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# VANISHING ACTS ON ANCIENT GREEK AMULETS:
## FROM ORAL PERFORMANCE TO VISUAL DESIGN

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS


Preface vii

Abbreviations ix

List of figures xi

1: Introduction: Oral performance and epigraphic habit 1

2: Fever: Palindromes, confrontation and containment 17

3: Bleeding: The evolution of a *vox magica* 35

4: Headache and sore throat: Vanishing acts as expulsion rituals 51

5: Conclusions: A tentative history of disappearing speech-acts 67

Bibliography 79

Appendix: Survey of wing- and heart-shaped names in magical texts

- Amulets 85
- Non-amuletic magic 89

Indexes

- Subject index 91
- Magical texts and gems 99
- Index of foreign words 103
- *Index locorum* 105

# PREFACE

As is often the case, this monograph began with a short article on a completely different subject (Faraone [2001a]): the use of hexametrical incantations in early Greece and the light that a passage in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* could shed on the practice. A key part of my interpretation turned on two demon-names mentioned in the passage (lines 228-29: the 'Undercutter' and the 'Woodcutter') and in the process of collecting parallels I stumbled across a papyrus amulet that consisted solely of the word *staphylotomos* ('cutter of the grape-cluster') repeated over and over again with each successive line shorter than the previous by one letter, until the word disappeared entirely. To make a long story short, I quickly became entranced with these magical 'vanishing acts', as I have come to call them, and somewhat puzzled by the fact that in the 1990s scholars had begun to move away from the standard early twentieth-century interpretation of Heim and others that on curative amulets, at least, these triangular formations illustrated the process of *deletio morbi*, a form of name-magic, whereby a disease was cured or a demon forced to flee by making their names disappear. This volume, then, is an attempt to discuss all examples of these so-called wing- and heart-shaped words (on amulets and in non-amuletic magical texts) and to put forth a historically more nuanced defense of the theory of *deletio morbi*, in a manner that takes on board the criticisms of recent scholarship.

Earlier versions of parts of this study were presented as lectures in 2007-2010 at Macalester College, at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, at the University of Salerno, at the Early Christian Studies Workshop and the Ancient Societies Workshop (both at the University of Chicago), at the Institute for Advanced Studies at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, at the University of Southern California, at Columbia University, at William and Clark University, at Bryn Mawr College, at Stanford University, at the University of California at San Diego, at 'Edición de textos mágicos de la Antigüedad y la Edad Media', a conference in Madrid and Toledo, at the University of Notre Dame, at Oxford University, at the University of California at Los Angeles, at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton, New Jersey and at King's College, London. I extend my thanks to my hosts at all of these venues and to the various audiences for their questions and criticisms, all of which helped shape the final written form of this essay.

I am equally thankful for the help I was given at various museums and collections, where hands-on examination of gemstones and amulets vastly increased my understanding and appreciation of these often very small and unassuming objects. Especially helpful were (in alphabetical order): Mathilde Avisseau-Broustet at the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris, Yekaterina Barbash at the Brooklyn Museum, Lucilla Burns at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, Chris Entwistle at the British Museum, Benton Kidd at the Museum of Art and Archaeology of the University of Missouri at Columbia, Ken Lapatin at the Getty Villa Museum, Dirk Obbink at the Oxyrhynchus Collection of the Sackler Library in Oxford, J. Michael Padgett of the Princeton Art Museum, Brian Rose at the

Archaeological Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, and Don Skemer of the Rare Book Room of the Firestone Library at Princeton University.

I began the first full draft of this study in the autumn of 2008 at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton on a fellowship supported by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation as well as the Hetty Goldman Membership Fund. I am thankful to the staff and faculty of the School of Historical Studies for making my stay so rewarding, especially Heinrich von Staden. In the winter of 2009 I continued work in the equally stimulating environs of the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles and I am likewise grateful to the staff there, especially Ken Lapatin, Barbara Forbush, and Tricia Gilson and to my fellow sojourners F. Lissarague, V. Huet and F. Tronchin. I owe my greatest debt, perhaps, to the growing band of generous scholars and friends working on Greek amulets and magical gems, especially Véronique Dasen, Roy Kotansky, Attilio Mastrocinque, Simone Michel, Arpad Nagy, and Richard Gordon. Robert Daniel, Franco Maltomini, Raquel Martín Hernández, David Martinez and Dirk Obbink checked readings and answered many papyrological queries with alacrity and precision. Special thanks, also, to Gideon Bohak for sharing with me early drafts of his ground-breaking book *Ancient Jewish Magic*, for spending a day in Cambridge showing me many unpublished Aramaic amulets from the Cairo Genizah, and for answering what must have seemed to him to be an unending series of questions over the last five years. Finally I am deeply indebted to Richard Gordon, Roy Kotansky, Kent Rigsby, and Attilio Mastrocinque for reading and commenting on the entire manuscript. I am especially thankful to Thomas Keith and Rebecca Lewis for editorial help.

Chapter 3 is based on the much more detailed argument presented in Faraone (2009b), and Chapter 4 abbreviates and combines Faraone (2009c) and (2010b).

# ABBREVIATIONS FOR CORPORA OF MAGICAL TEXTS

*BM* = S. Michel, *Die magischen Gemmen im Britischen Museum*, 2 vols (London 2001).

D&D = A. Delatte and P. Derchain, *Les intailles magiques gréco-égyptiennes de là Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris 1964).

*DMG* = S. Michel, *Die magischen Gemmen: Eine Studie zu Zauberformeln und magischen Bilderen auf geschnitten Steinen der Antike und Neuzeit* (Geissen 1997).

*DT* = A. Audollent, *Tabellae defixionum* (Paris 1904).

*DTA* = R. Wünsch, *Defixionum tabellae Atticae*, Appendix to *Inscriptiones Graecae* III (Berlin 1897).

*GMA* = R. Kotansky, *Greek magical amulets: The Inscribed gold, silver, copper, and bronze* lamellae, *part 1: Published texts of known provenance, text and commentary,* Papyrologica Coloniensia 22.1 (Opladen 1994).

*GMPT* =H. D. Betz (ed.), *The Greek magical papyri in translation* (Chicago 1986).

Heim = R. Heim, *Incantamenta magica Graeca-Latina*, Jahrbücher für classische Philologie Suppl. 10 (Leipzig 1892).

*LIMC* = *Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae* (Zurich 1981- present).

*MSF* = J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Magic spells and formulae : Aramaic incantations of late antiquity* (Jerusalem 1993).

*PGM* = K. Preisendanz [and A. Henrichs], *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die Griechischen Zauberpapyri*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Stuttgart 1973-74).

SGD = D. Jordan, 'A survey of Greek defixiones not included in the special corpora', *GRBS* 26 (1985) 151-97.

*SGG* = A. Mastrocinque (ed.), *Sylloge gemmarum gnosticarum*, Bollettino di Numismatica Monografia 8.2.1-2, 2 vols (Rome 2003-08).

*SM* = R. Daniel and F. Maltomini, *Supplementum magicum*, 2 vols, Papyrologica Coloniensia 16.1-2, 2 vols (Opladen 1990-91).

*SMA* = C. Bonner, *Studies in magical amulets chiefly Graeco-Egyptian*, University of Michigan Studies, Humanistic Series 4 (Ann Arbor 1950).

# LIST OF FIGURES


1.1: (drawing) From GMA 37, used with the permission of the author and the Institut für Altertumskunde, University of Cologne.

1.2: (photo) Getty 84 AN.I.73 (reverse) used with the permission of The J. Paul Getty Museum. Many thanks to Dr. Ken Lapatin.

1.3a: (photo) Mastrocinque (forthcoming) no. 482 Obverse.

1.3b: (photo) Mastrocinque (forthcoming) no. 482 Reverse.

1.4a: (drawing) Getty 73.AN.1 drawing by Kotansky (1980) fig. 4 used with permission of the author.

1.4b (photo) Getty 73.AN.1 (reverse) used with the permission of The J. Paul Getty Museum. Many thanks to Dr. Ken Lapatin.

2.1: SM 11 used with the permission of the authors and the Institut für Altertumskunde, University of Cologne. Many thanks to Dr. Robert Daniel.

2.2: SM 21 used with the permission of the authors and the Institut für Altertumskunde, University of Cologne. Many thanks to Dr. Robert Daniel.

2.3: SM 3 used with the permission of the authors and the Institut für Altertumskunde, University of Cologne. Many thanks to Dr. Robert Daniel.

2.4: SM 34 used with the permission of the authors and the Institut für Altertumskunde, University of Cologne. Many thanks to Dr. Robert Daniel.

2.5: After Wilcken *BGU* (1903) no. 956.

3.1: BM 383 reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum. Many thanks to Dr. Chris Entwistle.

3.2a: (photo) Mastrocinque (forthcoming) no. 296 Obverse.

3.2b: (photo) Mastrocinque (forthcoming) no. 296 Reverse.

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3.5: BM 385 reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum. Many thanks to Dr. Chris Entwistle.

3.6: PGM LXII 76-106.

3.7: BM 352 reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum. Many thanks to Dr. Chris Entwistle.

4.1a & b: Thanks to Dr. Melnikova Irina Nikolaevna, the Director of the Anapa Historical Museum, for these new photographs and for permission to use them, and to Prof. Vladimir F. Stolba for his crucial help in arranging for the photographs to be taken and sent to me.

4.2: T-S K1.143 reproduced by courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library. Many thanks to Dr. B. M. Outhwaite.

4.3: After Audollent (1908) 5.

4.4: PGM XIXa.

4.5: SM 1 used with the permission of the authors and the Institut für Altertumskunde, University of Cologne. Many thanks to Dr. Robert Daniel.

5.1: SM 48 used with the permission of the authors and the Institut für Altertumskunde, University of Cologne. Many thanks to Dr. Robert Daniel.

5.2: SM 40 used with the permission of the authors and the Institut für Altertumskunde, University of Cologne. Many thanks to Dr. Robert Daniel.

5.3: After Schlumberger (1892) 74.

5.4: After Delattre *BCH* 12 (1888) 297.

# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

# ORAL PERFORMANCE AND EPIGRAPHIC HABIT

We sometimes find in ancient Greek magical texts groups of letters arranged in triangles, for instance, a series of vowels inscribed on a small piece of gold foil from Ephesus (Appendix no. 46, Figure 1.1):[1]

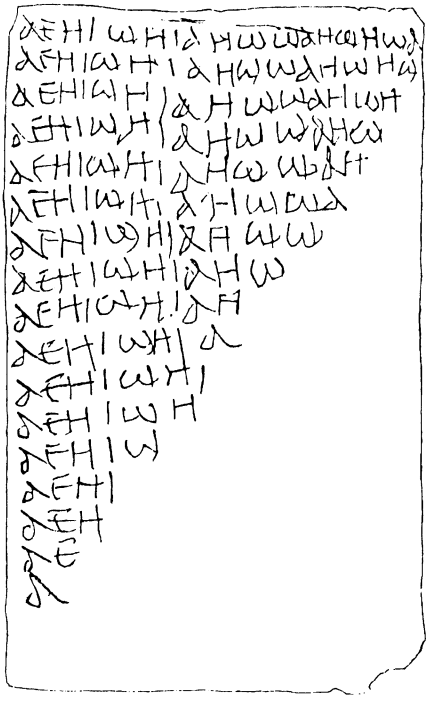


Figure 1.1

This gold *lamella* had been rolled from top to bottom, folded vertically once, and then inserted into the cylindrical container in which it was found. It had undoubtedly been worn around the neck as an amulet. The shape of the right triangle here is produced by writing out the sequence of vowels and then writing the same sequence again on the line beneath, but leaving off the final letter. The process is repeated line-by-line until all of the letters are gone. A similar, but reversed, shape is created by leaving off the first letter of the word in

[1] *GMA* 37 (2nd-3rd CE; 5 x 3 cm.) The drawing is by Kotansky and is used with permission. All of the texts with vanishing names discussed in this study are listed and described in the Appendix, to which the numbers in the text refer.

each successive line, as we find with the seven vowels inscribed on a small brownish-white chalcedony gemstone in the Getty Villa Museum (no. 45; Figure 1.2):[2]

In the papyrus handbooks, these figures in the form of a right triangle are said to be composed in 'wing-shape fashion', for obvious reasons.[3] If, however, one removes both the first and last letters at the same time, a slightly different shape emerges: an isosceles triangle, as we see in this example from Narmouthis, Egypt, one of the earliest, preserved on an ostrakon of first or second century CE date (no. 41 = *SM* 67):

αβλαναθαναλβα
βλαναθαναλβ
λαναθαναλ
αναθανα
ναθαν
αθα
θ

The Greeks called this shape the 'grape-cluster' or the 'heart-shape', [4] and it is an arrangement, as we shall see, that shows up frequently on fever amulets, most often, as here, with the palindrome αβλαναθαναλβα.

By the early part of the twentieth century scholars had come to a general consensus that words inscribed in these triangular shapes on amulets represented the names of diseases or evil demons, which are forced to disappear as each letter of their name vanishes. They dubbed the process *deletio morbi*.[5] In recent years, however, scholars have in isolated studies questioned this long-standing *communis opinio*, pointing out, for instance, that most amulets that deploy this technique are not inscribed with the name of a known disease, but rather with strings of vowels or non-Greek words of uncertain meanings, and that similar triangular formations also appear on curses and love spells, in which maleficent demons are invoked rather than banished.[6] Others have even suggested

[2] Getty no. 84.AN.I.73. For brief discussion see Michel *ad DMG* 46.1.b and Taf. VII.8. Thanks to Simone Michel for this photograph and to the Getty Museum for permission to use it. On the reverse of the stone one finds a snake, magical symbols, and the letters χεχε, all surrounded by an *ouroboros* serpent.

[3] Wing: *PGM* II.2 and 6 (πτερυγοειδῶς); *cf. PGM* VII.716 (πτερύγιον) and *PGM* XIII.902 (πτερυγώματα).

[4] Grape-cluster: *PGM* LXII.82 (ὡς βότρυς) and Daniel and Maltomini (1989): βοτρυδόν and βοτρυοειδές (two versions of the same recipe). Heart: *PGM* III.70 and LXII.82 (καρδιοειδῶς); IV.407 (καρδία); II.68 (τὸ καρδιακὸν ὄνομα). Both: *PGM* III.69-70 (καρδιακῶς ὡς βότρυς).

[5] See *e.g.* Heim (1892) *ad* no. 97, Dornseiff (1925) 58-59 and 63-67, and Pfister (1927). For full survey, see Önnerfors (1993) 162-67.

[6] See below in Chapter 2 for my discussion of the text-specific arguments of Wortmann (1963) and Daniel and Maltomini (1989) and *ad SM* 1, who suggest that the names Gorgophonos (no. 8), Staphylotomos (no. 27) and Lycurgus (no. 28) are the names of heroic protectors who help cure the patient. They do not, however, draw from these examples any global conclusions regarding the sufficiency of the traditional interpretation of *deletio morbi*.

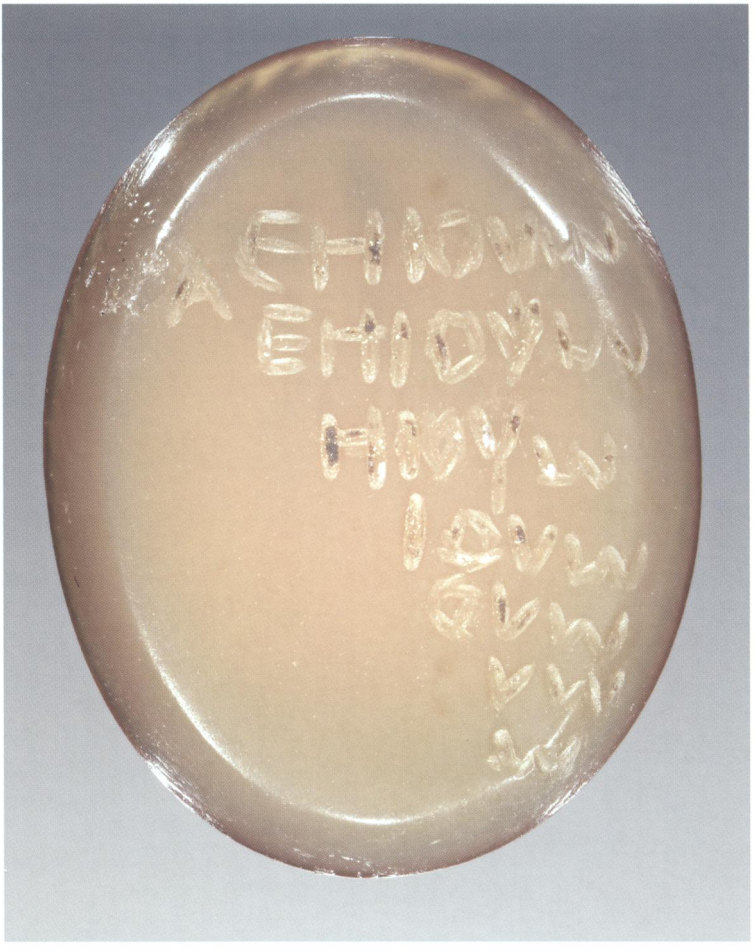


Figure 1.2

that the process of *deletio morbi* evolved at a later date.[7] The argument for *deletio morbi*, moreover, fails to explain why the name or word on an inscribed amulet does not, in fact, disappear at all, but rather persists in the first line of the formation and is then spelled out a second time acrostically along the diagonal(s), as we can see in all of the examples given

[7] Gordon (2002) 87 n. 68 summarizes and dismisses the traditional view as follows: 'It is commonly, though mistakenly, thought that the "heart" [*i.e.* "heart-shaped name"] is intended to denote the disappearance of the fever, disease, etc. At best this is a secondary evolution ….' He is, however, mainly concerned with curses, on which the triangular shapes do indeed serve as a form of invocation or representation of the dangerous demon, rather than its demise (see Chapter 5 for discussion). See Mastrocinque (2008) 102 for this important distinction: 'Le nom ou la phrase sont efficaces contre les maladies, c'est-à-dire contre les demons des maladies, parce qu'ils sont écrits en triangle. Mais le problème surgit quand le nom en triangle est celui du héros, qui tua la cause de la maladie....' I discuss this problem in detail in the final chapter of this volume.

above.[8] How can we claim, then, that the technique aims at making the disease vanish, when the written name does not, in fact, do so?

As a result of these important challenges, in recent years a schism of sorts has quietly opened between those scholars who continue to support the older consensus[9] and those who challenge it by suggesting that these triangular formations are the *ad hoc* invention of late Hellenistic or Roman-period scribes, who created them solely with their visual effect in mind – indeed, some have even suggested that these scribes used as models the *technopaignia* (or *carmina figurata*) of the Hellenistic and Roman periods, clever poems written in the shape of altars or pan-pipes, such as the *Syrinx* poem preserved in the manuscripts of Theocritean corpora:[10]

Οὐδενὸς εὐνάτειρα Μακροπτολέμοιο δὲ μάτηρ
μαίας ἀντιπέτροιο θοὸν τέκεν ἰθυντῆρα,
οὐχὶ Κεράσταν ὅν ποτε θρέψατο ταυροπάτωρ,
ἀλλ᾽ οὗ πειλιπὲς αἶθε πάρος φρένα τέρμα σάκους,
οὔνομ᾽ Ὅλον, δίζων, ὃς τᾶς μέροπος πόθον
κούρας γηρυγόνας ἔχε τᾶς ἀνεμώδεος,
ὃς μοίσᾳ λιγὺ πᾶξεν ἰοστεφάνῳ
ἕλκος, ἄγαλμα πόθοιο πυρισμαράγου,
ὃς σβέσεν ἀνορέαν ἰσαυδέα
παπποφόνου Τυρίας τ᾽ ἐ⟨ξήλασεν⟩.
ᾧ τόδε τυφλοφόρων ἐρατόν
πῆμα Πάρις θέτο Σιμιχίδας·
ψυχὰν ἁ, βροτοβάμων,
στήτας οἶστρε Σαέττας,
κλωποπάτωρ, ἀπάτωρ,
λαρνακόγυιε, χαρείς,
ἀδὺ μελίσδοις
ἔλλοπι κούρᾳ,
καλλιόπᾳ
νηλεύστῳ.

[8] I cannot find in print this observation of the double or triple persistence of the name, which was pointed out to me by my colleague Jonathan Hall.

[9] For example: Önnerfors (1993) 166-67 and Versnel (2002) 130, who describes the process succinctly: 'the gradual decrease in the length of the word itself is the analogon for the desired decline of the illness.' More recently see Bohak (2008) 269: 'the name of the illness ... written in the "dwindling" formation, apparently ... to bring the same effect upon the illness itself.'

[10] Trans. Edmonds (1928), slightly modified. As far as I can tell Dieterich (1891) 199 and Delatte (1914) 58 first drew the connection with the *technopaignia*, but they thought that the poets were imitating the magicians, which is unlikely given the fact that the earliest extant disappearing name dates to the first century CE. For recent discussion (arguing the reverse line of influence), see Brashear (1995) 3433 and Bohak (2008) 265-66. Gordon (2002) 87 agrees with the importance of writing in the advent of the vanishing names, noting that they were 'in the first place visual devices and only secondarily acoustic', but he thinks that a stimulus from the *technopaignia* 'seems on the whole unlikely.' Indeed, such poems provide a poor parallel, because they are created in a different fashion by composing verses of different lengths to fill up a preset mold; the disappearing name, on the other hand, has a generative principle: the same word is repeated and shortened over and over again.

The bed-mate of 'nobody' and mother of the war-abiding
Brought forth a nimble director of the anti-stone's nurse,
Not the horned one who was once fed by the son of a bull,
But him whose heart was fired long ago by the P-less line of shields,
'Pan' by name and double by nature, him that loved the
Wind-swift voice-born maiden of mortal speech,
Him that fashioned a sore that shrilled with the
Violet-crowned Muse into a monument of the fiery furnace
Of his love, him that extinguished the manhood
That was of equal sound with a grandfather-slayer and
Drove it from a Tyrian woman, him, in short,
To whom is set up by this Paris that is son
Of Simichus this delectable piece of
Un-peaceful goods dear to the wearers
Of the blind man's skin, with which
Heartily pleased, you clay-treading
Gadfly of the Lydian queen, at once
Thief-begotten and none-begotten,
Whose pegs are legs, whose legs
Are pegs, play sweetly, I pray,
Unto a maiden who is indeed
Mute, and yet is another
Calliope that is heard
But not seen.

This poem has been crafted on the page in the shape of a *syrinx* ('panpipe'), and its shape is a vital part of the poem's effect; this effect is, however, completely lost if the poem is recited orally. With such purely visual models in mind, then, some scholars reinterpret these disappearing names as full-blown representations of the names of powerful supernatural allies, whose power is increased, rather than diminished, by the triangular expansion of the name.[11] This new approach also helps explain why in the same period such words dwindle on curses and erotic charms, where they certainly are not designed to drive away demons.

But there are, in fact, reasons for resisting this trend. Neither the proponents of *deletio morbi* nor their recent critics have, however, offered a systematic treatment of this feature of Greek magic, so one immediate goal of this volume is to bring together for the first time all examples known to me of magical spells or recipes that deploy disappearing names, regardless of their genre or date (see the Appendix). One benefit of such inclusiveness is the realization that their use differs enormously with the genre of the spell: as we shall see in what follows, on amulets we usually find a single name (sometimes a decipherable Greek name or word) at the center of the design with its diminishing end pointed downwards, whereas on curses and erotic charms many disappearing names appear in confusion on the

[11] See, *e.g.*, Frankfurter (1994) 199-200, who suggests that the authors of these triangular formations (among other geometric forms) 'would be representing [the name] in multiple dimensions and thereby deriving increased power from the name.'

same tablet or papyrus, some right side up and some upside down, none central to the design and rarely generated from recognizable Greek words or names.

In what follows, then, I defend the interpretation of the vanishing names on amulets as examples of *deletio morbi*, first by stressing these important generic differences and then by arguing that these differences allow us to trace the historical development of the phenomenon. I will argue, in fact, that the wing- and heart-formations on amulets are written versions of earlier disappearing 'speech-acts' – oral performances in which the demon's name was gradually reduced in speech and then finally replaced by complete silence. The creativity of the scribes in the Roman period, I will argue, lies not in their creation *ex nihilo* of these triangular shapes as visual representations or designs, but rather in how they react to the very real problem that in written form, unlike in oral performance, these names remain dangerously present on the papyrus or gemstone that eventually is placed on the patient's body. In the three internal chapters I describe four different types of curative amulets from the Roman period – for fever, bleeding, headache and sore throat – showing in each case how the scribes who inherit these originally oral performances re-imagine them as visual ones, by putting the vanishing names in the center of tableaux with other speech-acts, symbols and images that create narratives of confrontation, containment, and even expulsion. By offering close readings of most of the nearly fifty amulets or amulet-recipes included in the Appendix, I hope to reveal their special nature – generally curative, rather than protective, and concerning illnesses that are healed gradually in stages – and also to point out some recurrent patterns of design within each type, for example, the preponderant use of palindromes in heart-formations to cure fever or the consistent one-to-one correspondence between a name and a disease, for example Damnameneus with headache or Tantalus with bleeding. In contrast, most of the roughly twenty examples of vanishing acts on curses and other kinds of spells show a very different and indeed contrary understanding of their use.

I conclude by suggesting – purely for heuristic purposes – that vanishing speech-acts evolved in five stages, with oral performance at one end of the spectrum and purely visual play at the other. The first stage is a verbal type of name-magic, in which the names of diseases and demons were chanted over the sick person, with each repetition subtracting a letter until the name (and with it the disease) was gone. In the second stage these same names, now inscribed on small sheets of gold and silver foil, gemstones, papyri, and even the leaves of plants, continue to narrate the erasure of diseases and demons, either appearing alone or side-by-side with other speech-acts such as prayers. But even at this stage, the entire text of the amulet can still be read aloud and thus performed orally. In the third stage these disappearing speech-acts begin to be perceived (paradoxically) as static triangular representations for the designated diseases or demons, as scribes begin to realize that in this new textual medium these names assume a novel and threatening heft in that they do not vanish at all, but are rather spelt out twice along the top and sides of the triangle. It is at this crucial stage of development that scribes begin to confront or surround the now potentially dangerous name with the words of prayers, unpronounceable symbols, and images; at this stage the amulet can no longer be performed orally. In the fourth stage we see cases of crossover, in which magician-scribes take the standard format of amulets with a single disappearing name and use it instead for curses or hostile erotic spells, in which the triangular name clearly represents or even invokes the disease or demon, rather than forcing it to vanish. In these cases there is usually no attempt to confront or contain the

name, because the goal of the spell is to invoke or introduce dangerous demons into the human world. In the fifth and final stage, these triangular forms are deployed – almost entirely in the non-amuletic magical genres – as pure designs that are in most cases completely unrelated to the specific goals of the spell in which they are deployed.

I propose these five stages as a heuristic model, but, as we shall see in the final chapter, the evidence is not so tidy. The triangular forms on extant amulets do, in fact, precede those on curses and erotic spells by a century or so, but the statistical power of such an argument is vitiated by the tiny size of the database. There is, however, much under-appreciated evidence from the Byzantine and mediaeval periods, especially from the Aramaic magical spells discovered in the Cairo Genizah, for (i) the direct correlation between the shrinking name of a disease and healing of the patient; and (ii) the oral performance of such vanishing acts. We find a clear case of the former in this recipe preserved in Latin by the sixth-century CE medical writer Marcellus of Bordeaux (no. 25):[12] 'Write this charm on a clean papyrus and tie it with a linen thread and attach it to him or her around the middle, those who suffer a flow of blood (*sanguinis fluxum*) from whatever part of the body: *sicycuma, cucuma, ucuma, cuma, uma, ma, a*.' Heim rightly saw that there was a direct connection between the dwindling name and the cessation of bleeding, and that the start of the word *sicycuma* itself was probably an initial *sic*, which was originally part of the instructions in the spell (*i.e.* '[the word is to be written] in this way').[13] He proposed, therefore, that the disappearing word was simply *cucuma*.[14] I suggest, however, that the original vanishing word was more likely *cuma* (Greek κῦμα), 'wave' or 'flood',[15] and that it refers directly to the pathological condition that the spell seeks to cure, the *sanguinis fluxus*.[16] Note that there are no instructions to write the word out in a wing- or heart-formation, and regardless of the origins of this disappearing word, the mechanism of this amulet, which includes only the vanishing word, is quite clear: as the word diminishes, so, too, will the flow of blood.[17]

[12] *de Med.* 10.34 = Heim no. 97. I use the text supplied by Önnerfors (1993) 166-67.

[13] In Greek recipes the word οὕτως is used in similar ways; see *PGM* II.1-2 and 5-6, discussed below.

[14] He worried rightly that the sequence skipped *icucuma*, which should logically be the second iteration. He made no attempt to elicit any meaning from the word, but nearly a century later Versnel (2002) 130 suggested in passing that the disappearing word was *cucuma* ('cooking pot', a word which is used elsewhere by Marcellus) and that the initial *sic* may have been the remains of *siccus*, 'dry'.

[15] The original *cuma* was probably enlarged when a scribe inserted a linking vowel between the *sic* and *cuma*. Note that in the first iteration of this word the second letter is a Y, but then it changes to a U. More important, perhaps, is the fact that a little later in this chapter Marcellus gives a simple cure for nosebleed (10.69): say into the ear three times ΣΟΚΣΟΚΑΜ ΣΥΚΥΜΑ. Here in the second word we see Greek κῦμα spelled out in Greek letters.

[16] The equation between κῦμα and *fluxus* is not exact, but close enough for such charms, as both are concerned with the motion of liquids. Greek κῦμα derives from the verb κύειν, 'to swell', and it refers to a naturally swollen thing like a 'wave' or a 'billow'; it is also used metaphorically to describe a 'flood', *e.g.* of men. Latin *fluxus*, on the other hand, derives from the verb *fluere*, 'to flow, overflow, spread'.

[17] Versnel (2002) 130.

Another simple Greek example of *deletio morbi* appears on four late antique amuletic bowls inscribed in Aramaic (no. 38),[18] unlikely evidence, at first glance, for a history of Greek amulets. But, as we shall see repeatedly in this study, a surprising number of transliterated Greek terms survive in wing- and heart-formations in later Aramaic (and Hebrew) spells, and there is no doubt that all of them were borrowed in late antiquity, if not earlier, from the Greek magical tradition.[19] The four bowls in question include on their inner surfaces, among many other prophylactic texts, a transliteration (again in linear form) of the Greek word *kephalargia* ('headache') as follows: QPLRGYH, PLRGYH, LRGYH, RGYH, GYH, YH, H.[20] These bowls were designed to protect houses and their inhabitants from a variety of demons and diseases, and it is difficult to know – given the geographical, temporal and linguistic divides the name has crossed – whether the authors of these bowls understood the meaning of the Greek word and therefore included headaches among the diseases or dangers banned by the amuletic bowl; we can safely say, however, that both the word *kephalargia* and the disappearing format were borrowed directly from the Greek tradition. In a Byzantine Jewish magical recipe for an amulet 'for every pain in the body' (no. 39) this same word [Q]PLRGYH is written out in triangular form along with another disappearing word MWQRYN, which seems to be a similarly decapitated[21] transliteration of the Greek word *(he)mikrania*, 'migraine' (literally 'half-head').[22] Although to my knowledge neither *kephalargia* nor *hemikrania* vanishes on any extant Greek amulets, it is hard to imagine that they were originally used for anything other than curing a headache. As for the original oral performance of these diminishing names, the fact that *kephalargia* is written out in linear form and transliterated into Aramaic in three different ways in the four surviving examples suggests that it may indeed have been borrowed from the Greek world as an oral incantation.[23]

[18] These bowls are generally found in Iraq and western Iran and date from the fifth or sixth to the eighth century CE. They are inscribed on their inner surfaces with apotropaic inscriptions and drawings and are often found upside down in houses or under thresholds. See Bohak (2008) 183-93 for discussion and bibliography.

[19] For this subject, see Bohak (2008) 266-70, who stresses that the Greek words themselves as well as the disappearing technique are foreign to Jewish magic and were borrowed from the Greeks.

[20] Bohak (2008) 268-69 discusses the four different examples, one published and three unpublished.

[21] Both of these words are missing the first iteration or two of the series. As we shall see, this is not uncommon over time, especially in cases where the disappearing words are being used by people who no longer understand what the word means or even that it is a comprehensible word. See also [D]amnameneus (no. 20), [Epi]curus (no. 32) and [A]kranarba (no. 70b).

[22] A manuscript 'which preserves so many ancient Palestinian Jewish magical recipes.' See Bohak (2008) 269, who informs me by e-mail that the recipe is for a general spell against fevers, demons, etc., without any references to the head or to headaches.

[23] So Bohak (2008) 268-69, who notes that all four are written in linear fashion and have differences in transliteration (QPRGYH, KPLRGY and KPLRGYH), 'perhaps pointing to the oral (rather than written) transmission of this sequence.'

Figure 1.3

We see a similarly straightforward case of *deletio morbi* on a small lapis lazuli ring stone of the second or third century CE (no. 26; Figure 1.3).[24] Its obverse holds the image of a cluster of ripe grapes, and on the reverse it is incised with the word *staphulê* in a faux grape-cluster formation.[25] Both the Greek word *staphulê* and the image represent the same object, 'the grape-cluster', and, as scholars have suggested, there is also a play on the triangular form of the vanishing name. Here, as in the case of the vanishing words for headache or migraine, there is a simple correlation between the disappearance of the name and the cure, because in a medical context the word *staphulê* commonly describes a pathological state, when the uvula, the fleshy pendent part of the soft palate, becomes engorged with blood and painful.[26] This secondary meaning of *staphulê* is apparently generated by the close similarity between the swollen and reddish-purple tip of an infected uvula and a miniature bunch of red grapes. The image of the grape-cluster itself (on the obverse), then, like the images of scorpions used to repel scorpions,[27] is probably meant to prevent the inflammation of the uvula by the process of like-banning-like – indeed, the slightly purplish-blue color of this lapis lazuli gem may have been selected for this very

[24] This gem was originally in the Froehner Collection and is now in the Cabinet des Médailles and will appear in Mastrocinque (forthcoming) with a yet to be assigned inventory number. For discussion see Daniel and Maltomini (1989), Faraone (2001) 5-7, and Mastrocinque (2008) 99-100.

[25] A wing-formation was produced by removing the last letter of each line, but it was shifted to the right to make it look like an isosceles triangle to imitate the grape-cluster formation – probably to recall the image of a grape-cluster on the other side of the gem and the meaning of the word itself: 'grape-cluster'.

[26] Daniel and Maltomini (1989).

[27] For the depiction of scorpions on amulets, see below, n. 42.

reason.[28] On the reverse of the gem, however, another magical technique is at work: the line-by-line reduction and disappearance of the word *staphulê* is designed to shrink the swollen uvula step by step until it vanishes from sight and health is returned. It is possible, then, to interpret all of these vanishing words as straightforward illustrations of the process of *deletio morbi*: by making the words for various pathologies –'flood (of blood)', 'headache', 'migraine' and 'swollen uvula' – disappear letter by letter, we aim to make the bleeding, throbbing, or swelling subside and disappear.

We find similarly late and non-Greek evidence that vanishing names were originally performed orally in antiquity. As was mentioned above, the survival of three different transliterations of the disappearing Greek word *kephalargia* on the Aramaic bowls points in this direction. Late Jewish sources give us even more evidence for the performance of such names. The Babylonian Talmud, for example, recommends that for self-protection at night while drinking from a stream or pond one should recite Psalm 29 or say the following: 'So-and-so, your mother warned you to watch out against SHBRYRY, BRYRY, RYRY, YRY, RY in white cups.' Shabriri is a term of Akkadian origin and it refers to the illness of night-blindness. [29] It suffices, of course, to cite this text as cross-cultural evidence that vanishing names were orally performed in antiquity, but, as Bohak has shown, despite the non-Greek name of the disease, the technique used here must have been borrowed directly from the Greeks in late antiquity. And as it turns out, we find similar evidence for the oral performance of dwindling names in a Greek magical papyrus of the late Roman period, in the midst of a long hymn-prayer to Apollo (no. 70a):[30]

> ακρακαναρβα <κρακαναρβα ρακαναρβα ακαναρβα> καναρβα αναρβα ναρβα αρβα ρβα βα <α>. λέγε ὅλον οὕτως τὸ ὄνομα πτερυγοειδῶς ...
>
> σανταλαλα, <ανταλαλα νταλαλα> ταλαλα. λέγε τοῦτο τὸ ὄνομα καὶ αὐτὸ ἓν ὑφαιρῶν πτερυγοειδῶς ...
>
> *Akrakanarba <krakanarba rakanarba akanarba> kanarba anarba narba arba rba ba a.* Say the whole name in this manner in wing-like fashion...
>
> *Santalala, <antalala ntalala> talala.* Say this name also leaving off one letter in succession in wing-like fashion ...

In both cases the vanishing names are not laid out on the papyrus in the usual triangular fashion, but rather they are written in a continuous line like the word *kephalargia* or the name *Shabriri* in the previous examples. And indeed, this method of transmission may explain why some stages of the disappearing names themselves (in diamond brackets

[28] Lapis lazuli is an uncommon medium for Greek healing amulets, which raises the possibility of the specific importance of its color on this stone.

[29] I follow the translation and interpretation of Bohak (2008) 419-20, who cites it as an example of a late antique Greek practice adopted by the western (*i.e.* Palestinian) tradition of Jewish magic and then subsequently borrowed by the eastern (*i.e.* Babylonian) tradition, where it is applied to an Akkadian name. Dornseiff (1925) 64 seems to have been the first to cite this text as an oral example of *deletio morbi*.

[30] *PGM* II.1-2 and 5-6.

above) have been lost in the text.[31] Both of these commands are, of course, blatantly self-contradictory, because they use a visually descriptive adverb 'in wing-like fashion' to describe how the name should be orally pronounced.[32] In the past one commentator, at least, urged that we fix the problem by emending the command 'say' (*lege*) to 'write' (*graphe*),[33] a solution that has, however, been rejected by all other editors, because they rightly saw that both names were embedded in a long hymn-prayer that clearly was meant to be spoken aloud, not written down.[34]

In the same handbook this recipe is followed by 'An Alternate Procedure' of the same spell, which begins with the following directions (no. 70b = *PGM* II.65-68): 'Take a sprig of laurel and write the two names on its leaves, the one: "*<Akrakanarba>*[35] *krakanarba rakanarba akanarba kanarba anarba narba arba rba ba a a*"; the other: "*Santalala, antalala ntalala talala alala, lala, ala, la, a.*"' Given the small size of laurel leaves this was presumably accomplished by writing a different iteration of the disappearing name on each leaf.[36] We then are told to weave this laurel bough into a garland with white and red woolen fillets and wear it during the potentially dangerous prognostication ceremony that is to follow. This alternate set of instructions, then, reveals a different scribal solution for thinking about these oral performances as text: here the inscription of a different iteration of the name, each on an individual leaf, does not, in fact, produce the tell-tale triangular shape. Such a format suggests instead that the author of this second recipe, at least, still imagined each iteration of the vanishing word as a separate verbal or textual act. These

[31] Editors reconstruct the missing portions of the sequences (in diamond brackets) from instructions found in a second version of the same recipe (see next paragraph). It seems, in fact, that the first name (*santalala*), in addition to losing several iterations in its mid-section, was probably much longer; see Chapter 5 below.

[32] Önnerfors (1993) 166 n. 19 calls this a case of 'synesthesia.'

[33] Heim (1892) *ad* no. 97.

[34] See, *e.g.*, Gordon (1987) 88, who rightly criticizes Heim and explains the conundrum as a reference to 'the Homeric cliché for effective speaking, "winged words".' Frankfurter (1994) 202 thinks it refers to an utterance 'in some liturgical fashion'. Both explanations seem weak, and I think it more likely that some scribe trained in handbook jargon came across this command for oral performance and added the words 'in wing-like fashion' so his late antique reader would understand that the following words, although written out in linear fashion, were organized according to the well-known pattern.

[35] Vanishing words often lose their initial iterations; see n. 21 above.

[36] Bonner and Youtie (1953) 61-62 are probably correct in assuming that we are to inscribe each of the twelve leaves with a different magical name. As is the case with the *PGM* II recipe for the seven-leaved branch, this is ultimately a recipe for divination by direct divine contact, and I assume these twelve inscribed leaves also operate as some kind of phylactery. A third papyrus recipe (*PGM* XXIVa), this one for a kind of lot-divination, instructs us to 'take twenty-nine leaves of a male palm and write on each of the leaves (one of) the twenty-nine names of the gods', and then to pick them up two by two until one remains, which will provide an omen for the question at hand. I use the revised text and translation of Jordan (2002b) 28. A curious inscribed jade gem of irregular shape (BM 504, where it is labeled 'Neuzeitlich') is inscribed on one side with the image of a garland, each of the fourteen leaves of which is inscribed with a different angel or magical name, *e.g.* Gabriel, Sabaoth, Damnameneus, Abrasax etc.

two recipes, then, show us how the magician-scribes of the late Roman period experimented with at least two methods for rendering the orally performed vanishing name: the triangular forms illustrated at the start of this chapter and the linear presentation seen here, which treats each iteration as a separately pronounced or inscribed word. It is, moreover, difficult to imagine the reverse process: that the vanishing name was originally invented in its full triangular glory by late Hellenistic or Roman scribes and that at some later point in time someone got the idea that the iterations of these names could or should be recited aloud or printed separately on the individual leaves of a laurel garland.

Other cases where scribes write a disappearing name in linear form or catch themselves in mid-formula suggest that the oral performance of these vanishing words persisted in antiquity, for example, on a fever charm carved into a somewhat battered grayish-white agate gemstone in the Getty Villa Museum (73.AN.1). Here the scribe started to write on the obverse (the left side in Figure 1.4) a corrupted form of the disappearing word *ablanathanalba* in linear fashion, but then switched mid-way to a wing-formation:[37]

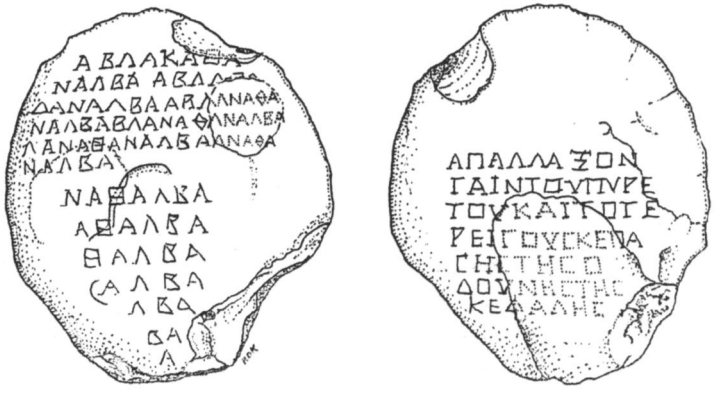


Figure 1.4

It is difficult to know why this scribe suddenly changes from linear to triangular format, but here we can see that the triangle and the prayer, which appears on the reverse side, are independent of one another (both are discussed below near the beginning of the next chapter).[38] I should point out, moreover, that both could be performed and comprehended orally.

[37] Kotansky (1980) 184-87, whose drawing (his Figure 4) is used here with his permission. On the reverse we find a short prayer ('deliver Gaius from fever, *etc.*') that will be discussed in the next chapter. The *kappa* that appears in the first iteration can be explained by the frequent confusion on gems between *kappa* and *beta*; see note 69 below.

[38] Kotansky (1980) 184 suggests that 'for want of space' the scribe wrote out only the final part of the name in triangular formation, but I am not certain this is correct, because it is a very large gem (40.2 x 35.1 cm), and if he had not mistakenly written the full word three times before beginning the reduction, it seems (to my eye at least) that the whole word would have fit, as it does on the large gem from Florence (no. 45), which is preceded by a two-line rubric.

We see yet another linear vanishing act embedded in a similar collocation of independent speech acts on a sixth-century CE papyrus amulet used to ban scorpions (no. 29 = *PGM* 2):

†τὴν θύραν, τὴν Ἀφροδίτην
φροδίτην, ροδίτην, οδίτην,
δίτην, ίτην, την, ην, <ν>, Ὡρ Ὡρ,
φωρ φωρ, Ἰάω, Σαβαώθ, Ἀδονέ

δένο σε, σκορπίε Ἀρτε[μ]ήσιε·

ἀπάλλαξον τὸν οἶκον τοῦτον
ἀπὸ παντὸς κακοῦ ἑρπετοῦ
[καὶ] πράγματος, ταχύ, ταχύ.

ὁ ἅγιος Φωκᾶς ὧδε ἐστιν.

†The door, the Aphrodite,
phrodite, rodite, odite,
dite, ite, te, e, Hor Hor
phor phor, Iao, Sabaoth, Adonai

I bind you Artemesian scorpion!

Deliver this house from every evil creeper
[and] thing, quickly quickly.

Saint Phokas is here.

The amulet begins with a cross and the Greek words for 'the door' in the accusative case, the latter of which was probably part of the instructions from a recipe book (mistakenly copied out), which told the magician to place this amulet near the door to the house.[39] There follow the words 'the Aphrodite', and then the name diminishes in the usual fashion without the article. The scribe presumably could have written these words out in the usual triangular shape, but once again we see that a parallel tradition persisted in magical handbooks of preserving such names in linear fashion.[40]

This amulet is, then, composed of four independent speech-acts, each independently designed to protect a house or shop from scorpions. The scribe, moreover, seems to emphasize their independence, by starting each charm at the beginning of a new line in the papyrus (I have illustrated these divisions above by inserting horizontal spaces in the text): (i) the disappearing name preceded by a cross and followed by two names for the

[39] I thank my colleague Margaret Mitchell for this suggestion, which fits well with the mention of 'this house' in line 6 and the fact that the final line of the text ('St. Phokas lives here') is typical of amulets placed at the door of the house; for bibliography, see note 42 below.

[40] One might argue, of course, that the scribe wrote Aphrodite's name out in linear fashion to save space, but in this case (a house amulet written on papyrus) this seems especially unlikely, as there was no constraint on the size of the amulet (body amulets needed to fit into very small containers, but this would presumably not be a problem for a house amulet).

Egyptian god Horus and then three for the Jewish god Jahweh,[41] (ii) a one-line binding spell directed against a scorpion ('I bind you...'), (iii) a three-line plea for deliverance 'from every evil creeping thing', and then (iv) a one-line declaration: 'Saint Phokas lives here.' Each of these four charms can be documented elsewhere: the final boast about the presence of Christ or a saint is itself a common inscription over or near Christian house-doors, the plea for deliverance is often found alone on amulets, and the first-person binding formula is typical of binding spells cast against human rivals. [42] In short: the disappearing name of Aphrodite appears to be one of several self-contained units, and the power of this amulet is robustly over-determined, since in theory any one of its four parts could operate by itself as an effective phylactery. All four parts could, moreover, be performed orally, except, of course, the initial cross.[43]

It is difficult to understand Aphrodite's precise connection with the scorpion, but on a Christian amulet it is not unexpected that a pagan goddess would be equated with such a danger or evil, and indeed in the binding spell that appears a few lines lower on the papyrus the scorpion is closely allied with another pagan Greek goddess, when it is addressed as an 'Artemesian scorpion'.[44] As it turns out, the use of the Aphrodite-triangle persists in Egypt well into the Middle Ages: several examples of her name transliterated into Aramaic as 'PRYTYT' vanish on amulets against scorpions preserved in the Cairo Genizah. The simplest, 'mass-produced' form (no. 30) starts with a single disappearing triangle of her name and ends with a crude drawing of a scorpion. Either, of course, can operate independently as an amulet, the name by virtue of its disappearance and the image by the strategy of like-banning-like.[45] We saw a similar pair of techniques on the lapis lazuli ring-stone for sore throat, which has the vanishing word *staphulê* on one side and the image of a grape-cluster on the other. In the more complicated version of these Aramaic scorpion amulets (no. 31) we find an additional free-standing unit, one drawn from the Jewish tradition: 'Excommunicated shall you, scorpion, be, in the name of Rabbi Judah, son of Ezekiel; you shall not harm from this day and forever.' Although this is a

[41] There are other, shorter versions of this amulet. The central part of it (lines 3-5: the Egyptian and Jewish names followed by the binding formula) shows up, for example, on a series of smaller papyrus amulets discussed by Tod (1939) 58-61 nos. 4-8 (= *PGM* XXVIIIa-c and *PGM* 2-3).

[42] St. Phokas: Robert (1965) 266-67. Deliverance (ἀπαλλάσσειν): *SM* 7, 9, 12, 18 and 29, and Faraone and Kotansky (1988). Direct binding formula: Faraone (1991a) 5-6.

[43] The cross was a powerful apotropaic symbol. John Chrysostom, in a diatribe against amulets, says that for protection there is only one 'incantation' for the faithful (praising God) and only one *praxis*: making the sign of the cross (*PG* 62.357-58). Especially illustrative of this practice is the description in the *Life of Saint Porphyry* (60-61) of a spontaneous exorcism of a sculpture of Aphrodite near the city gate of Gaza: when the demon that dwelled within the statue saw the crosses carried by Porphyry's party, it fled the statue and in the process knocked it to the ground, where it was shattered. A Christian lintel-inscription from the area of Halicarnassus reads: 'As long as the cross is present Phthonos is not in the least powerful'; see Robert (1965) 265, who also cites parallels from Syria.

[44] Tod (1939) 58-59 suggests plausibly that the scorpion's epithet 'Artemesian' may recall Artemis' role in one version of the death of Orion, in which she sends a scorpion to kill him.

[45] See Bohak (2009) 38 for the translation that follows, the interpretation, and the emphasis on the Greek origins of the Aphrodite triangle.

Jewish amulet inscribed in Aramaic, it is clear that the Aphrodite triangle and perhaps the scorpion image are borrowed directly from the Greek tradition, as is the modular frame of the amulet, which here, too, brings together three completely independent operations, two of which were originally speech-acts: the Greek dwindling name and the Jewish excommunication.[46]

There is good evidence, then, that during the Roman Empire vanishing names were preserved in linear form, and that some of these were performed orally; but how can one know that such oral performances were the ancestors rather then the descendents of the written triangular forms? One important argument is the exceptional nature of the names on inscribed amulets. If disappearing names were indeed invented by the scribes of the first or second century CE, we would be hard pressed to explain why the names on amulets differ so greatly from those in other magical texts and why they are treated so differently. As we shall see in the following chapters, disappearing names on amulets almost always appear singularly and in an upright position (*i.e.* balanced on their tip). They are nearly always on curative, rather than prophylactic, amulets, and are often recognizable Greek words or names. Dwindling names on other magical texts, on the other hand, almost always appear in groups, are sometimes upside down, and are rarely comprehensible Greek. A theory or presumption of simultaneous creation cannot, I think, explain these important generic differences. If, however, we posit a centuries-old oral tradition of vanishing names in simple healing incantations prior to the explosion of scribal activity in the Roman period, such differences are easier to account for: the use of a disappearing word on amulets preserves the special pre-Roman focus on the single name of a disease, whereas the pluralism and incomprehensibility of the names on other magical texts represents the creative scribal extension of this original use into other magical genres.[47] It is also important to note that the various stages of development suggested above do not completely replace each other, but each seems to persist in some form or another, thanks to the tradition of magical handbooks, which (as we have seen above in the case of *PGM* II) could transmit both oral and written versions of the same disappearing words in the same recipe.

[46] No. 31 begins with three different vanishing names ('BLYGM', 'PRYTYT' and 'PYQRWS), and there is no scorpion image; see Bohak (2009) 38. The first name ('BLYGM') is probably also a transliterated Greek word, but it has been truncated or garbled to the point that it is presently unrecognizable. The second name is Aphrodite, and the third may refer to the Greek philosopher Epicurus, whose unpopularity with religious Jews may explain his demonization here. Another short Genizah recipe (no. 32 = *MSF* 16.5:12-17) seems to confirm the connection of Epicurus' name with scorpions: 'For the stinging of a scorpion, write over the pain(ful spot): 'QRWS, QRWS, RWS, WS, S.' The disappearing word here also seems to be a truncated version of Epicurus, '<PY>QRWS; see Bohak (2009) 43 n. 14. Note that, whereas all of the other Greek and Aramaic amulets for scorpions are designed to keep them away, this charm is used uniquely to heal the spot on the body upon which it is written.

[47] See, *e.g.*, Gordon (2005) for an excellent discussion of North African scribes, who creatively adapted and augmented lead curse tablets at the local level.

# CHAPTER 2

# FEVER: PALINDROMES, CONFRONTATION & CONTAINMENT

Of the extant amulets with vanishing names, those used to cure fevers are the most common. Quintus Serenus, a third-century CE Roman medical writer, gives us a recipe for a fever amulet similar in its simplicity to the amulet for bleeding recommended by Marcellus of Bordeaux (discussed in the previous chapter): write the following on a piece of papyrus and tie it to the neck of the patient with a linen cord:[48]

ABRACADABRA
BRACADABR
RACADAB
ACADA
CAD
A

Both here and in Marcellus' charm for bleeding the only text necessary is a single disappearing word. And as we shall see, the use of the heart- or grape-cluster formation with a palindrome – or a word like ABRACADABRA that superficially looks palindromic – is typical of fever amulets. But if we did not have Serenus' instructions, we would be hard pressed to know what disease this simple triangle was designed to cure. This is not the case, however, with the more verbose and composite amulets, where we can often discern conflict between the dangerous fever demon represented by the disappearing name and supernatural helpers or protectors who are invoked to heal the patient in an accompanying prayer. A papyrus amulet for Techosis (no. 5 = *SM* 9) is a typical example: below the word *ablanathanalba* rendered in heart-shaped form we find a short prayer with no addressee: 'Deliver (ἀπάλλαξον) Techosis … from the quotidian shivering-fever that possesses her.' A similar combination appears on the large greyish white agate at the Getty (discussed briefly in the previous chapter; see Figure 1.4): *ablanathanalba* appears on one side in a botched heart-formation and there is a similar prayer to an unnamed helper on the other: 'deliver (ἀπάλλαξον) Gaius from his fever and his shivering and from all of his headaches.'[49]

The word *ablanathanalba* is a palindrome, and, when presented in a heart-shaped formation, it is doubly voided as it disappears:[50] by simultaneously removing the same

[48] Q. Serenus 935-40.

[49] Kotansky (1980) 184-87 and Geissen (1984). I use Geissen's text of the reverse here.

[50] In this context I shall not discuss *PGM* XCL (no. 4), which is identical in structure (an *ablanathanalba* triangle in heart-formation above and a fragmentary prayer below), because it is too

letter from the front and back of the name, the word is dismantled systematically in both directions. In the case of disappearing palindromes, then, the disabling effect on the disease or demon is doubled, because the palindrome itself seems to have evolved as yet another kind of orally performed name-magic[51] that aimed at confounding supernatural beings by invoking and then promptly reversing the letters of their names. This kind of name reversal is illustrated in a neat cross-lingual example: the word ΣOYBPOM, which appears on a number of Greco-Roman amulets, is the Latin word *morbus*, 'disease' or 'sickness', spelled in reverse in Greek characters.[52] By reversing this word for 'disease', the creator of these amulets aimed at reversing or confounding the sickness that had attacked his patient. The purpose and power of this kind of reversal is well known with regard to retrograde inscriptions on Greek curse tablets and to the manipulation of voodoo dolls,[53] but for my present purpose it is best illustrated in a recipe for a 'Kronian Oracle' found in the Paris magical handbook (*PGM* IV.3086–95), a necromantic ritual in which Kronos is summoned up from the underworld by the correct recitation of his many names and then forced to return by pronouncing his names in reverse order.[54]

In the amulets of Techosis and Gaius the addressee of the prayer is unnamed, and some might suggest that the request for healing is indeed directed at the triangular name, which might be thought to represent a powerful healer or protector. This suggestion is, however, weakened by many other examples, where we can quite easily tell that the supernatural helper is not the same entity named in the vanishing act. Another papyrus

lacunose to make full sense of it. Its original editor thought it was a curse or an erotic charm, but Kotansky, *GMPT ad loc.*, correctly identifies it as an amulet because of the mention of 'ear-ache', 'burning', and possibly 'fever'.

[51] Bernand (1991) 325 points out that the failure to reverse the letters of diphthongs in some palindromes suggests that they were created or remembered orally, and Gordon (2002) 86 quotes a demotic text that describes the oral performance of a palindrome (*PDM* xiv.873-4): 'utter this great name ... utter it from beginning to end and from end to beginning.'

[52] Harrauer (1992) 39-44.

[53] Faraone (1991a) 6-7 discusses *DTA* 67, a curse written retrograde: 'Just as these words are cold and backwards, so too may the words of Krates be cold and backwards'; see *idem* (1991b) for 'voodoo dolls' with heads twisted entirely backwards.

[54] To get him to come up from the underworld we are to say (*PGM* IV.3105): 'AIE OI PAIDALIS PHRENOTEI CHEIDÔ STYGARDÊS SANKLOEN GENECHRONA KOIRAPSAI KÊRIDEU THALAMNIA OCHOTA ANEDEI, come, master!' But when it is time to send him back one must reverse the order of the names used to call him up (3120): 'ANAEA OCHETA THALAMNIA KÊRIDEU KOIRAPSIA GENECHRONA SANÊLON STYGARDÊS CHLEIDÔ PHRAINOLE PAIDALIS IAEI, go away, master of the world!' This is not a true palindrome, of course, because the order of the individual words of the name is reversed, rather than the individual letters, but it neatly illustrates how pronunciation in proper order invokes demons to come, whereas recitation in reverse order sends them away. The numerous mistakes in the reversal reveal, moreover, that the scribes who copied it were probably unaware that the second invocation was the reverse of the first. I am grateful to Richard Janko for pointing out to me the reversal of these names. For full discussion, see Faraone (2010a) 403-404.

fever amulet, for example, is arranged in precisely the same format (no. 3 = *SM* 11): it begins with a heart-shaped formation and ends with a request (Figure 2.1): 'O angels, ruling and excellent, relieve (παύσατε) Dias, whom Sophia bore, from the fever that possesses him, on the present day, in this very hour, now, now, quickly, quickly.' On this amulet, then, the single disappearing name cannot represent the plurality of angels invoked immediately afterwards.

ζαγουρηπαγουρη
αουρηπαγουρ
γουρηπαγου
ουρηπαγο
υρηπαγ
ρυπα
ηπ
Ϻ
κύριοι ἄγγελοι
καὶ ἀγαθή, παύ-
σαται Διᾶν, ὃν
ἔτεκε [C]οφία,
ἀπὸ τ[ο]ῦ συνέ-
χοντος αὐτὸν
πυρετοῦ, ἐν τῇ
σήμερον ἡμέρᾳ,
ἐν τῇ ἄρτι ὥρᾳ,
[ἤδη ἤ]δη, τα-
[χὺ τα]χύ.

Figure 2.1

The disappearing name at the top of this amulet, *zagourêpagourê*, seems to be formed from two Aramaic words with contrasting meanings: 'he whose light/fire glows' (*zagourê*) and 'he whose light/fire diminishes' (*pagourê*),[55] so one might perhaps argue that these two entities are imagined as a pair of angels, who are the plural addressees of

[55] See Jacoby's remarks in volume 3 of the *PGM*, pages 221 and 229. Apparently independently, Tardieu (1985) 406 argues that they describe the sun and that *zagourê* means 'lumière pure'. Mastrocinque *SSG* 1.101 notes that the seven letters of Zagourê appear at the ends of seven rays emanating from the solar nimbus of Harpocrates, Dan Levene explains in an e-mail that the second part of each word *–ourê* corresponds to Aramaic *'wr* ('light') + the third person singular pronoun *h*. The first part of *zagourê* corresponds to *zky* ('pure' or 'strong') and the first part of *pagourê* to *pg* ('faint'). I would simply note that although there has been vigorous debate about the precise semantic values of the two terms, all seem to agree that they describe either heat or light and that they are complete opposites of one another.

the prayer. But such an interpretation does not fit well with the fiery personality of Zagoure, who is associated in several other magical texts with the evil god Seth-Typhon, and therefore is an excellent candidate for a fever-causing demon.[56] I suggest, moreover, that these two names with such diametrically opposed meanings, when uttered or inscribed in succession, produce the same effect as a palindrome: the first part (*zagourê*) is the name of a dangerous fever demon ('whose fire glows'), the invocation of whom is immediately cancelled by the second name (*pagourê*), which has a palliative effect ('whose fire diminishes').

The proposed analogy between this double name and the palindrome also helps explain why *zagourêpagourê* is not presented as a pair of triangular names, but rather as a single heart-shaped formation, in which the dangerous name and the euphemistic one vanish letter-by-letter at the same rate. Indeed, this amulet has all of the hallmarks of a creative *ad hoc* invention of a magician-scribe, who understood the tradition of using palindromes in heart-formations on fever amulets and saw the pair *zagourê-pagourê* as a kind of conceptual palindrome.[57] We see another creative burst in a third- or fourth-century papyrus amulet from Tebtunis (no. 7 = *PGM* XXXIII) that begins with a very long heart-formation of the word αβλαναθαναλβα-ναμαχαραμαραχαραμαραχ, which is clearly an extension of the traditional αβλαναθαναλβα-palindrome, but is not itself a palindrome.[58] Beneath the vanishing name we find a plea to 'tireless Kok Kouk Kol' to relieve Tais from a variety of fevers.[59] Here, once again, the supernatural helper is distinguished by name from the dwindling word.

[56] Bohak (2008) 206 points out that *Zagourê* appears frequently in the spells of *PGM* XXXVI. We find it twice as a name or title placed near a demonic figure: once over a figure inscribed nearly from head to toe with the names of Seth in a 'restraining spell' (*PGM* XXXVI.1-34) that is addressed to 'Typhon … who killed his own brother', and once (in the truncated form *Zagurê*) below a demonic figure (lines 35-68), where the titles of the demon also connect it with Seth; see Hock *GMPT ad loc.* n. 3. *Zagourê* also appears together with *Pagourê* (and numerous other names) in a pair of burning erotic-spells in the Oslo magical handbook (*PGM* XXXVI.295-311): first in a spell recited while throwing lumps of sulfur into a fire, and again – this time in the reversed order *Pagourê Zagourê* – in a spell in which burning myrrh is equated with the female victim of the spell (333-60). One wonders whether the reversed sequence *Pagourê Zagourê* is more conducive to a fiery spell, because it moves from less heat to more, and the sequence *Zagourê Pagourê* is appropriate for a fever amulet, because it moves from hot to cool.

[57] This experiment was not entirely successful: when the scribe realized that the fourteen-letter pair of names, *zagourê-pagourê*, could not be reduced to a single letter, as is usually the case with palindromic heart-formations, he merged the final *eta* and *pi* into a single letter that looks like a capital E with its tines pointed downwards. Many thanks to Don Skemer of the Princeton University Rare Book Room for allowing me to study this amulet up close.

[58] The second part of this word (ναμαχαραμαραχαραμαραχ) is itself a palindrome, if we leave off the first four letters.

[59] Kok Kouk Kol may have been connected with the triple *kappas* inscribed on red jasper colic amulets, which usually depict Heracles strangling the Nemean Lion; perhaps Kok Kouk Kol is a 'secret name' of Heracles – certainly the epithet 'tireless' (*akamatos*) fits the description of the laboring hero.

A common form of fever amulet, then, is a single vanishing name followed directly by a simple prayer to single or plural supernatural helpers. This is the second of the five developmental stages proposed in the previous chapter: the vanishing name is written down, but can still be orally pronounced, if necessary. This kind of two-fold amulet is, of course, over-determined, because either section of the amulet would suffice to cure the fever. Such duplication or pleonasm is, needless to say, a common feature of magical spells, which often offer a variety of texts and approaches on a single amulet or curse. There are, however, more complicated forms of fever amulets in which the triangular name and the prayer seems less independent of one another, for example, on a fourth- or fifth-century CE papyrus amulet from Egypt (no. 10 = *SM* 21; see Figure 2.2).[60]

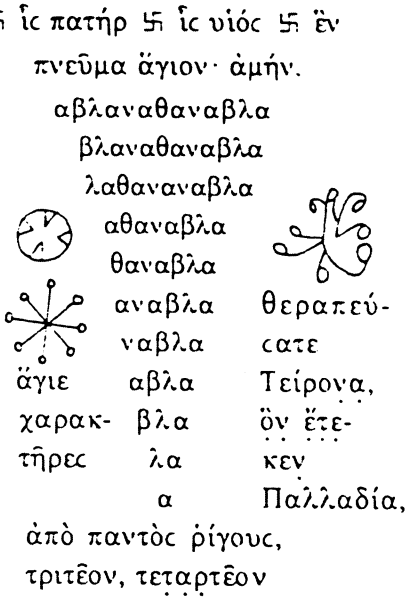



Figure 2.2

This amulet has four different components, but they are not laid out sequentially, as in the Aphrodite-scorpion amulet: (i) in the top two lines a short invocation of the Christian trinity separated by swastikas (an alternate form of the cross) and closed with an 'amen'; (ii) the word *ablanathanalba* composed in a wing-formation, which has been shifted to the right to make it look like a 'grape-cluster'; (iii) three symbols next to the triangle; and (iv) an invocation written on both sides of the triangle and below it: 'O holy *charaktêres*, cure (θεραπεύσατε) Tiron, whom Palladia bore, from every fever…'.

As we saw earlier, the Christian trinity, saints, or symbols are useful tools for deciphering the internal dynamics of these amulets, for they appear consistently as healers or protectors of the sick person who wears the amulet. We know from other magical texts,

[60] The swastikas are much larger than they appear in Figure 2.2; see the drawing in Geissen (1987) 153 and his Tafel VII.

moreover, that the 'holy *charaktêres*' mentioned in the final invocation are represented on this amulet by the three symbols placed on either side of the wing-formation. The number three may indeed be important here, given the fact that the amulet begins with the Christian trinity, and one wonders whether the scribe assimilated these three powerful *charaktêres* to the three parts of that trinity. This amulet differs from the previous ones in another important way. In the earlier examples the dwindling name and the prayer seemed to be separate but equal speech-acts, placed one after the other or on different sides of a gem: either, in fact, could be used to cure the patient. In this example, however, the individual units are drawn together by the design of the amulet, which actively surrounds the vanishing name with the trinity, swastikas, *charaktêres*, and the prayer itself. We have arrived, now, at stage 3 of the evolutionary scheme proposed in the introduction: the amulet displays both a vanishing act and a prayer, but it cannot be fully performed, because the symbols and the antagonistic relationships between them, the name, and the prayer would be lost in an oral performance.

Another papyrus fever-amulet of a somewhat earlier third-century date (no. 2 = *SM* 3; see Figure 2.3) has the same components, but in a different order.

[Ια]ρβαθ αγραμμη φιβλω χνημεω
[α ε]ε ηηη ιιιι ooooo υυυυυυ ωωωωωω[ω.]
κύριοι θεοί, θεραπεύcατε Ἑλένην, ἣν ἔ[τεκεν name, ]
ἀπὸ πάcης νόcου καὶ ἀπὸ παντὸc ῥίγουc κ[αὶ πυρετοῦ ]
ἡμερινοῦ ἀμφιμερινοῦ τριτέου τεταρτ[αίου . . . .] . .[ ]
Ιαρβαθ αγραμμη φιβλω χνημεω

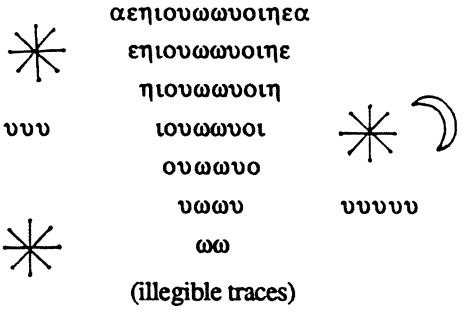



Figure 2.3

This amulet has four symbols, two each on either side of a disappearing palindrome comprised of the seven vowels (αεηιουωωυοιηεα), and a similar prayer urging the 'lord gods' to cure (θεραπεύcατε) Helena 'from every disease, shivering and fever'.[61] The

[61] Daniel (1983a) *ad loc.* suggests that the command (with a plural imperative: κύριοι θεοὶ θεραπεύσατε) could refer to a single god, but does not specify which god. *Charaktêres* are, in fact, usually very powerful deities, who can provide curses as well as protection; for a detailed discussion, see Frankfurter (1994) 205-11, who notes (p. 209) that the 'body's greatest protective charm', as advertised at *PGM* I.264-76, is comprised of seven laurel leaves, each inscribed with a single, different *charaktêr*.

prayer, moreover, is preceded and followed by the same four names (lines 1 and 6: *Iarbath Agrammê Philbô Chnêmeo*), who perhaps should be identified as the addressees of the prayer. As in the previous example the number may be significant, because there are four *charaktêres* below, although one would have expected (as in the previous amulet) a different *charaktêr* for each of the four names. The *charaktêres*, moreover, are placed (again as in the previous example) along the edges of the triangle, precisely where the palindromic series of vowels αεηιουω-ωυοιηεα is spelled out acrostically, while the four divine names, like the trinity in Tiron's amulet, hover over the fully spelled name in the first line.[62]

I suggest, then, that the persistence of the disappearing name in these triangular formations becomes an important issue once they begin to be inscribed on amulets and become worrisome to some magician-scribes, who then invent new visual tableaux to resist or control them. The Roman imperial period was, as Gordon has rightly stressed, an enormously creative period for these magician-scribes,[63] and we can see in the case of the dwindling names that they responded in a number of different ways to the challenges and opportunities that writing offered them. On a fifth-century papyrus amulet, for example, the scribe renders the name *ablanathanalba* in a wing-formation that is threatened or patrolled in a novel manner (no. 11 = *PGM* XLIII):

| | |
|---|---|
| ablanathanalba | Emanouêl |
| blanathanalba | Asouêl |
| lanathanalba | Marmarêl |
| anathanalba | Melchiêl |
| nathanalba | Ouriêl |
| athanalba | <Th>ouriêl |
| thanalba | Marmariôth |
| analba | Athanaêl, |
| nalba | Athanaêl, |
| alba | Aôê [...], |
| lba | Sabaôth, |
| ba | Adônai, |
| a | Elôai, |
| abô[...] | |

*seseggen* seal(?) of Michaêl Sabaôth *lapapa* ... Gabriêl, Souriêl, Raphaêl, protect Sophia, whom Theonilla bore, from every shivering and fever, quickly, now.

[62] It may also be significant that this amulet is used against four different types of fever ('the daily, the every-other-day, the every-third-day and the every-fourth-day') and that these four adjectives stand alone in line 5, followed immediately by the reiterated magical names in line 6 (*Iarbath Agrammê Philbô Chnêmeo*), which are likewise four in number and take up a single line of the text. Perhaps the scribe was suggesting that each of the four protectors specialized in curing a different kind of fever.

[63] Gordon (2005).

Here, instead of setting the powerful angel-names above or below the triangle, the scribe places one name next to each iteration of the dwindling name, as if to suggest that a different angel was responsible for the loss of each letter.[64] The author of this amulet may, moreover, recall or illustrate the oral prehistory of these kinds of triangular formats when he sets a single guardian over each stage of the disappearance, as if he imagines these names not visually as a triangle in which the name persists in the diagonal acrostic, but rather as a series of discrete verbal actions, much the same as the author of the recipe discussed in the previous chapter, in which each iteration of a word was to be inscribed on a separate laurel leaf (see note 34). This amulet can, moreover, be orally performed: it has no symbols and the combative relationship between each iteration of *ablanathanalba* and its individual angelic overseer could easily be rendered by pronouncing them in pairs line by line.

We have, then, isolated a group of fever amulets that share a number of common features of text and design. Palindromes rendered as grape-clusters seem popular and in the case of the *zagourê-pagourê* amulet, the composite and self-negating name of the vanishing demon seems to evoke the idea of feverish heat immediately quenched. Most of the examples discussed above are on papyrus, but the use of greyish white agate for Gaius' fever amulet suggests that gemstones may have been an especially appropriate medium for treating fever. The ancients, in fact, report the cooling properties of some kinds of stone. Pliny tells us that the agate, when plunged into boiling water, stops the boiling (*NH* 37.139-42). He says similar things about rock crystal (*NH* 37.23.24). Indeed, the ancient lapidaries mention that agate was good for treating fevers.[65] The small ostrakon (7x4 cm) from Narmouthis (discussed briefly in the preceding chapter) is also inscribed with *ablanathanalba* in the usual heart-shape (no. 41); there is no accompanying prayer, but one wonders whether a piece of a broken terracotta pot serves here as a poor man's version of a cool stone.[66] The word *ablanathanalba* disappears again on a large

[64] The scheme breaks down slightly with the presumed dittography of the angel names in lines 6 (Ouriel, corrected by the editor) and 9 (Athanaêl, which presumably replaced another similar name). A much later Coptic fever amulet (no. 15 = *ACM* 64.64-91) probably descends from this type of Greek spell: the word *ablanathannalban* disappears in wing-formation from the right side, alongside of which we also find an adjuration to some plural entities to 'take away this fever and this chill' so that Syra, daughter of Pelca, and her baby *in utero* live yearly without disease. Below the triangle, we find again fourteen names – Thalalmelal, Kokalthaal, Maalbuk, Ananias, Setra, Asarias, Misak, Misael, Abdenako, Chesenaethi, Chersetaethi, Chersapaethi, Hilelmilelel, Michor – one for each letter of *ablanathanalba*, but this equation was probably lost on the Coptic scribe or his source, who has added two extra letters to the traditional palindrome, so that the correspondence fails.

[65] Geissen (1984) 26.

[66] This ostrakon is probably too big to serve as a body amulet, but it could perhaps have been placed in a baby's crib or under a bed. On its reverse we find a fragmentary inscription: '-herb, myrrh, dried figs and white pennyroyal'. Daniel and Maltomini *SM ad loc.* suggest that these may have been herbal remedies that were to be used along with the ostrakon as amulet.

whitish and clear quartz gem in Florence (no. 47).[67] One would think that this, too, was a fever amulet, but the name is rendered in a wing-formation (not a grape-cluster), suggesting that the engraver, like the Greek scribe who created the papyrus amulet discussed above (no. 11), did not realize that the word was a palindrome. Its amuletic power is made plain, however, by the grandiose rubric above the vanishing name: 'the greatest phylactery' (φυλακτήριον μέγιστον), which presumably indicates more global claims for its efficacy than just fever control. [68]

An agate gemstone in Athens was perhaps also designed to combat fever: ακλαναθαναλκα, a scribal error for *ablanathanalba*, vanishes in a heart-formation between two enthroned and facing Egyptian deities (no. 43). [69] The figure seated on the right is a bearded male god, who wears a solar disk supported by two horns and who stretches out a scepter and a kind of Egyptian flail toward the disappearing name. A goddess sits on the left, her head crowned by a lotus flower that is encircled by horns and a uraeus-serpent; she holds a crown of leaves toward the name. Since there is no prayer, the precise purpose of this amulet is unclear, but the use of *ablanathanalba* in heart-formation and the cool agate medium both point to the quenching of a fever. The images of the gods, moreover, seem to take the place of the *charaktêres* and prayers in the other fever amulets: they confront both sides of the dwindling name, which seems to recoil from their gaze and gestures.[70]

We have seen in the foregoing survey of fever amulets three distinct but interrelated types of speech-acts used for curing fevers: prayer, name-reversal (the palindrome) and

[67] *SGG* II no. Fi105 (1.9 x 1.25 cm). The vanishing word is set between two horizontal lines that may suggest it was originally designed for a square or rectangular surface, perhaps a gold chit like the Ephesus amulet (no. 45).

[68] A small crystal sphere of the same material was discovered in a fourth-century CE grave in Denmark, inscribed in Greek with *ablanathanalba*. See Meaney (1981) 91. Beneath the word appears to be a downward-pointing arrow; could this have been a scribal abbreviation, misunderstood by the engraver, to inscribe the word in the triangular formation here? In the recipe for a uterine bleeding spell (no. 24 = *PGM* LXII.78-83; see Chapter 4 for discussion) two iterations of the disappearing name are written out and then a diagonal line traces the shape of where the other iterations should begin. At the end of this line is *nu*, which would be the final iteration for this palindrome in grape-cluster shape.

[69] Delatte (1914) 56-58, no. 20, who notes that the confusion of *kappa* for *beta* in the name ακλαναθαναλκα is common enough on gemstones.

[70] We saw earlier that the seven vowels rendered in palindrome appear on a papyrus fever amulet (Figure 2.3), and one cannot help wondering if the vowels αεηιωηιαηωωαηωηωα rendered in wing-form on the gold tablet from Ephesus (no. 45; see Figure 1.1 at the very start of this study) also form a palindrome, albeit in corrupted and truncated form. It can with a few additions easily be reconstructed as one: αεηιαωηι<ω>αηωωαηω<ι>ηωα<ιηεα>. The seven vowels are also presented in a palindrome and disappear in a heart-formation on a later Coptic recipe for an amulet 'for the stomach and headache' (no. 36) that makes the two halves of the palindrome disappear separately in wing-formations, which has the same effect as the full palindrome disappearing from either end. On a second Coptic fever amulet AAAAAAA and OOOOOOO also disappear separately in wing-formations, and, if these letters indicate *alpha* and *omega*, one might see here a self-canceling palindromic pattern as well.

name-dismemberment (the heart-shaped formations). In some of the more complex amulets, however, this does not seem to be sufficient, and scribes also place powerful symbols (*e.g.* crosses or *charaktêres*) or images of powerful gods at the diminishing sides of a vanishing palindrome in order to confront the name and force its disappearance. Such non-linguistic additions are, of course, impossible to perform orally. But, since the *charaktêres* are, on some amulets, directly urged to heal the patient, the same kind of narrative is implied in every case: the palindromic name seems to withdraw or shrink back simultaneously from both ends in the face of powerful symbols or gods. I would stress that this kind of interaction is entirely scribal and that it is, in fact, a creative innovation generated by the accidental inscription in the same space of two originally distinct and free-standing speech acts (the vanishing name and the prayer), along with non-verbal representations of the recipients of that prayer: the *charaktêres* or other images of powerful gods. We have arrived once again at the third of the developmental stages discussed earlier.

Perhaps the most complicated example of this kind of interaction between dwindling name, prayer and symbol is an elaborate fever amulet inscribed on a sixth-century papyrus from Egypt for a man named Joseph (no. 13 = *SM* 34; see Figure 2.4). Section A relates a narrative in the present tense:

> Jesus Christ heals (θεραπεύει) the shivering and the fever and every illness of the body of Joseph, who wears the amulet. The quotidian and the tertian. They are quick. Amen. Hallelujah!

Section C, on the right side of the amulet, shifts from descriptive mode to imperative: 'White wolf, white wolf, white wolf. Let him heal (θεραπευσάτω) the shivering-fever of Joseph. They are quick.' Note that both texts use the same verb (θεραπεύειν) that in several of the fever-amulets discussed earlier was addressed in prayers directly to supernatural helpers: in Section C the white wolf is encouraged to intervene on Joseph's behalf ('let him heal'), whereas in Section A the healing action of Jesus, expressed in the present tense, seems to take the form of a *historiola* or (perhaps better) an acclamation.[71]

[71] *Historiolae* are short narratives about the gods, which describe an action that provides a model for the desired action of the magical spell; see Frankfurter (1995) for discussion. Such stories are, however, usually told in the past tense; for another example of the present tense, see the Philinna papyrus (discussed in Chapter 4), where the command to a headache in the form of a wolf-demon to flee is followed by the general statement: 'wolves flee, *etc.*' The present tense is, nonetheless, odd and Richard Gordon suggests to me that the 'Christ heals' part of this amulet is not a narrative, but rather a mixed utterance that hints at *historiola*, but then becomes a polite command in the present tense. On the other hand, simple acclamations of the god's power, *e.g.* 'Serapis conquers', are always in the present tense and may provide the model here (I thank Kent Rigsby for this suggestion).

| | A | B | C |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | † † † | |
| 1 | Ἰ(ησοῦ)ς Χ(ριστὸ)ς | Ηριχθονιη | λύκος λευ- |
| | θερα- | ριχθονιη | κός, λύκος λευ- |
| | πεύει | ιχθονιη | κός, λύκος λευ- |
| 4 | τὸ ῥῖγος | χθονιη | κὸς θεραπευ- |
| | καὶ τὸν | θονιη | σάτω τὸ ῥιγο- |
| | πυρετὸν | ονιη | πύρετον Ἰωσῆφ. |
| | καὶ πᾶσαν | νιη | ταχύουσι. ζ † † |
| 8 | νόσον τοῦ | η | |
| | σώματος Ἰωσῆφ τοῦ φοροῦν- | | |
| | τος τὸ φυλακτήριον - τὸ κα- | | |
| | θημερινὸν καὶ διὰ μιᾶς. | | |
| 12 | ταχύουσι. ἀμήν, ἀλλη- | | |
| | λούια. | | |

Figure 2.4

In between sections A and C, we find a wing-formation surmounted by three crosses. Although the disappearing word appears on the papyrus as HPIXΘONIH, Wortmann, the original editor, emended the text by changing the first and last vowel from *eta* to *epsilon*, so that it yields the name Erichthonius in the vocative case (Ἐριχθόνιε).[72] To defend this emendation, he pointed to a Byzantine recipe (no. 20) for a 'phylactery for the head', the second section of which begins with the acclamation 'Jesus Christ conquers' and then lists in linear fashion a series of magical names, the first nine of which clearly preserve – in alternation and in somewhat garbled form – the initial portions of two different vanishing names (Erichthonios and Ablanathanaêl) presented in wing-formation: Ἐριθώνιος, Ἀβλαθαναήλ, Χθόνιος, Ἰριχθόνιος, Βλαθαναήλ, Λαθαναήλ, Θώνος, Ἀθαναήλ, Ὄνιος.[73] The fact that the same masculine form of the name (in transliterated form) also disappears in the nominative in an unpublished Aramaic magical recipe for a fever amulet seems to

[72] Wortmann (1963) 159-60.

[73] This section is entitled '*Phylaktêrion* for the head', but seems to have two separate prayers. The first invokes the god of Abraham to free so-and-so from 'pain of the head', 'migraine' and then exorcizes the headache and forces it to come out of the patient's body. The second begins with an acclamation 'Jesus Christ conquers', followed by the two disappearing names (and perhaps a third corrupted name), and ends with 'Amen'. It preserves, in short, the two-fold format of many fever amulets: disappearing name preceded by powerful name or symbol and prayer. The two wing-formations presumably once stood in a manuscript side by side, but were then incorrectly recopied in the linear (and ultimately mixed-up) form in which they appear today.

confirm Wortmann's suggestion that the masculine nominative form was indeed used to cure fevers. [74]

Wortmann argued, then, that this wing-formation on the papyrus amulet (in its emended form) calls upon the famous Athenian hero Erichthonius in the vocative to come forth and heal the fever, just as Jesus and the white wolf do in the parallel texts to the right and the left.[75] Although his emendation is perhaps plausible, his interpretation is unlikely since nearly all of the decipherable vanishing names on amulets (including his parallel in the Byzantine recipe) appear in the nominative, with one exception in the accusative. [76] It seems more likely, therefore, that this amulet preserves an otherwise unattested female name in the nominative: Erichthoniê. Wilamowitz, in fact, in a discussion of the various versions of the names Erechtheus and Erichthonius, anticipated the discovery of this text, when he suggested that the name of Erichtho, the nefarious witch in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, was probably a shortened form of a hitherto unattested female name like Erichthonia.[77] The name Erichthoniê, like Erichtho, then, need not be connected with Athenian myth at all and has, in fact, the obvious chthonic associations that are suitable for a disease-causing demon.

There has, moreover, been little discussion about the placement of the wing-formation below the three crosses and in between the healing narratives about Jesus and the white wolf, which once again seem to be part of a coordinated design at the center of which the name of the chthonic demon Erichthoniê vanishes in the face of the powerful texts and symbols which identify the patient's several allies.[78] The scribe, moreover, has manipulated this vanishing name in order to mimic the central isosceles triangle found on

[74] T-S Ar. 42.122: see Bohak (2008) 269 n. 121. Over e-mail Bohak kindly offered a preliminary translation: 'A section for fevers, 'RKWTYNWS DKWTYNWS KWTYNWS WTWNWA NWS WS S, so-and-so son of so-and-so, Amen, Amen, Selah.'

[75] Erichthonius need not, however, be equated with Erechtheus here or anywhere in Greek myth. Although later authors often confuse the two, Erichthonius had his own myth: he was born from Earth (with snakes or perhaps in the form of a snake), after Hephaestus ejaculated on the ground, and he later became king of Athens; see Kearns (1989) 113-14, 160-61 and 210-11. Erechtheus, on the other hand, seems to have been 'an old figure of cult worshipped in conjunction with Athena Polias, and identified by title with Poseidon', whereas, although Erichthonius was a king born of divine parents, there is no firm evidence that he was the object of cult. His name means 'very earthly' and he is connected with snakes and other chthonic symbols.

[76] A first-declension noun like σταφύλη does not, of course, distinguish between the nominative and the vocative, but among those other names that do make this distinction, most are in the nominative, *e.g.*, Lycurgus, Gorgophonos, and *staphulotomos*. Aphrodite alone appears in the accusative on an amulet discussed earlier, and Damnameneus appears once in the vocative on a curse tablet (no. 58 = *PGM* XIXa; see the top right corner of Figure 4.4), but otherwise in the nominative.

[77] Wilamowitz (1893) II.128-29.

[78] Note, too, that in Section A of the amulet, the length of each line of text gradually increases, as Erichthoniê's name diminishes, much the same as in the Coptic amulet discussed above (no. 14) on which each line of the prayer gets longer as the edge of the name recedes. The number of letters in the first eight lines of Section A are as follows: 4, 4, 5, 6, 5, 7, 8, and 8. It is almost as if the prayer grows line-by-line as the demon's name disappears.

other fever amulets: although he generates the Erichthoniê-triangle as a wing-formation by removing only the first letter from each line, he nonetheless shifts it to the left side to look like a heart-shaped one. I suggest, moreover, that he may have altered the initial *epsilon* to an *eta* to create, at least initially, the mirroring effect of a palindrome in the first line. We saw the same effect at the start of this chapter with the disappearance on Serenus' fever amulet of the word *abracadabra*, which at first glance seems to be vaguely palindromic as well.

As a parallel for his heroic interpretation of Erichthonius, Wortmann adduced another papyrus fever-amulet of late Roman date that was discovered rolled up and tied with a red string (no. 8 = *PGM* XVIIIb). As we can see in Wilcken's drawing of this amulet (Figure 2.5), the word γοργωφωνας disappears, like Erichthoniê, in a wing-formation that has been shifted to the right to make it look like a heart-shaped formation.[79] Around it spirals a formula for an exorcism.

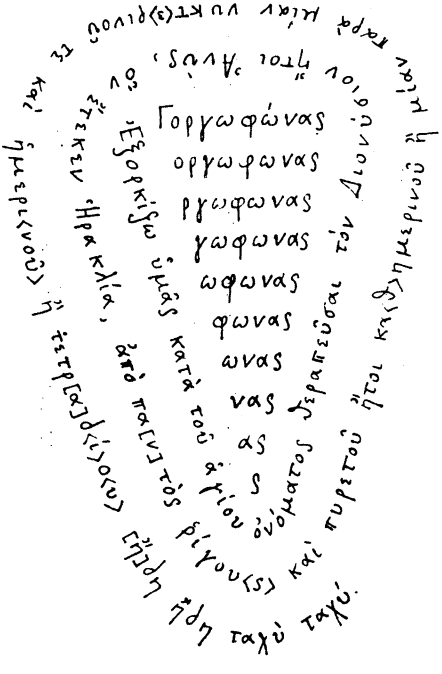



Figure 2.5

Here the originally direct command 'Heal!' found on many Greek fever amulets has been subsumed into the complicated syntax of an exorcism: 'I adjure you all by the sacred name ... to heal (ἐξορκίζω ὑμᾶς κατὰ τοῦ ἁγίου ὀνόματος... θεραπεῦσαι) Dionysius, whom Herakleia bore, from every shiver, fit, and fever.' The use of this more elaborate exorcism has, unfortunately, confused the interpretation of the amulet. Wortmann followed Preisendanz and interpreted the vanishing word ΓΟΡΓΩΦΩΝΑΣ as the plural

[79] The drawing is after that of Wilcken in *BGU* 3.956.

accusative noun γοργωφώνας referring to 'the women who slew the Gorgon'; both scholars assumed that this hitherto unknown group of women is the same as the plural entities adjured in the swirling incantation (ὑμᾶς) – in short: the exorcism will force the disappearing Gorgon-slayers to heal Dionysius. Daniel and Maltomini, however, rightly questioned the unique use of a plural accusative noun in a wing-formation and suggested that, if we emend the last three vowels to *omicrons*, ΓΟΡΓΩΦΩΝΑΣ becomes the singular nominative γοργοφόνος, 'Gorgon-slayer', the well-known epithet of the Greek hero Perseus.[80] They concluded, moreover, that this 'Gorgon-slayer', now an appropriately singular entity, is none other than 'the holy name' by which (κατὰ τοῦ ἁγίου ὀνόματος) the unidentified plural helpers (ὑμᾶς) will be forced to heal the patient.

Exorcism formulae usually involve three parties: the exorcist (present as the subject of the first-person verb 'I adjure'), the demon (addressed in the second person), and some higher deity whose description or name is supposed to frighten the demon into submission. Since the third party in exorcisms is almost always the all-powerful Jewish or Christian god, we should assume that the holy name here is one of his. Indeed, I can think of no parallel where a Greek hero like Perseus is assimilated to the Jewish or Christian god. Nothing else in this small papyrus amulet suggests, moreover, a reference to Perseus and it seems that here, as in the case of the Erichthonie amulet, there is a strong temptation to uncover – by the process of emendation – the names or epithets of classical Greek heroes in the magical texts of later antiquity. It is undoubtedly correct to emend the final alpha to an omicron, a common mistake in Roman-era papyri, but, in fact, the transmitted word ΓΟΡΓΩΦΩΝΑΣ can be more easily understood – by emending one less letter – as some hitherto unattested compound of the adjective γοργός ('terrible, grim') and a second word with an *omega* in its stem: the noun φωνή ('voice'). Tzetzes, in fact, seems to know (*ad Iliad* 1.258) a nymph with a similar name Gorgophônê, and there are more than sixty known compounds of the noun φωνή, most of them preceded by a descriptive adjective, such as γλυκύφωνος ('sweet-voiced') or τραχύφωνος ('rough-voiced').[81] A compound noun like γοργόφωνος ('The Grim-voiced One') would, moreover, be a suitable name for a frightening demon. Indeed, a recently published amulet from Asia Minor seems to equate a headache with the attack of a female demon, who has a name formed in a similar manner: ἀπόστρεφε, Ἰησοῦ, τὴν Γοργῶπα ... καὶ τῇ παιδίσκῃ σου, τὴν κεφαλαλγίαν ('Jesus, turn away the Grim-faced One... and on behalf of your maidservant, the headache').[82] Here the 'Grim-faced One' seems to be the demoness that causes or is assimilated to the patient's headache. In the case of the Gorgophônos amulet, moreover, the layout of the text on the papyrus lends strong support to this interpretation: the encircling formula – which conjures a plurality of unnamed helpers to heal the patient

[80] In their commentary to *SM* 1 (pp. 4-5 n. 5). Mastrocinque (2008) 100-101 suggests that the word should be rendered as a Doric nominative noun γοργοφόνας, but he provides no parallels for other cases of the Doric dialect used in the Greek magical papyri from Roman Egypt.

[81] I thank Kent Rigsby for the reference to the passage in Tzetzes; for the *–phônos* compounds see Kretchmer-Lockner *ad loc.*

[82] Kotansky (2002).

from a singular fever – surrounds the disappearing name, in much the same way that we have seen on other composite fever amulets.

As was mentioned at the start of this chapter, fever amulets comprise the largest category of curative amulets inscribed with vanishing names and it is not surprising that they provide examples of two of the five developmental stages outlined in the previous chapter, beginning with the second stage which, like the charms recommended by Serenus and Marcellus, are inscribed only with the disappearing name. Another standard form of this second stage seems to be the vanishing name on the top of the amulet, with a prayer for help on the bottom or, in the case of Gaius' agate gem, on the reverse side. Both seem to function independently and both could indeed have been performed orally, one after the other. Some of the more complex amulets, however, begin to confront the dwindling name with unpronounceable crosses or *charaktêres* or with the equally unpronounceable images of the two facing Egyptian gods. Others, like the White Wolf amulet for Joseph or the Gorgophônos amulet, completely surround the disappearing name with text or symbols. With these more complicated tableaux we reach Stage 3: they treat the disappearing name in a different and more guarded way, as if the scribes have noticed and begun to worry about the persistence of the dangerous name in the first line and along its receding edge. The name, in short, has ceased to be a mere record of an oral performance: it has taken on a permanent presence of its own and must be reckoned with.

Zagourê-Pagourê, Erichthoniê and Gorgophônos, then, all vanish on fever amulets and in each case these names have an appropriately fiery or demonic connotation. Most extant fever amulets, however, use words like *ablanathanalba* or vowel strings that are pronounceable, but incomprehensible to us and probably to the Greeks themselves. The vowels disappear both in their simple seven-fold form and doubled as a palindrome. The small brownish-white chalcedony in the Getty collection (no. 45; see Fig. 1.2), for example, fits this description well, but its purpose is unknown: on the reverse of the gem there is a snake, *charactêres* and the letters χεχε surrounded by an *ouroboros*). The seven vowels also disappear on a green jasper gemstone in St. Petersburg (no. 44), which has a cock-headed anguipede on the other side. We find a similar combination on a heliotrope (green with red streaks) in Berlin (no. 42), which has the same anguipede on its obverse and the seven vowels in a wing-formation on the reverse. [83] Along the diminishing edge of the vowel-string, moreover, we see the armed figure of Ares leaning on his spear with his back to the vowels, just as he appears on the amulets to control bleeding discussed in the next chapter.[84] Here, too, we see the same coincidence of type of vanishing text (vowel strings or *ablanathanalba*) and the use of transparent stones or those of cool colors. In

[83] For a third similar gem, see Goodenough (1953) no. 1055 (who takes the illustration from Matter *Excurs. Gnost.* Plate ii.6), which has a snake-haired demon spearing a supine demon on the obverse, while on the reverse under the ιεαω–logos the vowel-string disappears in a botched heart-shaped formation (it ends with *omicron* rather than the middle letter *iota*). The ιεαω–logos is shaped to fit into the top part of the triangle, but it does not disappear. The medium is unstated and I have not been able to track this gem down – it appears on the plate in Matter, but Matter does not discuss it in his text; since the scene on the obverse is unparalleled, I suspect that it is post-classical.

[84] Weiss (2007) 321 no. 672.

fact, of the forty-nine amulets listed in the Appendix, only eleven are on gems or ostraka, and of these eleven, seven display the same coincidence of text and cool colour:

| | Colour | Vanishing Text | Purpose |
|---|---|---|---|
| no. 6 | gray-green | seven vowels | fever |
| no. 41 | (ostrakon) | *ablanathanalba* | NA |
| no. 42 | green | seven vowels | NA |
| no. 43 | green | *ablanathanalba* | NA |
| no. 44 | green | seven vowels | NA |
| no. 45 | brownish-white | seven vowels | NA |
| no. 47 | rock crystal | *ablanathanalba* | *phylaktêrion* |

Six of these seven gems do not state their purpose, but I suggest that fever is the most obvious choice.

It seems, in fact, that the seven vowels often represent the sun or the rays of the sun. As early as the third century BCE, Demetrius of Phaleron claimed that Egyptian priests, when singing hymns to their gods, intoned the seven vowels in succession, suggesting that this was a means of invocation, and there is evidence that the Greeks, at least, thought this Egyptian practice imitated the natural piety of baboons, who sang the vowels in the morning at the rising of the sun.[85] If the vowels thus came to be understood as the secret name or invocation of the Mediterranean sun, then one can easily imagine how they might also become equated at some point with a demon who causes fever, much the same as fiery Zagourê was (see note 52). Indeed, like the seven letters of Zagourê, the seven vowels are inscribed at the ends of the solar rays of a god inscribed on a magical gem, in this case Chnoubis, rather than Harpocrates.[86] The popular use of the palindrome *ablanathanalba* on fever amulets likewise suggests that Ablana or Ablanath was the name of a demon as well, although all of the Hebrew etymologies advanced so far have been abandoned and it seems less and less likely that it is a Semitic name.[87] All agree, however, that it must be connected with the sun. But like all gods and divine forces, the sun could not only be a source of health and growth, but a source of sickness and danger as well: it is well known, for instance, that in the Mediterranean world high noon was known as a dangerous hour for mortals, especially at hotter times of the year. Thus, although solar deities and forces, like *ablanathanalba* and the seven vowels, do appear on some amulets and gems as protective and healing entities, it would seem that in the case of fever they could also be the source of

[85] Frankfurter (1994) 204-05.

[86] *e.g.* BM 327. For Zagourê, see above, n. 55.

[87] On the general problem of wrong-headed Semitic pedigrees for Greek *voces magicae*, see Bohak (2003), who points out that these so-called Hebrew names very rarely show up in Jewish magic. An unpublished greenish-black stone in the British Museum (1993, 2-6, 3) punctuates the palinode with two dots as αβλανα-θ-αναλβα, suggesting that the *theta* was added as a bridge letter and that the original name was αβλανα.

danger.[88] We shall see a similar ambiguity in Chapter 4, when it comes time to discuss Damnameneus, who in archaic times was a dangerous underworld demon, but who is equated in Late Antiquity more positively with the 'subduing sun'. But regardless of their meanings and origins, the disappearances of both the palindromic vowel-string and *ablanathanalba* on amulets were apparently helpful strategies to heal fever in the Roman period. In the next chapter I shall argue that we can actually witness the creation of a nonsensical *vox magica* like *ablanathanalba* in a series of magical recipes and gemstones concerned with bleeding.

[88] The word *ablanathanalba*, for example, appears on the reverse of twenty-seven magical gems in the British Museum, in most cases connected with solar deities, for example, on the back of gems showing Harpocrates sitting on the lotus plant (BM 105-106), an ithyphallic and orant baboon (BM 151), the cock-headed anguipede (BM 193, 208, 216-18 and 232), Helios himself (BM 243), and other solar motifs (BM 259, 272 and 289). In most of these cases we do not know the precise goal of the gems in question, but it seem clear that they were used to protect or to heal and that the word *ablanathanalba* invokes or names a solar force as protector or healer.

# CHAPTER 3

# BLEEDING: THE EVOLUTION OF A *VOX MAGICA*

In the first half of the last century, there was great interest in a pair of large hematite gemstones (nos. 23a-b; see Figures 3.1 and 3.2) that depict an armed male figure on the obverse beneath the receding edge of an enigmatic command that scholars rendered alternately as 'Tantalus-viper, drink blood!' (διψὰς Τάνταλε αἶμα πίε)[89] or 'Tu as soif, Tantale? Bois du sang!' (διψᾷς Τάνταλε; αἶμα πίε).

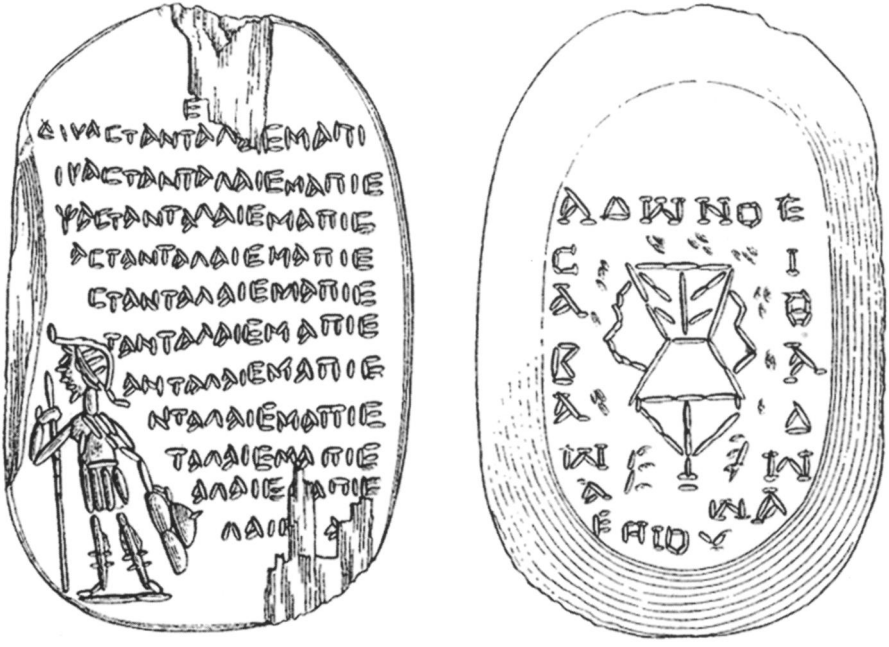


Figure 3.1

On the reverse side of these gems we find an upright vase or jar surrounded by a series of magical words, usually Greek transliterations of Hebrew angel-names or divine epithets. By mid-century scholars had come to a consensus that this vase represented a woman's womb and that the command to Tantalus on the obverse was designed to stop menorrhea.

[89] *SMA* no. 144 = BM 383. This chapter is an abridged version of Faraone (2009b), where I give a detailed discussion of the text and images on each stone. For the individual texts, see Appendix nos. 23a-i.

The vanishing command, in short, somehow forces Tantalus to drink the woman's blood, and thereby causes the bleeding to stop.[90]

In the last fifty years seven new examples of this amulet have come to light (23c-i), which introduce important variations in both the iconography and the vanishing inscription, and prompt us to revisit the question of precisely how these gems were thought to be effective. One important question, of course, is why the mythological figure of Tantalus is invoked: as Festugière suggested many years ago, the command on these gems must in some way be ironic, because in the underworld Tantalus is completely unable to drink or eat.[91] Bonner, on the other hand, focused on the diminishing text and claimed that as the text disappears, the bleeding will stop.[92] Given the data assembled in the previous two chapters – especially Marcellus' recipe for a blood-staunching amulet with the dwindling name *cuma* – this approach makes sense, at first glance. Such a comparison is not so easy to make, however, because the Tantalus gems inappropriately conflate the two very different kinds of speech-act that we encountered in the previous chapter: (i) a prayer or request to a supernatural being (often in the form of a simple imperative) to protect, heal or deliver the patient; and (ii) the dwindling name of the disease or the disease-causing demon.

There is, in fact, no other extant example of a vanishing sentence, question, or command on a magical amulet. Indeed, if the single word 'blood' (*haima*) were made to vanish, these amulets would easily fit into the logic of *deletio morbi*, according to which Greek words describing pathologies like 'headache' (*kephalargia*) and 'swollen uvula' (*staphulê*) are made to diminish and then vanish. But what does it mean when a full sentence disappears? Here, too, one might argue that the triangular formation is simply a means of exaggerating the force of the command, which appears both in the first line and along the diagonal. In what follows I shall, in fact, argue that, although non-vanishing versions of the command, extant in one Greek gem and two late Latin recipes, clearly command Tantalus to drink in order to bring different kinds of bleeding to a halt, the disappearing sentences on the nine Tantalus amulets are best understood as a kind of back-formation designed to undo the command to drink and thereby to restore the flow of blood. Such an explanation, as we shall see, fits in well with the consensus that the vase on the reverse of these gems represents a woman's uterus: these amulets, in short, were used only in the case of menstrual bleeding, in which hemorrhage can be either beneficial or pathological, depending on the context. All other kinds of human bleeding are, of course, pathological and must be stopped before health can ensue.

[90] H. J. Rose (1951), Barb (1952), Bonner (1950) 88-89, Festugière (1961) 288, and Mastrocinque (2000) 137.

[91] Festugière (1951) 88-89.

[92] Bonner (1950) 88 ('a cure for menorrhagia'), most recently reiterated by Mastrocinque (2000).

Figure 3.2

Scholars rightly understand the command on these gems to refer to Tantalus' famous punishment in the underworld, but it is not entirely clear how this tradition is being invoked. Our earliest and most influential description is the underworld scene of the *Odyssey* (11.582-87):[93]

> And I saw Tantalus in bitter torment, standing in a pool, and the water came close to his chin. He was wild with thirst (διψάων), but he had no way to drink; for as often as the old man (ὁ γέρων) stooped down, eager to drink, so often would the water be swallowed up and vanish away (ἀπολέσχετ' ἀναβροχέν), and at his feet the black earth would appear, for some *daimôn* would dry it all up (καταζήνασκε).

[93] Although there is little agreement as to precisely why Tantalus was punished, subsequent ancient sources tend to use the *Odyssey* passage as a guide to depicting the underworld scene (the one important variation is that a rock is suspended over his head, like Damocles' sword, instead of – or in addition to – the retreating food and water). Indeed, Pausanias (10.39.12) mentions Homer in his description of the scene from Polygnotus' famous painting in the Cnidian Lesche at Delphi. See Gantz (1993) 531-36.

The famous pool, at least as it is depicted here, seems to dry up in two discrete steps: (i) Tantalus attempts to drink the water, but then (ii) by the intervention of an unnamed *daimôn* the water immediately vanishes and dry ground appears at his feet. Tantalus is not, then, an obvious person to drink up the excess blood of the patient, unless, of course, we understand that the command triggers in a complicated manner the whole process, *i.e.*: '(try to) drink the blood, Tantalus, (so that some god will dry it up).' This is a problem to which we shall return.

Modern scholars have wavered between two interpretations of the first five letters that appear in nearly all versions of this inscription: ΔΙΨΑΣ. Seyrig printed δίψας and translated the entire command as 'Tantale assoiffé, bois le sang', suggesting that he understood δίψας to be an adjective or participle meaning 'thirsty'.[94] Bonner, on the other hand, accented it differently and thought it was the feminine noun διψάς, a snake whose bite caused legendary thirst in her victims. Therefore he translated the phrase as 'Tantalus-viper, drink blood', and connected this 'viper' with the bearded snakes on the reverse of the gem, which seemed to him to be drinking from the uterine symbol.[95] Independently of one another Festugiére, H. J. Rose, and Barb (with Delatte and Derchain eventually following suit) all took a different approach, suggesting that the word in question should be rendered διψᾷς, the second-person singular form of the verb διψᾶν, 'to thirst', and punctuating it as a short question followed by a command: 'Tu as soif, Tantale? Bois du sang!'[96] Their interpretation produces an ironic and memorable rhetorical question – of course Tantalus is thirsty! – and to this day it remains the favorite of scholars.[97] Nonetheless, the general approach of Seyrig seems preferable, because it is in line with the simple kinds of commands one finds on amulets and magical gemstones.[98] There is, to put it the other way around, no parallel for a rhetorical question followed by a command in magical texts. The *Odyssey*, moreover, the archetype of all descriptions of Tantalus' punishment, uses the participle διψάων (11.584) to describe him thirsting in Hades. I would agree, therefore, that ΔΙΨΑΣ is most likely some variant or deviant form of the aorist participle διψ<ήσ>ας (see note 94) that modifies the name Tantalus and makes reference to his famous thirst, *e.g.* 'O Tantalus, because you thirst, drink (the) blood (of the patient)!'

[94] Seyrig (1934) 3. Since the form and accentuation of δίψας do not accord with any known adjective or participial form of the verb διψᾶν, Festugière (1951) 86 was probably correct to suppose that Seyrig may have understood it as an faulty form of the participle διψ(ήσ)ας.

[95] Bonner (1950) 276. The word διψάς, -άδος is used in Greek as the feminine form of the adjective δίψιος, and also as a substantive for 'snake' (LSJ *s.v.*).

[96] Festugière (1951) 81, H. J. Rose (1951) 60, Barb (1952) 274, and D&D no. 364 *ad loc.* Ten years later Festugière (1961) 287 n. 2 reaffirmed his reading of διψᾷς, but he replaced the question mark in the middle of the text with a comma.

[97] More recently with a comma replacing the question mark: 'You are thirsty Tantalus, so drink blood!' See, *e.g.*, most recently Michel's comments in *DMG* (p. 156) and Mastrocinque (2000) 137. The switch to the comma was instigated by Festugière (see preceding note).

[98] *E.g.* διαφύλασσε (BM 28), πέπτε (BM 180), φύλαξον (BM 290), σταλῆτι (BM 351), or σῶζε (BM 460).

Figure 3.3

Figure 3.4

As was often the case in the fever amulets discussed in the previous chapter, the vanishing name is not alone on these gems. In six cases we find a kind of symbol placed halfway down the diminishing side of the disappearing word, like the *charactêres* that appear along the edge of the triangular names on fever amulets. On one gem (23a; see Figure 3.2) Zeus' thunderbolt appears, and it probably has the same threatening role that it has when it appears on evil eye amulets, where it often assaults the eye from above.[99] In the five other cases we see symbols constructed of triangular shapes, which all have a corner pointing downwards: a diamond (23c and f); a 'spindle' constructed of two isosceles triangles joined at the base (23e); a V-shape (23h); and an upside-down isosceles triangle (23i).[100] But, even more importantly, we find in all nine examples an anthropomorphic figure incised in a lower corner of the gem – also along the shrinking edge of the disappearing command: on seven (nos. 23a-g) a warrior armed with helmet and spear leans on his shield in the lower left corner (see *e.g.* Figures 3.1 and 3.2), while on the remaining two (nos. 23h-i) we find a bound nude figure with the head of an ass (or perhaps a jackal) in the lower right corner or a similar lion-headed figure in the lower left; both are apparently trying to flee (see Figure 3.4).[101] These

[99] See Engemann (1975) 26 for the thunderbolt descending on evil eye amulets.

[100] One might be tempted to call the V-shaped object (Figure 23h) an *upsilon*, but it has serifs and the letters found elsewhere on this gem and indeed in this entire series are all without serifs.

[101] BM 384 and Getty 83.AN.437.50. For discussion see Michel (1997) 294-95. Unfortunately both of these gems are fragments, a common problem with hematite gems, which can be very friable. The Getty gem (Fig. 3.4) was refashioned in a much smaller format after it broke; see Faraone (2009b) 257 n. 18.

figures seem to be independent of the symbols that are placed above their heads, except in the case of the lion-headed one (see Figure 3.4), whose head is touched by the point of an inverted isosceles triangle, which (if done by design) might indicate an attack on or threat to the bound figure below.

The two animal-headed figures are usually interpreted as demons, who are represented here somewhat paradoxically as both bound and in flight. This posture thus seems to combine two traditional Greek methods of dealing with enemies and demons, which are sometimes bound and at other times urged to flee in theriomorphic shapes.[102] I suggest, then, that the bound and fleeing demons represent the same source of danger or evil as the disappearing command: according to the logic of the design, as the command shrinks the demon gets farther away. We shall encounter a similar kind of logic in the next chapter, where a vanishing name seems to be equated with an expulsion ritual (*apopompê*) designed to chase a demon or disease away from a community or a single human body.

As for the armed and stationary figure on the seven other gems, Seyrig suggested that this was Tantalus himself,[103] but the simplest interpretation of both types of figures and their interchangeability would be that the bound and fleeing demon is imagined as the cause of the disease, while the unencumbered soldier plays some kind of protective or curative role like the *charaktêres* or the Egyptian gods found alongside the dwindling names on fever amulets: he stands confidently with his back to the receding inscription, in some cases apparently with the wind on his face. [104] Indeed, a similar Ares figure stands in the same pose along the edge of a disappearing vowel sequence that was discussed at the end of the previous chapter. Scholars generally identify this figure as Ares because a similar warrior appears on a pair of hematite gemstones in the British Museum (*e.g.* Figure 3.5) accompanied by the inscription: 'Ares cut the pain of the liver' (Ἄρης ἔτεμεν τοῦ ἥπατος τὸν πόνον).[105]

Yet another gemstone shows a similar Ares-figure striding forward with upraised shield and spear: before his feet a tiny, knee-high demon runs away looking back at Ares. This demon resembles the lion-headed one on the Tantalus gem in Figure 3.4, and has a similarly contorted pose.[106] The Ares-figures, then, are undoubtedly positive protective

[102] See Faraone (1991b) for binding rituals and (2004a) for the rituals that expel *e.g.* headache-causing demons as horses or wolves; for the latter see also my discussion in the next chapter.

[103] Seyrig (1934) 4, followed by D&D no. 364 *ad loc.* Bonner (1950) 88 and Festugière (1951) 86 disagree. The influential Homeric description (quoted earlier) described Tantalus as an old man, which the warrior figure is not.

[104] This paragraph is heavily indebted to Michel (1997) 152-54. The fact that the warrior stands with his back to the dwindling name is unexpected; given the pattern of confrontation discussed in the previous chapter, we should expect Ares to face the receding edge of the name.

[105] BM nos. 385-86; see Michel (1997) 152-53 and Faraone (2009b) for discussion of the image. The inscription is similar in form to a series of iambic healing inscriptions; see Faraone (2009a), who restores the meter by emending the text to Ἄρης ἔτεμνεν τὸν πόνον τοῦ ἥπατος ('Ares was cutting the pain of the liver').

[106] *SMA* 54, also illustrated in *DMG* Taf. 56.3. See Michel (1997) 153-54 for discussion.

Figure 3.5

forces, whereas the craven animal-headed figures represent the frightened demons that were thought to cause the disease. The thunderbolt and the triangular symbols, on the other hand, seem to perform the same function as the *charactêres* on the other amulets: they, too, represent powerful forces that threaten and contain the name. On one of the gems, as was mentioned earlier, the triangular symbol seems to do double duty (see Figure 3.4): it appears on the receding flank of the disappearing command, but it also seems to attack the head of the fleeing demon, thus threatening the letters and the demonic image at the same time.

The interpretation of the imagery on the reverse of the stones has not raised much controversy, so it can be discussed briefly. We usually find an upright wide-mouthed vessel balanced on its tip or set on a stand and surrounded on all four sides by the powerful names of the Jewish god Iaô (= Jahweh), Sabaô(th) and Adônai, the seven vowels, sometimes preceded by a symbol of the sun and followed by a crescent moon, and a fourth name of uncertain meaning that may originally have had, like Sabaô(th), a Semitic ending: Thadôa(th). These names seem to be positioned on all four sides so that they can protect or restrain the womb, like the *ouroboros* serpent that often appears on other uterine amulets. [107] On four of these gems (23a-c and g; see Figure 3.1), we see a pair of snakes, sometimes bearded, hovering at either side of the uterine jug. On the other gems (see Figure 3.2) the snakes are less carefully rendered and seem to devolve into makeshift handles for the jug. This is probably a later development, since none of the other depictions of the womb on gemstones – for example the popular upside-down type with a key – are shown with

[107] Ritner (1984) 219-20 shows that the protective *ouroboros* serpent is a very old Egyptian device, correcting Bonner *SMA* no. 144, who calls it a 'conventional border'.

handles. Bonner thought these snakes were drinking from the upright uterine vessel, but their mouths do not actually touch or stretch over the lip of the jug.[108] The beard on some of the snakes suggests, moreover, an Egyptian origin for the iconography and divine status for the snakes.[109] If this is correct, then the snakes may simply be there to reinforce the sense that we also get from the inscribed angelic names: the uterine vessel is surrounded by powerful supernatural beings and perhaps even threatened, much as the evil eye is often depicted surrounded by dangerous animals.[110]

Barb saw from the very beginning that these Tantalus gems belong to the same tradition as two amulet recipes preserved in late Latin medical handbooks.[111] The first, a cure for nosebleed, requires us to inscribe with the patient's blood the following charm on three laurel leaves (in Greek transliterated into Latin letters): *Tantale pie, pie Tantale, Tantale pie*! ('Tantalus drink! Drink Tantalus! Tantalus drink!').[112] The script is then washed off with leek juice and given to the patient to drink. Here one imagines that by ingesting the command 'Drink, Tantalus!' Tantalus will in some way drink the blood from within the body and the exterior bleeding from the nose will stop. The second Latin recipe is designed to stop the flow of blood generally. We are instructed to write the following text on a sheet of papyrus (*charta*) and then tie it with a thread to the sufferer's body – around the neck for men and the belly for women:[113] *Sicut terra<m> non tangat, ita sanguinem bibe Tantale, Tantale bibe sanguinem, bibe Tantale* ('Just as it [*i.e.* the amulet] does not touch the earth, so drink blood Tantalus! Tantalus drink blood! Drink Tantalus!'). Here the charm is translated, rather than transliterated (Greek *pie* becomes Latin *bibe*), and Tantalus is explicitly directed to drink blood, whereas in the previous Latin charm he was commanded simply to drink. The first part of this spell is obscure. As in the previous example, the famously thirsty Tantalus is encouraged to drink up the blood of the patient so that the hemorrhage will cease. The persuasive analogy (*sicut ... ita*) suggests, however, some unexpected limits to his actions: Tantalus is to drink blood only as long as the amulet does not touch the ground, that is, as long as it is tied to the patient. It would seem, then, that the author of this recipe can imagine a time when the patient would take the amulet off, presumably at a time when the bleeding has stopped for good or when (in the case of healthy menstrual bleeding) there is need for it to begin again.

[108] See, *e.g.*, a similar pair of serpents with a starburst or solar symbol over their heads, but between them stands a pair of facing mummies instead of a jug (De Clerc Collection of the Cabinet des Médailles no. 3472).

[109] Guralnick (1974).

[110] For examples, see Levi (1941) and Dunbabin and Dickie (1983) and Figure 5.4 in this volume.

[111] Barb (1952) 271-72.

[112] V. Rose (1894) 276, Önnerfors (1993) 207, and Michel (1997) 153. The spell is preserved in the so-called 'Additamenta Pseudo-Theodori'. Barb (1952) 272 suggests plausibly that the text must have been inscribed in three sections (as punctuated by commas in the translation), one for each of the three laurel leaves.

[113] Heim no. 122. I give the improved text of Önnerfors (1993) 207 n.106.

Scholars generally agree that the Tantalus gemstones and these two Latin spells all have the same purpose: to encourage Tantalus to stop the bleeding by drinking the excess blood.[114] In part this consensus is encouraged by the ancient belief that the stone from which all of the Tantalus-amulets are carved – hematite, literally 'bloodstone' – had natural blood-staunching powers.[115] Both the general rule (all hematite stones are styptic amulets) and the specific application of it (all the Tantalus-amulets are styptic amulets) need to be re-examined. In the first case, hematite had other properties that connected it analogically with blood – especially the fact that some types, when wetted and rubbed, produce a blood-colored liquid.[116] In this case, since the stone itself seems to bleed, it is entirely plausible that it could also have been used in rites that aimed to encourage bleeding. We know, in fact, of at least one magical spell designed to promote uterine bleeding: a fragmentary amulet-recipe from a Greek magical handbook of third-century CE date (no. 24 = *PGM* LXII.76-106). The rubric and introduction have not survived, but the request to be inscribed on the papyrus amulet makes its purpose abundantly clear: 'Let the genitals and the womb of her, So-and-so, be open and let her become bloody by night and day.'[117] This is, of course, the opposite of the alleged goal of the Tantalus gemstones. The papyrus recipe tells us to write this prayer in lamb's blood – or perhaps menstrual blood[118] – on a small chit along with a complicated design (see Figure 3.6) that is centered around a drawing of a cup- or bowl-shaped object, which probably represents an open uterus – that is, one that can bleed freely.[119]

The phrase 'in this way shaped like a heart' (οὕτως καρδιοειδῶς) appears above the mouth of the womb-cup. Although some commentators believe this phrase refers to the cup-shaped drawing itself,[120] it must refer to the partially rendered disappearing name αριουαθωρμενερτιουμαιισι that precedes it. As we can see, the scribe wrote out the first two iterations and the first letter of the third and then drew a diagonal line to indicate in

[114] The Latin recipes undoubtedly preserve a much older Greek practice of using oral incantations to stop bleeding, as for example the incantation that the sons of Autolykos use to stop the bleeding from Odysseus' wounded thigh (*Odyssey* 19.455–58); see Renehan (1992) for bibliography and discussion. See below for a hematite gemstone in Perugia that carries the Greek inscription: 'Drink Tantalus!'

[115] Barb (1952) 279-80 and Hanson (1995) 290-91.

[116] Hanson, *loc. cit.* (n. 115 above), who also notes that in medicine hematite was often heated up, pulverized, and then steeped in water or oil, which produced a blood-colored liquid that was given to the patient to drink or rubbed on the skin. See Barb (1969) for detailed discussion.

[117] Barb (1959) 368 suggests it was designed to facilitate an abortion by opening up the womb. See Aubert (1989) 428-41 for additional arguments – he suggests that the spell might have been used as a curse against another woman to force her to abort.

[118] See the revised text of F.A.J. Hoogendijk *apud* Aubert (1989) 430 n. 14.

[119] See, *e.g.*, Preisendanz, *PGM ad loc.*: 'Geöffnete μήτρα?' and Aubert (1989) 429-30: 'a representation of female genitalia or open cervix.'

[120] Barb (1953) 202 with n. 156, apparently followed by Aubert (1989) 429. But the expression καρδιοειδῶς always refers to vanishing names: see n. 4 above.

shorthand the path the disappearing left edge of the triangle should take. At the end of this

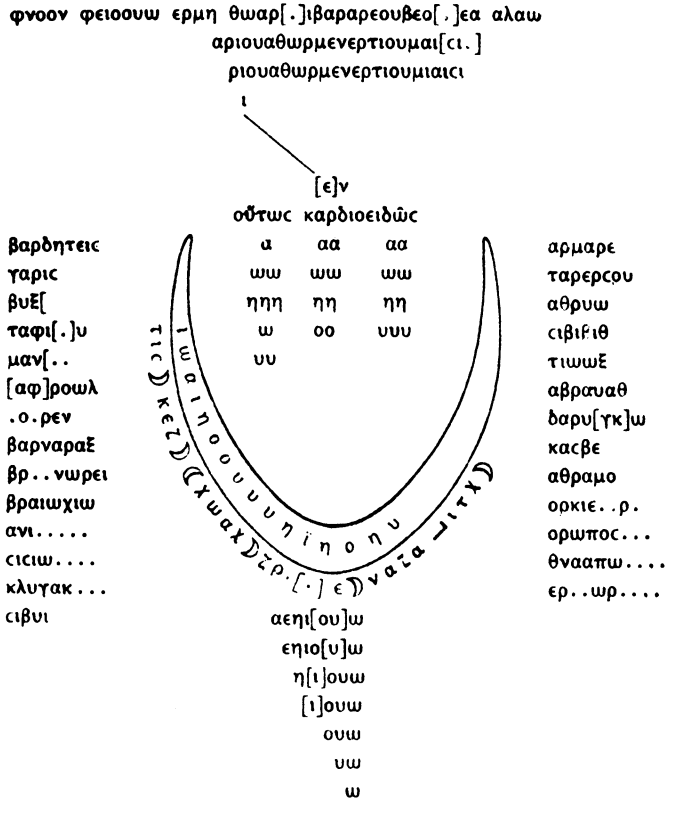



Figure 3.6

diagonal he gives us the last iteration (*epsilon nu*), from which we can see that he wants the word to disappear in a heart-shaped formation. The lacuna at the start of this recipe leaves the exact mechanics of this amulet obscure, but since the long heart-shaped disappearing name (αριουαθωρμενερτιουμαιισι) is positioned above the uterine cup, and since its first line is slightly longer than the opening of the cup,[121] I suspect that it represents a lid or stopper for the cup that could effectively seal it off, if placed upon it. If this suspicion is correct, then as the name blocking the entrance to the uterus disappears, the blood can flow freely again from the womb. Like many of the more complicated fever amulets, the vanishing word is preceded and followed by magical words that are presumably designed to confront the name and encourage it to disappear. At the end of the recipe we are told to bury the inscribed papyrus 'by the side of a stream', where presumably the constantly flowing waters will

[121] The proportions are clearer in the photograph in Aubert (1989) plate 1 (facing p. 432) than the drawing in *PGM*, which appears here as Figure 3.6.

Figure 3.7

provide yet another model for the hoped-for appearance of the woman's uterine blood.[122] It would seem, then, that not all amulets that concern the uterus and blood are designed to stop bleeding, and that a disappearing name could be used to remove a uterine blockage or induce delayed menarche.[123]

At the heart of this amulet, I think, lies the traditional ambiguity in the treatment of uterine blood in Greek medicine and magic.[124] If a person's nose or wound bleeds, this is always a bad thing and the bleeding must be stopped, but the flow of menstrual blood can, of course, be both good and bad, depending on the context. If a woman does not want to be pregnant, the disappearance of her menses is a bad sign. But if she is happily pregnant or desires to be so, the appearance of her menses is an alarming or disappointing sign. We see this ambivalence clearly in another genre of uterine amulet, which survives in two different versions, depending on whether the patient wishes the uterus to be open or closed. On these gems, nearly all of them hematite like the Tantalus amulets, the uterus is depicted as an inverted jar (not upright as on the Tantalus gems) with its mouth covered by a key (see, *e.g.*, BM 352 in Figure 3.7). Delatte suggested that this key was always

[122] The Greek is παρὰ ῥοῦν, which J. Scarborough *apud GMPT* translates as 'near sumac', which is possible, but I follow Preisendanz *apud PGM*: 'neben einem fliessenden Wasser.' Aubert (1989) 433-34 seems to follow Scarborough, but allows for both meanings in the passage.

[123] There is, of course, much more about this complex amulet that eludes us: there are columns of magical words on either side of the uterine cup, which is itself labeled with a long string of vowels and has another string of vowels (punctuated with crescent moons) curving beneath it. At the bottom a small wing-shaped formation of the seven vowels disappears below the cup, where the papyrus is badly abraded.

[124] Rightly stressed by Ritner (1984) 213-14, against Barb (1952) 279-81. See also Hanson (1995) 284.

meant to close the uterus, either to prevent conception or to prevent spontaneous abortion, but Bonner more cautiously maintained that these gems had a variety of purposes.[125]

We now know, in fact, that these amulets could be used to open or close the womb and thereby promote or impede bleeding or birth. Ritner points out, for example, that the Egyptian *soroor*-formula, which appears on some of these gemstones, is also used in spells to open doors and to facilitate escape, and he shows that when it appears on uterus-gemstones it aims at opening, not closing the womb.[126] He also demonstrates that the identity of the Egyptian gods who often appear on top of the womb or on the reverse side of the gem could also signal different uses: when Seth appears, for instance, the purpose of the gem is probably to open the womb to induce bleeding or abortion, [127] but when it is Khnum, either in his Egyptian, ram-headed guise or as the Hellenistic Chnoubis-serpent, the goal is to open the womb for childbirth.[128] A similar argument might be made for a few amulets on which the key to the womb is positioned with its tines reversed (*i.e.* pointing away from the mouth of the womb), suggesting that the womb is unlocked: on two of them Seth or Anubis appears on the obverse, hinting that abortion is the goal,[129] but on another Chnoubis appears over the womb, suggesting birth.[130] There is also a small subset of these gems in which the jug-like womb is reversed: its mouth points upwards like the vases on the back of the Tantalus gems, rather than downwards, and in one case the key is at the back of the womb, not the mouth.[131] All of these reversals suggest a binary use of these hematite gems to either open or close the womb, depending on the circumstances. It is, of course, beyond the scope of this study to analyze the large corpus of gemstones that depict the uterus and its key, but suffice it to say that despite their familiar blood-staunching qualities hematite amulets were used to open and close the womb, to stop and start menstrual bleeding, and for other purposes as well, and that their varied iconography and inscriptions can help us fine-tune our understanding of them.

Let us return to the Tantalus gems. In the Latin recipe for the laurel-leaf charm, Tantalus is invoked in transliterated Greek to drink, in order to stop bleeding from the patient's nose. The simile used in the second Latin recipe (the one for the papyrus amulet)

[125] Delatte (1914) and Bonner (1950) 87.

[126] Ritner (1984) 218-19.

[127] Ritner (1984) 215-16. Behind Seth's appearance lies the story that he tried to rape Isis when she was pregnant in order to cause her to abort Horus, the son of Seth's great rival Osiris. The threat of Sethian rape is actually depicted in gems that seem to show a recumbent ithyphallic donkey attempting to penetrate a pregnant or parturient woman; see Barb (1959) and Ritner (1984) 215 n. 49 and Dasen (2008).

[128] Ritner (1984) 214-15 and 217.

[129] BM 381 and an unpublished hematite in a private collection in Berlin, which is described and discussed briefly by Michel *ad DMG* 54.5b, who provides her own photograph in Taf. 72.1.

[130] BM 381.

[131] Wombs with upward mouths: D&D nos. 344 (an Osirian mummy on top of key), 350 (Chnoubis on top of key), 362 (the key is below and at the back of the womb), and 363 (it also has an inscription: φύλαξον Σελευκίαν [ἀπὸ παντ]ὸς μητρικοῦ [πάθους?]).

suggests that it, too, was used to prevent bleeding, because as long as the patient wears the amulet and keeps it from touching the ground, Tantalus is exhorted to drink the blood of the patient. Because of the transliterated Greek in the first recipe, Barb rightly understood that both of these late Latin recipes derived from Greek originals, and, in fact, Vitellozzi has recently published a hematite gem in Perugia that is inscribed on the reverse with the simple command πίε Τάνταλε; on its damaged obverse one can make out three inverted jug-like objects that he identifies as a symbolic representation of a tripartite womb surrounded by letters.[132] This gem, in short, seems to be a version of the nine Tantalus gems discussed above, with one important difference: the command to Tantalus does not disappear. If the nine Tantalus gemstones surveyed here had been inscribed just once with the command 'Because you are thirsty, Tantalus drink blood!' and not repeated in a disappearing formation, then I would agree that they had the same goal as the gem from Perugia: to stop the bleeding.

But since the command disappears in a wing-formation, we have a more complicated case, in which both Tantalus and the command to drink are forced to vanish and the opposite effect is desired: to allow or promote uterine bleeding. The wing-formation, in short, nullifies or reverses the original command to drink, just as in the first of the Latin recipes the efficacy of the inscribed command *Tantale bibe sanguinem* is nullified or reversed by removing the amulet and placing it on the ground. Such a reversal, of course, only makes sense in the case of menorrhea, [133] which is, as we have seen, a unique category of human bleeding: it can either be healthy or pathological, depending on the context. The uterine image on the reverse of the Tantalus gems makes this connection explicit: if Tantalus was imagined to be drinking the excess blood of a non-bleeding woman, then it makes sense to reverse the situation by inscribing the original command in wing-formation and thereby dismantling it one letter at a time – almost as if one were tearing up letter by letter the original command to drink. Such a development in the evolution of the Tantalus amulets might, in fact, help to explain some of the variations and mistakes in the vanishing command on the gems (see Figure 3.8),[134] for it may well be that some scribes, used to inscribing exotic or nonsensical *voces magicae* or words in wing-formation, did not, in fact, understand what they were writing and may have treated the sentence δίψας Τάνταλε αἷμα πίε as if it were a nonsensical magical logos of nineteen letters (διψασταναλεαιμαπιε), just like the

[132] Vitellozzi *apud SGG* vol.II, Pe 26: 'raffigurazione simbolica dell' utero; l'organo è tripartite e termina in tre segmenti filamentosi.' The Greek letters around the mutilated edge are too difficult to make sense of, but presumably recorded the name of some powerful deity or angel, as we find on the back of the Tantalus gems.

[133]This seems assured by the command at the end of the recipe to tie the amulet around the waist (if the patient is a woman) but around the neck, if it is a man.

[134] For a detailed discussion of the individual texts, see Faraone (2009b). The Tantalus gem in the Getty with the lion-headed demon (no. 22i, illustrated in Figure 3.4), was broken at some point in antiquity and then reworked in a smaller format, in which only the letters ασταναλαιε disappear. Presumably the person who salvaged the gem did not realize that the full name was comprehensible.

vanishing *nomen* of twenty-four letters (αριουαθωρμενερτιουμαιισι) in the *PGM* LXII recipe for inducing menorrhea (no. 24; see Figure 3.6).[135]

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ΔΙΨΑΣ | ΤΑΝΤΑΛΕ | ΑΙΜΑ | ΠΙΕ | (no. 23a) |
| ΔΙΨΑΣ | ΤΑΝΤΑΛ | ΑΙΕΜΑ | ΠΙΕ | (nos. 23b, d, f, and g) |
| ΔΙΨΣ | ΤΝΑΛ | ΑΜΕ | ΠΙΕ | (no. 23c) |
| | ΤΑΝΤΑΛ | ΑΙΕΜΑ | ΠΙΕ | (no. 23e) |
| ΔΙΨΑΣ | ΤΑΝΤΑΛ | ΑΙΕΜΑ | | (no. 23f) |

Figure 3.8

We saw a similar range of degeneration in the execution of the uterine cup on the reverse of the Tantalus gems: on the highest quality examples (those that also preserve the best versions of the inscription) we see the bearded serpents hovering at the side of the womb vessel, but in the poorly executed gems they have degenerated into mere jug handles. Such confusion or degeneration of the exemplar may also explain the deviant form of δίψας (= the participle διψήσας?) in several of the nine extant versions and the problem of inconsistent spelling in many of them ( *e.g.* the missing *iota* in δίψας in no. 23c).[136]

We might have expected scribes to know better and to correct such problems, but they could only have done so if they had expected that they would be confronted with a comprehensible Greek command. But this need not have been their expectation at all. Indeed, the most recently published version of the command (no. 23c: διψστναλαμπιε) would not be at all comprehensible to modern readers if we did not have the other gems as models for reconstructing it. Likewise, I suspect that the disappearing word σανταλαλα to be spoken aloud and inscribed in *PGM* II.5 and 66 (discussed in Chapter 1) is, in fact, an even more truncated and corrupt version of the same command: [δίψα]ς [Τ]άνταλ[ε]α[ῖμα]).[137] Since out of the roughly seventy extant Greek examples of disappearing words and names collected in the Appendix there is no other example of an entire phrase or sentence vanishing, and since most of the words of nineteen letters or larger are nonsensical, it is quite probable that many scribes would not have expected the disappearing letters on the Tantalus-amulets to be sensible Greek, especially after they had suffered the varying degrees of corruption and confusion displayed above in Figure 3.8.[138] The non-vanishing command was, in short, originally comprehensible and was

[135] See Chapter 5 for discussion of a fever amulet (no. 9) that runs the three names Iao, Sabaoth, and Adonai into a longer *vox magica.*

[136] Faraone (2009b).

[137] For the tendency of disappearing words to lose their first iterations, see Chapter 1, n. 15. In the *PGM* II spell another disappearing word, ακρακαναρβα, is to be used twice in tandem with σανταλαλα. I suggest that it, too, seems to be a corrupted and truncated version of the popular palindrome αβλαναθαναλβα (see no. 42 in the Appendix for the variant ακλαναθαναλκα). Both of these words, at least as they appear in the papyrus, are unparalleled, which raises the suspicion that they are both, in fact, corrupted versions of these better known words or phrases.

[138] See Versnel (2002) 138-39 for other examples of the corruption and loss of intelligibility of Greek words that in Latin spells become nonsense.

composed to stop bleeding, as we can see in the two Latin incantations and on the Perugia gemstone; the disappearing version of it, on the other hand, was also presumably decipherable, when it was first created as a back-formation that encouraged bleeding, but I suggest that it eventually came to be treated as if it were a single, nonsensical magical word, whose disappearance would lead to bleeding. We saw the same kind of devolution of a comprehensible Greek word in the Latin recipe for an amulet against bleeding (no. 25; discussed in Chapter 1), on which the word *sicucuma* vanishes – a word that probably was equally unrecognizable to its users as an awkward combination (with an added medial vowel) of Latin *sic* and *cuma*, the Greek word for 'flood'.

Finally, what role does the mythological figure of Tantalus play in our understanding of this series of amulets? Clearly in the Roman period, when these amulets and Latin charms were in use, the focus is on Tantalus as a drinker. But why blood? There are, in fact, hints that in some darker versions of his myth he killed his own son Pelops, butchered him, and served him up to the gods.[139] The details are sketchy, because our earliest source, Pindar, successfully suppresses this horrific story, but there is no evidence that Tantalus himself ever ate the flesh or drank the blood he had prepared. Indeed, such consumption would be atypical of such myths, like the feast of Thyestes, where the one who tricks his enemy into cannibalism does not himself join in the final meal. The trope of poetic justice in the Hellenic underworld suggests, moreover, that Tantalus was punished by continual hunger and thirst because he spectacularly overindulged in eating and drinking. Perhaps there was a (now lost) saying or moral tale about Tantalus the glutton, who would eat or drink anything. The command, then, is not so much ironic, as Festugière suggested, but cruel-hearted: we command Tantalus to drink, knowing full well that he will not be successful, but his endless attempts to do so will periodically cause the unnamed *daimôn* to dry up the flowing stream that feeds the pool. The Homeric scene may, in fact, explain why Tantalus was deemed especially appropriate to control menorrhea: the filling and emptying of the underworld pool provides a good model for a regular alternation of flow and cessation, one not dissimilar to the healthy menstrual flows of a woman. On the other hand, since all of the Tantalus gems with a clear or vague provenance come from the eastern Mediterranean (the Levant, Cyprus, or Egypt), and since we are vaguely aware of another, non-Peloponnesian Tantalus, who ruled as a king in Anatolia, it is possible that this eastern king was (in an account that failed to survive) a capacious drinker or glutton.[140]

[139] Gantz (1993) 531-33.

[140] Mastrocinque (2000).

# CHAPTER 4

# HEADACHE AND SORE THROAT: VANISHING ACT AS EXPULSION

Up until this point we have primarily concerned ourselves with simple acts of name-magic: as the name of a disease, a magical word, or a string of vowels vanishes, the pathology itself – a fever, a swollen uvula, or an unwanted flow of blood – likewise diminishes and then disappears. Even the full command to Tantalus seems in time to have metamorphosed into a single disappearing magical word διψσταλαμπιε. But the use of proper names or epithets on some of the fever amulets discussed in Chapter 2 – for example: Erichthoniê or Gorgophônos – complicates the picture, for it transforms an illness into a personified demon, who, in the case of Gorgophônos, for instance, is imagined to have a voice. We also saw how two of the Tantalus gems seem to equate the vanishing letters with the image of an animal-headed demon running away in fright. In this chapter we shall explore in greater detail the idea that dwindling names not only make illnesses disappear, but also make demons 'flee' or 'withdraw'. In what follows I offer close readings of a number of amulets for headache and sore throat, because the names of the attacking demons in these cases happen to be known to us from much earlier literary texts: Damnameneus, a demon who subdues people in the underworld, and Lycurgus, the mad king of Thrace, who tried to kill Dionysus and his Bacchic followers and who eventually cut down his own son with a pruning hook, because he thought the boy was a grapevine.

Our first datum is an agate gem (no. 18) from Anapa, a Russian city that lies on the north coast of the Black Sea (Figure 4.1).[141] Despite the unusual spherical shape of the stone, the inscriptions divide up sensibly into two coherent groups, each twelve lines long:[142]

[141] Inv. 835. The gem is 3.5 cm in diameter. For brief discussion see Neverov (1978) vol. 2. 833-48, no. 50, plate clxxvi, who dates the text to the 2nd-3rd century CE. The gem was discovered in 1950 near Anapa, presumably in or close to the nearby ruins of ancient Gorgippia, a city that was founded in the 6th century BCE as a Greek emporium, grew to a prosperous city by the 3rd century BCE, and was eventually destroyed by the Goths in the 3rd century CE.

[142] I follow the text of Neverov (1978) with two exceptions: I have emended line 15 (where he prints τοῦ κορυφησεν κεφαλ[αίου]) and (using the new photographs in Figure 4.1 as my guide) I print φραμφειρεινλελαμε at line 2 (instead of his φραμφερεινλελαμε) and πολύπου in line 22 (instead of his πολύπον). In this chapter I do not discuss the list of the parts of the head on the reverse of this gem, a list which is very similar to one found in the Hippocratic *Peri Pathôn*. For a detailed discussion of the entire text and its close relationship to medical handbooks see Faraone (2010b) 92-94.

Figure 4.1

Obverse:

πρὸς φαρμάκων ἀποπομπάς
φραμφειρεινλελαμε
Δαμναμενεύς
αμναμενεύς
μναμενεύς
ναμενεύς
αμενεύς
μενεύς
ενεύς
νεύς
εύς
ύς

Reverse:

κύριε δέομαί σου ποη{ι}σο[ν]
τὴμ μάθην ἀκὴν ὑγείην
περὶ τῆς κορυφῆς. ἐνκεφάλ[ου] [5 MAGICAL SYMBOLS]
ὤτων [6 MAGICAL SYMBOLS]
μήνιγγος [4 MAGICAL SYMBOLS]
σταφυλῆ[ς] [3 MAGICAL SYMBOLS] πρμηρυμα
τραχήλου λαχμαληλ
μετώπου λαροιμαια
μυκτῆρος κηρεα
πολύπου σαηηι
ὀδόντων [MAGICAL SYMBOL]
στόματος

OBVERSE:

For the sendings-away of *pharmaka*:
phrampheireinlelame
Damnameneus
amnameneus
mnameneus
nameneus
ameneus
meneus
eneus
neus
eus
us

REVERSE:

Lord, I beg of you, grant
the knowledge, healing, health,
concerning the head. For the brain [5 MAGICAL SYMBOLS]
For the ears [6 MAGICAL SYMBOLS]
For the eardrum [4 MAGICAL SYMBOLS]
For the uvula [3 MAGICAL SYMBOLS] Prmêruma
For the throat Lachmalêl
For the forehead Laroimaia
For the nostril Kêrea
For the polyp Saêêi
For the teeth [1 MAGICAL SYMBOL]
For the mouth

The first line of the obverse, which I translate above as 'For the sendings-away of *pharmaka*', seems to be a rubric copied from a magical handbook, but there is no exact parallel for it in our extant papyri. [143] The word *pharmakon* can refer to both a 'poison' and a '(hostile) incantation', and we do, in fact, have evidence that the Greeks used amulets to protect themselves against both.[144] The closest parallel comes from a fourth-century CE magical handbook: 'For the loosening of spells (*pros lusin pharmakôn*)', an idea that we

[143] The following discussion is an abridged version of Faraone (2010b) 94-104.

[144] See, *e.g.*, *GMA* 36.15-16 and 52.12, with Kotansky's comments *ad locc.*, for amulets against poison; those against curses and hostile incantations are treated below. There is a small possibility that the word φαρμάκων is (with a change of accent) φαρμακῶν, the genitive plural of the word φαρμακός, 'scapegoat', and that the phrase refers to 'the sending away of scapegoats' – which is, of course, precisely what one does with scapegoats (see next note). The word is rare, however, in the Roman period and does not appear at all in magical texts, so it seems imprudent to interject it here, although (as we shall see below) scapegoat rituals are close kin to the ritual imagined by the creator of the Anapa gem.

also find at the start of a short incantation to be inscribed on a three-cornered ostrakon (*PGM* XXXVI.256-64: 'Asstraelos Chraelos, loosen every spell (*pan pharmakon*) against me, so-and-so...'. The verb 'to loosen' (*luein*) in this text and the cognate noun 'loosening' (*lusis*) in the previous one both imagine the undoing of some kind of binding spell or curse. The real oddity, then, is the use of ἀποπομπή, a noun derived from the verb ἀποπέμπειν, 'to send away', which usually refers to purification rituals during which polluted off-scourings (often called *pharmaka*) are carried away, or to scapegoat rituals, during which polluted animals or people (often called *pharmakoi*) are driven out of a town or household.[145] As we shall see, the creator of the Anapa gem seemed to think (logically enough) that the process of sending the demon away was equivalent to making it disappear.

We find, moreover, a handful of references in magical texts of similar date to the defensive use of such rituals against curses, as in a stipulation in a long imprecation from Apamea in Syria, which attempts to bind a charioteer named Hyperechius (*DT* 15):[146] '... or if anyone made rites of expulsion or rites of aversion on his behalf (ἀποπομπὰς ἤδε ἀποτροπὰς ἐποίησεν ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ), loosen, loosen completely all (*i.e.* such) aid (λύσατε, ἀπολύσατε πᾶσαν βοήθιαν) made on behalf of Hyperechius, son of Remmachus, of the Blue team.' Since this stipulation is designed to undo any possible help (βοήθια) that the victim Hyperechius may have used to protect himself against curses, it seems best to understand ἀποπομπὰς ἤδε ἀποτροπάς as repeated rituals (note the plural here, as in the Anapa gem) of escort and aversion aimed at shielding him from precisely the kind of malevolent spell illustrated by the lead tablet from Apamea, which is itself a curse that aims at preventing Hyperechius from winning his next chariot race.[147] The fact that the author of this curse uses the plural nouns ἀποπομπαί and ἀποτροπαί in tandem further strengthens this interpretation, since the latter ('rites of aversion') are always protective or defensive in nature.[148] We find a similar pairing in the late Greek lexicographer Pollux, who tells us that the *daimones* who loosen curses (οἱ λύοντες τὰς ἀράς) are called ἀλεξίκακοι, ἀποπομπαῖοι and ἀποτρόπαιοι (1.131).

The single word in the second line on the gemstone (φραμφειρεινλελαμε) is a *vox magica* that in some way or other invokes or acclaims an immortal solar being.[149] Its placement, moreover, just above the first line of the name, recalls the placement of other powerful names and symbols above the vanishing names on several of the fever amulets discussed in Chapter 2, for example: the names of the trinity placed above *ablanathanalba* on Tiron's amulet (see Figure 2.2); four magical words above the vanishing vowels on

[145] For recent bibliography on the latter, see Faraone (2004a). For the former, see Parker (1983) 257-80.

[146] The curse is quite fragmentary, but since the stipulation is repeated twice in lines 3-7, the text is secure.

[147] The use of the imperatives λύσατε and ἀπολύσατε strengthens this impression, since λύειν and its compounds are often used in the sense of 'loosening' magical spells or 'releasing' someone from them. See, *e.g.*, a silver amulet from Syria, which urges (*GMA* 46.8-12): λύσατε τὴν Ἰουλιανὴν ἀπὸ πάσης φαρμακίας ('Release Juliana from all witchcraft!').

[148] See Faraone (2004b) for numerous examples of the verb ἀποτρέπειν on amulets.

[149] For full discussion, see Faraone (2009b) 96-97.

Helene's amulet (see Figure 2.3); or the three crosses over Erechthoniê on the amulet for Joseph (see Figure 2.4). It is also worth noting the short prayer on the top of the reverse side of the Anapa gem: 'Lord, I beg of you, grant the knowledge, healing, health, concerning the head.' It would seem, then, that this gemstone contains all three of the standard components necessary for a sequential amulet of the sort discussed in Chapter 2: the *vox magica* on top, followed by the dwindling Damnameneus, and then the short prayer.

But who, then, is this Damnameneus, and why does his name vanish on a gem concerned with healing the head? The fifth-century BCE writer Pherecydes identifies Damnameneus as one of the Idean Dactyls and connects him closely with hostile incantations: he divides these Dactyls, whose corporate name literally means 'Fingers', into two 'Hands', those on the left, who were male and cast spells (*goêtes*), and those on the right, who were female and loosened spells (*analuontes*), a scheme which places the male Damnameneus among the casters of spells, presumably hostile ones.[150] The female group who loosen spells may, on the other hand, be the same *daimones* that Pollux speaks of (quoted earlier): 'those who loosen curses', and are called, among other names, 'the senders-away' (*apopompaioi*). The ancients plausibly derived the name Damnameneus from the Greek verb 'to subdue' (δάμνειν), and it was included as one of the six *Ephesia grammata*, powerful magical words that were used throughout the Roman Empire in oral incantations and on inscribed amulets to protect people and places: ἄσκιον, κατάσκιον, λίξ, τετράξ, δαμναμενεύς, αἴσια.[151] We now know, however, that these *Ephesia grammata* were originally part of a comprehensible hexametrical Greek text used on lead amulets from late classical Crete, Sicily, and Magna Graecia.[152] Two of these amulets preserve a verse of great interest: Δαμναμενεῦ· δάμασον δὲ κακῶς ἀέκοντας ἀνάγκα[ις] ('... O Damnameneus [= "Subduer"], brutally subdue the unwilling ones with constraints!').[153] The *figura etymologica* used here ('O Subduer ... subdue!') connects him closely to the traditionally constraining and compulsive forces of the underworld, which often appear on curse tablets, for example: 'O Hermes Restrainer, restrain the wits, the tongue of Kallias' (Ἑρμῆ κάτοχε κάτεχε φρένας, γλῶτταν τοῦ Καλλίου.)[154] Such a role fits well, of course, with his membership in the Dactyls of the Left Hand: a *goês* who casts harmful spells.

[150] *FGrH* 3 F 47 (Jacoby). The term *goês* is a general word for a magician or sorcerer, but here, since they are diametrically opposed to the *analuontes*, we must imagine that the *goêtes* cast binding spells. For discussion, see Johnston (1999) 105-106 and Blakely (2007) 47-50, who summarize earlier literature. Clement *Stromata* 5.15.132 says that the Dactyls invented incantations (*epôidai*).

[151] For the most recent treatment with a full citation of all Greek texts, see Bernabé (2003).

[152] The first two words ἄσκιον κατάσκιον, for example, now appear to be a corruption of the first three words of a grim hexametrical narrative connected with Demeter, her daughter, and Hecate. See the ongoing work of Jordan (1988), (1992), (2000) and the essays in Faraone and Obbink (2012).

[153] Line 7 of the fourth-century BCE tablet from Phalasarna, Crete, and line 8 of the fourth-century BCE tablet from Epizephyrian Locri; for text and discussion, see Bernabé (2003) 13-14.

[154] A third-century BCE Athenian binding spell (*DTA* 88).

Similarly dangerous and chthonic connections also appear in our scanty evidence for Damnameneus in archaic epic poetry.[155]

All this suggests, then, that Damnameneus began his long career as an underworld punisher, who 'subdues' the unwilling dead and presumably – given his role in curses – the living. At some point in the Roman period, however, he takes on new solar powers and his name is reinterpreted to mean 'the subduing sun'.[156] This evolution of Damnameneus from underworld demon to solar deity would, of course, be unthinkable to a Greek in classical times, but by the Roman period Helios had been equated with the sun gods of Mesopotamia (Shamash) and Egypt (Re), who made nightly trips through the underworld and thus were themselves important powers in the underworld, who could, for example, be called upon to send up a ghost for necromantic sessions.[157] A related feminine form of the name, Δαμναμένη, seems to have a similarly diverse range of associations in magical texts and is used a number of times to describe Selene-Hekate, who has a similar history and bivalence in her role as Damnamenê: she is the moon with powers to control the cosmos, but she is also a powerful underworld goddess to whom binding curses and compulsive erotic spells were addressed.[158] To my knowledge there are no extant amulets on which the female name Damnamenê vanishes, but the variation discussed earlier between male Erichthonios and female Erichthoniê is suggestive. Another and better known epithet of Hekate does appear, moreover, on one very late text (no. 40), a medieval Aramaic recipe for an exorcistic amulet that includes three vanishing names, two of which, 'TRTRWKS and 'BRSKS, have been deciphered as transliterated

[155] In a fragment from the 7th or 6th-century BCE poem *Phoronis* of unknown authorship (frag. 2.3 Bernabé) we hear that 'great Damnameneus' was a wizard (*goês*), a co-discoverer of iron and a servant of Adrasteia, a goddess whose name means 'Inescapable' and who was herself assimilated in the classical period to Nemesis and then in Roman-period philosophical circles to Ananke and Fate.

[156] Clement of Alexandria, for example, claimed (*Stromata* 5.8.45), on the testimony of an obscure Pythagorean named Androkydes, that the name means 'the conquering sun' (ὁ ἥλιος ὁ δαμάζων). And indeed we find signs of the solar Damnameneus in the elaborate recipes in magical papyri. It appears, for example, as the name of the sun in the fourth hour, when it takes the form of a bull (*PGM* III.510), and in a recipe for a magical ring we are told to hold the ring up to the rising sun and recite a long invocation that again addresses the sun by all of its names (*PGM* XII.270-350). There is a sense, however, that the name Damnameneus was an unfamiliar one. The formula 'I call upon you as…' (ἐπικαλοῦμαί σε) requires that all of the names be in the accusative case in apposition to the pronoun σε, but in the case of Damnameneus, the scribe or his exemplar erred in writing the vocative with the correct accusative form of the article: τὸν Δαμναμενεῦ (299); see Moyer and Dieleman (2003) 54 n. 32. For a wider discussion of the solar Damnameneus, see Bonner (1950) 201 and Blakely (2007) 52-53.

[157] Faraone (2004c).

[158] Most notably in a hymn to the goddess, where Kronos himself is said to have inscribed the scepter of Hekate with the following words so that all the things in the cosmos will remain steadfast under her control (*PGM* Hymn 18.39-41): Δαμνὼ Δαμνομένη Δαμασάνδρα Δαμνοδαμία. The related feminine noun δαμναμένη is, moreover, a synonym for κατανάγκη and refers to a magical spell or plant used in hostile magic to subdue or constrain its victims; see LSJ *s.v. Damnameneia* also appears as an epithet for the bear constellation (*PGM* VII.699: Arktê), who is similarly described as dominating the cosmos.

Greek.[159] The first name is Tartarouchos, 'She-who-holds Tartarus', an epithet of Hekate that also shows up in curse tablets and erotic spells, for instance, a number of times in a *diabolê* spell that asks the goddess to 'be wroth ... and hurl him to this ill' (*PGM* IV.2242).[160] Here then we have another good example of the name of a god or demon that appears as a hostile agent of erotic compulsion spells or binding curses and whose name also disappears on amulets. This sort of amulet may, in fact, be precisely the kind of protective measure that the man who cursed Hyperechius in Apamea was worried about: rituals that might successfully avert or send away the supernatural agents of the very curse he was directing against Hyperechius.

There are, to my knowledge, only three other extant examples of the name Damnameneus in a wing-formation. The first appears in an Aramaic recipe for an amulet that also heals the head (no. 21; see Figure 4.2, overleaf):[161]

| | |
|---|---|
| [Damanamenus] | |
| Damanamenu | [4 *charaktêres*] |
| Damanamen | |
| Damaname | |
| Damanam | You holy symbols |
| Damana | and holy *charaktêres* |
| Daman | by the mercy of the Father |
| Dama | of mercy heal the head of NN |
| Dam | |
| Da | |
| D | |

Here, as we have seen elsewhere, the first iteration of the disappearing name has been lost.[162] This recipe is, moreover, obviously drawn from the same Greek tradition as, for example, the fever amulet for Tiron discussed in Chapter 2: next to the diminishing edge of the triangle, we find four large *charaktêres* in a row, each about twice the height of the Hebrew letters. Similarly large *charaktêres* appear on Tiron's amulet, but in three separate positions on both sides of the tapering end of the triangle. And below these *charaktêres* on the

[159] *MTKG* II, 36, 2a/8-11. I closely follow the discussion of Bohak (2008) 268, who notes that the prothetic aleph has been added to the start of the name. The second disappearing name is the familiar Abrasax, a entity who could be invoked in erotic binding curses (*e.g. PGM* VIII.49 or IV.331-32: 'Abrasax hold her fast'), and whose name also disappears on a long Coptic amulet that invokes Gabriel against 'every unclean spirit' and includes a drawing of Gabriel holding in his left hand a palm branch (a symbol of victory), under which the name Abrasax vanishes in wing formation (no. 37).

[160] Bohak (2008) 268.

[161] See *MSF* 18. 9: 6-13a for this translation. Bohak (2008) 267-68 stresses the Greek origins of the triangle.

[162] For other examples of disappearing names missing their first iteration, see Chapter 1, n. 15.

Figure 4.2

Aramaic amulet we find a short prayer that is again quite similar to the one found on Tiron's amulet, which reads: 'Holy *charaktêres* heal Tiron!' (ἅγιοι χαρακτῆρες θεραπεύσατε Τείρονα). And as we saw on several of the fever amulets, the scribe has placed the *charaktêres* themselves on the side of the vanishing word that is being dismantled. It cannot, of course, be a coincidence that the name Damnameneus disappears on two amulets for healing the head that derive from the Greek tradition: the Anapa gem and this Aramaic recipe.

His name also disappears on three hostile spells. A Damnameneus triangle forms half of the central design of a pair of very similar curses from Hadrumetum (2nd-3rd century CE), where it is inscribed upside down, as a matching piece to a right-side-up wing-formation of the seven vowels (nos. 60a-b = SGD 145 and 147; see Figure 4.2).[163]

[163] They are discussed in detail in Audollent (1908). The first curse (no. 60a, illustrated in Figure 4.3; the drawing is after Audollent [*op. cit.*] p. 5) is fragmentary, but the scribe has taken a lot of care to position the two triangles on either side of the central spot where he apparently drove a nail. The second curse (no. 60b) has a similar arrangement at its center, except that in the space between the triangles he has placed the curse formula that identifies the victim. This text is more elaborate, with writing at right angles to itself, and vertical rows of letters.

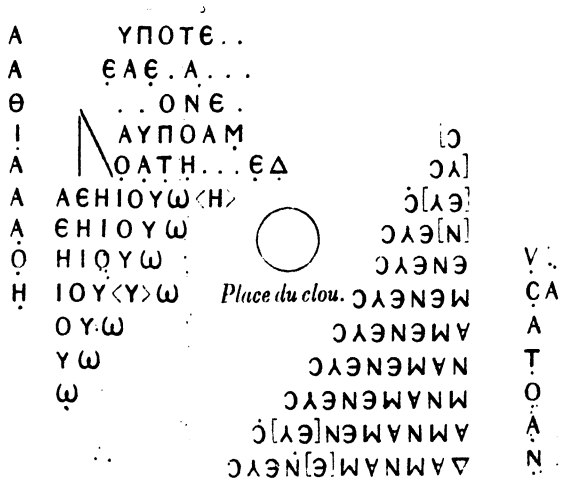



Figure 4.3

Damnameneus disappears one last time in a somewhat disrupted triangle – this time in the vocative case – at the upper right corner of an elaborate erotic charm that has a half dozen triangular formations (no. 58 = *PGM* XIXa; see Figure 4.4).[164]

Figure 4.4

[164] *PGM* XIXa.16-29. I say 'disrupted' because there are blank spaces after the seventh and eighth iterations.

I should stress that none of the other triangles on this papyrus are formed from comprehensible Greek words or names, and there is no reason why a Greek reader would recognize Damnameneus as an individual personality in all the hubbub.

The great differences, then, between the disappearance of Damnameneus' name on amulets and curses boil down to emphasis and legibility. On both of the headache amulets Damnameneus disappears in the nominative case alone in the visual field and there is nothing to distract our attention away from his plight. We have seen, moreover, that the presence of the powerful name φραμφειρεινλελαμε over his vanishing name on the Anapa gem, the *charaktêres* next to it in the Aramaic recipe, and the short prayers on both all conform to the patterns of confrontation that we have seen on the fever amulets. There is, thus, an implied narrative about the reduction of the headache or headache-demon named Damnameneus. In the non-amuletic texts, however, his name is inverted or deployed in the vocative case amidst a crowd of other wing-formations that are not comprehensible Greek.[165] These curses, in short, seem to use triangular names somewhat randomly as anonymous parts of the wider visual design of the curse tablet. I shall return to this point in the next chapter.

In the case of the Anapa gemstone and the Aramaic amulet recipe, then, I suggest that the disappearance of the singular and meaningful name Damnameneus ('The Subduer') letter by letter is designed to eliminate this dangerous chthonic demon, who is elsewhere invoked in curses or hostile spells designed to create erotic seizures. How and why he gets connected with headaches in the Roman period is uncertain, but both the rubric on the Anapa gem ('For the sendings-away of [hostile] spells') and the name of the arch-*goês* Damnameneus prepare us for an amulet against malicious incantations. There is also the problem raised earlier: why does the author of the Anapa gem think that his charm will 'send away' curses and other hostile spells, instead of loosening them? There seems, in fact, to be some slippage here between the hostile actions mentioned in the rubric (*pharmaka*) and the agent who is forced to vanish (Damnameneus). We see a similar slippage on a long silver amulet from Beirut (4th century CE), where an exorcism begins with a plea to protect the owner of the amulet (*GMA* 52, ll. 12-13) 'from all spells (*pharmaka*) and binding curses (*katadesmata*)', but ends with the command that 'all you male demons (*arsenika*) and all you frightening binding spells (*katadesmata*) flee' (89-92). Here the use of the verb 'to flee' (*pheugein*) is appropriate to the male demons, who are imagined to have bodies with feet, but inappropriate to *katadesmata*, which are incorporeal rituals or speech-acts designed to bind down their victims. Note, too, that on the Beirut amulet it is the male demons, like the 'Dactyls of the Left Hand', who are told to flee. A similar kind of confusion shows up in the rubric of an amulet used to protect a grove of trees in Catania, Sicily, which calls itself a 'loosener and a pursuer against every

[165] Rendering the dwindling name Damnameneus in the vocative may indicate that the scribe did not recognize it as a Greek name; indeed, we saw this in the case of the solar invocation discussed earlier in n. 155, where his name appeared in the vocative with an article in the accusative, as if it were an indeclinable barbarian name. His name also appears in the vocative at the beginning of the hexametrical verse found in two late classical lead amulets (see n. 140 above).

sorcery' (lines 15-18: *analutikon kai apodiôktikon pros pasan pharmakian*).[166] This is an amulet that both unties curses (*analuein*) and also chases them away (*apodiôkein*); the first verb is appropriate for curses themselves, whereas the second is appropriate only for the agents of the curse.

The language of flight and pursuit is, in fact, quite common on Greek amulets concerned with demons. A late classical house amulet from Crete, for example, gives the following commands to some theriomorphic demons: [167] 'Flee (φεῦγε) at once, flee, she-wolf, flee, dog, at once.... Raving let them run, each to his own home.' The Augustan-era 'Philinna Papyrus' likewise assimilates 'pain of the head' to wolf- and horse-demons and bids them to flee as well:[168] 'Flee pain of the head! [Lion] flees under a rock and wolves flee and single-hooved horses flee propelled by the blows of my perfect charm!'[169] A Greek living in the imperial period enacted a similar kind of ritual scenario by inscribing on a silver *lamella* a short dramatic libretto, in which Artemis of Ephesus appears as the agent of the expulsion (*GMA* 13):

> For migraine headache:
>
> Antaura came out of the sea. She shouted like a hind. She cried out like a cow. Artemis went to meet her (saying): 'Antaura, where are you going?' 'Into the half-part of the head (*i.e.* of the patient).' 'No, do not go into the half-part of the head!'

As in the case of the Anapa gemstone, this text begins with a rubric. In the dramatic scene that follows the goddess confronts Antaura, a demon whose name means something like

[166] See also the rubric on the reverse: 'a *phylaktêrion* against sorcery (*pros pasan pharmakian*)'. Maltomini (2008) Appendix no. 10 dates the text itself 'not before 6th CE', but the rubrics indicate an even earlier tradition; the drawing in Libertini (1927) 105 shows that the first rubric was, in fact, indented and separated from the text in such a way as to suggest it was copied directly from a handbook.

[167] See Faraone (1992) 44-48 for theriomorphic demons.

[168] Lead amulet from Phalasarna, Crete: φεῦ[γ,'] ἅμα φεῦγε, λύκαινα, φεῦγε, κύων ἅμα σύ, .... μαινόμενοι δ<ρ>άντων πρὸς δώματα αὐτοῦ ἕκαστος; see Jordan (1992) for the best text and discussion. 'Philinna Papyrus' (*PGM* XX and *Supplementum Hellenisticum* no. 900): φεῦγ' ὀδύν[η] κεφαλῆς, φεύγει δὲ [λέων] ὑπὸ πέτ[ρα]ν· φεύγουσιν δὲ [λύ]κοι, φεύγ[ουσι] δὲ μώνυχες [ἵπ]ποι [ἱέμενοι] πληγαῖς ὑπ' [ἐμῆς τελέας ἐπαοιδῆς]. For discussion, see Maas (1942) and Furley (1993).

[169] I have argued in Faraone (2004a) that these formulae were originally orally performed and accompanied by some expulsive ritual or gesture. In the Roman period the authors of amulets sometimes add a supernatural pursuer as a threat. Pliny the Elder (*Nat.* 27.100) preserves the earliest example, an incantation against impetigo in transliterated Greek, in which the disease is assimilated to beetles: 'Flee (φεύγετε) beetles, a fierce wolf pursues (διώκει) you!' In two cases the flee-formula is accompanied by an image. One gemstone depicts Perseus holding the decapitated head of Medusa and reads 'Flee gout, Perseus (διώκει) pursues you!', while another shows Heracles strangling the Nemean Lion with the command: 'Withdraw (ἀναχώρει) bile, the divinity(?) pursues (διώκει) you.' In all of these later formulae, the addressee of the command is either the disease itself ('gout' or 'bile') or an animal or theriomorphic demon that is assimilated to the illness, for example the beetles in Pliny's charm (= impetigo) or the wild wolves and horses in the Philinna Papyrus (= headaches).

'contrary breeze'.[170] The rest of the text is a short dialogue in which Artemis questions the demon and then commands her not to enter the head of the owner of the amulet. The silver tablet breaks off at this point, but a series of Greek recipes of Byzantine date preserve full versions of the dialogue, in which Jesus assumes Artemis' role. Since all of the Christian versions end with Jesus ordering the demon to leave (*e.g.*, 'Look here! Do not go into my servant, but flee (φεύγετε) and be off (ὑπάγετε) to the wild mountain!'), scholars rightly assume that Artemis, too, ended her speech by commanding Antaura to flee.[171] Here, then, as on the Anapa gemstone and in the Philinna Papyrus, a headache is assimilated to a demon that attacks the patient. The cure in every case is to remove the demon: Antaura is commanded by a greater power to flee to the head of a bull grazing on a (presumably far-off) mountainside, the theriomorphic demons in the papyrus are commanded to flee under a rock, and Damnameneus and his hostile *pharmaka* are to be the object of 'sendings-away'.

As it turns out, we find the same equation of disappearing name and fleeing demon in a recipe for an ivy-leaf amulet designed to cure the pain of a sore throat.[172] It appears in Chapter 18 of the *Testament of Solomon*, a text in which protective and curative recipes are presented as confessions that the legendary King Solomon once elicited from a variety of disease-causing demons. In the papyrus version of 18.37 a demon claims responsibility for pain in various places in the throat (nos. 28a-b):[173]

> ἐγὼ, κύριε ῥήξ, [Ἀγωχώνηον καλοῦμαι. ἐν τοῖ]ς παρι<σ>θμίοις καὶ ἐν τῇ κίον[ι] καὶ ἐν τῷ φάρυ[γγ]ι π[όνον ποιῶ. ἐάν τις ε]ἰς φύλλον κισσ[οῦ] γ[ρά]ψ[ῃ 'σο]γρυοκυλ' βοτρυοειδὲς ἀ[..... καὶ π]εριάψῃ, καὶ φεύγω.
>
> I, O lord king, [am called Agôchônêon. In th]e tonsils and in the uvula and in the pharynx [I cause pain. If anyone] inscribes on an ivy leaf 'Sogruokyl' in a grape-cluster shape [.....] and ties it on, I also flee.

The instructions here are similar to the simple recipes of Serenus and Marcellus for papyrus amulets: inscribe the vanishing name alone on an ivy leaf and attach it to the patient, in this case presumably to his neck. The name Sogruokyl is at first glance meaningless, like many of the disappearing names discussed earlier, but luckily the

[170]Kotansky *GMA ad loc.* Kent Rigsby points out to me that the term 'aura' used in many modern languages to describe the special feeling migraine-sufferers experience just before an attack probably comes from Galen (*Loc. aff.* 6.194), who was the first to observe the phenomenon in epileptics. The name of the demoness 'Antaura' must be related.

[171] The two other versions quoted in full by Kotansky *GMA ad loc.* are as follows: 'Go off to Mt. Ararat ... flee (φεῦγε), migraine ... from the servant of the Lord' and 'Depart (ἀναχώρησον) from the limbs and bones of God's servant.'

[172] What follows is a simplified version of Faraone (2009c).

[173] I follow the brilliant discussion of Daniel (1983b), who uses as his guide *P. Rainer Cent.* 39 frr. c-d ll. 15-18, a papyrus version of the spell that was part of a *rotolus* (a vertical scroll) that contained only chapter 18 of the *Testament* and apparently circulated independently as a magical handbook. Its text is in several ways superior to the MSS of the *Testament*, which he uses to fill in the lacunae of the papyrus.

manuscript tradition of the *Testament* preserves variant instructions. 'If anyone inscribes on ivy leaves "Lycurgus" in a receding(?) grape-cluster shape, immediately I recede.' (ἐάν τις εἰς φύλλα κισσοῦ γράψει 'Λεικουργος' βοτρυδὸν ⌊ἀναχωρίς⌋, εὐθὺς ἀναχωρῶ.)[174] The word Sogruokyl in the first version of the recipe is, in fact, the name Lycurgus spelled in reverse. It seems, then, that in the first version of this recipe (quoted above) the amulet doubly attacks the demon by reversing his name and then making it disappear, like the palindromic names that vanish on the fever amulets discussed in Chapter 2.[175]

This recipe is probably one of the earliest attestations of the inscription of disappearing names, because by the first century CE and perhaps even earlier this spell for sore throat was probably circulating as part of an independent Greek magical handbook.[176] But why is Lycurgus treated here as a dangerous demonic force? As it turns out he, like Damnameneus, has a dark and troubled history. He was a legendary king of Thrace, who like Pentheus resisted the worship of the god Dionysus and who, in a moment of Dionysian-inspired madness, hacked his own son to death, thinking he was cutting a grapevine. This ivy-leaf amulet is part of a trio of sore throat amulets that invoke the Lycurgus myth because of the assimilation (discussed earlier) in Greek thought and language of the swollen and infected uvula to a bunch of red grapes. The second of the three is the lapis lazuli gemstone discussed briefly in Chapter 1 (no. 26 and Figure 1.3), which is inscribed on the back with the word *staphulê* in wing-formation.[177] In that case, as we saw, the reduction and disappearance of the word *staphulê* (= 'red and swollen

[174] I give the text of McCown (1922). The word ἀναχωρίς is in half-brackets because it only appears in Recension A. My translation follows Jackson (1988) 55-56, who says of ἀναχωρίς that 'although no such word is attested for any stage of the Greek language', ἀναχωρίς is somehow 'meant to describe the process of "withdrawing" one letter or syllable at a time from the magical word λυκοῦργος and in this manner sympathetically to effect the demon's "withdrawal" from his host.' Mastrocinque (2008) 98-99 suggests less convincingly that the word is a mistake for ἀναχωρεῖς and that whole phrase Λυκοῦργος ἀναχωρεῖς ('Lycurgus, you will go away!') was supposed to vanish.

[175] Daniel (1983b) *ad loc.* suggests plausibly that both versions are incomplete and that the original recipe recommended the inscription of the palindrome *Lykourgosogruokyl* in a heart-shape. I have suggested earlier a similar devolution of a single palindromic heart-shape to a pair of mirroring wing-shapes, *e.g.* in nos. 36, 50, and 58, where the seven vowels are inscribed forwards and backwards in two separate triangles. In nos. 65 and 66 the word EULAMÔ and its reverse ÔMALUE disappear in separate triangles, one from the left and the other from the right, suggesting likewise that originally the combined word EULAMÔMALUE vanished in a heart shape.

[176] The individual Greek recipes were adapted to the interview format of the *Testament*, but not consistently; the demon who confesses to being the cause of sore throat says his name is Agôchônêon, but he flees when Lycurgus' name vanishes. It is, of course, unlikely that the scribe who incorporated this Greek recipe for the ivy-leaf amulet into the *Testament* understood that 'Lycurgus' was the name of a notorious Thracian king. For the redating of Book 18, see most recently Klutz (2006) 107: 'sometime between the middle of the Hellenistic age and the middle of the first century CE.'

[177] Daniel and Maltomini (1989). The wing-formation usually takes the shape of a right triangle, but in this case it has been shifted to the right to make it look like an isosceles one.

uvula') presumably leads step by step to the physical shrinkage of the infected uvula until it vanishes from sight. It is a straightforward case of *deletio morbi*.

The situation is more complicated, however, with the third amulet of the set (no. 27 = *SM* 1; see Figure 4.5), which consists solely of the word *staphul{l}otomos* – presented in wing-formation – followed by three crosses.

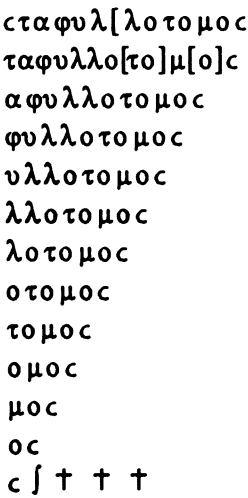



Figure 4.5

The word literally means 'the one who cuts the grape-cluster', but in all of its extant appearances in Greek it has a specialized medical meaning and refers to a surgical procedure or tool designed to lance or remove the infected uvula (*staphulê*).[178]

Daniel and Maltomini, who were the first to bring the recipe from the *Testament of Solomon* into this discussion, argued that the two disappearing names, Lycurgus and *staphulotomos*, are functionally equivalent, and that they both refer to a supernatural hero, who is called upon to threaten the swollen uvula with excision, if it does not stop hurting the patient.[179] Their interpretation, of course, goes to the heart of the conundrum that this study addresses: if Lycurgus is in fact a supernatural hero who by threat of surgery heals the sore throat, why does his name vanish? Why not simply invoke him, instead, in a prayer and ask him to come and heal the patient directly, as we have seen repeatedly in the various prayers to *charaktêres* or angels found in the composite fever-amulets? There is, however, no prayer on the Lycurgus-amulet described in Book 18 of the *Testament* or on the *staphylotomos*-amulet, only the vanishing name and (on the latter) three crosses.

[178] The earliest editors were agnostic as to the purpose of this amulet, but Kotansky *apud GMPT* CXX.1-13 (p. 314), by adducing the gemstone mentioned above, concluded rightly that this text, too, served as an amulet against sore throat.

[179] Daniel and Maltomini *SM* p. 4 n. 5 defend their argument by adducing, in part, the earlier work of Wortmann, who, as I argued in Chapter 2, made similarly erroneous arguments about the names Erichthonios and Gorgophonos on fever amulets.

There is, of course, a deeper problem with labeling Lycurgus as a healer: given his reputation in Greek myth, he can hardly be considered a 'culture hero' like Perseus or Heracles, who by dint of their tireless combat against monsters and wild predators were thought to make the world a safer place for humankind. Lycurgus is indeed consistently represented in Greek art and literature as a violent and impious madman who uses a pruning hook to attack the young Dionysus, his nurses, and even his own son. Lycurgus, in short, fits more easily into the role of a hostile and destructive personality like Damnameneus than that of a beneficial surgeon or culture hero, and his weapon of choice – a pruning-hook – provides the model for him as a demon who cuts (and thereby causes pain in) the uvula. The same can also be said for the word *staphulotomos*, which fits comfortably into a pattern of Greek demon-names ending in *–tomos* or *–tamnos*.[180] Nor should we forget that at the bottom of the *staphulotomos* amulet we find three crosses, like those that hover over Erichthoniê's vanishing name and like the single cross that precedes Aphrodite's name on the scorpion amulet. The *staphulotomos*-amulet, in short, causes the traditional name of a sore-throat demon to disappear in the presence of three crosses. Nonetheless it aims at an outcome that differs in one important way from that of the lapis lazuli gem: the shrinking word *staphulê* ('grape-cluster') on that gemstone was designed to shrink the swollen red uvula by the simple process of *deletio morbi*: as the word got smaller and smaller the infected and swollen uvula would likewise shrink in size. The amulets on which *staphulotomos* and Lycurgus disappear, on the other hand, aim at making the pain-inducing agent go away and thereby reduce and eventually stop the pain in the throat, as the confessing demon in the *Testament* passage tells us explicitly ('I cause pain [*ponon*] ....'). The first, in short, is an amulet that physically reduces the swollen uvula, whereas the two others make the pain-causing agent depart, presumably on his own two feet, like the animal-headed demons on the Tantalus gems. This connection is expressed most clearly at the end of the section of the *Testament* quoted above (the sore-throat demon speaks): 'If anyone inscribes on an ivy leaf the (*i.e.* vanishing) name ... and ties it on, I, too, flee.'

The use of an ivy leaf in the *Testament* recipe is also noteworthy, since it was the special plant of Dionysus and is thus an appropriate medium for counteracting the legendary antagonist of the god and causing his name to disappear.[181] Lycurgus' name vanishes on one other amulet whose medium is significant. Another Aramaic recipe from the Cairo Genizah dictates the following (no. 22): 'For a head(ache) and a migraine: on deer-skin(?) parchment write RYQWRGWS, YQWRGWS, QWRGWS, WRGWS, RGWS, GWS, WS, S.'[182] Since the fawn-skin is another potent Dionysiac symbol often worn by maenads (and more durable than an ivy leaf), it too would be an appropriate

[180] For example, 'Undercutter' (Hypotamnos) and 'Woodcutter' (Hylotomos), demons who apparently cut the gums of teething babies, or the implied epithet of a baneful Hekate, who on an Athenian *defixio* is invoked to 'cut the heart' (*kardiotomêson*) of the victim; see Faraone (2001).

[181] For fuller discussion, see Faraone (2009c).

[182] *MSF* G18.14.10-12. See Bohak (2008) 236-37 for this translation and detailed discussion; he notes that the change of the initial *lambda* in the Greek original to a *rho* is common and remarks that 'there is no doubt that this recipe originated in the Greek-speaking world of pagan magic, and subsequently entered both the *Testament of Solomon* and the Aramaic magical texts.'

substitute here for the ivy leaf. [183] Thus, as in the case of the use of cool-colored stones for fever amulets, we see that the Dionysiac media for these amulets may have played an important role in the combat against this famously anti-Dionysiac individual.

The Greek recipe for the ivy-leaf amulet is, finally, crucial for understanding how expulsion rites can be enacted by dwindling names. In both versions of the recipe in the *Testament of Solomon* the demon confesses that, if the disappearing name is inscribed on the leaf and the leaf tied on to the person, 'I flee' (φεύγω) or 'I withdraw' (ἀναχωρῶ) – the same two verbs that we saw in the expulsion formulas cited above. In other words, the vanishing name alone forces the disease-causing demon to flee, much like the *abracadabra* triangle on Serenus' fever amulet. A similar operation is implicit in the Anapa gemstone, on which we found, after the rubric 'For the sendings-away of (hostile) spells', the magical name *phrampheireinlelamai*, the disappearing Damnameneus, and the prayer for healing the head. In this case, however, the arrangement resembles that of the more complex fever amulets, which combined a vanishing name, powerful symbols or names, and prayer. But the Damnameneus and Lycurgus amulets are different, because both are explicitly imagined as expulsion rituals. We saw a similar equation of dwindling name and fugitive demon on two of the Tantalus gems discussed in the previous chapter, where animal-headed demons flee in fear at the dwindling edge of the triangle. The authors of all three of these amulet-types seem, in short, to imagine and enact the ritual expulsion of a demon as an abstract, even arithmetical, process of subtraction.

[183] Bohak (2008) 236 n. 14 follows the translation 'deer-skin(?)' in the *MSF* 'for lack of a better solution.' Deer-skin, in fact, shows up fairly frequently in the Genizah handbooks as a medium for amulets; see, *e.g.*, *MSF* 11.1:7 (for a barren woman), 11.3:13 (to prevent abortion), 16.1:14 (to make peace between man and wife), or 18.12:8 (for causing people to assemble around you).

# CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS

## A TENTATIVE HISTORY OF DISAPPEARING SPEECH ACTS

We have seen that many of the wing- and heart-shaped formations of Greek words on amulets work in one way or another according to the process of *deletio morbi*: as the name of the disease gradually vanishes, so too will the swelling subside, the bleeding diminish, or the fever cool. In the case of the names of demons, the process is similar: as the name disappears, the demons withdraw. In the previous chapter, however, we saw that in the Roman period triangular formations of Damnameneus' name also appear on a curse and an erotic spell, and it is time to get a wider sense of the practice and evolution of vanishing names on all magical texts and to discuss, finally, the last two stages of the evolutionary scheme proposed in the first chapter. As illustrated in the detailed 'Survey' in the Appendix, out of a total of seventy examples, dwindling Greek words and vowel strings appear on forty-nine amulets or in recipes for them: seventeen for fever (nos. 1-17), five for headache (nos. 18-22), three for menstrual bleeding (nos. 23-25), three for sore throat (nos. 26-28), four for warding off scorpions or healing their sting (nos. 29-32), and two for gaining charm and victory (nos. 33-34).[184] Six amulets (all 5th century CE and later) have multiple targets (nos. 35-40), and there are nine amulets for which the precise complaint is impossible to decipher (nos. 41-49). The limited range of these illnesses is significant, since most patients do in fact recover from fever, headache, sore throat, or bleeding in gradual stages. Vanishing names, in short, appear almost exclusively on amulets used to cure sick people from a small number of diseases, and are only rarely used to protect healthy people from future problems.[185]

[184] I have included later Coptic, Byzantine, and Aramaic amulets and recipes when they use obviously Greek words or names, because (as we have seen) these later traditions are often very conservative and they preserve the same methods and goals over a millennium. So as not to skew the numbers, I treat the nine versions of the Tantalus amulet (nos. 23a-i) and the two versions of the Lycurgus triangle in the *Testament of Solomon* (28a-b) as single types, as well as the two nearly identical curses from Hadrumetum (60a-b) and the names in two versions of the same divination spell in *PGM* ii (nos. 70a-b).

[185] The exceptions are the Aphrodite amulets that ban scorpions (nos. 29-31) and the two charm amulets that ask for a benefit (nos. 33-34). The limited use of dwindling names is significant, because the Greeks used other kinds of amulets to cure a wide range of other discomforts, including eye-diseases, stomach-ache, sciatica, liver problems, gout, colic, and the wandering womb. See Bonner (1950) 51-94.

There also seems to be some significant correlation between vanishing names, media, and discomforts. The most popular vanishing name, *ablanathanalba*, disappears on eleven of the forty-nine amulets: eight times for fever (nos. 4-7, 10-12, and 15), twice for headache (nos. 19-20), once for a charm-spell (no. 33), and thrice for an unstated ailment (nos. 41, 43, and 47). Its close connection with fever is, moreover, probably greater than these numbers indicate. As we saw at the end of Chapter 2, the six amulets of uncertain purpose on which the seven vowels or *ablanathanalba* vanish are all inscribed on stones of similarly cool color and were probably used for fever as well.[186] There seems to have been, moreover, a close interrelation between fever- and headache-amulets in the case of the dwindling names Erichthoniê and Erichthonios, which appear both on fever amulets (nos. 13 and 17) and in one Byzantine recipe for headache, where Erichthonios is accompanied by *ablanathanalba* (no. 20). An obvious explanation for such crossovers is the simple fact that headaches so often accompany high fevers. Lycurgus and *staphulotomos*, on the other hand, appear solely on sore-throat amulets (nos. 27-28), and invoke the mad king's attack on his son as a model for his role as the knife-wielding demon that produces pain in the uvula ('grape-cluster') by cutting.[187] Here, too, the media are significant, since both ivy and fawn-skin point to Dionysus as an ally that protects the patient against Lycurgus. The use of other names is also limited: Damnameneus appears only on amulets used to heal the head (nos. 18 and 21), Aphrodite only on scorpion amulets (nos. 29-31), and the Tantalus-command only on menorrhea-amulets carved in hematite (nos. 23a-i). Such small data sets cannot, of course, prove anything statistically, but the non-random distribution of these vanishing words suggests that just as Lycurgus was apparently the name of a demon that caused sore throat, so, too, Damnameneus was thought to cause headache, while *ablanathanalba*, Erichthoniê/Erichthonios, and the seven vowels were thought be the source of fevers.[188]

The evidence is, however, much more complicated in a number of other cases. The word IOBRAK (no. 49), for example, is known elsewhere as a name of Seth, and it vanishes twice in wing-formations and twice in heart-shaped ones on a fragmentary sixth-century CE papyrus amulet of indeterminate purpose. Since Seth is generally a force of evil or disorder in Greek magical spells, his name or epithet is a good candidate for a vanishing act on an amulet, but why four times? There are also instances in which the name that disappears is one usually associated with protection or healing. The name of the angel Michael, for example, appears in two wing-shaped triangles on what seems to be an amulet for fever and earache (no. 14), but the fragmentary state of the papyrus prevents us from knowing why Michael's name dwindles and why it does so twice. We face a similar problem with the use of the dwindling name Epicurus, a name that literally means 'ally' or 'helper', on the Aramaic spells

[186] The first (no. 41) is an inscribed potsherd with medicines listed on its reverse; the second appears on a green onyx gemstone (no. 43), a cool-colored stone like the gray agate at the Getty that was designed for fever (no. 6); and the third is the *phylaktêrion megiston* inscribed on a whitish quartz gemstone (no. 47).

[187] There is some crossover here, as well: Lycurgus' name vanishes on a medieval Aramaic amulet for headache (no. 22).

[188] See Chapter 2.

for banning scorpions (no. 31) or curing their sting (no. 32). There is a different, but related, problem with the long disappearing name *iaôsabaôthadônaiakrammachammarei* on a papyrus amulet for fever (no. 9). The second half of it (*akrammachammarei*) is joined with *ablanathanalba* in another composite name on a fever amulet (no. 7), but otherwise it only disappears on hostile magical spells (see below). It also seems that the scribe who created this unique name did not realize that the first half of it combines three of the best-known names and epithets of the Jewish god Jahweh (Iaô Sabaôth Adônai), names that usually denote a protective or therapeutic ally. The name *Iaôsabaôth* vanishes as a single wing-formation on a victory charm (no. 34), and here, too, the failure to articulate the two divine names separately suggests that the scribe did not recognize them as such. The intelligibility of these names must have been a constant problem, as we saw in Chapter 3 in the case of the Tantalus gems.

As I stressed at the beginning of this study, I do not seek to explain all the variations of the vanishing name in all Greek magical texts, but rather to point out some important patterns in their design and use on amulets, for it is clear that the Roman period is a richly creative one for the magician-scribes who produced these amulets and that many of the unique examples discussed above may have simply been one-off experiments. But in cases where we see repeated patterns of use, we can be more confident. The disappearing names on most amulets are usually, with the important exception of *ablanathanalba* and the seven vowels, decipherable Greek names or words, and are generally limited to a specific use. This is not the case with the twenty-one instances of dwindling words in non-amuletic spells, which include nine hostile erotic spells (nos. 50-58), nine curses (nos. 59-67), and three divinatory spells (nos. 68-70).[189] As we saw in the last chapter (Figures 4.3 and 4.4), these non-amuletic spells tend to deploy several triangular formations at once. Another good example is a 2nd-3rd century CE erotic spell on lead (no. 50 = *SM* 48; see Figure 5.1, overleaf), in which five different words vanish simultaneously, including *ablanathanalba* in section C and the vowels in sections D (forwards) and F (backwards).

There are, however, some correlations between vanishing name, medium, and use similar to those that we saw on amulets. The best case is found among the erotic compulsion spells, where separate wing-formations of *akrammachamarei* and *ablanathanalba* appear together on three of the nine erotic spells (nos. 50, 55, and 58) and the long *iaeô*-palindrome shows up in a heart-formation (as we would expect of a palindrome) in four texts: three erotic spells (nos. 50, 54, and 58) and one divinatory one (no. 68).[190] On yet another erotic charm the first half of the *iaeô*-palindrome has been carved up into four sections and each section vanishes in its own wing formation (no. 56).

[189] The boundary between erotic spells (*agôgai*) and lead curse tablets is permeable, since the former are a form of curse; see Faraone (1999) 43-54. One of these *agôgai* is, in fact, inscribed on lead (no. 50) and described in a recipe for such a lead tablet (no. 54); see the following note.

[190] Two of these (nos. 50 and 54) are clearly from the same tradition, because they have nearly the same invocation: the latter is a fourth-century CE recipe for a curse to be inscribed on a lead tablet; the former seems to have been inscribed according to this recipe, but it is dated earlier (2nd-3rd century CE) and it has a more complex design. The recipe asks for only one triangle (the *iaeô*-logos), whereas the lead tablet adds four more triangles (Figure 5.2). For discussion, see Martinez (1991) and Faraone (1995b).

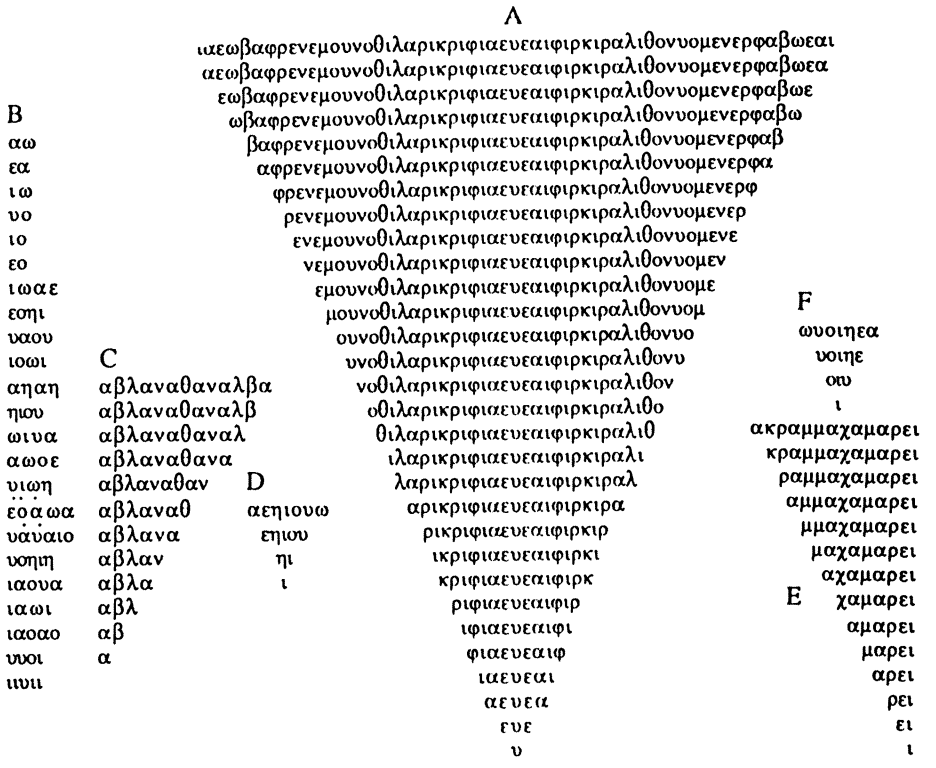



Figure 5.1

The curses present their special own patterns. We find the *erêkisithphêarach*-palindrome in heart-formation on four curse tablets (59, 63, 65, and 67), but in only one erotic spell (no. 53).[191] As we saw in the previous chapter, Damnameneus appears in the nominative case, but upside down, on two nearly identical curses from Hadrumetum (Figure 4.2) and right-side up in the vocative case on the upper left corner of an elaborate erotic spell (Figure 4.4). The word *eulamô* (in reverse, *ômalue*) appears in wing-formation in one erotic spell (no. 51) and on five curse tablets (61-63, 66, and 67) but nowhere else. To sum up: there is only one example of a comprehensible Greek noun, name, or epithet dwindling in these non-amuletic texts – Damnameneus. And of the nineteen extant examples of vanishing names in non-amuletic texts, only six contain a single name (nos. 51-54, 62, and 68), *i.e.* the pattern that we find on nearly every amulet.[192] Another important difference is the inscription of upside-down triangles on five curses or erotic spells (nos. 55, 58, 60, 63, and 66), a feature that never appears on amulets. There are, finally, at least two cases where the name that disappears in a

[191] It may also be significant that three of the nine curse tablets are anger-binding or silencing spells (nos. 63, 64, and 67), a higher percentage than expected, and that both types of spells seem to cross over easily into the realm of protective amulets; see Faraone (2003).

[192] No. 62 is only a fragment and may have included more in its missing parts.

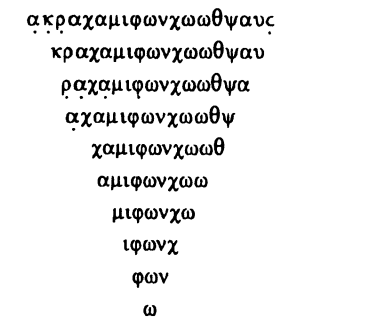
non-amuletic text is elsewhere invoked in the same text as an agent: a silencing curse in which four alternate names of Seth disappear and Seth is asked to silence the victim (no. 64), and an anger-restraint spell in which the *erêkisithphê*-logos both vanishes and is invoked (no. 67). Here it is perfectly clear that the triangular name both represents and invokes the baneful agent of the curse.

There is no doubt that the crossover between positive solar deities and hostile underworld demons, however puzzling it may be to modern observers, made perfect sense in the Roman period, by which time the Greek god Helios had been assimilated to Near Eastern solar deities like Ra and Shamash, who each night were thought to cross through the underworld and have power there. As a result, Damnameneus (the 'Subduer'), who appears in archaic Greek poems and amulets as an evil underworld demon who casts hostile magical spells, is re-imagined in Roman times as 'the subduing sun', whose name disappears on amulets (in an attempt to make him disappear) but also in curses, where the triangular format seems to have the reverse effect: it represents him and his power to harm. The ambiguous use of the magic word *ablanathanalba* or the seven Greek vowels, on the other hand, seems to develop in the other direction: although connected elsewhere with the positive power of the sun, their disappearance in palindromes on fever amulets suggests that they also had a negative aspect, connected perhaps with the dangerous and feverish potential of the noonday sun. The vowels, moreover, seem to appear on other amulets (for example on the reverse of the Tantalus gems) as powerful forces that control the bleeding or movement of the womb. We find this same confusion or expansion of powers in the case of the magical name *ablanathanalba*, which appears in non-vanishing form on some amulets as a protector, but which also disappears on others as the dangerous cause of fevers.

It seems, then, that curses and erotic spells generally contain different sorts of dwindling names and deploy them in a different manner than amulets. Three relatively early erotic spells, however, display some interesting hybrid formulations. A third-century CE papyrus now in the Princeton Rare Book Room, for instance, is laid out in a format alien to curses and erotic spells, but nearly identical to many of the amulets discussed earlier (no. 52 = *SM* 40; see Figure 5.2).[193]

There is no question about the content of this spell: a man named Ptolemaios bids a singular supernatural entity to enflame the liver, breath, heart, and soul of a woman named Ptolemaïs until she comes to him. There is, however, some confusion about the addressee of this command. Since there are two examples (discussed above) where the disappearing name is also the addressee of the hostile spell, it may be the case that the dwindling word ακραχαμιφωνχωωθψαυς is imagined to be the agent of this fiery attack, but between the triangle and the command we find a series of symbols (not the traditional *charaktêres*) written in a single line that might also constitute a single magical name to which the singular request is directed. Form and content, then, are pulling in different directions. This tension is even reflected in how the papyrus was manipulated after it was inscribed: it was carefully

[193] I thank Don Skemer of the Princeton University Rare Book Room for his permission to study this amulet, for his help, and for his lively interest in the amulet.



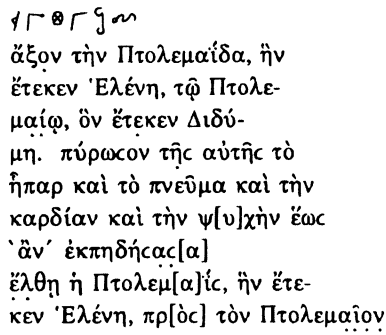




Figure 5.2

folded up into a small 2 x 3cm rectangle, a perfect size for an amulet case or sack.[194] Did Ptolemaios carry this curse on his person like an amulet? This is not inconceivable, given the fact that other forms of erotic magic were carried in amulet form and there is even a case of a hostile erotic spell carved on a large gemstone.[195]

A recently published papyrus fragment in Cologne (no. 53) provides another example of the sometimes awkward combination of amuletic form and erotic content: at the center of the papyrus the scribe wrote the word ερηεχισιφθηαραρακαραηφθησικηρε in heart-shaped formation, along the edge of which he inscribed an erotic incantation that spiraled around the entire triangle – precisely as we saw on the Gorgophonos amulet discussed in Chapter 2. This same name, moreover, vanishes in similar fashion (albeit in the company of other disappearing words) on two lead curse tablets (nos. 59 and 63). As in the case of the Princeton papyrus, the form of the text suggests that the author of this spell was also experimenting by using an amuletic form for an erotic spell, although in this case the

[194] I owe this insight to Janet Downie. By way of comparison, of the fourteen erotic charms collected in *SM*, seven (all lead) were unfolded, three lead and one papyrus were rolled or folded in one direction only, one was wrapped around a pair of figurines, and only two (papyrus) were folded into small amulet-sized packages: *SM* 40 (*i.e.* no. 52, the Princeton papyrus with the vanishing name) and 43 (a fourth-century CE papyrus erotic spell of similar focus).

[195] Faraone (1999) 52-53 and 58.

papyrus fragment itself shows no signs of folding.[196] A final example[197] of a crossover in technique from amulet to curse is a hematite gem from Asia Minor that depicts Eros on the obverse in the act of striking someone or something, while the word ευλαμω disappears on the reverse (no. 51).[198] The aggressive stance of the god here is typical of this genre of erotic spells and gemstones that aim at the erotic subjugation of another person, [199] so it is not surprising that the word ευλαμω, which vanishes only on hostile spells, disappears as well. The format, however, is typical of some of the amuletic gemstones that we have seen in this study: a dwindling name on one side and an image of or prayer to a god on the other. In all three of these generic crossovers, then, the magician-scribe seems to use the form or format of an amulet, but content and disappearing name appropriate to a hostile erotic curse. It is, finally, important to point out that this borrowing is going in one direction only: from the amulets to the curses. This is important, because if these triangles were freely used in the same manner on all kinds of magical spells, we would expect to find at least one case of an amulet inscribed with multiple vanishing names, some of which are upside down or in the vocative case.

In Chapter 1 I suggested that the evolution of these disappearing speech-acts could for heuristic purposes be divided into at least five stages, and that the originally oral form of amuletic name-magic (stage one) continued to be performed and probably survived into medieval times. Once written down these oral formulae created both problems and new opportunities for the magician-scribe. Those who first wrote out a disappearing name in wing- or heart-shaped form undoubtedly discovered that this formation was visually pleasing and that it provided at least one unanticipated benefit: the vertical alignment of identical letters helped scribes or engravers to ensure that no letters were left out in the various iterations of the shrinking name. At this second stage there were also the benefits of

[196] Personal communication from Maltomini.

[197] One of the divination spells (no. 68 = *SM* 65) probably borrows the amuletic form as well, but it is too fragmentary to say for certain: the spell was inscribed on a small shallow terracotta bowl (before firing) and consists of a single and very large palindromic name, which was written in full along the rim of the bowl and then probably ended its disappearing act at its center; along the left edge of the triangular name a prayer was inscribed that begins: 'Hither to me, self-begotten god...' Since only one large shard of the bowl survives, we cannot exclude other prayers and symbols elsewhere on the bowl, but the editors' reconstruction is very plausible: the triangular name was probably designed to invoke the god in parallel with the prayer.

[198] *SGG* vol. 2, Ro 21, which Mastrocinque describes *ad loc.* as follows: 'Eros stante di tre quarti verso d., alato, nudo, con cingha dalla spalla d. attraverso il petto, la d. levata in atto di colpire, la s. in avanti con un oggetto (farfella?) in mano; in basso a s. una faretra; a d. un arco.' See *idem* (2008) for discussion.

[199] See Faraone (1999) 52-53 and 58 for Eros and hostile spells. Jordan (2002a) published a gray-yellow jasper with Eros labeled *Aktiôphi* aiming his bow on one side and on the other a curse aimed at silencing someone, citing two other yellow jaspers with similar inscriptions and Eros holding his archery equipment in one hand and his torch in the other: BM no. 251 and Maaskant-Kleibrink (1978) no. 1114. On Philipp (1986) no. 40 (*Nilkiesal*) the name is reversed, suggesting that the gem aims at disarming Eros.

redundancy. In some cases the disappearing name was thought to cure an illness all by itself, but the popularity of composite amulets reveals that along with these vanishing speech-acts other verbal formulae – especially prayers to protective agents (*e.g.* 'heal so-and-so!') or performative speech-acts ('I bind you scorpion!') – could be uttered as well, one after the other, as we found on several of the fever spells and especially in the four different charms crowded onto the Aphrodite scorpion-amulet. But it is clear from the even more complicated cases, like the Erichthoniê-amulet, that at some point (I have called it Stage 3) these scribes began to organize the texts of these different and redundant speech-acts into visually and thematically coherent tableaux, in which powerful names, symbols, and prayers for deliverance could be mobilized around the centrally placed disappearing name. This kind of experimentation, moreover, created narratives of confrontation and containment between the protectors and the vanishing name – narratives that were at best only implicit in the sequential juxtaposition of prayer and vanishing name in the second stage. At this third stage of development, moreover, the disappearing name is capable of expressing two different kinds of narrative: (i) its original function as a form of name-magic that narrates a sequence of erasures that end in the disappearance of the disease or demon; and (ii) a second narrative that was generated by accident, when the fully inscribed and doubly spelt vanishing name was seen to interact visually with other texts and symbols on the same amulet.

We have, in fact, an excellent parallel for such a secondary development in the popular Greco-Roman amulets that depict the evil eye. The fact that frontal eyes appear in a number of protective contexts in the classical and Hellenistic worlds (*e.g.* shield devices and the prows of ships) has suggested to scholars that the eye itself was once believed to ward off danger and the ill effects of *phthonos* and *baskania* ('evil eye') through the process of like-banning-like.[200] But in the Roman period another practice evolves on amulets, sculptural reliefs, and entranceway mosaics: this same eye is now surrounded and attacked by self-propelled weapons and noxious animals (see Figure 5.3 after Schlumberger [1892] 74).

In this case, too, we must imagine that the manufacturers of these objects no longer thought that the traditional practice of deploying the single eye could sufficiently ward off the evil by itself, and they added a ring of protective agents around the eye to signal a similar kind of supernatural conflict and containment. Like the names Gorgophônos and Erichthoniê, which still vanish on their amulets in the midst of an encircling mass of protective prayers and symbols, the eye presumably still carries out its original duty of like banning like, but an additional threat has been added to strengthen the power of the image. In a similar manner, the third evolutionary stage of the dwindling names embodies two possibly contradictory narratives: (i) that the disease or demon vanishes along with its diminishing name; and (ii) that the disease or demon persists, just as its name persists in the first line and along the diagonal(s) of the triangle, but it is nevertheless rendered harmless by the prayers or images and symbols that confront or envelope it.

[200] See *e.g.* Dubin (1987) 307-10, who discusses the early and universal use of 'eye-beads' and 'eye-gems' as protective devices.

Figure 5.3

From this third, somewhat ambiguous, stage in the evolution of the disappearing speech-act, it was, I suggest, a quick and easy transition to the two final stages, in which the triangular formations are considered full representations of demons that can be used to invoke, rather than ban, their presence. The three 'crossover' erotic spells (nos. 51-53) illustrate the fourth stage in its simplest form: a single triangle and a single prayer or image. The same is true for the two curses (nos. 64 and 69) on which the disappearing name is invoked elsewhere in the text as the agent of the curse. In all these cases the triangular name undoubtedly represents and invokes the hostile agent of the curse or erotic spell, but at the fifth and final stage wing- and heart-formations often seem to be stripped entirely of their meaning and implied narratives and become purely visual, even abstract phenomena. The late antique texts are the most elaborate. In Figure 5.1, for example, we saw part of an elaborate love charm inscribed on a lead tablet, which contains five triangles of various sizes formed by vowel sequences or disappearing names, including *ablanathanalba* and the seven vowels.

This final developmental stage differs greatly from the practice that we saw on amulets. Now scribes deploy wing- and heart-formations in innovative ways, for example, by placing several on the same papyrus, by inverting some so that they point up instead of down, and by grouping them in almost abstract geometrical patterns. Most importantly, however, the heart- and wing-formations used in non-amuletic texts rarely preserve comprehensible Greek names like Damnameneus or Aphrodite, and they only rarely have any obvious connection with the goal of the spell in which they are included, as they so often do on the amulets. Rather, they seem to be hypertrophic versions of non-sensical *nomina magica* or vowel clusters, often extended to three or four times the length of the names that vanish on amulets, and it is usually impossible to say whether or how they might represent the powerful agents that are invoked elsewhere on the tablet to attack the victim.

One can quibble over the number of stages of development or the precise divisions between them, but it is clear that, as in most evolutionary schemes, the simpler design precedes the more complex. Thus in the future, if a dwindling name turns up all by itself on a papyrus, with its margins intact and no lacunae, we would be likely to conclude that it was an amulet, because of the testimony of writers like Serenus and Marcellus of Bordeaux, who

both give us recipes for inscribing a triangular name (with no other text) on a papyrus and attaching it to the patient. By contrast, out of the scores of recipes for curses and erotic spells in the extant Greek magical papyri, not one bids us to inscribe a solitary triangle. A second consideration, illustrated in Chapter 2, is that amulets with triangular names and simple prayers (Stage 2) can easily be performed orally, whereas nearly all of the curses and erotic spells in stage five cannot.

It is true, of course, that at first glance stages two through five seem to appear simultaneously in the Roman imperial period, but the evidence suggests that dates for the amulets are, in fact, slightly earlier (the numbers are from the Appendix):[201]

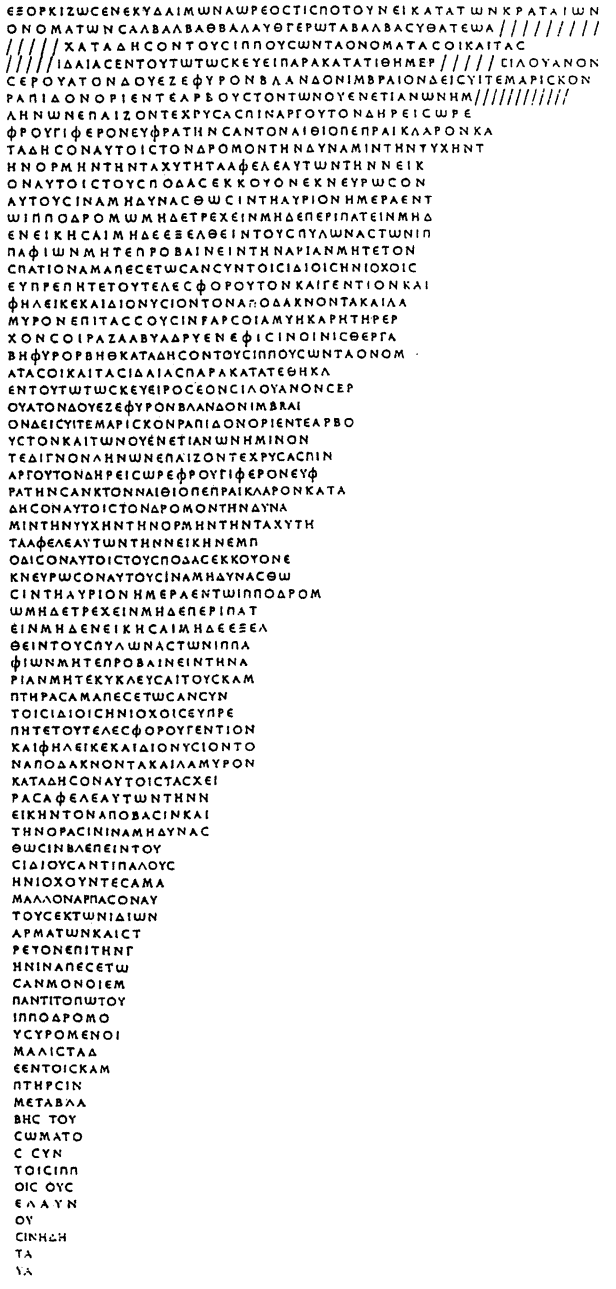
| | Amulets | Non-amulets |
|---|---|---|
| 1st CE | 28 | |
| 1st-2nd CE | 26, 41 | |
| 2nd CE | 42 | |
| 2nd-3rd CE | 18, 23, 43-47 | 50, 51, 59-61 |
| 3rd CE | 1, 2, 24, 27 | 52, 53, 62, 63, 68 |
| 3rd-4th CE | 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 48 | 64, 69 |
| 4th CE | 9 | 54-57, 65-67, 70a-b |
| 4th-5th CE | 10 | 58 |
| 5th CE | 11, 35 | |
| 5th-6th CE | 12 | |
| 6th CE | 13, 25, 29, 48 | |

These dates cannot, of course, be used as precise markers, because there is a tendency to date all 'magical gemstones' to the 2nd-3rd century CE and because the simple recipes preserved by the likes of Serenus and Marcellus are unquestionably earlier than the third- and sixth-century CE authors that preserve them. Nonetheless, this chart allows us *grosso modo* to see some patterns. There are, for instance, eleven amulets in the first four time-slots, but only five hostile spells, and among the fifteen earliest amulets (1st-3rd century CE) we find that all but one (no. 24) are of the simplest types (Stage 2): a single disappearing name or a name combined with a brief prayer or image (nos. 1, 2, 18, 23-24, 26-28, and 41-47). The three 'crossover' erotic spells that seem to illustrate Stage 3 (nos. 51-53) appear, moreover, among the earliest non-amuletic texts.[202]

The original use of the disappearing name is, finally, suggested by one unexpected adaptation of its triangular shape: a Greek curse-tablet from Carthage (Figure 5.4, overleaf)

[201] I have not included the following items, because they are either much later and derivative Coptic, Byzantine, and Aramaic versions or they have not been dated at all: nos. 14 (no date given), 15, 16, 17, 19-21, 30-32, 33-34 (no date given), and 36-40. We can, in short, use this later or undated material to reconstruct and flesh out the Greek tradition, but we cannot use it to date its earliest stages.

[202] A fragmentary divination spell (no. 68) may provide another example of the use of an amuletic form on a non-amuletic device: if the reconstruction is correct, it has a single triangle and single prayer (see note 187 above). It also stands among the earliest non-amuletic spells (3rd century CE).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ΜΑΛΙCΤΑΔ
ΕΕΝΤΟΙCΚΑΜ
ΠΤΗΡCΙΝ
ΜΕΤΑΒΑΛ
ΒΗC ΤΟΥ
CΩΜΑΤΟ
C CΥΝ
ΤΟΙCΙΠΠ
ΟΙC ΟΥC
ΕΛΑΥΝ
ΟΥ
CΙΝΗΔΗ
ΤΑ
ΥΑ

Figure 5.4

that aims to bind a number of charioteers and their horses (*DT* 237). [203] As we can see, the text of this curse has been carefully inscribed so that it takes the shape of a right triangle similar to a wing-formation. It is, however, created in an entirely different manner, because the scribe has written a continuous, non-repeating text in lines of decreasing length, in the very same manner as the Hellenistic *technopaignia* mentioned earlier in Chapter 1 (*e.g.* the *Syrinx* poem illustrated in that chapter) that some scholars claim as the inspiration for the disappearing names in Greek magical spells. Another lead charioteer-curse of similar date from Antioch uses the same technique:[204] the tablet contains sixty-one lines, the first forty-seven of which preserve a long, fearful invocation of mainly Greek chthonic deities that ends with a plea to 'bind, destroy and utterly subdue the horses of the Blue faction'. The scribe then adds the names of thirty-six horses, but he begins at this point to shorten the margin of each successive line, so that the last third of the tablet assumes the same triangular shape. As a result, only the names of the thirty-six equine targets are poured into the triangle, suggesting that this scribe believed that this diminishing shape might somehow weaken or constrain the horses named therein.[205] In both of these curses, then, we see how a magician-scribe has superficially captured the deleting effect of the disappearing words surveyed in this study, but without understanding the step-by-step process of dismemberment that is such an important feature of the earliest examples of this technique.

We can, I think, appreciate these two charioteer-curses, alongside the generic misfits like the Princeton erotic spell or the Eros gem, as yet more examples of the innovations created by the scribes of the Roman period. I should add that such experiments were part of a much wider phenomenon at that time, when the epigraphic habit of the Roman Empire was extended to a wide array of amuletic objects: gold and silver tablets, papyri, ostraka, and gemstones. It should be understood, of course, that these later scribal inventions are in no way inferior to the speech-acts that preceded them, but rather respond with verve and imagination to a whole new set of problems and opportunities offered by the medium of writing. This flood of inscribed amulets, however, should not be mistaken as a sign of a sudden interest in magic or a rise in superstition: the ancient Greeks had for centuries been using protective oral prayers and incantations, including, I suggest, disappearing speech-acts, but it is only in the Roman period – when they are inscribed on stone, metal, and papyrus and become visible for the first time to historians – that they are treated as objects of both creativity and concern by the magician-scribes who first wrote them down.

[203] Several other charioteer-curses from Carthage display this same triangular form: *DT* 234-35, 238-40, and 242.

[204] Hollmann (2003). The text dates to the late 5th or early 6th century CE.

[205] Gordon (2002) 90-92 discusses this Carthaginian curse in detail and concludes: 'The "wing" has been creatively misunderstood: instead of being constructed by omitting one letter from the same *onoma* or palindrome in each succeeding line, a normal curse-text has been written out to create a wedge-shape presumably so as to transfer the power associated with the "wing" to the text as a whole.' I would agree entirely, but would add that the 'power' of the design (which Gordon does not precisely define) presumably lies in its ability to constrict the rival horses and charioteers and eventually make them vanish, just as the names of demons do on amulets.

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| TEXT | WORDS IN FORMATION | SHAPE |
|---|---|---|
| **AMULETS**: | | |
| *Against fever:* | | |
| 1) Quintus Serenus (lines 935-40) | ABRACADABRA (Latin) | (not specified) |
| 2) *SM* 3 (= *PGM* CXXX) | αεηιουωωυοιηεα | heart-shaped |
| 3) *SM* 11 (= *PGM* LXXXVIII) | ζαγουρηπαγουρη | heart-shaped |
| 4) *PGM* XCI | αβλαναθαναλβα | heart-shaped |
| 5) *SM* 9 | αβλαναθαναλβα | heart-shaped |
| 6) *JPGMJ* 8 (1980) 223-27 | αβλαναθαναλβα | full name 3x, then wing-shaped (from left) but shifted to look heart-shaped |
| 7) *PGM* XXXIII | αβλαναθαναλβαναμαχαραμαραχαραμαραχ | 3rd -4th cent. CE/I heart -shaped |
| 8) *PGM* XVIIIb | γοργωφωνας (= γοργόφωνος 'Grim-Voiced') | wing-shaped (from right) but shifted to look heart-shaped |
| 9) *PGM* VII 218-21 | Ιαωσαβαωθαδωναιακραμμαχαμμαρει (= Ιαω Σαβαω | wing -shaped (from left) |
| 10) *SM* 21 (= *P.Köln* 6.257) | αβλαναθαναλβα | wing-shaped (from left) but shifted to look heart-shaped |
| 11) *PGM* XLIII | αβλαναθαναλβα | wing-shaped (from left) |
| 12) *P.Köln* 10.425 | αβλαναθαναλ{β}α ακραμμαχαμμαρι | both wing-shaped (from right) |
| 13) *SM* 34 (=*ACM* 11) | ηριχθονιη (= Ἐριχθόνη) | wing-shaped (from left) but shifted to look heart-shaped |

## - and Heart-Spells in Greek Magical Texts

| SHAPE | DATE/MEDIUM | INVOCATION/IMAGE |
|---|---|---|
| (not specified) | 3rd cent. CE/recipe for papyrus amulet tied on the neck with linen cord. | (none) |
| heart-shaped | 3rd cent. CE /papyrus | 'lord gods' 3 *charaktêres* (θεραπεύσατε) |
| heart-shaped | 3rd -4th cent. CE/papyrus | 'lord angels' (παύσατε) |
| heart-shaped | 3rd -4th cent. CE/papyrus | (too fragmentary) |
| heart-shaped | 3rd -4th cent. CE/papyrus | unnamed; singular imperative (ἀπάλλαξον) |
| full name 3x, then wing-shaped (from left) but shifted to look heart-shaped | 3rd -4th cent. CE/ large brownish-white chalcedony gem | unnamed; singular imperative (ἀπάλλαξον) from fever, shiver, headache |
| ραμαραχ<br>3rd -4th cent. CE/papyrus<br>heart -shaped | | Kok-kou-kol (παῦ[σο]ν) |
| wing-shaped (from right) but shifted to look heart-shaped | 3rd -5th cent. CE/papyrus | unnamed; ὁρκίζω ὑμᾶς ... θεραπεῦσαι |
| ρει (= Ιαω Σαβαωθ Αδωναι ακραμμαχαμμαρει)<br>wing -shaped (from left) | 4th cent. CE/recipe for a fever amulet inscribed on papyrus | Abrasax (no request) |
| wing-shaped (from left) but shifted to look heart-shaped | 4th -5th cent. CE/papyrus | 'holy *charaktêres*' 3 *charaktêres* (θεραπεύσατε) |
| wing-shaped (from left) | 5th cent. CE/papyrus | many angel names (δ]ιαφύλξον) |
| both wing-shaped (from right) | 5th-6th cent. CE/papyrus (Greek and Coptic) | *charaktêres* (θεράπευσον) |
| wing-shaped (from left) but shifted to look heart-shaped | 6th cent. CE/papyrus | three crosses, Christ (θεραπεύει) and the white wolf |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | ακραμμαχαμμαρι | shaped (from right) |
| 13) *SM* 34 (=*ACM* 11) | ηριχθονιη (= Ἐριχθόνη) | wing-shaped (from left) but shifted to look heart-shaped |
| 14) *PGM* XLIV | Μιχαηλ (twice) | both wing-shaped (from left) |
| 15) *ACM* 64.64-91 | ABLANATHANNALBAN | wing-shaped (from right) |
| 16) *ACM* 64.92 | AAAAAAA<br>OOOOOOO | both wing-shaped (from right) |
| 17) Bohak (2008) 269 n. 121 | RKWTYNWS (=Ἐριχθόνιος) | wing-shaped (from left) but written in linear form. |
| *For healing the head:* | | |
| 18) *EPRO* 68 (1978) 848 (Gorgippia) | Δαμναμενευς | wing –shaped (from left) but shifted to look heart-shaped |
| 19) Delatte (1927) 1.549.10-14 | αβλαθαναλ | wing-shaped (from left) |
| 20) Delatte (1927) 1.125. 11-15 | αβλαθαναηλ<br>Ἐριχθόνιος | linear, alternating between the two names |
| 21) Cairo Genizah (*MSF* G18. 9. 6-14) | 'M'N'M'NWS (= [Δ]αμναμενευς) | wing-shaped (from left) |
| 22) Cairo Genizah (*MSF* G18.14.10-12) | RYQWRGWS (= [Λ]υκουργος (from left) | wing-shaped |
| *Concerning bleeding:* | | |
| 23) Hematite gems from Eastern Mediterranean (all 2nd -3rd cent. CE): | | |
| a) *SMA* no. 144 | δίψας Τάνταλε αἶμα πίε | wing–shaped (from left) |
| b) D&D no. 364 | δίψας Τάνταλ' αἶεμα πίε | wing–shaped (from left) |
| c) *Auktionkatalog F. Sternberg* xxiv 73 fig. 27 no. 459 | διψςτναλαμπιε (corrupt) | wing–shaped |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| shaped (from right) | (Greek and Coptic) | (θεράπευσον) |
| wing-shaped (from left) but shifted to look heart-shaped | 6th cent. CE/papyrus | three crosses, Christ (θεραπεύει) and the white wolf (θεραπευσάτω) |
| both wing-shaped (from left) | (no date given)/papyrus | (fragmentary) mentions fever(?), burning, earache |
| wing-shaped (from right) | Coptic papyrus amulet | adjuration to fifteen angelic names to 'take away this fever and chill' (along diminishing side) |
| both wing-shaped (from right) | Coptic papyrus amulet | 'take the burning away from so-and-so' (angels are adjured) |
| wing-shaped (from left) but written in linear form. | Aramaic recipe from the Cairo Genizah | 'A section for fevers' (no addressee or prayer) |
| wing –shaped (from left) but shifted to look heart-shaped | 2nd -3rd cent. CE/ red brown agate | 'lord' ('I beg you lord. make … healing and health regarding the head') |
| wing-shaped (from left) | Byzantine recipe for κεφαλουργία inscribed on paper and applied to head | (none) |
| linear, alternating between the two names | Byzantine recipe: 'phylactery for the head' | prayer and exorcism, then 'Jesus Christ conquers' then vanishing names. |
| wing-shaped (from left) | Aramaic recipe (medium for amulet not stated) | 'holy *charaktêres* … heal the head' |
| wing-shaped | Aramaic recipe inscribe on deer-skin (?) | 'for headache and migraine' |

ent. CE):

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| wing–shaped (from left) | (Beirut)/hematite (uterine image on obverse) | (none) Ares-figure in lower left with thunderbolt overhead |
| wing–shaped (from left) | (Syria)/hematite (uterine image on obverse) | (none) Ares-figure in lower left |
| wing–shaped | (none given)/hematite | (none) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| b) D&D no. 364 | δίψας Τάνταλ' αἶεμα πίε | wing–shaped (from left) |
| c) *Auktionkatalog F. Sternberg* xxiv 73 fig. 27 no. 459 | διψςτναλαμπιε (corrupt) | wing–shaped (from left) |
| d) BM no. 383 | δίψας Τάνταλ' αἶεμα πίε (only first two words vanish) | wing–shaped (from left) |
| e) BM no. 384 | Τάνταλ' αἶ[εμα πίε (left half only) | wing–shaped (from left) |
| f) Skoluda MO16 | δίψας Τάνταλε αἶεμα | wing–shaped (from left) |
| g) Festugière (1961) no. 1 | δίψας Τάνταλε αἶεμα πίε | wing–shaped (from left) |
| h) BM no. 382 (right half only) | Τάνταλ' αἶεμ]α πίε | wing–shaped (from left) |
| i) Getty no. 25 (lower left corner) | δίψ]ας Τάνταλ' αἶε[μα | wing–shaped (from left) |
| 24) *PGM* LXII 76-104: | αριουαθωρμενερτιουμαισι αεηιουω | heart -shaped wing -shaped (from left) |
| 25) Heim no. 97 (Marcellus of Bordeaux) | *cicuma* (= κῦμα?) | wing–shaped (from left) |
| *Against sore throat*: | | |
| 26) Gemstone *ZPE* 78 (1989) 93-94 | στάφυλη | wing-shaped, (from right) but shifted to look heart-shaped |
| 27) *SM* 1 (= *PGM* CXX) | σταφυλλοτόμος | wing-shaped (from right) |
| 28a) *Testament of Solomon* 18.37 | Λυκουργος | heart-shaped (βοτρυδὸν) |
| 28b) *Testament of Solomon* (*PRainer Cent.* 39 frr. c-d lines 15-18) | σογ]ρυοκυλ (= Λυκουργος spelled backwards) | heart-shaped (βοτρυοειδὲς) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | with thunderbolt overhead |
| wing–shaped<br>(from left) | (Syria)/hematite<br>(uterine image on obverse) | (none)<br>Ares-figure in lower left |
| wing–shaped<br>(from left) | (none given)/hematite<br>(uterine image on obverse) | (none)<br>Ares-figure in lower left<br>with diamond overhead |
| wing–shaped<br>(from left) | (Cypriot?)/hematite<br>(uterine image on obverse) | (none)<br>Ares-figure in lower left |
| wing–shaped<br>(from left) | (none given)/hematite<br>(uterine image on obverse) | (none)<br>Ares-figure in lower left<br>with spindle overhead |
| wing–shaped<br>(from left) | (none given) hematite<br>(uterine image on obverse) | (none)<br>Ares-figure in lower left<br>with diamond overhead |
| wing–shaped<br>(from left) | (none given)/hematite<br>(uterine image on obverse) | (none)<br>Ares-figure in lower left |
| wing–shaped<br>(from left) | (none given)/hematite<br>(uterine image on obverse) | (none)<br>bound ass-headed demon<br>in lower right with<br>v-shaped object overhead |
| wing–shaped<br>(from left) | (none given)/hematite<br>(uterine image on obverse) | (none)<br>bound lion-headed demon<br>in lower left with<br>triangle overhead |
| heart -shaped<br>wing -shaped<br>(from left) | 3rd cent. CE/pap.-handbook<br>(to be inscribed on papyrus) | (none addressed)<br>'let her womb be open ...' |
| wing–shaped<br>(from left) | 6th cent. CE/Latin recipe<br>(to be inscribed on papyrus) | (none) |
| wing-shaped,<br>(from right) but<br>shifted to look<br>heart-shaped | 1st -2nd cent. CE/lapis lazuli<br>(grape cluster on obverse) | (none) |
| wing-shaped<br>(from right) | 3rd cent. CE/papyrus | three crosses |
| heart-shaped<br>(βοτρυδὸν) | Book 18 descends from<br>1st cent. CE text/ 'write it<br>on ivy leaves' | (none) |
| heart-shaped<br>(βοτρυοειδὲς) | Book 18 descends from<br>1st cent. CE text/ 'write it<br>on an ivy leaf' | (none) |

*To ban scorpions or heal their sting:*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 29) *PGM* 2 | Ἀφροδίτην | 'wing-shaped' (from left), but written here in linear fashion |
| 30) Bohak (2008) 255 | 'PDYRT' (=Ἀφροδίτη) | 'wing-shaped' (from right), but shifted to look heart-shaped. |
| 31) Bohak (2008) 255 | 'PDYRT' (=Ἀφροδίτη)<br>'PYQRWS (= Ἐπικούρος?) | 'wing-shaped' (from left), but shifted to look heart-shaped. |
| 32) Recipe from Cairo Genizah (*MSF* 16.5:13-17) | '<PY>QRWS (= Ἐ<πι>κούρος?) | 'wing-shaped' (from left) |

*Charm and victory amulets:*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 33) D&D no. 130 | αβλαναθαναλβα | heart-shaped |
| 34) *PGM* XXXV | Ιαωσαβαωθ | wing-shaped (from left) |

*Amulets with multiple targets:*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 35) *Le Muséon* 105 (1992) 5-24 | αειμουω | wing-shaped (from left) |
| | ιιιι | wing-shaped (from right) |
| | ωωωω | wing-shaped (from right) |
| | οοουυ | wing-shaped (from right, but to look like one |
| 36) *ACM* 64.92 | AEEIOUO<br>OUOIEEA | both wing-shape (from right) |
| 37) *ACM* 71 (end) | αβρασαζ | wing-shaped (from left) |
| 38) Bohak (2008) 268-69 | QPLRGYH (= κεφαλάργια) | wing-shaped (from left) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 'wing-shaped' (from left), but written here in linear fashion | 6th cent. CE/papyrus | cross, Horus, Yahweh<br>'I bind you, scorpion'<br>'St. Phokas lives here' |
| 'wing-shaped' (from right), but shifted to look heart-shaped. | 'mass-produced' Aramaic amulets (Cairo Genizah) | image of scorpion |
| 'wing-shaped' (from left), but shifted to look heart-shaped. | Aramaic amulets (Cairo Genizah) | image of scorpion, excommunication |
| 'wing-shaped' (from left) | Late antique Aramaic handbook (fragment); to be written 'over the pain(ful spot)' of a scorpion sting. | none (triangle alone), cures sting |
| heart-shaped | (none given)/ red jasper gem | next to enthroned figure of the child god Horus and above request: δός μοι χάριν. |
| wing-shaped (from left) | papyrus (but preserves an oral exorcism) | elaborate exorcism that requests charm (χάριν) and victory. |
| wing-shaped (from left)<br>wing-shaped (from right)<br>wing-shaped (from right)<br>wing-shaped (from right, but shifted to look like one from left) | 5th cent. CE/silver amulet (Aramaic and Greek) | binds spirits<br>banishes evil-eye<br>adjures ghosts and sorcery |
| both wing-shaped (from right) | Coptic papyrus recipe | 'amulet for the stomach and headache'<br>*charaktêres* / no prayer |
| wing-shaped (from left) | Coptic amulet under left hand of image of Gabriel at end of amulet | long invocation of Gabriel against every unclean spirit, male or female |
| wing-shaped (from left) | four Aramaic magic bowls | for protection against demons, but the word |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 37) *ACM* 71 (end) | αβρασαζ | wing-shaped (from left) |
| 38) Bohak (2008) 268-69 | QPLRGYH (= κεφαλάργια) but preserved in linear form | wing-shaped (from left) |
| 39) Bohak (2008) 269 | [Q]PLRGYH (= κεφαλάργια) MWQRYN (= μικράνια) | (both from left) |
| 40) Bohak (2008) 268 (*MTKG* II, 36, 2a/8-11) | 'TRTRWKS (= Ταρταρουχος) 'BRSKS (= Αβρασαξ) | (both from left) |
| *Healing amulets with unknown target:* | | |
| 41) *SM* 67 | αβλαναθαναλβα | heart-shaped |
| 42) Weiss (2007) no. 672 | αεηιουω | wing-shaped (from right) |
| 43) Delatte (1914) no. 2 | ακλαναθαναλκα | heart -shaped |
| 44) Neverov (2002) 204 fig. 12 | αεηιουω | wing-shaped (from right) |
| 45) *DMG* 46.1.b and Taf. VII.8) (= Getty no. 84.AN.I.73) | αεηιουω | wing-shaped (from left) |
| 46) *GMA* 37 (Ephesus) | αεηιωηιαηωωαηωηωα (= palindrome? αεηια-ωηι<ω>αηωωαηω-<ι>ηωα<ιηεα>) | wing-shaped (from left) |
| 47) *SGG* II, Fi 105 | αβλαναθαναλβα | wing-shaped (from right) |
| 48) *P. MontsRoca* no. 239 (= Martín Hernández [2010]) | αρχαχαμαριαχαβελ | wing-shaped (from left) |
| 49) *PGM* CXVI | ιωβρακ (4x) (= name or epithet) of Seth) | twice heart-shap twice wing-shap (from left) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| wing-shaped (from left) | Coptic amulet under left hand of image of Gabriel at end of amulet | long invocation of Gabriel against every unclean spirit, male or female |
| wing-shaped (from left) | four Aramaic magic bowls | for protection against demons, but the word 'headache' suggests that the original Greek spell was for headache. |
| (both from left) | Byzantine Jewish recipe | 'for every pain in the body', but the word 'headache' suggests that the original Greek spell was for headache. |
| (both from left) | Aramaic recipe for exorcistic amulet. | |
| heart-shaped | 1st-2nd cent. CE/ostrakon (7x4 cm) concave side (Narmouthis, Egypt) | (none; 'herb, myrrh, dried figs and white pennyroyal' on convex side) |
| wing-shaped (from right) | 2nd cent. CE/green heliotrope with red flecks | obverse: anguipede with vowels and stars |
| heart -shaped | 2nd-3rd cent. CE/ green onyx | placed between two facing and enthroned deities, one male & one female, in Egyptian garb |
| wing-shaped (from right) | 2nd-3rd cent. CE/ green jasper | obverse: anguipede |
| wing-shaped (from left) | 2nd-3rd cent. CE/rev. brownish chalcedony | obverse: snake with *charaktêres* and χεχε within *ouroboros* |
| wing-shaped (from left) | 2-3rd cent. CE/gold foil | (none) |
| wing-shaped (from right) | 2nd-3rd cent. CE/whitish quartz crystal | φυλακτήριον μεγίστον |
| wing-shaped (from left) | 3rd-4th cent. CE/papyrus (damaged) | to the right at line 8 traces of a *charaktêr* |
| twice heart-shaped twice wing-shaped (from left) | 6th cent. CE/papyrus | (none) most probably an amulet |

| TEXT | WORDS IN FORMATION | SHAPE |
|---|---|---|
| **NON-AMULETIC MAGIC:** | | |
| *Compulsive Erotic Spells:* | | |
| 50) *SM* 48: | ακραμμαχαμμαρει | wing-shaped (from left) |
| | αβλαναθαναλβα | wing-shaped (from right) |
| | ιαεωβαφρενεμουνοθιλαρικιφιαευεαιφιρκιραλιθονυο | heart-shaped |
| | αεηιουω | heart-shaped |
| | ωυοιηεα | heart-shaped |
| 51) *SGG* Ro 21 | ευλαμω | wing–shaped (from left) |
| 52) *SM* 40 (=*PGM* LXXXIV) | ακραχαμιφωνχωωθψαυς | heart-shaped |
| 53) Daniel (2008) | ερηεχισιφθηαραρακαραηφθησικηρε | heart-shaped |
| 54) *PGM* IV 409-34 | ιαεωβαφρενεμουνοθιλαρικιφιαευεαιφιρκιραλιθονυο | heart-shaped |
| 55) *PGM* XVIIa | ακραμμαχαμμαρει | wing-shaped (from left) |
| | αβλαναθαναλβα | wing-shaped (fr (both upside do |
| 56) *PGM* XXXVI 102-33 | ιαεω | wing-shaped (from right) |
| | βαφρενδεμουν | wing-shaped (from right) |
| | νοθειλαριιιαη | wing–shaped (from right) |
| | φιρκιαλι (= ιαεω-logos in segments) | wing –shaped (from right) |
| 57) *PGM* XXXIX | θατθαραθαυμθωλθαρα (twice) | both wing-shape (one from right and one from l |

| SHAPE | DATE/MEDIUM | INVOCATION/IMAGE |
|---|---|---|
| wing-shaped (from left)<br>wing-shaped (from right)<br>αιφιρκιραλιθονυομενερφαβωεαι<br>heart-shaped<br>heart-shaped<br>heart-shaped | 2-3rd cent. CE/lead tablet | Greek and Egyptian gods, Jahweh |
| wing–shaped (from left) | 2nd -3rd cent. CE/ hematite gem (reverse) | obverse: image of Eros about to strike butterfly (=Psyche?) with his hand |
| heart-shaped | 3rd cent. CE/papyrus | six *charaktêres*; singular imperative (lock of hair) |
| ɔε<br>heart-shaped | fragmentary<br>3rd cent. CE/papyrus | unnamed;<br>singular imperative (wraps around triangle) |
| :αιφιρκιραλιθονυομενερφαβωεαι<br>heart-shaped | 4th cent. CE/<br>papyrus-handbook<br>(to be inscribed on a lead tablet) | (same as no. 50) |
| wing-shaped (from left)<br>wing-shaped (from right)<br>(both upside down and right side up) | 4th cent. CE/papyrus | Anubis |
| wing-shaped (from right)<br>wing-shaped (from right)<br>wing–shaped (from right)<br>wing –shaped (from right) | 4th cent. CE/<br>papyrus-recipe<br>(to be inscribed on papyrus) | Min of Coptos<br>'attract x' |
| both wing-shaped (one from right and one from left) | 4th cent. CE/papyrus | unnamed, singular;<br>'ὁρκίζω σε ...<br>to attract x'<br><br>(two figures in between: Bes and male with sword and decapitated head') |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | (twice) | (one from right and one from l |
| 58) *PGM* XIXa | ακραμμαχαμμαρει | wing-shaped (from left) |
| | αβλαναθαναλβα | wing-shaped (from left) |
| | αεηιουω (twice) | wing-shaped (from left; upsic |
| | ωυοιηεα | wing-shaped (from left; upsic |
| | Δαμναμενευ | wing-shaped (from left) |
| | ιαεωβαφρενεμουνοθιλαρικιφιαευεαιφιρκιραλιθονυο | heart-shaped |
| *Binding Spells and Curses:* | | |
| 59) *DT* 243 (Carthage) | ερηεχισιφθηαραρακαραηφθησικηρε | heart-sh. |
| | καραηφθησικηρε | wing-shaped (from right) |
| 60a) SGD 145 (Hadrumetum) | Δαμναμενευς | wing–shaped (from left, upside down) |
| | αεηιουω | wing–shaped (from left) |
| 60b) SGD 147 (Hadrumetum) | Δαμναμενευς | wing–shaped (from left, upside down) |
| | αεηιουω | wing–shaped (from left) |
| 61) SGD 167 (Beirut) | ευλαμω (twice) | wing–shaped (from right) |
| 62) Jordan (1994) no. 5 (Isthmia) | ευλαμω | wing–shaped (from left) |
| 63) *SM* 55 (Egypt) | ακραμμαχαμαρει | wing-shaped (from left; upside down) |
| (= SGD 154) | ειραμμαχαμμαρκα | wing-shaped (from right; up |
| | ωμαλυε | heart-shaped |
| | ερεικεισειθφηαραραχαραηφθεισεικειρε | heart-shaped |
| 64) *PGM* VII 940-68 | ιωερβηθ | wing-shaped (from right) |
| | ιωπακερβηθ | heart-shaped |
| | ιωσεσεσρω | wing-shaped |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (one from right and one from left) | | ὁρκιζω σε ... to attract x' (two figures in between: Bes and male with sword and decapitated head') |
| wing-shaped (from left) wing-shaped (from left) wing-shaped (from left; upside down) wing-shaped (from left; upside down) wing-shaped (from left) ;αιφιρκιραλιθονυομενερφαβωεαι heart-shaped | 4th or 5th cent. CE/ papyrus | ghost 'attract, enflame. destroy, burn, etc.' |
| ›ε heart-sh. wing-shaped (from right) | 2nd -3rd cent. CE/[i] lead tablet | (fragmentary) |
| wing–shaped (from left, upside down) wing–shaped (from left) | 2nd -3rd cent. CE/ lead tablet | unnamed; singular imperative |
| wing–shaped (from left, upside down) wing–shaped (from left) | 2nd -3rd cent. CE/ lead tablet | unnamed; singular imperative |
| wing–shaped (from right) | 2nd -3rd cent. CE/ lead tablet | 'lord angels' |
| wing–shaped (from left) | 3rd cent. CE/lead tablet | (fragment) that curses four men |
| wing-shaped (from left; upside down) wing-shaped (from right; upside down) heart-shaped ;ικειρε heart-shaped | 3rd cent. CE/lead tablet | unnamed; singular imperative (silence spell) |
| wing-shaped (from right) | 3rd-4th cent. CE/ pap.-recipe for | Seth/ 'come to me and silence |
| heart-shaped wing-shaped | anger-restraint spell (to be inscribed on papyrus) | and subordinate x' |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | heart-shaped |
| 64) *PGM* VII 940-68 | ιωερβηθ | wing-shaped (from right) |
| | ιωπακερβηθ | heart-shaped |
| | ιωσεσεσρω | wing-shaped (from left) |
| | ιωπημψ (all = names of Seth) | wing-shaped (from left) |
| 65) *PGM* XXXVI 231-55 | ουσιρισεσεγγενβαρφαραγγης | botched heart |
| | ερικισηφηαραραχαραφθισικηρα | heart |
| 66) *DT* 187 (Rome) | ευλαμω | wing-shaped (from right) |
| | ωμαλυε | wing-shaped (from right) |
| | ζηρωσι | wing –shaped (from right; up |
| 67) *SM* 57 (Egypt) | ευλαμω | wing-shaped (from right) |
| (= SGD 162) | ευλαμω | wing-shaped (from left) |
| | ωμαλυε | heart-shaped |
| | ερηκισιθφηαραραχαραηφθισικηρε | heart-shaped |
| *Divination Spells:* | | |
| 68) *SM* 65 | ιαεωβαφρενεμουνοθιλαρικιφιαευεαιφιρκιραλιθονυ | heart-shaped |
| 69) *PGM* VII 703-26 | ιεωυωηαιηιαωηυωει (all vowels) | wing-shaped |
| | ραραπαεαβραιηιραραπαυουωαραωαχ | heart-shaped |
| 70a) *PGM* II 1-2, 5-6 | ακρακαναρβα | both wing-shap |
| | σανταλαλα | from the left, bu written in linea fashion |
| 70b) *PGM* II 65-68 | ακρακαναρβα | both wing-shap |
| | σανταλαλα | from the left written in linea fashion |

[i] On the date of this text see Jordan (1976) 129 n. 4.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| heart-shaped | | |
| wing-shaped (from right) | 3rd-4th cent. CE/ pap.-recipe for | Seth/ 'come to me and silence |
| heart-shaped wing-shaped (from left) wing-shaped (from left) | anger-restraint spell (to be inscribed on papyrus) | and subordinate x' |
| botched heart heart | 4th cent. CE/ papyrus-handbook (to be inscribed on lead tablet which is inserted in the corpse of a frog and hung toward the sun) | 'supreme angels' 'as this frog dries up, so may the victim's body' (cock-headed figure with sword) |
| wing-shaped (from right) wing-shaped (from right) wing –shaped (from right; upside down) | 4th cent. CE/lead tablet | 'lord angels' |
| wing-shaped (from right) wing-shaped (from left) heart-shaped ↄε heart-shaped | 4th cent. CE/lead tablet | many names, including the ερηκισιθφη-logos/ singular and plural imperatives (anger restraint) |
| ↄεαιφιρκιραλιθονυομενερφαβωεαι heart-shaped | 3rd cent. CE/clay bowl (inscribed on interior) | single, pantheistic god 'come to me ....' |
| wing-shaped ιωαχ heart-shaped | 3rd-4th cent. CE/handbook recipe for dream oracle (to be inscribed on papyrus and placed under a lamp) | the sun; lords of glory same names as disappearing names |
| both wing-shaped from the left, but written in linear fashion | 4th cent. CE/recipe for divination (to be spoken aloud 'in wing-like fashion') | amidst invocations of Phoebus Apollo |
| both wing-shaped from the left written in linear fashion | 4th cent. CE/recipe for divination (to be written on laurel leaves of a crown worn by a person performing sacrifice and singing a hymn) | invocations of Laurel and Apollo |

# SUBJECT INDEX


Abdenako, 24 n.64
Ablana, 32
Ablanth, 32
Ablanathanaêl, 27
abortion, 43 n.117, 46, 66 n.183
Abraham, 27 n.73
Abrasax, 11 n.36, 57 n.159
acclamation, 26
accusative (case), 13, 28, 28 n.76, 30, 56 n.156, 60 n.165
Adônai, 41, 48 n.135, 69
Adrasteia, 56 n.155
agate, 17, 24, 25, 31, 51, 68 n.186
Agôchônêon, 63 n.176
Agrammê, 23, 23 n.62
Akkadian, 10, 10 n. 29
Aktiôphi, 73 n.199
Alexandria, 56 n.156
ally, 68-69
altar, 4
amen, 21, 26, 27 n.73, 28 n.74
amulet case, 72
Ananias, 24 n.64
Ananke, 56 n.155
Anapa, 51, 51 n.141, 53 n.144, 54-55, 58, 60-62
Anatolia, 49
Androkydes, 56 n.156
angel, 11 n.36, 19, 24, 35, 42, 47 n.132, 64, 68
anger-binding spell, 70 n.191, 71
animal, 40-42, 51, 54, 61 n.169, 65-66, 74
animal-headed figures, 40-41, 51, 66
Antaura, 61-62; 62 n.170
anthropomorphic figure, 39
Antioch, 77
Anubis, 46
Apamea, 54, 57
Aphrodite, 13-15, 13 n.40,14 n.43, 14 n.45, 15 n.46, 21, 28 n.76, 65, 67 n.185, 68, 74-75
Apollo, 10
apotropaic symbol, 8 n.18, 14 n.43
Aramaic, 7-8, 10, 14-15, 15 n.46, 19, 19 n.55, 27, 56-58, 60, 65, 65 n.182, 67 n.184, 68, 68 n.187, 76 n.201
archery, 73 n.199
Ares, 31, 40, 40 n.104, 40 n.105
Arktê, 56 n.158
arms, 35, (armed figure) 40
arrow, 25 n.68
Artemis, 14, 14 n.44, 61-62
article, 13, 56 n.156, 60 n.165
Asarias, 24 n.64
Asia Minor, 30, 73
ass, 39
Asstraelos Chraelos, 54
Athanaêl, 24 n.64
Athena Polias, 28 n.75
Athens/Athenian, 25, 28, 28 n.75, 55 n.154
aura, 62 n.170
Autolykos, 43 n.114

baboon, 32, 33 n.88
babies, 65 n.180
Babylonian, 10 n. 29
Barb, 38, 42, 47
barbarian, 60 n.165
barren (woman), 66 n.183
bear, 56 n.158
beard (on snakes/serpents), 38, 41-42, 48
bed, 24 n.66
beetles, 61 n.169
belly, 42
Berlin, 31, 46 n.129
Beruit, 60
bile, 61 n.169
binding spell/ritual/curse, 14, 14 n.41, 14 n.42, 18 n.50, 40 n.102, 54, 55 n. 150, 55 n. 154, 56-57, 57 n.159, 60, 70 n.191, 71
birth, 46
black, 32 n.87
Black Sea, 51
bleeding/blood, 6-7, 9-10, 17, 25 n.68, 31, 33, 35-36, 38, 38 n.97, 42-47, 43 n.114, 49, 51, 67, 71
'bloodstone', 43
Blue team, 54
body amulet, 13 n.40, 24 n.66
Bohak, 10

bones, 62 n.171
Bonner, 36, 38, 42, 46
bound figure, 40
bow, 73 n.199
bowl, 8, 10, 73 n.197
branch, 11 n.36
breath, 71
breeze, 62
British Museum, 32 n.87, 33 n.88, 40
brownish-white, 2
bull, 56 n.156, 62
burning, 18 n.50, 20 n.56
Byzantine, 7, 8, 27-28, 62, 67 n.184, 68, 76 n.201

Cairo Genizah, 7, 14, 15 n. 36, 57-58, 65-69, 76 n.201
cannibalism, 49
Carthage, 76, 78 n.203, 78 n.205
Catania, 60
cervix, 43 n.119
chalcedony, 2, 12, 24, 31
chariot race, 54
charioteer, 54, 78, 78 n.203, 78 n.205
Chersapaethi, 24 n.64
Chersetaethi, 24 n.64
Chesenaethi, 24 n.64
Chnoubis, 32, 46, 46 n.131
Christ/Christian, 14, 14 n.43, 21-22, 26-27, 26 n.71, 27 n.73, 30, 62
chthonic (demon), 28, 28 n.75, 56, 60, 78
Clement (of Alexandria), 56 n.156
Chnêmeo, 23, 23 n.62
Cnidian Lesche, 37 n.93
cock-headed anguipede, 31, 33 n.88
colic amulet, 20 n.59, 67 n.185
Cologne, 72
community, 40
conception, 46
confrontation, 6
constellation, 56 n.158
containment, 6
cool colors, 25, 31-32, 66, 68, 68 n.186
Coptic, 24 n.64, 25 n.70, 28 n.78, 57 n.159, 67 n.184, 76 n.201
cosmos, 56, 56 n.158
Crete, 55, 55 n.153, 61, 61 n.168
crib, 24 n.66
cross, 13-14, 14 n.43, 21, 26-28, 31, 55, 64-65
crown, 25
crystal, 25 n.68
cult, 28 n.75
cup, 43-44, 45 n.123, 48
curse/curse tablet, 2, 3 n.7, 5-7, 14 n.47, 18, 18 n.50, 21, 22 n.61, 28 n.76, 43 n.117, 53 n.144, 54-58, 54 n.146, 58 n.163, 60-61, 67, 69-71, 69 n.189, 69 n.190, 70 n.191, 72-73, 75-76, 78
cylinder, 1
Cyprus, 49

Dactyl, 55, 60
Damnamenê, 56
Damnameneus, 6, 11 n.36, 28 n.76, 33, 51, 55-60, 56 n.155, 60 n.165, 62-63, 65-68, 70-71, 75
Damocles, 37 n.93
danger, 32
Daniel, 30
dead, 56
deer-skin, 66 n.183 (see also "fawn-skin")
Delphi, 37 n.93
Delatte, 38, 45
Demeter, 55 n.152
Demetrius of Phaleron: 32
demon, 2, 3 n.7, 6-8, 8 n. 22, 14 n.43, 17-18, 18 n.51, 18 n.54, 20, 20 n.56, 24, 27-28, 28 n.78, 30-33, 31 n.83, 36, 40-41, 40 n.102, 47 n.134, 51, 54, 56-57, 60-63, 62 n.170, 63 n. 174, 63 n.176, 65-68, 71, 74-75, 78 n.205
Denmark, 25 n.68
Derchain, 38
dialogue, 62
Dias, 19
diamond, 39
Dionysius, 29-30
Dionysus, 63, 65-66, 68
diphthong, 18 n.51
disease, 2, 3 n.7, 4, 6-8, 18, 22, 28, 36, 40-41, 51, 61 n.169, 67, 74-75
disorder, 68
divination, 67 n.184, 69, 73 n. 197, 76 n.202
dog, 61
donkey, 46 n.127
door, 13-14, 46
Doric, 30 n.80
drinking, 49
ear, 7 n. 15
ear-ache, 18 n.50, 68
earth, 28 n.75, 42
eating, 49

Egypt(ian), 2, 14, 14 n.41, 21, 25, 26, 31-32, 40, 41 n.107, 42, 46, 49, 56
emporium, 51 n.141
enemy, 40, 49
Ephesia grammata, 55
Ephesus, 1, 25 n.67, 25 n.70, 61
epic poetry, 56
Epicurous, 15 n. 46, 68
epileptics, 62 n.170
Epizephyrian Locri, 55 n.153
Erichtheus, 28, 28 n.75
Erichtho, 28
Erichthoniê, 28-31, 28 n.78, 51, 55-56, 65, 68, 74
Erichthonius, 27-29, 28 n.75, 56, 64 n.179, 68
Eros, 73, 73 n.199, 78
erotic charm/spell/curse, 5-7, 18 n.50, 20 n.56, 56, 57 n.159, 57, 59-60, 67, 69-71, 72 n.194, 72-73, 75-76
escape, 46
evil, 2, 14, 20, 39-40, 39 n.99, 68, 71, 74
evil eye, 39, 39 n. 99, 42, 74
excision, 64
excommunication, 15
exorcism, 14 n.43, 27 n.73, 29-30, 56, 60
expulsion, 6, 61, 66
eye disease, 67 n.185

Fate, 56 n.155
fawn-skin, 65, 68 ('deer-skin')
feast (of Thyestes), 49
Festugiére, 36, 38, 49
fever, 3 n.7, 6, 8 n. 22, 12 n.37, 17, 18 n.50, 19-22, 23 n.62, 24-26, 24 n.64, 25 n.70, 28-29, 28 n.74, 31-33, 51, 67-68, 71
fever amulet/charm, 2, 12, 19, 20 n.56, 21-22, 24-27, 24 n.64, 29, 31, 39-40, 44, 51, 54, 57-58, 60, 63-64, 64 n.179, 66-69, 68 n.186, 71
fig, 24 n.66
finger, 55
fire, 19-20, 20 n.56, 31, 32
flail, 25
flesh, 49
flood, 7 n. 16, 49
Florence, 12 n.38, 25
food, 37 n.93

Gabriel, 11 n.36, 57 n.159
Gaius, 12 n.37, 17-18, 24, 31
garland, 11-12, 11 n.36
Gaza, 14 n.43
genitals, 43, 43 n.31
genitive (case), 53 n.144
Getty Villa Museum, 2, 12, 17, 31, 47 n.134, 68 n.186
ghost, 56
glutton, 49
gold, 1, 6, 25 n.67, 25 n.70, 78
Gordon, 23
Gorgippia, 51 n.141
Gorgon, 30
'Gorgon-slayer', 30
Gorgophonê, 30
Gorgophônos, 28 n.76, 31, 51, 64 n.179, 72, 74
Goths, 51 n.141
gout, 61 n.29, 67 n.185
grape-cluster, 2, 2 n.4, 9, 9 n. 25, 14, 17, 21, 24, 25 n.68, 63-65, 68
grapevine, 51, 63
gray, 12, 17, 24, 32, 68 n.186, 73 n.199
green, 17, 31-32, 68 n.186
'Grim-faced One', 30
ground, 38
grove, 60
growth, 32
gums, 65 n.180

Hades, 38
Hadrumetum, 58, 67 n.184, 70
Halicarnassus, 14 n.43
hand, 55, 60
Harpocrates, 19 n.55, 32, 33 n.41
head, 8, 8 n.22, 18 n.53, 20 n.56, 25, 27, 27 n.73, 37 n.93, 39-41, 42 n.108, 51 n.142, 55, 57-58, 61-62, 61 n.169, 66, 68
headache, 6, 8-10, 24, 25 n.70, 26 n.71, 30, 36, 40 n.102, 51, 60, 61 n.169, 62, 65, 67-68, 68 n.187
healer, 18, 21, 33 n.88, 65
healing, 55, 68
health, 32, 55
heart, 65 n.180, 71
heart-shape (formation), 2, 2 n. 4, 3 n. 7, 6-8, 17, 17 n.50, 19-20, 20 n.57, 24-26, 25 n.70, 29, 31 n.83, 43-44, 63 n.175, 67-70, 72-75
heat, 19 n.55, 20 n.56
Hebrew, 8, 32, 32 n.87, 57
Hecate, 55 n.152, 56 n.158, 57, 65 n.180
Helena, 22, 55
Helios, 33 n.88, 56, 71

helmet, 39
heliotrope, 31
helper, 17-18, 20-21, 26, 30, 68
hematite, 20 n.59, 35, 39 n.101, 40, 43, 43 n.114, 43 n.116, 45, 46, 46 n.129, 47, 68, 73
hemorrhage, 36, 42
Hephaestus, 28 n.75
Heracles, 20 n.59, 61 n.169, 64-65
Herakleia, 29
herb, 24 n.66
herbal remedies, 24 n.66
Hermes, 55
hero, 2 n.6, 20 n.59, 28-30, 64-65
Hilelmilelel, 24 n.64
Homer, 11 n.34
horn, 25
horse, 40 n.102, 61, 61 n.169, 78, 78 n.205
Horus, 14, 46 n.127
hour, 32
house/household, 8 n.18, 13, 13 n.39, 14, 54
house amulet 13 n.40, 61
hunger, 49
hymn, 32, 56 n.158
Hylotomos, 65 n.180
Hyperechius, 54, 57
Hypotomnos, 65 n.180

Iaô, 41, 48 n.135, 69
Iaôsabaôth, 69
Iarbath, 23, 23 n.62
Idean, 55
illness, 4 n. 9, 6, 26, 51, 61 n.169, 67, 74
impetigo, 61 n.169
imprecation, 54
incantation, 8, 14 n.43, 15, 30, 43 n.114, 49, 53-55, 53 n.144, 55 n.150, 60, 61 n.169, 72, 78
'Inescapable', 56 n.155
Iran, 8 n. 18
Iraq, 8 n. 18
iron, 56 n.155
Isis, 46 n.127
ivy, 62-63, 63 n.176, 65-66, 68

jackal, 39
jade, 11 n.36
Jahweh, 14, 41, 69
jar, 35, 45
jasper, 31, 73 n.199
Jesus, 26-28, 27 n.73, 62
Jewish magic, 8 n. 19, 8 n. 22, 10 n. 29, 32 n.87
Jews/Jewish, 10, 14-15, 14 n.41, 15 n.46, 30, 41, 69
Joseph, 26, 31
jug, 41, 42 n.108, 46, 48
Juliana, 54 n.146

Kallias, 55
key, 41, 45-46, 46 n.131
Khnum, 46
king, 49, 62-63, 63 n. 176, 68
knife, 68
knowledge, 55
Kok Kouk Kol, 20, 20 n.56, 20 n.59
Kokalthaal, 24 n.64
Krates, 18 n.53
Kronian Oracle, 18
Kronos, 18, 56 n.158

lamb, 43
lapis lazuli, 9, 10 n. 28, 14, 63, 65
Latin, 7, 18, 36, 42-43, 43 n.114, 46-47, 48 n.138, 49
laurel, 11-12, 22 n.61, 24, 42, 42 n.112, 46
lead, 14 n.47, 15 n.47 54-55, 60 n.165, 61 n.168, 69, 69 n.189, 69 n.190, 72 n.194, 72, 75, 78
leaf, 6, 11-12, 11 n.36, 22 n.61, 24-25, 42, 42 n.112, 44, 46, 62-63, 63 n.176, 65-66
leek, 42
Levant, 69
libretto, 61
lid, 44
light, 19, 19 n.55
limbs, 62 n.171
linear form/fashion, 12-13, 15, 27 n.73
linen, 7, 17
lintel, 14 n.43
lion, 61
lion-headed figure, 39, 40, 47 n.134
literature (Greek), 65
liver, 40, 40 n.105, 67 n.185, 71
living, 56
Lord, 22, 55, 62 n.171
lotus, 25, 33 n.88
love spell/charm, 2, 5, 75
Lycurgus, 28 n.76, 51, 63-64, 63 n.174, 63 n.176, 65-66, 67 n.184, 68, 68 n.187

Maalbuk, 24 n.64
madman, 65

maenad, 66
magical recipe book/handbook; Coptic, 66 n.183
magical recipe book/handbook; Greek, 2, 11, 11 n.34, 13, 15, 18, 20 n.56, 43, 53, 61 n.166, 62-63, 62 n.173
magician, 4 n.10, 6, 12-13, 20, 23, 55 n.150, 69, 73, 78
Magna Graecia, 55
Maltomini, 30
meal, 49
medical handbook, 42, 51 n.142
medicine/medical, 7, 9, 17, 42, 43 n.116, 45, 51 n.142, 64, 68 n.186
medieval period, 7, 56, 68 n.187, 73
Mediterranean, 32, 49
Medusa, 61 n.169
menarche, 45
menorrhagia, 36 n.92
menorrhea, 35, 47, 49, 68
menstrual bleeding/blood, 36, 42-43, 45-46, 49, 67
Mesopotamia, 56
Michael, 68
Michor, 24 n.64
migraine, 9, 10, 27 n.73, 62 n.170, 62 n.171, 65
Misael, 24 n.64
Misak, 24 n.64
monster, 65
moon (crescent), 41, 45 n.123, 56
mountain, 62
Mt. Ararat, 62 n.171
mummy, 42 n.108, 46 n.131
myrrh, 20 n.56, 24 n.66
myth (Greek), 28, 28 n.75

nail, 58 n.163
name-dismemberment, 26
name-magic, 6, 18, 51, 74
name-reversal, 18, 18 n.54, 26
Narmouthis, 2, 24
Near East, 71
neck, 42, 47 n.133
necromantic ritual, 18, 56
Nemean lion, 20 n.59, 61 n.169
Nemesis, 56 n.155
night-blindness, 10
Nilkiesal, 73 n.199
nimbus, 19 n.55
nominative (case), 27, 28, 28 n.76, 30, 30 n.80, 60, 70
noon, 32, 71
North African, 15 n.47
nosebleed, 7 n.15, 42, 45-46
nude figure, 39
nurse, 65
nymph, 30

Odysseus, 43 n.114
oil, 43 n.116
omen, 11 n.36
onyx, 68 n.186
oral (performance), 1, 5-8, 8 n.23, 10-12, 10 n.29, 11 n.34, 14-15, 18 n.51, 73, 76, 78
Orion, 14 n.44
Osiris, 46 n.131, 46 n.127
Oslo, 20 n.56
ostrakon, 2, 24, 24 n.66, 32, 54, 78

pagan, 14, 65 n.182
pain, 8-9, 15 n.46, 27 n.73, 40, 40 n.105, 61-62, 65, 68
Palestinian, 8 n. 22, 10 n. 29
palindrome, 2, 6, 17-18, 18 n.51, 18 n.54, 20, 20 n.57, 20 n.58, 22,-26, 24 n.64, 25 n.68, 25 n.70, 25 n.70, 29, 31-33, 63, 63 n.175, 69-71, 73 n.197, 78 n.205
Palladia, 21
palm, 11 n.36, 57 n.159
pan-pipes, 4-5
Paris, 18
peace, 66 n.183
Pelca, 24 n.64
Pelops, 49
pennyroyal, 24 n.66
Pentheus, 63
Perseus, 30, 61 n.169, 64-65
Perugia, 43 n.114, 47, 49
Phalasarna, 55 n.153, 61 n.168
Philinna Papyrus, 61-62, 61 n.168, 61 n.169
Philbô, 23, 23 n.62
Phthonos, 14 n.43
phylactery, 14
Pindar, 49
poem, 4, 71
poison, 53, 53 n.144
Pollux, 55
Polygnotus, 37 n.93
pool, 49
Poseidon, 28 n.75

pot, 24, 68 n.186
prayer, 6, 10-12, 12 n.37, 17-18, 17 n.50, 20-24, 24 n.64, 27 n.73, 28 n.78, 36, 55, 58, 64, 66, 73-76, 73 n.199, 76 n.202, 78
predator, 65
pregnant, 45, 46 n.127
Preisendanz, 29
priest, 32
Princeton, 71, 72 n.194, 72, 78
prognostication ceremony, 11
protection/protector/protective amulet, 32, 33 n.88, 36, 40-41, 41 n.107, 53-55, 57, 60, 62, 67-69, 70 n.191, 74, 74 n.200, 78
prothetic aleph, 57 n.159
prow, 74
pruning hook, 51, 65
Psalm 29, 10
Ptolemaios, 71-72
Ptolemaïs, 71
punisher, 56
purification ritual, 54
purple, 9
Pythagorean, 56 n.156

quartz, 25, 68 n.186

ram, 46
rape, 46 n.127
ray, 19 n.55, 32
Ra, 71
Re, 56
red, 11, 29, 31
Remmachus, 54
restraining spell, 20 n.56
'Restrainer', 55
ring, 9, 14, 56 n.156
rites (ritual) of aversion, 54
rites (ritual) of expulsion, 40, 54, 61 n.169, 66
Ritner, 46
ritual of escort, 54
rival, 46 n.127
rock, 61-62, 37 n.93
rock crystal, 24, 32
Roman Empire, 15, 55, 78
Rose, H.J., 38
rubric, 12 n.38, 25, 43, 53, 60-61, 61 n.166, 66
Russia, 51

Sabaô(th), 11 n.36, 41, 48 n.135, 69
saint, 14, 21
scapegoat ritual, 53 n.144, 54
scepter, 25, 56 n.158
sciatica, 67 n.185
scorpion, 9, 9 n. 27, 13-15, 14 n.44, 15 n.46, 21, 65, 67-69, 67 n.185, 74
Semitic, 32, 32 n.87, 41
Selene-Hekate, 56
Serapis, 26 n.71
serif, 39 n.100
serpent, 42 n.108, 46, 48
servant, 56 n.155, 62, 62 n.171
Seth, 20 n.56, 46, 46 n.127, 68, 71
Seth-Typhon, 20
Setra, 24 n.64
Seyrig, 38, 40
Shabiri, 10
Shamash, 56, 71
shield, 39-40, 74
ship, 74
shivering, 22, 26, 29
shop, 13
Sicily, 55, 60
sickness, 18, 32
silencing-spell, 70 n.191, 71, 73 n.199
silver, 6, 60-62, 54 n.147, 78
snake, 2 n.2, 28 n.75, 31, 31 n.83, 38, 38 n.95, 41-42
Sogruokyl, 62-63
Solomon, 62
Sophia, 19
solar disk, 25
solar (force, symbol, being), 19 n.55, 32, 33 n.88, 42 n.108, 54, 56, 56 n.156, 60 n.165, 71
soldier, 40
son, 14, 28 n.74, 43 n.114, 46 n.127, 47 n.134, 49, 51, 54, 63, 65, 68
sorcerer, 55 n.50
sorcery, 61, 61 n.166
sore throat, 6, 14, 51, 62-64, 63 n.176, 64 n.178, 65, 67-68
soul, 71
spear, 31, 39, 40
speech-act, 6, 13, 15, 22, 26, 36, 60, 67, 73-75, 78
spherical shape, 51
spindle, 39
spirit, 57 n.159
St. Petersburg, 31
St. Phokas, 13 n.39, 14, 14 n.42
St. Porphyry, 14 n.43

stand, 41
starburst, 42 n.108
statue, 14 n.43
sting, 15 n. 46, 67, 69
stomach-ache, 25 n.70, 67 n.185
stone, 78
stopper, 44
stream, 10, 44, 49
string, 29
styptic amulets, 43
'Subduer', 55, 60, 71
sulfur, 20 n.56
sun, 19, 19 n. 55, 32, 33, 41, 56 n.156, 56, 71
surgery/surgical tool, 64-65
swastika, 21, 21 n.60, 22
swelling, 7 n.16, 10, 67
sword (of Damocles), 37 n.93
Syra, 24 n.64
Syria, 14 n.43, 54, 54 n.147

Tais, 20
Tantalus, 6, 37 n.93, 38 n.97, 35-38, 40, 40 n.103, 42-43, 43 n.114, 45-47, 47 n.132, 47 n.134, 49, 51, 65-66, 67 n.184, 68-69, 71
Tartarouchos, 57
Tartarus, 57
Tebtunis, 20
Techosis, 17-18
terracotta, 24, 73 n.197
Thadôa(th), 41
Thalalmelal, 24 n.64
theriomorphic demons, 40, 61-62, 61 n.167, 61 n.169
thigh, 43 n.114
thirst, 49
Thrace, 51, 63, 63 n.176
thread, 42
transliteration, 8, 8 n.23, 10, 35
tree, 60
thunderbolt, 39, 39 n.99, 41
Thyestes, 49
tines, 46
Tiron, 21, 23, 54, 57-58
tongue, 55
torch, 73 n.199
town, 54
transparent (stone), 31
triangle, 1-2, 3 n.7, 4-10, 5 n.11, 9 n. 25, 12-15, 12 n.38, 14 n.45, 17-18, 17 n.50, 20-21, 23-24, 24 n.64, 25 n.68, 28-29, 31 n.83, 36, 39-41, 43, 57-58, 57 n.161, 58 n.163, 59-60, 63 n.175, 63 n.177, 66-69, 67 n.184, 69 n.190, 71-73, 73 n.197, 75-76, 76 n.202, 78 n.203
trinity, 21-23, 54
Typhon, 20 n.56

'Undercutter', 65 n.180
underworld, 18 n.54, 36-37, 49, 51, 55-56, 71
upright position, 15
upside down (or inverted), 6, 8 n.18, 15, 39, 41, 45, 58, 70, 73, 75
uraeus-serpent, 25
uterus/uterine, 25 n.68, 36, 41-48
uterine symbol, 38
uvula, 9-10, 36, 51, 63-65, 68

vase, 35-36
vessel, 41
victim, 20 n.56, 38, 54, 56 n.158, 58 n.163, 60, 65 n.180, 71, 75
victory, 57 n.159, 67, 69
viper, 35
Vitellozzi, 47
vocative (case), 27-28, 59-60, 28 n.76, 56 n.156, 60 n.165, 70, 73
voodoo doll, 18, 18 n.53
vowels, 1-2, 22-23, 25 n.70, 30-33, 31 n.83, 40-41, 45 n.123, 49, 51, 54, 58, 63 n.175, 67-69, 71, 75

waist, 47 n.133
warrior, 39, 40 n.103, 40 n.104
water, 37 n.93, 38, 43 n.116, 44
wave, 7 n. 16
weapon, 65, 74
white, 11-12, 24-26, 24 n.66, 28, 31-32, 68 n.186
wife, 66 n.183
Wilcken, 29
Wilmowitz, 28
wing-shape (formation), 2, 6- 8, 9 n. 25, 11-12, 11 n. 34, 21-23, 24 n.64, 25, 25 n.70, 25 n.70, 27-31, 27 n.73, 45 n.123, 47, 57 n.159, 57-58, 60, 63-64, 63 n.175, 63 n.177, 67-70, 73, 75, 78
witchcraft, 54 n.147
wits, 55
wizard, 56 n.155
wolf, 26, 26 n.71, 28, 31, 40 n.102, 61, 61 n.169

womb, 35, 41, 43, 43 n.117, 46, 46 n.131, 48, 67 n.185, 71
'Woodcutter', 65 n.180
woollen fillets, 11
Wortmann, 28-29
wound, 45
year, 32
yellow, 73 n.199

Zagourê, 20, 20 n.56, 32
Zagourê-Pagourê, 31
Zeus, 39

# INDEX OF MAGICAL TEXTS AND GEMS


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *ACM* | 64.64-91 | 24 n.64, 67-68, 76 n.201 |
| | 64.92 | 25 n.70, 67, 76 n.201 |
| | 71 | 67, 76 n.201 |
| *BGU* | 3.956 | 29 n.79 |
| *BM* | no. 28 | 38 n.98 |
| | no. 40 | 73 n.199 |
| | nos. 105-6 | 33 n.88 |
| | no. 151 | 33 n.88 |
| | no. 180 | 38 n.98 |
| | no. 193 | 33 n.88 |
| | no. 208 | 33 n.88 |
| | nos.216-8 | 33 n.88 |
| | no. 232 | 33 n.88 |
| | no. 243 | 33 n.88 |
| | no. 251 | 73 n.199 |
| | no. 259 | 33 n.88 |
| | no. 272 | 33 n.88 |
| | no. 289 | 33 n.88 |
| | no. 290 | 38 n.98 |
| | no. 351 | 38 n.98 |
| | no. 352 | 45-46 |
| | no. 381 | 46 n.129, 46 n.130 |
| | no. 382 | 35 n.89, 36-43, 45-48, 47 n.132, 51, 65-69, 67 n.184, 71, 76 |
| | no. 383 | 35 n.89, 36-43, 45-48, 47 n.132, 65-69, 67 n.184, 71, 76 |
| | no. 384 | 35 n.89, 39 n.101, 36-43, 45-48, 47 n.132, 65-69, 67 n.184, 71, 76 |
| | nos. 385-6 | 40, 40 n.105 |
| | no. 460 | 38 n.98 |
| | no. 504 | 11 n.36 |
| | no.1114 | 73 n.199 |
| *D&D* | no. 130 | 67-68, 67 n.185, 76 n.201 |
| | no. 344 | 46 n.131 |
| | no. 350 | 46 n.131 |
| | no. 362 | 46 n.131 |
| | no. 363 | 46 n.131 |
| | no. 364 | 35 n.89, 40 n.103, 35-43, 45-48, 47 n.132, 65-69, 67 n.184, 71, 76 |
| *DTA* | no. 67 | 18 n.53 |
| | no. 88 | 55 n.154 |
| *DT* | no. 15 | 54, 57 |
| | no. 187 | 69-70, 76 |
| | nos. 234-5 | 78 n.203 |
| | no. 237 | 77-78 |
| | nos. 238-40 | 78 n.203 |
| | no. 242 | 78 n.203 |
| | no. 243 | 69-70, 72, 76 |

Getty Museum
73.AN.1 12
84.AN.I.73 2
83.AN.437.50 39-41, 39 n.101

*GMA* no. 13 61
no. 36.15-6 53 n.144
no. 37 1 n.1, 67, 76 (n. 46 in appendix)
no. 46.8-12 54 n.147
no. 52.12-13 53 n.144, 60
no. 52.89-92 60

*GMPT* CXX.1-13 64 n.178

Heim no. 97 7, 7 n. 15, 17, 36, 49, 62, 76 (n. 25 in appendix)
no. 122 36, 42-43, 42 n.113, 46-47, 49

*JPGMJ* 8 (1980) 223-27 32, 67-68, 68 n.186, 76 (n. 6 in appendix)

*MSF* 11.1:7 66 n.183
11.3:13 66 n.183
16.1:14 66 n.183
16.5:12-17 15 n.46, 67, 69, 76 n.201
18.9:6-14 57-58, 57 n.161, 66-68, 76. n.201
18.12:8 66 n.183
18.14:10-12 65-67, 65 n.182, 68 n.187

*MTKG* II, 36, 2a/8-11 57 n.159, 67

*PGM* I.264-76 22 n.61
II. 1-2 7 n.13, 10, 12, 48 n.137, 67 n.184, 69, 76 (n. 70a in appendix)
5 7 n.13, 10, 12, 48, 48 n.137, 67 n.184, 69, 76 (n. 70a in appendix)
6 7 n.13, 10, 12, 48 n.137, 67 n.184, 69, 76 (n. 70a in appendix)
65 11-12, 11 n.36, 48 n.137, 67 n.184, 69, 76 (n. 70b in appendix)
66 11-12, 11 n.36, 48, 48 n.137, 67 n.184, 69, 76 (n. 70b in appendix)
67-68 11-12, 11 n.36, 48 n.137, 67 n.184, 69, 76 (n. 70b in appendix)
III.70 2 n.4
.510 56 n.156
IV.331-2 57 n.159
.407 2 n.4
.409-34 69-70, 69 n.189, 69 n.190, 76
.2242 57
.3086-95 18
.3105 18 n.54
VII.218-21 67, 69, 76
.699 56 n.158
.703-26 69, 75-76
.716 2 n.3
.940-68 69, 70 n.191, 71, 75-76
VIII.49 57 n.159
XII.270-350 56 n.156
XVIIa 69-70, 76
XVIIIb 2 n.6, 29-31, 51, 64 n.179, 67, 72, 75-76 (n. 8 in appendix)
XIXa 28 n.76, 59-60, 66, 69-70, 76 (n.58 in appendix)
16-29 59 n.164
XX 61, 26 n.71, 61 n.168 (Philinna papyrus)
XXIVa 11 n.36

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | XXVIIIa-c | 14 n.43 |
| | XXXIII | 20, 67-69, 76 (n. 7 in appendix) |
| | XXXV | 67, 67 n.185, 69, 76 n.201 |
| | XXXVI.1-34 | 20 n.56 |
| | .102-33 | 69, 76 |
| | .231-55 | 69-70, 76 |
| | .256-64 | 54 |
| | .295-311 | 20 n.56 |
| | XXXIX | 69, 76 |
| | XCI | 67-68, 76 |
| | XCL | 17 n.50 (n. 4 in appendix) |
| | XLIII | 23-25, 67-68, 76 (n. 11 in appendix) |
| | XLIV | 28 n.78, 67-68, 76 n.201 (n. 14 in appendix) |
| | LXII.76-106 | 43-45, 48, 76 (n. 24 in appendix) |
| | .78-83 | 25 n.68 (n. 24 in appendix) |
| | .82 | 2 n.4 |
| | CXVI | 67-68 |
| *PGM* 2 | | 13-15, 21, 65, 67-68, 67 n.184, 76 |
| *PGM* 2-3 | | 14 n.43 |
| *PGM* Hymn 18.39-41 | | 56 n.158 |
| *PDM* xiv.873-4 | | 18 n.51 |
| *P. Köln* 10.425 | | 67-68, 76 |
| *SGD* | no. 145 | 58-59, 58 n.163, 66-67, 69-70, 76 (n. 60a in appendix) |
| | no. 147 | 58-59, 58 n.163, 66-67, 69-70, 76 (n. 60b in appendix) |
| | no. 167 | 69-70, 76 |
| *SGG* II | | |
| | Fi 105 | 25, 25 n.67, 32, 67-68, 68 n.186, 76 (n. 47 in appendix) |
| | Pe 26 | 43 n.114, 47, 47 n.132, 49 |
| | Ro 21 | 69-70, 73, 73 n.198, 75-76 |
| *SM* | no. 1 | 2 n.6, 30 n.80, 64, 67-68, 76 (n. 27 in appendix) |
| | no. 3 | 22-23, 54-55, 67, 76 (n. 2 in appendix) |
| | no. 9 | 17-18, 67-68, 76 (n. 5 in appendix) |
| | no. 11 | 19-20, 67, 76 (n. 3 in appendix) |
| | no. 21 | 21-24, 54, 57-58, 67, 76 (n. 10 in appendix) |
| | no. 34 | 26-31, 51, 55-56, 64 n.179, 65, 67-68, 74-76 (n. 13 in appendix) |
| | no. 40 | 69-73, 72 n.194, 75-78 |
| | no. 43 | 72 n.194 |
| | no. 48 | 69, 69 n.189, 69 n.190, 76 |
| | no. 55 | 69-70, 70 n.191, 72, 76 |
| | no. 57 | 69-71, 70 n.191, 76 |
| | no. 65 | 69-70, 73 n.197, 76, 76 n.202 |
| | no. 67 | 2, 24-25, 32, 67-68, 68 n.186, 76 (n. 41 in appendix) |
| *SMA* | no. 54 | 40, 40 n.106 |
| | no. 144 | 35 n.89, 41 n.107, 35-43, 47 n.132, 45-48, 65-68, 67 n.184, 69, 71, 76 |

# INDEX OF FOREIGN WORDS


*ablanathanalba,* 12, 17, 17 n.50, 21, 23-25, 24 n.64, 25 n.68, 31-33, 33 n.88, 54, 68-69, 71, 75
*abracadabra*, 17, 29, 66
*agôgai*, 69 n.189
*akamatos,* 20 n.59
*akrammachammarei,* 69
*alpha,* 25 n.70
*analuontes,* 55, 55 n.150
*apopompê*, 40, 55
*arsenika,* 60

*baskania,* 74
*beta,* 12 n.37, 25 n.69
*bibe,* 42

*carmina figurata,* 4
*charaktêres,* 21-23, 22 n.61, 22 n.61, 25-26, 31, 39-41, 57-58, 60, 64, 71
*charta*, 42
*cuma,* 7, 7 n. 15, 36, 49
*cucuma*, 7, 7 n. 14

*daimôn,* 37, 49, 54-55
*defixio,* 65 n.180
*deletio morbi,* 2-3, 5-6, 8-10, 10 n. 29, 36, 64-65, 67
*diabolê,* 57

*epôidai,* 55 n.150
*epsilon,* 27, 29
*epsilon nu,* 44
*erêkisithphê,* 71
*erêkisithphêarach,* 70
*eta,* 27, 29
*eulamô,* 70
*ex nihilo,* 6

*fluere,* 7 n. 16
*fluxus,* 7 n. 16

*goês,* 55, 60, 55 n.150, 56 n.155
*graphe,* 11

*haima, 36*
*(he)mikrania,* 8
*historiola*, 26, 26 n.71

*iaeô,* 69, 69 n.190
*iaôsabaôthadônaiakrammachammarei,* 69
*icucuma,* 7 n.14
*in utero,* 24 n.64
*iota,* 31 n.83, 48
*ita,* 42

*katadesmata,* 60
*kappa,* 12 n.37, 20 n.59, 25 n.69
*kardiotomêson*, 65 n.180
*kephalargia*, 8, 10, 36

*lambda,* 65 n.182
*lamella,* 1
*lege,* 11
*luein,* 54
*lusis,* 54

*morbus,* 18

*nomen,* 48
*nomina magica,* 75

*ômalue,* 70
*omega,* 25 n.70, 30
*omicrons,* 30, 31 n.83
*onoma,* 78 n.205
*ourouboros,* 2 n.2, 31, 41, 41 n.107

*pagourê,* 19-20, 19 n.55, 20 n.56
*pan pharmakon,* 54
*pharmakôn,* 53-54, 60, 62
*pharmakoi,* 54
*pheugein,* 60
*-phônos*, 30 n.81
*phrampheireinlelamai,* 66
*phthonos,* 74
*phylaktêrion,* 27 n.73, 32, 61 n.166, 68 n.186
*pie,* 42
*ponon,* 65
*praxis*, 14 n.43

*rho,* 65 n.189
*rotolus,* 62 n.173

*sanguinis fluxus,* 7
*santalala,* 11 n.31
*sic,* 7, 7 n. 14, 7 n. 15, 49
*sicut,* 42
*sicucuma,* 7, 49
*soroor*-formula, 46
*staphulê,* 9-10, 14, 36, 63-65
*staphylotomos,* 28 n.76, 64-65, 68
*succus,* 7 n. 14
*syrinx*, 5

*technopaignia,* 4, 4 n. 10, 78
*theta,* 32 n.87
*-tamnos,* 65
*-tomos,* 65

*upsilon,* 39 n.100

*vox magica,* 32 n.87, 33, 35, 47, 48 n.135, 54-55

*zagour*ê, 19-20, 19 n.55, 20 n.56
*zagourêpagourê,* 19-20, 20 n.57, 24

# *INDEX LOCORUM*


Babylonian Talmud: 10
Clement, *Stromata* 5.8.45: 56 n.156
Galen, *Loc. aff.* 6.194: 62 n.170
Hippocrates, *Peri Pathôn*: 51 n.142
Homer, *Odyssey,* 11.582-87: 37-38, 37 n.93, 40 n.103, 49
John Chrysostom, *PG* 62.357-58: 14 n.43
*Life of Saint Porphyry* (60-61): 14 n.43
Lucan, *Pharsalia*: 28
Marcellus of Bordeaux: 7, 7 n.14, 17, 31, 36, 75-76
Quintus Serenus 9 35-40: 17, 17 n.48, 29, 31, 62, 66, 67, 75-76
Pherecydes: 55
*Phoronis:* 56 n.155
Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*: 24
*Natural History,* 27.100: 61 n.169
Pollux 1.131: 54
Tzetes, *ad Iliad,* 1.258: 30, 30 n.81
*Testament of Solomon* 18.37: 2 n.6, 62-68, 62 n.173, 65 n.182, 65 n.182, 67 n.184, 76 (n. 28 in Appendix)
Theocritean corpora, *Syrinx* poem: 4, 78