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Cibo e salute nelle tradizioni germaniche medievali
Food and Health in the Germanic Middle Ages

ABSTRACTS

Chiara Benati – Claudia Händl, ‘Cibo e salute nelle tradizioni germaniche medievali: un approccio filologico’, *Filologia germanica – Germanic Philology* Supplemento 3 (2022), pp. 1-10.

Cibo e salute costituiscono due necessità universali al centro della vita e dell’attività umana quotidiana tanto oggi, quanto nel Medioevo. Nell’ambito degli studi medievistici questi temi possono essere affrontati da prospettive e con metodologie diverse. Altrettanto variegata sono le possibilità di studio di questi temi offerti da una scienza quale la filologia germanica in Italia per sua natura aperta alla multidisciplinarietà e alla comparazione di tradizioni diverse. Lo studio dei primi testi nelle lingue germaniche può, infatti, contribuire significativamente alla conoscenza delle abitudini alimentari, della cultura del cibo, del concetto di salute, del rapporto tra salute e malattia e delle pratiche terapeutiche nel Medioevo non solo attraverso lo studio di fonti dirette appartenenti alla *Fachliteratur* (libri di cucina, ricettari, testi di dietetica, *Tischzuchten*, trattati di medicina e chirurgia, formule magiche e benedizioni di guarigione), ma anche attraverso la lettura critica di passi riferiti a banchetti e momenti conviviali, al digiuno, alla malattia e alla ricerca della salute contenuti nei testi letterari, giuridici, omiletici e agiografici.

Maria Giovanna Arcamone, ‘Cibo e benessere presso i Germani antichi’, *Filologia germanica – Germanic Philology* Supplemento 3 (2022), pp. 11-32.

That part of western Europe known as Germanic *Barbaricum* was made up, in the north, of Southern Scandinavia, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and the coasts of present-day Netherlands and Germany, in the center of a large part of the great plain stretching from France to the Urals, and, in the south, of an equally large portion of the densely wooded European *Mittelgebirge*. The study of common Germanic vocabulary provides clear evidence for the natural resources used by the inhabitants of the ancient *Germania*. Furthermore, it can prove that the Germanic peoples adopted foods and food-preparation previously unknown to them after coming into contact with the Roman culture. Such study also shows that the ancient Germans introduced a number of their own indigenous foodstuffs and food names, when they settled in the *Romània*. Three newly proposed Germanic etymologies of Italian words concerning foods confirm the influence Germanic peoples had on Italian food culture.

Sarah Baccianti, ‘Guaritori, acquasanta e latte materno: alcuni resoconti di pratiche e incantesimi medici nell’Islanda medievale’, *Filologia germanica – Germanic Philology* Supplemento 3 (2022), pp. 33-52.

This paper seeks to offer an exploration of the role played by medicine and miracles in the healing of wounds and bodies in a handful of examples from the *Byskupasögur*. This aspect, which so far

has not been studied, is fundamental in the research of the transmission and reception of medical knowledge in medieval Scandinavia, more specifically in medieval Iceland. Moreover, this study investigates how some of the cures present in the *Byskupasögur* can be found also in the Old Norse-Icelandic medical treatise Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, 23 D 43, which provides useful parallels with the Anglo-Saxon medical tradition.

Chiara Benati, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung des *Feldtbuchs der Wundarzney*: Luzern, Zentral- und Hochschulbibliothek, pp 27 4°', *Filologia germanica – Germanic Philology* Supplemento 3 (2022), pp. 53-71.

This study focuses on the manuscript fragment of one of the earliest and most influential surgical handbooks printed in Germany, the *Feldtbuch der Wundarzney* by Hans von Gersdorff (1517), transmitted in Luzern, Zentral- und Hochschulbibliothek, Pp 27 4° (early eighteenth century), which represents one of the latest examples of the reception of the field surgery manual and which will, therefore, allow investigating not only the reasons why some 200 years after its first publication this compilation of authoritative sources still deserved some interest, but also the textual and discursive modifications undergone by the text in this time span. In this, particular attention will be paid to the philological, linguistic, and terminological analysis of the fragment, in order to highlight any evolution and modification in the medical discourse across these two centuries and, specifically, in the passage from the printed medium to the manuscript form.

Daniela Fruscione – Letizia Vezzosi, 'Þær mæn drincen: law and drinking', *Filologia germanica – Germanic Philology* Supplemento 3 (2022), pp. 73-118.

The topic of drinking has recently aroused great interest in the field of historical-social and anthropological studies in relation to the various forms of social and community rituals and their components. Most attention has been paid to drinking as a complementary component of cooking and eating rituals. However, one cannot ignore that drinking plays a much more important role in Old Germanic societies, as is evident in both literary and non-literary sources. The ritual of drinking is often mentioned on occasion of the signing of agreements, of marriage contracts as well as a means of strengthening mutual relationships or of formalizing the promise to meet the obligations that the relationship required. In the present study, taking the Anglo-Saxon and Norse literatures as a reference, we would like to identify more precisely the role of drinking as attested in literary sources and figure out whether literary pictures of the act of drinking can be accounted for as reflexes of change in society and accordingly in laws. Written Anglo-Saxon legislation, from its Kentish beginnings in the seventh century to the twelfth century, offers a good field for analysis of the topic of drinking. First of all, being written in the vernacular and not in Latin, it is the only early medieval legislation that offers insight into an early vocabulary of drinking. In addition, the Anglo-Saxon laws allow us to observe the progression between two attitudes towards drinking. The earliest Kentish laws still reflect an archaic concept of drinking as a quasi-judicial institution which enjoys special protection. In relation to the interaction of Germanic law with a converted Christian order, later laws show that the influence of Christianity marked a turning-point in developing an idea of drinking as one of the sins that Archbishop Wulfstan loved to deploy in his homilies.

Elvira Glaser, 'Schweizer Kochbuchhandschriften im spätmittelalterlich-frühneuzeitlichen Kulturkontakt', *Filologia germanica – Germanic Philology* Supplemento 3 (2022), pp. 119-139.

The article first gives a brief overview of the late medieval handwritten tradition of cooking recipes in German-speaking Switzerland, the importance of which recedes behind the richer tradition of the

Eastern Upper German area. The border region of Low and High Alemannic only gains visibility with a handwritten copy of the *Küchenmeisterei* print at the end of the 15th century. In the following, two manuscripts which have only become known in recent years and which show lexical references to the Italian language area will be examined in more detail: the Solothurn manuscript S 392 (around 1500) and the Chur manuscript StAGR NH2 (1559/17th century). The Italianisms of the Solothurn recipe collection – including an early testimony of *ravioli* – are probably due to a specific source that has not yet been determined; those of the Chur cookbook, which appear mainly in the younger parts of the manuscript, are likely to derive from various sources, possibly also oral ones, of the southern Alemannic-Romance border area, as discussed in some examples. The older part of the Chur cookbook, on the other hand, points linguistically and according to the watermarks to the eastern border region with Bavarian. The recipe tradition as a whole is a testimony of late medieval - early modern cultural contacts.

Claudia Händl, 'Essen und Trinken in der deutschsprachigen Lyrik des Spätmittelalters. Zum Funktionswandel der Schlemmerthematik in den sogenannten Herbstliedern', *Filologia germanica – Germanic Philology Supplemento 3* (2022), pp. 141-171.

The so-called 'Autumn songs' celebrating the joys of this season have a particular position in late medieval German lyric poetry. This tradition begins with Steinmar's Autumn song, a sophisticated literary experiment referring to the traditional courtly love lyric, in which the love for the *Minnedame* is rejected in favour of the devotion to the Autumn. Hadlaub's experimenting with this new song form becomes the occasion for opposing a less radical joy concept to Steinmar's absolute vision. The songs by Ulrich von Baumburg and Wizlav demonstrate that the Autumn glutton theme in the poetic production around 1300 is more and more often used exclusively to enlarge the motif repertoire. In fourteenth-century lyric the glutton theme is more and more detached from the love one, the opposition between the seasons is no longer used argumentatively to discuss poetological positions and the glutton theme is mainly aimed at representing the Autumn wanton life. The anonymously transmitted song *Neidtharcz gefräß* represents the peak of the new song type introduced by Steinmar. The sole theme is now the excessive praise of the manifold gifts of the Autumn which do not only include the unsurpassed abundance of culinary pleasures, but also – as clear counterpole to courtly love – erotic joys.

Norbert Kössinger, 'Literatur als Medizin. Zum *Armen Heinrich* als Seuchenspruch', *Filologia germanica – Germanic Philology Supplemento 3* (2022), pp. 173-187.

In a 16th-century manuscript from the Bamberg Carmelites (Staatsbibliothek, Msc. Theol. 225, Bl. 16r) a Latin pest recipe has survived, which bears the heading *Pauperis Heinrici praeservativum ab epidemia*. The short text, which Gerhard Eis already published in 1949, is newly edited in the present contribution with its parallel tradition. Based on the Latin recipe the essay analyzes the relationship between literature and medicine with regard to the history of Hartmann von Aue's *Armer Heinrich*.

Patrizia Lendinara, 'Food Miracles in the Early Lives of St Cuthbert', *Filologia germanica – Germanic Philology Supplemento 3* (2022), pp. 189-223.

One of the earliest Lives of Saints written in England is the anonymous Life of Saint Cuthbert, which was soon followed by the two Lives written by Bede. These three works will be examined with respect to the typologies of food miracles involving Cuthbert, which are either narrated in all

the three Lives or are found in only one of these works (see the Appendix for a synoptic list). Food miracles are reported in the Bible and occur in numerous medieval hagiographies and other texts concerning the life and deeds of a saint. The food miracles which involve Cuthbert are apparently routine events, but in three instances they also reveal his power of foreknowledge. Cuthbert providentially receives food before taking his vows and when he is a monk at Melrose and Ripon. In these episodes, food is bestowed upon Cuthbert, who is portrayed as a rather passive recipient. On the other hand, the food miracles that take place during his hermitage on Inner Farne, including those occurring in the days of his last retreat to this small island, are enacted by Cuthbert. As will become evident, the nature of the miracles changes in parallel with the steps of his life. The variation in typology, as well as the difference within the same kind of food miracle, account for the complexity of this saintly figure.

Almut Mikeleits-Winter, 'In fannun kasuezzit – Kochen und Essen in der Überlieferung des Althochdeutschen', *Filologia germanica – Germanic Philology Supplemento* 3 (2022), pp. 225-259.

The transmission of the Old High German language in texts and glosses from the middle of the 8th century onwards is completely tied to the Latin tradition with its primary content of Christian theology and the spreading of faith. For this period, genuine specialist texts concerning cooking and cuisine (e.g., recipes) do not exist. Therefore, the specific vocabulary for preparing food, for eating and drinking has to be unearthed in other sources. Such words certainly can be found in the texts of the religious-spiritual sphere, but often in a metaphorical usage. Moreover, in many cases the texts of the Bible or of classical antiquity, which are the basis of translation and glossing, do not reflect the reality of medieval life. For this reason, every single occurrence of a word must be subjected to an individual philological analysis, paying special attention to the textual context and the different types of translation. Taking the verbs of food preparation (which is understood here in a broader sense) as an example, one can demonstrate that an astonishingly diverse and differentiated inventory of culinary expressions can be identified. However, the number of attestations is often low, and in some cases there is not enough evidence to describe the entire semantic spectrum as well as syntactic aspects of a word. Hence, it is essential to supplement the linguistic findings with other historical sources such as written sources, pictorial sources, or the discoveries of archeology and archaeobotany.

Laura Poggesi, 'Rimedi per le emorragie: esempi da un inedito manoscritto in medio inglese', *Filologia germanica – Germanic Philology Supplemento* 3 (2022), pp. 261-285.

Medieval physiological system, based on the humoral theory, gave a great importance to blood, which was considered responsible for carrying nutrients in the body and regulating humoral balance. Phlebotomy was one of the forms of treatment mostly practiced to eliminate corrupted humours which may cause illness. However, an excessive loss of blood could be dangerous and harmful as well and, for this reason, it was of fundamental importance to regulate bleeding. This essay proposes an analysis of six Middle English medical recipes and a charm to stop haemorrhage contained in a 15th century medical compendium: Cambridge, Trinity College, R.14.32 which has not been edited yet. The aim is to investigate medical techniques to cease bleeding and restore health. The presence of a charm along with the recipes is a witness of the coexistence of medicine and magic as healing devices regarded as equally effective. All the texts will be considered in relation to the manuscript context in which they are found. This approach would highlight the place and function of the codex as a repository of medical learning in Middle English. Moreover, the study of remedies recorded in the form of recipes paves the way to a reconsideration of the role of these texts – sometimes considered of popular production and of secondary importance in

comparison with learned treatises – in the dissemination of medical knowledge in Late Medieval England

Carla Riviello, 'Mangiare e bere tra i Mirmidoni: fonti apocrife nelle rappresentazioni in inglese antico', *Filologia germanica – Germanic Philology* Supplemento 3 (2022), pp. 287-308.

The apocryphal tale of Matthew, captured by the anthropophagous Mermedonians, as well as the tale of Andrew, inspired by God to save the other apostle and to carry on his evangelizing mission, were widely spread throughout Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. In the Old English tradition, the account is related in the poem *Andreas* and in a homily preserved in CCC 198. The comparison between the vernacular texts and the Greek and Latin analogues allows us to observe that in each version the process of conversion is built upon the decannibalization of the Mermedonians. Cannibalism is represented through a play between oppositions and allusions which unifies the different sections of the tale. However, within a structure that is mostly shared among the several versions, the homily and the poem seem to adapt independently the source material for their target audience. They both employ particular strategies in order to offer a coherent and cohesive text with effective and meaningful images.