konrad Vollmann (herausg.), *Frühe Deutsche Literatur 800-1150*, Frankfurt, 1999), p. 156.

Remarks: Musical reconstruction: B. Bagby. Polyphonic singing style and addition of flute based on simple organum at the 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Eiris sazun Idisi / Phol ende Wodan** (The 'Merseburg Magic Charms')

Musik: basiert auf melodischem Material der Schafknochenflöte sowie typischen Gesten der traditionellen nordischen *Kulning*-Gesangstechnik.

Text: Merseburg, Domstiftsbibliothek, Cod. 136, fol. 85r. (9. Jh.)

Text-Edition: Müller, S. (Hg.) ; *Althochdeutsche Literatur : eine kommentierte Anthologie* ; Stuttgart :

Reclam, 2007 ; S. 270.

Bemerkung: Musikalische Rekonstruktion (H.Marti und N.Rodenkirchen)

**Wyrn com snican, toslat he man** (from the Anglo-Saxon 'Nine Herbs Charm')

Music: improvised recitation based on four lowest tones of the harp tuned G-a-c-d-f-g (B. Bagby)

Text: London, BL Harley 585 (11c), excerpted from 'The Nine Herbs Charm' (found in *The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems*).

Text edition: Robert E. Bjork (edition and translation), *Old English Shorter Poems*, Vol. II. Harvard University Press, 2014) p. 194.

**Wenne, wenne, wen-chichenne** (Anglo-Saxon charm against a boil or cyst)

Music: improvised recitation based on four lowest tones of the harp tuned G-a-c-d-f-g (B. Bagby)

Text: London, BL Royal 4 A xiv (12c). Metrical charm 'Against a Wen' (found in *The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems*).

Text edition: Robert E. Bjork (edition and translation), *Old English Shorter Poems*, Vol. II. Harvard University Press, 2014) p. 226.

## II. Fortuna and Philosophia

**O varium Fortune lubricum** (on the nature of Fortune, Paris, late 12th century)

Music: based on the staffless neumed version in the 'Carmina Burana' manuscript (CB14), Munich, Bayr. Staatsbibl. Clm 4660, fol. 47v, transcribed by B. Bagby in conjunction with the 2-voice version found in Florence, Bibl. Med. Laur. Pluteus 29.1 fol. 351v.

Text edition: Benedikt Konrad Vollmann (ed.), *Carmina Burana: Texte und Übersetzungen* (Frankfurt/M., 1987), p. 42. Strophes 1, 3, 4.

Remarks: this is the first known attempt to reconstruct the neumed version of this song as found in CB.

*Metra* from the *Consolation of Philosophy* of Boethius (d. ca. 526) in musical settings from the *Cambridge Songs* (Canterbury, early 11th century):

**Tha waes ricra sum on Rome-byrig** (Anglo-Saxon prologue by King Alfred the Great, 9th century)

Source: London, BL Cotton MS Otho A.vi. (mid 10<sup>th</sup> century).

Text-Edition: S. Irvine and M. Godden, *The Old English Boethius* (Harvard Univ. Press, 2012), p. 8.

Remarks: The text performed here is excerpted from a much longer text (Meter 1) of King Alfred. It is spoken and then gradually sung, using the melodic material from the Boethian *metrum* 1,1 ('Carmina qui quondam studio') for which it serves as a preface. Musical realisation: B. Bagby,

**Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi** (Lament of Boethius in prison)

Musik: *olim* Geneva, Bibl. Bodmeriana 175, fol. 2r. [now in a private collection].

Text-Edition: [http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/Chronologia/Lspost06/Boethius/boe\\_con1.html](http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/Chronologia/Lspost06/Boethius/boe_con1.html) (Stand 12.2.2017)

Remarks: transcription by Sam Barrett (see: Barrett, S., *The melodic tradition of Boethius' 'De consolatione philosophiae' in the Middle Ages* (2 vols.), Kassel, 2013.

**Cum Phoebi radiis grave** (Philosophy's reply)

Musik: Napoli, Biblioteca Nazionale, IV. G. 68, f. 14v – 15r.

Text-Edition: [http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/Chronologia/Lspost06/Boethius/boe\\_con1.html](http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/Chronologia/Lspost06/Boethius/boe_con1.html) (Stand 12.2.2017)

Bemerkung: Musikalische Rekonstruktion (H.M. und Sam Barrett)

Vgl. dazu: Barrett, S. ; *The melodic tradition of Boethius' 'De consolatione philosophiae' in the Middle Ages* (2 Bde.) ; Kassel : Bärenreiter, 2013

**Nubibus atris** (Teaching of Philosophy)

Musik: Alençon, Bibliothèque municipale, 12, fol. 7r.

Text-Edition: [http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/Chronologia/Lspost06/Boethius/boe\\_con1.html](http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/Chronologia/Lspost06/Boethius/boe_con1.html) (Stand 12.2.2017)

Bemerkung: Musikalische Rekonstruktion (B.B. , H.M. und Sam Barrett)

Vgl. Dazu: Barrett, S. ; 2013

## III. Cleopatra and Dido: Suicidal Pagan Queens

**Nunc est bibendum** (Ode of Horace [65-8 B.C.E.], northern French songbook, late 11th-century)

Source: Horace Ode 'Vides ut alta' (1,9) as found with neumes in PET4 fol. 3r.

Transcription: B. Bagby and S. Barrett.

Text-Edition: C.E. Bennett, *Horace: The Odes and Epodes* (Harvard Univ. Press, 1914), p. 98.

Remarks: The reconstruction of this ode's melody is based on the only known neumed alcaic ode of Horace, found in the source used here (see Silvia Wälli, *Melodien aus mittelalterlichen Horaz-Handschriften* (Kassel, 2002), p. 228-9. Thanks to Sam Barrett for valuable assistance.

**Vaga** (instrumental version of a sequence from the Winchester Troper, 11th century)

Source: Corpus Christi 473, fol. 87v

Remarks: Sequela called 'Vaga' transcribed from the neumes of the Winchester tropers, 11c, also using the transcription of Bannister Hughes as second reference.

**O decus, o lybie regnum** (Lament of Dido, France, late 12th century; from the *Carmina Burana*)

Music: München, bayr. Staatsbibl. clm 4598, fol. 61v. (transcription by B. Bagby).

Text: 'Carmina Burana' manuscript (CB100), Munich, Bayr. Staatsbibl. Clm 4660,

Text edition: Benedikt Konrad Vollmann (ed.), *Carmina Burana: Texte und Übersetzungen* (Frankfurt/M., 1987), p. 364.

Remarks: this version, based on staffless neumes in the 13th century ms., is a re-working of a transcription originally made by B. Bagby in 1999. This the first known attempt to reconstruct this this song found neumed only in CB.

**Stans a longe** (instrumental version of a sequence by Notker of St. Gall, 9th century)

Source: 1. Corpus Christi 473, fol. 87R ; 2. Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliothek Ms 417; IV Orpheus: the Power of Song.

Remarks: Sequela originating from Notker's times in the 9c., transcribed after the neumes of the Winchester tropers, 11c, Corpus Christi College, and also using the well-readable sequence collection Utrecht Prosarium, 13c, as second reference.

**Felix qui potuit boni** (text by Boethius, from a *Cambridge Songs*, early 11th century)

Music: *olim* Geneva, Bibl. Bodmeriana 175, fol. 2r. [now in a private collection].

Text-Edition: [http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/Chronologia/Lspost06/Boethius/boe\\_con1.html](http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/Chronologia/Lspost06/Boethius/boe_con1.html) (Stand 12.2.2017)

Remarks: transcription by B. Bagby and Sam Barrett (see: Barrett, S., *The melodic tradition of Boethius' 'De consolatione philosophiae' in the Middle Ages* (2 vols.), Kassel, 2013.

In some performances, an alternate version may be performed, based on Alençon, Bibl. Municipale 12, fol. 33v. Transcription by S. Barrett.

**O fons Bandusie** (instrumental version of an Ode of Horace, southern French ms., ca. 1100)

Source: Southern French ms., ca. 1100

Remarks: Instrumental boneflute version of an original early 11<sup>th</sup> century melody to an Ode of Horace, using Benjamin Bagby's song transcription in an orally transmitted process of learning the melody just by listening to it, as the only reference for this instrumental version.

**Collis erat collemque** (from the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, 43 BCE - 18 AD)

Musik: Basiert auf Horaz-Vertonungen des Mittelalters. Vgl. dazu: Wälli, S. ; *Melodien aus mittelalterlichen Horaz-Handschriften : Edition und Interpretation der Quellen* ; Kassel : Bärenreiter, 2002

Text-Edition: Fink, G. ; *Ovid : Metamorphosen* ; Düsseldorf : Artemis und Winkler, 2009

Bemerkung: Musikalische Rekonstruktion (H.M.) Ausschnitt aus Soloprogramm ORPHEUS (<http://www.hannamarti.com/ovidius>)

## V. Hercules: Heroic Inspiration

**Prima Olenei tolerata** (Hexameter from the *Carmina Burana* ms., early 13th century)

Source: 'Carmina Burana' manuscript (CB64), Munich, Bayr. Staatsbibl. Clm 4660,

Text edition: Benedikt Konrad Vollmann (ed.), *Carmina Burana: Texte und Übersetzungen* (Frankfurt/M., 1987), p. 214 ('De XII virtutibus Herculis').

**Bella bis quinis** (text by Boethius, from the *Cambridge Songs*, early 11th century)

Musik: Oxford, Bodleian Library Auct. F. I. 15, f. 64v. (Rekonstruktion Sam Barrett)

Text-Edition: [http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/Chronologia/Lspost06/Boethius/boe\\_con1.html](http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/Chronologia/Lspost06/Boethius/boe_con1.html) (Stand 12.2.2017)

Musik-Edition: Barrett, S. ; 2013 ; Bd. 2, S. 88

Bemerkung: Musikalische Rekonstruktion basiert auf der diastematischen Notation im norditalienischen Traktat *De Musica* des Pseudo-Odo (ca. 1000) (vgl. Barret, S. ; 2013)

**B Olim sudor Herculis** (Pierre de Blois [d.1212], from *The Later Cambridge Songs*, 13th century)

Source: 'Carmina Burana' manuscript (CB63), Munich, Bayr. Staatsbibl. Clm 4660 (text only)

Music: Cambridge, University Library MS Ff.I.17(I), fol. 5R

Transcription: B. Bagby, with reference to John Stevens, *The Later Cambridge Songs* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2005), p. 101.

Text edition: Benedikt Konrad Vollmann (ed.), *Carmina Burana: Texte und Übersetzungen* (Frankfurt/M., 1987), p. 208.

Remarks: one double-strophe of the song is not performed here for reasons of program length. In some cases reference is made to the other musical source of this piece, Florence, Bibl. Med. Laur. Pluteus 29.1 fol. 417r. The attribution to Pierre de Blois is by Peter Dronke.