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Beyond Cursing: The Appeal to Justice in Judicial Prayers

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In 1972 a lead tablet was found in Italica (Spain) with the following, partially mutilated text (second century A.D.):¹

Domna Fons Foyi [. . .]
 ut tu persequaris tuas
 res demando quiscun-
 que caligas meas tel-
 luit et solias tibi
 illa demando {ut} ut
 illas aq̄itor si quis
 puella si mulier siue
 [ho]mo inuolauit
 [. . .] illos persequaris.

Except for a few sections, the translation is not difficult:

O Mistress (*domina*) Spring Foyi . . . , I ask that you track down (or claim) your possessions. Whoever has stolen my shoes and sandals (*telluit*, perfect of *tollo*) I ask that you. . . . (?) Whether it is a girl, a woman or a man who stole them . . . pursue them.

The text is written on lead and had obviously been deposited in the spring that is addressed in the opening line; both characteristics naturally reminded scholars of the *defixiones* discussed at the start of this volume. The text, however, has remained puzzling, and no satisfactory interpretation has been offered to date. How can we explain that the stolen possessions of a person are at the same time called the property (lit., "the affairs") of a goddess? The text is also peculiar, because of, among other things, the double use of *persequaris* with two different objects and hence two different meanings.

I want to show that the text of the Italica tablet, as well as a number of related texts, cannot be understood if they are considered as *defixiones* in the traditional meaning of that term. Secondly I shall demonstrate that in this respect the isolation of Greek and Latin texts has been a hindrance, since it is only in comparison with the Greek material that many Latin "curse" texts can be correctly interpreted; but even then we have to look outside the limited domain of the *defixiones*. These new interpretations are offered within the larger framework of an overview of the texts

that, although reminiscent of the *defixio*, in reality form another category, which I shall refer to as "judicial prayers" or "prayers for legal help." I have attempted to give a complete survey of these prayers insofar as they are epigraphical or papyrological in character—with the exception of a few categories that have already been described at length or form a separate group, such as, for example, the public prayer for revenge or the confession inscriptions. Rather than cite all texts completely here, I have restricted myself, as far as the argument allows it, to translation.² I am not the first to study the judicial prayer: Ziebarth, Steinleitner, Zingerle, Björck, and Latte have already come to important conclusions.³ But the quantity of new material, particularly the Latin, has increased to such an extent that substantial interpretative progress has become possible. In addition it seems that the research into these types of texts has practically been at a standstill for several decades—so much so that very recently a prayer for revenge on papyrus was published⁴ without the (very able) editor even alluding to the genre to which it belonged or the relevant literature dealing with it.

"*Defixiones*, more commonly known as curse tablets, are inscribed pieces of lead, usually in the form of small, thin sheets, intended to influence, by supernatural means, the actions or the welfare of persons or animals against their will" is the definition of D. Jordan.⁵ For a complete discussion of these texts, I can refer to the contribution by Faraone (chap. 1). I shall make only a few introductory remarks indispensable to my argument. If most *defixiones* are lead tablets (there are a few exceptions), this purely formal characteristic must not seduce us into claiming that the reverse is also true, namely, that all short texts written on thin sheets of lead are *defixiones*. Their implicit or explicit purpose is another and far more important element; the victim must be "bound" (according to Greek terminology) or "nailed down" (as the Latin puts it)⁶—which may include a wide variety of different meanings from "making powerless and unable to take action" to "making ill" (often with a detailed enumeration of the bodily parts to be afflicted) to "killing" (only rarely). In addition, most *defixiones* were either buried in the grave of an *ἄωρος*, that is, "a person untimely dead" or in chthonic sanctuaries or placed in wells for reasons explained by Faraone. The older examples normally do not give more than the name(s) of the victim(s), a practice maintained throughout classical antiquity, or the simple formula "I bind NN," which betrays the "mechanical" and more or less "automatic" procedure usually associated with magic. The involvement of the gods or the daemons in the action seems to be a result of an evolution that (though the first attestations already date from the fifth century B.C.) reaches perfection only in the imperial period. Even then, these supernatural helpers are instructed or compelled to go about their destructive task. One may, then, for reasons of systematic classification, speak of "the prayer formula," but we should realize that we are employing the minimum criteria of a prayer. This is apparent from the overt imperative tone in which the gods or daemons are ordered to do whatever the author of the tablet wishes them to do.⁷

Most noticeable is the fact that notions of supplication or vow are absent or extremely rare in the *defixiones*.⁸ If and when they occur, they should arouse our suspicions about the nature of the text; as we shall see, these aberrations are indeed

often accompanied by other elements that are atypical for the taxonomy of the *defixiones*. The nature of the gods addressed also changes over time. In the earlier period they belong exclusively to the sphere of death and the underworld and appear to be liable to forms of manipulation that the Olympian deities would not easily tolerate. As for the social context, purposes, and functions of the curses, Audollent and others⁹ made a classification of four categories: (1) rivalry in the theater, amphitheater, and circus; (2) competition in the world of love; (3) rivalry connected with litigation; and (4), damages of any kind (especially theft and slander) caused to the author by someone else. Faraone has quite rightly added, at Jordan's suggestion, a category for commercial curses, which he substitutes for category number 4 above. Just as Winkler argues in chapter 8 for a functional interpretation of the amatory curses in the context of the Mediterranean struggle for life and honor in a thoroughly competitive society, so Faraone interprets the curses concerning the circus, lawsuits, and commerce as just another means of fighting with envious and often hostile rivals on a day-to-day basis. Both interpretations seem to me to be particularly convincing and revealing.

I must, however, draw special attention to a supposition that although conceivable, may be mistaken. The intended victims in all four of Faraone's categories are not being cursed because they are guilty of any crime or misdeed against the *defigens* but rather because they are his rivals with regard to social prestige or economic position, and any attack against their social position will result in an increase of his own honor. Accordingly, we find in the *defixiones* neither justification for the cursing action nor the names of their authors. The absence of the author's name (to which there are only a few exceptions) may be partly explained by the fear of being accidentally cursed by the "nailing" of one's own name (which would be inscribed next to the victim's) or by fear of countermagic. There are, however, strong social pressures that also encourage such anonymity. As one anthropologist put it, the basic rule of the Mediterranean "amoral familist" (his designation for the "able protector" of other ethnologists) is, "Maximize the material, short-term advantage of the nuclear family; assume that all others will do likewise."¹⁰ And although in this competition practically any means or method (including "black magic") is employed, a sharp and consistent distinction is maintained between exploits of which one may publicly boast (e.g., to have outmaneuvered competitors by cunning or even wily tricks; cf. the ambiguous "Odyssean" meaning of *πονηρός* in modern Greek) and actions that are *never* confessed either publicly or privately.

This is indeed a classic instance of a double standard of morality, a fact that may vitiate the argument in the essays of Winkler and Faraone that all methods used to further the aims of the family were also morally approved or socially tolerated. Individuals may indeed try to spoil the milk, the crops, or the procreation of a neighbor by magical means and even feel that this is inevitable if they wish to protect their own families. Nevertheless, they know full well that the act is strongly condemned by all other members of the society, just as they themselves would publicly condemn similar attempts made by others. There is at this point a tension between public morality and private enterprise in the modern Mediterranean, as there was in the ancient. Acts of black magic (real or suspected) were denounced as

threats to social stability and cohesion on account of their harmful intentions (*maleficium*) and their relationship to the uncanny (*superstitio*). Nor is this negative attitude toward malevolent magic restricted to philosophers such as Plato¹¹ or to official legislation such as the Laws of the Twelve Tables at Rome, which explicitly forbade incantation for harmful purposes (followed by many laws in the imperial period that outlawed magic). We have evidence that similar attitudes existed in more or less private circles; the terror and disapproval that followed the fortuitous find in the nineteen sixties of a magical curse in a grave in modern Greece and the official execration of its author by the village priest¹² have a splendid parallel in an event narrated by a Latin inscription from Tuder (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* 11.3639), in which Iuppiter O. M. is thanked for bringing to light a buried *defixio* that cursed a number of *decuriones* and praised for having liberated the city from fear. A public slave is charged with the nefarious act. Surely his name was *not* on the tablet, just as there was no hint of the name of the person who inscribed the *defixiones* that were discovered in the walls and floors of the house of Germanicus after his supposedly unnatural death (*Tac. Ann.* 2.69), a discovery that similarly caused terror in the masses and subsequently led to the execution of a scapegoat of senatorial rank. There can be little doubt that this social abhorrence is the main reason why people did not add their signatures to what must be unconditionally labeled as an instrument of black magic. Accordingly these tablets are often and correctly described as *Schadenzauber*, "magic tablets," "magical curses," and so on.

Now although some conception of the *defixio* certainly existed in antiquity, we should always remember that the definition of this term is in some sense a modern creation. In this connection, a remark made by Björck has never been sufficiently appreciated: "Man möchte sagen dass der Begriff der Tabella Defixionis nicht so sehr in der Wirklichkeit verankert ist wie vielmehr in Audollent's Sammlung."¹³ He alludes here to the existence of texts on lead tablets that satisfy some but not all the characteristics discussed above and that nevertheless are generally referred to as *defixiones* because they were included in Audollent's corpus. As we might expect, this pertains above all to Audollent's fourth category, which, eliminated from the discussion of traditional early Greek *defixiones* by Faraone, becomes the central focus of my essay. This category is the least extensive of the four, and it will quickly become evident that all the examples Audollent gives (summed up on his p. xc) belong to a "borderline" group and that some even fall completely outside the boundaries of the *defixio*. The texts in Audollent's collection that mention the name of the sender are few and mostly belong to his fourth category (p. xlv).¹⁴ A group of judicial *defixiones*, particularly those from Amathous on Cyprus are one exception.¹⁵ Here we can probably assume that the writers felt for some reason morally justified in having recourse to the extra help of the *defixio*. There are also some erotic *defixiones* in which the name of the sender appears.¹⁶

I shall introduce texts that carry all the obvious characteristics of the *defixio* but that also have particularities pointing to another kind of mentality. I shall limit myself at first to the Greek material (the Latin will follow later) and hope—on the strength of the material collected in *Defixionum Tabellae Atticae*, *Defixionum Tabellae*, and "Survey of Greek Defixiones" (texts found after the publication of the book collections)—to be able to lay claim to some degree of completeness.

THE BORDER AREA

The gods named in the *defixiones* invariably either belong to the dominion of death, the underworld, the chthonic or are reputed to have connections with magic. Kagarow (p. 59–61) names, in order of frequency, Hermes, Kore/Persephone, Hecate, Hades/Pluto, Ge, and Demeter. In addition, the Erinyes, the nymphs, Egyptian and oriental gods such as Osiris and Typhon, and many daemons appear. In principle they carry out tasks not as representatives of right or morality but on the strength of their dark nature. The only possible exceptions, namely the Erinyes, have in the period of the *defixiones* generally become daemonic Furies.¹⁷ In this respect there is only one real exception, unmistakable because the name expresses the function clearly: Praxidike or the Praxidikai. These goddesses—most likely related to the Erinyes—are called upon for help only rarely,¹⁸ clearly “to do justice.” Particularly interesting is *DTA* 109, in which the Praxidikai are asked to restrain a victim: *φίλοι Πραξιδικαί κατέχετε αὐτόν*. The text concludes, “To you, Praxidikai and Hermes Restrainer, I shall, when Manes has fallen on hard times, bring an offer of rejoicing.” Such a *votum* is, although not unique, still very exceptional in a *defixio*.¹⁹

If the Praxidikai have to carry out justice, as they clearly do, the sender obviously feels that he or she has been injured by someone. This sentiment is indeed expressed several times. Sometimes the injustice is explicitly mentioned. An unpublished tablet from Athens (first or second century A.D.)²⁰ curses “whoever gave a *pharmakon* to Hyacinthos.” Likewise, an unpublished tablet in the Ashmolean museum (perhaps fourth century A.D.)²¹ curses “whoever bewitched (*κατέδεσεν*) me, whether woman, man, slave, free, foreigner, townsman. . . .”

An Athenian *defixio* (second century A.D., *DT* 74) curses, (*καταγράφω κ(αἰ) κατατ[ίθω]*) and wishes fever for, whoever “keeps and does not return” (*τοῦ κα(τά)σχοντος κ(αἰ) οὐκ ἀποδ[όντος]*)²² a certain object. At the end it also curses *Παῦλον λιθοξόον / [. . .] ο συνγνώντα* (“Paulus, the stonemason, who has knowledge of the matter”). Practically identical in formula, time, and place, another tablet (*DT* 75) curses “the thief” (*τοῦ κλέπτ[ου]*). Sometimes more details are given. A tablet from Megara (*DT* 42, first or second century A.D.) gives on one side a curse of every conceivable part of the body in the typical manner of a *defixio*. On the other side the motive is explained. The text is quite mutilated, but we can clearly make out that the writer was (unfairly) accused of borrowing twenty denarii without returning them even though he had just repaid the debt. At other times we can gather from the terminology itself that the writer felt that he had been injured with regard to his rights. In the case of a second-century-A.D. tablet from Messana (*SEG* 4.47 = *SGD* 114) we should still, perhaps, hesitate; a woman is cursed who is called *ἀμαρτωλόν* (“criminal, sinful”), but this can often be an ordinary term of abuse, as she is also called *σκύζαν* (“lust”). Terms of abuse do not occur often in *defixiones*,²³ but we do encounter the term *ἀμαρτωλός*²⁴ once more on an Attic *defixio*, which contains an undeniable reference to the victim’s guilt (*DTA* 103, fourth century B.C.): “To Hermes and Persephone I send this letter. Because I direct this (curse) against criminal people (*ἀμαρ[τωλοῦς]*), they must, O Dike, receive their deserved punishment (*τυχεῖν τέλο(υ)ς δίκης*).” Related to this text and to the text with the Praxidikai quoted above is the following curse from Centuripae on

Sicily (*SEG* 4.61 = *SGD* 115, first century A.D.): “Mistress, destroy Eleutheros. If you avenge me (*ἐ(κ)δεικήσης*), I shall make a silver palm, if you eliminate him from the human race.” The verb *ἐκδικέω* is a technical term in revenge texts on graves, and just like Latin *vindicare* it means, among other things, “to take revenge on someone on account of an injustice suffered.” We should note that here again a *votum* is promised. A reference to revenge or punishment is usually a signal that the text is some sort of prayer for justice, for instance, in a text from Megara (*DT* 41, first or second century A.D.). It contains two operative verbs: *καταγράφω* (a familiar word in Greek *defixiones*) and *ἀναθεματίζομεν*, a unique term to which the *anathema* mentioned at the end of the text undoubtedly refers. It expresses the wish that the cursed person will moan and that his blood and flesh will burn. Finally, it directs the curse to “punishment and retaliation and revenge”: [*κατα*]γράφ[ο]μεν, [*εἰς*] κολάσε[ις . . .] καὶ [ποι]νὴν καὶ [τι]μ[ωρ]ίαν. We are quite obviously in an atypical setting here; several elements betray a Jewish influence²⁵ and I think that in the quoted passages the punishments of hell are intended, just as the term *κόλασις* by itself also meant “hell.”²⁶ If justice is looked for, it is in this case to be found in the hereafter.

Sometimes the writer only mentions that he has been “unfairly treated.” *DTA* 102 (fourth century B.C., Attic) begins as follows: “I send a letter²⁷ to the daemons and to Persephone and ‘deliver’ to them Tibitis, daughter of Choirine, who has wronged me (*τὴν ἐμ(ε) ἀδικο(ῦ)σαν*).” In *DTA* 120 (third century B.C., Attic) the victim is similarly designated: *τὸ[ν] ἐμ(ε) ἀτιμο(ῦ)ντα* (“who has treated me shamefully”). And on a very severely mutilated tablet (*DTA* 158, third century B.C., Attic) we read, *το[ῖς] ἀδικο(ῦ)μένοις . . . ἀδικο(ῦ)μέν[οις] . . . (κ)αὶ δίκ[η] . . .*.²⁸

Another Attic tablet with the verb *ἀδικέω* presents us with an additional feature; *DTA* 98 (third century B.C.) curses Euryptolemos and Xenophon with terminology usually associated with *defixiones*, but it ends as follows: *φίλη Γῆ, βοήθει μοι. ἀδικούμενος γὰρ ὑπὸ Εὐρυπτολέμου καὶ Ξενοφώντος καταδῶ αὐτοὺς* (“Dear Earth, help me. It is because I was wronged by Euryptolemos and Xenophon that I curse them”). We immediately feel a change in atmosphere. It is no longer an instruction to the god with an automatic result, but a flattering (*φίλη!*) request for help. And this request is supported by a reference to the injustice suffered. Perhaps more than argumentation is hiding in the phrase *ἀδικούμενος γὰρ*. A fourth-century B.C. Attic tablet points in still another direction (*DTA* 100): “Saturos from Sounion and Demetrios and all of them as well, whoever else [is hostile] to me. I bind (*καταδῶ*) them, [I] Onesime. All of them, their persons and their acts against me I entrust to you, in order that you ‘take care’ of them, Hermes Restrainer, restrain their names, and all that belongs to them.” In this first part of the text we find the traditional terminology of a *defixio*, particularly in the use of the verb *καταδῶ*. But it is remarkable that the writer makes herself known—Onesime. Then the tone changes abruptly:

Ἐρμῇ καὶ Γῇ, ἱκετεύω ὑμᾶς τηρ(ε)ῖν
ταῦτα καὶ τούτους κολάζ(ε)τ(ε)
σφάζετε τῇ[ν] μολυβδοκόπον

Hermes and Ge, I beg you to take care of all of this and punish them,
but [save her] who has “struck” the lead.

The verb *ἵκετεύω* means "to plead"; and as such, just like the phrase "help me" in the previous text, it is not exactly at home in the text of a traditional *defixio*. The key word here is *κολάζ(ε)τ(ε)*, which implies a justified punishment. What is of the greatest interest, however, is the closing passage, which (although it is mutilated) almost certainly asks that the writer of the tablet herself should suffer no harm. It seems as though she excuses herself for this indecent but unfortunately unavoidable device.

We encounter a similar tone in a very elaborate curse text from Athens (SGD 21, first century A.D.).²⁹ Someone curses and "deposits" (the verbs are *καταγράφω* *κὲ κατατίθεμε*) in the name of a number of gods of the underworld, including Hecate, the one who stole some articles of clothing mentioned in the text, as well as those who know about it but deny knowing it (*ἐτι κατατίθεμε κὲ τοὺς συνειδότας τῇ κλέψει κὲ ἀρ[ουμ]ένους*). Hecate, who is addressed directly several times (*ὦ δέσποινα Ἑκάτη*) is given the task "to cut the heart of the thieves or the thief." Despite these unique characteristics, the whole text is very similar to a traditional *defixio*. The author is clearly aware of this, for in the editor's version the first four lines we find:

[. . .] ἐς σ[έ]βον μὲ τὸν [κ]αταγρά-
φοντα κὲ τὸν ἀπολέ[σαντα] ὅτι οὐκ ἔ-
κων ἀλλὰ ἀνακαζ[όμεν]ος διὰ τοῦς
κλέπτας τοῦτο ποιεῖ.

Jordan has informed me privately that instead of [. . .] ἐς σ[έ]βον μὲ, he reads *ἐξέερουμε* at the beginning of the first line. Interpreting this as *ἐξαιρούμαι*, we can then translate:

I make an exception for the one who is writing this *defixio* and thereby destroying the thieves, because he does not do this voluntarily but is forced³⁰ by the thieves.

It is as if the author contends that he does *not* belong in the collections of Wunsch and Audollent. But where does he belong? We will discover this forthwith with the help of a text that marks the transition between the traditional *defixio* and what we usually call prayer.

In 1957 a lead curse tablet was discovered on the island of Delos (SGD 58, first century B.C. or first century A.D.?) covered with writing on both sides. I shall discuss both sides, albeit not in the same sequence as the original editor.³¹ Side B begins as follows:

[Κύριοι] Θεοὶ οἱ Συκοναῖοι [?] ΤΟΙΚΟΥΠΙ-
—Κυρία Θε(ᾶ) Συρία ΗΙ . . . ΤΟΙ . . . Συκο[να]
[ἐκδικ]ήσετε κὲ (ᾶ)ρετὴν γεν(ν)ήσετε.
[κατα]γράφω τὸν ἄραντα, τὸν κλέ-
ψαντα τὸ δραύκι(ο)ν· καταγράφω τοὺς
συνιδότε(ς), τοὺς μέρο[ς] λα[βό]ντες.

Although without a doubt the characteristics of the traditional *defixio* predominate, we can once again detect a different kind of mentality in the opening lines:

Lords gods Sykoniai . . . , Lady goddess Syria . . . Sykona, punish, and give expression to your wondrous power.³² I curse the one who took away, who stole, my necklace. I curse those who had knowledge of it, those who participated.

A recital of the specific parts of the body to be bound follows "from head to toe," identical to the lists found in traditional *defixiones*, and then we read the catchall phrase, "whether (the crook be) woman or man." We immediately recognize the verb *ἐκδικέω*, which (as we have seen above) signals the prayer for justice. It is this aspect of "prayer" that dominates the text of side A.

Κύριο[ι] Θεοὶ οἱ Συκ(ο)ναῖοι Κ[—]
[Κ]υρί(α) Θε(ᾶ) Συρία ἢ Συκονα Σ[—]
ΕΑ ἐκδικήσετε καὶ ἀρετὴν
γεννήσετε κὲ διοργιάσετε
τὸν ἄραντα, τὸν κλέψαντα τὸ δρ-
άκι(ο)ν, τοῦ(ς) συνιδότες, τοὺς μέ-
ρο[ς] λαβόντες ἴδε γυνή ἢτε ἄ-
νήρ.

Lords gods Sykoniai, Lady goddess Syria Sykona, punish, and give expression to your wondrous power and direct your anger to the one who took away my necklace, who stole it, those who had knowledge of it and those who were accomplices, whether man or woman.

This text is nearly identical to the first except that instead of *καταγράφω* ("I curse") it says *διοργιάσετε* ("You must fulminate against"),³³ and the recital of the cursed parts of the body is missing. These two texts on one tablet show in a truly exemplary way the two possible appeals to the supernatural that were available to the victim of an injustice. Just like those who cannot blame their rivals for any wrong except their rivalry (e.g., in the context of circus, amatory, judicial, and commercial curses), the inscriber of this tablet, too, could avail himself of a traditional *defixio*. Unlike his colleagues, however, he could add references to his victim's guilt and his own innocence. Despite the fact that the text on Side B would (on formal grounds at least) be regarded as a typical *defixio*, the assertions of righteousness seem to diminish, if not neutralize, the negative connotations usually attached to this extreme form of black magic.

On the other hand, the injured party could totally refrain from the techniques and terminology of the *defixio* and appeal exclusively to the aid and might of the gods. The only "pure" illustration of this type is our final text (although the text from Centuripae cited above, p. 64 is certainly a strong possibility). All of the other texts are more or less hybrids of the traditional *defixio* and the standard prayer for justice that is the subject of the next section. Although it is conceivable to divide the material into two polar opposites—*defixio* and prayer for justice—there is, as we have seen, a whole spectrum of approaches that lie between them. Absolute distinctions, though sometimes indispensable for systematic definitions, are more-often-than-not blurred or even nonexistent in reality. Consequently, I do not plead for the complete elimination of the samples of our "border group" from the collections of the *defixiones*, provided that their specific peculiarities are duly recognized and

appreciated. Just as elements usually associated with religious prayer tend to occur in the texts of the *defixiones*, so too we shall meet striking examples of curse terminology in the "pure" juridical prayers which follow.

In conclusion then, to the degree that the anticipated revenge against a guilty person is justified, we sometimes encounter in the boundary area between curses and prayers the following alien (i.e., nontraditional) elements in some *defixiones*:

1. the name of the author;
2. an argument defending the action, sometimes with a single term, sometimes with more elaborate detail;
3. a request that the act be excused or that the writer be spared the possible adverse effects;
4. the appearance of gods other than the usual chthonic deities;
5. address of these gods—whether because of their superior character or as a persuasive gesture—either with a flattering adjective (e.g., *φίλη*) or with a superior title such as *κύριος*, *κύρια*, or *δέσποινα*;
6. expressions of supplication (*ἱκετεύω*, *βοήθει μοι*, *βοήθησον αὐτῷ*) added to personal and direct invocations of the deity;
7. terms and names that refer to (in)justice and punishment (e.g., Praxidike, Dike, *ἐκδικέω*, *ἀδικέω*, *κολάζω*, and *κόλασις*).

We shall repeatedly encounter all these elements in the prayers for justice, the area of inquiry that lies just on the other side of the boundary between *defixio* and prayer.

THE PRAYER FOR JUSTICE

The person in antiquity who had suffered an injustice and had gone to the authorities in vain,—if indeed he had bothered to go at all³⁴—had in fact only *one* authority at his disposal: he could lodge his complaint with the god(s). This did happen regularly in the form of prayers that I collect under the term *judicial prayer* or *prayer for justice*. Once again I shall give an overview of the Greek epigraphical material. I must disclaim any attempt here at a full treatment of two other special categories of prayer that I shall refer to no more than is necessary. These are the specific "prayer for revenge" and the so-called confession inscriptions, which are represented by a rather large number of inscriptions and are elsewhere described in detail, although a corpus of both would be desirable. I adduce, by way of an introduction, two often-quoted-and-studied texts. The first is one of the oldest Greek texts on papyrus, the famous curse of Artemisia from the temple of Oserapis in the Serapeum of Memphis (fourth-century B.C.).³⁵ It is too long to quote the whole in Greek here but I give a complete translation and sections of the Greek text wherever I deem them appropriate:

O Lord Oserapis (*ὦ δέσποτ' Ὁσεράπι*) and you gods who sit enthroned together with Oserapis, to you I direct a prayer (*εὐχομαι ὑμῖν*), I Artemisia, daughter of Amasis, against (*κατά*) the father of my daughter, who robbed her of her death gifts(?) and of her coffin. Now, if he has done justice to me and to his children, then may that be just. Exactly

in the way that he did injustice (*ἄδικα*) to me and to my children, in that way Oserapis and the gods should bring it about that he not be buried by his children and that he himself not be able to bury his parents. As long as my accusation against him (*καταβολῆς*) lies here, may he perish miserably, on land or sea, he and all his (possessions), through Oserapis and the gods who sit enthroned with Oserapis, and may he find no mercy (*μηδὲ ἰλάονος τυχάνου*) with Oserapis nor with the gods who sit enthroned with Oserapis.

Artemisia placed this petition (*κατέθηκεν τὴν ἱκετηρίην ταύτην*), begging (*ἱκετεύουσα*) Oserapis to do justice (*τὴν δίκην δικάσαι*) and likewise the gods who reign with Oserapis. As long as this petition (*ἱκετηρία*) lies here, may the father of the girl find no mercy in any way with the gods. Whoever takes away this petition (*τὰ γράμματα*) and does injustice to Artemisia, may the god punish him (*τῇ(ν) δίκην ἐπιθ(εῖν)*), . . . insofar as Artemisia has not ordered this to them . . . (a not-very-legible passage follows).

Here we have a real prayer for justice, requesting punishment of a guilty party, directed to powerful divine judges (of the underworld).³⁶ There are reminiscences of curse formulas,³⁷ but there is no coercion; the god is master, the human subservient. Evidently the prayer has been placed in the temple, clearly visible for everyone, with the risk that someone might take it away. That person will then also have to be punished by the god. Although it is not entirely clear from the text, it seems that Artemisia leaves open the possibility that she herself can (if she wishes) grant the order to remove the letter of supplication. Just like other, still-to-be-treated texts (in particular the next one), this supplication shows similarities with the worldly *ἐντευξίς* formulas of the Ptolemaic, and especially the imperial, periods. It is likewise clear that aside from Greek influences, Egyptian (particularly demotic) culture plays an important part here; various demotic prayers for justice are known from as early as the sixth century B.C. down to the first few centuries A.D.³⁸

The second text was found in 1899 on a lead tablet near Arkesine on Amorgos (SGD 60).³⁹ It was dated to the second century A.D. by Homolle, the first century A.D. by Bömer, and around 200 B.C. by Zingerle. Since the tablet has disappeared, linguists and papyrologists have the last word here, for the text shows unmistakable similarities with the petitions of the *ἐντευξίς* type. In the narrative portion there is a description of how a certain Epaphroditos,⁴⁰ with the help of evil practices, incited the slaves of the writer to flee. With the exception of this passage I again give the translation of the whole text while quoting only the most important passages in Greek.

Lady Demeter, O Queen, as your suppliant, your slave, I fall at your feet (*Κυρία Δημήτηρ, βασίλισσα, ἱκέτης σου, προσπίπτω δὲ ὁ δοῦλος σου*). . . . Lady Demeter, this is what I have been through. Being bereft, I seek refuge in you: be merciful to me and grant me my rights (*ἐγὼ ὡ ταῦτα παθὼν ἔρημος ἔὼν ἐπὶ σε καταφεύγω σοῦ εὐγυλάτου τυχεῖν καὶ ποῖσαι με τοῦ δικαίου τυχεῖν*). Grant that the man who has treated me thus shall have satisfaction neither in rest nor in motion, neither in body nor in soul; that he may not be served by slave or by handmaid, by the great or the small. If he undertakes something, may he be unable to complete it. May his house be stricken by the curse for ever. May no child cry (to him), may he never lay a joyful table; may no dog bark and no cock crow; may he sow but not reap; . . . (?): may neither earth nor sea bear him any fruit; may he know no blessed joy; may he come to an evil end together with all that belongs to him. (Side A)

Lady Demeter, I supplicate you because I have suffered injustice: hear me, O goddess, and pass a just sentence (λίτανεύω σε παθὼν ἄδικα, ἐπάκουσον, θεά, καὶ κρίναι τὸ δίκαιον). For those who have cherished such thoughts against us and who have joyfully prepared sorrows for my wife Epiktēs and me and who hate us, prepare the worst and most painful horrors. O Queen, hear us who suffer and punish those who rejoice in our misery (ἐπάκουσον ἡμῶν παθοῦσι, κολάσαι τοὺς ἡμᾶς τοιούτους ἡδέως βλέποντες). (Side B)

Again we have a humble supplication from a submissive mortal ("your slave") to a sovereign goddess (here, even "queen")⁴¹ who is asked to show her "mercy" and (here for the first time) to "hear"⁴² the supplicant by avenging him and punishing the guilty. In this case the requested punishments recall curses more explicitly, not those that we normally encounter in the *defixio* but rather those of conditional self-cursing oaths or, more especially, prohibitive curses against possible grave-desecrators.⁴³ The main difference from the "borderline" *defixiones* of the previous section is that here the curses are not pronounced by the writer himself but rather placed in the hands of a goddess upon whose sovereign power the writer makes himself totally dependent even when he wishes that the goddess cast a *κατάδε[ε]σμος*(s) (= *defixio*) over the house of an enemy.

Besides the characteristics of traditional prayer noted above, these two prayers both request punishments that are irrevocable. The guilty must be punished for an irreparable damage, and the punishment serves exclusively as satisfaction for the sense of justice of the injured person; in short, it constitutes a request for *revenge*. Although not strictly belonging to it, both our texts recall a well-known category of prayer for which we can note several characteristics without giving an elaborate description: the prayer for revenge. Among the funerary inscriptions described by Strubbe (chap. 2), there is a category defined by (one of) two characteristics: (1) the Sun or another great god is invoked to avenge an injustice suffered; or (2) this supplication is symbolized by the depiction on the grave stele of two raised hands. Most of these inscriptions have been collected by Cumont in various publications, and a good overview can be found in Björck.⁴⁴ Since that time several new testimonia have come to light.⁴⁵

The Sun, "who observes all things and hears all things" (Hom. *Il.* 3.277), is indeed the most qualified avenger,⁴⁶ but sometimes other superior and all-seeing gods are attested.⁴⁷ Often the Hypsistos Theos ("Greatest God") appears in a Jewish or Christian context. Likewise, the upraised hands are often, but not always, present. Thematically, however, all these texts have in common the fact that they beg the gods for retaliation, revenge, and justice and that they usually concern themselves with cases of abnormal and therefore suspicious death. Often the deceased is envisaged as an *ἄωρος* or *βιαιοθάνατος*, that is, someone who has died "before his fated time" or in a violent and unnatural manner.⁴⁸ As is typical in traditional, premodern societies, the inexplicable death—for example by a lingering illness—is frequently attributed to the evil practices of enemies,⁴⁹ who are suspected of using poison or magic spells. These revenge prayers aim at forcing the usually unknown perpetrator to atone for his or her crime.⁵⁰ Of the twenty-two pagan Greek and Latin texts collected by Björck all but three request revenge for manslaughter. In two of the exceptions⁵¹ it is clearly a question of a security or

depositum that the deceased had left and the present owner now (after the death of the real owner) refuses to relinquish. Here, as in the cases of manslaughter, it is a question of an irreparable loss.

The terminology is formulaic and shows a strong forensic influence. Terms with the element *ἐκδικε*— occur most often by far (the numbers refer to Björck's collection): *θεῖον φάος ἐκδικον ἔστω* (2); *ἐκδίκησον* (4, 18); *ἐκδικήσης τὸ αἷμα* (12);⁵² *ἐκδικήσατε* (13); *ἐκδικήσειαν* (17); *este vindices* (16). Number 10 has *Tu indices eius mortem*, often read as *Tu <ν>indices* or *[u]t vindices*.⁵³ Other terms occur with the connotation of "prosecution": *μετέλθετε αὐτοὺς* (11) and *ἵνα με[τ]έλθῃ αὐτὴν ὁ ἥλιος*.⁵⁴ The verb *μετέρχομαι* here literally means "pursue." Next in frequency is the verb *ζητέω*: *Ἥλιε, τὴν μοῖραν ζητήσο(ν) ἐμὴν* (6) and *τὸ αἷμα . . . ζητήσεις τὴν ταχίστην* (12). I shall discuss below the several meanings of the verb *ζητέω* and its compounds. The following expressions are more distant variants of the same theme: *Ἥλιε βλέπε* (3) ("Sun, keep a watch") and also *Deus magni oculi abet* ("The god has a large eye"), as is announced in an inscription from Rome;⁵⁵ *μὴ λάθοιτό σε ὁ ἐπίβουλος* (5); and *μὴ ἐκφύγοι τὸ κράτος τῆς θεᾶς* (14), in which it is asked that the evildoer or the crime not "escape"⁵⁶ the god. One can also "entrust" or "commit" the criminal directly to the god: *Sol tibi commendo qui manus intulit ei* (9, as well as 10).

In these short prayers we detect none of the characteristic features of a *defixio*. The situation is slightly different when we come to the related Christian revenge prayers, which are written on papyrus and can often provide much longer texts. In these texts there is often a detailed description of the diseases from which the guilty should perish, which recalls the prescriptions found on a number of *defixiones*.⁵⁷ Although in these Christian texts a (presumably) violent death is often the cause of the complaint, it is usually a question of activities described as "violations" or "crimes" committed against the plaintiff or else something more general, as, *ὅλα τὰ ἐναντία ἐπέπονθα παρ' αὐτοῦ* (24) ("I have suffered all sorts of hostilities at his hands"). Here, too, revenge is regularly demanded instead of a simple redress of the injustice. In the Greek Christian texts we repeatedly see the verb *ἐκδικέω*. An appeal to the power of the god is also made: *ἵνα βλέπω τὴν δύναμιν* (24); compare *πολέμεσον αὐτοὺς τῇ σῇ δυνάμει*.⁵⁸ In the Coptic texts, which are larded with Greek terms, the judicial terminology is similarly dominant. The god is asked (I quote Björck's translation) "Recht zu schaffen." One time we read, "I bring this indictment (λίβελλος) against" (29), or "Führe meinen Prozess gegen" (27). Another text reads, "Bringe deinen Zorn (ὀργή)" (31). The sixth-century-A.D. papyrus now in Uppsala, which was the motivation for Björck's research, brings together several interesting elements: "Let Didymos and Severine be pursued (κατιδιωχῆτω). . . . Lord, quickly show them your might (δ[ε]ῖξον) αὐτοῖς ταχεῖαν τὴν δύναμιν σου). . . . Let them come before your tribunal (καταλαβέτωσαν τὸ βῆμα). . . . I have submitted my affair to the Lord for punishment of the evil deeds (ἐπιδέδωκ[α] τὰ ἐμὰ. . . . δεσπότη εἰς ἐκδίκησιν τῶν κα[κ]ῶν. . . .)." The verb *ἐπιδιδόναι* is a technical term for presenting petitions, such as the *libellos* mentioned in the Coptic texts.

Since the publication of Björck's collection, several Greek prayers for justice have been discovered in Egypt. I translate a text on an ostrakon from Esna (*O. Cair.*

J. E. 38622) that although found in 1906, was published only in 1985.⁵⁹ "Claudius Silvanus and his brothers to mistress Athena against Longinus Marcus. Since Longinus—against whom we have often appealed to you because he was after our lives while we did no wrong, poor as we are—while he wins nothing with this, he still continues to be malicious against us, we beg you to do justice. We have already asked Ammon for help as well." In this case the prayer is directed to Athena (= Neith) and was probably placed in her temple, which lay underground in the necropolis.

Because it will be useful later on, I shall now cite from Björck (pp. 81–82) the four different meanings that the verb *ἐκδικέω* can have and that illustrate perfectly its judicial connotations: (1) claim a case, vindicate; (2) give someone legal aid or satisfaction, vindicate a person by taking up his cause, give satisfaction to a person (with a person as object); (3) punish a culprit, punish a crime, avenge (with a person or action as object); (4) act as avenger or as legal assistant (intransitive). In many aspects this verb corresponds closely to the use of the Latin verb *vindicare*.

We therefore note that the curse of Artemisia and the curse discovered on the island of Amorgos show strong thematic similarities with the prayers for vengeance, particularly with the subcategory that does not concern revenge for manslaughter itself but rather retaliation for some other injustice. In particular, they have in common that instead of redress, they ask for punishment and retribution. This also connects them to texts in the border areas between *defixio* and prayer, which all hold in common the necessity that the culprit suffer *deservedly* and that the offence be considered irreparable. We shall now introduce a group of texts in which a powerful divinity is called upon to help, but this time the prayer is used to put pressure on the culprit to redress the wrong.

During excavations at Cnidus in Asia Minor in the middle of the nineteenth century, C. T. Newton found thirteen lead tablets (DT 1–13)⁶⁰ that had apparently been placed in the temple of Demeter. As they are clearly formulaic, it suffices to cite one example, written by a woman named Artemis (DT 2):

Artemis "dedicates" (*ἀνισποῖ*) to Demeter and Kore and all the gods with Demeter, the person who would not return to me the articles of clothing, the cloak and the stole, that I left behind, although I have asked for them back. Let him bring them in person (*ἀνενέγκα[ι] αὐτός*) to Demeter even if it is someone else who has my possessions, let him burn, and let him publicly confess (*[πεπρη]μένος ἐξ[αγορεύων]*) his guilt. But may I be free and innocent of any offense against religion . . . if I drink and eat with him and and come under the same roof with him. For I have been wronged (*ἀδίκημαι γάρ*), Mistress Demeter.

In these texts,⁶¹ dated by most specialists to the first or second century B.C., the plaintiff is always a woman⁶² who has been injured by a usually unknown, or at least unnamed, person (or persons). They concern (among other things) theft, the refusal to return a borrowed object, and slander. The plaintiff "dedicates" (*ἀνισπώω*, *ἀνατίθημι*) the culprit to Demeter, Kore, and the gods with them. Sometimes there are two avenues open to the guilty parties: they can right the wrong—for example, by returning the stolen object, after which the affair is considered closed—or (if they do not elect to do this) Demeter must force them to come to the temple themselves (*ἀναβαίνω*) and to confess publicly their guilt (*ἐξαγορεύω*). In

case of theft they must bring the stolen object to the temple (*ἀναφέρω*).⁶³ From these texts we can infer *how* the culprit is compelled by the goddess: he is described as *πεπρημένος* (DT 1A, 2A, 4A, 6A—and 6B and 7A?), a term that is sharply disputed (but I shall show elsewhere that it means "burned" in the sense of "afflicted by fever or illness"). At any rate, in DT 3 we find instead of this word the term *κολαζόμενοι*,⁶⁴ and in DT 8 there is mention of *τιμ[ω]ρίας τύχοι* and *πά[σ]αν κόλασιν*. Elsewhere (DT 1) we read *μεγάλας βασάνους βασανιζόμενα*,⁶⁵ "tormented by great agonies." The goddess therefore subjects the culprit to a painful illness and in this way forces him to confess and, if applicable, to surrender the stolen goods. There is still another formula that expresses the anger of the goddesses: *μη τύχοι εὐιλάτου Δάματρος* ("Let him not find Demeter merciful") and variants. Sometimes this seems to be a variant of the expression mentioned above, that is, the displeasure of the goddess forces the culprit to confession (DT 4A, lines 8–10; 8; and probably 5 and 6A). But elsewhere it is stipulated that the goddess must *remain* "unmerciful" and "implacable" even after the confession⁶⁶ (DT 1A; 4A, lines 4–6; 6B; and probably 12 and 13). These two alternative forms often seem to run somewhat together in the mind of the author.

Through this "consecration" to the goddess the culprit has entered a provisional taboo situation. He is cursed for the time being and belongs in one way or another under the control of the divine powers of the underworld. In order to protect themselves from "contagion" the writers in many cases added the proviso that the curse not strike the writer of the tablet, not even if he or she and the culprit are together accidentally—eating, drinking or living under the same roof⁶⁷—things that can happen in a small community where the guilty party is anonymous. In addition the writer sometimes excuses the action with the expression, *ἀδίκημαι γάρ Δέσπο[ι]να Δάματερ* (DT 2, "For I have been wronged, Mistress Demeter"; cf. DT 8, line 20). We have already encountered similar formulae of excuse (see pp. 66–67). About the exact implications of the act of "dedicating" the victim I cannot digress at this point. It certainly does not mean that the culprit has fallen into a kind of holy slavery, as has been supposed, but rather that he has been "entrusted, committed" to the god, as we often find in the use of (*παρα*)*κατατίθεμαι*, *παραδίδωμι*, and similar verbs in the texts of the *defixiones*.⁶⁸

With this, the culprit has become the "care" of the goddess, who now tackles the investigation and the prosecution and presides as the judge over an imaginary court. One could also "consecrate" other things to the deity besides the culprit; a bronze tablet (perhaps third century B.C.) found in Southern Italy around 1775 has often been compared with the Cnidian texts.⁶⁹ I shall quote only the second half:

Kollura consecrates (*ἀνιαρίζει*) to the servants of the goddess the three gold pieces that Melitta received but does not return. Let her (Melitta) dedicate (*ἀνθείη*) to the goddess twelve times the amount together with a *medimne* of incense according to the measure valid in the city. And let her not breathe freely until she has dedicated (*ἀνθείη*) it to the goddess. But if the writer of the tablet eats or drinks with her without knowing it,⁷⁰ then let her be unpunished, even if she finds herself under the same roof."

There are obvious parallels with the Cnidian texts; a prayer for divine justice containing elements of a "consecration" to the gods (here the verb is *ἀνιαρίζω*)

pressures the (identified) victim to right the wrong she has committed. She is "not to breath freely" (*μη πρότερον δὲ τὰν ψυχὰν ἀνείη*)⁷¹ until the stolen item is returned to the temple of the goddess (here the verb is *ἀνθείη*). The Italian tablet also ends with a very similar "protection clause." What is different is the extra, very heavy fine imposed upon the criminal by an overlap of the spheres of divine and human justice.⁷² What concerns me especially is that here not the culprit but the stolen object is "consecrated" and is hence made the "god's affair." We encounter something similar in a recently published text of a bronze tablet, of unknown provenance but coming at any rate, from Asia Minor.

The tablet, which has been dated variously from 100 B.C. to 200 A.D. has a round hole in the middle of the top edge, presumably for attaching it to a surface for public display. I reproduce the text of the editio princeps:⁷³

ἀνατίθημι μητρὶ σε θεῶν
χρυσᾶ ἀπ(ώ)λεσ(α) πάντα ὥ-
στε ἀναζητήσ(α)ι αὐτ-
ήν καὶ ἐς μέσον ἐνε-
κκεῖν πάντα καὶ τοὺς
ἔχοντες κολάσασθαι-
ι ἀξίως τῆς αὐτῆς δυνά-
με(ω)ς καὶ μήτε αὐτ[ήν]
καταγέλαστον ἔσθ[θ]αι.]

I shall suggest as a correction that the reading *σε* in the first line is based on a misunderstanding, since the *ε* cannot be seen on the excellent photo published alongside; the putative *σ* is rather an unsuccessful start of the *θ* of the *θεῶν* that follows it.⁷⁴ My rejection of *σε* is supported by the fact that an addressed object is totally without parallel in such texts and by the syntactically impossible position between *μητρὶ* and *θεῶν*. Therefore I propose as translation,

I consecrate to the mother of the gods the gold pieces that I have lost, all of them, so that the goddess will track them down and bring everything to light⁷⁵ and will punish the guilty in accordance with her power and in this way will not be made a laughingstock.

The text has a clear relation to the Cnidian curse as well as to the South Italian tablet. Here, too, the stolen object is consecrated to the goddess, who has to "track it down" and punish the guilty. However, this tablet also refers to another genre of inscriptions. We encountered the appeal to the miraculous power of the god in some prayers of revenge and in the lead tablet from Delos cited above. Its editor had not noticed that the *ἀρετή* mentioned there recalls inscriptions from Asia Minor, in which this term and the concept behind it are so pronounced that they are sometimes referred to as "aretalogies,"⁷⁶ although scholars usually prefer to call them "confession inscriptions." And in these texts we also encounter (aside from compounds of the verb *ζητέω* and an emphasis on punishments by the god) the warning, as in the bronze tablet just quoted, not to trifle with the god.

We have now considered the whole collection of Greek prayers for divine "legal aid" and have analyzed their characteristics. In the prayers in which there is no overriding demand for punishment or revenge but rather for clarification, confession, and (if possible) settlement of the dispute, the guilty is often "dedicated" to the

deity for prosecution; at other times the stolen object itself is "consecrated" to the deity in hopes that it might be tracked down. We have saved one question until now, namely: What happened to the stolen property after the dispute was settled? Was it given back to the owner or did it remain not temporarily but permanently in the possession of the deity? There are no clear pronouncements about this. At Cnidus the thief first has the opportunity to return the stolen object to its owner and in this way can escape divine punishment, that is, he "burns" only if he fails to do this and "has to bring" the object to the goddess. The verb employed here (*ἀναφέρω*, "offer as sacrifice"!) seems to suggest that the object will indeed remain in divine possession, a situation that the term *ἀνθείη* in the South Italian text could also indicate. However, in this matter different practices could conceivably exist, as will certainly appear from the following discussion.

THE CONFESSION INSCRIPTIONS

Beginning in the last century steles were found in the northeastern area of Lydia (known as Maeonia or Katakekaumene) and in the adjacent area of Phrygia bearing similar texts, which were, as a group, different from the usual votive inscriptions. Since they often contain a kind of confession of guilt, they are generally called "confession steles".⁷⁷ The steles are often precisely dated and without exception come from the second and third century A.D. Although there exists great variation, they can generally be classified as praises for or aretalogies of the god, in which the *δύναμις* (power)⁷⁸ of the usually local divinity (e.g., the Great Mother, especially as Meter Leto; Men, with several epithets; Apollo, with epithets such as Lairbenos) is described and glorified. In addition we often encounter other elements. First there is an acclamation of the type "Great (is) Men" or "Great (is) Anaeitis," and so on. The reason for the erection of the stele is often a confession of guilt (*ὁμολογέω* or *ἐξομολογέω*), to which the author has been forced by the punishing intervention of the deity (*κολάζω*, *κόλασις*), often manifested by illness or accident. Sometimes the victim of the punishment has asked (*ἑρωτάω* or *ἐπερωτάω*) the deity the reason for the punishment and what he should do to propitiate the god; unsolicited divine commands also occur. By his confession and eventual reparation of the wrong the culprit appeases the god (*εἰλάσκομαι* or *ἐξιλάσκομαι*); the god therefore reveals his *dynamis* by both the punishment and the cure of the victim, and as homage to the god the story of the miracle is now written on a stele (*στηλλογραφέω*), sometimes at the command of the god but not necessarily so. The text often ends with a clear profession of faith: "And from now on I praise the god" (*καὶ ἀπὸ νῦν εὐλογῶ*) or sometimes, especially in Phrygia, a warning: "I warn all mankind not to disdain the gods, for they (i.e. mankind) will have this stele as a warning" (*παραγέλλω πᾶσιν μηδὲν καταφρονεῖν τῶν θεῶν ἐπεὶ ἔξει τὴν στήλην ἐξενπλᾶριον*).

These inscriptions often focus on transgressions of the type that we encountered in the tablets from Cnidus: theft, failure to return a deposit, and slander, especially with regard to allegations of poison or black magic.⁷⁹ Perjury, mentioned with some frequency,⁸⁰ forms a bridge of sorts between the transgressions against men and those against gods. For us it is interesting that in the category of profane transgres-

sions the god is sometimes appealed to by the injured person in order to punish the guilty and in this way do justice. And in some cases it is also explicitly announced by what means the god has been brought to act. I quote a well-known confession inscription:⁸¹ "To Men Axiottenos. Since Hermogenes, son of Glycon, and Nitonis, son of Philoxenos, have slandered Artemidoros with respect to wine, Artemidoros has given a *πιττάκιον*. The god has punished Hermogenes, who has propitiated the god, and from now on he will extoll (the god)." A *πιττάκιον* is a tablet covered with writing, which is presented to the deity. It is, among other things, a technical term for oracle questions placed before the gods in Egypt.⁸² In another confession inscription (TAM 318) we are told how a woman, Tatias, stands accused (in a campaign of gossip) of poisoning her son-in-law, who had subsequently gone out of his mind. She reacted as follows:

ἡ δὲ Τατίας ἐπέστησεν
σκήπτρον καὶ ἀραίς ἔθηκεν
ἐν τῷ ναῷ, ὥς ἱκανοποιού-
σα περὶ τοῦ πεφημίσθαι αὐ-
τὴν ἐν συνειδήσει τοιαύτη.
οἱ θεοὶ αὐτὴν ἐποίησαν ἐν
κολάσει, ἣν οὐ διέφυγεν.

Tatias drew up a scepter and placed *ἀραί* (curses) in the temple, as if to show that she was not guilty of the transgressions attributed to her,⁸³ although she was aware of her guilt. The gods subjected her to a punishment that she did not escape.

Apparently the poor woman died, and in the remainder of the text we are told how her relatives "unbound (λύω) the *ἀραί*" and successfully propitiated the gods.

The text contains many interesting elements, among which the following are of importance to us. There is a ritual opening of the judicial process by the "drawing up of a scepter."⁸⁴ We meet this and closely related expressions again several times. In particular some recently found texts make it clear that it is here a question of making visible the present power of the god. The *ἀραί* most likely contained a conditional self-curse that Tatias uttered in order to prove her innocence, a procedure similar to that which appears in a Cnidian tablet (DT 1). What is essential is that these *ἀραί* are clearly related to the *πιττάκιον* of the first text; the case is entrusted to the god in writing, and punishment is implored for the culprit. Perhaps we can find another example of such a "juridical prayer" in a confession inscription from Maeonia (TAM 362) that mentions "someone who has overthrown and removed the tablet (*π[ι]νακίδιον*)."⁸⁵ One way to appeal to divine justice (*ἐπεκαλέσατο κατ' αὐτοῦ τὸν θεόν*, in the words of TAM 525) is therefore a written complaint in a temple. Now we have already become acquainted in detail with such petitions in the previous section. The similarity even goes so far that Artemisia feared that her "curse" would be taken away, something that seems to have happened in the Maeonian inscription under consideration. The Cnidian prayers provide closer comparison.⁸⁶ There is, to be sure, a time difference of at least one—and most likely two or three—centuries, but the dated confession inscriptions themselves prove precisely how persistently a religious practice can be maintained over two centuries, even to details of wording.

We could say that the Cnidian tablets form the opening to a legal proceeding, just like the *ἀραί*, the *πιττάκιον*, and the *πινακίδιον* in the confession inscriptions; while the confession inscriptions themselves describe the course and the conclusion of the whole lawsuit. Conversely, it also appears that such "divine justice" can function especially well where illness, misfortune, or even death are regarded in the first place as divine punishment and thus lead to serious self-examination for possible sins committed against gods or men. A series of short votive inscriptions from Philadelphia⁸⁷ illustrates perfectly the two possible reactions to illness and cure. On the one hand we find the usual type, *εὐ[ξά]μενος εὐχὴν ἀνέ[θ]ηκα* ("Having made a vow . . . I redeemed it"),⁸⁸ in which a vow for the cure of an illness is simply redeemed, but on the other hand there are texts like *κολασθεῖσα το[ῦ]ς μασστο[ῦς] εὐχὴν ἀ[ν]έθηκα*,⁸⁹ in which an illness affecting a woman's breasts is clearly seen as a punishment.

This relationship between the Cnidian tablets as complaints before a divine tribunal and the confession inscriptions as records of divine justice invites closer scrutiny of the confession inscriptions with regard to the question that we raised above: What was the fate of the possession obtained illegally by the culprit? As we have noticed, the wording of the Cnidian tablets and the related tablet from Southern Italy seemed to indicate that the object brought to the temple would in fact be the possession of the goddess(es) (which by itself would not necessarily have placed it outside human use).⁹⁰ Such an outcome, however, does not seem logical to every modern researcher: "Aber welcher Fluch! Wenn sie aber das Gestolene nicht wiedergeben, so sollen sie es der Göttin zustellen!" C. Wachsmuth wrote indignantly.⁹¹ Some examples from the confession inscriptions demonstrate that this could indeed happen. According to an inscription from Koresa (Lydia)⁹² an article of clothing was stolen from a bathing establishment: "The god was vexed with the man and after some time had him bring the cloak to the god. He openly confessed his guilt. Then the god ordered him, through the agency of an 'angel,' to sell the article of clothing and to publicize his miracles on a stele". One can of course contend that the exceptional nature of the command proves that *normally* the returned object will *not* belong to the deity. But there are other attestations. From the neighborhood of Kula (Maeonia) comes a confession inscription⁹³ whose legible part relates the gods' request that certain individuals return a sum of money that they are illegally withholding. They did *not* return it to its rightful owner, but instead "the sons of the culprits gave double the original amount to erect a stele"; thus it is somewhat comparable with the South Italian prayer (see p. 73). In an unpublished confession inscription from Usak⁹⁴ two people ask the *patrioi theoi* what they could have done wrong. Somewhere along the line this is made clear to them, for they tell us, "We deposited 100 denarii just as the *patrioi theoi* had demanded (*καθὼς ἐπεζήτησαν*)."⁹⁵ Although there is no certainty here, I suspect that it concerns a sum of money acquired in a disreputable manner; again, this time, the money is not returned to the owner but is deposited in the temple.

Of course it also happens that the original owner gets the lost or stolen item back again. Clearly there existed a variety of practices; this will be confirmed further from the Latin material. At any rate, the very demand to erect a stele means an assessment on financial means. An inscription (TAM 327) begins as follows: "An-

acitis is great. Since Phoebus has sinned, the goddess asked for a *ἱεροπόημα*.⁹⁵ This term, which occurs several times, probably means a "gift to the deity" and is perhaps identical to the *στηλογραφία*. There is *one* text from Cnidus that although it has disappeared from scholarly discussion since Newton's edition, nevertheless offers a nice parallel to this.⁹⁶ In it we read that a woman dedicated *χαριστεία* and *ἐκτίματρα* to Demeter, Kore, and the gods with Demeter and Kore—in which the term *ἐκτίματρα*, otherwise unattested, must mean (using the analogy to terms such as *σῶστρα*, *λύτρα*, or *μήνυτρα*) something like "payment"—in this case in the form of high veneration and thanks—somewhat comparable to the *ἱεροπόημα* and praise of the confession stele.

Finally, a few words on the question of terminology. The verb *ἐπιζητέω* appears as one of the standard ingredients of the confession texts. This is significant since it has, like many of the terms discussed above, strong juridical connotations. I now summarize the results of a long and detailed analysis, the bulk of which I cannot present here. The verb, which in the confession texts nearly always expresses the action of the god(s), functions in roughly three divergent, yet nevertheless interrelated, ways:

1. When the direct object is inanimate, it means "to demand, to require something," for example, satisfaction, a *ἱεροποήμα*, a stele. Occasionally it means "to claim" an object that the gods regard either as their own property or as stolen property that has been entrusted to their care.
2. When the direct object is a person, the verb means "to pursue" a guilty party. Occasionally, we find a more concrete variant, such as the use of the verb *μεταβαίνω* in an inscription from Usak,⁹⁷ where a woman refused to pay a promised reward for child rearing: *καὶ οἱ θεοὶ μετέβησαν ἰς αὐτήν* ("And the gods chased after her"), easily comparable with the use of the verb *μετέρχομαι* in some prayers for revenge (see p. 71).
3. It also occurs without any object at all, in which case some object, animate or inanimate, is often easily supplied from the text. In some cases, however, it is used in the absolute sense of "to investigate the affair" or "to hold a judicial inquiry."

The investigation referred to in the last definition may be initiated by the injured party.⁹⁸ In TAM 317 several people have stolen pigs from Demainetos and Papias, and when they inquired into (*ζητέω*) the matter, the culprits denied it. The next step is to entrust the case to the justice of the god. This is exactly the same situation that occurs in Babrius' fable (no. 2), where a farmer loses his mattock and starts an inquiry (*ἐπιζητέω*) to ascertain whether it was stolen by certain individuals. When they deny it, he takes them to a temple in a nearby city to take an oath.

Our insight into the various meanings of (*ἐπι*)*ζητέω* can perhaps put an end to the long discussion⁹⁹ of another term in one very illuminating confession text (TAM 440) in which several gods are invoked with regard to a deposit of 40 denarii that Apollonios has left with Skollos. When Apollonios tries to get the money back, Skollos swears by the gods invoked at the beginning of the inscription (*τοὺς προγεγραμένους θεούς*) that the money had been returned at the agreed-

upon time. Afterwards, because Skollos had broken his word, Apollonios *παρεχώρησεν τῇ θεῷ*. The gods punish Skollos with death and set up a judicial inquiry (*ἐπιζητέω* in its absolute sense). In the end Tatias, his daughter, redeems (*λύω*) the oath.

I have left the phrase *παρεχώρησεν τῇ θεῷ* untranslated. I cannot go into the lengthy debate over the use of the verb *παρὰχωρέω* here; it suffices to say that its semantic range includes "give way to," "leave or concede something to somebody," and especially (and to us most significantly) in legal parlance "surrender or cede a right or a legal claim to another person." As there is no explicit object for *παρὰχωρέω*, we may choose, as we do with *ζητέω*, to supply an animate or inanimate object; or we may understand it in an absolute sense. Just as we have seen the three possible functions of *ἐπιζητέω* we may conclude that the same three options are possible here. For *ἐπιζητέω* is precisely the divine response to the human act of *παρὰχωρέω*, the latter being a legal equivalent, of sorts, to the more hieratic terms used in the Cnidian and related tablets, such as *ἀνιερόω*, *ἀνιαιρίζω*, or *ἀνατίθημι*, which could similarly have either the guilty party or the stolen property as objects. It is therefore quite unnecessary to single out one of the possible meanings. I think there is a good possibility that a larger concept of judicial cession is involved, that is, the plaintiff hands over the stolen property, the accused, and the entire case to the god(s) for a final decision. The act of cession may have been symbolically, if not legally, expressed by physically placing the *πιττάκιον* in the temple of the god; and it is possible, though in this case not demonstrable, that by this act the ceded object becomes the property of the god.

At the end of our paraphrase of TAM 440 we also see the use of the verb *λύω* (loosen), which occurs in its various forms¹⁰⁰ rather frequently in the confession texts. It expresses the act of paying ransom in order to propitiate the god and assuage his wrath.¹⁰¹ Therefore a curse in which the gods are called *ἀνεπιλύτους* ("unbending," lit., "unable to be loosened") or the "scepters" are termed *ἄλυτα* ("unable to be loosed") is particularly threatening,¹⁰² since it no longer offers this last way out. The term *λύτρον* in the sense of "ransom," that is, "a means of escaping the consequences of sin" is commonplace in the New Testament, particularly in Pauline discourse,¹⁰³ which the otherwise purely pagan confession inscriptions recall in many respects. For us it is essential to stress the fact that in the case of a transgression against another person a simple settlement of the dispute may not be sufficient; additional "compensation" may also be necessary as atonement for an implicit wrong (or an explicit one, e.g., perjury) committed against the god. Such a *λύτρον* may have taken the form of a stele, in which case the terms *λύτρον* and *ἱεροποίημα* would seem to coincide.

CONCLUSION FROM THE GREEK MATERIAL

By way of the borderline *defixiones* we entered the domain of the judicial prayer. In doing so we noted that as an alternative to "taking the law into one's own hands" by means of a *defixio*, people could express their grievances against their fellow human beings in a prayer that submitted their complaint to the god. In practically all these

prayers the deity is presented as a superior, majestic autocrat to whom human beings in all humility submit their cases, like in the Egyptian *ἔντευξις* to the monarch. The accuser transfers the whole lawsuit or the culprit or the stolen property (or all three at the same time) to the care of the god. In the explicit prayers of revenge there is principally a demand for retaliation against, and punishment of, the guilty party (*κολάζω, ἐκδικέω, μετέρχομαι, καταδιώκω*, or the Latin *vindicare*), to which end either the guilty person is "handed over" (*κατατίθημι, κατατίθεμαι*, or the Latin *commendare*) or the entire case is entrusted to the god (*ἐπιδέδωκ[α] τὰ ἔμᾶ, "I bring this libellos," "führe meinen Prozess"*). In the other judicial prayers as well as in the confession inscriptions, although the thought of revenge certainly plays a part, it is above all the restitution of, or indemnity for, the loss or damage (e.g., in the case of slander) that is demanded. Case, person, or stolen goods can be entrusted to the deity (the verbal forms vary, e.g., *ἀνιέρω, ἀνιαρίζω, ἀνατίθημι, παραχωρέω*), who then opens an inquiry, prosecutes the guilty, or claims the stolen property. The verb *ἐπιζητέω* is the typical term and is used in all these meanings, just as in the revenge prayers *ἐκδικέω* and *vindicare* possessed a comparable—though-not-identical spectrum of meanings. Likewise we encounter *ἀναζητέω* with the same meaning or simply *ζητέω* (e.g., with *αἶμα* or *μοῖρα* as a direct object)¹⁰⁴ in the biblical sense of "demand an account of."

The divine intervention appears in the form of illness, accident, or the death of the guilty and is seen either as an irrevocable punishment (*κόλασις, τιμωρία*, etc.) or as a conditional and temporary means of pressure (e.g., "May he not breathe easily until. . ."), that is, a judicial torment (*βασανίζειν* and related words) by which the guilty is eventually brought to confess (*ἐξαγορεύω, ὁμολογέω*, or *ἐξομολογέω*)¹⁰⁵ and retribute or compensate for, what was owed (*ἀνενέγκαι αὐτὸς παρὰ Δάματρα*, etc.). Sometimes the stolen property is returned to the original owner, and sometimes it remains (whether according to an explicit agreement or not) property of the deity. The latter can be regarded as the result of an actual cession.

Finally, we must mention the physical presentation of these prayers for justice. Newton announced that he found the Cnidian tablets "broken and doubled up" (p. 382). Nevertheless he insisted that "they were probably suspended on walls as they are pierced with holes at the corners" (p. 724). Although some scholars claimed that these holes could not be found and that some tablets were covered with writing on both sides, many others, including C. Wachsmuth, J. Zündel, R. S. Conway, E. Ziebarth, and R. Wünsch¹⁰⁶ continued to believe that the tablets were placed in the temple in public view to be read by everyone. One continually detects the conviction (among modern scholars at least) that publication was necessary to give some real effect to the tablets. And indeed, there do occur formulas on the tablets that warn the thief, who thereby receives one last chance to remedy his transgression. Despite opposition by Audollent,¹⁰⁷ who thought that these prayers were buried just like real *defixiones*, Kagarow and Björck¹⁰⁸ argue for the publicity of these texts, not necessarily as "public advertisements" in the temple but possibly through the agency of a priest who received the complaint and then took the necessary steps to inform the accused. Zingerle¹⁰⁹ has gone very far—certainly too far—in his views

about a *Priestergericht*, in which priests not only had control of the lawsuit but also carried out punishment.

Without going into details here, we can without effort establish that the Greek material does not point to one uniform procedure. Many of the judicial prayers from the "border area," just like the related *defixiones*, came from graves or wells or springs¹¹⁰ and therefore were permanently hidden from human view. This is probably also true for the Amorgos tablet, just as it is also certain that some of the Coptic revenge prayers from Egypt were sent along with the dead in accordance with the practice of the ancient Egyptian "letters for the dead." But even where we are in a context of a temple, variations are possible. The reference to public fines in the bronze tablet from South Italy (see pp. 73–75) strongly suggests that it was a public document, and the bronze tablet from Asia Minor (see pp. 74–75) still has the hole from which it was originally suspended. The curse of Artemisia was certainly placed in the temple to be seen by everyone, just as the *πιπτάκια* of the confession inscriptions presumably were, since the fear was expressed that they might be stolen. A demotic prayer for justice¹¹¹ says, "As for anyone in the world who will set this document on fire [to destroy] it, let him not escape from our plea." Still, some of these prayers were not available for everyone to read; a Coptic-Christian prayer for revenge (Björck no. 31) has the prescription, "He who opens this papyrus (*χάρτης*) will bring on his head what has been written on it: let it go on his head."

All this can and will be researched more systematically. For the time being, however, we can conclude that in some cases—among others the public prayers for revenge—the trust in the divine power alone sufficed as a motivation for the accusation. In temples prayers could be publicly displayed—as was also the case with oracle questions¹¹²—and could in this way bring the thief to repentance. But they were also offered closed,¹¹³ just as today we still encounter "letters to heaven" in churches. In this case we may assume an occasional mediating role for the priests who represent the divine court of arbitration, a phenomenon that is still known to occur in many traditional cultures of our own day.¹¹⁴ C. Wachsmuth¹¹⁵ compared a church practice in Greece of his time in which the accusation, including the possible divine punishment, was read out loud by the priest. In my opinion the most obvious—though by no means exclusive—procedure may be that the injured party first tries to draw a confession from the suspected culprits¹¹⁶ and then tells them explicitly that he is making a higher appeal to the god. The knowledge that the accusation now rests with an all-seeing, highest authority is sufficient to force the culprit to reconsider his deeds, especially when shortly thereafter he does not feel perfectly healthy. We shall see that the Latin lead tablets from England support this view to a great extent.

LATIN JUDICIAL PRAYERS

Augustine (*De Civ. D.* 6.10) borrows from Seneca a description of the people who resided in the temple of the Trias Capitolina in Rome: "One places names before

Jupiter, the other tells him the time, still another reads to him, another anoints him. There are women who arrange the hair of Juno and Minerva and hold a mirror for them. There are also those who hand them petitions and inform them about their lawsuits (*qui libellos offerant et illos causam suam doceant*).¹¹⁷ Although the exact religious context of this curious fragment is not quite clear,¹¹⁷ it does suggest that in the first century A.D. there existed, even at the center of the *imperium Romanum*, practices that provide a direct parallel to the Greek prayers for revenge and justice we have analyzed and that encourage us to search for similar texts in Latin epigraphical materials.

Let us return to the problematic text from Italica that opens this essay. The central question was how to explain the peculiar fact that a stolen object could be called the property of the goddess (*tuas res*) by the injured party. Whoever places this text in the category of the traditional *defixio* denies one excellent avenue for explanation; for if it is compared to the judicial prayers of Asia Minor, the difficulties dissolve immediately. The double usage of the verb *persequi* has its direct counterpart in the Greek verb ἐπιζητέω, and it occurs here in two constructions that occur in the confession inscriptions, namely in the sense of "tracking down" the stolen goods as well as "prosecuting" the culprit. It is then evident that in this Latin tablet, too, the injured party has "dedicated" (or perhaps better, "ceded" in the judicial sense) his or her stolen property to the goddess and that in this way it had become, legally speaking, the case or the property of the goddess (*tuas res*) just as we saw in the Greek material. The goddess was also addressed respectfully as *domina*. Now if this were our only Latin testimony to such prayers, there would be some ground for scepticism; for there are several lacunae in the text and the Latin is far from perfect. Not too much should be deduced from the one word *tuas*. But fortunately there are more examples. In a curse text from Corsica, called a *defixio* by the editor and much improved in Solin's publication we read,¹¹⁸

[---] ule vindica te. Qui tibi male f[aciet], qui [---]
[---] v]indica te et si C. Statius tibi nocuit, a[ut] e[um] vind[ica] te ---
[---] persequa[ur]is eum, ut male contabescat usque dum mori[er]e[tu]r ---
cumque alis, et si Pollio conscius est et illum persequaris,
ni annum ducat.

I prefer (for reasons that will become clear) to restore *f[ecit]* instead of *f[aciet]* in line 1. In lines 3–4 we should understand *quicumque alius* and in line 5 *ni* as *ne*. I translate,

—ule (probably the name of a god), avenge yourself. Whoever has done you harm . . . avenge yourself on him, and if C. Statius has injured you, avenge yourself on him [. . . persecute] him in order that he may waste away horribly until he dies. And whoever else—for instance, if Pollio—is an accomplice, persecute him as well, so that he won't live out the year.

Without a doubt, elements of the standard terminology of *defixiones* are present, like *tabescat* and *ni annum ducat*, but Solin remarks, "Wenn ein Gegner des den Fluch aussprechenden der Gottheit Schaden zufügt, soll diese sich von jenem befreien. Dergleichen habe ich auf keiner antiken Fluchtafel gefunden. Der verfluchende identifiziert sich sozusagen mit der Gottheit, die ihm helfen soll." The text, however, immediately loses its enigmatic character when we classify it with

the judicial prayers, a classification that seems warranted by the terms *vindica*, *consciis*, and *persequaris*. The injured party has ceded his case to the goddess, who thereby becomes a "party" to the lawsuit herself and will act as *vindex*. Hence my preference for the restoration *male fecit* (has done harm) instead of *male faciet* (will do harm).

We find added support for such interpretations in several Latin "curse tablets" (for the most part from England), of which some have been known for a long time, while others have been found very recently and are published in the latest issues of *Britannia*.¹¹⁹ In 1964 the great scholar of the Latin *defixio*, R. Egger, discussed a curse tablet from Wilten-Veldidena near Innsbruck that had been published in 1959 by L. Franz:¹²⁰

Side A

Secundina Mercurio et
Moltino mandat, ut siquis * XIII
sive draucus duos sustulit, ut
eum sive fortunas eius infi-
dus Cacus sic auferat quo-
modi ill(a)e ablatus est id quod
vobis delegat, ut persecutis
vobisque deligat, ut

Side B

persicuat is eum
aversum a fortunis (s)u-
is avertatis et a suis prox-
imis et ab eis quos caris-
simos abeat, oc vobis
mandat, vos [e]um cor[ipi]a-
tis.

Egger made excellent use of the extant Latin and Greek *defixiones* and other related texts from England and shed light on several troubling aspects of the text. I do believe, however, that we can make this text yield its full meaning only by setting it against the background of the (Greek) judicial prayers. I first give a translation:

Secundina charges Mercurius and Moltinus that whoever has stolen 14 denarii or two necklaces,¹²¹ that the perfidious Cacus take him away or his possessions, just as they (her possessions) have been taken away from her, the very things that she transfers to you to track down. And she also assigns you to persecute him and separate him from his possessions and from his fellow men and from those who are dearest to him. With that she charges you; you have to catch him.

The parallels to the Greek judicial prayers strike us immediately. Mercurius and Moltinus have to take over the tasks of the earthly judge. The task or transfer is expressed by *mandare* and *delegare*. The latter of these words is the exact Latin equivalent of the Greek verb παραχωρέω, meaning "to assign, confide, commit, entrust any thing to a person (for attention, care, protection, etc.)" and "to make over either one who is to pay the debt or the debt itself," being, therefore, the term for judicial cession. It is now up to the gods to *persequi* (with a double object) first the stolen object that is ceded (*id quod vobis delegat ut persecutis*) and next the thief himself or possibly the whole case (*vobisque deligat ut persicuat is*), all exactly as we saw in the case of the Greek equivalent ἐπιζητέω. The prosecution here similarly involves punishment as well, in this case by a sort of "isolation" of the guilty. I doubt that *ut eum coripiat is* means "ihr aber sollt ihn vor Gericht bringen." I should prefer "seize," "catch," perhaps "take into custody."

What happens to the stolen object? Egger thought that the thief, in Secundina's expectation, would contritely report to the gods and carry out restitution of the stolen object. Although this is not impossible, it seems equally likely that revenge

and punishment of the guilty is the main purpose of the prayer. Either way, the god takes over the task of punishing the guilty and demanding an account.

In his day Egger could refer to three tablets from England that, however different they may have been, still were somewhat related to the tablet from Austria. Of these, the tablet from Lydney Park (Gloucestershire) has been known the longest.¹²²

Devo
Nodenti Silvanus
anilum perdedit
demediam partem
donavit Nodenti
Inter quibus nomen
Seniciani nollis
petmittas sanita
tem donec perfera(t)
usque templum No-
dentis.

To Divus Nodens. Silvanus is missing his ring. He has given half (of its worth) to Nodens. Let no one in the group to which Senecianus belongs live in good health until he brings (the object) to the temple of Nodens.

Here we have a mechanism that corresponds in detail to that of the Cnidian tablets; pressure is exerted on the thief in the form of an illness (cf. *πεπρημένος*). The phrase *perferat usque templum Nodentis* corresponds to *ἀνελέγκαι αὐτὸς παρὰ Δάματρά*, except that here the writer suspects in what social circles the thief could be found. And there is a prearranged agreement with the deity concerning the stolen property; the god receives half of the value, which must mean that the original owner receives back the ring if it ever shows up. This is confirmed by other texts.

A tablet from the third or fourth century A.D.¹²³ found in Kelvedon, Essex confirms this picture. The text of R. P. Wright in the editio princeps (*Journal of Roman Studies* 48 [1958]: 150, no. 3) reads as follows:

quicumque res Varenī in
volaverit si mulrer si mascel
sangu(i)no suo solvat
et pecuni(a)e quam exesuerit
Mercurio dona et Virtuti s(acra).

Egger improved the interpretation suggested by the editor in several respects, especially in his reading of the final line as *Mercurio dona(tur) et Virtuti s(emis)*. He was mistaken in one detail only; he understood the phrase *sanguino suo solvat* to mean *soll persönlich zahlen*, that is, "let him pay in person."¹²⁴ Apart from the fact that such a notion cannot be expressed by the Latin here, later discoveries among the British lead tablets make it clear that *sanguine suo* can only mean "with his own blood," that is, "with his health" or "with his life." Thus, I would translate this tablet as follows:

Whoever stole the property of Varenus, whether man or woman, let him pay for it with his own blood. From the money that he (the thief) will pay back, half is given to Mercurius and Virtus.¹²⁵

From these texts and others discussed below, it appears that the guilty must personally atone for their crime with physical suffering, illness, and so on. In addition, some form of restitution is sometimes demanded for the stolen object, which then benefits (at least partially) the deity as well. In short, just as in the Cnidian tablets, the criminal is "punished" with physical discomfort (there the term *πεπρημένος* is used, here *sanguine suo*) either to force him to restore the stolen property or (failing that) to provide real—and therefore permanent—punishment for the crime.

Several recently published tablets from England demonstrate quite clearly that this is the correct interpretation of the phrase *in sanguine suo*. I shall first cite the ending of a rather unusual specimen from Bath (*Britannia* 12 [1981]: 378, no. 9). Uricalus and several members of his family have sworn an oath at the spring of Dea Sulis in which the stipulation occurs, *Quicumque illic periuraverit deae Suli facias illum sanguine suo illud satisfacere* ("Whosoever committed perjury will give satisfaction [or will atone] to the Dea Sulis for it with his blood"). This text comes very close to the confession inscriptions in which there is a question of atonement for perjury, in particular, the one in which the term *ἱκανοποιούσα* (= *satisfacere*) occurs.¹²⁶ The most important observation, however, is that *sanguine suo satisfacere* can mean nothing else here except "atone with his own blood" (therefore with illness, in particular with fever, and perhaps even death).¹²⁷ Before discussing some recently discovered texts in which all this is expressed more explicitly, I first want to cite a puzzling tablet from Essex¹²⁸ (*Britannia* 4 [1973]: 325, no. 3) that has not really been understood:

Side A	Side B
Dio M(ercurio) dono ti(bi)	Dono tibi
negotium Et-	Mercurius
{t}ern(a)e et ipsam	aliam neg [o-
nec sit i(n)vidi(a) me(i)	tium N VIN
Timotneo san-	
gui[n]e suo	NIIL.
	MIN[. . .]S NGI
	SVO

The editors R. P. Wright and M. W. C. Hassall translate,

To the god Mercury, I entrust to you my affair with Eterna and her own self, and may Timotneus feel no jealousy of me/at the risk of his life-blood. (Side A)

I entrust to you, O Mercury, another transaction. . . . (Side B)

At the end of side B there follows another instance of *sanguine suo*. There are numerous grammatical and spelling mistakes: *Dio* instead of *Deo*, *Timotneo* instead of *Timotheo*, *aliam* instead of *alium*. This encourages me to suggest an alternative interpretation. Eternus is a name that occurs rather often in Roman Britain and has just recently appeared again, this time on a curse tablet.¹²⁹ I have long wondered whether *negotium Eternae et ipsam* might not mean "Eterna's trade (shop, business, store) and Eterna herself," as we find them cursed regularly in Greek *defixiones*¹³⁰ (e.g., τὰ ἔργα, ἐργασία, πράξις, etc.). I prefer an interpretation that the editors give with regard to *alium negotium* on side B, especially because of the parallels to other tablets from Britain and (in particular) to the Greek judicial prayers; we have

here in an exemplary way the entrusting to the god of the "lawsuit itself and of the (guilty) person." However, as we have seen, in such prayers the author often does mention his name. Besides, the proposed translation of *nec sit invidia mei Timotheo* is somewhat artificial. I therefore propose to interpret as follows: "And don't let there be envy on my account (*mihi* must be understood), Timotheus."¹³¹ The last-named is the author, who asks the god that his action not be to his disadvantage. Is this not the same stipulation that we found in the tablets from Cnidus and the related one from South Italy? If this is so, then *sanguine suo* (perhaps also on side B) must be regarded as a syntactically freestanding expression, "With his blood!" (sc., "The guilty party must pay"). This is not without parallels in related Greek texts. One of them we have already cited under the prayers for revenge: *τὴς αὐτῶν ἡδίκησε τῷ ἡ ἀλμ[α]*.¹³² Although this does not prove my interpretation, I believe it does show that such a reading is possible and indeed—in the context of judicial prayers—more plausible than what has been previously suggested.

The profit of our comparison of the Greek and Latin texts will become even more striking when we apply our method to a well-known "*defixio*" that has often been discussed without producing any convincing interpretation. It concerns a tablet found in the amphitheater at Caerleon (the ancient Isca Silurum, encampment of the *legio II Augusta*). The editor, R. G. Collingwood, read, *Domna Ne- / mesis do ti-bi pallem / et galliculas / Qui tulit non / redimat n[isi fusa] sanguine / sua*. Practically all of the previous interpretations of this tablet begin with the assumption that we have here a traditional *defixio* using an appropriate kind of sympathetic magic,¹³³ namely, that the person gives the clothing of an enemy to the goddess Nemesis in order that the owner will get them back only by paying with his life. In order to elicit this reading from the tablet, however, one must understand the word *tulit* to mean "he has worn" or "he has brought" and *redimat* to mean "may he get them back," both of which are strained, if not impossible, translations of the Latin.

If, however, we take these verbs in their normal meaning as they appear on other British lead tablets (i.e., *tulit* [= *abstulit*], "he has stolen" and *redimat*, "may he atone or redeem") we immediately see that this text is another example of juridical prayer. The translation is then very straightforward: "Mistress Nemesis, I give you (*my*!) cloak and shoes. Whoever has stolen them will not atone for it unless with his life, with his blood." It is therefore a question of cession to the goddess by which the stolen object has become her possession (cf. *tuas res* from the *Italica* text). This is clearly a prayer for revenge and for punishment of the guilty. *Redimere* is comparable to the Greek verb λύω, in the sense of "ransom, redeem, buy off, atone for."

Since I first arrived at this interpretation long ago, it has been happily confirmed by texts from Bath (*Britannia* 14 [1983]: 336, nos. 5 and 6). Number 5 reads,

exēcro qui involaver-
it qui Deomiorix de hos-
{i}pitio suo perdiderit qui-
cumque rē(u)s deus illum
inveniat sanguine et
vitae suae illud redemat.

I curse (him) who has stolen, who has robbed Deomiorix from his house. Whoever is guilty, may the god find him. Let him pay for it with his blood and his life.

Number 6 reads,

Minervae
de(ae) Suli donavi
furem qui
caracallam
meam invo-
lavit si seryus
si liber
si ba
ro si mulier
hoc donum non-
redemat nessi
sangu(i)nē suo.

I have given to Minerva, the Dea Sulis, the thief who has stolen my hooded cloak, whether slave or free, whether man or woman. He is not to redeem (i.e., in the sense of "buy off") this "gift" unless with his own blood.

The phrase "to pay with his own blood" occurs twice. The second text, in particular, is interesting because here the thief is delivered to the goddess (as in the Cnidian tablets), and he can only redeem himself from this "transfer" (*donum*)¹³⁴ with his blood.

I shall now cite some (parts of) recently discovered Latin texts to show to what extent they correspond to Greek—in particular Cnidian—texts, partially also to show how the Greek material can contribute here to the interpretation. The first is a tablet from Uley (*Britannia* 10 [1979]: 343, no. 3). As I have done before, I shall begin with the excellent translation and interpretation of the editors, M. W. C. Hassall and R. S. O. Tomlin:

Side A

Commonitorium deo
Mercurio [written over *Marti Silvano*] a Satur-
nina muliere de lintia
mine quod amisit ut il-
le qui hoc circumvenit non
ante laxetur nis{s}i quando
res ssdictas ad fanum ssdic-
tum attulerit si vir si mu-
lier si servus s{i} liber

Side B

Deo ssdicto tertiam p-
artem donat ita ut
ex{s}igat istas res quae
sssta(e) sunt.
Ac a quae perit deo Silvano
tertia pars donatur ita ut
hoc ex{s}igat si vir si femina, si serv-
us si liber[. . .] E[. . .] TAT.

A memorandum to the god Mercury (erased: Mars Silvanus) from Saturnina a woman concerning the linen cloth she has lost. Let him who stole it not have rest until he brings the aforesaid things to the aforesaid temple, whether he is man or woman, slave or free. (Side A)

She gives a third part to the aforesaid god on condition that he exact those things which have been written above. A third part from what has been lost is given to the god Silvanus on condition that he exact this, whether (the thief) is man, woman, slave or free. . . . (Side B)

This is an official complaint, called *commonitorium* here and on another tablet (*Britannia* 13 [1982]: 400, no. 4), *petitio*. In harmony with such a technical term is

the vaguely official style in *ssdictus* (cf. the use of the term *προγεγραμμένοι* in the confession inscription on p. 78, which concerned the dispute between Apollonios and Skollos).¹³⁵ Saturnina asks that the unknown thief "have no rest until" (*non ante laxetur*) he returns the stolen cloth, a stipulation that recalls not only the language of some *defixiones* (e.g., *ne quis solvat nisi nos qui fecimus* [DT 137] or the use of *ἀναλύω* in the Greek *defixiones*)¹³⁶ but, above all, the expression in the South Italian prayer (see pp. 73–74): "Let her not breath freely until. . . ." The thief can only "be free," "be liberated" when he has brought the stolen object to the temple, as in the Cnidian tablets. Saturnina in advance pledges to the god a third of the value on condition that he goes after these things; here as elsewhere the Latin *exsigat* is used in a manner identical to the Greek verb *ἐπιζητέω*.

A tablet from Bath (*Britannia* 12 [1981]: 371, no. 6) has a similar usage: "I have given to Dea Sulis the six silver pieces that I have lost. The goddess will claim them back (*exactura*) from the names listed below." The names then follow. The verb *exsigatur* occurs again on a tablet from Bath (*Britannia* 13 [1982]: 403, no. 6) that begins by dedicating some lost money to the same goddess: *Deae Suli Minervae Docca / dono numini tuo pecuniam quam* [. . . *a]misi id est (denarios quinque).*

The following tablet from Uley (*Britannia* 10 [1979]: 342, no. 2) is also very interesting.

Side A	Side B
Deo Mercurio	habeant nis{s}i
Cenacus queritur	[[nis{s}i]] repraese [n-
de Vitalino et Nata-	taverint mihi iu-
lino filio ipsius d[e]	mentum quod r[a-
iumento quod erap-	puerunt et deo
tum est. Erogat	devotionem qua[m]
deum Mercurium	ipse ab his ex-
ut nec ante sa-	postulaverit.
nitatem	

Cenacus complains to the god Mercury about Vitalinus and Natalinus, his son, concerning the draught animal that was stolen. He begs the god Mercury that they will not have good health until they repay me promptly the animal they have stolen and (until they pay) the god the "devotion" that he himself will demand from them.

Again we perceive the full judicial setting of the Cnidian tablets. Here we see the use of the actual legal term *queri* ("to make a complaint before the court"). The last sentence contains a proviso unique for British lead tablets; the thief, forced by "the court," must not only give back the stolen animal or pay its value (*repraesentare* can mean both), but in addition he has to give a *devotio* to the god. Here the term can not, of course, have had the usual meaning (i.e., "a curse, imprecation, etc.") but must be something like a devotional act or gift by which penance is done. This may refer to a part of the value of the object (which elsewhere, however, is invariably promised by the original owner) but also to the *ἱεροπόημα* mentioned in some confession inscriptions that accompanied the secular settlement of the case and was also requested by the god in a dream.

I cannot cite here all the known texts from Britain. Several offer some further interesting details. One curse (*Britannia* 14 [1983]: 338, no. 3) reads, *si servus si liber t(a)ndiu siluerit vel aliquid de hoc noverit* and further on, *is qui anilum involavit vel qui medius fuerit*, that is, in addition to the actual thief, the tablet curses any accomplices or people who know about the crime. We have met stipulations of this sort several times in Greek and Latin texts discussed above (cf. the term *consciis* or, in Greek, *συνγνώντα, τοὺς συνειδότας, τοὺς συνιδότες*). Consequences for the blood can also be expressed in a more concrete way. Another tablet (*Britannia* 14 [1983]: 334, no. 2) wishes that the thief of a bronze vessel *sangu(in)em suum in ipsu[m] [i.e., ipsum] aenmu [i.e., aenum] fundat* ("may spill his blood into the vessel itself"). Another variant occurs in one of the more intriguing texts, in which a Christian is named explicitly. I give the text as presented by the editors (*Britannia* 13 [1982]: 404, no. 7).

seu gen(tili)s seu C-
h(r)istianus quaecumque utrum vir
utrum mulier utrum puer utrum puella
utrum servus utrum liber mihi Annian
o ma(n)tutene de bursa mea s(c)x argente[o]s
furaverit tu d[o]mina dea ab ipso perexi[g]-
e[. . . eo]s si mihi per[f]raudem aliquam INDEP-
REG[.]STVM dederit nec sic ipsi dona sed ut sangu-
inem suum EPVTES qui mihi hoc inrogaverit

There can hardly be any disagreement about the interpretation of the first six lines. I point to the deferential apostrophe *domina dea*, which we noted in related Greek and Latin texts. *Perexigere* is a unique intensification of the more common *exigere*. The editors, however, are at a loss about what to do with the last three lines: "The syntax is obscure and the text (if correctly transcribed) probably corrupt. The purpose is apparently apotropaic (to make any counter-spell by the thief rebound upon him?), and *eputes* possibly conceals a verb equivalent to *solvat*." As for the reading *indepreg[.]stum*, "it is uncertain whether to read something like *indeprehensum* ("undiscovered") or to separate *inde* ("thence") from an obscure technicality like *pr(a)egestum* ("previous action"), *pr(a)egustum* ("foretaste"), etc."

I believe that we make further progress by adducing some comparable Greek texts, especially those from Cnidos. I shall begin with the verb *irrogare*, which means "to impose, inflict, ordain a punishment or penalty upon somebody." How could the injured party himself ever deserve punishment? I think that the solution is hidden in one of the conjectures of the editors with regard to *indepreg[.]stum*, namely, *indeprehensum*.¹³⁷ However, this sentence becomes clear only in comparison with the Cnidian practice. Several excuse formulas were to safeguard the writers from the wrath of the gods. In particular they had to emphasize that they themselves were not guilty and were forced to this appeal to divine justice. We have interpreted *nec sit invidia mei Timotheo* in the same way. If the complaint is not somehow justified, the accuser himself must risk divine retaliation. This would a fortiori be the case if nothing had been stolen at all. That is why the authors of the Cnidian tablets first give the guilty an opportunity to right the wrong. Divine help is invoked

only when human endeavors fail. Invoking divine help against false accusations occurs repeatedly on confession inscriptions. Since we know that already in Augustan times *donare* occurs generally with the meaning of *condonare* ("to forgive, to pardon"), the following translation of the last three lines seems best to me:

If through some deceit (i.e., on the sly) the thief has given it back to me so that it remained undiscovered, do not in any way pardon him, but may you destroy (or drink, or may he vomit)¹³⁸ his blood, whoever has inflicted this guilt upon me.

Thus, although of course discussion is still possible about the details of the individual readings and interpretations, it is by now clear how helpful the Greek material can be for the explanation of related Latin texts.

FROM THE GREEK EAST TO THE LATIN WEST: CONCLUSION

We must conclude that it is worthwhile to break the language barrier. The differences between the *defixio* and the judicial prayer that we have observed in the Greek material, seem to occur in exactly the same way in the Latin tablets.¹³⁹ Indeed, only when this distinction is fully appreciated can some Latin texts that previously resisted analysis now be fully understood. The differences in mentality that form the background of the two categories is similar in both the Latin texts and the Greek. In the traditional form of the *defixio* there is more-often-than-not an anonymous person who desires to harm an enemy without any argumentation or justification for the action; the daemons or gods who carry out the curse are manipulated, rather than persuaded. In the judicial prayer, however, an individual, often giving his or her name, supplicates the god(s) in a subservient way (*domina*, etc.) and asks for divine assistance in the form of retaliation for an injustice suffered. In this context there is abundant use of formulaic language closely imitating that used in the secular courts of law. Although once in a while a great god is invoked (Iupiter O.M., for example), these prayers are generally directed to local deities—or gods from the Roman pantheon identified with local deities—for instance, spring nymphs, Divus Nodens, Mercurius, Neptunus, and, especially in Bath, the Dea Sulis (Minerva). The British tablets, insofar as it is possible to check, were not placed in a temple open to public view, but rather they were folded or rolled, possibly pierced with a nail (so at any rate unable to be read by outsiders) and buried or thrown into a spring; at Bath dozens of tablets manipulated and deposited in this way were recovered from the hot spring and the Roman reservoir excavated beneath the floor of the King's Bath.¹⁴⁰ We can therefore conclude that in these cases the trust in the power of the god was so dominant that publication of the complaint in order to bring the thief to repentance was deemed superfluous. This does not, however, preclude the possibility that the injured persons may have also mentioned the accusation in some more public forum in such a way that the culprits were made aware of their indictment before the god(s).

I have left one problem until now that I hope to be able to go into elsewhere in more detail: How do we explain the striking similarities between the texts of such far-flung regions, cultures, and periods (e.g., the Cnidian tablets, of hellenistic

date, and the English tablets, dating mostly from the third or fourth century A.D.)? In this case spontaneous generation is certainly not to be rejected out of hand as a possible explanation: a certain shared religious mentality¹⁴¹ in which the dependence and subservience of mankind to the superior power of the god predominates might indeed lead independently to prayers of a judicial nature. Nor is the belief that illness is punishment from the god limited to a small number of cultures. Elsewhere¹⁴² I have argued that the more specific, detailed, and exceptional the elements shared by comparable customs and formulas, the greater the likelihood of a derivation and the smaller the probability of an independent development. In the case of the judicial prayer I would prefer to believe that borrowing and transmission has taken place because I consider the similarities so striking as to make spontaneous development far less likely. We should note that such borrowing among the *defixiones* can sometimes be demonstrated, just as the South Italian judicial prayer was also undoubtedly related to the Cnidian prayers. Sample books or professional formularies may have played a role.¹⁴³ Particularly in England, we have to take into account the strong influence of international migration that often resulted when Roman soldiers from far distant parts of the empire finished their military duty there and opted not to return to their native lands.

I conclude with an exceptionally interesting example of borrowing in a judicial prayer from Spain. Besides the prayer from Italica, which we took as our starting point, there exists a prayer, already known for a long time, on marble bricked into the wall of a water basin near Emerita.¹⁴⁴ It reads,

dea Ataecina Turi-
brig. Proserpina
per tuam maiestatem
te rogo obsecro
uti vindices quot mihi
furti factum est; quisquis
mihi imudavit involavit
minusve fecit [e]a[s] res] q(uae) i(nfra) s(criptae) s(unt)
tunicas VI, [p]aenula
lintea II, in[dus]ium cu-
ius I. C . . . m ignoro
i . . . ius

Goddess Ataecina Turibrigensis Proserpina, by your majesty I ask, pray, and beg that you avenge the theft that has been done to me. Whoever has changed (*immutavit*, or replaced?), stolen, pilfered from me the things that are noted below (*quae infra scriptae sunt*): 6 tunics, 2 linen cloaks, an undergarment. . . .

The respectful language is striking. The verb *vindicare* corresponds again to *ἐκδικέω* in the Greek revenge prayers. In reaction to a paper I gave in Paris in April 1985 on this subject, Patrick Le Roux informed me that in a well in Baelo, Spain a lead tablet was found in 1970 showing a clear relation to the one just cited. He was kind enough to send me the text and allowed me to use parts of it in advance of full publication.¹⁴⁵ The text invokes the goddess Isis Myrionymos¹⁴⁶ and "commits a theft" to her [*tibi commendo furtum*]. The goddess is addressed as "mistress" (*domina*) and asked *per maiestate(m) tua(m)* to pass sentence on this theft. This time the

verb is not *vindicare*, but *reprindere* (= *reprehendere*, "to convict, pass judgment on"). All this is clearly similar to the usual practice in judicial prayers. There is however one element unique in the whole Latin collection: *fac/tuo numini maes-itati exemplaria*. It is paradoxical that neither the term *exemplarium* nor anything similar occurs in any other Latin judicial prayer¹⁴⁷ but that it does occur several times in Greek confession inscriptions from Asia Minor—clearly, as happens more often, as a loanword from Latin—and in a formulaic expression: "I warn all mankind not to disdain the gods, for they (i.e. mankind) will have the stele as a warning (*ἐξενπλάριον*)" (see p. 75). Moreover, the phrase *ut tu evide(s) immedilo qui fecit autulit* ("that you publicly punish[?] whoever did it, [whoever] stole it") recalls the phrase *ἐς μέσον ἐνεκεκεῖν* in the text from Asia Minor (see pp. 74–75). It seems clear to me, because of these similarities, that these texts from Spain cannot have originated independently from the texts from Asia Minor. In this way a welcome bit of information in Paris about Spain possibly provides a link between Greek Asia Minor and Roman Britain.

Finally, what about the problem of "magic" and "religion"? As the reader will have noticed I have opted for a cautious use of the term *magic*. We have observed that many *defixiones* in the traditional sense of the term display clear characteristics of black magic. At the same time, however, we also observe a shift here and there. As Faraone remarks, elements of prayer may intrude. In and of itself this fact does not necessarily exclude such texts from the category of magic. Invocations to gods and daemons of the underworld in prayerlike formulas often occur in (particularly later) magical texts in order to encourage divine cooperation, and they may readily be included in a definition of magic. Indeed, we often descry elements of coercion. As soon as aspects of supplicatory prayer turn up, however, we notice that these are restricted to the texts that also display other "atypical" elements, for instance, the invocation of Olympian as opposed to chthonic gods, the use of deferential titles and formulas, excuses for the disturbance, and so on. We concluded that all these elements were characteristic of utterances to which in their most ideal form no one would deny the label of "religious prayer." There are, then, two complications: first, it seems better to see prayer and *defixio* as two opposites on the extreme ends of a whole spectrum of more or less hybrid forms; second, the terms *magic* and *religion*, which may be applied to each of these extremes, tend to lose their distinctive force as one approaches the middle ground of this spectrum. This does not—at least in my mind—imply that we need to abandon altogether the use of these terms. On the contrary, it should provoke our interest and encourage us to document and explain the conditions and the circumstances that foster the blurring of the boundaries. We have seen in our case that the essential criterion for the definition of judicial prayer should be sought in the legitimation and motivation of the wish, that is, we should ask ourselves whether the wish was justified according to some unwritten laws of public morality or whether the action was a legitimate one (i.e., as an act of rightful retaliation). In this situation and only in this situation a person could and did resort to divine aid by means of a judicial prayer, in addition to, or as an alternate to, magical *defixiones*. It is obvious, however, that what we distinguish as magical and religious attitudes correspond closely to coercive or performative attitudes and supplicative or negotiative attitudes.

What is perhaps most interesting is that the "manipulative" aspects predominate in the traditional *defixiones* found in Greece proper, whereas we find supplicative elements in areas where Greek culture was imported at a later period and where for centuries prior very different social and political forces had exercised their influence on the culture and mentality of the inhabitants. A strongly monarchical ideology has deeply influenced religious perceptions here; for the common man one of the chief tasks of the distant king and his more-approachable subordinates was the administration of justice. The fact that the prayer for justice employed the official language of a royal petition is significant. It appears that in these regions people had a choice of options when it came to interacting with the supernatural; the fact that in the case of a justified complaint they so often opted for the deferential judicial prayer instead of the traditional *defixio* speaks volumes about their belief in divine power and its direct involvement in human affairs.¹⁴⁸

Notes

The following oft-cited works will be referred to by the author's last name and date of publication only, or by the abbreviation given in square brackets:

- A. Audollent, *Defixionum Tabellae* (Paris, 1904). [DT]
 - G. Björck, *Der Fluch des Christen Sabinus*, Papyrus Upsaliensis 8 (Uppsala, 1938).
 - F. Cumont, "Il sole vindice dei delitti ed il simbolo delle mani alzate," *Mem. Pont. Acc.*, 3d ser., 1 (1923): 65–80.
 - R. Egger, *Römische Antike und frühes Christentum*, vol. 1 (Klagenfurt, 1962/63).
 - P. Herrmann, *Ergebnisse einer Reise in Nordostlydien*, DenkschrWien 80 (Vienna, 1962): 1–63.
 - , *Tituli Asiae Minoris* vol. V, pt. 1 (Vienna, 1981). [TAM]
 - D. R. Jordan, "A Survey of Greek *Defixiones* Not Included in the Special Corpora," *GRBS* 26 (1985): 151–97. [SGD]
 - E. G. Kagarow, *Griechische Fluchtafeln*, Eos Suppl. 4 (Leopoli, 1929).
 - K. Latte, *Heiliges Recht: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der sakralen Rechtsformen in Griechenland* (Tübingen, 1920).
 - K. Preisendanz, "Fluchtafel (*Defixio*)," *RAC* 8 (1972): 1–29.
 - H. Solin, *Eine neue Fluchtafel aus Ostia*, Comm. Hum. Litt. vol. 42, pt. 3 (Helsinki, 1968).
 - W. Speyer, "Fluch," *RAC* 7 (1969): 1160–1288.
 - F. S. Steinleitner, *Die Beicht im Zusammenhange mit der sakralen Rechtspflege in der Antike* (Munich, 1913).
 - H. S. Versnel, ed. *Faith, Hope, and Worship: Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World* (Leiden, 1981).
 - , "May he not be able to sacrifice . . . ? Concerning a Curious Formula in Greek and Latin Curses," *ZPE* 58 (1985): 247–69.
 - R. Wünsch, *Defixionum Tabellae Atticae*, IG, vol. 3, pt. 3 (Berlin, 1897). [DTA]
 - E. Ziebarth, "Neue attische Fluchtafeln," *GöttNachr.* 1899:105–35.
 - J. Zingerle, "Heiliges Recht," *JOAI* 23 (1926) 5–72.
 1. J. Gil and J. M. Luzón, *Habis* 6 (1975): 117–33; *L'année épigraphique* 1975, no 497.
- The editors of *AEPigr* interpret *abutor* "avec le sens superlatif et non d'abus," but this does not make the text clear to me.
2. I hope to devote a more detailed study to this question, in which I shall return to

several important questions that at present are not under discussion. In this connection I would greatly appreciate it if readers would call my attention to any testimonia I may have overlooked. Many texts, such as more than two hundred tablets from England, are still awaiting publication. There are about 80 from Bath (*Britannia* 16 [1985]: 322) and about 200 from Uley (*Britannia* 10 [1979]: 342, n. 11).

3. Ziebarth 1899, Steinleitner 1913, Zingerle 1926, Björck 1938, and Latte 1920.

4. See n. 59.

5. Jordan 1985, 151.

6. For details see Faraone's essay (chap. 1, p. 3–4).

7. See the collection of formulas in Audollent, *DT*, pp. 483–86, and note that practically all these instances of direct instructions to the gods or daemons date from the period of the Roman Empire. Earlier instructions to the gods are the exceptions, not the rule.

8. It is significant that apart from a few instances of ἐπικαλοῦμαι and ἀξιῶ (without exception dating from imperial times) all of the (few) instances of verbs connoting the idea of "imploing" in the index to *DT* (e.g., *rogo*, *obsecro*, *oro*, *peto*, etc., which indeed belong to the genuine language of prayer) are Latin and therefore late. The Greek verb ὀρκίζω and others, of course, belong to another category. For vows in *defixiones* see below, p. 00.

9. This is the usual classification. Kagarow (1929, 50 ff.) distinguishes between five categories separating curses against evildoers in general from curses against magic incantations. Cf. Faraone above, p. 24 n.23

10. E. C. Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society* (New York, 1958), 83. His view is shared by many other modern anthropological studies on circum-Mediterranean societies. For the able protector, see J. Davis, *People of the Mediterranean* (London, 1977), chaps. 3 and 4. He explains success in social competition mainly in terms of honor, which in turn will give the successful competitor access to limited resources.

11. Among many passages, see, e.g., *Pl. Rep.* 364B: "If he wants to hurt an enemy, he will damage both the righteous and the unrighteous by means of incantations and spells," a statement that clearly denounces the "amoral" aspects of this type of black magic.

12. R. and E. Blum, *The Dangerous Hour* (London, 1970), 34. Their book reports many such examples of the marked ambivalence concerning magic in general and curses in particular.

13. Björck 1938, 112.

14. See SGD 162 and 164 for two examples.

15. T. B. Mitford, *The Inscriptions of Kourion* (Philadelphia, 1971), nos. 127–42. Cf. Th. Drew-Bear, "Imprecations from Kourion," *BASP* 9 (1972): 85–107. For the correct provenance (Amathous, not Kourion) see P. Aupert and D. Jordan, *AJA* 85 (1984): 184.

16. *DT* 231, 260, 261, 270, 271; SGD 151–53, 155, 156, 158–61. Jordan (SGD, pp. 186 and 191) also mentions two unpublished examples. SGD 91 is a curious and extraordinary piece.

17. On Erinyes in *defixiones*, see Wünsch, *DTA* vi and xxi; Audollent, *DT* lxi and xciii. Combination of Erinyes with other gods occurring in *defixiones*: B. C. Dieterich, "Demeter, Erinyes, Artemis," *Hermes* 90 (1962): 124–48. In general: A. Dieterich, *Nekyia* (Leipzig, 1893), 54ff.; L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, vol. 5 (Oxford, 1904), 437ff.; P. Robin, *Le culte des Erinyes dans la Grèce classique* (Paris, 1939); R. E. Wüst, "Erinyes," *RE Suppl.* VIII (1956): 82ff.; R. Gladigow, "Jenseitsvorstellungen und Kulturkritik," *ZRGG* 26 (1974): 289–309, esp. 299ff.

18. Kourouniotes, *Ephemeris Epigraphica* 1913:185 (= SGD 14 [Athens, third century B.C.]): πρὸς τὰς Πραξιδίκας; the same formula is in SGD 62 (Athens, third century B.C.). A votive inscription at Volos has Πραξιδίκαις Μεγαλοκ[ῆς . . .] (B. Helly, *Gonnoi*, vol. II [Amsterdam, 1973], no. 204). A *defixio* from Cyrene (third century B.C.) identifies Praxi-

dike with Kore: Πραξιδίκα κῶρα μεγάλητο(ρος) Ἀγλαοκάρπου; see C. Pugliese Carratelli, *ASAtene* 23/24 (1961/62): no. 193; C. Gallavotti, *Maia* 15 (1963): 450–54 (= SGD 150). Cf. also Wünsch, *DTA* vii. For the goddess Dike see below. In a late bilingual word list mention is made of Ἐκδικήσεις as *Ultrices* for which see G. Goetz, *Hermeneumata Pseudositheana*, *Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum* 3 (Leipzig, 1892), 237.

19. The expression is εὐαγγέλια θύειν ("sacrifice at the occasion of good tidings"); cf. Xen. *Hell.* 1.6.37. Cf. *PGM* IV.2094: τέλεσον δαίμονι τὰ ἐνθάδε γεγραμμένα· τελέσαντι δέ σοι θυσιάν ἀποδώσω. There are only a few more such votive formulas in the *defixiones*. Cf. for the moment Kagarow 1929, 40 and D. R. Jordan, *Hesperia* 54 (1985): 243.

20. Jordan, SGD, p. 158.

21. Jordan, SGD, p. 197; cf. *DTA* 46.

22. The stolen object may even be a παρθένος (young girl). See Audollent, *DT* 74. SGD 38 mentions a tablet from the Athenian Agora (inv. IL 1722) from the 3d cent. A.D. that reproduces this text against thieves.

23. We occasionally find phrases like: τὴν γλώτταν τὴν κακὴν, etc. (*DTA* 84) or τὸν κύσθον τὸν ἀνόσιον (*DTA* 77). There is a slight possibility that apparent professional indications like πορνόβοσκος (brothel keeper or pimp) (SGD 11) may simply be a form of ridicule or abuse. A special type of *defixio* is based on the use of abuse, e.g., *DT* 155: τὸν δυσσεβὴν καὶ ἄνομον καὶ ἐπικατάραιον κάρδηλον and *DT* 188 τόνδε τὸν ἄνομον καὶ ἄσεβῆ. These are *diabolai*, which accuse the opponent of evil deeds against the god in order to provoke divine wrath against him. Cf. S. Eitrem, "Die rituelle ΔΙΑΒΟΛΗ," *SO* 2 (1924): 43–58. For this reason one should not include *DT* 295 into category 4, as Audollent does, since this accusation—*tibi commendo quoniam maledixit partourientem*—is undoubtedly a *diabolē*. Cf. Eitrem, *ibid.*, 57.

24. The term ἀμαρτωλός occurs frequently in funerary curses of Asia Minor. See Strubbe above, p. 48.

25. Inter alia, the Greek term ἀνάθεμα, which is typically Jewish (Speyer 1969, 1240 ff.).

26. A. Cameron ("Inscriptions Relating to Sacral Manumission and Confession," *HTR* 32 [1939]: 158 states clearly that κολάζω is "the term for the divine punishment"; Th. Homolle, *BCH* 25 (1901): 422, n. 1. "châtiment divine, à l'expiation imposée même au delà de la vie"; Steinleitner 1913, 96, n. 3: "typische Ausdruck für Hölle und Höllenstrafen." Cf. F. X. Gokey, *The Terminology for the Devil and Evil Spirits in the Apostolic Fathers* (Ph.D. diss., Catholic University, 1961), 89f.; *TWNT* III, 817. References to punishment in hell or netherworld do occur now and then in *defixiones*. A tablet from Athens has [εἰς τὸ] / δαιμόνιον σκοτεινὸν καὶ καταχθόνιον καὶ / [] εἰς ὅλους τοὺς θεοὺς / ΠΑΣΑΓΗΣ (= πᾶς(ης) γῆς?) πέμπω δῶρον (SGD 54 [Jordan's text] after R. P. Austin, *BSA* 27 [1925/26]: 73). Perhaps something of the kind is intended in a tablet from Apamea against charioteers who are supposed to see daemons from their doors: δέμ[ο]νας ἄωρο[υ]ς, δέμονας βιεύς, Ἡφέστου πῦρ . . . (Jordan, SGD, p. 193).

27. On this *Jenseitskorrespondenz* see Preisendanz 1972, 7–8 and Faraone above, p. 4.

28. Perhaps *DT* 14 from Phrygia belongs to this category: γράφω πᾶ[ν]τ[α]ς τοὺς ἐμοὶ ἀντία π[ο]ιοῦντας μετὰ τῶν [ἀ]ώρων. The context does not refer to the juridical atmosphere normally indicated by terms like *antioi* or *antidikoi*. Cf., further, *DT* 92 from the Thracian Chersonesos (third century B.C.): Αἴσα ἀναιρούσι κἀ[δ]ικοῦσι.

29. *SEG* 30.326 (= SGD 21), originally published by G. W. Elderkin (*Hesperia* 6 [1937]: 382–95) together with another *defixio* that contains a *diabolē* and the phrase ναὶ Κύριε τυφῶς ἐκδίκησον (. . .) καὶ βοήθησον αὐτῷ. See, for some emendations, *BE* 1938, no. 23 and D. R. Jordan, *Glotta* 18 (1980): 62–65, whose text I follow.

30. It is no accident that this term is also a *sermo technicus* in official petitions in Egypt; see below, p. 80.

31. SGD 58; Ph. Bruneau, *Recherches sur les cultes de Délos à l'époque hellénistique et à l'époque impériale* (Paris, 1970), 650ff. Cf. J. Triantaphyllopoulos, *Mélanges helléniques offerts à G. Daux* (Paris, 1974), 332–33. The editor makes an occasional slip, not noticed by L. Robert. Lines 10–12 of side B read *καταγράφο τοῦ ἄραντος ΤΑΟΙΑΕΝ, τὰ ἀναγκῆα αὐτοῦ*, and he translates, “Je dévoue . . . de celui qui a emporté, ce qui lui est nécessaire.” ΤΑΟΙΑΕΝ is almost certainly τὰ αἰδοῖα and τὰ ἀναγκαῖα is surely not “what is necessary” but a variant of αἰδοῖα.

32. The editor follows a suggestion made by A. Plassart by translating, “Donnez naissance à votre pouvoir.” He does not realize, however, that this corresponds closely with the terminology of the so-called confession texts from Lydia and Phrygia (see below, p. 75). Cf., on the meaning of *aretē*, for instance, Y. Grandjean, *Une nouvelle arétologie d'Isis à Maronée* (Leiden, 1975), 1–8.

33. The use of the imperative *διοργιάσετε* is related to the expression *θεοὶ κεχολωμένοι* found in many funerary curses. Cf., e.g., a curse from Halos in Phthiotis (third century B.C.): . . . ἔξει δὲ ὀργὴν μεγάλην τοῦ μεγάλου Διός. See, on these texts, Versnel 1985, 259ff. and Strubbe above, chap. 2.

34. Failure of human efforts is a *topos* in reports of divine healing miracles; see O. Weinreich, *Antike Heilungswunder*, RGVV, vol. 8, pt. 1 (Giessen, 1909) 195ff. Cf. a confession text ἀφελπισθοῦσα ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων (Steinleitner 1913, no. 19). I do not know any comparable reference to failing human justice in *defixiones* or juridical prayers. A funerary curse containing μὴ δυνάμενος ἄγειν τὸ πρᾶγμα (Zingerle 1926, 54ff.) is of a different nature.

35. Fr. Blass, *Philologus* 41 (1882): 746ff.; K. Wessely, 11. *Jahresber. d. Franz-Joseph Gymnasiums* (Vienna, 1885); Wünsch, *CIA* III, app. XXXI; Preisigke, *Sammelbuch* I, 5103; Wilcken, *UPZ* I, no. 1; Gerstinger, *WS* 44 (1924/25): 219, with a new reading adopted by Wilcken, *UPZ*, 646ff.; *PGM* XL; Steinleitner 1913, 102; Björck 1938, 131ff. Some remarks: W. Crönert, in *Raccolta di scritti in onore di G. Lumbroso* (Milan, 1925), 470–74; R. Seider, in *Festschrift zum 150 jährigen Bestehen des Berliner Aegyptischen Museums* (Berlin, 1974), 422–23.

36. Not only because Oserapis is a god of the netherworld but also since gods sitting together as judges are typical for the images of underworld and hereafter; E. Rohde, *Psyche*, vol. I, 10th ed. (Tübingen, 1925), 310–11. Cf. the instances at Cnidus and elsewhere (below, p. 72) and SGD 164: *Εὐλαμων, μετὰ τῶν σῶν παρῆδρω[ν]*.

37. S. Eitrem (see n. 23), 43: “Ein Gebet kann doch in einen Fluch hinübergleiten wie z.B. in dem Rachegebet der Artemisia.” On the differences between this type of prayer and the genuine curse, see Kagarow 1929, 22ff., 49ff.; Björck 1938, 112ff.; P. Moraux, *Une defixion judiciaire au musée d'Istanbul*, *Mém. Ac. Roy. Belg.* vol. 54, pt. 2 (Brussels, 1960): 4–5.

38. Below, p. 81.

39. Th. Homolle, *BCH* 25 (1901): 412–30; *IG* XII.7², p. 1; R. Wünsch, *BPhW* 25 (1905): 1081; Latte 1920, 81, n. 54; Zingerle, 1926: 67–72; Björck, [1938]: 129–31; Versnel 1981, 32; H. W. Pleket, in *Faith, Hope and Worship*, ed. H. S. Versnel, 1981, 189–92. I have given a recent treatment of the text in Versnel 1985, 252ff., to which I refer for the details.

40. In a letter Jordan suggests to me that perhaps *epaphroditos* should not be capitalized and interpreted as “a certain charming fellow.” This may well be true. As we have seen and shall further observe, names of thieves and the like are mentioned if known, but the curse is usually the specific refuge for those who do not know their opponents.

41. Zingerle 1926, 67–72 was the first one who drew attention to the similarity with the *ἐντευξίς*, and he was followed by Björck 1938, 60 ff. Indeed, many of the expressions of

this prayer (and the one of Artemisia) have exact parallels in the *ἐντευξίς*: βασιλεῦ; ἐπὶ σε καταφεύγω; τοῦ δικαίου τύχω; ἰκέτις; προσπίπτω; ἀδικοῦμαι. Later collections and studies confirm this: Maria T. Cavassini, in “Repertorium Papyrorum Graecarum Quae Documenta Tradant Ptolemaicae Aetatis,” *Aegyptus* 35 (1955): 299–334 (“Exemplum vocis ἐντευξίς”); O. Gueraud, *Enteuxis* (Cairo, 1931); J. L. White, *The Form and Structure of the Official Petition*, SBL Dissertation Series 5 (Missoula, 1972). On ἀδικοῦμαι as a stereotyped element of the *ἐντευξίς* see also W. Schubart, “Das hellenistische Königsideal nach Inschriften und Papyri,” *APF* 12 (1937): 7. Zingerle could have also included the term *εὐίλατος*, which is used in reference to kings or emperors: *P. Petr.* 2, 13, 19; *UPZ* 109, 6; cf. Versnel 1985, 260–61.

42. Björck (1938, 137) points out that the same can be found in magical papyri. *PGM* LI has παρακαλῶ σε, νεκύδαμον (.) ἀκοῦσαι τοῦ ἐμοῦ ἀξιώματος καὶ ἐκδικῆσαί με.

43. See Versnel 1985, 254; Strubbe above, chap. 2.

44. The main collections and discussions are F. Cumont, “Il sole vindice dei delitti ed il simbolo delle mani alzate,” *Mem. Pont. Acc. ser. 3*, vol. 1 (1923): 65–80; idem, “Nuovi epitafi col simbolo della preghiera al dio vindice” *Rend. Pont. Acc. Arch.* 5 (1926/27): 69–78; idem, *Syria* 14 (1933): 392–95; Björck 1938, 24ff.; Cf. also G. Sanders, *Bijdrage tot de studie der Latijnse metrische grafschriften van het heidense Rome*, Verhandelingen Kon. Vlaamse Acad. Wet. Kl. Letteren 37 (Leiden, 1960), 264ff.; F. Bömer, *Untersuchungen über die Religion der Sklaven in Griechenland und Rom*, vol. 4 (Wiesbaden, 1963), 201–5. On the symbol of the raised hands see Strubbe above, p. 42.

45. L. Robert, *BE* (1965), no. 335 and (1968), no. 535; D. M. Pippidi, “Tibi commendo,” *RivStorAnt.* 6/7 (1976/77): 37–44; D. R. Jordan, “An Appeal to the Sun for Vengeance (*Inscr. de Délos* 2533),” *BCH* 103 (1979): 522–25.

46. See F. J. Dölger, *Die Sonne der Gerechtigkeit* (Münster, 1919), 90ff.; F. Cumont, *Afterlife in Roman Paganism* (New Haven, 1922), 133ff.; J. Bidez, *La cité du monde et la cité du Soleil chez les Stoiciens*, *Mém. Ac. Roy. Belg.* 26 (Brussels 1932); R. Pettazzoni, in *Homages to J. Bidez et F. Cumont* (Bruxelles, 1949), 245–56.

47. In the collection of Björck: Serapis (1); Theos Hypsistos (11, 12); Hosios Dikaos (13); Haghe Thea (14); *Manes vel Di Caelestes* (16); οἱ θεοὶ (17). Cf. E. Schwertheim, *Inschriften von Kyzikos und Umgebung* (Bonn, 1980), no. 522 for Δίκη καὶ Ζεῦ Πανσπόσιε.

48. J. H. Waszink, “Biothanatoi,” *RAC* II (1954): 391–94 and Pippidi (see n. 45). On ἄωροι see the literature in Bömer (see n. 44), 202–3.

49. K. Meuli, “Lateinisch ‘moriōr’—deutsch ‘morden,’” *Gesammelte Schriften* vol. I (Basel, 1975), 439–44.

50. L. Robert, *Collection Froehner*, vol. 1, *Inscriptions grecques* (1936), 55–56: “Poison et magie jouaient un grand rôle et en fait et dans les imaginations. Il serait intéressant d’en relever les traces dans les épitaphes grecques.” He gives some examples to which, indeed, many more could be added. Cf. also Zingerle 1926, 18–19 and Latte 1920, 68, n. 18. The word δόλος is frequently attested, see L. Robert, *BCH* 101 (1977): 49, on δόλον πονηρόν. I wonder whether in *Inscriptions de Délos*, ed. P. Roussel and M. Launey (Paris, 1937) no. 2533—καὶ εἰ τις αὐτῇ βλάβῃ(?) ἐπεβούλευσεν, according to the conjectures by Jordan (see n. 45)—we should not prefer δόλο]ν to βλάβῃ]ν. This nearly always implies that the culprit is unknown, e.g., τίς δὲ τούτους ἠδίκησε ἐνκεχαρισμένος ἦτω εἰς αὐτὰ τὰ νέκυνια (*MAMA* vol. VII, p. 402 = S. Mitchell, *Regional Epigraphic Catalogues of Asia Minor* [Oxford 1982] II, 362); τίς αὐτὸν ἠδίκησε τῷ ἡ αἵμα[α] (N. P. Rosanova, *VDI* 51 [1955]: 174–76). I find it difficult to follow Jordan (see n. 45), 522, n. 2, who makes τίς interrogative (τίς αὐτὸν ἠδίκησε;). My colleague Strubbe has transcribed another funerary

text in the museum of Afyon where *τίς* has unmistakably the function of *ὅστις*. Cf. also BE (1959): 273 and (1980): 341. C. Naour ("Inscriptions du Moyen Hermos," ZPE 44 [1981]: 18, no. 1) gives another unequivocal example. W. Peek (ZPE 42 [1981]: 287–88) refers to it as "ein seit dem Hellenismus ganz gewöhnlicher Sprachgebrauch," (he gives yet another example). Cf. G. Petzl, ZPE 46 (1982): 134. Naturally, the name of the murderer is rarely mentioned. Björck 1938, no. 20 (*Atimeto liberto, cuius dolo filiam amisi*) and no. 21 (*Acte libertae*) belong to the rare exceptions.

51. Björck 1938, no. 13 (= S. Mitchell, [see n. 150]: 242) and no. 14. In no. 17 (from Nabataea) mention is made of *κακολογούντων*, which leaves the option of death caused by charms or slander. In no. 18 *δειράντων* may imply bodily violence, although *δειρομαι* may also be "Nachteil erleiden" (F. Preisigke, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyruskunde* [Berlin, 1856–1924] s.v.).

52. This expression tallies with the marked Jewish character of the famous inscription from Rheneia.

53. Cumont 1923, no. 5B: *tu (v) indices*; followed by Björck and Bömer (see n. 44), 203; Jordan (see n. 45), 524, n. 8, suggests [*u*]t *vindices*, provided that the stone proves to have been damaged.

54. *Inscriptions de Délos* no. 2533. Cf. Jordan (see n. 45).

55. CIL 6. 34635a; Cumont 1923, no. 7 with related texts.

56. Cf. CIG 3.5471 (= IG 14.254): *μη λάθοιτο τὸν θεόν*, and Cumont 1923, 74, no. 9: *Κύριε Ἥλιε [ἡ τι]ς(?) κλαπή σε μή λάθοιτο*.

57. Björck 1938, 58: "Das Verweilen bei der besonderen Art von Heimsuchung die die Gegner treffen soll, eignet weniger dem Rachegebet als dem Schadenzauber und Fluch."

58. On the wall of a monastery in Nabataea: Le Bas-Waddington, *Voyage archéologique en Grèce et Asie Mineure*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1870), 2068.

59. In this translation I have tried to preserve the faulty syntax of the Greek, which provides a good example of the deficient and often somewhat breathless language characteristic of many of these texts. Cf. Gallazzi, "Supplica ad Atena su un ostrakon da Esna," ZPE 61 (1985): 101–9. I thank W. Clarysse for having drawn my attention to this text before it was published. Gallazzi refers to two related texts from the same area, of which only a poor transcription remains, published by B. Boyaval (*Chron. d'Égypte* 55 [1980]: 309–13). One of them has *ἀξιούμεθα ἡμᾶς κρίνεσθαι μετ' αὐτῶν καὶ βεβοηθήσθαι ὑπὸ ὑμῶν* (. . . .) *ἐγκαλοῦμεν ὑπὸ τούτων τῶν καταράτων καθ' ἡμέραν ὑμῖν*. For a repeated prayer for justice compare a text from England (*Britannia* 15 [1984]: 339, no. 7): *iteratis [pre]c[i]bus te rogo ut . . .* Gallazzi neglects to place this prayer in the context of the prayers collected by Björck and denies any similarity with the curse of Artemisia because it contains *una lunga esecrazione* (p. 103), surely an insufficient argument. Several authorities quoted by him do compare demotic prayers for justice with the Artemisia text: G. R. Hughes, "The Cruel Father," in *Studies J. A. Wilson* (Chicago, 1969), 43–54; J. Quaegebeur, in *Schrijvend Verleden*, ed. K. R. Veenhof (Leiden, 1983), 263–76, esp. 272ff.

60. C. T. Newton, *A History of Discoveries at Halicarnassus, Cnidus, and Branchidae*, vol. 2 (London, 1863), nos. 81ff. For older discussions see literature in DT, p. 5. The texts can also be found in H. Collwitz and F. Bechtel, *Sammlung der griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften*, vol. 3, pt. 1 (Göttingen, 1899), 234ff.; DT 1–13; Steinleitner 1913, nos. 34–47; *Inschriften*, vol. 3, pt. 1 (Göttingen, 1926); Latte DTA, pp. xff.; some of them in SIG, 3d ed., 1178–80. Discussions in Zingerle 1926; Latte 1920, 80; Björck 1938, 121ff.; M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, vol. 1, 2d ed. (Munich, 1955), 221f. There are some textual conjectures in Kagarow 1929, 52.

61. I shall rigorously restrict my comments to the themes directly bearing on my investigation.

62. Note that most of the *defixiones* from the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Corinth are directed against women (N. Bookidis, *Hesperia* 41 [1972]: 304; R. S. Stroud, *AJA* 77 [1973]: 228–29). Among the Cnidian curses there is one conditional self-curse.

63. The verb *ἀναβαίνω* is a technical term for "to go up to god or temple." Cf. UPZ, vol. I, p. 42, no. 3: *ἀνάβασιν εἰς τὸ ἱερόν*, and TWNT, vol. I, pp. 517f. It also occurs in confession texts: TAM, vol. V, p. 1, no. 238; MAMA, vol. IV, pp. 283, 289. The verb *ἀναφέρω* is the technical term for "offering a present to the god." See TWNT vol. IX, 62ff. Cf. a recently published funerary text: *ἀμπέλους τῷ Διὶ ἀνάφερε* (G. Petzl, *EA* 6 [1985]: 72).

64. This forms a distant parallel to the term *κολαζόμενος* in a confession text from Eumeneia: Th. Drew-Bear, "Local Cults in Graeco-Roman Phrygia" *GRBS* 17 (1976): 261, n. 54: ". . . a present participle of which our text thus furnishes the first attestation."

65. The term also in a magic papyrus: *P. Berlin* 10587. That it may imply a feverish illness is demonstrated by an unpublished tablet from Carthage or Hadrumetum (SGD, pp. 186–87), from which L. Robert, *JSav.* (1981): 35, n. 1, quotes: *καὶ ἐπιθυμῶ πυρούμενοι τὰς ψυχὰς, τὰς καρδίας, τὰς σπλάνγχνας αὐτῶν βασανιζόμενοι ἐπὶ τὸν τῆς ζωῆς μου χρόνον*. On *βάσανος* as juridical torture see RAC 8 (1972): 101ff.

66. On the consequences of this prayer see Versnel 1985. There is a marked inconsistency in the sequence of what is wished for in lines 4–6 and 8–10 of DT 4A. This, however, is not unparalleled in this type of text. Cf. SGD 163 (Hebron, third century A.D.): *βάλεται (= βάλετε) αὐτὸν ἐπὶ κάκωσι(ν) καὶ θάνατον καὶ κεφαλαιγίας*; and a *defixio* mentioned below, n. 139, where a thief must die and bring back a stolen vessel (in this order).

67. On the implications of this formula see Latte 1920, 55, 64f., 75, n. 40 and addendum; idem, "Schuld und Sünde in der griechischen Religion," in *Kleine Schriften* (Munich, 1968), 9; and W. Speyer 1969, 1165 and 1181. The formula had a long life: it is found in a different context in magical texts against illness of the sixteenth century (F. Pradel, *Griechische und süditalienische Gebete, Beschwörungen und Rezepte des Mittelalters*, RGCV 3 [Leipzig, 1907], 22, line 11): *μη συμπιῆς, μη συμφαγῆς, μη συγκομηθῆς, μη συναναστῆς μετὰ τοῦ δούλου τοῦ θεοῦ*. I know of only one similar curse from antiquity: D. R. Jordan, *Hesperia* 54 (1985): 223–24, no. 7.

68. DTA 100; DT 74–75. The terms are frequently used in the Sethianic curses. Cf. in particular Jordan (see n. 67), 241; idem, *AM* 95 (1980): 236–38; SGD 112. Cf. also the *defixio* (above, page 65) *αὐτοὺς (. . .) σοι παρακατατίθεμαι τηρεῖν* ("I entrust them to you that you may keep watch over them" [as over a deposit]).

69. See for literature Audollent's comments on DT 212. The text also appears in SEG 4.70, IG 14.644, and with a commentary in V. Arangio-Ruiz and A. Olivieri, *Inscriptiones Graecae Siciliae et Infimae Italiae ad Ius Pertinentes* (Milan, 1925), 165ff.

70. This may seem strange, since the author knows the culprit by name. There are several possibilities. The author may accidentally find herself in Melitta's company through no fault of her own, or she may simply be using a prescribed formula that is inappropriate for her present situation.

71. I interpret the phrase in this way, although the syntax suggests that the culprit herself is the subject. I recognize here a situation opposite from, e.g., *στρέβλωσον αὐτῶν τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ τὴν καρδίαν ἵνα μὴ πνέωσιν* (DT 241, line 14). In a tablet from Hadrumetum we read, *καὶ μὴ ἀφῆς τὴν ψυχὴν* (SGD 147).

72. The combination of divine and secular penalties is well known: Zingerle, *Philologus* 53 (1894): 347ff.; Latte 1920, 80, n. 53; J. Merkel, "Ueber die sogenannten Sepulcralmulden," in *Göttinger Festgabe für R. von Ihering* (Göttingen, 1892), 79–134. On the duplication or multiplication of fines, see Zingerle 1926, 36; W.-D. Roth, *Untersuchungen zur Kredit-*

παραθήκη im römischen Ägypten (Ph.D. diss., Philipps-Universität zu Marburg 1970), 91–95 and 99.

73. C. Dunant, "Sus aux voleurs! Une tablette en bronze à inscription grecque du Musée de Genève," *MusHelv* 35 (1978): 241–44.

74. The text is not without difficulties. L. Robert (*BE* [1980]: 45) would prefer a full stop after *θεῶν* and then a separate statement: "I have lost all my gold." This does not seem very likely since *ὥστε* must depend on some previous wish or command. Nor do I follow him in maintaining the subjunctive *ἀναζητησῇ* of the text—not because *ὥστε* could not take a subjunctive but because *αὐτήν* must be the subject-accusative belonging to this verb. Clearly *αὐτήν* cannot be the object of *ἀναζητησῇ* ("search for her") since the unknown thieves are in the plural and the goddess (*αὐτήν*) is in the subject-accusative in the rest of the text.

75. The phrase *ἐς μέσον ἐνεκκεῖν πάντα* means "make known the truth." This might be a slight argument for maintaining *indices* in the juridical prayer (see n. 53) "that you make known (the cause of) his death," but I still prefer the other solutions.

76. For this reason V. Longo, *Aretalogie nel mondo greco I: Epigrafi e papiri* (Genova, 1969), 158–66, included five confession texts in his collection. The term most commonly used is *δύναμις* or *δυνάμεις*. See the survey in E. Varinlioglu, "Zeus Orkamaneites and the Expiatory Inscriptions," *EA* 1 (1983): 83, n. 42. It has invaded late magical texts: *ἀξιῶ καὶ παρακαλῶ τὴν σὴν δόιναμην* (SGD 189). Cf. the prayer for revenge *P. Upsal*. 8 (above, p. 71): *δεῖξον τὴν δύναμίν σου*, which appears in a different form in line 15 as *[δ]εῖξον δ' ὡς τὸ παροῖθε θεοῦδδα θαύματα σεῖο*. These *θαύματα* are indeed identical with what generally are called *ἀρεταί*. In one confession text we read *καὶ ἐνέγραφα τὴν ἀρετὴν* (*TAM* vol. V, pt. 1, no. 264), where *ἀρετή* = *δύναμις*. For an analysis of *δύναμις* as divine power to do miracles, see F. Preisigke, *Die Gotteskraft der frühchristlichen Zeit* (Leipzig, 1922); J. Röhr, *Der okulte Kraftbegriff im Altertum* (Leipzig, 1923); H. W. Pleket, "Religious History As a History of Mentality: The 'Believer' As Servant of the Deity in the Greek World," in Versnel 1981, 178–83.

77. In his famous 1913 collection and commentary F. S. Steinleitner counted seventeen examples from Maeonia, four from other parts of Lydia, and twelve from Phrygia—a total of thirty-three inscriptions in all. Since then dozens have been found—especially lately—and several (for example, the specimens in the museum of Usak) have not yet been published, and others have been published in very scattered studies. For Maeonia there is a recent edition in the volume published by P. Herrmann, *Tituli Asiae Minoris*, vol. 5, pt. 1 (Vienna, 1981), abbreviated throughout this essay as *TAM*. A new edition with commentary of all the material is a pressing need. The most important older collections are Steinleitner 1913; W. H. Buckler, "Some Lydian Propitiatory Inscriptions," *BSA* 21 (1914–16): 169–83; Zingerle 1926; *MAMA* vol. IV, nos. 279–90. There are discussions of several particular aspects in Cameron (see n. 26); O. Eger, "Eid und Fluch in den maionischen und phrygischen Sühne-Inschriften," in *Festschrift P. Koschaker*, vol. 3 (Weimar, 1939), 281–93. For a fundamental survey of the religious mentality see J. Keil, "Die Kulte Lydiens," in *Anatolian Studies Presented to W. M. Ramsay* (1923): 239–66. On the confession see R. Pettazzoni, *La confessione dei peccati*, vol. III, pt. 2 (Bologna, 1936). There have been many new discoveries: Herrmann 1962, 1–63; L. Robert, *Nouvelles inscriptions de Sardes* (Paris, 1964), 23–31; Drew-Bear (see n. 64), 260ff.; G. Petzl, "Inschriften aus der Umgebung von Saittai," *ZPE* 30 (1978): 249–58; H. W. Pleket, "New Inscriptions from Lydia," *Talanta* 10/11 (1978/79): 74–91; Chr. Naour, "Nouvelles inscriptions du Moyen Hermos," *EA* 2 (1983): 107–22. There are several recent studies on specific gods connected with the confession texts, some of them with new material: E. N. Lane, *Corpus Monumentorum Religionis Dei Menis* vols. I–IV (Leiden, 1971–1978), with a good introduction in vol. III (1976), 17–38; I. Diakonoff, "Artemidi Anaëiti anestesēn," *BABesch* 54 (1979): 139–75; E. Varinlioglu (see n. 76); P. Herrmann and E. Varinlioglu,

"Theoi Pereudenoi," *EA* 3 (1984): 1–17; H. Malay, "The Sanctuary of Meter Phileis near Philadelphia," *EA* 6 (1985): 111–25; K. M. Miller, "Apollo Lairbenos," *Numen* 32 (1985): 46–70; P. Herrmann, "Men, Herr von Axiotta," in *Festschrift F. K. Dörner* vol. I (Leiden, 1978), 415–23; and now H. Malay and G. Petzl, "Neue Inschriften aus den Museen Manisa, Izmir und Bergama," *EA* 6 (1985): 60ff.; P. Herrman, "Sühn- und Grabinschriften aus der Katakekaumene im archäologischen Museum von Izmir," *Anz. Österr. Ak. Wiss.* 122 (1985): 249–61. Since this essay was submitted in 1986, several new and important studies here appeared that could not be incorporated here.

78. On the *δύναμις* see note 76 above. The *στήλαι* are *μαρτυρίαι*; see Versnel (1981) 60ff.

79. There is an exemplary list of sins in a sacral law from Philadelphia concerning a private sanctuary (second or first century B.C.): *SIG*, 3d ed., 985; *LSAM* 20. The religious climate is very similar to that of the confession *στήλαι* (M. P. Nilsson, *GGR* [see n. 60], vol. 2, 2d ed. [Munich, 1961], 291) and to that of Christian communities, see S. C. Barton and G. H. R. Horsley, "A Hellenistic Cult Group and N. T. Churches," *JAC* 24 (1981): 7–41.

80. For *ἐπιγορκέω* or *παρορκέω* see E. Varinlioglu (see n. 77), 78 and 81 and Drew-Bear (see n. 64), 265ff.

81. *TAM*, no. 251, where there are references to literature on the term *πιττάκιον*; cf. also Strubbe, above, p. 45.

82. *ἐξέλθῃ τὸ πιττάκιον* (*POxy* 8.1150 = *PGM* VIIIb). That this is formulaic is demonstrated by a recently published oracle: *ZPE* 41 (1981): 291.

83. This is my interpretation of *ικανοποιούσα*, on which I cannot expand here. Cf. *satisfacere* in a British tablet on page 85.

84. For the discussion on the meaning of these *σκήπτρα* cf. Naour (see n. 77), 119–20 and Strubbe above, pp. 44–45.

85. On the word *πινακίδιον*, see Chr. Habicht, *Altertümer von Pergamon*, vol. VIII, pt. 3, *Inschriften des Asklepieions*, ad no. 72.

86. The correspondence was noticed for the first time by Ziebarth 1899, 122ff. and has been explored by Steinleitner 1913, 100–104; Zingerle 1926, 19f.; Björck 1938, 112ff. Cf. Eger (see n. 77), 288ff.; Pettazzoni (see n. 77), 74–76 and 141, n. 96.

87. Malay (see n. 77). I quote from his nos. 2 and 9 respectively.

88. On the formulaic aspects of similar *εὐχή* dedications cf. Robert (see n. 77), 35, n. 4; Naour (see n. 77), 108; Varinlioglu (see n. 76), 79.

89. For a most unequivocal expression of this see, in a recent dedication to Men Axiottenos, *πεποσχότα . . . ὑπὸ Μηνός* ("suffering . . . through Men"), which has been edited by G. Manganaro (*ZPE* 61 [1985]: 199ff.). The terminology *κολασθεῖς εἰς* or *ἀπό* plus part of the body is formulaic. For a recent survey of pictures of parts of the body in confession texts, cf. Naour (see n. 77), 109. In general see F. T. van Straten, "Votive Offerings Representing Parts of the Human Body (the Greek World)," in Versnel 1981, 105–51.

90. It was possible, for instance, to give an object to the god and keep the usufruct, cf. A. Cameron (see n. 26), no. 1, Edessa no. 10. Actually the sacral *manumissio* is an example of this principle, so that *εἶναι αὐτὴν τῆς θεοῦ* actually means *ἐλευθέραν εἶναι*; see Cameron, *ibid.*, 149. For comparable examples from the Roman world see P. Veyne, "*Titulus praelatus*: offrande, solennisation et publicité dans les ex-voto gréco-romains," *RA* (1983), 296f.

91. C. Wachsmuth, "Inschriften von Korkyra," *RhM* 18 (1863): 5.

92. *TAM*, no. 159, where one finds references to the discussion on *ἄγγελος*. On dream commandments in general see F. T. van Straten, "Daikrates' Dream: A Votive Relief from Kos and some other *kat' onar* Dedications," *BABesch* 51 (1976): 1–38.

93. Herrmann 1962, 57 and *TAM*, no. 510.

94. It is the same inscription from which Petzl ([see n. 77], 257, n. 41) and P. Herrmann (*TAM*, no. 159) quote another passage.

95. *TAM*, no. 328 (ἐπεζήτησεν ἱεροπόημα); nos. 320 and 321 (ἀπέδωκαν τὸ [ἱε]ροπόημα); no. 322 (ποίησαντες τὸ ἱεροπόημα)—all from the temple of Anaëtis and Men Tiamou at Kula. Cf. Diakonoff (see n. 77). For the discussion on the meaning of the term cf. Robert (see n. 77), 30, n. 4 and Lane (see n. 77), III:18f.

96. Newton (see n. 60), 716: "this word may mean 'atonements' or 'sin-offerings'." For ἱατρα demanded by the god see Wörrle in Chr. Habicht, *Altertümer von Pergamon*, vol. 8, pt. 3, *Die Inschriften des Asklepieions*, 184ff.

97. Herrmann/Varinlioglu (see n. 77), no. 9. I think that the translation "die Götter zu Julia übergegangen sind" (Varinlioglu) is mistaken and that the views of Herrmann and Petzl, "gingen auf sie los," should be preferred. In *ibid.*, no. 7 τοῖς συνεπερχομένοις has the comparable meaning of "to attack together." Cf. the new text from Esna (see p. 71–72) with the verbs ἐπέρχομαι and προσέρχομαι.

98. Cf. Keil (see n. 77), 38: ἐπιζητέω πρὸς τινας ὁμολογίαν. Finally, ἐπιζητέω can take the meaning of (ἐπ)ερωτάω in the function of "consulting the god on the sin that causes illness." Thus in H. W. Pleket (see n. 77), no. 13: Γλυκία Ἰουλίου τοῦ Ἀγρίαι κολασθεῖσα ὑπὸ τῆς Ἀναείτιδος τῆς ἐν Μηρῶ τὸν γλουθροῦν ἐπιζητήσασα ἀν[έθ]ηκεν.

99. Ziebarth 1899, 122, cf. K. Buresch, in *Aus Lydien: Epigraphisch-geographische Reise Früchte*, ed. O. Ribbeck (Leipzig, 1898), 112; Buckler (see n. 77), 179; Eger (see n. 77), 282. Cf. Lane (see n. 77), 31. Ziebarth saw in this the presentation of a judicial complaint on a πιττάκιον, comparable to the Cnidian petitions, in which he is followed by Steinleitner (p. 100): "Apollonios machte der Meter Artemis Platz, d.h. machte sie zu Vertreterin seiner gerechten Sache." Buckler agrees: "... a cession of Apollonios. This was probably a curse inscribed on a πιττάκιον and placed before the goddess' shrine." Here the verb is clearly interpreted in its absolute sense or at best with, as its hidden object, the lawsuit itself. Yet O. Eger, who with this one exception follows the footsteps of his predecessors, interprets, "Apollonios überantwortete (παρεχώρησεν) deshalb der Göttin den ihr durch seinen Eidbruch bereits verfallen Skollos" and therefore sees the guilty as object. With this he particularly reacts to Zingerle (1926, 36), who had described the action as a real *Zessionsverfahren*, in which the right to claim is transferred to a third party, in this case the deity, exactly as on the bronze tablet from South Italy. The result would then be that the sum would in the end become temple property.

100. For the discussion on these terms see Herrmann 1962, 47f. and *TAM*, no. 255.

101. Eger—(see n. 77)—(p. 283) compares Polyb. 6.58.4: τηρεῖν τὴν πίστιν καὶ λύειν τὸν ὄρκον; cf. Liv. 22, 61, 4 (*iure iurando se exsolvisset*) and *ibid* 8 (*religione se exsolvisset*, "redeem oneself from the obligations of an oath"). Cf. Speyer 1969, 1191.

102. See Versnel 1985, 261f. and Strubbe above, p. 45.

103. A. Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten*, 4th ed. (Tübingen, 1923), 277ff. Cf. on the psychology H. S. Versnel "Self-sacrifice, Compensation, and the Anonymous Gods," in *Le sacrifice dans l'antiquité*, Entretiens Hardt 27 (Genève, 1981), 135–85. Cf. an inscription from Jerusalem (seventh century A.D., *BE* (1960) no. 416: ὑπὲρ λύτρου τῶν αὐτοῦ ἀμαρτιῶν.

104. Björck 1938, nos. 6 and 12. On the use of ζητέω in this sense see *TWNT* vol. II, 897.

105. The terms alternate in literary texts: R. Merkelbach, "Fragment eines satirischen Romans: Aufforderung zur Beichte," *ZPE* 11 (1973): 89–90.

106. C. T. Newton (see n. 60); C. Wachsmuth (see n. 91); J. Zündel, "Aegyptische Glossen," *RhM* 19 (1864): 481–96; R. S. Conway, "The Duenos Inscription," *AJP* 10 (1889): 445–59; Ziebarth 1899, 126; Wünsch, *DTA* xiib.

107. Audollent, *DT*, p. cxvi and 5.

108. Kagarow 1929, 22ff.; Björck 1938, 123ff.

109. Zingerle 1926. His theory was severely censured, e.g., by Eger (see n. 77) and L. Robert (*BE* [1978]: 471, no. 434). Cf., further, Strubbe above, p. 44 with n. 102.

110. For lead tablets in wells cf. Jordan (see n. 19), 207 nn. 3–5 and 210, n. 7.

111. It is discussed by Hughes and Quaegebeur (see n. 59).

112. Cf. J. D. Ray (*JEA* 61 [1975]: 181–188), who refers to Amm. Marc. 19.12.3 concerning the oracle of Bes at Abydos: *chartulae seu membranae, continentes quae petebantur, post data quoque responsa interdum remanebant in fano*. Cf. also Lucian Alex. 19. For more general remarks on these practices see Versnel 1981, 32ff. Sometimes oracular questions come very near to prayers for justice; a tablet found at Dodona asks, ἔκλεψε Δορκίλος τὸ λάκος (H. W. Parke, *The Oracles of Zeus* [Oxford, 1967], no. 29). Cf. Versnel 1981, 6.

113. The emperor Trajan sent a closed letter to the oracle of Jupiter Heliopolitanus (Macrob. *Sat.* 1.23).

114. Cf. Gallazzi (see n. 59), 105–6.

115. Wachsmuth (see n. 91), 569.

116. In Egypt we have clear evidence of oracles with this purpose; see B. Kramer, "POxy 12.1567: Orakelfrage," *ZPE* 61 (1985): 61–62 for earlier literature.

117. For the discussion see Versnel 1981, 30, n. 118. The complex of guilt feelings, penalties by the gods, confession, and redemption is attested for Rome, too: R. Reitzenstein, *Die hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen* 3d ed. (Leipzig, 1927; repr. Darmstadt 1966), 137ff.; L. Koenen, "Die Unschuldsbeteuerung des Priestereides und die römische Elegie," *ZPE* 2 (1968): 31–38; R. Merkelbach (see n. 105), 81–100; P. Frisch, "Ueber die lydisch-phrygischen Sühneinschriften und die 'Confessiones' des Augustinus," *EA* 2 (1985): 41–45.

118. G. Moracchini-Mazel, *Les fouilles de Mariana (Corse)*, vol. 6, *La Nécropole d'I Ponti* (Bastia, 1974), 18f. (first or second century A.D.); H. Solin, *Arctos* 15 (1981): 121–22.

119. They are being published by M. W. C. Hassall and R. S. O. Tomlin, but many tablets from Uley and Bath are still unpublished. For a short introduction see M. W. C. Hassall, "Altars, Curses and Other Epigraphic Evidence," in *Temples, Churches, and Religion: Recent Research in Roman Britain*, ed. W. Rodwell (London, 1980), 79–89; and R. Tomlin, "Curses from Bath," *Omnibus* 10 (1985): 31–32. On the temple and cult of Minerva Sulis at Bath, see I. A. Richmond and J. M. C. Toynbee, "The Temple of Sulis-Minerva at Bath," *JRS* 45 (1955): 97–105; H. J. Croon, "The Cult of Sul-Minerva at Bath," *Antiquity* 27 (1953): 79–83; B. Cunliffe, "The Temple of Sulis Minerva at Bath," *Antiquity* 40 (1966): 199–204; P. Salway, *Roman Britain* (Oxford, 1981), 686ff.; B. Cunliffe, *Roman Bath Discovered* (Oxford, 1971), 27ff.; M. J. Green, *The Gods of Roman Britain* (n.p., 1983), 31, 43, 52; M. J. T. Lewis, *Temples in Roman Britain* (Cambridge, 1966), 57–61. On Uley see A. Ellison, "Natives and Christians on West Hill, Uley," in *Temples, etc.*, ed. Rodwell, (London, 1980): 305–20.

120. L. Franz, *JOAI* 44 (1959): 69ff.; Solin 1968, no. 12.

121. Egger interpreted *draucus* as "a head of cattle," but Jordan points out to me in a letter that this is actually a transliterated Greek term meaning "necklace," which also appears in the diminutive (δραύνκιον) on the Delian tablet discussed above on p. 66–67.

122. *CIL* VII.140; *ILS* 4730; *DT* 106; *RIB* 306. The common interpretation, "among those who are called Senecianus," seems wrong to me. The interpretation in my text is closer to Latin syntactical rules and *nomen* is generally "the person" in this type of text. R. G. Goodchild ("The Curse and the Ring," *Antiquity* 27 [1953]: 100–102) connects this tablet with a golden ring with the name Senecianus that was found in a fourth-century Christian context.

123. Solin 1968, no. 18. The archaeological context is third-to-fourth-century A.D., although the writing seems earlier.

124. He derived this suggestion from a third, well-known tablet discovered in England, which I cannot treat here *in extenso*, cf. E. G. Turner, *JRS* 53 (1963): 122ff. (= Solin [1968, no. 21], who dates it to c. 200 A.D.). In it Jupiter is required to "haunt," (*exigat*) the mind and intestines of the person who has stolen some *denarii* from Canus Dignus. Then there follows, *ut in corpore suo in brevi temp[or]e pariat. Donatur deo ssto decima pars eius pecuniae quam [so]luerit* ("that in his own person [or perhaps lit. "with his own body"] in a short time he may balance the account. The above-named god [*ssto* = *s(upra) s(crip)to*] is given a tenth part of the money after he [i.e., the thief] will have repaid it."). Note that *exigo* even more than the customary *persequor* exactly parallels the Greek verbs ἐπιζητέω ("claim, reclaim, demand") and ἐκζητέω ("require an investigation," "require an accounting," "exact an amount" or [in an absolute sense] "start an investigation," "punish"). Note also that *pario* and *solvo* approach the meaning of the Greek verb λύειν as used in the confession texts, i.e., "redeem, atone for, buy off."

125. The editor translates "from the money that the thief had 'consumed'" (i.e., the verb is some form of *exedere*), which is hardly possible. Egger assumes that *exesuerit* is a slip of the pen for something like *solverit*. Could it not be *exsoluerit*?

126. TAM 318 (see above, p. 76); cf. Björck 1938, no. 25, where I suggest reading ποιῶ αὐτῇν ἱκανόν μου, Μέσα.

127. The editors have recognized this (see p. 375, n. 24).

128. From a pit or well (third/fourth century A.D.).

129. On a pewter plate from the hot springs at Bath, (*Britannia* 16 [1985]: 323, where one can find further references).

130. E.g., SGD 11, 13, 15, 40, 46, 52, 69, 73, 94, 124, 170, 177; cf. Faraone above p. 11.

131. Or maintain *mei* as objective genitive followed by a dative.

132. See n. 50. Since this text is also disputed, I cite several other curse formulas. L. Robert (*CRAI* [1978]: 280ff.) published a funerary curse from the Karayū valley in Pisidia. It contains the following wish for the potential graverobber or vandal (I quote the version proposed by H. W. Pleket in *SEG* 28, no. 1079; I owe this reference to Strubbe): τέκνα / τέκνοις αἵματι καὶ θανάτοις ἀποδώσουσ[ε]. In his commentary Robert connects the verb ἀποδίδωμι to the committed crime and interprets, "He will pay for this crime with his blood and with many dead." Threatened punishments of many or even a thousand deaths do occur (see L. Robert, *ibid.*, 281, n. 36), but for us it is most significant that *sanguine suo solvat* recurs here literally in a Greek curse. Robert points to a related tombstone curse from Philomelion, Phrygia (*MAMA* VII, 199; *CIG* III, 3984; cf. L. Robert, *Hellenica* 13 [1965]: 97–98), which reads, ὅς ἂν τούτῳ τῷ μνήματι κακῶς ποιήσῃ, οἰκῶ, βίω, τῷ σώματι αὐτοῦ ("Whosoever harms this tombstone, [he will pay for it] with his house, his life [and] his body"). Here we are dealing with what Robert calls a "carcasse d'une malédiction traditionnelle," in which the added asyndetic exclamation "with his house, his life, and his body" is sufficient to express that these are the objects with which the guilty must pay or atone.

133. R. G. Collingwood (*JRS* 17 [1927]: 216 and *Archaeologica* 78 [1928], 158, no. 10) correctly understands *tulit* as *abstulit* and *redimat* as "buy back" and interprets it as meaning that the thief or the owner will buy back the objects placed with Nemesis only with his death. This isn't very logical because it concerns stolen objects. A. Oxé (*Germania* 15 [1931]: 16ff.) improved the text by reading *n[isi] vita* *sanguine suo* instead of *n[isi] fusa* *sanguine sua*. His translation reads, "Wer sie brachte, möge sie wiedererhalten nur mit seinem Leben, mit seinem Blute." He imagines that someone has left his clothes at the wardrobe of a public bath and that in the meantime an enemy buried the tablet with the wish to Nemesis that the owner can get the clothing back only by paying with his blood. Without commenting on the precise

situation, Preisendanz (*APF* 11 [1935]: 155) judges "wahrscheinlich handelt es sich um Verfluchung eines Gladiators durch seinen Todfeind, der die Kleider und Schuhe des anderen der Domna Nemesis schenkt unter Bedingung seines Todes." Egger (*Wien. Jahresh.* 35 [1943]: 99ff. = Egger 1963, 281–83) generally agreed with these suggestions. Without the benefit of the recent discoveries we have discussed—and reading *sanguinei sui*—he translated, "Herrin Nemesis! Ich übergebe dir Mantel und Schuhe, wer sie getragen hat, möge sie nur dann zurückerhalten, wenn sein Rotfuchs umkommt" (idem 1963, 281–83). He is followed by Solin 1968, no. 20 and *RIB* 110, no. 323. It had escaped him that H. Volkmann (*ARW* 31 [1934]: 64) had at least made a start towards a better solution by understanding *redimere* as *culpam redimere* ("büssen"). Whoever chooses to translate this verb as "to get back" (this is not at all its usual meaning) has to conclude that it is a question of sympathetic magic in which the clothing of a person by consecration to a deity draws the owner along as well. It is, however, notable that although the burial of clothing, hair, nails, etc. is widely known in Greek magical texts, allusions to it on magic *defixiones* are rare. There is one highly dubious—at any rate abnormal—instance in *DT* 210, and there is a new tablet published by Jordan (see n. 19), 251f. in which the hair of the victim is given to the daemon. He mentions a few other instances. See H. Solin, "Tabelle plumbee di Concordia," *Aquileia Nostra* 48 (1977): 146–63, esp. 149 for the translation of *tulit* as "he has taken away." We need not say more about the bay (horse), cf. *Britannia* 14 (1983): 352, n. 12.

134. A tablet from Aylesford (Kent) has *donatio*; cf. *Britannia* 17 (1986): 428, n. 2.

135. For the term ὑπογεγραμμένοι on a gold tablet and a collection of parallels, see D. R. Jordan, *AJA* 89 (1985): 164–65, and idem (see n. 19), 241 and 252. On this "official" language cf. Hassall (see n. 119), 87.

136. Cf. Deissmann (see n. 103), 259; καταδέσμους ἀναλύσεις (*PGM* IV.2177). Cf. Preisendanz 1972, 6f.; Speyer 1969, 1191. Cf. SGD 170: τούτων μηδεῖ[ς] θεῶν λύσιν ποιήσται.

137. E. Courtney suggests *idem regestum* (heaped back upon), which would yield a similar interpretation.

138. *epotes*(?) or, as F. G. Naerebout suggests, *eructet*(?). After this essay had been sent off to the publisher, Tomlin informed me that he now prefers to read *(r)eputes*, i.e., "reckon the stolen coins with his blood," which seems to solve the riddle quite well.

139. We also find ourselves in the "borderland" now and then in the texts of the Latin tablets. A text from England of the usual juridical type has strong reminiscences of the traditional *defixio*, especially in its detailed series of stipulations (*Britannia* 15 [1984] 339 no. 7): *nec illis [p]ermittas sanit[at]em nec bibere nec ma[n]d[u]care nec dormi[re]* [*nec naf[os] sanos hab[er]e*] *nt* The usual text of a *defixio defigo* *Eudemum*. This victim must die as soon as possible, and yet *infra dies nove(m) vasum reponat*. Apparently it is a case of theft, therefore it has the tone of an appeal to justice (R. Egger, "Eine Fluchtafel aus Carnuntum," *Der römische Limes in Österreich* 16 [1926] 136–56 = idem 1963, 81–97); Solin 1968, no. 6). Cf. also R. Marichal, *CRAI* (1981): 41–51 for a lead tablet from Montfo (Gallia Narbonensis): *Qomodo hoc plumbu non / paret et decadet, sic deca / dat aetas, membra, vita / bos, grano, mer eorum qui / mihi dolum malu fecerunt*, etc. It is magic, but the victim is guilty. Cf. *CIL* vol. XIII, 11340: *ut me vindicetis de quuma*; see R. Egger, *ibid.*, p. 87 and Solin (see n. 133), 149.

140. Cf. Cunliffe (see n. 119), 27ff.

141. Cf., on this mentality, Pleket (see n. 76), 152–92.

142. Versnel 1985.

143. On these "handbooks" see Björck 1938, 134; Jordan (see n. 19), 211 and 233f. On handbooks for magic spells and rituals, see Faraone above p. 4.

144. *CIL* II.462 (with a very adventurous conjecture by Mommsen); *DT* 122; J. Vives, *Inscripciones Latinas de la España Romana* (Barcelona, 1971), no. 736. The terminology shows influences of legal language.

145. It has been published in J. H. Bonneville, S. Dardaine, and P. LeRoux, *Fouilles de Belo: Les inscriptions* (Paris, 1987–88).

146. Thus I explain *Isis Muromem* of the text.

147. One Latin *defixio* belonging to the Sethianic texts (*DT* 142) has *ut omnes cog[n]osc[ant] exempl[um e]or[um]*.

148. I should like to thank Jeannette K. Ringold, who translated this essay from the Dutch original. I am also very grateful to David Jordan and Christopher Faraone for their numerous helpful comments.

4

Incantations and Prayers for Salvation on Inscribed Greek Amulets

Roy Kotansky

The use of magic for protection and deliverance from diseases must have been widespread from the earliest times.¹ The sufferer had recourse to healing through prayers and offerings, rites of incubation, and any number of rituals performed by itinerant holy men who adhered to that heterodox and often arcane aspect of religion known as "magic."² Apart from the more empirically minded doctors, a wide variety of practitioners from herb-gatherers to midwives could be sought for remedies in the classical period.³ As an infection festered or a fever lingered, even the sternest critics of traditional or "superstitious" remedies turned to the application of amulets. In his lost *Ethics*, Theophrastus questions whether a man's character changes when the circumstances of his life change, and he reports how the "freethinking" Pericles, sick with the plague, had been prodded by his womenfolk into wearing an amulet (Frag. L21 Fortenbaugh); Diogenes Laertius tells a similar deathbed tale about the philosopher and notorious atheist Bion, who at the end of his life dons amulets and renounces his former attacks "against religion" (*εἰς τὸ θεῖον*, 4.54; cf. 4.56–57). Both anecdotes, whether historically accurate or not, present a plausible picture of competing cures and "second opinions" as a disease worsens and seem to set the use of amulets squarely within the sphere of traditional beliefs.

Amulets were in demand for every imaginable situation in life.⁴ Although they could often serve to introduce desirable qualities such as love, wealth, power, or victory,⁵ amulets were usually used to cure medical complaints (both injuries or illnesses) and to thwart the daemonic influences often held responsible for disease. Etymologically speaking, the Greek terms for amulet (*περίαμμον* and *περί-απτον*) are derived from the verb *περιάπτειν* ("to tie on") and refer to an object or material that is "attached to" or "tied on" to a person.⁶ A phylactery (the English word comes directly from the Greek *φυλακτήριον*, formed from the verb *φυλάσσειν*, "to protect") is a type of amulet used more specifically to protect an individual or community from some impending calamity or plague.⁷ Amulets could be organic substances or simple compounds; as we shall see, their application was often accompanied by spoken prayers or incantations. In later times the large number of amulets containing written prayers and incantations allows us to document the gradual transition from the "unlettered" practice of oral magic to the

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