

The Ephesia Grammata

1. Unpublished tablet from Selinous, 4th BCE?

Side A, column i
traces?

I [c.3] ΤΑΙΣ[c.2].. καὶ οὐκ ἀτέλεστ' ἐπ[α]εῖδω.
ὅστις τῶνδ' ἱερῶν ἐπέων ἀρίσθημα καλὸν ψεῖ
γράμματα κασσιτέρῳ κεκολλημένα λαὸς ἐν οἴκῳ,
οὐ νιν πημανέουσιν ὅσα τρέφει εὐρεῖα χθών
5 οὐδ' ὅσα πόντῳ βόσκει ἀγαστονος Ἀμφιτρίτη.
Παιήων, σὺ δὲ πάντοσ' ἀλέξιμα φάρμακα πέμπεις
καὶ τὰδ' ἐφώνησας ἐπέ' ἀθάνατα θνητοῖσιν·
ὅσα κατὰ σκιαρῶν ὁρέων μελαναύγει χώρῳ
Φερσεφόνης ἐκ κήπου ἄγει πρὸς ἀμολγὸν ἀνάγκη[ι]
10 τὴν τετραβήμονα παῖς ἀγίην Δήμητρος ὀπηδόν,
αἶγ' ἀκαμαντορόα νασμοῦ θαλεροῖο γάλακτος
βριθομένην· ἔπεται δὲ θεαῖς πεπιθούσα φαειναῖς
[λ]αμπά σιν· [Ε]ἰνοδαῖα δ' Ἑκάτῃ φρικώδει φωνῇ
[βα]ρβάρῳ ἐκκλάζουσα θεὰ θεῶι ἡγεμονεύει·
15 [c.5] [c.2]· αὐτοκέλευστος ἐγὼ διὰ νύκτα { }
[c.8-9] ἰπρομολοῦσα λέγω [θ]εοφρασ[c.4]
[c.8-9] θνητοῖσι δὲ δαίμο[ν]ος ἀγλα[αδύρου]
[c.9-10] ΟΣΤΕΛΕΣ[1-2] ΝΧΑ[3-4] ΩΙΚΕΘ[c.6]
[c.11-12] ΙΚΑΙ[c.10-12] Σ[c.6]
20 [c.12-13] ΤΑΔΩ[c.20]

Side A, column ii

21 [c.10-11] ΝΤΑ[c.3].. ΔΕ[c.24-26]
[c.6-7] ὠντ' ἀνόμενῳ ῥ[ῖ]κων ἀπο χε[c.10-11]
[Παιήων,] σὺ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἀλεξιμὰ φάρμακα πέμπεις
[c.6-7] γον κατὰκουε φ[ρ]ασὶν γλυκὸν ὕμνον
25 [c.6] ἀνθρώποισιν ἐπιφθέγγεσθαι ἄν[ω]γα
[c.5-6] ὦι καὶ εὐπολέμῳ καὶ ναυσίν, ὅτα[ν κήρ]
[c.7] ἀνθρώποις θανατηφόρος ἐγγύ[θεν] ἔλθῃ
[c.6-7] ἰπροβάτοις καὶ ἐπὶ τέχναισι βροτ[c.4-5]
[c.6] φθέγγεσθαι ἐν εὐφρόνῃ ἥδ' ἐκατ' [ἡ]μαρ
30 [c.6-7] νῆχων ὅσιν {σιον} στόματος θυ[c.4-5]
[c.6] ἔσσι πόλει· τὰ γὰρ ἀρχῆς ἐστιν ἀρίστ[α]
[Παιήων,] σὺ δ' ἐπὶ πάντοσ' ἀκεσφόρος ἔσι καὶ ἔσθ[λός]
[c.8-9] κῖ κατασκῖα αἰσῖα αἰσῖα ἐνδασῖ[c.5-6]
[λέγ; ὦ]δε· ἀμολγὸν δ' αἶξ· αἶγα βίαι ἐκ κ[ή]που c.9-
11]
35 τῶι δ' ὄνομα Τέτραγος ἡγδ[c.11-12]
τετροάγ' ἀρ' ἄγε Τέτραγ[c.11-12]
μῶλιος ἀ[κ]τὲρ ὑδάτων ῥ[c.10-11]
ὄλβ[ι]ος ὦι [κα]τὰ δὲ σκεδαθ[ή]ι κατ' ἀμα-
ξίτην ἰὼ[καὶ] φρασὶν αὐ[τὸς] ἔχῃ
40 [μακάρων κατ'] ἀμαξιτὸν αὐδάν
[c.10] Τ[ε]τραγ[ος,] Δαμναμενεύ[ι]
[δάμασον δὲ κακῶς] ἀ[έ]κοντας ἀνάγκη[ι].

Side B, column i

43 [c.9-10] κῖ θν[- -]
[c.8-9] ο κέλεσ[θ]ε [- -]
[c.8] ΩΣΕΙΣ[] κ[c.6] [- -]
47 [c.6] Διὸς υἱόσ[] ιστ[ε] [α]γκακ[- -]
[c.7-8] ἐ[ι]ς τόξων, καὶ ὕδρης πολυ[- -]
[Πα]ι[ή]ων, ὁ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἀλεξιμὰ φάρμακα πέμπει,
[οὐ]κ ἂν δὲ λήσαιτ' οὐδεὶς {ουδαι} πολυφαρ[μακ] - - -
]- - -

Side A, column i

(traces of letters?)

1 and I sing incantations that are not ineffective.
2 Whoever hides in a house of stone the notable letters
3 of these sacred verses inscribed on tin,
4 as many things as broad Earth nourishes shall not harm him
5 nor as many things as much-groaning Amphitrite rears in the
sea.
6 Paieon, for in every direction you send averting charms ,
7 and you spoke these immortal verses to mortal men:
8 “As down the shady mountains in a dark-and-glittering land
9 a child leads out of Persephone's garden by necessity for
milking
10 that four-footed holy attendant of Demeter,
11 a she-goat with an untiring stream of rich milk
12 laden; and she follows, trusting in the bright goddesses
13 with their lamps. And she leads Hekate of the Roadside,
14 the foreign divinity, as she cries out in a frightening voice:
15 ‘I by my own command through the night ...
16 ... having sallied forth, I recount divinely [uttered?] ...
17 ... to mortals and of the goddess of the splendid [gifts]’
18-20 (individual letters and traces of letters)

Side A, column ii

21 [traces of letters]
22 ... of/from lawless h[ou]ses ...
23 Paieon, for you yourself [do send] averting charms!
24 Give ear in your mind to sweet h[ymn]ic song]
25 I command you to utter for mortals ...
26 whenever [doom] among the ... good-at-war, and the ships
27 [comes] near bringing death to mortals.
28 ... [and] near the flocks-and-herds and the handiworks of
mo[rtals]
29 ... utter in night and by [day]
30 ... keeping pure of mouth
31 ... is for/to the city, for best are the things from the
beginning(?).
32 [Paieon, for you] in every direction are cure-bringing and
exce[llent].
33 “... kataskia assia asia endasia
34 a she-goat for milking ... the she-goat from the g[arden by]
force!
35 and for the one who has the name of sw[et] Tetragos,
36 lead, then, Tetraon Tetrag[os]
37 ... windy headland of the waters
38 Blessed is the one for whomever from overhead “Iō” is
scattered
39 on the carriage-way [and] whoever him[self] [down along]
the
40 carriage way has the speech [of the blessed]:
41 “[Trex, Tetrex, T]etrag[os Damnameneus]!”

Side B, column i:

42 [letters and traces of letters]
43 ... let him bid ...
44 [letters and traces of letters]
45 ... o son of Zeus, and whoever ... forceful
46 ... with your bow ... and of the Hydra, many-
47 [Pa]i[e]on, for in every direction [he sends] averting charms,
48 Nor would anyone harm [us?] armed with much-cur[ing] ...

2. Photius Lexicon (2405.)

Ἐφέσια γράμματα καὶ Ἐφέσια ἀλεξιφάρμακα· ὀνόματα ἅττα καὶ φωναὶ ἀντιπάθειάν τινα φυσικὴν ἔχουσαι.

3. Hesychius s.v. Ephesia Grammata (7401)

Ἐφέσια γράμματα· ἦν μὲν πάλαι <ς>, ὕστερον δὲ προσέθεσαν τινες ἀπατεῶνες καὶ ἄλλα. Φασὶ δὲ τῶν πρώτων τὰ ὀνόματα τὰδε· ἄσκιον, κατάσκιον, λίξ, τετράξ, δαμναμενεὺς, αἴσιον. Δηλοὶ δὲ τὸ μὲν ἄσκιον σκότος, τὸ δὲ κατάσκιον φῶς, τὸ δὲ λίξ <γῆ, τετράξ δὲ ἐνι>αὐτός, δαμναμενεὺς δὲ ἥλιος, αἴσιον δὲ ἀληθές. Ταῦτα οὖν ἱερά ἐστί καὶ ἁγία

4. Phalasarna Tablet: National Museum, Athens, Inv.

X.9355
ἀγγελίαν ἀνὰ γὰρ [~~~~~] τῶνδε κελεύω
[φε]ύγ[εμε]ν [ἡ]μ[ε]τέρων οἴκων [~~~~~] [ἀ]π[ὸ] [~~~~~]
Ζῆνα τ' Ἀλεξίκακον καὶ Ἡρακλέα Πτολίπορθο[ν]
Ἰατρὸν καλέω [κ]αὶ Νίκην [κ]αὶ Ἀπόλλω[να]
αἰαὶ ἐγὼ δ' ἔλκεϊ Τέτραγος ΠΥΞΥΤΥΔΙΤΑΓΑΛΙΣ
Ἐπαφος, Ἐπαφος, [Ε]παφος, φεῦ[γ'] ἅμα φεῦγε λύκαινα,
φεῦγε κύων ἅμα σ[ύ] καὶ Προκροπρος, ἄτε· ----- σύνοικος
μαινόμενα δάντων πρὸς δώματα αὐτοῦ ἕκαστος.
ὄρκ μεμ πομπαι[—] δ[ε] τῶι κύνε.[—]
ασκι καταски κατασκια ασιαν ενδασιαν ἐν ἀμολγῶι
[α]ῖξ αἰγα βίαι ἐκ κήπῳ ἐλαύνετε, τ[ῶ] ὄνομα Τέτραγ[ος]
σοὶ δ' ὄνομα Τρέξ [~~~~~]· Ἀνεμῶλιος ἀκτῆ.
ὄλβιο[ς] φ[ί] κ[α]τὰ δὲ σ[κ]εδάθῃ κατ' ἀμαξιτὸν ἰὼ
κ[αὶ] φρεσίλλυτο[ς] ἔχη μακάρων {μακά[ρ]ων} κατ' ἀμαξιτὸν
α[ῦ]δάν
Τρὰξ Τέτραξ Τέτραγος,
Δαμναμε[ν]εῦ· [-----] δάμασον δὲ κακῶς [ἀ]έκοντας ἀνάγκαι
ὅς κέ με σ[ί]νεται, καὶ οἱ κακὰ κολλοβάλλοισι
ἱερακόπτε[ρον] πελειόπετον χιμ[αί]ρας ἀμισαντον λεωκέρας
λ[ε]ῖωντος ὄνυξ, λεοδράκοντος γλ[υφ]αν γένειον.
ὁ με καταχρίστ[ω] δ[ι]ηλήσεται οὔτε ἐπενίκτ[ω]
οὔτε πατῶ [οὔ]τ' ἐπατωγῇ, σ[ύν]τορ ἀπάντων.

5. PGM LXX 5-16

*Ἐκάτης Ἐρεσχιγὰλ πρὸς φόβον κολάσιος·
ἐὰν ἐξέρχηται, λέγε τῷ· ἐγὼ εἰμι Ἐρεσχιγὰλ
κρατοῦσα τοὺς ἀντ[ί]χειρας, καὶ οὐδὲ ἐν δύνатаι κακὸν αὐτῇ
γενέσθαι· ἐὰν δ' ἐγγὺς ἐπέλθῃ σοι, ἐπιλαβόμενος τῆς δεξιᾶς
πτέρνης <δίωκε> λέγων· Ἐρεσχιγὰλ παρθένε, κύων, δρὰ
καίνα, στέμμα, κλείς, κηρύκειον, [τ]ῆς ταρταρούχου χρύσειον τὸ
σάνδαλον, καὶ παραίτησθ.
Ἄσκει κατασκεῖ ερων ορεων ιωρ μεγα σεμνυνηρ
βαυῖ γ, φοβαντία, σεμνή· τετέ[λ]εσμαι καὶ εἰς
μέγαρον κατέ[βη]ν Δακτύλων καὶ [τ]ὰ ἄλλα εἶδον
κάτω, παρθένος, κύων, καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ π[ά]ντα.*

6. Porphyry, Περὶ ἀγαλμάτων 8.58-65

*Ἐκάτη δὲ ἡ σελήνη πάλιν, τῆς περὶ αὐτὴν μετασχηματίσεως
καὶ κατὰ τοὺς σχηματισμοὺς δυνάμεως. Διὸ τρίμορφος ἡ
δύναμις, τῆς μὲν νουμηνίας φέρουσα τὴν λευχείμονα καὶ
χρυσοσάνδαλον καὶ τὰς λαμπάδας ἡμμένας· ὁ δὲ κάλαθος, ὃν
ἐπὶ τοῖς μετεώροις φέρει, τῆς τῶν καρπῶν κατεργασίας, οὗς
ἀνατρέφει κατὰ τὴν τοῦ φωτὸς παραύξησιν· τῆς δ' αὖ
πανσελήνου ἡ χαλκοσάνδαλος σύμβολον.*

Ephesia Grammata: also Ephesian warding magics, some names and phrases having an innate remedy for suffering.

Ephesia Grammata: Formerly there were 6, but afterwards some deceivers added others. They say that these are the names of the first ones: askion, kataskion, lix, tetrax, damnameneus, aision. It is clear that askion is darkness, kataskion is light, lix is earth, tetrax is the year, damnameneus is the sun, and aision is truth. Therefore these things are holy and sacred.

Messenger ... up... I bid you to flee from these houses of ours.... I call on Zeus Averter of evil and on Herakles Sacker of cities and on the Healer and on Victory and on Apollo. Ah, ah, thus Tetragos (the goat) drags the PUXUTUAITAGALIS. Epaphos, Epaphos, Epaphos, flee; She-wolf, flee also; And you, Dog, and PROKROPROSATE (the Thief?), ... associate. Let them run maddened, each to his own house. Oath ... dog. Aski Kataski {Kataski} AASIAN ENDASIAN "at milking time," goat.. "drive from the garden by force the goat." To whom the name is Tetragos, and to you the name Trex... windy promontory. Happy is he for whom has been scattered, along the highway IO! PHRESILLUTO (Shorn of his senses?) let him have the cry of the blessed along the highway. Trax Tetrax Tetragos. Damnameneu ... tame by force the wickedly unwilling, whoever hurts me and those who KOLLOBALOUSI (cast as a binding spell?) evil things -- hawk-wing, PELEIOPETON (dove feather?), entirely mixed AMISANTON of the Chimera, claw of lion, tongue of bearded lion-serpent -- shall not harm me with ointment or application or with drink or with spell, spoiler of all things.

Charm of Hekate Ereschigal Against Fear of Punishment
If he comes forth, say to him: "I am Ereschigal, the One holding Her Thumbs, and not even one Evil can befall Her!" If, however, he comes close to you, take hold of your right heel and recite the following: "Ereschigal, Virgin, Bitch, Serpent, Wreath, Key, Herald's Wand, Golden Sandal of the Lady of Tartaros!" And you will avert Him. "ASKEI KATASKEI ERÔN OREÔN IÔR MEGA SAMNYËR BAUI (3 times) PHOBANTIA SEMNË, I have been initiated, and I went down into the Underground Chamber of the Dactyls, and I saw the Other Things Down Below, Virgin, Bitch, and all the rest!" Say it at the crossroad, and turn around and flee.

The moon again is Hekate, (the symbol) of the configurations about her and of the power of the configurations -- wherefore her power is threefold: that of the new moon as she bears the white-robed and golden-sandalled [...] and the torches alight. The kalathos, which she bears aloft, is the symbol of the production of crops, which she nurtures in the increase of her light. The bronze-sandalled goddess is, again, (the symbol) of the full moon.

7. Cologne Defixio: P. Colon. inv. T.1

Ἀμφ[...]. θα, φουστρούμε, νυκτιτρούμε, κελεύω σ[ε]
 [κύων, δράκαινα,] στέμ[μα, κλ[εῖς, κη] | ρύκ[ι]ο,ν,
 τῆς Ταρταούχου χάλ[κ]εον τὸ σάνδαλον,
 τῆς δε[...]| πρου χρύσειον τὸ σάνδαλον,
 ἰδὼν δὲ ἐγὼ ἔφυγον τ[ῆν] σιδη] | ροσάνδαλον,
 ἔβην δ' ἐπ' ἔχνεσι χρυσοσανδάλων Κόρη[ς]
 σώσον] | με, σωσίκοσμε, Δήμητρος κόρη.
 ἐπιτελοῦσαι μοι τὸν [κατά] | δεσζμον τοῦτον.
 ἄξον, κατὰδῃσον Ματρώναν, [ῆν] ἔτε] | κεν Τ[α]γένε,
 ἧς ἔχῃς τὴν οὐσίαν, ἧς ἔχῃ ἐν ν[ό]φ Θεόδω] | ρος, ὃν ἔτεκεν
 Τεχῶσις.
 ἄσκι κατὰ σκιε[ρῶν] | ὀρέων μελαναυγέα χῶρον
 {Περσεφόνης} ἔκ κήπου [ἄγει] πρὸς ἅ] | μολγὸν ἀνάγκη
 τὴν τετραβάμονα π[αῖς] ἀγίην Δῆ] | μητρος ὁπ[η]δόν,
 αἶγ' ἀκαμιντορόα [νασμοῦ θα] | λεροῖο γ[ά]λακτος,
 θεσομενον []
 λαμπάδας Εἰνοδί[α] | Ἐκάτη φρικώδει φωνῇ
 βάρβαρον ἐκκράζουσα θεά | θεῶ ἡγεμονεύει.
 νύξ, ἔρεβος σκότιον, αἰὼν, | φάος, Ἄρτεμις ἀγνή,
 ἐξετωνεπε τετραβάμων δορκ[...] | πασαεα
 κεστῶ ἀγαλλομένη Ἀφροδίτη, Περσεφονείη,
 φορβη | ἰοχέαιρα {οἰωαιαιω} πρόσκοπε ἰοδάμασσα.
 φύλαξον ἅλν | τον τὸν κατὰδεσζμον τοῦτον εἰς αἰῶνα.

8. Eustathius on Odyssey XIX.247 (2.201-2)

ἀφ' ἧς καὶ παροιμία τὸ, Ἐφέσια γράμματα, ἐπὶ τῶν ἀσαφῆ τινὰ
 λαλούντων καὶ δυσπαρακολούθητα. ἐπωδαὶ γάρ τινές, φασιν,
 ἐκεῖνα ἦσαν, ἃς καὶ Κροῖσος ἐπὶ τῆς πυρᾶς εἰπὼν ὠφελήθη. καὶ
 ἐν Ὀλυμπίᾳ δὲ φασὶ Μιλησίον τινὸς καὶ Ἐφεσίου παλαιόντων
 τὸν Μιλήσιον μὴ δύνασθαι παλαίειν διὰ τὸ τὸν ἕτερον περὶ τῷ
 ἀστραγάλῳ ἔχειν τὰ Ἐφέσια γράμματα, ὧν γνωσθέντων καὶ
 λυθέντων τριακοντάκις τὸ ἐφεξῆς πεσεῖν τὸν Ἐφεσίον.
 Πausanias δὲ φησὶν ἐν τῷ κατ' αὐτὸν ῥητορικῷ λεξικῷ καὶ ὅτι
 φωναὶ ἦσαν τὰ Ἐφέσια γράμματα, φησὶ δὲ ἐμπεριέχουσα νοῦν
 ἀλεξίκακον, ἃς καὶ Κροῖσος ἐπὶ πυρᾶς φησὶ καὶ αὐτὸς εἰπεῖν,
 καὶ ὅτι ἀσαφῶς καὶ αἰνιγματωδῶς δοκεῖ ἐπὶ ποδῶν καὶ ζώνης
 καὶ στεφάνης ἐπιγεγράφθαι τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος τὰ τοιαῦτα
 γράμματα.

9. Anaxilas, The Harp-Maker (268)

ξανθοῖς τε μύροις χρώτα λιπαίνων,
 χλανίδας θ' ἔλκων, βλαύτας σύρων,
 βολβούς τρώγων, τυροὺς κάπτων,
 ὧ' ἐκλάπτων, κήρυκας ἔχων,
 Χῖον πίνων, καὶ πρὸς τοῦτοις
 ἐν σκυταρίοις ῥαπτοῖσι φορῶν
 Ἐφεσῆα γράμματα καλά.

10. Menander Paidia fr. 313 K (Photius s.v. ἀλεξιφάρμακα)

Ἐφέσια τοῖς γαμοῦσιν οὗτος περιπατεῖ λέγων ἀλεξιφάρμακα.

11. Plutarch, Quaestiones conviviales 706e

ὥσπερ γὰρ οἱ μάγοι τοὺς δαιμονιζομένους κελεύουσι τὰ Ἐφέσια
 γράμματα πρὸς αὐτοὺς καταλέγειν καὶ ὀνομάζειν, οὕτως ἡμεῖς
 ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις τερετίσμασι καὶ σκιρτήμασι 'μανίαις τ'
 ἀλαλαῖς τ' ὀρινόμενοι ῥιβαύχενι σὺν κλόνῳ τῶν ἱερῶν καὶ
 σεμνῶν ἐκείνων γραμμάτων ἀναμνησκόμενοι καὶ
 παραβάλλοντες ὧδ' αὖ καὶ ποιήματα καὶ λόγους κενοὺς οὐκ
 ἐκπλαγῆσόμεθα παντάπασιν ὑπὸ τούτων.

... Nature-roamer, night-roamer, I order you, "Dog,
 Serpent, Chaplet, Key, Caduceus, bronze sandal of the
 ruler of Tartarus, gold sandal of De[...]prus; having seen
 the iron sandalled female I fled and went in the tracks of the
 gold-sandalled Kore; save me, savior of the cosmos,
 daughter of Demeter," to activate this charm for me: drive,
 spell-bind Matrona, whom Tagene bore, whose substance
 you have, whom Theodorus, whom Techosis bore, has in
 mind -- "When under the shadowy mountains in the dark-
 gleaming land the child drives by force from the garden of
 Persephone at milking time the holy four-footed servant of
 Demeter, the goat with her ceaseless flow of rich milk
 THESOMENON... torches for Hecate Einodia; with a
 terrible voice the barbarously shouting goddess leads to the
 god; Night, Erebus, Darkness, Aion, Light, Artemis chaste
 ... four-footed ... Aphrodite delighting in her girdle,
 Persephoneia, Phoebe, ... arrow-pourer ... provident, arrow-
 tamer.." -- keep this spell unbreakable forever.

From which comes the proverbial phrase "Ephesian letters,"
 of those babbling some things unclear and hard to
 understand. For they say that these were some charms,
 which Kroisos said and saved himself from the pyre. And
 they say that in the Olympics, when a certain Milesian and
 Ephesian were wrestling, the Milesian could not defeat his
 opponent in wrestling because that other one had the
 Ephesian letters on a knucklebone. When these were
 perceived and removed, the Ephesian fell thirty times in a
 row. Pausanias also says in the rhetorical lexicon on this
 subject that the words were the Ephesian letters,
 encompassing in themselves the natural sense of warding off
 evil. He also says that Kroisos spoke these on the pyre, and
 that such letters seem to have been written unclearly and
 enigmatically on the feet and girdle and crown of Artemis.

from Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* XII.14.12-18 548C

Oiling his skin with yellow unguents, flaunting soft cloaks,
 shuffling fine slippers, munching bulbs, bolting pieces of
 cheese, pecking at eggs, eating periwinkles, drinking Chian
 wine, and what is more, carrying about, on little bits of
 stitched leather, lovely Ephesian letters.

He walks around those getting married, speaking the
 Ephesian warding magics.

For just as sorcerers advise those afflicted by demons to
 recite and name over to themselves the *ephesia grammata*, so
 we, in the midst of such warblings and caperings, "Stirred
 by frenzies and whoops to the tumult of tossing heads," if we
 bethink ourselves of those hallowed and venerable writings
 and set up for comparison songs and poems and tales of true
 nobility, shall not be altogether dazed by these
 performances...

12. Plutarch, *Quomodo quis* 85b

οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐκμεμαθηκότες τὰ τῶν Ἰδαίων ὀνόματα Δακτύλων
χρῶνται πρὸς τοὺς φόβους αὐτοῖς ὡς ἀλεξικάκοις, ἀτρέμα
καταλέγοντες ἕκαστον· ἡ δὲ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐπίνοια καὶ
μνήμη ταχὺ παρισταμένη καὶ διαλαμβάνουσα τοὺς
προκόποντας, ἐν πᾶσι πάθεσι καὶ ἀπορίαις ἀπάσαις ὀρθοῦς τε
καὶ ἀπτῶτας διαφυλάττει.

True it is that those who have got by heart the names of the Idaean Dactyls use them as charms against terrors, repeating each name with calm assurance; but it is also true that the thought and recollection of good men almost instantly comes to mind and gives support to those who are making progress toward virtue, and in every onset of the emotions and in all difficulties keeps them upright and saves them from falling.

13. Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* XI, 26

Ἐφεσίων γράμμασι παράγγελμα ἔκειτο ὑπομιμνήσκεσθαι τῶν
παλαιῶν τινοσ τῶν ἀρετῇ χρησαμένων.

In the *ephesia grammata* there was this message, to remember
some one of the ancients who practiced virtue.

14. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.8.45.2-3

Ἀνδροκύδης γοῦν ὁ Πυθαγορικός τὰ Ἐφέσια καλούμενα
γράμματα ἐν πολλοῖς δὴ πολυθρύλητα ὄντα συμβόλων ἔχειν
φησὶ τάξιν, σημαίνειν δὲ Ἀσκιον μὲν τὸ σκότος, μὴ γὰρ ἔχειν
τοῦτο σκιάν· φῶς δὲ Κατάσκιον, ἐπεὶ καταυγάζει τὴν σκιάν·
Λίξ τέ ἐστιν ἡ γῆ κατὰ ἀρχαίαν ἐπωνυμίαν καὶ Τετραξ ὁ
ἐνιαυτὸς διὰ τὰς ὥρας, Δαμναμενεὺς δὲ ὁ ἥλιος ὁ δαμάζων, τὰ
Αἰσιὰ τε ἡ ἀληθὴς φωνή, σημαίνει δ' ἄρα τὸ σύμβολον ὡς
κεκόσμηται τὰ θεῖα, οἷον σκότος πρὸς φῶς καὶ ἥλιος πρὸς
ἐνιαυτὸν καὶ γῆ πρὸς παντοίαν φύσεως γένεσιν

Androkydes the Pythagorean, indeed, says that the so-called
Ephesian letters, which were well-known among many,
were of the order of symbols. And he said that Askion is
darkness, for this has no shadow; and Kataskion is light,
since it casts a shadow with its rays; and Lix is the earth,
according to the ancient name; and Tetrax is the year,
according to the seasons; and Damnameneus is the sun, the
tamer; and Aisia is the true word. And truly the symbol
signifies that the divine things have been set in order:
darkness to light, the sun to the year, the earth to every kind
of genesis of nature.

15. PGM VII 451 – 458

γράφει τὸν λόγον τὸν Ὀρφαϊκόν· ἄσκει καὶ τασκεῖ λέγων, καὶ
λαβὼν μίτον μέλανα βάλε ἄμματα τξε καὶ ἔξωθεν περιῖδησον,
λέγων πάλιν τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον καὶ ὅτι· διατήρησον τὸν κάτοχον·
ἢ κατὰδεσμον, ἢ ὃ ἂν ποιῇς, καὶ οὕτως κατατίθεται. ἡ γὰρ
σελήνη τὸ ὑπόγειον διοδεύουσα, ὃ ἂν εὖρη, λύει. τούτου δὲ
γενομένου διαμένει ἅμα ἐπιλέγοντός σου καθ' ἡμέραν ἐπὶ τῷ
τόπῳ τούτῳ. μὴ ταχὺ με<τα>δίδου τινί· εὐρήσεις γὰρ μετὰ
πολλοῦ καμάτου.

Write the Orphic formula, saying, "Askei kai taskei" and,
taking a black thread, make 365 knots, and bind [the
thread] around the outside of the plate, saying the same
formula again and, "Maintain the restraining" (or "the
binding"), or whatever you do. And thus it is deposited. For
Selene, when she goes through the underworld, breaks
whatever spell she finds. But when this rite has been
performed, the spell remains unbroken so long as you say
over the formula daily at this spot.