

Egyptian Magical Practice under the Roman Empire: the Demotic Spells and their Religious Context

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I. The Published Sources

1. Introduction

Demotic magical texts from Roman Egypt constitute a small, but significant, corpus. As commonly – if imprecisely – defined,¹ 'magic' comprises the

¹ For Western attempts to standardize determinations of a category 'magic', see AUNE (1980), pp. 1510–16; GUTEKUNST (1986); RITNER (1993a); and § II.1, pp. 3353–55 below.

subject matter of only four published Demotic treatises of varying length, a few papyrus fragments, and two short texts on pottery and wood. It figures prominently in several literary texts. This paucity of published evidence of 'magic' need not reflect historical reality. Owing to the limited number of Demotic specialists, large corpora of Demotic sources remain unpublished and uncatalogued in museum collections,² and magical texts of Roman date certainly exist among these unexamined resources.³ Magical materials, in particular, have traditionally suffered from the disinterest of Egyptologists,⁴ though a series of recent publications, projects, and symposia suggests an awakening interest in the subject.⁵ Earlier efforts to isolate 'magic' from 'medicine' and 'religion' have created artificial boundaries, and general agreement over the parameters of the field of 'magic' has proved elusive.⁶ If funerary texts are counted among the 'magical' corpus, textual evidence (papyri, stelae, graffiti, etc.) is greatly increased.⁷ Even lacking Demotic inscriptions, curative amulets provide copious evidence of native 'medico-magical' practices during this period.⁸ Each of the Demotic magical manuals contains passages in the older Hieratic script as well, reflecting the traditional nature of the material and its association with 'sacred' compositions.⁹ The interdependence of magic, religion, and medicine is discussed below (§§ I.11 and II.1). The relationship between the Demotic and 'Greek' magical papyri is also intimate, and must be treated in some detail (§ III). Three of the four major Demotic sources contain texts written in Greek,¹⁰ while two have passages termed 'Cushite'. 'Alphabetic' Demotic (avoiding traditional ligatures) is frequently employed to write magical names or foreign words.¹¹ Owing to the absence of vowels in the Demotic script, the Egyptian scribes of these papyri devised a new alphabet combining Greek and Demotic symbols to ensure the proper pronunciation of

² See the remarks of SAMUEL (1983), pp. 108–10, regarding Ptolemaic Demotic papyri. See also ZAUZICH (1969).

³ E.g. P. Michigan 1444, currently under study by the author.

⁴ See the appeal of CAMINOS (1987), pp. 147–48, regarding the need to attract scholars "to this much-neglected field of research."

⁵ See *inter alia*, BORGHOUTS (1978) and (1980); GUTEKUNST (1986); RITNER (1989a); RO-CATTI and SILIOTI (1987).

⁶ Cf. the approach to funerary materials in BORGHOUTS (1987), pp. 29–30; and CAMINOS (1987), pp. 147–48. For the problem in general, see RITNER (1993a and b).

⁷ For Demotic funerary texts of the Roman period, see the discussions in M. SMITH (1979) and (1987). Ritual and astrological texts have also been excluded from the present study.

⁸ RITNER (1984), and cf. RITNER (1989a). A Roman era papyrus (P. Berlin 8769) detailing amuletic properties of stones is published in SPIEGELBERG (1902), p. 29 and plate 98.

⁹ Hieratic was retained for all religious writings well after the introduction of the Demotic language and script. The employment of Demotic for sacred compositions is first attested only in the reign of Ptolemy Auletes; see M. SMITH (1979), pp. 2–13.

¹⁰ The fourth, P. Louvre E 3229, has a partially erased Greek passage on the verso, now read by BRASHEAR, see the reference below in this volume (ANRW II 18,5), p. 3479.

¹¹ The practice was not an innovation, and appears in the earlier 'Aramaic' Amherst papyrus transcribed in Demotic signs; see VLEEMING and WESSELIUS (1985).

incantations. Termed 'Old Coptic', this evolving script appears in short passages, isolated words, or superlinear glosses.¹² A more elaborate experiment of the same nature was undertaken in a second century magical papyrus from Oxyrhynchus, in which the entire text was composed in a different mixture of Greek and Demotic letters.¹³ A secret cipher represents a further invention of native scribes dealing with magical texts.¹⁴ Earlier suggestions of a Greek origin for this code cannot be maintained.¹⁵ Derived from the Demotic and highly arcane Hieratic scripts, the cipher could only have been composed by an author familiar with Egyptian priestly tradition. Easily intelligible to trained Egyptians of the priestly class, the cipher served to obscure texts from those outside this tradition, and was intended to protect ritual procedures deemed illegal by Roman authorities.¹⁶

Official hostility to 'magic' by Roman and later Christian rulers undoubtedly reduced the numbers of surviving magical papyri, for the burning of magical books became a common civic event.¹⁷ In general, preserved texts must have been consciously hidden. It is thus significant that all of the published Demotic treatises, together with the bulk of the Greek material, probably derive from a single Theban cache. These documents were acquired from Luxor antiquities dealers in the first half of the nineteenth century by JEAN D'ANASTASI, the Swedish consul in Alexandria. ANASTASI's manuscripts were subsequently sold at auctions (1828, 1857), and the magical papyri were dispersed throughout various European collections.¹⁸ As reconstructed, this Theban archive contained 10 or more sizeable papyri of third or early fourth century date.¹⁹ The ancient compiler is unknown, as is the original find spot of the cache. One discovery is thus largely responsible for our present knowledge of magic in Roman Egypt. Ongoing excavations may yet alter the record dramatically, as

¹² For a discussion of alphabetic Demotic and the development of Old Coptic as seen in the magical papyri, see JOHNSON (1977), pp. 87–88 and 93–97.

¹³ OSING (1976b), updating CRUM (1942) and VOLTEN (1953). The language and content of the papyrus are nonetheless exclusively Egyptian.

¹⁴ GRIFFITH and THOMPSON (1904–1909), vol. 3, pp. 105–12.

¹⁵ Vs. *ibid.*, p. 108. The recognition by GRIFFITH and THOMPSON that the code could be broken easily by trained Egyptians does not imply that it was originally developed by Greeks against Greeks. In post-Pharaonic Egypt, few Egyptians – and no Greeks – will have known old Hieratic sound values. The cipher's left to right direction (contrary to Demotic) is not suggestive of foreign origins; hieroglyphs could face either direction and "retrograde" inscriptions (read backwards) were typical in ritual and magical texts (e.g. Book of the Dead). The disguise of priestly texts (from those only knowing Demotic) is parallel to the development of arcane hieroglyphic values in late temple texts. The impetus for both 'codes' comes from the native priesthood, not foreigners.

¹⁶ See now the remarks of JOHNSON, in BETZ, et al. (1986), p. lv.

¹⁷ BETZ, et al. (1986), p. xli; BARNS (1964).

¹⁸ BETZ, et al. (1986), pp. xlii–xliii; JOHNSON, in *ibid.*, pp. lv–lvii; GRIFFITH and THOMPSON (1904–1909), vol. 1, pp. 1–3; FOWDEN (1986), pp. 168–72.

¹⁹ The list of eight papyri in FOWDEN (1986), p. 169, fails to include P. BM 10588 and P. Louvre E 3229.

shown by the recent discovery of about 20 Demotic magical papyri of Ptolemaic date from Saqqara.²⁰

Despite the small number of published papyri, the subject matter covered by these treatises is quite varied and the underlying theology and magical mechanics quite intricate. Little of this has been analysed in print, however, and contemporary discussions of Egyptian magic have often excluded all Demotic evidence.²¹ In contrast to the numerous studies of Greek magical papyri, only two short surveys of Demotic magical texts have appeared.²² Aside from primary text publications (or republications), rare secondary literature has concentrated largely upon important grammatical features, and the transition of Demotic to Coptic.²³ Studies in lexicography and interpretation have been brief.²⁴ In response to this situation, my own study of Pharaonic magical practice has incorporated comparative evidence from Demotic and Greek sources, and attempted to reintegrate these texts within their Egyptian cultural and theological contexts.²⁵

A complete list of the published papyri follows, including languages of composition, primary and secondary publications, and a summary of contents. As noted above, all four magical manuals derive from Thebes (modern Luxor)²⁶ and date to the third century or slightly later. In all cases, the best and more current translations of these Demotic manuals are to be found in the re-edition by BETZ, et al. (1986).

2. P. British Museum 10588

Composed in Demotic, Greek, Old Coptic, and Nubian.

The Demotic, phonetic 'Nubian', and Old Coptic passages were written by one scribe. To the same copyist should probably be assigned the Greek texts of the recto. The verso has been assigned to a second Greek hand (period of Diocletian).

Primary Publication: BELL, NOCK, and THOMPSON (1933).

Further editions and commentaries:

RITNER, JOHNSON, and O'NEIL, in BETZ, et al. (1986), pp. 286–92 (PDM/PGM LXI)

PREISENDANZ (1973–74), vol. 2, pp. 189–92 (Greek sections only as PGM LXI)

RITNER (1986), pp. 95–100, in re. §§ 1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12
M. SMITH (1984), in re. § 7.

²⁰ To be published by the Egypt Exploration Society, edited by JOHN RAY with additional commentary by H. S. SMITH, W. J. TAIT, and R. K. RITNER.

²¹ BORGHOUTS (1974) and (1978). LEXA (1925) does however include Demotic materials in his analytic discussions (cf. pp. 122–53).

²² BRESCIANI (1987), and JOHNSON, in BETZ, et al. (1986), pp. lv–lviii.

²³ JOHNSON (1976a), (1976b) and (1975–76).

²⁴ Cf. CANNUYER (1984), SMITH (1984) and (1980), and RITNER (1986).

²⁵ RITNER (1993a).

²⁶ For the Theban dialect of the Demotic papyri, see JOHNSON (1976b).

Contents:

- § 1 (cols. 1/1–2/13): Spell for a Revelation (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 2 (col. 3/1–12): Spell to Discover a Person's or God's Desire
- § 3 (col. 4/1): Uncertain Fragment
- § 4 (col. 4/2–7): Remedy for a Head Wound (in Demotic and Greek)
- § 5 (col. 4/8–16): Remedy for the Head (?) (in Demotic and Greek)
- § 6 (col. 4/17–20): Remedy for an Erection (in Greek)
- § 7 (col. 5/1–17): Spell for a Dream Revelation from Thoth (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 8 (col. 6/1–16): Spell for Finding a Thief (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 9 (col. 7/1–5): Spell for Granting Favor and Love (in Demotic and Nubian)
- § 10 (col. 7/6–11): Love (?) Spell, 'The Red Cloth of Nephthys'
- § 11 (col. 7/12–16): Prescription for a Donkey Not Moving
- § 12 (col. 8/1–16): Love Spell
- § 13 (vo. col. 1/1–20): Love spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 14 (vo. col. 2/1–12): Love spell (in Demotic, Old Coptic, and Greek)
- § 15 (vo. 'A' cols. 1–2): Love Spell (in Greek)
- § 16 (vo. 'B' col. 1): Love spell (in Greek)

3. P. Leiden I 384 vo.

Composed in Demotic, Greek, and Old Coptic.

Primary Publication: JOHNSON (1975). For positions of columns, see *ibid.*, p. 30. 13 Greek columns are found between the Demotic columns. Divorced from their Demotic surroundings by LEEMANS and PREISENDANZ, the Greek texts were given an independent numbering system, and are labeled 'G' below. Both Demotic and Greek spells were written by the same scribe, who subsequently wrote the bilingual P. London and Leiden, described below. Old Coptic glosses in these papyri show the influence of a Theban dialect.²⁷ The magical texts were copied onto the back of a literary papyrus that had been inscribed in the previous century. The recto of the papyrus contains the longest and most significant Demotic mythological text, 'The Myth of the Solar Eye'. One animal fable from this compilation was translated into Greek, and later recast as the most famous fable of 'Aesop', the story of the lion and the mouse. For publications and bibliography of the recto, see SPIEGELBERG (1917a), LICHTHEIM (1980), pp. 156–57, and DE CENIVAL (1988).

Further editions and commentaries:

JOHNSON et al., in BETZ, et al. (1986), pp. 152–72 (PDM/PGM XII)

LEEMANS (1856), pls. 226–27

PREISENDANZ (1973–74), vol. 2, pp. 57–86 (Greek sections only as PGM XII)

²⁷ See JOHNSON (1976b).

JOHNSON (1975–1976)

JOHNSON (1976)

M. SMITH (1984), in re. § 29.

Contents:

- § 1 (col. 2*/1–5): Fragmentary
- § 2 (col. 2*/6–20): A Ring to Create Praise
- § 3 (col. 1*/1–29): Spell for Direct Petition of Imhotep
- § 4 (col. 1G/1–13): Spell for Direct Petition of Kore (in Greek)
- § 5 (cols. 1G/14–3G/22): Spell to Acquire Eros as an Assistant (in Greek)
- § 6 (col. 3G/23–33): Himerios' Recipes (in Greek)
- § 7 (col. 4G/1–15): Charm of Agathocles for Sending Dreams (in Greek)
- § 8 (cols. 4G/15–5G/3): Spell of Zminis of Dendera for Sending Dreams (in Greek)
- § 9 (col. 5G/4–12): Request for a Dream (in Greek)
- § 10 (col. 5G/13–20): Spell for a Divine Revelation (in Greek)
- § 11 (cols. 5G/20–6G/3): Charm to Release Bonds (in Greek)
- § 12 (col. 6G/4–6): Charm to Restrain Anger (in Greek)
- § 13 (col. 6G/7–14): Charm for Eloquence (in Greek)
- § 14 (col. 6G/15–17): Request for a Dream Oracle of Pole Star (in Greek)
- § 15 (col. 6G/18–26): To Make a Tincture of Gold (in Greek)
- § 16 (cols. 6G/26–8G/22): Magical Ring (in Greek with Demotic title)
- § 17 (cols. 8G/23–10G/38): Magical Ring for Success (in Greek with Demotic title)
- § 18 (col. 11G/1–14): Sphere of Democritus to Predict Life and Death (in Greek)
- § 19 (col. 11G/15–25): Spell for Causing Separation (in Greek with Demotic title)
- § 20 (cols. 11G/26–12G/12): Charm for Inducing Insomnia (in Greek)
- § 21 (col. 12G/13–16): Charm for Gaining Friendship and Favor (in Greek & Cipher?)
- § 22 (cols. 12G/17–13G/30): Interpretations of Secret Plant Names (in Greek)
- § 23 (col. 4/1–12): Spell for Causing Separation (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 24 (col. 4/13–26): Spell for Causing Separation (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 25 (col. 3/1–32 = G14): Spell for Causing Separation (in Demotic and Greek)
- § 26 (col. 2/1–11): Spell for Causing Separation (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 27 (col. 2/12–27 = G15): Spell for Causing Separation (in Demotic, Greek, and Old Coptic)
- § 28 (col. 1/1–12 = G16): Love Spell (in Demotic and Greek)
- § 29 (col. 1/13–30 = G17): Love Spell (in Demotic and Greek).

4. P. London and Leiden (= P. BM 10070 + P. Leiden I 383)

Composed in Demotic, Greek, Old Coptic, and Nubian.

All texts were copied by one scribe, perhaps as a continuation of P. Leiden I 384 vo. which was also written by the same compiler.²⁸ As previously noted, Old Coptic glosses in both texts reflect Theban dialect.

Primary Publication: GRIFFITH and THOMPSON (1904–1909), with references to older literature.

Further editions and commentaries:

JOHNSON, W. GRESE, and R. HOCK, in BETZ, et al. (1986), pp. 195–251 (PDM/PGM XIV)

PREISENDANZ (1973–74), vol. 2, pp. 131–33 (Greek sections only as PGM XIV)

LEXA (1925), vol. 2, pp. 122–50

RITNER (1986), pp. 100–105, in re. §§ 2, 5, 11, 16, 26, 33, and 35

CANNUYER (1984), in re. § 87

SPIEGELBERG (1904)

HESS (1901).

Contents:

- § 1 (cols. 1/1–3/35): Vessel Divination [from physician?] of Oxyrhynchus (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 2 (col. 4/1–22): Direct Petition of Imhotep (in Demotic, Greek, and Old Coptic)
- § 3 (col. 4/23–24): For 'Lucky Shadows'/Visions (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 4 (col. 5/1–2): Fragmentary Charm of Pole Star
- § 5 (col. 5/3–34): Lamp Divination (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 6 (col. 6/1–8/11): Lamp Divination (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 7 (col. 8/12–18): Direct Petition of Pole Star (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 8 (cols. 9/1–10/22): Vessel Inquiry of Khonsu (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 9 (col. 10/22–35): Vessel Inquiry to see Solar Bark (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 10 (col. 11/1–26): Spell for Giving Favor (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 11 (col. 12/1–21): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 12 (col. 12/21–31): Love Spell
- § 13 (col. 13/1–10): Spell for Separation (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 14 (col. 13/11–29): Uses of Shrewmouse and Other Animals in Poisons and Love Spells (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 15 (col. 14/1–33): Vessel Divination (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 16 (col. 15/1–20): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)

²⁸ JOHNSON (1975), p. 53.

- § 17 (col. 15/21–23): Love Spell
- § 18 (col. 15/24–31): Charm to Restrain Anger of Superior (in Demotic and Greek)
- § 19 (col. 16/1–17): Lamp Invocations (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 20 (col. 16/18–30): Lamp Divination (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 21 (col. 17/1–21): Lamp Divination (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 22 (col. 17/21–23): Lamp Invocation
- § 23 (col. 17/23–26): Lamp Invocation (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 24 (cols. 17/26–18/6): Lamp Invocation (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 25 (col. 18/7–33): Vessel Divination from Physician of Oxyrhynchus (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 26 (col. 19/1–9): Spell for Dog Bite (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 27 (col. 19/10–21): Spell for Expelling Swallowed Poison (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 28 (col. 19/21–32): Spell for Expelling Bone Stuck in Throat (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 29 (col. 19/32–40): Spell for Dog Bite
- § 30 (col. 20/1–27): Spell for Scorpion (?) Sting
- § 31 (col. 20/27–33): Spell for Expelling Bone Stuck in Throat (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 32 (col. 21/1–9): Vessel Divination of Osiris (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 33 (col. 21/10–43): Love Spell
- § 34 (col. 22/1–5): Vessel Divination
- § 35 (col. 23/1–20): Spell for Inducing Insomnia (in Demotic, Greek, and Old Coptic)
- § 36 (col. 23/21–26): Vessel Divination of Moon (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 37 (col. 23/27–31): Vessel Divination of Moon (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 38 (col. 24/1–39): Formulae for Inducing Insomnia and Poisons (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 39 (col. 25/1–22): Lamp Divination (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 40 (col. 25/23–31): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 41 (cols. 25/31–26/18): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 42 (col. 27/1–12): Vessel Divination for Seeing Solar Bark (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 43 (col. 27/13–36): Lamp Divination (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 44 (col. 28/1–10): Vessel Divination (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 45 (col. 28/11–15): Vessel Divination
- § 46 (col. 29/1–20): Vessel Divination of Sun (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 47 (col. 29/20–30): Vessel Divination of Sun (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 48 (vo. cols. 1/1–2/15): Properties of Plants (in Demotic and Greek)
- § 49 (vo. col. 2/16–20): For Inducing Insomnia (in Demotic and Old Coptic)

- § 50 (vo. col. 3/1–3): For Inducing Insomnia (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 51 (vo. col. 3/4–13): Names and Properties of Minerals (in Demotic and Greek)
- § 52 (vo. col. 3/14–16): Love Spell
- § 53 (vo. col. 3/17–18): Mineral Properties
- § 54 (vo. col. 4/1–5): Prescription for Infected Ear
- § 55 (vo. col. 4/6–19): Names and Properties of Animals and Minerals (in Demotic and Greek)
- § 56 (vo. col. 5/1–3): Prescription for Menorrhagia
- § 57 (vo. col. 5/4–8): Pregnancy Test
- § 58 (vo. col. 5/9–13): Prescription for Menorrhagia (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 59 (vo. col. 5/14–17): Names and Properties of Plants (in Demotic and Greek)
- § 60 (vo. col. 6/1–8): Gynaecological Prescription (Bladder Infection?)
- § 61 (vo. col. 7/1–4): Gynaecological Prescription
- § 62 (vo. col. 7/4–7): Gynaecological Prescription
- § 63 (vo. col. 8/1–8): Prescription for Gout (in Demotic, Greek, and Old Coptic)
- § 64 (vo. col. 9/1–10): Prescription for Gout (in Demotic and Greek)
- § 65 (vo. col. 10/1–12): Prescription for Gout (in Demotic, Greek, and Old Coptic)
- § 66 (vo. col. 11/1–11): Prescriptions for Ailing Feet
- § 67 (vo. cols. 12/1–13/9): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 68 (vo. col. 13/10–11): Love Spell
- § 69 (vo. col. 13/11–12): Love Spell
- § 70 (vo. col. 14/1–7): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 71 (vo. col. 15/1–7): Invocation for Catching a Thief and Saving a Ship (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 72 (vo. col. 16/1–7): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 73 (vo. col. 17/1–8): Love and Dream Spell (in Demotic, Old Coptic, and Greek)
- § 74 (vo. col. 18/1–12): Invocation of Pole Star (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 75 (vo. col. 19/1–7): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 76 (vo. col. 20/1–7): To Heal Ophthalmia or Evil Eye (in Demotic, Old Coptic, and Nubian)
- § 77 (vo. col. 21/1–6): Eye Ointment
- § 78 (vo. col. 22/1–20): Eye Ointment for Vessel Divination (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 79 (vo. col. 23/1–12): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 80 (vo. col. 24/1–13): Lamp Divination (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 81 (vo. col. 25/1–8): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 82 (vo. col. 26/1–9): Vessel Divination (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 83 (vo. col. 27/1–8): Vessel Invocation (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
- § 84 (vo. col. 28/1–3): Directions for Spirit Summoning (with last?)

- § 85 (vo. col. 29/1–6): Spell for Inducing Madness (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
 § 86 (vo. col. 30/1–2): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
 § 87 (vo. col. 30/3–6): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
 § 88 (vo. col. 30/7–8): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
 § 89 (vo. col. 30/9–10): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
 § 90 (vo. col. 30/11): Love Spell (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
 § 91 (vo. col. 31/1–6): Lamp Invocation (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
 § 92 (vo. col. 32/1–13): Uses of Shrewmouse (in Demotic and Old Coptic).
 § 93 (vo. col. 33/1–9): Formula for Removing Fever (in Demotic and Old Coptic)

5. P. Louvre E 3229

Composed in Demotic, Greek, and Old Coptic.

Different scribes seem responsible for the texts of the recto and verso. The distinction could be illusory, owing to verso's poor state of preservation.

Primary Publication: JOHNSON (1977).

Further editions and commentaries:

- JOHNSON, in BETZ, et al. (1986), pp. 323–30 (PDM Supplement)
 LEXA (1925), vol. 2, pp. 151–53
 MASPERO (1883), pp. 113–23, and pls. 4–10 and 14
 M. SMITH (1980), in re. §§ 7 and 14.

Contents:

- § 1 (col. 1/1–6): Spell for Sending a Dream
 § 2 (col. 1/7–18): Spell for Sending a Dream
 § 3 (col. 1/19–27): Spell for Sending a Dream
 § 4 (cols. 1/28–2/10): Spell for Sending a Dream
 § 5 (cols. 2/10–3/1): Spell for Sending a Dream (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
 § 6 (cols. 3/1–4/15): Spell for Sending a Dream (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
 § 7 (col. 4/15–30): Spell for Sending a Dream
 § 8 (col. 5/1–14): Spell for Sending a Dream
 § 9 (col. 5/15–22): Spell for Direct Petition of Osiris
 § 10 (cols. 5/22–6/6): Spell for Compulsion
 § 11 (col. 6/6–19): Spell for Direct Petition of Thoth (in Demotic and Old Coptic)
 § 12 (col. 6/19–25): Spell for Finding your House of Life (Dwelling Place)
 § 13 (cols. 6/25–7/14): Spell for Reciting a Document / Direct Petition of Imhotep
 § 14 (vo. 1–24): Fragmentary Rites (for Compelling Spirit) (in Demotic and Old Coptic).

6. 'Faiyum Temple Archive'

Composed in Demotic. Though published as 'Hermetic Writings', these fragmentary papyri in Vienna are primarily ritual in nature and probably derive from one or more temple scriptoria. The collections contained papyri inscribed at various dates, ranging from the end of the Ptolemaic period to the late second century. Certain texts contain phrases recalling invocations or procedures in the longer manuals. The beginning of P. Vienna 6614 (early Roman) may include a mention of the God Heka, but is otherwise astrological. P. Vienna 6336 (first century B.C.) is surely a revelation spell, with its references to "dead ones" and "desiring knowledge" (col. 1/x + 4), "enchanting the sky," the House of Life, magicians, lector priests (col. 1/x + 5–x + 6), and a vessel (col. 2/x + 4). Further procedures appear in P. Vienna 6321 (mid to late second century) and 6343 (Roman, *contra* the editor's suggestion of a Ptolemaic date).

Publication: REYMOND (1977). This idiosyncratic publication must be used with extreme caution; cf. the reviews gathered in THISEN (1984), p. 186, adding DEVAUCHELLE (1980).

7. O. Strassburg D 1338

Composed in Demotic. The 16 preserved lines on this ostrakon comprise a single medico-magical text for aiding menstruation, labelled "spell for causing blood to descend from the body of a woman." Like the papyri, this ostrakon was purchased in Luxor, combines Demotic with older Hieratic, and uses standard formulae of threats and commands to ensure divine intervention on behalf of the subject. Movement in the natural order is to be halted until the woman's blood flows properly. Authority is derived from Isis, who in turn claims to represent Amon of Luxor. Like the papyri, the ostrakon was designed for reference rather than for a specific person and uses the designation "So-and-so" in line 16. A revised translation follows, incorporating phrases previously unread or untranslated.

Publication: SPIEGELBERG (1911), pp. 34–37 and pl. 6.

Revised Translation:

"Spell for causing blood to descend from the body of a woman.²⁹
 O heaven, do not create wind; O sea, do not create waves,
 while the compulsion³⁰ is before the great noble god who rejoices over
 order.
 O heaven do not [...] Seek after what I have said today,
 after what I have said as magic with the voice of Isis the great, the god's
 mother,

²⁹ Final words broken, but likely. Or read "from a woman of(?) [...]"

³⁰ The term is *hyt* and signifies "fury, possession" or the like.

erence manuals" for a temple or private library would seem correct.³⁴ Eclectic content is an inherent feature of scribal collections, and even thematically coherent texts may include 'extraneous' spells of interest to the compiler.³⁵

As outlined above, the most common goal of the procedures contained in the Demotic manuals was the direct petition of a god for revelation, using lamps, bowls, mediums, or dreams. Such revelations are the focus of P. British Museum 10588 §§ 1, 2, and 7; P. Leiden I 384 vo. §§ 3, 4, 7–10, and 14; P. London and Leiden §§ 1–9, 15, 19–25, 32, 34, 36–37, 39, 42–47, 73–74, 77(?)–78, 80, 82–84, and 91; and all of P. Louvre E 3229 except § 12. The technical term for such 'Offenbarungszauber' is *ph-ntr* (ϣⲛⲏⲧⲣ), "petitioning (literally "reaching") god,"³⁶ corresponding to procedures labeled in the Greek texts as αὐτοπτος or σύστασις.³⁷ Although the elaborate Demotic invocations contain unmistakable foreign elements, the procedure itself is not alien, but traditional. Direct revelations through visions and dreams (as incubation) were sought throughout Pharaonic history.³⁸ The Ptolemaic dream spell of the Egyptian priest Hor stands well within this tradition and serves as an excellent parallel for the Greek and Demotic texts of the succeeding Roman period.³⁹ Revelations by dreams or water-filled bowls are also well-paralleled in the Hellenistic legends of Nectonebo, which derive from Egyptian sources.⁴⁰ 'Bowl magic' is clearly attested in Egypt from the New Kingdom onward, speci-

fically in spells for beholding the solar bark and the gods of the underworld.⁴¹ The bottoms of shallow bowls are painted with scenes of the sun god or other deities whom the ritualist intends to visualize.⁴² As is typical of Egyptian ritual texts from all periods, the practitioner then variously implores and threatens the gods, while identifying himself with one or more of their company.⁴³ Compulsion is also effected by the knowledge of secret names.⁴⁴ These most distinctive Egyptian practices survived to dominate all incantations copied in Demotic and Greek and became a source of contention in the debates on Theurgy between Porphyry and Iamblichus.⁴⁵

The practitioner's ability to be both hostile and conciliatory is reflected not only in the incantations, but also in the very purpose of the oracular consultation. As in the Demotic and Greek spells, the *ph-ntr* may be directed toward either 'positive' (visions, revelations) or 'negative' (curses, compulsions) ends. Thus, in the 'harim conspiracy' against Ramses III (ca. 1182–1151 B. C.), a conspiring priest used a ritual scroll from the royal library to conduct a *ph-ntr* against the king.⁴⁶ In contrast, workers in the ninth year of Ramses IX (ca. 1117 B. C.) were officially excused from labor on the royal tomb *r ph p3 ntr* "to petition god."⁴⁷ The broken context of the surviving attendance record suggests that the process entailed lamps rather than bowls, as is the case with many of the spells later recorded in Demotic and Greek.⁴⁸ More typically, such oracles were conducted via the public procession of divine statues, which 'nodded' assent to favored questions. Alternatively, submitted written petitions might be

³⁴ JOHNSON, *ibid.* This is preferable to the designation "grimoire" (with overtones of "black magic") used by LEXA (1925), pp. 122 ff.

³⁵ Cf. the assortment of remedies and spells appended to the verso of the EDWIN SMITH 'Surgical' papyrus, in BREASTED (1930), pp. 501–507; and the recipe "to keep a kite from robbing" in the otherwise medical papyrus Ebers (col. 98/2–6), in VON DEINES, GRAPOW, and WESTENDORF (1958), p. 306.

³⁶ For the term and procedure, see RITNER (1993a); KRUCHTEN (1985) and (1986), and JOHNSON (1977), pp. 90–91. The earlier translation "god's arrival" must be modified on the basis of P. Turin 2072/142, vo. 6, discussed below. The use of *ph* "to reach" with the nuance "to petition" should be compared with the synonym *spr* "to approach/petition," and is already evident in the Middle Kingdom "Complaints of Khakheperresoneb," vo. 6: "A petitioned (*ph*) heart does not keep silent"; see GARDINER (1969), pp. 108–109 and pl. 18.

³⁷ See the general discussion in HOPFNER, (1983), vol. 2/1, pp. 116, 193, and *passim*; and EITREM (1929), pp. 49–53.

³⁸ For examples, see WENTE (1975–76), pp. 595–600; HELCK (1969), pp. 9 and 13; ASSMANN (1978), pp. 22–50, and OTTO (1971), pp. 9–22; and SATZINGER (1985), pp. 249–54.

³⁹ RAY (1976), pp. 66–73. Ptolemaic Egyptian evidence for the practice is found also in the autobiography of Taimhotep, LICHTHEIM (1980), p. 62; and cf. MALININE (1960), pp. 250–65.

⁴⁰ See the 'Dream of Nectonebo', in WILCKEN (1927), pp. 369–74, and the opening of the Alexander Romance of Pseudo-Callisthenes, in WOLOHOJIAN (1969), p. 23: "[Nectonebo] went to his palace alone, took a basin, and, isolating himself, worked this sorcery of the basin. He poured spring water into his basin, and with his hands created ships and men from wax, and set the men upon the ships and put them into the basin." The conjunction of bowl and ship model is found again in the Book of the Dead spells cited in the following note.

⁴¹ See Book of the Dead spells 133–34 § T1, in ALLEN (1974), pp. 108–110; PLEYTE spells 167–69 § P1, in *ibid.*, pp. 216 (said to be from the royal treasury); BORGHOUTS (1971), p. 132, n. 304, and (1978), pp. 22–23. With these magical bowls used for the deceased, cf. the offering of a *hnuw*-bowl in Coffin Text spell 936, in FAULKNER (1978), p. 71. The funerary context of these rites need not preclude a similar function for the living; see GILULA (1978), and WENTE (1982). "Magical" use of bowls also figures prominently in both 'Letters to the Dead' and the 'Execration Texts'; see RITNER (1993a). Direct visions of the solar bark are the goal of §§ 9 and 42 of the London and Leiden papyrus.

⁴² Actual examples of such bowls are found in BRESCHIANI, PERNIGOTTI, and SILVIS, (1977), pp. 73–75 and pl. 27; and MASPERO, (1902), p. 285. Filling the bowls with water or oil may have enhanced their use in scrying; Book of the Dead spell 134 recommends that the image of the person to be visualized in the solar boat should be anointed with *hknw*-oil.

⁴³ For these common practices, see SAUNERON (1951), and (1966), and GRAPOW (1911). Identification of ritualist/magician and deity is fundamental to all Egyptian spells. The pattern is continued without break in the Demotic spells and their translations into Greek, where the expression "I am (NN)" is still usually written in Egyptian as ANOK.

⁴⁴ This 'gnostic' technique (and obsession) is attested in virtually every Egyptian spell from the earliest sources onward. The most famous example is the tale of "Isis and the Secret Name of Re," in WILSON (1969). Perhaps exceeded only by "I am," the declaration "I know" is one of the most common (and significant) statements in Egyptian magic.

⁴⁵ For Porphyry's rejection of Egyptian threats against gods in his 'Letter to Anebo' and the rebuttal by Iamblichus, see DES PLACES (1966), pp. 146 ff. and 186–88.

⁴⁶ For sources and discussion, see WEBER (1977), and RITNER (1993a).

⁴⁷ P. Turin 2072/142, vo. 6, in ALLAM (1973), vol. 1, pl. 129; and KRUCHTEN (1985), pp. 12–13.

⁴⁸ LÉFEBURE (1902) remains a valuable discussion of the procedure.

selected as authorized by the gods.⁴⁹ The 'ambivalent' nature of the ritual is shown as well by the actions of the temples, which both sponsored the public oracles for determining guilt and innocence (as "beautiful festivals of the *ph-ntr*"),⁵⁰ and issued amuletic decrees to protect the bearer against "every unfavorable/evil *ph-n-ntr*."⁵¹ Whether public or private, such oracular petitions were orthodox ceremonies conducted by priests,⁵² and not merely legal, but the very arbiters of legality, fully equivalent to a court of law.⁵³ The implications of this inherent legality for general notions of "magic" will be discussed below (§ II.1).

Second in frequency among the Demotic manuals are spells designed to create love and favor, or more accurately, to compel submission (with or without a sexual component). Such spells are found in P. British Museum 10588 §§ 9–10, and 11–16; P. Leiden I 384 vo. §§ 2, 12–13, 16–17, 21, and 28–29; and P. London and Leiden §§ 10–12, 14, 16–18, 33, 40–41, 52, 67–70, 72–73, 75, 79, 81, 86–90, and 92. These rites for subjugation and restraint of anger are balanced by cognate spells for the separation of lovers, serving either as a vindictive curse or as preparation for dominating one of the lovers by a subsequent spell. Separation spells comprise P. Leiden I 384 vo. §§ 19, and 23–27, and P. London and Leiden § 13. Tablet Qaw may have been designed for a similar purpose. Spells for creating love and favor, like those for engendering hate, are all 'domination' spells, replete with threats and tortures inflicted upon the subjugated party. There is thus little distinction between 'love spells' and curses in regard to recitations, praxis, or intent.⁵⁴ Remedies for passion and poison may be conjoined in a single discussion (P. London and Leiden §§ 14 and 92), gods are dispatched to harass recalcitrant donkeys and women (P. British Museum 10588 §§ 11–12), and recitations to inflict *insomnia* are both independent curses and standard elements of love magic. Cursing spells appear in P. Leiden I 384 vo. § 20, P. London and Leiden §§ 14, 35, 38, 48–50, 85, and 92, and Tablet Qaw.

Evidence for love spells from Pharaonic Egypt is slight, for only a single Ramesside example survives, utilizing traditional threats against the gods unless the conjured subject "follows after me like an ox after grass."⁵⁵ Rituals for subjugation, however, are common from the Old Kingdom to the Christianization of Egypt, reducing public and private enemies to the status of bound prisoners menaced by gods and magician. It is these rites which were the direct antecedents of cursing and 'domination' magic in the Demotic and Greek pa-

⁴⁹ For the techniques and social significance of Egyptian oracles, see ČERNÝ (1962).

⁵⁰ See KRUCHTEN (1985) and (1986).

⁵¹ "Reaching of God", see EDWARDS (1960), p. 39, n. 61.

⁵² See the discussion in RITNER (1993a).

⁵³ ČERNÝ (1962).

⁵⁴ For the interrelationship between love spells, curses, and execration rites, see the extended discussion in RITNER (1993a), Chapter 4.

⁵⁵ O. Deir el-Medineh 1057, in SMITHER (1941). But see the spells for sexual potency listed in ALTENMÜLLER (1980), col. 1158, n. 19.

pyri.⁵⁶ But for its 'Proto-Coptic' script, the second century magical papyrus from Oxyrhynchus represents a classic execration of the enemies of Osiris.⁵⁷ Egyptian influence is particularly obvious in the praxis of the love spell PGM IV, 296–466, in which the 'beloved' is rendered in clay as a pierced bound prisoner, following standard execration practice attested in Egypt from predynastic times. Actual use of this spell is proved by an assemblage discovered in Antinoopolis, now in the Louvre.⁵⁸ Temple rituals designed to curse enemies of the gods and state were adapted for personal adversaries as well, detailing the use of execration figures in wax, clay, or papyrus of "all male and female enemies whom your heart fears."⁵⁹ Like the later separation spells, these rites may confer sexual impotence upon their victim.⁶⁰ Other examples declare flatly: "If this spell is recited against any enemy of NN, evil will happen to him for 7 days."⁶¹ Such ceremonies either equate personal enemies with the punished Seth/Typhon and his confederates or subject them to his harrasing power. The same fates are accorded the victims of compulsion rituals copied in Demotic and Greek, which commonly employ Sethian symbolism of donkeys and the color red.⁶² In contrast, lamp divinations of a non-hostile purpose avoid the color and stipulate that red slip must not be applied to the pottery lamp.⁶³

Compulsion can be effected not only by Seth but by the spirits of the dead. From Roman Egypt, a figurine inscribed in hieroglyphs invokes the power of a dead woman to compel sexual favors from men: "Arise, bind him whom I might see so that he have sex with me. I do obeisance before you."⁶⁴ Despite the novel directness of the exhortation, the appeal to the dead is based solidly in Egyptian cultural practice, reflecting the millennia-old custom of petitioning the dead for health, love, children, ending or furthering quarrels, etc.⁶⁵ Tablet Qaw, deposited in a tomb shaft, is a direct descendent of these 'Letters to the Dead'. From the same tradition derives the constant appeal to spirits of the graveyard noted throughout the magical papyri of the Roman period.⁶⁶ The

⁵⁶ For execration rituals, see the overview in SCHOSKE (1986), and the Ptolemaic magical (?) ritual in SPIEGELBERG (1902), pp. 20–21 and plates 94–96 (P. Berlin 8278). Hellenistic elements are certainly present, however, and may predominate in other magical media, cf. the Graeco-Egyptian gem of a satyr fondling a goat with the hieroglyphic inscription "everything good," plausibly explained as a love charm in DRIOTON (1947).

⁵⁷ See the three spells in OSING (1976b), pp. 45–126. There is now no need to question their affiliation to native magic, *contra* BORGHOUTS (1974), pp. 16–17.

⁵⁸ BOURGUET (1975) and (1980), and KAMBITIS (1976).

⁵⁹ P. Bremner-Rhind, col. 28/17–18, in FAULKNER (1937), p. 175.

⁶⁰ P. Bremner-Rhind, col. 24/16: "You shall not have an erection; you shall not copulate" (paralleled in col. 25/17–18).

⁶¹ P. Louvre 3129, in SCHOTT (1929), p. 61.

⁶² For Seth and his symbolism, see TE VELDE (1977); and for PGM references, see HOPFNER (1974), pp. 365–66.

⁶³ See the examples gathered by RITNER, in BETZ, et al. (1986), p. 336.

⁶⁴ DRIOTON (1942).

⁶⁵ GARDINER and SETHE (1928). Further bibliography in GRIESHAMMER (1975).

⁶⁶ E.g. P. London and Leiden §§ 16 (love spell) and 85 (madness spell); PGM IV 2006–2125, XII 107–21 (cat), and *passim*. See also the discussion of Biaiothanatos Daimon in

general preference for invoking spirits of the 'disgruntled' dead (untimely or violently dead, buried in an unsanctified or ruined cemetery) in compulsion spells again reflects native practice. Execration figurines were interred in or beside older graves,⁶⁷ effectively delivering the subjected enemies into the hands of spirits whose tomb offerings, and pleasant disposition, had long vanished. Where no such graves were available, an executed captive could accompany the rite to serve as the necessary hostile spirit, untimely and violently slain.⁶⁸ The angry dead were believed responsible for many human afflictions; they could be expected to show no mercy.⁶⁹

In contrast to such spells which inflict injury, a large category of healing magic is also present, comprising P. British Museum 10588 §§ 4–6; P. London and Leiden §§ 26–31, 54–66, 76–77 (?), and 93; and O. Strassburg D 1338. The medical application of magical techniques and recitations was commonly practiced in Egypt at all periods, and the distinctions between physician, priest, and magician often will have been ones of emphasis. Each variety of practitioner, for example, was expected to examine the pulse, and spells accompanied the administration of medicines, bandages, etc.⁷⁰ The same blurring of priestly and medical roles is found in the Demotic corpus, where rituals of a non-medical nature are attributed to an Egyptian physician in P. London and Leiden §§ 1 (?) and 25.

Pharaonic precedents are easily found for spells in P. London and Leiden designed to heal eye disease (§ 76),⁷¹ cure female complaints (§§ 56–62),⁷² calm fever (§ 93)⁷³ and expel bones caught in the throat (§§ 28 and 31).⁷⁴ A late gynaecological treatise in Demotic also combines such incantations with practical drug therapy,⁷⁵ and a standard amulet form was devised for similar purposes.⁷⁶ Eye ointments were typically applied for both medicinal and ritual purposes, and their use appears in many Demotic and Greek spells (cf. P. London and Leiden §§ 77–78, and PGM V 97 and VII 335–47). Bites and stings inflicted by snakes, animals, and scorpions were primarily treated by magical

BETZ, et al. (1986), p. 333. The principle is well enunciated by the Egyptian priest and stoic philosopher Chaeremon, see VAN DER HORST (1984), pp. 36–37, frag. 22D.

⁶⁷ See JUNKER (1947), p. 38; and OSING (1976a), p. 156.

⁶⁸ VILA (1973), pp. 628–29 and 631.

⁶⁹ See the references to medical treatments for injuries inflicted by the "stroke of a dead man or a dead woman" (*s.t.-mwt mwt.t*) gathered in VON DEINES and WESTENDORF (1962), pp. 701–703.

⁷⁰ For medical magic, see the overview in H. GRAPOW (1955), pp. 13–26. For pulse taking, see P. Ebers, § 854 (col. 99, 2–3), in VON DEINES, GRAPOW, and WESTENDORF (1958), p. 1.

⁷¹ ROCCATI (1970), pp. 28–35.

⁷² BORGHOUTS (1970), pp. 28–31; GRIFFITH (1898), p. 10, no. 30.

⁷³ LUFT (1974).

⁷⁴ ROCCATI (1970), pp. 36–38.

⁷⁵ ERICHSEN (1954).

⁷⁶ RITNER (1984).

remedies,⁷⁷ and the incantations of P. London and Leiden (§§ 26–27 and 29–30) follow well-established patterns in which the patient is equated with the injured god Horus who was healed by Isis. Collections of such 'anti-venom' spells were carved upon popular healing stelae depicting the god trampling crocodiles underfoot ('*Cippi* of Horus').⁷⁸ Water poured over the stelae acquired the power of the spells and was drunk by the patient. Though inferior in quality to earlier examples, Horus *Cippi* were still common in Roman Egypt,⁷⁹ and their imagery influenced the depiction of the Egyptian magician Pancrates in Lucian's 'Philopseudes' 34, and of the emperor Hadrian on Alexandrian coinage.⁸⁰

Of the remaining spells, the most interesting from a traditional Egyptian perspective are the divination procedures for the discovery of a thief, found in P. British Museum 10588 § 8, and P. London and Leiden § 71. These, like the spells for discovering a person's desire (§ 2) or home (P. Louvre E 3229 § 12), are in reality only variants of the previously discussed spells for direct revelations. It was just such a need to determine guilt in cases of theft that had motivated most instances of the older *ph-ntr* procession. For further varieties of pre-Roman magical spells in Egypt, see the representative overview in ALTENMÜLLER (1980).

Spells lacking Egyptian influence are clearly in the minority in the Demotic (and Demotic-Greek) papyri; these include P. British Museum 10588 § 9 (Nubian), and P. Leiden I 394 vo §§ 4, 15, and 18⁸¹ (Greek). In other instances, the presence of foreign script, names, or mythological references is generally coupled with the appearance of Egyptian gods, phraseology, and theological imagery. Given the syncretistic nature of magic in Egypt, as elsewhere, there is nothing unusual in the occurrence of either foreign elements or whole texts. A Cretan spell is included in an Egyptian medical manual from the Eighteenth Dynasty,⁸² and Semitic spells and gods are found throughout New Kingdom compilations.⁸³ The preference for exotic languages may also have motivated the use of abracadabra '*Zauberwörter*' throughout the Demotic and Greek

⁷⁷ E.g. ROCCATI, (1970), pp. 23–27, and the early Demotic scorpion spell published in VITTMANN (1984), with further remarks in ZAUZICH (1985); RITNER (1986), pp. 105–106; and VITTMANN (1989).

⁷⁸ Discussion and bibliography in RITNER (1989a).

⁷⁹ DARESSY (1903), pp. 31–34 (9418–9424).

⁸⁰ LEVI (1948). For the connection between Pancrates and Hadrian, see PGM IV 2446–55.

⁸¹ However, a similar procedure was attributed to the Egyptian astrologer Petosiris; see HERSHBELL, in BETZ et al. (1986), p. 166.

⁸² P. Med. London, col. 11/4–6 in 'Keftiu' speech; VON DEINES, GRAPOW, and WESTENDORF (1958), p. 258. For recent bibliography, see BORGHOUTS (1974), p. 17; and GOEDICKE (1984).

⁸³ LANGE (1927), pp. 98–99. P. Ebers 422, in VON DEINES, GRAPOW, and WESTENDORF (1958), p. 59, and see the other exx. on pp. 258–59. So also in Book of the Dead spells 162–65, see the remarks in ALLEN (1974), 157–58, nn. 264–66. Adopted deities include Astarte, Baal, Reshep, and Huruna.

papyri, though many instances are merely phonetic renderings of spoken Egyptian.⁸⁴ In any case, the technique is quite ancient in Egypt, appearing already in the Pyramid Texts (ca. 2400 B.C.).⁸⁵

As the function of Egyptian magic in the Roman period generally follows traditional patterns, so does the methodology of its spells. Native magical mechanics dominate the praxeis of both the Demotic and the Greek (PGM) magical corpus. In addition to the divine identifications ("I am NN"), secret names, threats against the gods, Sethian imagery, necromancy, divination by lamp and bowl, prisoner figurines, and glossalalia, discussed individually above, magical texts of the Roman period include the traditional techniques of encircling (PGM IV 2967–3006),⁸⁶ "licking off" spells (P. London and Leiden, col. 20/10–14; P. Louvre E 3229, col. 7/10–12; PGM IV 785–89; PGM VII 505–28; PGM XIII 132, 434, 690, 889–99 and 1051),⁸⁷ spitting (P. London and Leiden, cols. 9/30 and 19/2–5, and cf. PGM IV 132),⁸⁸ swallowing the dissolved ink of texts (PGM XIII 133–35; PGM C),⁸⁹ trampling (P. London and Leiden, cols. 1/24 and 5/1; PGM VII 925–39, 965–68; PGM IX 1–14; and PGM X 36–50) and burning images (P. Leiden I 384, 12/3–4, 1/11–30, and PGM II 48–49, PGM VII 469 and *passim*),⁹⁰ consecrating animals by drowning (P. London and Leiden, cols. 3/34–35, 6/16, 9/23–26 and *passim*; PGM III, 1 ff. and *passim*),⁹¹ using magical bricks and sand (cf. P. London and Leiden, cols. 3/5–7, 5/6, and PGM III 20 ff.),⁹² tents (PGM XIII 98, 210, 566 and 652),⁹³ etc. Concise bibliography for many other historical techniques can

⁸⁴ See the annotations throughout BETZ, et al. (1986).

⁸⁵ Pyramid Text Spell 281, § 422, termed "untranslatable" in FAULKNER (1969), p. 85. So also in the New Kingdom papyrus published in LANGE (1927), pp. 64–65; the Saite scorpion spell in VITTMANN (1984); P. Bremner-Rhind, col. 32/49–50, of Dynasty 30 date, etc.

⁸⁶ Said to be Egyptian in origin, this harvesting spell uses standard identification techniques affiliating plants with lists of divine body parts or fluids; see MASSART (1959). "Encircling" (*pḥr*) is an Egyptian technical term for "enchanting," and is a standard feature of temple and private rituals; cf. BREASTED (1930), pp. 478, 502, and 504; and JOHNSON and RITNER (1990), pp. 498–506.

⁸⁷ For the common technical use of *nsb* ("to lick off" spells), see Book of the Dead spells 32, (21'st dyn., b, §§ S 1 cont'd – 3 cont'd), and 149e, § S2, in ALLEN (1974), pp. 43 and 143.

⁸⁸ For traditional uses and associations, see ZIBELIUS (1984).

⁸⁹ See RITNER (1989a), pp. 106–108. The designation of PGM C follows BETZ, et al. (1986), p. 307, where the significance of the word "dissolve" is not understood (n. 4).

⁹⁰ For trampling, burning and spitting, cf. the ritual directions throughout the execration ceremony in FAULKNER (1937).

⁹¹ Even spells written in Greek preserve in the transcription Εσιῆς the original Egyptian term of *ḥsy* "praised one" for the divinized drowned. The association of drowning and divinity is based on the fate of Osiris; see the examples and discussion in HOPFNER (1983), vol. 2/1, pp. 207–210.

⁹² For the use of 4 consecrated bricks to create a sacred perimeter, see THOMAS (1964). For sand in ritual foundations, see MARTIN (1983).

⁹³ For the use of tents (as recreations of the sky vault in rites for visions), see Book of the Dead spells 148 (21'st dynasty) § P7, and 190 § P7 in ALLEN (1974), pp. 141 and 214

be found in my annotations to individual passages throughout the translations in BETZ, et al. (1986). Detailed analysis of such methods and their survival appears in RITNER (1993a), including discussions of circumambulation, spitting, blowing, licking, swallowing, the use of images, superposition, trampling, binding, the use of red, breaking, uses of sand, burning, numerological symbolism, piercing, reversal, burial, necromancy, and oracular consultations. Further questions of methodology are discussed in § III (pp. 3367–68), below. The directions of Demotic (and PGM) spells are certainly more elaborate than in earlier examples, but this is paralleled by the similar elaboration of ritual texts carved on late temple walls.⁹⁴ Given the certain continuity of purpose, mythology, and technique, there is no justification for the assertion that Demotic texts "cannot be considered the immediate continuation of 'older' magic."⁹⁵

II. The Nature of Egyptian 'Magic'

1. Pharaonic Heka

In terms of contemporary theoretical discussions of 'magic' and 'witchcraft', Egypt presents several significant discrepancies.⁹⁶ These are at once illustrative of the distinctive nature of the Egyptian religion, and of the inherent inadequacy of all supposed 'universal' definitions of 'magic'. In refutation of the general tenets espoused earlier in this series by D. AUNE,⁹⁷ Egyptian magic was traditionally neither unorthodox, illegal, nor "socially deviant."⁹⁸ Rather, as the force and god Heka (*ḥkꜣ* / *Hkꜣ*), 'magic' was a primary and necessary element of creation, used naturally by the gods, and granted as a divine benefit to mankind. Heka's hieroglyphic symbol means simply 'power', and late hieroglyphic 'ciphers' use his image to spell the 'divine force' embodied as 'gods' and in 'temples'.⁹⁹ Orthodox temple ritual regularly invoked the use of such force, and the god himself received a standard cult, particularly prominent in Roman times at the state-funded temple of Esna in Upper

(for initiation), and cf. BRUGSCH (1889). The tent is labeled an "unexplained residuum" of a mystery rite by MORTON SMITH in BETZ, et al. (1986), p. 173, n. 24. Contra O'NEIL in *ibid.*, p. 72, no mention of a tent is found in PGM IV 1949–50, where the term σκῆνος signifies "corpse."

⁹⁴ Contra the objection of NOCK (1929), p. 228, n. 2. Cf. also late ritual texts such as P. Bremner-Rhind.

⁹⁵ BORGHOUTS (1974), p. 17.

⁹⁶ Current theories and their shortcomings are well summarized by GUTEKUNST (1986) and (1987). The following discussion of Egyptian magic is abridged from RITNER (1993a and b).

⁹⁷ AUNE (1980), pp. 1507–16.

⁹⁸ Discussed in specific detail in RITNER (1993a and b).

⁹⁹ For the writing of *nṯr.w* "gods" and "temple" with the images of Heka, see JUNKER (1903), pp. 5–8.

Egypt.¹⁰⁰ Unlike the Greek cult of Hekate, Heka's cult had no inherently 'sinister' overtones. The god appears variously as eldest son of the creator, one of the creator's 14 'spiritual doubles' (*ka*), creative 'Logos', 'Protector' and 'Lord of *ka*-spirits', destructive force of compulsion and execration rites, generative harvest deity, and patron of oracles.

Serving both generative and destructive ends, Heka/heka represents an amoral force inherent in the created order, a power which could be tapped by appropriate words and gestures. There is no 'black' vs. 'white' magic; both gods and demons may use its force. As noted above, the magical *ph-ntr* was employed in a plot against the throne. The resulting prosecution of the conspirators was not a trial against sorcery, but rather a trial for treason, in which magic had served as one weapon. The hostile ritual had been taken from the royal library, and the practitioner, as usual, was a priest. Execrations of private individuals also appear within conventional temple texts (i.e. P. Bremner-Rhind).¹⁰¹ Such practices were clearly legal and orthodox.

The commonplace role of 'magic' within Egyptian religion obviates as well all questions of 'social deviance', for the magician did not defy social norms but fulfilled them. The social role of Egyptian magicians was not comparable to that of a Simon 'Magus' or Dr. Faustus. Preconceived notions of the magician as playing "a lone hand" on the outskirts of tradition¹⁰² are totally inappropriate for Egypt, where the magician was invariably a literate priest, the very source of tradition. The common Egyptian term for magician signified 'lector priest', the ritualist who recited the written spells.¹⁰³ Such spells were temple property, composed, edited, and stored in the temple scriptorium.¹⁰⁴ Service in the priesthood rotated in shifts, and off-duty priests could easily supplement their income by serving as community magicians. With texts restricted to temple holdings and literacy restricted to 1% of the population,¹⁰⁵ one must not imagine itinerant magicians compiling libraries of spells. When spell collections are found in 'private' hands, the individual is invariably a priest.¹⁰⁶ Priestly 'usurpations' of scriptorium texts are more common in Hellenistic Egypt, when the development of a hereditary priestly class obscured distinctions between temple and personal holdings.

As the concept of 'magic' was not opposed to 'religion' within Egyptian society, neither was it used to stigmatize foreign cults. The natural force of Heka was felt to animate both native *and foreign* rites. Even the hostile Nubian 'sorcery' directed against Pharaoh in the tale of Si-Osiri was designated *hk?* –

¹⁰⁰ The classic discussions are GARDINER (1915) and TE VELDE (1970). Further bibliography is found in BORGHOUTS (1980), though this author's attempt to restrict the range of *hk?* (repeated in IDEM, 1987) is unconvincing and rebutted in RITNER (1993a).

¹⁰¹ FAULKNER (1937).

¹⁰² NOCK (1929), p. 230.

¹⁰³ OTTO (1975).

¹⁰⁴ GARDINER (1938).

¹⁰⁵ BAINES and EYRE (1983).

¹⁰⁶ Exceptions are found only at the 'quarantined' village of Deir el-Medineh, where royal tomb workers acted as their own priests. For discussion, see RITNER (1993a).

as was the Egyptian magic used to defeat it. Egyptian philosophical speculation thus need not deny the 'authenticity' of foreign beliefs and practices and could readily adopt and adapt them. Reductionistic categories were not devised to separate native from foreign beliefs, unlike the Graeco-Roman dichotomy posed between 'religion' (i.e. local, sanctioned, and genuine) and 'magic' (i.e. foreign, illegal, and false).¹⁰⁷ Evolved from derogatory references to the foreign religious practices of the Persian Magi, the Greek category of *μαγεία*, and its Latin descendant *magia*, served primarily to enforce cultural boundaries.

2. Egyptian Magic under Roman Rule

As should be evident from the foregoing discussion, Roman notions of 'magic' were alien to Egypt, and Egyptian practice was suspect to Rome. The narrow Roman view of religion had led to the expulsion of Egyptian cults from that city in 59, 58, 53, and 48 B. C. With the conquest of Egypt by Octavian, an uneasy co-existence prevailed between the structures of Egyptian practice and the strictures of Roman law. In 199 A. D., a decree of Q. Aemilius Saturninus, prefect of Egypt under Septimius Severus, forcefully demonstrated the fundamental incompatibility of Egyptian and Roman conceptions of religion and magic:

"[Since I have come across many people] who consider themselves to be beguiled by the means of divination [I quickly considered it necessary,] in order that no danger should ensue upon their foolishness, clearly herein to enjoin all people to abstain from this hazardous (or "misleading") superstition. Therefore, let no man through oracles, that is, by means of written documents supposedly granted in the presence of the deity, nor by means of the procession of cult images or suchlike charlatanry, pretend to have knowledge of the supernatural, or profess to know the obscurity of future events. Nor let any man put himself at the disposal of those who enquire about this nor answer in any way whatsoever. If any person is detected adhering to this profession, let him be sure that he will be handed over for capital punishment ..."¹⁰⁸

This edict against oracles was apparently promulgated only within Egypt, and was clearly directed against the techniques of the traditional *ph-ntr*, which commonly utilized both statue processions and divinely authorized writings, as noted above. The ironic result of this edict was to denigrate as nonreligious 'superstition' an orthodox temple procedure performed on behalf of the state (and at state expense). In Egyptian eyes, the practice was still a proper religious

¹⁰⁷ SEGAL (1981).

¹⁰⁸ P. Yale inv. 299, translation adapted from REA (1977); and HORSLEY (1981), pp. 47–51. For the text, see also PARÁSSOGLU (1976); and LEWIS (1977). I wish to thank CHRISTOPHER DUES of the University of Toronto for bringing the papyrus and references to my attention.

and judicial rite. Without any change in action or actors, a pious, religious arbiter of legality has become illegal superstition. The change is entirely one of cultural perspective. As in Rome itself, the prohibition was unsuccessful, for in 359 an Egyptian oracle (of Bes at Abydos) again troubled Roman authority, prompting Constantius to decree a general abolition of oracles throughout the empire.¹⁰⁹ Coptic evidence shows that even this attempt was without success.¹¹⁰ At the Theban temple of Luxor, the processional ceremony continues to this day in the annual festival of the Moslem saint Abu el-Haggag.

Nonetheless, official Roman condemnation of these activities did produce a significant change. What had constituted public religion was now driven underground, becoming instead a private practice, necessarily protected by secret cipher. All Demotic examples of the *ph-ntr* (as well as the related Greek *σύστασις* and *αὐτοπτος*) are for private use only, performed secretly in secluded quarters. *Only now* could the practice be termed 'magic' in the common Western sense (i.e. 'illegal' and 'private') and then *only from the Roman perspective*. It is important to stress that the rituals remained 'orthodox' from the Egyptian perspective, and were still composed and compiled for temple scriptoria. As previously noted, the Demotic papyri show clear evidence of exclusive priestly knowledge, and the authorship of both Demotic and Greek spells is often explicitly ascribed to temple priests or physicians (e.g. P. London and Leiden §§ 1, 7, and 25; PGM IV 2967–3006, 3007–86; PGM V 96–172).¹¹¹ Priestly authorship would explain many features of these spells and surely accounts for the unmistakable dependence of the theology of PGM XIII upon conceptions carved in hieroglyphs on the walls of the Roman-period temple at Esna.¹¹² Roman law will not have modified the basic theology of the temples. Restricted in number and living a life apart,¹¹³ the priesthood continued its ancestral practice of gathering and editing texts of hymns, rituals, medicine, and 'magic'. The range of contemporary temple holdings is suggested by the published papyri from scriptoria in the Faiyum. In addition to medical treatises, building rites, and invocations, these almost certainly include texts for divination.¹¹⁴

Egyptian reaction to the Roman prohibition is epitomized in the second century Greek tale of Thessalos, a physician from Asia Minor who travelled to Upper Egypt to supplement his philosophical studies.¹¹⁵ Arriving in Thebes,

¹⁰⁹ Ammianus Marcellinus, xix, 12, 3–16. See also PIANKOFF (1958–60).

¹¹⁰ ČERNÝ (1962), pp. 47–48 (7th–8th century).

¹¹¹ See FOWDEN (1986), pp. 166–76.

¹¹² SAUNERON (1959), pp. 43–44; (1961), and (1962), pp. 268–69. The evidence is noted in FOWDEN (1984), pp. 63, n. 65, and 171–72; but see RITNER (1989b).

¹¹³ Exempt from many taxes, priests required official certification by the state; see DAVID and VAN GRONINGEN, (1965), pp. 128–29. A perhaps exaggerated account of the exclusive society of priests is given by the stoic – and Egyptian priest – Chaeremon; see VAN DER HORST (1984). For the continuity of priestly activities, see also the discussion of FOWDEN (1986), pp. 57–68 – but with RITNER (1989b).

¹¹⁴ REYMOND (1976) and (1977). See above, § I. 6, p. 3343.

¹¹⁵ A. J. FESTUGIÈRE, (1939); A. D. NÖCK (1933), pp. 108–109; and JONATHAN Z. SMITH (1978).

Thessalos asked a group of native priests whether anything remained of Egyptian magical power (*τι τῆς μαγικῆς ἐνεργείας*) to conduct an audience with the gods or the dead. Although most appeared scandalized (*φερόντων*) by the question, one old priest agreed to conduct the rite with the aid of a bowl filled with water. After preparations and fasting, Thessalos was led to a secluded room – perhaps within a temple¹¹⁶ – where in a vision he confronted Asclepius/Imhotep who dictated to him a treatise on the healing properties of plants. The techniques of this procedure (bowl, fasting, seclusion) accord perfectly with those in contemporary 'private' Demotic and Greek papyri, and 'Direct Petitions' of Imhotep are well attested (P. Leiden I 384 vo., § 3; P. London and Leiden § 2; and P. Louvre E 3229 § 13).

The priests' initial shock at the request of Thessalos has generally been interpreted in light of Roman prohibitions of magic, which entailed capital punishment for both performer and teacher. JONATHAN Z. SMITH, however, has argued that it is rather an indication of their disbelief in the efficacy of magical power.¹¹⁷ Given the importance of Heka to Egyptian theology even in the latest periods, and the discovery of magical papyri among late temple archives, this reinterpretation is less than convincing. More likely motivations for their reticence would be the severity of Roman punishment for *magia*, and the fact that Thessalos was a stranger to the priests, and a foreign Greek stranger at that. It would hardly be surprising that the priests were unwilling to risk capital punishment for imparting secret (and sacred) knowledge to an outsider who could not be trusted and who should be excluded from such privileged knowledge in any case.

SMITH's suggestion of priestly disbelief was intended to bolster his contention that the epiphany in this text represents a reversal of the traditional priestly/temple context in favor of "temporary sacrality" sanctified by the power of the magician Thessalos.¹¹⁸ This is not correct. The rite may well have taken place in a temple, and the magician responsible for the vision was definitely not Thessalos but the traditional Egyptian priest trained in traditional temple practice. Fear of Roman punishment for *magia* may have made the priests wary and the rite secretive, but the *ph-ntr* experienced by Thessalos was still administered by an Egyptian priest as a proper religious rite.¹¹⁹

Even in later Roman Egypt, native magicians were not lone, "wandering craftsmen"¹²⁰ cobbling together the remnants of traditions with superficial understanding. They were never "basically a one-man show" with "no school, no organization, no building, and no institution upon which [they]

¹¹⁶ The term is *οἶκος*, which (like the word *ῥωγ*, found in corresponding Demotic rites) may signify either a sacred or profane room. For the Greek term, see FESTUGIÈRE (1939): 61–62, n. 21; vs. JONATHAN Z. SMITH (1978), p. 180.

¹¹⁷ JONATHAN Z. SMITH (1978), pp. 179–82.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

¹¹⁹ Cf. also the temple-sponsored incubation vision of Asclepius/Imhotep recorded in P. Oxyrhynchus XI. 1381 (equally second century), translated in GRANT (1953), pp. 124–27.

¹²⁰ The phrase is that of BETZ, in *Idem*, et al. (1986), p. xlvii.

can rely.”¹²¹ Egyptian magicians who did “wander” to Europe – or to the imperial court – were still trained priests, and probably associated with local sanctuaries of Egyptian gods. Such priestly magicians include the poet Pancrates, who won the favor of Hadrian (PGM IV 2446–55); Harnuphis, who brought rain to rescue the Roman troops of Marcus Aurelius in the Danube campaign of 172 A.D. (Cassius Dio lxxi 8,4); and the ‘stoic’ Chaeremon, the tutor of Nero and author of works on Egyptian magical principles.¹²² The clerical affiliation of Egyptian magicians was commonly recognized and formed a *topos* of contemporary literature, whether in Demotic (Khamuas, Hi-Hor) or Greek.¹²³ So long as Egyptian temples functioned, the magician would be at home among them.

Despite imperial sanctions, Egyptian and Roman conceptions of ‘magic’ did not merge until the Coptic period, when Christian hostility stigmatized all pagan practices – Roman as well as Egyptian – with the derogatory *magia*. As Coptic ⲙⲓⲕ, ancient *hkʿ* was stripped of its former theological significance and reduced to a category denoting fraudulent trickery or demonic sorcery, at once illegal and at odds with the newly ‘orthodox’ religion.¹²⁴ Only with the complete proscription of paganism does the overused image of the ‘lone magician’ become generally accurate within Egypt. Though ancient spells and rites survived, they no longer had institutional support, and while individual clerics might yet collect magical spells, this was in defiance of social and religious norms. ‘Magic’ was now a subject only for the isolated scholar of the occult, a pattern which has prevailed until the present and often produced misconceptions about the past.

III. The Demotic Papyri and the ‘Papyri Graecae Magicae’ (PGM)

Misconceptions have obscured not only the person of the native magician in the Roman era, but the nature and origin of his ritual texts. One unfortunate

¹²¹ BETZ (1982), p. 161. *Contra* BETZ, *ibid.*, pp. 161–70, the magician as revealed in the PGM did not necessarily require ‘self-definition’ apart from religious groups, since PGM authors were often institutional priests and likely members of the native clergy; see below § III. Perhaps such “montebanks” could be found among the Greek population, but, like Thessalos, they themselves could not conduct Egyptian rites.

¹²² See FOWDEN (1986), pp. 166–76; GUEY (1948); GARZYA (1984); and VAN DER HORST (1984); M. FREDE, Chaeremon, ANRW II 36,3, ed. W. HAASE, Berlin–New York 1989, pp. 2067–2103.

¹²³ The priestly character of Egyptian magic is explicitly recognized in the Greek writings of Chaeremon, Porphyry, and Iamblichus; see VAN DER HORST (1984); and DES PLACES (1966). Cf. also the depiction of the fictional priests Calasiris, whose competence in matters of the Evil Eye is stressed in Heliodorus, Aethiopica iii, 7–8; the crocodile-riding Pancrates in Lucian, Philopseudes 34; and the unnamed Egyptian priest of the Thessalos tale. A survey of this *topos* in Greek and Latin literature appears in DE SALVIA (1987).

¹²⁴ Whereas *hkʿ* had been the duty and privilege of gods and priests, its Coptic descendant ⲙⲓⲕ is never acknowledged by Christ or saints. Instead, the term is applied to pagans and heretics, see RITNER (1993a).

result of PREISENDANZ’s collection of the ‘Greek Magical Papyri’ (PGM) was the exclusion of the related Demotic texts, even where these were written by the same scribe and appeared on the same papyrus, column, or line.¹²⁵ The presence of Demotic might be acknowledged briefly in an introduction or annotation, but this artificial restructuring of the evidence gave the implication that the Greek texts could (or should) be treated independently. Just how skewed such a presentation may be is seen in the treatment of PGM XIV, the London and Leiden papyrus containing 29 columns of mostly Demotic spells on the recto and an additional 33 such columns on the verso. The edition of PREISENDANZ treats the papyrus in a mere 3 pages and reduces the text to only 27 lines, devoid of context or meaning. No mention is made of a Demotic equivalent joined to one of the passages in Greek.¹²⁶ In recasting the bilingual P. Leiden I 384 vo. as a ‘Greek’ papyrus (PGM XII), editors fabricated a separate numbering system for intervening Greek columns, even assigning separate column numbers to the Greek portions of otherwise Demotic columns! Strings of secret names transcribed into Greek letters (*voces magicae*) are removed from the midst of Demotic spells and printed as being in the Greek language.¹²⁷ On the basis of letters, one might as well include Old Coptic, and, on occasion, PREISENDANZ has done just that.¹²⁸ What exactly is meant by the label ‘Greek’ Magical Papyri?

The confusion between Greek letters and Greek language is exacerbated by the more fundamental confusion between Greek language and ethnic Greek culture. By designating the papyri as ‘Greek’ rather than ‘Greco-Egyptian’ (as had GOODWIN and HOPFNER in previous studies),¹²⁹ PREISENDANZ fostered the suspicion that these texts were to be valued primarily as the repositories of authentic literature and customs emanating from antique Greece. The main interest of PREISENDANZ is clear from the ‘higher criticism’ expended upon the hymns of the papyri, which were recast in metrical form to recapture the lost Greek ‘original’.¹³⁰ One cannot fault PREISENDANZ, as a classicist, for his interest in older Greek elements, and it is to be expected that subsequent studies by classicists will have concentrated upon perceived Greco-Roman parallels.¹³¹ In consequence of PREISENDANZ’s reworked corpus, however, the study of these documents has been relegated for over 60 years to students of ‘subliterary’ Greek culture, with little or no notice by Egyptologists.¹³² In the absence of

¹²⁵ See the similar criticism by JOHNSON, in BETZ, et al. (1986), pp. lv–lvii.

¹²⁶ PREISENDANZ (1973–74), vol. 2, p. 132, § c (= col. 15/24–31); cf. GRIFFITH and THOMPSON (1904), vol. 1, pp. 108–109.

¹²⁷ See the section notations for the retranslations in BETZ, et al. (1986), pp. 169–71.

¹²⁸ E.g. PREISENDANZ (1973–74), vol. 1, p. 114. However, no Old Coptic sections are printed from the largely Demotic papyri.

¹²⁹ GOODWIN (1852), and HOPFNER (1974 [reprint of 1921]).

¹³⁰ PREISENDANZ (1973–74), vol. 2, pp. 237–66.

¹³¹ Cf. NOCK (1929).

¹³² Since the early studies devoted to the decipherment of Old Coptic by ERMAN (1883), GRIFFITH (1900), (1901a–c), MÖLLER (who contributed to the PGM edition), and SCHMIDT (1931), Egyptologists have ignored these ‘foreign language’ texts. This trend culminates in the remarks of BORGHOUTS (1974), p. 17, who assumes that Demotic texts

cross-cultural discussion, the naïve presumption has thus arisen that these papyri are inherently Greek *cultural* material, marred by intrusive 'barbarisms' typical of a syncretistic age. Despite long recognition of the fundamental role of Egyptian mythology, ritual, symbolism, and language within the 'Greek' corpus, this pan-Greek attitude, has, on occasion, been carried to extremes.¹³³ By tacitly severing the papyri from their geographic setting, and by consciously excising Demotic material, PREISENDANZ has transformed the perception of the papyri and their audience.

To restore balance to the presentation of the evidence, retranslations of the Greek texts in BETZ, et al. (1986) were accompanied by new translations of the associated Demotic texts, and annotations on language, symbolism, and methodology. Renewed interest in the papyri has suggested a reappraisal of their cultural origins, textual authorship, and intended audience.¹³⁴ Just how 'Greek' are the Greek magical papyri? The problem of 'ethnicity' which confronts the student of these papyri is one applicable to the field of Greek papyrology as a whole, where authors, vocabulary, syntax, and concepts are often ethnically Egyptian. Greek language does not necessarily imply Greek culture. One must not confuse the Greek-speaking world with the Greek cultural world, any more than one should assume a unity of cultural outlook in English writings from London, Navaho reservations, Botswana, and New Delhi. The oldest piece of the PGM (which is also one of the oldest papyri written in Greek) is a case in point. The 'Curse of Artemesia' (PGM XL) was written by a Greek woman resident in Egypt before the arrival of Alexander the Great. It was deposited at the shrine of the Egyptian funerary bull-god Osiris-Apis following standard late Egyptian practices of petitions to deities.¹³⁵ It uses Egyptian formulas and is concerned with the theft of funeral gifts for a tomb, a suitably Egyptian anxiety properly addressed to the Egyptian god of the dead. The only thing 'Greek' about this text is its language — not its culture — yet it is unquestionably written by a woman of Greek descent.¹³⁶

also must be inherently foreign, since they parallel so closely the 'foreign' Greek documents.

¹³³ Cf. BAGNALL (1981), p. 20: "the root ideas, the underlying cosmology, has [sic] to be seen as Hellenistic, grounded in the philosophies of that era, and not borrowed with its trappings. It is no more oriental in essential character than the numerous buildings in pseudo-Egyptian style in North America ..." On the contrary, the cosmology of the PGM usually assumes the existence of a self-created solar deity, ruling the universe from his boat or transformed into a heavenly scarab, susceptible to threats and sacred names, counterbalanced by the cthonic Osiris and the powerful dead, and opposed to the demonic Seth/Typhon. These essential propositions are very "Egyptian," and hardly "trappings." The "underlying" motivations of the PGM — confronting the divine powers or ascending to join them, engendering favor and controlling one's enemies — are not newly spawned by contemporary "philosophies," but derive from unbroken Egyptian traditions far older than Greek philosophy, indeed older than Greek culture itself.

¹³⁴ Cf. JOHNSON in BETZ, et al. (1986), p. lv.

¹³⁵ For the practice, see now MIGAHD (1986).

¹³⁶ At this early date, the woman's name is sufficient proof of Greek ethnicity. By mid-Ptolemaic times, onomastics is no longer a reliable diagnostic criterion, and any of the Greek

The problem is more complicated when one examines the corpus as a whole. Approximately one half of the surviving magical spells derive from the single Theban find acquired by ANASTASI, and the percentage may well be higher.¹³⁷ These texts are all in the form of manuals and contain spells whose cultural source seems variously Greek, Egyptian, or a hybrid. The archive includes both Demotic and Greek language documents and thus could have been of use *only* to an individual or group fluent in both languages and scripts. On some documents, in fact, the same scribe wrote both the Demotic *and* the Greek. Papyrological evidence (both Demotic and Greek) is quite clear on the subject of *script* literacy. Of political necessity, many Egyptians knew and wrote Greek with varying degrees of fluency in the Ptolemaic and Roman eras, and many of the idiosyncracies of koine documentary papyri from Egypt are to be explained by the influence of the author's native grammar, idioms, and dialect. There is some evidence that a few enterprising Greeks learned the Demotic script in the Ptolemaic period (more will have known the spoken language), but there is *no evidence* that this was ever the case in the mid to later Roman period, when even Egyptians were more likely to be able to *write* Greek than the complex Demotic script. Paralleling the use of Latin by medieval Europeans, Greek will have been used by average literate Egyptians for letters and documents even when spoken conversation was primarily in the vernacular.

The contemporary Egyptian language had evolved to a stage closely approximating Coptic, and Demotic script, spellings, and grammar were increasingly archaic.¹³⁸ The rather unstandardized attempts to create an updated vernacular transcription are seen in the *voces magicæ*, the Oxyrhynchus 'transcribed' papyrus, and the Old Coptic passages found throughout the Greek and Demotic corpus.¹³⁹ These philological efforts are again scriptorium products; the typical Egyptian will either have composed in (probably poor) Greek, or had recourse to a scribe who could. Knowledge of the Demotic script showed special literary mastery unavailable to most Egyptians *and all Greeks*. The bilingual archive should then have served scribally-trained Egyptians knowledgeable in Greek, not *vice versa*. The additional presence of Hieratic makes this conclusion a certainty. Demotic and Hieratic literacy, the standard manual format, the explicit priestly attributions, the traditional 'magical' content, as well as the Theban origin, all suggest that the source of the archive was a

personal names mentioned in the Roman magical papyri could be borne by ethnic Egyptians.

¹³⁷ See FOWDEN (1986), p. 169. Members of the cache include PGM I, II, IV, V, V a, XII–XIV, LXI, P. Louvre E 3229, and two alchemical papyri in Leiden and Stockholm. ANASTASI acquired his collection in pieces over time (GRIFFITH and THOMPSON [1904–1909], vol. 1, p. 1), and dealers surely will have sold papyri from the Theban archive to more than one collector. The London and Leiden papyrus was torn in half for separate sale. Other unprovenanced PGM papyri could easily derive from the same Theban cache. PGM III is a particularly likely candidate; see FOWDEN (1986), p. 171; but cf. BRASHEAR, below in this volume (ANRW II 18.5), pp. 3402–04.

¹³⁸ Cf. JOHNSON (1976b).

¹³⁹ Further references to the development of Coptic are found in BRASHEAR, below, p. 3470.

temple scriptorium. This explanation is confirmed by the striking similarities between the baroque cosmologies detailed in PGM XIII and in the roughly contemporary hieroglyphic texts of the Esna temple.¹⁴⁰ If in this period the Demotic script had a limited audience, the hieroglyphic script was the exclusive domain of a select coterie of priests. The exchange of ideas or texts between priests in Esna and Thebes would be natural and corresponds to the pattern of priestly exchanges specifically mentioned in the papyri.

The attribution of the Anastasi papyri to an Egyptian temple redactor is perfectly compatible with the inclusion of ethnic Greek, Semitic, and Nubian material, for, as noted above (§ I.11), foreign elements and texts are not uncommon components of Egyptian magical treatises. During periods of cultural contact, foreign gods and spells are regularly adopted into the Egyptian canon. Semitic and Nubian elements appear in both the New Kingdom and Demotic magical corpus, and as these New Kingdom adaptations have been considered the result of a broadening Egyptian worldview, the Demotic examples should be understood likewise. In neither case is Egyptian religion seeking “legitimization” for itself by foreign borrowings.¹⁴¹ The Greek, Hebrew, Mesopotamian, and Nubian mythic elements were adopted as ritually valuable. The vast majority of invocations in both the Greek and Demotic papyri address numerous gods, native and foreign, who are equated with one another and with the reciter. The usual phrase even in Greek texts is “ANOK” (Egyptian for “I am”) plus a string of recognizable or incomprehensible divine names. Even with the addition of Greek, Semitic, or Nubian divine names, there is nothing particularly ‘Hellenistic’ about this pattern, since it is the standard procedure in all Egyptian magical texts. The choice of names is contemporary, the technique is traditional, ethnic Egyptian. The common use of the Greek language and script in the Anastasi archive results simply from the primacy of Greek in contemporary written literacy. In itself, the Greek language of a text is no indication of the ethnicity of either author or source. As the earliest member of the PGM could be written in Greek by an ethnic Greek and yet reflect Egyptian culture, so the later members of the PGM could be written in Greek by ethnic Egyptians and still reflect Egyptian culture.

The derivation of the Anastasi Greek (language) manuals from the scriptorium of an Egyptian temple raises the further possibility that the remaining, comparable PGM treatises derive from a similar (if not the same) source. Though ironic, it is highly possible that few of the preserved Greek magical papyri were ever intended for an ethnic Greek audience. Even where the audience was clearly non-Egyptian, the practitioner might yet be. Might not local Egyptian priests (on the pattern of Harnuphis) be responsible for the

¹⁴⁰ SAUNERON (1959), pp. 43–44; (1961), and (1962), pp. 268–69.

¹⁴¹ *Contra* BETZ (1991), pp. 227–28. I would like to thank the author for making the manuscript of his article available to me prior to publication. For the ‘Egyptian’ nature of the Demotic spells despite ‘foreign’ elements, see the remarks of SPIEGELBERG (1904), col. 196.

‘Greco-Egyptian’ Sethian cursing tablets found in Rome, Athens, and elsewhere?¹⁴²

Once the users, collectors, and redactors of the bulk of these manuals are recognized as Egyptians lettered in Greek, certain considerations must be made in any attempted interpretations of their content. As ERMAN recognized over a century ago, many passages in the Greek papyri are direct translations of Demotic rituals.¹⁴³ Even where the compiler’s script is Greek, his source may be Demotic, and his linguistic background will be Egyptian. The result is a sort of ‘translation Greek’ approximating Greek vocabulary to Egyptian conceptions.¹⁴⁴ No single Greek term need have the same range of meaning for its Egyptian audience that it will have had in its country of origin. This is particularly true where terms are used in contexts which at home would be unusual or inappropriate, but which in Egypt are proper and expected. Examples of such ‘Egyptianizing’ Greek are common. In his overview of the Greek papyri, Nock was surprised to note the frequent use of the vocative Θεέ, “clearly contrary to Greek linguistic feeling.”¹⁴⁵ The usage is not ‘irreverent’ in the PGM (as elsewhere in Greek contexts); rather it translates the standard Egyptian address “O God,” used (piously) throughout rituals and hymns.¹⁴⁶

More significant is the phrase ἱερὰ μαγεία “holy magic,” which in normal Greco-Roman contexts would be an oxymoron, signifying “holy superstition” or “holy blasphemy.”¹⁴⁷ Despite claims to the contrary, the use of this term in

¹⁴² These tablets are not evidence of the existence of a wide-spread, indigenous magical practice. Cf. the remarks of Nock (1929), p. 220: “And it is noteworthy that the actual lead tablets, based no doubt on similar magical books, tend to occur in groups together: most of the so-called Sethianic curse tablets in Rome were written by one hand.”

¹⁴³ ERMAN (1883), p. 90, regarding the Paris papyrus (PGM IV). For transcriptions of Egyptian mythology and symbolism, see BERGMANN (1982) and (1984), and cf. the assessment of FOWDEN (1986), p. 66.

¹⁴⁴ The approximation of this type best known to Egyptologists is the title of ‘prophet’ used in Greek texts to designate the Egyptian *ḥm-ntr* priest, who was hardly ‘prophetic’ in either the Greco-Roman or the Judeo-Christian sense; for references, see QUAEGBEUR (1982). For the possibility (and distortions) of Greek translations of Egyptian ‘Hermetic’ literature, see FOWDEN (1986), pp. 29–31.

¹⁴⁵ Nock (1929), p. 223.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. ERICHSEN (1972), pp. 15 (*i inpw* “O Anubis”), and 266 (*hy*). Examples in the London and Leiden Demotic papyrus are gathered in GRIFFITH and THOMPSON (1904–09), vol. 3, pp. 4 (no. 20) and 56 (no. 545). Egyptian grammar also explains the alternate use of the definite article as a vocative in similar Greek phrases noted by Nock.

¹⁴⁷ Examples gathered in BETZ (1982), pp. 163–64 (all from the Theban cache). Ironically, the term has now been selected as a title for a volume on Hellenistic magic (*‘Magika Hiera’*). The Greco-Roman opposition of “holy” religion to “impious” magic is still strongly felt, as evidenced by BETZ’s extensive preamble defending the distinction on the basis of theology in IDEM (1991), pp. 209–16. Implicit in this argument is the acceptance of Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian theology; from the perspective of Egyptian theology, the distinction is nonsense. The position of BETZ (esp. pp. 216 and 218) against “holy magic” strongly echoes that of Porphyry in his ‘Letter to Anebo,’ and with good reason. Both Porphyry and BETZ are discussing Egyptian conceptions which are alien to their theologies and cultural expectations.

no way reveals the existence of a late, philosophically elite corps of Hellenistic magicians, rebelling against custom to create their own authoritative tradition.¹⁴⁸ The term is a translation into Greek of the native concept of *heka* (*hk3*)! As noted above (§ II.1, pp. 3353–55), the traditional force of *heka* was exactly a form of “holy magic,” embodied as a god, and fundamental for the actions of gods and temple ritual. Appearing in the ‘Epistles’ of the sacred scribes Pnouthis, Nephotes, and Pitys,¹⁴⁹ mentions of “holy magic” are found in standard divination rites (*ph-ntr*), in company with other supposedly ‘novel’ phrases well paralleled in the Egyptian language. Thus, the expression “words of divinity” correponds to *mdw ntr* “god’s words,” and the statement that the spell of Pnouthis “compells the gods and all the goddesses” is *not* an expansion of Hesiod’s definition of magic “to include all the goddesses as well.”¹⁵⁰ It is the standard Egyptian pairing of “all the gods and goddesses.” Compare the invocation of P. London and Leiden col. 13/4, in which the ritualist claims to control “the compulsion of all the gods and goddesses (*hyt n ntr nb ntr.t nb*). Further references to a magician as being a “wise sage” and “professor of magic” or having a “magical soul” are equally explicable by classic Egyptian idiom.¹⁵¹ These texts are the product of an old “authoritative tradition,” not the manifesto of a developing cult wrestling with “problematic aspects.”¹⁵² Careful attention must be paid to the Egyptian ‘*Sitz im Leben*’ of the Greek vocabulary, or gross interpretative errors are inevitable.

Just such an error vitiates two recent attempts to isolate the occurrence of the term *μυστήριον* “mystery” within the magical corpus.¹⁵³ Returning to the same papyri which mention “holy magic,” HANS D. BETZ has sought to prove “a hermeneutical tendency on the part of the magicians” because of the “unde-

niably Greek origin of the mystery-cult terminology in the PGM.”¹⁵⁴ For BETZ, the use of words signifying “mystery” or “initiate” proves that “in the eyes of the magicians who wrote and transmitted these texts, the mystery-cult language and ritual provided religious legitimacy and cultural approval for all the other magical materials included in the spells as well.”¹⁵⁵ A long discussion follows, tracing the impact of Greek mysteries not on Egyptian, but on Judeo-Christian tradition. BETZ concludes that the addition of Greek mystery-cult terminology “transformed, enriched, brought up to date, and thus legitimated” earlier Egyptian magic, “which at one time functioned as highly valued ‘religion’, but “had now sunk to a lower level of mere ‘magic’ as a result of the encounter with the Greek religious world, in particular the mystery cults.”¹⁵⁶

All of this interpretation rests simply on the term *μυστήριον* and its variants. Here again, however, an excessively complex scenario may be simplified by recourse to standard Egyptian terminology. While the PGM uses *μυστήριον*, the contemporary Demotic spells retain the native equivalent *sšt3*.¹⁵⁷ Under the designation *sšt3* (and earlier *št3*), magical rites and spells in Egypt had *always* been designated as “mysteries,”¹⁵⁸ and the lector priest who used such spells was assigned the common title of *hry-sšt3* “chief of the mysteries” (or, one might say “*μυσταγωγός*”).¹⁵⁹ The debated question of native “mystery cults” is not particularly relevant to the discussion,¹⁶⁰ for it is the spells themselves which are “mysteries,” and the one who knows them is said to be “initiated” (*bs*).¹⁶¹ Thus, a New Kingdom spell to repel crocodiles is entitled “a veritable mystery of the scriptorium” about which “the lector priests say: Do not reveal it to others.”¹⁶² Book of the Dead spells are invariably “mysteries” not to be revealed to outsiders, and such spells are frequently glossed as “initiation rites.” A typical example is Book of the Dead spell 190, which initiates (*bs*) the ritualist by a direct vision within a sanctified tent. The spell is labeled “a roll for initiating the Blessed One into the mind of Re ... a mystery of the god’s domain.”¹⁶³ The same procedure is used in PGM XIII, which is described as a “mystery (*μυστήριον*) of god” (ll. 128 and 685). Both the Book of the Dead and PGM rite entail a direct confrontation and unity with the heavenly deity, resulting in ‘mysterious’ knowledge and deification.

The other ‘mysteries’ in the PGM are also to be understood in terms of the native “*sšt3*,” applicable to ‘Direct Petitions’ to deities, spells to acquire familiar spirits, and consecrations of scarab unguents and amulets.¹⁶⁴ Even the

¹⁴⁸ BETZ, 1982, and (1991), pp. 217 ff. There is nothing about these spells which proves that they are of a “later strata” or derive from a “higher cultural level,” vs. BETZ (1982), pp. 163–64. These suggestions derive only from subjective analysis of such included terms as “holy magic” and “mystery.” For supposed “philosophical” influence, see FOWDEN (1986), p. 87, n. 54.

¹⁴⁹ It is interesting to note that the alleged authors of these spells are all members of the native clergy. The last named Pitys is perhaps to be identified with the priest “Bitys” (following the common Egyptian *b/p* switch) stated by Iamblichus to have translated hieroglyphic texts into Greek; see the discussion and references in FOWDEN (1986), pp. 30, and 150–53.

¹⁵⁰ *Contra* BETZ (1982), p. 163.

¹⁵¹ See the various idioms listed in *Wb* 3, pp. 176–77. “Wise sage” was a standard epithet of priestly magicians (*rmt-rb*; *rb-h*).

¹⁵² BETZ (1991), p. 218. The supposed references to “illegitimate magic” in the PGM gathered by BETZ, *ibid.* pp. 217–18, are all misinterpretations. Invoking divine precedent and using protective charms are traditional Egyptian means of compulsion – not admissions of illegality. The superior results claimed in the “commercial” of PGM IV 2081–87 again derive from the long-standing native custom of appending such notices to virtually all ritual spells. A spell may be deemed “excellent” or “superior,” but this refers *only* to efficacy – never to legitimacy or “cultural level.” The authors of the PGM never had qualms about compelling gods.

¹⁵³ BETZ (1982), pp. 164–70, and (1991), pp. 219–29.

¹⁵⁴ BETZ (1991), p. 220.

¹⁵⁵ BETZ, *ibid.*, p. 220.

¹⁵⁶ BETZ, *ibid.*, p. 227.

¹⁵⁷ For uses, see MARK SMITH (1980) and (1984).

¹⁵⁸ *Wb* 4, 296–98, and 551–54. See the general discussion in ALTENMÜLLER (1977).

¹⁵⁹ *Wb* 4, 298–99. For further discussion, see RITNER (1993a).

¹⁶⁰ Mentioned by BETZ (1991), p. 220.

¹⁶¹ *Wb* 1, 473–74.

¹⁶² LANGE (1927), pp. 53–54.

¹⁶³ ALLEN (1974), p. 213 (§ P1–3).

¹⁶⁴ Examples listed in BETZ, 1991, pp. 219–220, and 224.

so-called 'Mithras Liturgy' (PGM IV 479–829)¹⁶⁵ is but a 'Direct Petition', which enables the practitioner "to ascend into heaven as an inquirer and behold the universe" (ll. 484–85). Despite the seemingly 'Hellenistic' ring to this statement, it is easily paralleled in older Egyptian descriptions. Thus, Tuthmosis III described his selection as king by an oracle of Amon as follows:

"He opened for me the doors of heaven; he opened the portals of the horizon of Re. I flew to heaven as a divine hawk, beholding his secret form (*bs*) in heaven ... I saw the glorious forms of the Horizon-God upon his mysterious (*štš*) ways in heaven."¹⁶⁶

Though striking, the phraseology of ascending to heaven as an initiate is stereotyped, appearing already in the Pyramid Texts,¹⁶⁷ and it was still used of priestly ceremonies in the Ptolemaic period: "Month 3 of Winter, day 1. The Day of initiation of the masters of heaven, i. e. the day of taking initiation into the sky which Ptah made," using "the great window which is in Memphis which is called Beautiful of Sight."¹⁶⁸

The mysterious penetration of gates, doors, and windows of the sky, underworld, and primordial waters is an attested commonplace of Egyptian mysticism for over 2,000 years, and the appearance of the same stock phrases in the PGM 'mysteries' is instructive. PGM XII, 270–350, a spell for a direct confrontation with a god using a consecrated scarab, states as follows: "keep this in a secret place as a great mystery. Hide it! Hide it! Its beginning: The gates of heaven were opened. The gates of earth were opened. The route of the sea was opened ... My spirit was heard by all gods and daimons ... My spirit was heard by the spirit of heaven ... Therefore give spirit to the mystery I have prepared" (ll. 320–31). Though written in Greek, the spell has a Demotic title, and is a simple *ph-ntr* by image. Reduplication for emphasis betrays the influence of standard Egyptian grammar,¹⁶⁹ and the spell concludes with an invocation in phonetic Egyptian.¹⁷⁰ This is merely 'translation Greek' with Greek vocabulary, owing nothing whatsoever to Greek "mystery-cult" theology. The use of the term *μυστήριον* to designate a scarab translates a longstanding Egyptian conception, expressly stated in Demotic wisdom literature: "The scarab is great because of its mysterious (*šstš*) image."¹⁷¹ The little beetle is the terrestrial image of the solar scarab, united in ritual acts by the force of "sacred magic" (*Heka*). If the use of *μυστήριον* in the PGM reveals anything about

¹⁶⁵ See BETZ, *ibid.*, p. 224, n. 58.

¹⁶⁶ SETHE (1927), p. 158; translation in BREASTED (1927), p. 61 § 141.

¹⁶⁷ Spells 313, 335, etc.; in FAULKNER (1969), pp. 98, 113 and *passim*.

¹⁶⁸ P. Berlin 13603, 4/22–25, in ERICHSEN and SCHOTT (1954), p. 319.

¹⁶⁹ Following the use of *sp-2* "twice" with adjectives, phrases, etc.; see *Wb* 3, 437. The same doubling appears in l. 334 (and throughout the PGM): "Hide, hide the true one!"

¹⁷⁰ See the annotations in BETZ, et al. (1986), p. 165. Untranslated "ouer" is the Egyptian epithet *wr* "great."

¹⁷¹ P. Insinger 24/8; see LICHTHEIM (1980), p. 204.

contemporary Egyptian religion, it is the continued vitality of traditional concepts.

Other traditional Egyptian elements maintained throughout the PGM in Greek translation include spell "pedigrees,"¹⁷² common headings (e. g. ἄλλο "Another [spell]" < *ky* "Another"),¹⁷³ spell recommendations,¹⁷⁴ and warnings for secrecy.¹⁷⁵ Greek divine names are often glosses for Egyptian deities as well, for "Hermes" usually indicates "Thoth," and "Typhon" always means "Seth."¹⁷⁶

If many of the spells in the PGM are direct adaptations of Egyptian originals, others have rightly been recognized as obviously foreign in origin (e. g. 'Homeric' spells). Even with regards to these texts, however, certain caution is necessary. Spells which seem highly Greek, Hebrew, etc., may well have been reworked to serve the editor's purpose, so that a 'Greek' oral spell may be used with a traditional Egyptian procedure. Thus it is dangerous to attribute 'native Greek status' to magical rites just because they appear in the company of well-metered Greek hymns. The magical *praxeis* of the PGM may in some places reflect native Greek rites, but in the absence of good early parallels that cannot be assumed in particular instances. Much – if not most – of the methodology

¹⁷² I. e. explicit attributions of spells to divine or famous authors. Like the magical corpus itself, these pedigrees have often been assumed to be the inventions of unknown 'Neo-platonists'; cf. the remarks of SCOTT (1985), pp. 3–6, regarding similar attributions in the Egypto-Greek 'Corpus Hermeticum', and FOWDEN (1986), p. 66. Within Egyptian literature, the pedigree is common at all times; representative exx. are found in Book of the Dead spells 90 § S2, 137A § T15, 148 §§ T3 and T6, 182 §§ P1–2, Pleyte 166 § P1, and Pleyte 167–69 (found by Setna Khamuas!), in ALLEN (1974), *passim*. Coffin Text spell 577 is from a "book under the flank of Khnum." P. Ebers 856 contains a recipe "according to what was found in writing under Anubis' feet in Letopolis. It was brought to the majesty of King Smty." P. Berlin 13588 utilizes a "Book of Breathings" found on the mummy of king Psammetichus. P. London and Leiden, col. 11/26, contains a scribe's feat of King Darius, and PGM XXIVa is a copy of a holy book found in the archives of Hermes/Thoth. The continuity is obvious. Further PGM exx. are listed in BETZ (1982), pp. 165–66.

¹⁷³ *Wb* 5, 111–12. For the numerous exx. in the London and Leiden Demotic papyrus, see GRIFFITH and THOMPSON (1904–09), vol. 3, p. 84 (no. 887). Native scriptorium tradition can also account for the typical classification headings as well as the "literary genres" implied by the labels "books," "copies," and "stelae," mentioned in BETZ (1982), pp. 167–68.

¹⁷⁴ These statements of the proven efficacy of spells are the so-called "commercials" in BETZ (1982), p. 169. *Contra* BETZ, *ibid.*, these do not reflect contemporary attempts to "beat the competition" offered by Jews, Christians, or the inevitable hypothetical Neo-platonist. They are but the latest examples of the ancient scriptorium practice of appending to spells such remarks as: "Truly effective, proved millions of times!" For these clichés, see *Wb* 4, 542.

¹⁷⁵ These warnings are common accompaniments of Egyptian spells at all times, and examples have already been noted. Other typical exx. are found with Book of the Dead spells 133, 136–37, 144, 147–48, 161–62, etc. Spells may be told to one's son or bosom friend, but guarded from foreigners, commoners, and, on occasion, even family members. For PGM exx. (misunderstood as evidence of a mystery cult), see BETZ (1982), p. 167.

¹⁷⁶ See the annotations throughout BETZ, et al. (1986).

of the PGM is demonstrably traditional Egyptian, and identical to that in the Demotic spells (§ I.11). While similar rites may develop independently, and Egyptian methods and magicians do seem to have been exported early, it is striking how idiosyncratic (rather than pan-Hellenistic) the PGM corpus is.

Despite Hebrew influence in the invocations of the PGM, its rites are not generally paralleled in the contemporary Jewish *Sepher Ha-Razim*.¹⁷⁷ The absence of close, earlier Hellenistic parallels for the rituals of the PGM has necessitated the "philosophy hypothesis," attributing the Roman compilations to the "systematic study of magic" by Neoplatonists or a Neopythagorean revival.¹⁷⁸ The clear contrast between PGM techniques and "authentic Greek" magic of Ptolemaic times is shown by the love spell found in the second idyll of Theocritus.¹⁷⁹ While the idyll's invocations to the moon, burning bayleaves, and melted wax are PGM commonplaces, its primary methodology using the traditional Greek *ἵνυξ*, a spinning 5-spoked wheel with attached wryneck-bird, is a practice never found in the PGM. Rather, in the PGM and Demotic corpus, spells of domination over lovers and enemies rely on invocations to the angry dead, a tradition traceable in Egypt for over two millennia.

A final note of caution must be directed at the more or less metrical Greek hymns, for some of them need not be ancient survivals from unknown Neopythagoreans but rather more contemporary productions by the Egyptian priests themselves. Manetho had composed in Greek for Ptolemy I, the stoic Chaeremon for Nero, and Pancrates for Hadrian. In late antique Alexandria, the teaching of Greek grammar and philosophy was quite often in the hands of members of the native clergy.¹⁸⁰ Native theological connections have been noted for the late Greek poets of Egypt as well.¹⁸¹ A case in point is the fourth-century sacerdotal family of Aurelius Petearbeschisin at Panopolis, in which the eldest son, Aurelius Horion, was high priest of the major local deity Min, while his brother Harpocraton was official panegyrist at the court of Constantine in Constantinople.¹⁸² Greek poetic composition was quite within the technical competence of certain members of the cosmopolitan late Egyptian priesthood.

In consideration of this possibility, one may examine the hymns of PGM IV, ll. 2441–2621, and 2622–2707, each of which contains a 'Diabole' or

¹⁷⁷ MORGAN (1983). This treatise is largely devoted to angelology and the powers in the levels of the firmament. Some common elements are found, for exx. the magical "ring script" (JOHN DEE's "Enochian" alphabet), and the use of lamellae in love compulsion spells (p. 35), but note the Egyptian influence on the solar conjuration using "priestly papyrus" and "priestly (hieratic!) script" (pp. 28–29).

¹⁷⁸ The gulf between Greek magic of the Ptolemaic and Roman eras is surveyed in NOCK (1929), pp. 225–27. For the suggestion of Neopythagorean authors of the Greek hymns, see *ibid.*, pp. 227–28; but cf. his arguments against Neoplatonist redactors of the surviving manuscripts on the basis of metrical errors (p. 222). The admission of a lack of Ptolemaic parallels is again coupled with the "philosophy hypothesis" in BAGNALL (1981), p. 20.

¹⁷⁹ See the comments of NOCK (1929), pp. 225–26.

¹⁸⁰ FOWDEN (1986), p. 167.

¹⁸¹ E.g. Claudian, see DERCHAIN (1956).

¹⁸² References in FOWDEN (1986), p. 174.

'Slander spell' to Selene, a ritual concept that continues to strike commentators as "strange."¹⁸³

"For you the woman NN burns
Some hostile incense, goddess;
The fat of dappled goat, and blood,
....
Mouse pellets, dog-faced baboon's blood
And egg of young ibis –
And what is sacrilege, she placed
These on your wooden altar.
....
Mark her, NN, the lawless one,
With bitter retributions ..." ¹⁸⁴

This hymn, clearly composed for magical ends, should be compared with various late Pharaonic poetic rituals which attribute sacrilege to demons and personal enemies:

"You have stolen the lance of the god (Horus) on his bank,
the protector of his father in the island of god
so that Shu now plunges his lance into you,
and the two sisters (Isis and Nephthys) spit on you.
You have cut away papyrus on the Winding Mound
on the day of sleeping in the fields
so that plunder is made among all of your possessions
by the god Khenty-khet in Athribis
You have insinuated (*bs*) your eye into the Divine Mound
and extracted what was in it for the enemy
....
You have cast glances against the god's mother,
saying to her "I'm your servant," in falsehood
You are now subject to the anger of the risen Osiris,
to the punishment of the protected goddess ..." ¹⁸⁵

He has inflicted violence upon the shrine of Sais,
He has plotted rebellion in Memphis,
See, he has entered the Serapeum,
He has done injury in the temple of Ipet,
He has felled a tree in Iws-aas,

¹⁸³ BETZ (1991), p. 226, with ref. to the basic study by EITREM.

¹⁸⁴ Translated by E. N. O'NEIL in BETZ, et al. (1986), pp. 87–88.

¹⁸⁵ Title: "The Interpretations/Revelations of the Mysteries (*sšt.w*) of the ritual for repelling the Angry One (Seth), which is performed in the temples of Osiris to repel Seth in his moment (of attack). If this spell is recited against any enemy of NN, evil will happen to him for 7 days. It is a truly great protection, it is useful for Osiris, and it is useful for the one who recites it: He shall not fall prey to any evil harm. Words to be recited ..." For the text, see SCHOTT (1929), pp. 60 ff., and for the cited passages, pp. 130/15–33/8.

He has caught fish in the sea of Moeris,
 He has slaughtered goats and trapped geese,
 in the temple of the god, foremost of estates,
 He has set foot in the Mansion of Purity ...¹⁸⁶

....

He has made a meal of the Ram
 in the temple of the great (ram god) Amon
 He has set his hand to the aphrodisiac plant
 in the sight of the fertility god of Mendes ...¹⁸⁷

A Demotic 'Slander Spell' in P. London and Leiden, col. 21, ll. 21–24, may also contain verse:

"She is the one who has urinated before the sun at dawn, saying
 to the sun: "Don't come forth"
 to the moon: "Don't rise"
 to the water: "Don't come to Egyptians"
 to the fields: "Don't bloom"
 to the great Egyptian trees: "Don't grow green."¹⁸⁸

By comparing the Greek and earlier Egyptian 'Slander Spells', the ultimate origin of the PGM ritual is obvious. As poetry, Egyptian and Greek conventions are quite different, but knowledge of similar Egyptian hymns could have inspired a bilingual hymnist. The choice of Selene is a Greek touch, but the technique of "ritual blame shifting" is an innovation in Greek texts.¹⁸⁹ It is, however, a fundamental element of Egyptian magic from the Pyramid Texts onward:

"As for any god will not set up a staircase for me –
 He shall have no loaf,
 He shall have no fan ...
 No offering shall be presented to him ...
 It is not I who says this against you, O gods,
 It is Magic (Heka) who says this against you, O gods."¹⁹⁰

The phrase "NN said it, not I" becomes a cliché of Egyptian magic and actually appears in Greek translation in PGM IV before the series of slanderous hymns.¹⁹¹ The same 'slanderous' process appears in PGM III, ll. 1–64, in which the drowning of a sacred cat is performed and then blamed on one's

¹⁸⁶ The 'Ritual for Overthrowing Seth and his Confederates', see SCHOTT (1929), pp. 18–19, ll. 10–18.

¹⁸⁷ SCHOTT, *ibid.*, pp. 22–23, ll. 1–4. Many other exx. are found throughout the papyrus.

¹⁸⁸ GRIFFITH and THOMPSON (1904–09), vol. 1, p. 139; and JOHNSON, in BETZ, et al. (1986), p. 230.

¹⁸⁹ See the remarks of NOCK (1929), pp. 226–27.

¹⁹⁰ Pyramid Text spell 539, in FAULKNER (1969), p. 208.

¹⁹¹ See the translation by O'NEIL, in BETZ, et al. (1986), p. 83. Further Egyptian bibliography by RITNER, in *ibid.*, p. 83, n. 314.

enemy. Such a spell would only have meaning within a social context which recognized sacred cats and thus points unambiguously to Egypt.

It is precisely this Egyptian context which unites the PGM and the Demotic spells, and which clearly accounts for the close relationship between them. In the past, this very similarity has often been used to denigrate the significance of the Demotic spells, which were viewed as debased attempts at 'international' Greek magic. Such a conclusion can no longer be maintained. 'International' Greek magic, as represented by the PGM, is in most respects a direct outgrowth of the internal development of native Egyptian magic.¹⁹² Both Demotic and Greek spells attest to the continuity of Egyptian scriptorium traditions, whether in regard to format, purpose, mythology, incantation or ritual technique. Contemporary influence from Greek and other mythologies is obvious, and in certain spells may be dominant, but these borrowings do not imply the loss of native tradition. On the contrary, even the most culturally 'Greek' spells are usually accompanied by Egyptian incantation or ritual techniques. The attribution of the bulk of the PGM to an Egyptian temple archive suggests a new purpose for these papyri, with an ethnically Egyptian rather than Greek audience. The steady erosion of Demotic as a literary language had led to various attempts to reproduce ritual texts in an alternate vernacular script; the same motivation will have facilitated the translation of ritual texts into Greek. The Greek language would have been serviceable to the bilingual priesthood, but would have required the retention of magical names in phonetic renderings (*voces magicae*). There can be no question that the much-invoked Neoplatonists and Theurgists ultimately did acquire and use papyri like the PGM. Their source was probably not earlier Greek philosophical schools, but such Egyptian priest-philosophers as Chaeremon, Anebo, Bitys, or Orion, as expressly claimed by the Neoplatonists themselves.¹⁹³

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All abbreviations of citations are standardized following 'Lexikon der Ägyptologie', edited by W. HELCK and E. OTTO, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1972–1987. (abbreviated 'LÄ')

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¹⁹² See also the assessment of BRASHEAR in this volume, below, p. 3470: "The native Egyptian element had always been preponderant in Greek magic."

¹⁹³ For the influence of Chaeremon, see VAN DER HORST (1984). For Anebo, the 'opponent' of Porphyry, see DES PLACES (1966). Anebo's historicity has been questioned, but there can be no question of Iamblichus' claim to defend Egyptian religion as he understood it, and from which he justifies his philosophy. For Bitys, see FOWDEN (1986), pp. 30 and 150–53. For the influence of the priest Orion on Proclus, see Marinos, Vita Procli 8 and 19. The tale of Thessalos again shows a "philosopher" turning to an Egyptian temple. Cf. also the story in Eunapius, Lives of the Sophists 470–71, concerning Antonius of Pergamon who left the Greek Academy in Alexandria to become a priest in a temple of Canopus and drew away all the best students.

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II
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