

The Greco-Egyptian Magical Formularies

LIBRARIES, BOOKS, AND
INDIVIDUAL RECIPES

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CHAPTER 1

Anatomy of the Magical Archive^{*}

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The papyrological study of archives and libraries offers the tantalizing possibility of bringing individual manuscripts together in order to reconstruct a fuller picture of the individuals and groups who produced and used them. Within the study of ancient magic, considerable attention has been focused on the Theban Magical Library, a group of magical and alchemical texts from second- to fourth-century Thebes in Upper Egypt, which have been used to produce a model of the “typical” magical practitioner of Roman Egypt: a Hellenized priest selling Egyptian rituals to a largely Greek-speaking audience in the centuries following the demise of the temples. Despite the value of this archive, the scholarly focus on it has tended to produce a single, essentialized image of magical practice, paradoxically diminishing the capacity of archives to produce richer and more contextually sensitive understandings of bodies of texts.

This chapter, therefore, has three goals, intended to remedy this tendency. The first is to define more clearly what is meant by the term “archive,” and more specifically, “magical archive,” and how the relationship between archive, manuscript, and text can be understood.¹ The second goal is to suggest a shift in

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1. For a definition and studies of papyrus archives, see van Beek 2007; Vandorpe 2009; Clarysse 2010. On the distinctive use of the term “archive” in papyrology compared to other humanistic disciplines, see Martin 1994, 569; van Beek 2007, 1033; Vandorpe 2009, 217–218. The standard work on archives in antiquity is Posner 1972, although it deals only cursorily with private papyrus archives.

focus from “magical archives” to “archives with magical content,” that is, toward seeing magical texts as one type of material that individuals might collect and use, whose relationships with nonmagical material may be important for its contextual understanding. This goal also relates to our conception of users and scribes of magical texts. The fact that one and the same user could have produced and possessed books of different kinds might have an impact on our perception of the readership of magical texts. Rather than conceiving narrowly of magicians or priests, we should instead consider the literate user more broadly. For this reason, we will also discuss briefly the issue of the copyists of magical handbooks. The third goal is to introduce a much larger corpus than previously considered—over twenty archives dating from Roman and Early Islamic Egypt containing magical content—and to provide brief examples of the ways in which these diverse collections provide us with a deeper appreciation of the potential of archives to offer richer views of the individuals who composed, copied, studied, and used these texts. We will present in detail three specific archives containing “magical” material from the Roman period: the well-known Theban Library, the Hermonthis Magical Archive, and the Kellis House 3 Archive. Our discussion, much of which is informed by bibliological and paleographical studies presented in other chapters of this book, includes the modern acquisition of these archives, as well as affinities of materiality and content within them.

1. *Defining a Magical Archive*

The papyrological definition of an “archive” is a group of manuscripts brought together by an ancient individual for a specific purpose,² whose existence is usually revealed by the documents being found together in an archeological discovery as part of a larger archeological assemblage.³ This seemingly simple definition has hidden complexities; most obvious is the fact that the majority of papyri in collections outside Egypt have no record of their provenance or circumstances of discovery. As a result, archives must often be reconstructed

2. This is the most basic definition; see van Beek 2007, 1034. For a stricter definition, see Pestman (1990, 51; 1995, 91–92), who distinguishes an archive, created by an individual or family with a certain purpose, from a dossier reconstructed by modern scholars (see below).

3. For a papyrological definitions of archives, see Fournet 2018a; cf. n. 2. On ancient libraries, see Houston 2014.

by the process of museum archeology, which involves examining catalogues, inventories, sale documents, and correspondence written by individuals involved in acquisitions, or by tracing back the origin of the documents to a site of production based on their codicological, paleographical, and lectional characteristics.⁴

This is exactly what has been done in the case of the Theban Magical Library, whose existence can be hypothesized based on the fact that its ten papyri were all the property of Jean d'Anastasy (1765–1860),⁵ who seems to have purchased them from anonymous Egyptians within a short period of time, likely in the early 1820s.⁶ This is, however, not exactly the same thing as saying that they were found in a single archeological location; it would have been possible for Anastasy to have purchased material from different sellers or locations, and later sell them together, and he certainly did this, since his three sale catalogues contain hundreds of items with several noted provenances.⁷ Likewise, even a shared findspot does not always indicate the existence of an archive; papyri were often disposed of in dumps that necessarily gathered together unrelated material.⁸ In the case of the Theban Library, however, there are additional points that suggest its coherence. First, all except two of the manuscripts are noted in Anastasy's catalogues as coming from Thebes, which probably means that they were purchased from dealers in Luxor.⁹ Again, this point is not decisive, but it

4. Fournet 2018a, 186–188. On the virtual reconstruction of libraries based on inventories, see Houston 2014.

5. Jean d'Anastasy was a Greek merchant in Alexandria who served as the consul for Sweden and Norway from 1828 to 1857. The original form of his name seems to have been Ἰωάννης Ἀναστασίου, although after being made a knight of the Swedish Order of Vasa in 1824 he apparently began to use the French form, d'Anastasy, which appears even on his grave in the cemetery of the Greek community in Alexandria (including in the Greek form δ'Αναστάς). His surviving correspondence, overwhelmingly in French, uses the form Jean d'Anastasy (followed here), although the tendency of nineteenth-century Europeans to change the form of names depending on the language being spoken has resulted in several alternatives—notably, Giovanni Anastasi, used by those in Livorno, Italy, through which his sales passed. To add to the confusion with his name, he is often mistakenly described as an Armenian, and confused with Giovanni “Yanni” d'Athanasi (1798–1854), a Greek excavator who worked with Henry Salt. See Chrysikopoulos 2015; Parasyra 1938; Dawson 1949.

6. Dosoo 2016a, 252–253.

7. See the sale catalogues, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden inv. 3.1.6; British Museum, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan AES Ar.246; cf. Dosoo 2016a, 254.

8. See van Beek 2007, 1034; Clarysse 2010, 56. Paradigmatic cases are the Oxyrhynchus rubbish dump and the “Cantina dei papyri” in Tebtunis. See also Martin 1994, for the circumstances of papyrus accumulation in antiquity.

9. Dosoo 2016a, 264, 273–274. For PGM VI, listed in Anastasy's catalogue as coming from Memphis, but identified as part of the same document as PGM II (together = GEMF 30), from Thebes, see Chronopolou 2017. No attributed provenance is known for P.Holm., since it was not included in a sale catalogue, but it shares the same hand as GEMF 60 (= PGM XIII) and P.Leid. I 397, with Theban provenances.

does make it more likely that they were the results of a single find. Second, the papyri contain internal details and features that confirm both a Theban origin (dialectal and religious features in the Demotic texts) and relationships with one another: shared hands, similar formats, and—although this cannot be taken as definitive—several individual recipes shared between manuscripts.¹⁰ Third, and perhaps most important, we must note that magical texts are relatively rare. Of the 70,000 or so published Greek papyri from Roman Egypt, only about a hundred (less than 0.2 percent) are magical formularies of the type found in the Theban Library.¹¹ This rareness has resulted in the assumption among papyrologists—often unstated, but probably correct—that when magical texts, especially of similar date and format, are sold together, it is likely that they originate from a single find.

While these principles have allowed us to reconstruct the Theban Magical Library, and several other archives discussed below, there are certain consequences resulting from their vagueness. First, we know that Egyptian and international dealers often split up groups of papyri, so that it is possible, and indeed likely, that some magical manuscripts that belong to different collections originally had relationships to one another.¹² This is a difficult problem to resolve; again, museum archeology offers the possibility of recovering some collections, but this has rarely been attempted for magical texts. One example can be seen in the attempt to enlarge the Theban Magical Library by connecting it to material from other sales: *GEMF* 55 (= *PGM* III), sold by Jean François

10. On specifically Theban aspects of the library, most marked among the Demotic texts, see Johnson 1977; Tait 1995; cf. more generally Dosoo 2016a, 259, 262, 267 n. 57.

11. The figures here are taken from the Trismegistos (www.trismegistos.org) and Kyprianos (www.coptic-magic.phil.uni-wuerzburg.de/index.php/the-database/) databases, respectively, and are correct for Greek-language texts dating between 100 BCE and 700 CE as of April 24, 2022. The precise number of texts from Trismegistos is 69,671, while the number of formularies from Kyprianos is 122.

12. One of the most notable examples of this is the so-called Bodmer Library or “Dishna papers,” distributed primarily between the Bodmer collection in Geneva and the Chester Beatty in Dublin, but with some further pieces in Cologne, Montserrat, in the Duke University collection in North Carolina, and in the Schøyen collection in Oslo. Robinson 2013 was the first to reconstruct and claim this as the library of the monastery of Pbow (a claim that circulated among the traders of these papyri). For opposing opinions, see Blanchard 1991 and Cribiore 2001, 200, with n. 74, for the argument that this hoard must have belonged to a Christian school of advanced learning. Turner (1968, 51–53) already connected it to Panopolis. The rolls of the *Iliad* in *PBodm.* 1 (3rd–4th cent.) are copied on the verso of a Panopolitan land register (dated to 208/9); see Geens 2014, 80; Miguélez Caverio 2008, 221–222. See the codicological argument advanced by Fournet 2015a, 14. The most recent approach is the monographic section of *Adamantius* 21 (2015) and Nongbri 2018, with an extensive study on the acquisition of this hoard(s) and material features of these books. A full review of the proposals for the nature of the Bodmer Library is given by Fournet (2015a, 15–17).

Mimaut (1774–1837), French consul in Alexandria, in 1837;¹³ the manuscripts sold to the British Museum in 1888 (discussed below as the Hermonthis Magical Archive), and *GEMF* 68 (= *PGM* XXXVI), purchased for the University of Oslo by Samson Eitrem in 1920.¹⁴ Korshi Dosoo has in the past expressed skepticism about such endeavors; in each of these cases, there are no surviving documents linking the manuscripts to Anastasy's purchases, and, although there are some similarities in the manuscript formats, it is not clear that these are best understood as representing their context of production, rather than the broader similarities we would expect between manuscripts belonging to the genre that scholars call "magical."¹⁵ Although there is evidence that the group of manuscripts that we call here the Hermonthis Archive was also purchased in Luxor, this occurred forty to sixty years later than Anastasy's purchase of the Theban Library. More research into the practices of Egyptian dealers is necessary to provide a more fully informed answer to this question, but for now we find a sale process lasting over half a century or more unlikely, and the internal coherence of both archives suggests they do not belong together.¹⁶

More secure is the prospect of linking manuscripts from different sales together by identifying matching hands. Again, this has rarely been attempted for magical manuscripts, but this method, along with that of examining content related to known individuals, is one manner by which papyrological dossiers are compiled—these dossiers being groups of documents linked by their relationship to individuals and families.¹⁷ The clearest example of this where magical texts are concerned is in the case of the archive of Dioskoros of Aphroditos (sixth century CE), whose voluminous writings include an amuletic prayer (*PGM* 13a) copied between two poems written on the verso of the remains of a contract.¹⁸ In our discussion of the Hermonthis Archive, we will again highlight other magical texts whose closeness of writing style may imply some relationship to this archive, and more secure connections can occasionally be made between other groups of magical texts based on very close similarities of hand and style.

13. Dosoo 2016a, 263–264.

14. Zago 2010, 74; cf. Hickey, Maravela, and Zellmann-Rohrer 2015.

15. Dosoo 2016a, 262, 267 n. 57. Cf. the further comments below in the discussion of the Hermonthis Archive.

16. For a fuller treatment of this problem, see the discussion of the Hermonthis Archive below. Cf. Hagen and Ryholt (2016, 64–65), who note that dealers could often be very patient, and cite one case where Muḥammad Muḥassib waited thirty years to get a satisfactory price for a group of papyri from Gebelein.

17. Van Beek 2007; Fournet 2018a; Clarysse 2010; Martin 1994.

18. On this text, see MacCoull 1987; Jordan 2001a.

The most secure archives with magical contents are those found *in situ*; this is the case of the well-known Ramesseum Papyri, a Middle Kingdom cache of texts, also from Thebes.¹⁹ In the period studied here, magical texts have been found in excavations in Kellis Area A House 3 (fourth century CE; see further below) and Hermitage 44 in Naqlun (fifth century CE), to name two examples.²⁰ Later in this discussion, we will look at ways in which the first of these provides us with details of the lives of magical practitioners, but for now we may observe the important point that each of these includes other types of texts—literary, paraliterary, and above all, documentary—alongside magical texts. This implies that our reconstructed magical archives were probably also parts of larger assemblages, but at present it remains very difficult to identify nonmagical material that might have been found with them; again, our work on the Hermonthis Archive offers a possible exception to this. We can only hope that later studies of both magical and nonmagical papyrological material will continue to pay greater attention to acquisition information and material features, and in doing so, will discover connections that are for now invisible.

Before moving on to a more detailed discussion of individual archives containing magical material, it is worthwhile to explore explicitly the type of information that archives give us. According to the definition we are using here, an archive is a collection of manuscripts deliberately brought together by an ancient individual, whose relationship is made visible to historians by an attested or reconstructed shared site of deposition. Strictly speaking, therefore, an archive tells us only about the circumstances of an archive's deposition. Before the moment when the archive was abandoned, hidden, or forgotten, its texts might have been composed, produced, and used either together or separately. An archive may be the result of a great many possible situations, being composed, for example, of manuscripts that were thrown away because they were no longer useful, or alternatively of texts that were hidden away to be protected from destruction. For this reason, we must be careful to clearly establish, rather than merely assume, connections between the manuscripts belonging to archives, and to interpret their pre-deposition relationships with caution.

1.2 Archives, Manuscripts, and the Lives of Texts

We might conceptualize a text's life as consisting of three broad stages that are accessible to modern researchers: (1) its composition and later editing or

19. Meyrat 2019.

20. For each of these archives, see the respective entry in the Appendix.

redaction; (2) its production as a material object, and subsequent copying into later manuscripts;²¹ (3) its contexts of use, leading to its context of final use and deposition. It is possible that some magical texts were composed, written, and then deposited by a single individual (as may actually be the case with a few idiosyncratic applied texts), but the complicated redactional histories that are evident in many of the magical formularies make it clear that this is rarely the case; most magical texts seem to have been copied (albeit with modifications) from older copies. Again then, strictly speaking, the text—its structure, vocabulary, and intertextual relationships—reveals information about composition and redaction; the physical manuscript—layout, handwriting, orthography, paratextual features—provides us with information primarily about the context of manuscript production; and the archive—the trends and relationships that can be observed within and between the texts—tells us about the context of the manuscripts’ final use (Table 1.1). Again, we must stress that these distinctions are not absolute; the contexts of composition, production, and use may be identical, but such cases must be argued for rather than merely assumed.

Another feature of the nature of archives becomes clear when we consider a hypothetical model for the circulation of recipes and their aggregation into larger collections. The well-known *P.Kellis Copt.* V 35 (discussed below) is a letter from one individual to another containing a single separation procedure requested by the recipient. As Paul Mirecki has observed, similar dynamics

Table 1.1. A proposed model for interpreting the features of manuscripts within archives.

Object of study	Sample features	Stage of primary relevance
Text	Structure, vocabulary, intertextual relationships	Composition and redaction
Manuscript	Binding, ¹ layout, handwriting, orthography, paratextual features, relationships between texts	Context of transmission and production, intended use, and more rarely, ownership ²
Archive	Trends and relationships within/ between manuscripts	Context of final use and deposition

¹The binding can give indications on the production, but it can also carry marks of ownership. Cf. the case of the Berlin Gnostic codex (TM/LDAB 107765) which contains an ex-libris; see Krutzsch and Poethke 1984, 37–40.

²Cf. n. 1 to this table.

21. Examples of evidence from antiquity for the copying of books: Cic. *Ad Att.* II 20–22, for the borrowing of books to be copied; *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2192, a letter requesting copies of books; Galen *De indolentia* 31–33. See Harris 1989, 224–226, 298, on networks and copying of books; see also Houston 2014, 13–19.

for the circulation of magical recipes are implied by the epistolary format found in several of the more complex recipes,²² and these may represent a fictionalized version of a real practice in which individual magical texts circulated between correspondents around Egypt. Similarly, suggestive are the sheets containing single recipes,²³ a particularly important example of which is *SM I 5*, a sheet containing brief instructions for creating an amulet against tonsillitis to be sent to a certain Sarmates; as the original editors suggest, this too was probably a letter.²⁴

If recipes circulated individually, we know that they also circulated in larger collections, and we can observe that these are of a wide variety of lengths and types. Some are short, with only two, three, or four recipes; others contain dozens. Some, like *GEMF 57* (= *PGM IV*), and the first stage of *GEMF 55* (= *PGM III*) seem to have been planned copies from preexisting exemplars.²⁵ Others, like *GEMF 16* (= *PDM/PGM XIV*), seem to have been added to gradually over time from a small, original core.²⁶ Lynn LiDonnici has suggested that this latter model lies behind the sections she observes in *GEMF 57* (= *PGM IV*)—short collections, perhaps on rolls or small codices, which had additional recipes added to their ends over time,²⁷ a process observed in both *GEMF 16* (= *PDM/PGM XIV*) and *GEMF 55* (= *PGM III*).²⁸ Groups of these opportunistically created formularies could then be copied into larger, planned formularies, with the resulting sequences or blocks of recipes retaining their originally idiosyncratic interests and characteristics (see Figure 1.1).²⁹ This implies that archives and multi-recipe formularies represent two manifestations of the same phenomenon—the tendencies of individuals to bring together individual magical recipes for their own purposes. Every archive represents, *in*

22. Mirecki 2013. Note that Mirecki considers the influence to run in the opposite direction; he sees an individual such as Ouales, the author of *P.Kellis Copt.* V 35, as following the tradition of priestly scribes attested by the epistolary frames. But, as he notes (p. 142), the parallels are only general, and some are questionable; when Ouales tentatively notes that, having not found the text requested, “perhaps this [other text] is what [his correspondent] needs,” this seems less likely to be a comment on the efficacy of the transmitted ritual text than a statement of uncertainty. Cf. Dieleman 2005, 269–270 on epistolary frames, and Gordon 2019a, 102–102 on processes of circulation more broadly.
23. For this specific format for magical formularies, see Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 2 in this volume.
24. Parsons 1974, 161, no. 3068.
25. LiDonnici 2003, a slightly abridged version of which appears as Chapter 4 in this volume; Love 2017.
26. See Dosoo, Chapter 5 in this volume, p. 193–231.
27. LiDonnici, Chapter 4 in this volume, esp. pp. 170–171.
28. Love 2017 and Martín Hernández and Torallas Tovar forthcoming; Dosoo, Chapter 5 in this volume, p. 193–231.
29. A similar process is reconstructed for medical texts in Reggiani 2019.

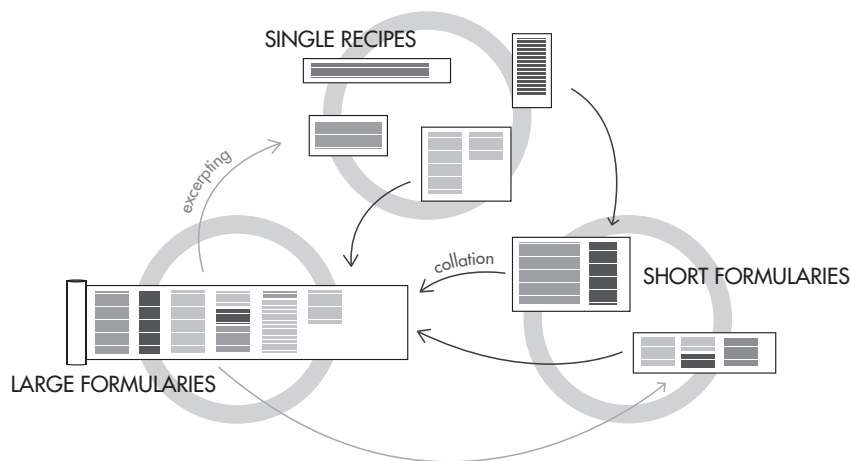


Fig. 1.1. Hypothetical model of the circulation of magical texts.

potentia, a formulary that might be copied into a single larger manuscript, and each complex formulary may retain the traces of an earlier stage, in which its recipes existed separately or in smaller groups as parts of an archive; as Lynn LiDonnici puts it, the more complex handbooks are in effect “‘one-volume’ libraries.”³⁰ We should be clear, however, that there is no evolutionary ladder of magical manuscripts, in which individual recipes inevitably coalesce into larger formularies and archives; it is certain that in addition to these centripetal forces tending towards accumulation, there were also inverse, centrifugal processes at work, in which individual manuscripts might be removed from archives, and recipes or groups of recipes were excerpted and copied, to produce smaller formularies or to be sent in letters or notes of instruction.³¹

2. The Theban Magical Library

The most recent treatment of the Theban Magical Library is that published by Dosoo in 2016,³² and while the discussion here will build upon and occasionally

30. LiDonnici 2003, 144, and Chapter 4 in this volume.

31. For the concept of “centripetal” and “centrifugal” forces in the compilation of manuscripts, see Faraone, Chapter 11 in this volume.

32. Dosoo 2016a. For other treatments, see Zago 2010; Dieleman 2005, 14–15; Brashear 1995, 3402–3404; Preisendanz 1933, 91–95.

correct it, we will not repeat in detail the information given there.³³ The Theban Library is a group of ten magical and alchemical texts whose shared purchase history seems to imply that they constitute a coherent archive that was purchased, found, and at least in part produced, in Thebes in Upper Egypt. Below is a list of these ten papyri, divided into four groups, or “subarchives,” based on their dating and material characteristics:

- A. Second- to third-century bilingual Greek/Demotic rolls
 - 1. *GEMF* 15 (= *PDM/PGM* XII; TM 55954 + 55946)
 - 2. *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV; TM 55955)
 - 3. *GEMF* 17 (= *PDM* Suppl.; TM 64218)
- B. Second- to third-century Greek rolls
 - 4. *GEMF* 31 (= *PGM* I; TM 88396)
 - 5. *GEMF* 30 (= *PGM* II + *PGM* VI; TM 88397 + 60673)
- C. Fourth-century Greek magico-alchemical codices
 - 6. *P.Holm.* + *GEMF* 59 (= *PGM* Va; TM 64429)
 - 7. *GEMF* 60 (= *PGM* XIII; TM 64446)
 - 8. *P.Leid.* I 397 (TM 61300)
- D. Fourth-century Greek magical codices
 - 9. *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV; TM 64343) Includes Old Coptic texts
 - 10. *GEMF* 58 (= *PGM* V; TM 64368)

These groups may be understood in different ways; they may represent, for example, changing norms of production within a single community, or originally separate archives which were brought together prior to the final deposition.³⁴ We should note that there are connections between the different groups: *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV) in Group D, for example, contains Old Coptic texts with textual parallels with Demotic material in *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV) in Group A,³⁵ while *GEMF*

33. A notable correction concerns Anastasy 75a (1828), described by Dosoo (2016a, 257) as the second part of *GEMF* 15 (= *PDM/PGM* XII) (Anastasy 75 [1828]); in fact it refers to fragments of *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV; Anastasy 65 [1828]) found in the folds of *GEMF* 15 (= *PDM/PGM* XII); see Dieleman 2005, 27; Reuvens 1830, 1ère lettre, p. 6; 3ème lettre, pp. 145–146.

34. Cf. Love (2017, 9–11), who notes the possibility that we might be dealing with two archives, one second/third century, the other fourth century. Since it is fairly common for multigenerational archives to span similar periods, the length of time does not seem to us to pose a serious challenge to the unity of the archive.

35. Most notably between *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV) 123–131 and *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV) 11–25, two nearly identical invocations of Osiris; a shorter parallel may be found between the opening of two narrative charms in *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV) 1220 and *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV) 94. For discussions of these, see Love 2016, 16–23, 31–33.

15 (= *PDM/PGM* XII) in Group A contains alchemical material that might suggest a relationship to that in Group C.³⁶ As we discuss in more detail below, however, shared content can also be found between material that we know to come from different geographical and temporal contexts, and so it is not clear how much importance should be accorded to textual parallels in the absence of other indicators of relationships between manuscripts. Nonetheless, we might imagine the Library to represent an archive possessed by multiple generations (at least three, given the time span covered), growing from an original core (perhaps Group A or B) with the addition of other material; this would correspond to the model of the “enriched dossier” proposed by Andrea Jördens for documentary texts—that is, a collection inherited and then supplemented by subsequent generations.³⁷

As already suggested, it seems almost certain that the Theban Library as we have it represents only part of what was once one or more larger archives, which may have contained other documentary, literary, or magical material. Fairly clear evidence of this may be found in *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV), whose verso contains additions written over the course of the manuscript’s working life, including notes consisting of Demotic explanations of Greek names for plants and minerals.³⁸ As with the other bilingual texts of *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV), these imply a user whose primary written language was Demotic, but who had access to and wanted to use Greek-language magical texts.³⁹ Many of these ingredients are found in surviving magical or alchemical recipes, implying that *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV) was used in conjunction with texts written purely in Greek, but not all of the ingredients appear in the surviving Greek texts from the Theban Library.⁴⁰ These annotations thus point us toward the existence of further Greek magical, and perhaps alchemical, recipes that were consulted by the handbook’s copyist, but which do not survive in the present-day Library.⁴¹ Further work on re-use attested in the Theban Library

36. This is found in *GEMF* 15 (= *PDM/PGM* XII) 193–201; see Halleux 1981, 163–166.

37. Jördens 2001; the “enriched legacy” is contrasted with “true legacy” dossiers.

38. These are found in lines 886–910, 920–929, 833–952, 966–969, the first five columns of the verso; for discussions, see Dieleman 2005, 112–113, 116–117, 119–120, 308–311; Dosoo, Chapter 5 in this volume, p. 222–223. See Chapter 2 on reuse and recycle of papyrus rolls and codices, pp. 111–118.

39. See Dieleman 2005, esp. 121–138.

40. See, e.g., ῥιζόγονος (safflower or cardamom) and κηληνόγονος (peony), which are explained in *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV) 889–890, and which both appear in *GEMF* 55 (= *PGM* III) 332, and τιβόμαλλος (spurge), found in *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV) 892, and in *P.Holm.* 1037.

41. Cf. the Formulae of “Praising Re in the Morning at his Rising” (*n: s̄l̄.w n dw: r tp dwe m hr̄f*), mentioned, but not provided, in *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV) 152. Dieleman suggests that this may have been a hymn to the sun (Dieleman 2005, 55), which may imply access to temple texts. This idea

may deepen this picture; *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV) has also been repaired using (never edited) fragments of Demotic and Greek documentary texts,⁴² and a damaged text mentioning oil—apparently either an account or a brief recipe—is written on the verso of *GEMF* 30 (= *PGM* VI).⁴³

Although the Theban Library texts—in particular *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV)—have come to stand in for “typical” or “ideal” magical texts from Roman Egypt, they are in many ways idiosyncratic. The size of the formularies marks them as outliers among the surviving material—although it is certainly possible that larger and more carefully copied texts once existed. Likewise, the use of Demotic and Old Coptic, prominent in several manuscripts, is unusual among surviving magical texts.⁴⁴ But just as the individual manuscripts are often understood as typical, so the Theban Library’s reconstructed history is often taken as representing, archetypically, the story of literate magic in Roman Egypt.

Broadly, the reconstructed history is as follows. The earliest text of the Theban Library, the Demotic *Myth of the Sun’s Eye* written on the recto of the document *GEMF* 15 (= *PDM/PGM* XII), dates from the second century CE, and seems most at home within a priestly context, perhaps even a temple library.⁴⁵ The other early texts, many of which are written partially in Demotic (Group A), also seem to have been copied by someone with training in a temple priesthood, since Demotic literacy in other contexts is unknown in the Roman period;⁴⁶ the same seems to be true of Old Coptic, the range of nonstandard methods of writing Egyptian in the Greek alphabet that preceded the third-century

is complicated by the fact that parallel texts copied later in the manuscript seem to use a formula consisting largely of *voces magicae* that are recited to the sun in the morning (lines 473–474, 477–479, 513–515). Svenja Nagel (2019, 124–125), on the other hand, argues that this formula replaces an older hymn, borrowed from a longer invocation that was used in the original ritual for a different purpose.

42. Dieleman 2005, 36, 42; handcopies in Leemans 1839, pl. xiv, nos. 1–2, 4–7.

43. Transcriptions may be found in Wessely 1888, 150; Kenyon 1893, vol. 1, 83.

44. Three of the four manuscripts containing Demotic included in Betz, *PDM/PGM* XII, XIV, and Suppl. (= *GEMF* 15, 16 and 17), belong the Theban Library; one (*PDM* LXI = *GEMF* 18) probably does not. Among the few other published magical formularies containing Demotic text, are O.Strasbourg dem. inv. 1338 (1st BCE–2nd CE cent.; TM 52204) and BM EA 10808 (2nd cent. CE; TM 108583). Approximately 25 previously unpublished Demotic magical texts are currently being edited for publication by Joachim Friedrich Quack, which will change our picture of the linguistic landscape of Egyptian magic, although the total number will still be considerably lower than comparable Greek material, especially in the 3rd and 4th cent. CE.

45. For the publication of this text, see Spiegelberg 1917. On the text and its position within the Theban Library, see Tait 1995, 171–173; Dieleman 2005, 30–31.

46. Tait 1994; Depauw 2012, 494–496, 500.

standardization of Coptic in Christian contexts.⁴⁷ These observations have therefore been used to argue that the owners of the Theban Library were Egyptian priests, who began to offer privatized versions of temple rituals to clients following the economic collapse of the temple system in the third and fourth centuries CE, and who began to translate or recompose texts in(to) Greek, as their clientele shifted from Egyptians to urban Greek-speaking elites.⁴⁸ Here we can see a collapsing of the distinction between textual composition, manuscript production, text use, and deposition: the entire archive, and all of its texts, become the products and rituals of the Roman Egyptian priesthood. We should note that this is not the only model that exists: Alexandr Khosroyev used the Theban Library as evidence of the syncretistic religiosity of Hellenized elites in Upper Egypt, without specific reference to the Egyptian priesthood, suggesting an interest among the literati in religious texts that offer parallels to the existence of the Nag Hammadi Library.⁴⁹

Using the tripartite model for understanding the text–manuscript–archive relationship, we will briefly examine the Theban Library in more detail and suggest ways in which each of these models might be refined. We will work backwards, considering the Library’s deposition, then its context of use, and finally its compilation and composition.

Since the circumstances of Anastasy’s purchase of the Library are unrecorded, we do not know where and how it was found. The fact that the manuscripts are in generally good condition suggests that they were deliberately deposited, unlike the abandoned texts from Kellis, discussed below. Like many manuscripts from the Theban region, they may have been found in a tomb in the rocky slopes of the

47. Old Coptic refers to a range of alphabetic renderings of the Egyptian language that appeared in the Early Roman period and used the Greek alphabet alongside a selection of Demotic characters. As Richter (2008, 413) has pointed out, there is no sharp line between the Old Coptic efforts, situated in the traditional temple context, and the early evidence of standard Coptic used in Christian milieus. The differentiation is to some extent a modern scholarly construction. For Old Coptic, see Richter 2008, 410–417; Love 2016; Quack 2017b; Fournet 2020a, 1–39, esp. 5–6.

48. The first author to suggest this theory seems to have been Charles Wycliffe Goodwin, who published *GEMF* 58 (= *PGM* V) in 1852 and proposed that the author was a “priest of Isis or Sarapis, addicted to that kind of Theurgy which Porphyry ... severely criticizes” (p. vi). For more recent arguments, see Ritner 1995a, 3361–3371; Frankfurter 1997, 115–135; Frankfurter 1998, 179–184, 210–237; Dieleman 2005, 10 et passim; Gordon 2012, 156–157, 162; Gordon 2013, 163–186. For an alternative possibility that some copyists may have been professional scribes without an inherent interest in the material, see Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 2 in this volume, p. 74–75.

49. Khosroyev 1995, 62, 98–102; cf. Lundhaug and Jenott 2015, 74–78 et passim; Piwowarczyk and Wipszycka 2017.

West Bank, although this may have been connected to a later re-use of the tomb unrelated to its original function.⁵⁰ Even if this were the case, we would still need more information, to understand whether its deposition there was opportunistic or part of a planned ritual, and what kind of associated objects formed part of its assemblage. Nonetheless, several possibilities can be suggested about the type of archive that it represents: (1) that the archive was abandoned during the Roman authorities' persecution of the owners and users of the magical texts; (2) that it was buried to conceal its secrets; (3) that it represents a funerary offering, and (4) that it represents the remains of a temple library.⁵¹

The *persecution model* is perhaps the most commonly suggested model in literature relating to the Theban Library, with Carl Wessely first implying it as a possibility.⁵² As several authors, most notably Robert Ritner, have observed, there seems to have been no systematic persecution of those activities we would classify as “magic” during the pharaonic period,⁵³ and there is no evidence either for the Ptolemaic period, although some sources suggest that laws against impiety may occasionally have been used against practitioners of “magic” in the broader Greek-speaking world.⁵⁴ The Roman period marked a change in this attitude; certain “magical” rituals were already forbidden under Republican law, and the Roman attitude toward “magic,” as well as astrology and alchemy, seems to have become more severe under Diocletian and his Christian successors.⁵⁵ Several practices attested by the Theban Library—the creation of curse tablets, the use of erotic procedures, divination through the evocation of spirits, and some healing practices—could have provoked official punishment, up to and including the death penalty. It appears that the official persecution of magic became more intense in the fourth century, when the collection history of the Theban Magical Library comes to an end—a piece of circumstantial evidence in favor of this model. We might imagine two scenarios, the first being that the users

50. But cf. Nongbri 2018, 91–98; Tutty 2018.

51. Cf. Brashear 1992, 26–29; Brashear 1995, 3405. Although these four models have been proposed specifically for the Theban library, the most remarkable find of books of magic, they could be applied to other archives.

52. Wessely 1888, 12.

53. Ritner 1995b.

54. Dickie 2001, 49–60; Eidinow 2010; 2016; 2019.

55. Pharr 1932; Phillips 1991; Trombley 1993, vol. 2, 29–45; Cramer 1996, 234–238; Kippenberg 1997; Dickie 2001, 141–161; Lenski 2002, 218–234 (on the magic trials under Valens); Sfameni Gasparro 2006 (the persecution attested by Zacharias' *Life of Severus*); Rives 2006; Rodríguez Martín 2010; Escribano Paño 2010; Marasco 2011; Rohmann 2016, 64–69. For Christian condemnation of and regulations against magic, see Dickie 2001, 251–272; Rohmann 2016, 114–116; Sanzo 2019b, 221–223; van der Vliet 2019.

of the Library, fearing punishment, decided to hide the texts;⁵⁶ the fourth century, particularly the reign of Valens (r. 364–378 CE), seems to have been a period of intense persecution of magical practices, and Ammianus Marcellinus (perhaps hyperbolically) describes book owners throughout the eastern Empire burning entire libraries to avoid being implicated.⁵⁷ The Theban Library, and contemporary archives that date to this period, might therefore represent examples of the collections of owners who tried to conceal, rather than destroy, their books.⁵⁸ We should note that if the owner(s) had been converts to Christianity, or were Christians facing discipline for possession of magical texts, they would likely have been expected to burn their books.⁵⁹ The second possible scenario is that the Theban Library represents a group of texts confiscated by the authorities; Dio Cassius records that Septimius Severus confiscated books containing “anything secret” (*aporrēton ti*) from Egyptian sanctuaries, while a late-recorded tradition claims that Diocletian sought out and burned alchemical works, although it is unclear how much weight can be assigned to these two stories, and we see from the second story that confiscated books may normally have been burned.⁶⁰ While the persecution model cannot be discounted, neither can it be definitively shown to be true for the Theban Library. There is indeed a decline in the number of surviving Greek magical papyri after the fourth century, but this is accompanied by a rise in Coptic magical manuscripts, and in any case, the small numbers we are dealing with must be interpreted with care.⁶¹ Likewise, as David Frankfurter has argued, the application of Imperial law in the provinces appears to have been patchy and inconsistent, and thus it is not clear to what extent a law promulgated in Constantinople would have made itself felt in Upper Egypt.⁶²

56. A similar case of books hidden to avoid persecution, confiscation, and ultimately destruction is that of the Tura codices, containing works of Origen and Didymos the Blind, which may have been concealed during the Anti-Origenist persecutions; see Koenen 1960; Koenen and Mueller-Wiener 1968; Doutreleau and Aucagne 1955; Doutreleau 1962.

57. Ammianus Marcellinus, *History* 29.4; cf. Fowden 1993, 170; Dickie 2001, 141–161; Rohmann 2016, 62–69.

58. Cf. Fowden 1993, 170.

59. See, e.g., Acts 19:19; Canons of Pseudo-Athanasius 72 (Riedel and Crum 1904, 47, 108); Zacharias of Mytilene, *Life of Severus* 81–84 (Kugener 1907, 61–63; Brock and Fitzgerald 2013, 66–67); cf. Rohmann 2016, 137–144 et passim.

60. Dio Cassius, *Roman History* (epitome) LXXVI.13; Suda, Δ.1156 (cf. Lindsay 1970, 54–59). Cf. Herrin 2009; Rohmann 2016, 62–69, 76, 101 et passim.

61. See Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 2 in this volume. Compare, perhaps, the rapid adoption of Coptic for letters, dominant in letters by women in the 5th cent. CE and by letters written by men from the 6th (Bagnall and Cribiore 2006, 19–22).

62. Frankfurter 1996, 312; Rohmann 2016, 109.

The *secrecy model* is based on the idea that the archive might have been hidden to prevent it from being seen by the uninitiated. While there are several references to the importance of secrecy in the texts of the Theban Library, the clearest is found in the *Eighth Book of Moses* (*GEMF* 60 = *PGM* XIII 1–343), which contains instructions to “make the book unfindable” once the user has been filled with the “divine wisdom.”⁶³ The idea that the book would be disposed of once its techniques had been thoroughly absorbed may, however, belong more to the framing narrative of the text than to its users’ lived reality; the larger section to which it belongs describes the original addressee swearing an oath to conceal the text in the temple of Jerusalem.⁶⁴ This frame would serve to enhance the significance of the text in the eyes of its fourth-century users; it was never meant to be seen or used by them, and its power would thus be all the greater for its forbidden character. This is not to say that the idea is impossible, although the stipulation of the *Eighth Book*, that the ritualist would have absorbed all the potential knowledge and power available in all ten of the manuscripts, seems unlikely. Nonetheless, the idea of hiding powerful texts that were no longer required makes some sense; perhaps their original owners were dead, or were no longer interested in the texts, and destroying them might have seemed sacrilegious to whoever inherited them.

The *funerary-offering model* suggests that the Library might have been part of the funerary assemblage of an individual from Roman Egypt, presumably (one of) its owner(s). The practice of burying texts with dead individuals has a long history in both Egyptian and Greek culture, and although the most obvious examples are funerary texts such as the *Book of the Dead* and the “Orphic” golden tablets, literary, biblical, and technical texts are also attested; in most cases, these should probably be understood as grave goods—treasured possessions intended to accompany the deceased—rather than as “books of the dead,” that is, guides to or aids in attaining a happy afterlife.⁶⁵ Such an

63. *GEMF* 60 (= *PGM* XIII) 234: πλῆθος τῆς θεοδορίας ἀνεύρετον ποιήσων τὴν βίβλον.

64. *GEMF* 60 (= *PGM* XIII) 233–234.

65. For an excellent recent overview, see Tutty 2018; cf. Roberts 1963; Turner 1968, 76–77; Lewis 2013; Ryholt 2019, 411–418. Examples of papyri that seem to have served as grave goods include *Poetae Melici Graeci* 791 (4th cent. BCE; TM 62931), a roll containing Timotheos’ *Persae* (4th cent. BCE; TM 62931); the Hawara Homer (2nd cent. CE; TM 60571), a roll containing part of the *Iliad* with scholia; Coptic Museum 12488 (4th–5th cent. CE; TM 107731), a codex containing the Psalms; British Library Or 7594 (4th–5th cent. CE; TM 107763), a codex containing a series of canonical and apocryphal Old and New Testament works. For further examples, see n. 67, below.

understanding might find a parallel to the Theban Magical Library in the *Book of Thoth* buried with Prince Naneferkaptah in *Setna I*, which contains revelatory practices; the book is described as providing light for the tomb.⁶⁶ This model is attractive, in that it relies on known practices, and requires no special social conditions, although the lack of recorded context for the Theban Library again prevents us from reaching a firm conclusion. We should also note that in most recorded cases from Greco-Roman Egypt, we have single manuscripts; only in two cases do we have collections of two and four manuscripts found together, so that the Theban Magical Library would be the largest “library” buried with its owner/user.⁶⁷ In the case of the Theban Library, such a deposition would be that of the last user, since the books cover a period of at least two centuries, and would have been used by at least three generations. We could perhaps imagine a situation in which the funerary-offering model overlapped with the persecution model; the heirs of the last owner of the Theban Library might have chosen to bury it with him or her rather than keeping proscribed texts.

The *temple-library model* suggests that the Theban Library represents part of an Egyptian temple’s library;⁶⁸ we should note that this is not incompatible with some of the other models, in that part of a temple library could have been removed to a private context where it could serve as a funerary offering or be buried for reasons of persecution or secrecy, although it might also have been found within a temple precinct, as has been the case with texts from Tebtunis, Narmouthis, and Elephantine.⁶⁹ Descriptions of temples mention various institutions that we might call libraries, including the “Houses of Books” (*pr.w md:t*) and the “Houses of Life” (*pr.w ‘nh*), religious institutions that incorporated “scriptoria”;⁷⁰ many temples in the Theban region presumably would have had libraries, from the huge complexes of Karnak, Luxor, and Medinet Habu to the

66. *Setna I* 4.33–34; see Vinson 2018, 121, 243–244.

67. These are Codex Panopolitanus (TM 59976; 6th–7th cent. CE), containing a range of apocryphal works, found with the Mathematical Papyrus of Akhmim (Baillet 1892); and Codex Tchacos (TM 108481), containing apocryphal texts, found with three codices containing Exodus (TM 66871), Pauline letters (TM 108582), and a mathematical work (TM 113825), all dating to the 4th cent.; cf. DeConick 2007, 63–65. Compare the “Akhhimim Tomb Libraries” from the 1st cent. BCE, which consist of four Demotic texts, one funerary, three literary, and probably come from one or more tombs in Akhhimim; see Ryholt 2019, 415–418.

68. Betz *GMPT*, xlii; Ritner 1995a, 3361–3362.

69. Gallo 1997, xxxi–l; Ryholt 2005; 2019, 392–405, 443–444.

70. Gardiner 1938; Wessetzky 1972; Weber 1980; Fowden 1996, 57–75; Ryholt 2005; von Lieven 2005; Stadler 2015; Wespi 2017; Ryholt 2019; Hagen 2019. For an alternative etymology of *pr ‘nh* as “house of documents,” see Vycichl 1983, 194–195; Morenz 2001; we would like to thank Edward Love for bringing this to our attention.

smaller temples of Amenhotep and Imhotep at Deir el Bahri and Thoth at Qasr el-'Aguz, although these appear to have gradually ceased to function over the course of the third century.⁷¹

As we have discussed, the most obvious link between the Theban Library and that of a temple is found in its Demotic texts; the mythological *Sun's Eye* on the recto of *GEMF* 15 (= *PDM/PGM* XII), and the bilingual Demotic-Greek magical texts of the verso of *GEMF* 15, *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV), and 17 (= *PDM* Suppl.). Old Coptic, too, is best attested in traditional Egyptian religious contexts, while the knowledge of Egyptian mythology displayed in some of the Greek texts, often representing particular Roman-period theologies, has suggested to some scholars that they were also composed by priests.⁷² These observations begin to lead us toward questions of composition rather than deposition, however. To date, there seem to be no published texts from the Greco-Egyptian magical tradition in Demotic, Greek, or Old Coptic, that clearly derive from a temple context; thus while the Demotic texts from the Theban Library may suggest a user trained in the priestly tradition, there is no clear reason to assume that the archive as a whole represents the remains of a temple library.⁷³ Future finds of magical texts in temple libraries may change this picture, and literary texts imply that magical texts, albeit perhaps those of an older Egyptian type, would not be alien to temple libraries.⁷⁴ Yet we note

71. For temples in the Theban area during the Roman Period, see Vandorpe 1995, 211–221; Łajtar 2012, 175–178. On the decline of the temples, see Bagnall 1988; Łajtar 2012, 36–37, 94–104; cf. Klotz 2012, 373–382; Fournet 2020b.
72. Ritner 1995a, 3358–3371; Dieleman 2005, 285–294; Gee 2005; Bortolani 2016, 379–385, 391; Escolano-Poveda 2020, 127–132.
73. Cf. the comments in Ryholt 2005, 151; Wilburn 2012, 59–60 n. 12. For older magical material in the Tebtunis temple library, see Quack 2002, 57–71. Ritner 1995a, 3343, refers to several magical texts from a “Faiyum Temple Archive,” but *P. Vienna* D 6336 and 6343 belong to the “Book of Thoth” (see Jasnow and Zauzich 2005, 87). *P. Vienna* D 6321 may be magical (Johnson 1982, 302; Devauchelle 1980, 131; but cf. Klakowicz 1981, 201–202, who considers it a commentary to the *Book of the Dead*); in any case, the provenance of the texts is uncertain (Devauchelle 1980, 128), despite their publication as “the contents of the libraries of the Suchos temples in the Fayyum” (Reymond 1977). Ryholt 2018a, 145 (cf. Ryholt 2018b, 158 n. 21), mentions a few fragmentary unpublished magical texts from Tebtunis, while several unpublished Greek and Demotic amulets have been found in the temple of Soknopaiou Nesos (Davoli 2005, 36; Capasso 2013, 32–33). Compare also the magico-medical texts mentioned in Dieleman 2011, 89, n. 7. Three Late Period amulets were probably found at the temple at Elephantine (Burkard 2006; Ryholt 2019, 402).
74. See, for example, the “book of magic” (*mgd n hyq*) in the House of Books of the temple of Thoth in Hermopolis in *Setna* II 5.10–14 (Simpson 2003, 483). For the training of priests in magic in the *Book of the Temple*, see Quack 2002, 43–36. For an example of such a text, see the *Book of Overthrowing Apep* from *P. Bremner-Rhind*, an apotropaic ritual which could be used as a private curse, and which describes itself as being stored in the House of Life (col. 29, l. 16 in Faulkner 1938; cf. Ritner 1993, 211–212). Compare the lists in Fowden 1993, 57–59; Ryholt 2005.

that astrological texts are already quite well represented in temple finds,⁷⁵ in contrast to magical material, as are examples of other technical literature, such as dream-interpretation and *omina* texts.⁷⁶ Presently the best-recorded sites do not show a clear relationship between magical texts of the type attested in the Theban Library and temple libraries, still less suggest that this should be seen as their primary context.

This raises the question of priests' participation in magic in Roman Egypt, a question which, as we have tried to show, cannot be answered simply by noting the shared deposition of the Theban Library's manuscripts. The idea of an Egyptian priest being the user of the Library, first proposed in the mid-nineteenth century,⁷⁷ was developed in the 1990s by scholars such as Robert Ritner and David Frankfurter as an antidote to an older idea of an itinerant wandering, marginal magician, which was inspired by the literature of Classical Athens⁷⁸; to the evidence of the Theban Library were added literary descriptions of Egyptian priests as users of "magic," and an observation that "magic" was traditionally the domain of the priesthood in Egypt.⁷⁹ This picture was intended to provide a more grounded picture of a ritual specialist, one situated within Egypt's specific cultural and historical context, who, even if the Library did not belong to a temple, might have owned it as a private archive.⁸⁰

Without suggesting that the "priest-as-practitioner" model is entirely wrong, it is worthwhile to deconstruct it briefly, again breaking down its claims into two parts: first, that priests were the principal users of magical texts, and second, that priests were the principal composers of magical texts. The idea that Egyptian priests were the only users of magic in the broader Roman Empire seems hard to maintain; as Sarah Iles Johnston and Gideon Bohak pointed out in their reviews of Frankfurter's *Religion in Roman Egypt*, the similarity of magical practices around the Roman Mediterranean suggests a wider possible

75. The literature on this topic is extensive, so here we cite only a few useful entry points. For Tebtunis, see Winkler 2009; Jones and Perale 2012, 309–310; Ryholt 2018a, 143–145. For Medinet Madi, see Ross 2006. Cf. Ross 2007 for an overview of Demotic astrological texts, and for discussions of the evidence for priests as astrologers, Jones 1994, 39–46; Moyer 2011, 235–241; Winkler 2016, 269–278.

76. For Tebtunis, see Ryholt 2005, 152–153.

77. Goodwin 1852, vi; cf. n. 41.

78. Smith 1978, 187; Dickie 2001, 71, 77; Frankfurter 1998, 247; for critiques, see Ritner 1995a, 3354; Frankfurter 2002, 115.

79. Ritner 1993, 220–233; Frankfurter 1997.

80. On private archives that may have been owned by priests, see Ryholt 2019, 405–411.

range of practitioners;⁸¹ if other individuals could practice Greco-Egyptian magic in other provinces, it seems unlikely that priests would be able to maintain a complete monopoly in Roman Egypt.⁸² Such a claim risks reducing pre-Christian Egyptian culture to an unchanging monolith, based on a view of the pharaonic past inspired by the literary texts produced by a priestly elite. Indeed, there are some suggestions of non-priestly ritual experts even in pre-Hellenistic Egypt.⁸³ As we have seen, there is little evidence of magical practices resembling those found in the Greco-Egyptian magical papyri in documented temple sites, and even the more detailed literary descriptions of temple libraries do not clearly describe such texts.⁸⁴ It is true that literary texts in both Greek and Demotic do describe Egyptian priests as practicing magic—summoning spirits, effecting love spells, and so on—but they also describe other “barbarian” priests, and indeed Greeks, performing the same activities, so we must be cautious about assuming the reality of such literary *topoi*.⁸⁵ Did the authors who used the Egyptian priest-magician as a stock character do so because they

81. Bohak 2000, 547–548; Johnson 2001, 369–370. Ritner (1995a, 3362–3363) has suggested that, for example, the “Sethian” curse tablets found in Rome may have been written by local Egyptian priests, something certainly possible, but hardly certain.
82. This possibility is acknowledged by Frankfurter (1997, 121), although he nonetheless argues that “the evidence is unequivocal that ritual expertise as a scribal—*literate*—endeavor was almost exclusively a function of priests in Egypt” (italics in original). However, there is in fact very little documentary evidence for the identities of the practitioners of literate magic (the term “ritual expertise” is too broad to be useful here). We argue that the evidence that does exist, discussed here, is far more multivocal than this statement suggests.
83. Such figures include the *rh.t* (“wise-woman”), attested principally at Deir el-Medina during the New Kingdom, who seems to have been a type of healer and diviner functioning outside the priesthood; see Karl 2000 for an overview. A literary example may be found in Djedi, the fourth “magician” in Papyrus Westcar, who is called simply a “townsman” (*nds*), in contrast to the others, who are chief lector priests (*hry-h.b.t hry-tp*) (see, e.g., Lepper 2008, 103).
84. The fullest lists (though of very different natures) are those from the Houses of Books of the Ptolemaic temples of Edfu and El-Tod (Grimm 1988), and that described in Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 6.4.35–71, perhaps drawn from Chaeremon; cf. Fowden 1993, 57–59. For an overview of lists of temple books, see Ryholt 2019, 441–443.
85. For Egyptians as magicians in Demotic literature, see Escolano-Poveda 2020, 24–83. In Greek literature, see Frankfurter 1997, 119–121; Frankfurter 1998, 217–221; Dickie 2001, 229–231; Dieleman 2005, 239–254; Escolano-Poveda 2020, 172–236, 257–270. For other “barbarian” magicians, see Lucian’s *Lover of Lies*, which includes, *inter alia*, “magicians” from Babylonia (11–12), Hyperborea (13–15), Palestine (16), and Arabia (17), as well as Egypt (33–36); another Syrian magic worker appears in his *Dialogues of Courtesans* (288–289). Pliny, of course, locates Persia as the origin of magic (*Natural History* 30.1–8), and claims that Nero tried to learn about magic from the *magi* brought by the Armenian king Tiridates (30.6). There was also an association, particularly among Christians, between Judeans and magic in the Greco-Roman imagination (Gager 1994; Lacerenza 2002, 395–401). Cf. Wendt 2016, 74–113, on “ethnically-coded” religious experts more generally, and Gordon and Gasparini 2014, 50–52, who observe that the *topos* of the Egyptian magician does not seem to be established in Greco-Roman literature until the 2nd cent. CE.

had first- or second-hand knowledge of Egyptian priests who performed these activities, or were they drawing from older, purely literary models? If they had encountered Egyptian priests, would these be individuals whom a modern scholar might classify as such, or simply ritual practitioners who had no role in the Egyptian temple cults, but who nonetheless claimed an Egyptian hieratic identity as a source of authority, a strategy that we often see in the frames of the magical papyri?⁸⁶

The term “priest” in modern scholarship covers a wide range of functionaries who worked in Egyptian temples, but who had distinct titles, roles, and educational histories;⁸⁷ when we talk about priests we are often talking about several characteristics—membership in a temple staff, training in the traditional Egyptian scripts, training in temple rituals, descent from a “priestly” family, recognition of “priestly” status by the Roman state—that are assumed to be united in a single person. Many individuals would have satisfied only one or two of these criteria, and it is certain that the decline of Egyptian temples over the third and fourth centuries led to a disaggregation of these characteristics.⁸⁸ Should someone who was descended from a priestly family but had never learned to read the traditional scripts or worked in a temple be considered a priest? Or someone who performed rituals in a temple that they had learned by heart, but who could not read, and was not recognized by the Roman state? We have already contrasted the lack of material evidence of magical practice among the Egyptian priesthood with the presence of astrological texts and *omina*, such as dream-interpretation manuals, known from temple contexts.⁸⁹ Yet even here we have evidence that priests were only one type of practitioner, since astrological texts are also known from other milieus.⁹⁰ This failure among priests to monopolize such practices cannot be

86. On whether certain “Egyptian priests” would really be “Egyptian” or “priests” according to modern definitions, see Swetnam-Burland 2011; Wendt 2016, 81–87; Escolano-Poveda 2020, 304. For the use of the topos of the Egyptian priest in the magical papyri, see Dieleman 2005, 254–284; Gordon 2019a, 97.

87. For a concise list of some of the functionaries of Egyptian temples, see Vandorpe and Clarysse 2019, 416–418. On the different priestly ranks and temple functionaries, see more generally Otto 1971, vol. 1, 75–113; Sauneron 2000, 54–74. On the idea of deconstructing the category of “priest” in the context of ancient Egypt, see Quirke 2015, 36, 92–97.

88. See Dijkstra 2008, 193–218, for the well-attested example of the last priests of Philae.

89. See nn. 75, 76 above.

90. Given the lack of provenance of most papyri, we may only provide a few indicative pieces of evidence. The best-provenanced astrological texts would seem to be the 4th-cent. horoscopes from Kellis, discussed more fully below (*PKellis Gr. I* 84, Horoscopes 2–4); the first of these comes from House 3, inhabited by Manichaean laypeople, and three come from the temple of Tutu, but date to

ascribed entirely to their reduced status under Roman rule, since already in the Ptolemaic period we have evidence of a Cretan dream interpreter working in the Serapeum of Memphis in the third century BCE, a site where temple functionaries seem to have offered similar divinatory services.⁹¹

This is not to say that priests did not practice magic—the Cretan dream interpreter may have been a contemporary of Ḥor of Sebennyto, a former *pastophoros* of Isis, whose ostraca demonstrate that he carried out dream-oracle rituals with clear parallels with the later magical papyri, including those from the Theban Library,⁹² and the Demotic magical texts do demonstrate the involvement of individuals trained in the traditional Egyptian scripts, one of the cluster of “priestly” characteristics. Yet perhaps they should be seen as one category of practitioner, alongside others. Such “others” might have included freelance practitioners who, like the Cretan in the Serapeum, may have attached themselves to temples without performing the role of a temple functionary. Matthew Dickie has described many examples in his discussion of the evidence (primarily literary) for individual practitioners around the Greco-Roman world.⁹³ Some such freelance practitioners may well have fit the model of the “itinerant magician,” a figure who might have made regular journeys (for example, from town to village) to visit clients, or performed apparent miracles for spectators in towns and cities as one of a range of wandering public performers alongside acrobats, contortionists, and so on—an image that may seem distasteful to modern scholars, but which is fairly well supported by the most realistic of the literary discussions of magic, and which finds clear parallels in the street performers found cross-culturally even today;⁹⁴ we note too the existence of other kinds of itinerant specialists,

a period when it seems to have been closed and was functioning as a domestic space, probably for Christians. See also *BGU VII* 1674 (Philadelphia, 2nd cent. CE), in which a doctor (*iatros*) promises to send a horoscope to his addressee. Although we know little of his biography, there seems to be no suggestion that Ptolemy, the most famous astrological writer of Roman Egypt, was a priest (Folkerts, Harmon, and Hübner 2006); on the larger question, cf. Jones 1994, 45–46.

91. For a recent discussion of the Cretan dream interpreter, see Renberg 2016, 728–732. For the contemporary practices of the former *pastophoros* Ḥor of Sebennyto, see n. 89, below.

92. For Ḥor of Sebennyto, see Ray 1976; 1978; Renberg 2016, 399–418, 432–447, 724–726.

93. Dickie 2000, 577–582; 2001, 202–250, 273–321.

94. For performing and itinerant magicians, see, e.g., Origen, *Against Celsus* 1.68; cf. Dickie 2001, 224–243, for an extended discussion. For the older figure of the *agurtēs*, who may have had equivalents in later Roman Egypt (see, e.g., Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* 3.4.28.3), see Serafini 2016; Eidinow 2017; Graf 2019a, 118–119, 124–125.

among them musicians, pedagogues, and doctors, in Egypt and the Greco-Roman world more generally.⁹⁵ The owner of the Theban Magical Library and similar manuscripts was not necessarily such a figure, however; the Library's texts generally show less of an interest in spectacular performance than in the use of divine power for real wonders.

There are a few real individuals from Egypt and elsewhere that we can point to as possible owners of such texts; Bohak has demonstrated that medical authors, such as Galen, Marcellus of Bordeaux, Aetius of Amida, and Alexander of Tralles, preserve recipes very close to those of the magical papyri, providing clear evidence that physicians had access to such handbooks.⁹⁶ There are also figures such as the grammarian Apion (late first century BCE to mid-first century CE), a native of one of the western oases (either Kharga or Dakhla) and specialist of Homer in Alexandria, who served as one of Pliny's sources of information for the miraculous powers of plants and animals, and who himself evoked the spirit of Homer.⁹⁷ A later example is John the Fuller (*qāšara*), a character from Zacharias of Mytilene's *Life of Severos of Antioch*,⁹⁸ a fifth-century dyer from Thebes who travelled to Antioch, where he became involved with a circle of law students interested in magic.⁹⁹ John was wealthy enough to own an Ethiopian slave, and, when his house was searched by Christians, was found to possess formularies attributed to Zoroaster, Ostanes, and Manetho, containing *voces magicae* and images of *daimones*. Such descriptions closely match the surviving Greco-Egyptian formularies, and John's origin in Thebes,

95. For musicians and dancers traveling between village and city, see Westermann 1924; for pedagogues, see Cribiore 2001, 41, 48, 234; for itinerant doctors in the Roman Empire, see Horsley 1982, 19–21.

96. Bohak 2016, 367–369, 372; Faraone 2018, 21–23, 276–287.

97. Dickie 2001, 213–216; van der Horst 2002; Dillery 2003; Bremmer 2005, 317–329; Jones 2005; Ameling 2014.

98. *Life of Severos* 74–84; Kugener 1907, 57–63 (Syriac text and French translation); Brock and Fitzgerald 2013, 64–67 (English translation). This text was probably originally composed in Greek but is only preserved in Syriac. While literary sources such as this need to be used with care, Zacharias was one of the law students at the time that John was in Beirut, so the events described touch on his social circle. Thus, while some of the reported events (such as the attempted sacrifice of John's slave) should probably be understood as fantastic, the general descriptions of the books of magic, and their use to acquire an assistant *daimōn* to use in a love spell, is quite plausible. For Zacharias and the context of the writing of the *Life*, see Brock and Fitzgerald 2013, 15–21.

99. There is also the case of Horapollon, of whom Zacharias of Mytilene (*Life of Severos* 14) tells us that he was a grammarian, a pagan, and “full of admiration for demons and magic” (Kugener 1907, 15; Brock and Fitzgerald 2013, 38). But the question arises as to whether Horapollon was really a practitioner of magic or whether he was just seen as such by the Christian Zacharias, who creates a connection in his work between magic and the non-Christian Alexandrian philosophers.

and professional activity—dyeing, a predominant concern in the Theban alchemical codices¹⁰⁰—offers an interesting coincidence with the Theban Library. The medical authors, Apion, and John, literate men of at least moderate means with the freedom to pursue their own interests, provide us with another model of someone who might be interested in magical texts, an image paralleled not only by the law students who surrounded John in Antioch, but also by the few real owners of magical texts who can be identified in the papyrological record. These are the owners of the Kellis House 3 magical texts, who seem to have practiced crafts including book copying, weaving, and trade (see below); Dioskoros of Aphrodito, poet, village headman, lawyer, and notary;¹⁰¹ and Aurelios Philammon, a tax collector from fourth-century Hermopolis whose notebook contains a number of magical recipes.¹⁰² This should remind us that written magic—the type attested by the magical papyri—could in principle be understood and used by anyone literate in Greek: Lucian's *Lover of Lies*, which contains one of the most fantastic images of the Egyptian priest-magician, also describes the priest's Greek pupil practicing an exorcism on his own by reading from an Egyptian work.¹⁰³ There seems, therefore, to be no reason to assume that Egyptian priests maintained a monopoly on its practice in Roman Egypt, if they ever had one.

This brings us to the last question, of the composition and transmission of the texts contained in the magical manuscripts. We might assume that the use of Demotic and Old Coptic within the Theban Magical Library guarantees that these texts, at least, were produced and used within a priestly context, but even this is not certain. At least one early Christian Coptic manuscript, *P.Bodmer VI* (third to fourth century CE), demonstrates the use of nonstandard characters, so that there must have been a brief period during which “Old Coptic scripts” were used by non-priests.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, one of the texts usually described as Old Coptic,

100. Recipes for cleaning, dyeing, and fixing cloth are a predominant concern of *P.Holm*. (recipes 89–159), although they may also be found in *P.Leid*. I 397 (recipes 89–99); see Halleux 1981, 43–46.

101. On the magical text (*PGM* 13a), a prayer for protection from demons, see n. 18, above. On Dioskoros and his career, see MacCoull 1988, 9–15; Fournet 2015b. Cf. the comments in Frankfurter 1997, 128 n. 35.

102. The magical texts, previously published as *PGM XXXIIa*, and to be republished as *GEMF* 66, may be found in context in Poethke, Prignitz, and Valske 2012. For a more detailed discussion, see Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 2 in this volume.

103. *Lover of Lies* 31. The text described him as speaking Egyptian (αἰγυπτιάζων), but, insofar as this text may be taken to describe a plausible event, it seems likely that the words would have been *voces magicae*.

104. *P.Bodmer VI*, a Coptic translation of the Proverbs, presents a dialect sometimes referred to as “proto-Theban” or Proto-Sahidic, demonstrating some features also present in Akhmimic and Lycopolitan,

an exorcism from *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV), seems to derive from an Egyptian-speaking Christian milieu.¹⁰⁵ Even the purely Demotic texts likely have more complicated histories; Dieleman has pointed out that many of the *voces magicae* they contain, as well as apparent calques from Greek, and the use of the Greek vowels, suggests that they were either translated from or inspired by older Greek models.¹⁰⁶ Svenja Nagel's analyses of some bowl divination procedures provide more concrete examples of such textual developments, with the recipes showing the integration of Greek, Mesopotamian, and Egyptian priestly material.¹⁰⁷ While it is likely that the use of Demotic and Old Coptic does demonstrate the involvement of individuals trained in the Egyptian priestly tradition in the practice of magic, it does not necessarily prove that their involvement was primary, or that the Demotic texts represent the older tradition upon which the Greek texts drew. Instead, we seem to have multiple, parallel traditions, which were capable of transition and transmission between languages.

The much larger body of Greek magical texts present even greater problems of interpretation. While some scholars have understood the use of Greek as a deliberate strategy by the Egyptian priesthood to access a Hellenophone clientele,¹⁰⁸ the picture is likely more complex than this. By the Roman period, Demotic was largely restricted to use within temples, primarily for religious texts, with documentary texts becoming rare after the mid-first century CE.¹⁰⁹ In all other spheres, Greek displaced Demotic as the primary written language, even finding a place in the Egyptian temple;¹¹⁰ the long-standing Egyptian practice of oracle tickets shifts from Demotic to Greek in the first century CE.¹¹¹ This is not necessarily because the people using Greek were Greek speakers; rather, Roman linguistic policy made Greek into the universal administrative

and using ten Demotic graphemes, as opposed to the six used in standard Sahidic, some of which are shared with with Old Coptic alphabets. For the edition, see Kasser 1960; see also Nagel 1965, 45–46; Kasser 1980, 69; 1991; 2003; Quack 2017b, 73–74. The overlap between early “standard” Coptic and Old Coptic is pointed out in Richter 2008, 413–414.

105. This is *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV) 1227–1264; see Love 2016, 190–222; Rist 1938; Twelftree 2007, 39–40, 262–264.

106. Dieleman 2005, 63–69, 87–91, 110–130, 285–294; Dieleman 2019, 284–286.

107. Nagel 2019a, 143–149 et passim.

108. Gordon 2012, 156–157, 162; Gordon 2013, 168–169; Gordon 2019a, 98–99.

109. Bagnall 1993, 235–238; Lewis 1993; Depauw 1997, 25–26; 2012, 489–499; Quack 2016; Fournet 2020a, 61–65.

110. A clear example of Greek influence in the temple sphere are the Narmouthis texts; see Bagnall, 2005 (2007); Donadoni 1955; Bresciani and Pintaudi 1987; Rutherford 2010.

111. Ripat 2006.

and literary language,¹¹² and even individuals who were monolingual Egyptian speakers relied upon Greek-literate scribes to send correspondence or to draft legal texts.¹¹³ We might imagine that Demotic would retain a place as the written form of the spoken language, but it seems to have diverged from the spoken norm by the Roman period (although this varied according to regional and individual norms), and it required considerable training to learn while having few uses outside of the temple sphere.¹¹⁴ While some clients of Greco-Egyptian magical practitioners were likely monolingual Greek speakers, it is equally likely that Egyptian speakers had recourse to practitioners who read spells in Greek, just as they had recourse to legal experts who copied contracts for them in this language. The overwhelmingly Egyptophone nature of both clients and practitioners may be reflected in the meteoric rise of Coptic as a language of magic—displacing Greek in the fifth century, shortly after it became available as a written norm.¹¹⁵ Coptic did not achieve similar dominance in other spheres of written culture until the eighth century, when Umayyad policy deliberately undermined Greek's use as the language of administration.¹¹⁶ A concrete example of such multi-lingualism is found, again, in the Kellis House 3 and Dioskoros archives, from the fourth and sixth centuries respectively.¹¹⁷ Private correspondence shows that Coptic was the intimate language of both families, likely their mother tongue. Yet in both archives the majority of the texts dealing with business and the Roman administration are written in Greek, the language of law, business, culture, and of magic.¹¹⁸

112. Torallas Tovar, 2022.

113. Bagnall 1993, 234–235, cf. the larger discussion on pp. 230–260; Bagnall and Cribiore 2006, 21.

114. The simple fact that the Demotic script had far more signs than the Greek means that it took (and still takes) longer to learn (cf. Depauw 1997, 17, 41), but, as noted by, *inter alia*, Lewis (1993, 277 n. 8), this should not be taken to mean that once learned, Demotic was less efficient or functional than Greek; its complexity rather offered increased expressive possibilities. On the divergence of Demotic from spoken Egyptian, see Ray 1994; Depauw 1997, 21, 33–36.

115. For an overview of this change, see Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 2 in this volume.

116. Namely, the establishment of Arabic as the language of the *dīwān* (chancellery) in 705 CE. For Greek in early Islamic Egypt, see Richter 2010; Sijpestein 2013, 66–71.

117. For Kellis, see Gardner 2007, 5; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk 1999–2014, 12–13. For Dioskoros, see Vanderheyden 2012, 794 et passim; Fournet 2020a, 12–13, 82–84. Pace Zakrzewska 2015, who argues for Coptic as a primarily written language, yet even if particular dialects represent specific registers or norms, there is no reason to assume that written Coptic was further removed from spoken Egyptian than the written form of any other ancient language, and some evidence (considerable dialectal and spelling variation, some of which is already apparent in Demotic, etc.) to suggest that, at least in its early stages, it was relatively close; cf. the comments of Bagnall 1993, 239. For the difficulty of accessing spoken Egyptian, see Richter 2006.

118. Although as shown in Chapter 2, Fig. 2.1, Coptic magical texts seem to be more common in the 6th cent., Dioskoros would represent one of the individuals still using Greek, a “laggard” in terms of the theory of the diffusion of innovations; cf. Harnett 2017, 203.

We do not have space here to discuss the composition of Greco-Egyptian magical texts in detail, but it is worth making some brief remarks relating to the idea of a priestly composer, drawn from the imagined history of the Theban Library. It is certainly true that many texts closely follow Egyptian theological ideas—not merely in a generic sense, but in reflecting specific aspects of Roman, and even Theban, theology.¹¹⁹ These may well imply the involvement of Egyptian priests as composers, although we should note that the writings of Hellenized priests such as Manetho (late fourth–early third century BCE)¹²⁰ and Chaeremon (first century CE)¹²¹ would have made these ideas more broadly accessible to a Hellenophone audience, a fact reflected, for example, in the Athenian philosopher Damaskios’ knowledge of Theban theology, transmitted through Heraiskos and Asclepiades, Hellenized Egyptians from the Panopolite nome who were interested in Egyptian religion.¹²² Ljuba Bortolani, who has performed the most detailed analysis of the magical texts’ religious content—focusing specifically on the hymns from the Theban Library—suggests that the hymns to the sun god and to Typhon represent an attempt to render Egyptian theology into Greek.¹²³ Yet she also notes that the hymns to Apollo, and even more so to the moon goddess, show more clearly Greek cultural origins.¹²⁴ Similar observations have been made for the practice of depositing curse tablets,¹²⁵ which seems more likely to derive from a culturally Greek practice, first attested in sixth-century BCE Sicily, than from the rather different letters to the dead or execration rituals.¹²⁶ Similarly Greek, though not from the Theban Library, is the *Homēromanteion* found in *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII),¹²⁷ while, as we have noted, the Old Coptic exorcism of *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV), and likely other

119. See, e.g., Tait 1995, 179–180; Dieleman 2005, 149–163; Klotz 2012, 74, 134–135, 138, 184, 190; Dosoo 2016a, 267 n. 57.

120. Aufrère 2012.

121. See Van der Horst 1984, ix–xi; for magic, see in particular fr. 4, which describes themes clearly present in the Greek magical texts (threatening to stop the solar barque and harm Osiris, the changing form of the sun god). Note the important question raised by Fournet 2014, 602–605, of whether Chaeremon really was a priest, or even Egyptian.

122. Damascius, *On First Principles* 1.324 (trans. Ahbel-Rappe 2010, 419); cf. Klotz 2012, 404. For these two individuals, cf. Athanassiadis 1999, 20–22; Miguélez Caverio 2008, 7–10.

123. Bortolani 2016, 346–347, 359–360, 364–368, 379–384; Bortolani 2021.

124. Bortolani 2016, 345–379.

125. Jordan 1985; Graf 2019b.

126. Faraone 2001, though cf. Ritner 1993, 172–190; Dieleman 2019, 103–105.

127. *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII) 1–148. Cf. Schwendner 2002, who argues that *Homēromanteia* were principally used by priests. While he is certainly correct that priests could and would have read and owned copies of Homer, his argument seems to proceed from the assumption that all or most magical papyri come from a priestly context, rather than finding clear archeological or archival evidence linking these particular texts to known priests. See also Martín Hernández 2014a and 2020a.

texts, seem to derive from a Jewish-Christian milieu, not that of the Egyptian priesthood.¹²⁸ The texts within the Theban Library, and of the Greco-Egyptian magical corpus more broadly, represent a wide range of overlapping practices with different, and often multiple, cultural origins, with broad similarities to, as well as subtler differences from, material from elsewhere in the Greco-Roman world. Bortolani has suggested that a temple scriptorium might have offered one context where a range of texts could be brought together to produce the mixed formularies of the type we find in the magical papyri, and while this is certainly true, it surely represents only one possible context.¹²⁹ Again, if non-Egyptian practices—*Homēromanteia* and curse tablets—were brought to Egypt by non-priestly practitioners, why would their practice become and remain the exclusive preserve of the temple priest?

A final problem to be considered is chronological: when we look at the full corpus of published Greco-Egyptian magical texts, rather than only the famous texts of the Theban Library, we find that the earliest texts (second century BCE–first century CE) are in Greek, and already display the markings of a developed genre, which continues to evolve until it is wholly supplanted in Egypt by Coptic-language magic in the seventh century.¹³⁰ The fact that the best-known Greek texts date to the fourth century has created the mistaken impressions that they are, as a whole, later than the Demotic examples, and that their appearance coincides with the third- to fourth-century decline of the Egyptian priesthood.¹³¹ Thus the popular idea that the Greco-Egyptian magical tradition was the creation of Late Roman priests who transformed themselves into Late Antique magicians is not supported by the papyrological evidence.¹³² As far as we can tell, Greco-Egyptian magic emerged from the cross-cultural crucible of late Ptolemaic and early Roman Egypt, and while the native priesthood likely played an important role, much of this process seems to lie in the prehistories of the texts rather than the histories of the individual manuscripts and archives which preserve them.¹³³

128. See n. 105 above.

129. Bortolani 2016, 379–385, 390–391.

130. These early texts are *GEMF* 1 (= *PGM* CXI, 2nd cent. BCE), *GEMF* 2 (= *PGM* CXVII; 1st cent. BCE), *GEMF* 3 (= *PGM* XX), *PGM* CXXII (1st cent. BCE–1st cent. CE). Cf. the discussion of these early rolls in Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 2 in this volume, and for a linguistic overview of magical texts in Egypt; cf. Faraone 2000.

131. For this theory, see Frankfurter 1997; Frankfurter 1998, 198–237; Frankfurter 2000, 175–183.

132. On this theory, cf. Escolano-Poveda 2020, 295–310, who rejects it for other reasons.

133. Cf. Dieleman 2005, 291–294; 2019, 284–286; Love 2016, 234–236.

This discussion of the Theban Library may seem overly pessimistic, but we believe it is important to stress the fact that it provides us with far less information than is often assumed by scholars who collapse and homogenize the processes of composition, production, use, and deposition. The earliest owner(s) of the Library's manuscripts may well have been trained within the priestly tradition, and this may have been true of later owners, who were able to read texts written in Old Coptic. But this does not necessarily mean that all of its texts belong to or are typical of a priestly context in late Roman Egypt; they seem rather to have collected texts with a wide range of cultural origins. Repairs to *GEMF* 15 (= *PDM/PGM* XII), which destroyed part of the Demotic text and covered up part of the *Myth of the Sun's Eye* on the other side, while protecting the Greek portions, imply that the final user(s) were unable to read this script.¹³⁴ Some studies we have mentioned seem to provide more grounded answers to the questions of who produced, copied, and used these texts, and for the remainder of this discussion we will continue to suggest ways in which other archives can provide further information about magical practice in Roman Egypt. We have argued here for a surrender of the monolithic image of the Egyptian priest-practitioner that the Theban Library has created, but the space that this shift creates has the potential to provide us with a richer and more nuanced understanding of magic in Roman Egypt, and its relationship to earlier and later practices within and beyond Egypt.

3. *The Hermonthis Magical Archive*

In the previous section, we broadly covered aspects of the Theban Library, including its reconstruction through museum archival research and theories on its location, deposition, composition, and scribal practices. We now discuss another possible library, applying similar strategies of reconstruction.

Following the principle established in the reconstruction of the Theban Magical Library—that the rarity of magical texts makes relationships between examples originating from the same purchase very likely—we can reconstruct a second large magical archive from late Roman Egypt, which we call the Hermonthis Magical Archive. This archive has been briefly discussed in the past by Dosoo,¹³⁵ and more recently by Martín Hernández.¹³⁶

134. Dieleman 2005, 29, 32–33.

135. Dosoo 2016b; 2016a, 265–266.

136. Martín Hernández 2020b; cf. Martín Hernández and Gordon, Chapter 7 in this volume.

The Hermonthis Magical Archive consists of five or six papyri, all but one of which were purchased for £150 from an Egyptian by the British Museum in May 1888, with Messrs Bywater, Tanqueray and Co. of London acting as agents.¹³⁷ These manuscripts had been brought to England by Ernest Alfred Wallis Budge, along with a large collection of other antiquities that he had purchased himself in Egypt and Mesopotamia.¹³⁸ Included in the sale were three older manuscripts, for which the Museum paid £500: the Book of the Dead of Ani (*BM EA 10470*),¹³⁹ written on papyrus, part of the Book of the

137. Bywater, Tanqueray and Co. Ltd. (later Bywater, Tanqueray and Phayre) was a banking and mercantile company that also operated as “agents” for overseas British residents. Succeeding the former Bywater, Perry and Co., they were established in 1876 and directed by Arthur Bywater, James Truman Tanqueray, Richard Preston Saunders, and Frederick Henry Browning. Their principal office was at Queen Victoria Street (no. 79, later no. 107) in London, and they had secondary offices elsewhere in London, as well as in Buenos Aires and Valparaíso (*Supplement to the London Gazette*, February 21, 1887, p. 926; *Guardian Newspaper*, London, January 25, 1888, p. 142). As a bank, its role in the transaction was in facilitating the payment between the museum and the Egyptian dealer. An advertisement in the *Llangollen Advertiser* from October 26, 1894 (p. 6) notes that among their services was “money transmitted to all parts of the globe at current rates of the day” (online at <https://newspapers.library.wales/view/3173143/3173149/34/LIVERPOOL>). By 1897 the company was in liquidation (Joseph Whitaker, *An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord 1897*, London, p. 295).

138. The sale is documented in the following sources: Report of Mr. Renouf, Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities, May 9, 1888 (British Museum Original Papers, no. 1766); Report of Mr. Maunde Thompson, May 9, 1888 (British Museum Original papers 1767); Minutes of the Meeting of the Trustees of the British Museum, May 12, 1888 (British Museum, ref. 17394/5); British Library Manuscripts Department, *Minutes: Purchases 1879–1888*, pp. 279–294; Register of Papyri (British Library). We are grateful to Peter Williams of the British Museum and Federica Micucci of the British Library for helping us locate and consult these documents. A description of the purchase, accompanied by a letter from Renouf, may be found in Budge 1920, vol. 1, 333–338.

139. The situation is in fact quite complex, since Budge reports finding the Book of the Dead of Ani, as well as those of Nu and Anhay, in their tombs, presumably with the help of the same Egyptian, and immediately taking possession of them (Budge 1920, vol. 1, 136–138). This would imply that the Book of the Dead that the Egyptian retained possession of and tried to sell directly to the British Museum would have been the papyrus portion of the Book of the Dead of Nakht, which would presumably have been found with the leather section. Nonetheless, the description of Renouf, repeated in all other documents relating to the sale, describes a Book of the Dead that is 80 feet long; this describes that of Ani, rather than that of Nakht, which is only 47 feet long. It seems possible that Budge agreed that the anonymous Egyptian could include Ani’s copy in his sale so that he could claim a higher price; the sum of £500 paid for the three pharaonic texts alone is considerable, given that Budge paid £1038/7/9 for all the other material he purchased on the trip, including three other Books of the Dead, two mummies, 200 leaves of Coptic manuscripts, and 180 cuneiform tablets from Amarna. Renouf justifies this sum based on the quality of the Book of the Dead, but also because he “ha[d] reason to believe that the owner of them knows where more [Books of the Dead] are to be found” (British Museum Original Papers, no. 1766); that is, presumably, Budge had informed him that the Egyptian would be a good source for more high-quality texts, and so helping him to get a good price for the purchase would guarantee his future cooperation. The Greek papyri of the Hermonthis Archive played an important role here, since the recommendation of Thompson allowed Renouf to defray the cost to the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities by having the Department of Manuscripts pay £150 of the total. Including the papyrus of Ani, rather than the less impressive papyrus of Nakht, in the sale, was likely a way for Budge to help the anonymous Egyptian. This seems to have had mixed results; although Renouf attempted to purchase further cuneiform tablets from

Dead of Nakht (BM EA 10473), on leather,¹⁴⁰ and a miscellaneous collection of Hieratic texts (BM EA 10474). The pharaonic texts seem to have come from Thebes—this was noted in the records of the sale for the leather roll,¹⁴¹ later stated by Budge for the papyrus of Ani,¹⁴² and is likely also true of the Hieratic roll.¹⁴³ The information surrounding the sale suggests that the seller was an inhabitant of Luxor, probably introduced to Budge by the Reverend Chauncey Murch during one of his visits to the city in 1887 or 1888, and apparently the same individual who helped Budge acquire numerous other artifacts from Upper Egypt.¹⁴⁴ Looking at the contents of the texts, we may note that one of the manuscripts, *GEMF* 75 (= *PGM* XIa; TM 64578), is written on the back of the account of expenses dated to the year 336 CE, relating to an estate centering on Hermonthis, modern Armant, approximately 15 km south of Thebes, and providing the archive with its name.¹⁴⁵ We know that Luxor served as a hub for antiquities from around Upper Egypt, and so it would even have been possible that the manuscript was found in or near Hermonthis.¹⁴⁶

Yet this textual indication is contradicted by further information provided by Budge himself later in his biography, in which he describes meeting the Egyptian from whom he purchased the magical Greek papyri while traveling

Amarna from the same Egyptian in late 1888, Murch wrote to him on November 23 of that year that the Egyptian had only received £100 of the £650 he was owed, and as a result had been forced to borrow from Greek lenders at the high interest rate of 7 percent. Murch notes in his letters that the seller felt (justifiably) cheated, and that he had also been underpaid for previous tablets he had sold. The full amount was not transferred by Bywater, Tanqueray & Co. to the anonymous Egyptian until December 11, 1888 (British Museum Original Papers, Letter of Chauncey Murch, November 23, 1888; Letter from Bywater, Tanqueray and Co. to C. W. P. Renny, December 12, 1888; cf. Mynářová 2007, 16–21).

140. Note that the papyrus portion, BM EA10471, was not included in this sale, but, according to Budge, had already been purchased by him in Egypt; cf. n. 118, above. For a bibliography of these texts, see the Totenbuch Project entry online: <https://totenbuch.awk.nrw.de/objekt/tm133529>.
141. British Library Manuscripts Department, *Minutes: Purchases 1879–1888*, p. 294; Report of Mr. Renouf, Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities, May 9, 1888 (British Museum Original Papers, no. 1766).
142. Budge 1913, 217.
143. See Black 2002, 228–237.
144. The identity of this Egyptian, simply referred to as a “native” in the documents surrounding the sale, has proved thus far impossible to recover. If, as seems likely from the desire of Budge and Renouf to ingratiate themselves with him (cf. n. 118), he was one of the major dealers, he might be identified with Muḥammad Muḥassib (1843–1928) or ‘Abd al-Magid Hussain Aga (ca. 1850–1915). Both are mentioned by Budge in his memoirs as working in Luxor, and he describes going to the latter’s house immediately after finding the Books of the Dead of Ani, Nu, and Anhay (Budge 1920, vol. 1, 138–150). For brief biographies of both figures, see Hagen and Ryholt 2016, 184–185, 245–247.
145. This text is *PLond.* I 125 ro. (TM 33213). Mitteis 1906, 246; cf. BL VII, 81; Bagnall 1993, 126.
146. In his biography, Budge notes that “the houses of the dealers at Luxor ... contained all the best coffins of the ‘find’ at Akhmim, and a mass of very important objects from Kūs” (Budge 1920, vol. 1, 89); cf. Hagen and Ryholt 2016, 65–76, 102–113.

with Chauncey Murch through Mallawi en route to Asyut in December 1888.¹⁴⁷ The man came from a town on the other side of the river from Mallawi (i.e., the east bank), and agreed to lead Budge to the site. Budge describes crossing the river, and traveling north and then east on donkeys, “keeping well away from the ruins of the old city ... ‘Hermopolis.’”¹⁴⁸ The site itself is described as a series of tombs cut into a low spur of hills east of the river, primarily from the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty, with two series of tombs from the Roman Period, as well as the ruins of a Coptic monastery with accompanying monastic graves. Budge persuaded the Egyptians to excavate the lower, blocked series of Roman tombs—while Budge is not explicit, we might suspect that the Hermonthis Library came from the upper series—where they found a group of rolls in a “painted cartonnage box”; this group of eight papyri (British Library Papyrus 131–137) was sent to the British Museum in 1889.¹⁴⁹ As usual, Budge’s account is not entirely consistent; despite the fact that he describes visiting the site in December 1888, he claims that “[t]he Copts made no attempt to get the tombs cleared until the following summer,” after which he received a letter in November 1888, before meeting “the writer of this letter and two of his partners ... in Port Sa’id in April, 1889.”¹⁵⁰ It is likely that he first visited the site in December 1887.¹⁵¹ Meanwhile, the British Museum’s Trustees’ minutes records purchasing the papyri on April 12, 1890, with the seller being “Dr. John R. Alexander of Cairo.”¹⁵² Despite the problems with Budge’s account, it seems likely that these papyri do come from near Hermopolis; one of them, British Library Pap. 131, a copy of Aristotle’s *Constitution of the Athenians*, re-uses two documents from

147. Budge 1920, vol. 2, 147–150. We are very grateful to Mills McArthur, who brought this information to our notice. The fact that Budge describes the “seller” of the Greek papyri as living in Mallawi, whereas the seller of the Egyptian papyri from the 1888 sale came from Luxor, raises once again the question of to whom the papyri really belonged at the time the sale to the British Museum was made; cf. n. 140 above. His reference to “the Greek magical papyri which I bought in 1887” (p. 149) perhaps reveals that they did not really belong to the “native” at the time of the sale.

148. Budge 1920, vol. 2, 149.

149. Budge 1920, vol. 2, 147–148, 150. We have been unable to consult the original documents relating to the sale from the British Library, but brief descriptions can be found on the British Library description of Papyrus 131 (online at www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Papyrus_131). Although the website describes the papyri being purchased in 1890, the catalogue of additions describes them as having been acquired in 1889 (Trustees of the British Museum 1894, 392–396); 1890 may thus be a typo.

150. Budge 1920, vol. 2, 150.

151. Cf. Cormack 2017, 77 n. 3.

152. See the British Library description of Papyrus 131 (online at www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Papyrus_131). Budge mentions knowing a Mr. Alexander in Asyut in Budge 1920, vol. 1, 411; the proximity of Asyut to Mallawi may have made him a natural agent for the sale; cf. Cormack 2017, 78 n. 7 for a variant account of the story given by Archibald H. Sayce.

the Hermopolite nome,¹⁵³ while another, *P.Lond.* I 130, contains a horoscope which says it was drawn up in Hermopolis.¹⁵⁴

Thus, while the Hermonthis Library seems to have been purchased in Luxor, and to contain internal links to the region of Hermonthis, it in fact may have come from near Hermopolis Magna, modern Ashmunein. There is some confirmation of this in the fact that *P.Lips.* 97, perhaps part of the Hermonthis Library (see below) is said to have come from Ashmunein. The exact site is difficult to recover; based on Budge's description, somewhere near the modern village of al-Barshā seems likely; this is about 9 kilometers south of Antinoopolis, modern Sheikh Ibada.¹⁵⁵ Several tombs, dating from the Middle Kingdom to the Roman Period, are cut into the rocks east of the desert, and there are also monastic sites, most notably the tombs converted into a monastery known as Sheikh Sa'id, and further north the monastery church of Deir Abu Hannis.

While the indications thus suggest that this Library was found near al-Barshā, we retain here the name "Hermonthis Library"; this is both because its exact provenance remains unknown, and because it has already been mentioned in print with this name. This name must be understood as purely conventional, a convenient designation to differentiate this archive from the Theban Magical Library, apparently also purchased in Luxor, rather than to define a certain geographical origin.

Based on the Minutes of the sale,¹⁵⁶ held in the British Library, Dosoo originally proposed in 2016 that the archive contained three magical texts: *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII), *GEMF* 72 (= *PGM* VIII), and *GEMF* 75 (= *PGM* XIa). In linking these three together, he followed Michela Zago, who had noted their acquisition in the same year, although she connected them to the Theban Library.¹⁵⁷ Dosoo also noted that *P.Lips.* 97 might belong to the library, a copy of several psalms written on the back of another series of accounts, apparently from the same estate as those of *GEMF* 75 (= *PGM* XIa); here he followed Roger Bagnall, the first to hypothesize a relationship between the two.¹⁵⁸ Further

153. *SB* VIII 9699 (TM 20003); *P.Lond.* I 131* (TM 20004).

154. *P.Lond.* I 130 (TM 23940).

155. We thank once again Mills McArthur, who had already come to the same conclusion. For recent discussions of these sites with further bibliography, see Willems et al. 2009; van Loon 2015. Note that we have found no explicit mention of the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty tombs mentioned by Budge here or nearby; Budge may have been mistaken in his assessment of their date. A deeper investigation of the possible findspot described by Budge remains a vital desideratum.

156. British Library Manuscripts Department, *Minutes: Purchases 1879–1888*, p. 294.

157. Zago 2010, 68–70.

158. Bagnall 1993, 126 with n. 79; cf. Gee 1995, 45.

research has revealed, however, that the 1888 sale contained not three but five Greek papyri; this is clear from the description of the report on the manuscripts written by Maunde Thompson before the sale,¹⁵⁹ as well as the British Library's Register of Papyri.¹⁶⁰ Whoever copied this description into the Minutes, upon which Dosoo originally relied, seems to have misread Thompson's report, understanding the last three papyri that Thompson described as a single manuscript.¹⁶¹

The Hermonthis Magical Archive would therefore consist of the following texts:

1. *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII; *P.Lond.* I 121; TM 60204)
 Date: Fourth century CE¹⁶²
 Description: Roll, H. 33 x W. 233 cm, with 19 columns recto and 13 verso, written in three hands, and containing 78 recipes. This is one of the largest surviving formularies from Roman Egypt.
 Notes: *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII) is the manuscript most clearly described in the various documents connecting to the sale. Thompson's report, and the documents derived from it, list it as "no. 1" of the Greek papyri, and describe it as a "long roll, measuring 8 feet in length, containing astrological and horological matter, broken but otherwise good and legible condition; perhaps of the second century. The Museum ... possesses one other papyrus of a similar nature."¹⁶³ The reference to astrological and horological matters clearly refers to the calendar of rituals to perform according to the zodiacal position of the moon in lines 284–299 (repeated on the verso),¹⁶⁴ and the list of unlucky days in lines 272–283.
2. *GEMF* 72 (= *PGM* VIII; *P.Lond.* I 122; TM 59324)
 Date: Fourth/fifth century CE
 Description: Roll, H. 28 x W. 49 cm, with three columns on the recto, containing an erotic procedure and instructions for dream oracle

159. British Museum Original Papers 1767; cf. Budge 1920, vol. 1, 337.

160. See the entries for Papyri 121–125.

161. *Minutes: Purchases 1879–1888*, 295.

162. For this and the other dates given here, see *GEMF*.

163. The other papyrus that Thompson refers to here might perhaps be one of the Theban texts already owned by the collection, perhaps *GEMF* 58 (= *PGM* V), which is illustrated, or the London part of *GEMF* 30 (= *PGM* VI), or *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV), also rolls.

164. See Martín Hernández 2018, 156–170.

invoking the god Bes, accompanied by an illustration of the deity with a sword and scepter.

Notes: This roll is described in far less detail in Thompson's report than *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII). Two descriptions could plausibly be identified with it: no. 2: "An imperfect roll, of the same character [as *GEMF* 74] and probably of the same date," or else one of those listed as no. 4: "Two charms or horoscopes of the 2nd or 3rd century."

3. *GEMF* 73 (= *PGM* IX; *P.Lond.* I 123; TM 64577)

Date: Fourth/fifth century CE

Description: Small sheet, H. 8.5 x W. 27.9 cm, formed from cutting a small vertical strip from a roll and turning it 90° to write *transversa charta*. The front (↓) contains a recipe for a curse to subject and silence an opponent, while the verso contains images of two figures, perhaps a deity threatening a corpse.

Notes: This papyrus is certainly one of those described by Thompson under no. 4 (see *GEMF* 72 = *PGM* VIII, above).

4. *GEMF* 76 (= *PGM* X; *P.Lond.* I 124; TM 64532)

Date: Fourth/fifth century CE

Description: Roll, H. 25 x W. 30 cm. The recto contains two columns, the first of which is partly cut off, so that it might have been preceded by more. The text contains three recipes, the first an erotic procedure, the second a procedure to restrain anger, the third to subject an enemy.

Notes: Again, Thompson's description makes it difficult to be certain; like *GEMF* 72 (= *PGM* VIII; see above), it might correspond to either no. 2 or no. 4 in his report. *GEMF* 76 (= *PGM* X) has suffered more obvious damage than *GEMF* 72 (= *PGM* VIII), so it might well be described as "an imperfect roll," and it contains an illustration of a stela similar to those found on *PGM* VII, suggesting that it might be no. 2. On the other hand, it is smaller than *GEMF* 72 (= *PGM* VIII), which might make it less likely that Thompson would compare it explicitly to the larger *PGM* VII.

5. *GEMF* 75 (= *PGM* XIa; *P.Lond.* I 125; TM 33213 [magical text] and 64578 [accounts])

Date: Fourth/fifth century CE (post-336 CE)

Description: Roll, H. 28 x W. 38 cm. Accounts describing payments in kind to various workmen (→) dating to July 336 CE, cut and reused to write a single magical recipe for acquiring a *paredros* on the verso (↓) at 180° to the recto.

Notes: *GEMF* 75 (= *PGM* XIa) is readily identified in the sale documents. Thompson lists it as “no. 3,” and describes it as “Portions of a tribute roll—very similar to a broken roll which was purchased a few years ago—of the second to third century.”¹⁶⁵ This description refers to the recto text.

6. Bonn, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek 147 + *P.Lips.* 97 (?)

= TM 62009 (Psalms) and 22424 (accounts)

Date: Fourth century CE (post-338 CE)¹⁶⁶

Description: Roll, H. 25.5 x W. 401.8 cm. On the recto are further accounts for an estate in Hermonthis dating to April 338 CE, apparently the same one dealt with on the recto of *GEMF* 75 (= *PGM* XIa).¹⁶⁷ The verso has Psalms LXX 30:5–55:14 copied onto it across 36 columns.

Notes: The purchase of this document is complex; the Leipzig part was originally broken into two fragments, the smaller of which, containing the first six columns, was originally held in the Royal Museum in Berlin before being transferred to Leipzig. The larger part, containing the remainder, is said in the Leipzig Papyrusammlung’s inventory book to have been purchased through Otto Rubensohn of the Berlin Museum in August 1902, and to have come from Ashmunein.¹⁶⁸ Nothing is known for sure about the acquisition of the Bonn section.¹⁶⁹ It seems likely that the whole roll was purchased, perhaps by Rubensohn, at some point prior to 1902, and then divided between the three collections. As discussed above, the attribution to Ashmunein does in fact strengthen its connection to the Hermonthis Library, even if, as the only nonmagical text in this putative archive, and from a different sale, its belonging to the archive remains for now uncertain. Nonetheless, if we hypothesize that the Hermonthis Archive had a close relationship to the estate whose document(s) it reused—that is, someone living or working on the estate used internal documents as a writing source—then it seems quite likely that this papyrus can be linked to the magical archive. While we might imagine that documents from the estate circulated as part of a trade in scrap papyrus,¹⁷⁰ it seems unlikely that

165. We have been unable to identify the manuscript referred to here.

166. Colomo and Scholl 2005.

167. Mitteis 1906, 246; Bagnall 1993, 126 with n. 79.

168. Mitteis 1906, 245; Colomo and Scholl 2005.

169. Colomo and Scholl 2005.

170. For two opposing views on this possibility, see Wipszycka 2000, 188–189, asserting the existence of such a trade, and Bagnall 2009, 58, suggesting that private recycling was likely more often the rule. For a broader discussion of the unresolved problems concerning the recycling of papyri, see Salmenkivi 2020.

two documents from the same estate ended up in the hands of unrelated copyists, especially given that there are so few other similarly well-preserved documents from fourth-century Hermonthis. The time period between the sales, at most 14 years, would not seem to be excessive. The existence of a copy of Psalms within an otherwise “magical” archive could be understood in different ways: either as a sign of the owner’s varied interests beyond magic—something we would expect from the other, fuller, archives with magical content, such as the Kellis House 3 Archive discussed below—or else as a ritual text, which could be adapted to produce invocations, or copied to produce scriptural amulets of the type that begin to appear in Egypt around the fourth century.¹⁷¹

Since this putative archive seems to have been purchased near Thebes, it is worth briefly repeating the reasons given earlier by Dosoo for separating the Hermonthis and Theban magical archives, at least for now.¹⁷² First, the two sets of papyri were acquired—in both cases, apparently, from Egyptian excavators and middlemen—approximately sixty years apart.¹⁷³ Such a gap in time between sales of related material would not be entirely unprecedented; the majority of the Great Bacchylides Roll (TM 59339) was purchased by Wallis Budge for the British Museum in 1897, with a further two fragments purchased and donated to the Museum by B. P. Grenfell shortly thereafter, and then about forty years passing before the final two fragments were purchased by Medea Norsa for the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence in 1938.¹⁷⁴ But this would seem to be the exception rather than the rule, and as a second argument we may note that the two groups display divergent physical and linguistic characteristics: the fourth-century Theban texts are all codices of broadly similar format,¹⁷⁵ one of

171. For such amulets, see Sanzo 2014. The earliest published example at present is *POxy. LXXVI* 5073 (late 3rd–mid-4th cent. CE). Cf. the later practice of using the Psalms in magical rituals presented in, e.g., Henein and Bianquis, 1975; Fodor 1978; Zellmann-Rohrer 2018b.

172. Dosoo 2016a, 261, 266.

173. Anastasy had acquired all of the Theban Library papyri by 1846, the date of preparation of the lot sold in 1857, and it is possible that he had already acquired all of them before 1827, when he attempted to sell his first lot to the Swedish government; see Dosoo 2016a, 252–253.

174. Budge 1920, vol. 2, 345–355; Kenyon 1897, xvi, n. 1; Norsa 1941. Note that the British Library website misleadingly lists the papyrus as having been bought from Budge’s mother-in-law, Ellen Maria Emerson: (http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Papyrus_733); Ismail 2011, 296–301. We would like to thank Naïm Vantieghem for providing us with this example.

175. *GEMF* 57 and 58 (= *PGM* IV and V, respectively) both belong to Turner Group 8, abb. 1, while the other codices (*GEMF* 60 = *PGM* XIII; *P.Holm.* + *GEMF* 59 (= *PGM* Va); *P.Leid.* I 397), written largely

which contains significant Old Coptic content,¹⁷⁶ while its rolls, dating to the second/third century, display two distinct physical patterns—bilingual Greek/Demotic rolls over a meter in length,¹⁷⁷ or Greek rolls around one meter in length.¹⁷⁸ By contrast, the Hermonthis material is entirely Greek,¹⁷⁹ and, with the exception of *GEMF* 73 (= *PGM* IX), consists entirely of rolls of varying sizes: most are 25–28 cm in height, and the one sheet, *GEMF* 73 (= *PGM* IX), has been cut from a roll of this size. The two archives also show recurrent hands: two of the Theban rolls and three of the Theban codices are the work of the same hand.¹⁸⁰ More generally, similarities between hands of the entire Hermonthis library,¹⁸¹ and within the Theban Library subgroups, are quite clear, and may imply copyists with similar training working within similar contexts. If we were dealing with a single archive, we would have to believe not only that its discoverers sold the material over a period of over sixty years—beginning before 1827 and ending in 1888—but also that they neatly divided the material so that the early sale(s) and final sale were markedly different in content. That the sellers carefully sold these two groups according to their formats seems still less likely when we consider that the Anastasy papyri demonstrate the sellers' habit of cutting individual rolls (*GEMF* 15 and 16 = *PDM/PGM* XII and XIV, respectively) in order to sell them twice.¹⁸² Budge's description of their find near Hermopolis, while not entirely trustworthy, further strengthens the argument to differentiate the two archives; they may have been found in two quite distinct geographical regions.

As with the Theban Library, we can note that the Hermonthis archive does display some examples of material that recur throughout the archive, and within the individual manuscripts that represent consolidated collections.

in the same hand, all have a height:width ratio of 1.7/1.8:1, although Turner somewhat arbitrarily divides them into Groups 7, 6, and 5, respectively; see Turner 1977, 17–19, 21, 142–143. For more detailed descriptions, see the discussion in Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 2 in this volume.

176. *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV); see Love 2016.

177. *GEMF* 15, 16, 17 (= *PDM/PGM* XII, XIV, and Suppl., respectively).

178. *GEMF* 31 (= *PGM* I; 80.2 cm wide) and *GEMF* 30 (= *PGM* II + VI; 128 cm wide). Cf. the discussion by Dosoo and Torallas Tovar in Chapter 2 in this volume.

179. Although there does seem to be a single Coptic letter in the *vox magica* $\theta\omicron\rho\chi\omicron\phi\alpha\nu\omega$ in *GEMF* 74.592 (= *PGM* VII 511), and Gordon 2019a, 119 identifies a Demotic sign in l. 462 (= 381), but this is perhaps better understood as a *charaktēr*.

180. *GEMF* 60 (= *PGM* XIII); P.Holm + *GEMF* 59 (= *PGM* Va); *P.Leid.* I 397.

181. Very similar hands may be noted in *GEMF* 72 (= *PGM* VIII) and *GEMF* 73 (= *PGM* IX), and *GEMF* 74 col. 21–22, 76, 75 (= *PGM* VII cols. xxix–xxx), *GEMF* 76 (= *PGM* X), and *GEMF* 75 (= *PGM* XIa). For a fuller discussion, see Martín Hernández and Gordon, Chapter 7 in this volume. For a broader discussion of hands in magical texts, see Nodar, Chapter 3 in this volume.

182. Dosoo 2016a, 261.

This might suggest the desire of collectors to compare variants, or perhaps the persistence of rituals within the communities that produced and passed down archives. Most obvious here is the *Dream Oracle of Bes*, one copy of which appears in both *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII) 222–249 and *GEMF* 72 (= *PGM* VIII) 64–110; a broader interest in dream oracles is apparent in other recipes from *GEMF* 74. Likewise, binding procedures appear in three of the five Hermonthis manuscripts (*GEMF* 74 = *PGM* VII, *GEMF* 73 = *PGM* IX, *GEMF* 76 = *PGM* X), as do erotic procedures (*GEMF* 74 = *PGM* VII, *GEMF* 72 = *PGM* VIII, *GEMF* 76 = *PGM* X), although this is probably less significant, since these are fairly common throughout magical formularies from this period.¹⁸³ A subtler similarity of content is found in the use of images within the papyri: while similar *figurae magicae* are found in many other magical papyri, the Hermonthis Archive contain some of the only surviving examples of the diagrams known as stelae, found on *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII) and *GEMF* 76 (= *PGM* X).¹⁸⁴

However, it is worth repeating here the caveats made earlier by Dosoo in the case of the Theban Library,¹⁸⁵ that there are also clear cases where very close textual parallels can be found in manuscripts widely separated by time and space, testifying to the fact that magical texts, like those of other genres, circulated widely within, and indeed beyond, Egypt. A third copy of the *Dream Oracle of Bes* has been found in *GEMF* 62 (= *PGM* CII) from Oxyrhynchus, closer to that of *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII) than *GEMF* 72 (= *PGM* VIII), while close parallels to some of the Theban material, and further images of stelae can be found in Michigan MS. Copt. 136, a fourth-century codex from the Faiyum.¹⁸⁶ This is most likely an artifact of the circulation of such texts throughout Roman Egypt, although we can note briefly another intriguing possibility. In our examination of the hands of the Hermonthis Archive texts, we observe similarities to that of *GEMF* 68 (= *PGM* XXXVI), purchased in Theadelphia¹⁸⁷ in the Faiyum, while occasional lambdacism, characteristic of the Egyptian of the Faiyum, found in some of the Theban Library's manuscripts, may provide a further suggestion

183. Cf. the discussion by Martín Hernández and Gordon in Chapter 7 in this volume.

184. *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII), below ll. 217 & 928; *GEMF* 76 (= *PGM* X) 31–35. Cf. the discussion by Martín Hernández and Gordon in Chapter 7 in this volume.

185. Dosoo 2016a, 262.

186. P.Mich. Inv. 136: stelae in lines 124–132, 169–175 (4th cent. CE; TM 64479), and a close parallel to *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV) 1219–1227 in P.Mich. inv. 136 lines 66–68.

187. For the acquisition of this text, see Hickey, Maravela, and Zellmann-Rohrer 2015.

of a connection.¹⁸⁸ As we have noted, the discovery of texts in archives tells us most directly about their context of deposition and final use, not necessarily their creation or composition, and so it is possible that a relationship existed between practitioners in Upper Egypt (Thebes/Hermonthis) and Middle Egypt (Oxyrhynchus and the Faiyum), in which they exchanged recipes or even entire handbooks. Again, we must be cautious here, since Thebes, the Faiyum, and Oxyrhynchus are the sites that have been subject to some of the most intensive excavations and hence yielded the most texts,¹⁸⁹ and these textual parallels may simply reflect this excavation pattern. A few suggestions, though, of the existence of such networks are found in two of the Theban texts: *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV; third century CE) describes recipes as having been transmitted by “a physician from the Oxyrhynchite Nome” (*w' swnw hn p; tše pr-mdj*),¹⁹⁰ and a priest from Cusae,¹⁹¹ while *GEMF* 58 (= *PGM* V) records a recipe variant given by a man from Herakleopolis.¹⁹² As Dieleman has observed, these attributions to anonymous practitioners rather than legendary sages have a ring of plausibility that other such framing descriptions lack.¹⁹³

The Hermonthis Archive thus provides us with a second major magical collection from Upper Egypt, most likely attesting to a second practitioner or community alongside the user(s) of the Theban Magical Library. Despite their numerous similarities in content and language, we can note a few interesting differences. In contrast to the Theban practitioner(s), who used both Egyptian- and Greek-language texts whose copies dated back to the second/third century and may have originated in a priestly context, the Hermonthis practitioner(s) used purely Greek-language texts, produced in a shorter period in the fourth and perhaps fifth centuries, following a more standard physical format.

4. The Kellis Area A, House 3 Archive

Kellis is one of the most important archeological sites from Roman Egypt—a rare example of a well-preserved settlement that can be excavated and has been

188. See *GEMF* 31 (= *PGM* I 145–146); *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV) 2046, 2118, 2144; *GEMF* 58 (= *PGM* V) 16. Cf. Torallas Tovar and Martín Hernández 2020.

189. Cf. Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 2 in this volume.

190. *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV) 1, 528. Since this reference appears in two versions of the same text, it must derive from an earlier textual generation.

191. *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV) 232.

192. *GEMF* 58 (= *PGM* V) 383.

193. Dieleman 2005, 263–266.

extensively documented. Located in the Dakhla Oasis, 350 kilometers west of the Nile valley, Kellis was occupied from the late Ptolemaic period until the 390s, when it was suddenly abandoned to the encroachment of the desert.¹⁹⁴ Kellis likely had between 500 and 1,500 inhabitants,¹⁹⁵ and serves as a beautiful cross-section of the religious history of Late Antique Egypt, with a temple complex dedicated to the Egyptian god Tutu functioning from around the reign of Nero (37–68 CE) until the 330s, three fourth-century Christian churches,¹⁹⁶ and extensive evidence of the lives of a small circle of Manichaeans, who likely considered themselves as adherents of a truer or more spiritual Christian Church.¹⁹⁷

Among the hundreds of texts excavated in Kellis are nine true magical texts, as well as a range of comparable material, including prayers, horoscopes, and sortition oracles (see Table 1.2), all dating to the fourth century. Some of this material was found in the western Area D, consisting of the Temple of Tutu and related buildings, and while some of the earlier texts may relate to its use as a temple, it is likely that the two true magical texts found in this area (*P.Kellis* Copt. VI 56, *P.Gascou* 87) are unrelated to this function, since both are Christian in content, and likely belong to the period in the second half of the fourth century in which the temple served a domestic function.¹⁹⁸ The majority of the texts come from the residential zone Area A, with one amulet against fever for an unnamed beneficiary, again largely Christian in inspiration, having been found in House 4, near the outer enclosure of the Temple of Tutu.

The fullest material, however, comes from Houses 1–3, a group of buildings occupying a single block, although with separate entrances.¹⁹⁹ While two further Greek fever amulets have been found in House 2, the bulk of the textual material, including magical texts, come from House 3, known to have been home to one or more Manichaean families. The textual material from this building—consisting of over 200 texts in Greek, Coptic, and Syriac, is incredibly complex, and understanding it is made more difficult by the many individuals who share the same names. Iain Gardner has recently drawn

194. Useful overviews of the site and its excavation may be found in Bowen, Chandler, and Martin 2005; Bowen, Chandler, Hope, and Martin 2006, 17–24.

195. Molto 2002, 243.

196. Bowen 2002b.

197. For a brief overview of the site's religious context and history, see Gardner, Alcock, and Funk 1999, 72–83. For the Temple of Tutu, see Hope 1998; Kaper 2003, 140–147; the latest datable text mentioning a priest is *P.Kellis* Gr. I 13 (at line 14; 335 CE). For orthodox Christianity in Kellis, see Bowen 2005. For Manichaeism in Kellis, see Gardner and Lieu 1996.

198. Kaper 2003, 150.

199. For a description of this area, see Gardner, Alcock, and Funk 1999, 99–122, 138–139.

Table 1.2. Magical texts and possibly related material from Kellis; those which do not belong to the House 3 Archive are shaded in light grey.

Siglum	TM	Area	Structure	Location	Description
<i>P.Gascou</i> 85	702585	A	House 2		Amulet against fever (Greek)
<i>P.Gascou</i> 86	702586	A	House 2	Level 16	Amulet, probably against fever (Greek)
<i>P.Kellis</i> IV 96 (KAB) ll. 1178–1178o	23651	A	House 2	Kitchen, southeast corner, deposit 2	Wooden codex containing a series of accounts for an estate; the cover includes a series of angel names and a reference to a prayer (Coptic)
<i>P.Kellis</i> Gr. II 93	64433	A	House 3	Room 1, level 1	“Sethian invocation” (?) (Greek)
<i>P.Kellis</i> Gr. I 82	109540	A	House 3	Room 1, level 4	List of lucky and unlucky days written on a wooden board (Greek)
<i>P.Kellis</i> Gr. II 91	64434	A	House 3	Room 1, level 4	Short hymn of praise written on bifolio, possibly used as amulet (Greek) ¹
<i>P.Kellis</i> Gr. II 94	64437	A	House 3	Room 4, level 3	Short hymn of praise written on wooden tablet, possibly used as amulet (Greek)
<i>P.Kellis</i> Copt. V 5	108341	A	House 3	Room 6, level 2	Codex fragments, perhaps astrological (Coptic)
<i>P.Kellis</i> Copt. V 7	108343	A	House 3	Room 6, level 2	Sortition oracle (?) (Coptic)
<i>P.Kellis</i> Gr. I 86	64440	A	House 3	Room 6, level 3	Amulet against fever for Ela[.]ke (Greek)
<i>P.Kellis</i> Gr. I 84 ² (= <i>P.Kellis</i> Copt. V 48)	97894	A	House 3	Room 6, level 3 + Room 1, deposit 1	Horoscope on a wooden board dating to 373 CE (earlier account in Coptic survives on other side)
<i>P.Kellis</i> Copt. V 35	85886	A	House 3	Room 6, deposits 3–5	Letter from Ouales to Psais III including separation procedure (Coptic and Greek)
<i>P.Kellis</i> Gr. I 88	64435	A	House 3	Room 8, level 4	Prayer for the unction of the sick (Greek) ³

Table 1.2. (cont.)

Siglum	TM	Area	Structure	Location	Description
<i>P.Kellis Gr. II</i> 92	64432	A	House 3	Room 9, level 3	Short hymn of praise written on bifolio, described in ed.pr. as possible amulet (Greek)
<i>P.Kellis Gr. I</i> 87	64441	A	House 3	Room 11, level 3	Amulet for Pamour III (Greek)
<i>P.Kellis Gr. I</i> 85a + b	64442	A	House 3	Room 11, level 4	Fragmentary formulary, containing three healing prescriptions, and one fragmentary text Greek)
P. Kellis inv. 92.35.b ⁴	874145	A	House 3	Room 11, level 4	Fragmentary amulet for Pamour (III?) (Greek)
<i>P.Gascou</i> 83	702583	A	House 4	Room 1b, level 1	Recipe for perfume (Greek)
<i>P.Gascou</i> 84	702584	A	House 4	Room 1b, level 2	Amulet against fever (Greek)
<i>P.Gascou</i> 88	702588	A	A/10	Level 11	Text of unclear purpose (Greek)
<i>P.Kellis Copt.</i> VII 126	832773	A	House 4	Rooms 1 + 1b, deposit 1	Invocation (Coptic)
Kellis Inv. P96.150 ⁵	700788	D	Context 7	Room 7	Fragmentary sortition oracle (Greek)
<i>P.Gascou</i> 87	702587	D	East corridor	Room 4, level 2	Fragmentary text mentioning Michael (Greek)
<i>P.Kellis Copt.</i> VI 56	128633	D	Main Temple, domestic block	D/8, Room 7,2	Miniature codex containing formula against snakebites (Coptic)
Horoscope 3 ⁶	97197	D	Main Temple, domestic block	D/8, Room 4, Deposit 2	Horoscope on papyrus dating to 332 CE (Greek)
Horoscopes 4 a + b	97196	D	Main Temple, domestic block	D/8, Room 4, Deposit 2	Two horoscopes on papyrus, dating to 337 and 364 CE (Greek)
<i>O.Kellis</i> 159	74689		Main Temple, domestic block	D/7, Room 7, deposit 8	Fragmentary text, perhaps a horoscope (Greek)

Table 1.2. (cont.)

Siglum	TM	Area	Structure	Location	Description
Horoscope 2 a + b	97331	D	Main Temple, domestic block	D/8, Room 8, deposits 5, 6	Two horoscopes on a wooden board, one dating to 392 CE, perhaps used for teaching (Greek)
<i>O.Kellis</i> 160	74690		Main Temple, domestic block	D/8, Room 12, deposit 5	Fragmentary text, apparently astrological (Greek)
<i>O.Kellis</i> 157	74687	D	Shrine II, Zone XXVI	Deposit 2a	Ostrakon containing alphabet and names; scribal exercise or magical text? (Greek)

¹For the hymns possibly used as amulets (*P.Kellis Gr.* II 91, 92, 94), see Gardner 1996, 132, 134, 137, 143. This possibility is rejected by Jenkins 1995, 224–225; Römer 2009, 136–137; de Bruyn 2017, 231–232.

²Cf. Worp 1995; Heilen 2004.

³Römer, Daniel, and Worp 1997. On the possible use of this manuscript as an amulet, see de Haro Sanchez 2008a.

⁴Worp 1995, 218, n.l. 16.

⁵Hoodendijk 2016.

⁶For Horoscopes 2–4, see de Jong and Worp 2001; cf. Heilen 2004.

attention to the problem of assuming that all the material from a single structure belongs together as an archive, suggesting that, among the House 3 material, for example, a “ritualist” may have inhabited the site and re-used some of the texts.²⁰⁰ For this reason, our discussion here focuses on the more clearly magical material directly related to individuals who can be identified with some certainty in other documents. In doing so, we will draw in particular upon the recent doctoral work of Mattias Brand and Håkon Fiane Teigen in order to attempt to situate the magical material from the House 3 archive

200. See Gardner 2019. It is not necessarily clear, however, that the manuscripts he discusses should be connected with a practitioner of magic (i.e., “ritualist”, in the narrow sense increasingly common in scholarship). *P.Kellis Gr.* I 82 is a calendar of lucky and unlucky days, an important early example of this genre in Greek. While Worp 1995, 207 compares it to the lunar calendar for practicing different magical rituals in *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII 272–282), there are no mentions of magical rituals in the *Kellis* text, and while such calendars could have been of interest to a magical practitioner, they also could be used by individuals with no specific ritual practice; their goal is simply to aid in the planning of life events (see e.g., Chardonnens 2017; Chardonnens 2019; Theis 2016; *pace* Hoogendijk 1996). The *κνυξ*-pangram noted by Gardner on this and other pieces might have been of interest to a magical practitioner, but does not appear in any published magical texts, and is best attested in pedagogical contexts (Lougovaya 2017; cf. Gardner 2019 for the identification of *P. Kellis Gr.* I 82 as the opening of the first Manichaean daily prayer rather than an “invocation of a god or daemon”).

within its social context.²⁰¹ Much of this will be, by necessity, speculative, but we believe it nonetheless has value in suggesting the possibilities for using provenanced texts to attempt a microhistorical reconstruction of magical practice.

The texts from House 3 document three generations of inhabitants from the very end of the third century to the end of the fourth century.²⁰² The inhabitants seem to have been an extended kinship group of moderate means, who traded goods with the Nile Valley, and in particular with Aphrodito in the Antaiopolite Nome, Hermopolis, Antinoopolis, and Asyut.²⁰³ The main activity attested by the texts is weaving, apparently at a scale beyond that of mere domestic industry, since they hired and paid weavers, and transported their wares to the Nile Valley using camels.²⁰⁴ Teigen has even tentatively suggested that they may have constituted a formal textile trade association.²⁰⁵ The family also owned olive, and perhaps jujube trees, particularly valuable in the oasis, which, in contrast to the Nile Valley, could be irrigated all year long.²⁰⁶ Some of these trees were rented out to provide further income, although these remained of secondary importance compared to the textile business.²⁰⁷ Teigen estimates the profit on the weaving business to have been 6.2–15 *solidi* per year, placing the inhabitants on the lower end of the middling spectrum—not poor, but certainly not wealthy.²⁰⁸

Many of the inhabitants—both males and females, apparently—were literate, and some of them were involved in the copying of texts in various languages. Although Magali de Haro Sanchez has in the past suggested that the house was a center of book copying and teaching,²⁰⁹ Gardner, followed by Brand and Teigen, has argued that is more likely that the texts were produced as a “spiritual praxis,” a Manichaean devotional activity, and part of the larger process of copying and circulating texts within private networks that we have already seen at work in magical manuscripts.²¹⁰ As we have noted,

201. Teigen 2018; Brand 2019.

202. Teigen 2018, 70–71.

203. Worp 1995, 50–52; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk 1999, 5, 13, 55–58; Teigen 2018, 67–101; Brand 2019, 125–138.

204. Bowen 2002a, 97; 2015, 227–240; Teigen 2018, 157–206.

205. Teigen 2018, 171–181.

206. Teigen 2018, 195–198.

207. Teigen 2018, 198.

208. Teigen 2018, 39, 202–204; cf. Brand 2019, 78.

209. de Haro Sanchez 2008a, 91–92.

210. Gardner 2007, 4–6; Teigen 2018, 291–294; Brand 2019, 315–325.

there is a linguistic division within the archive, with texts relating primarily to business with outsiders largely written in Greek, while personal letters are usually in Coptic, and religious texts may be in either.²¹¹ Syriac appears in a few bilingual texts, usually with Coptic glosses, suggesting that some inhabitants were interested in studying this language, presumably to access Manichaean scripture in its original language.²¹²

The house was likely one of the last to be abandoned, and while there is much left behind, the final inhabitants stripped the house of much of its wood, implying that any important or precious items were also removed; the remains therefore, including the textual remains, represent a fraction of the original archive, and likely that part that was lost, forgotten, or not considered worth keeping.²¹³ The work of Gillian Bowen, built upon by Brand, suggests that many of the texts would have been stored in jars kept on the roof, which would have fallen as the roofs collapsed, scattering their contents on the floor.²¹⁴ This means that texts found in close physical proximity likely constitute subarchives within the larger House 3 assemblage, and we may note that there seem to be two of these containing magical texts: in Room 11, levels 3 and 4, were two healing amulets and a fragmentary formulary, and in Room 6 were found the letter from Ouales to Psais containing a separation procedure, and another amulet. These five texts will be our focus here.

The formulary *P.Kellis Gr. I 85a + b* (= *GEMF* 64) consists of two tall papyrus fragments. The original editors consider it to be part of a folded roll, preserving the leftmost parts of two columns.²¹⁵ These preserve at least four recipes, all apparently containing prescriptions for the creation of amulets for protection or healing; the one whose title is fully preserved is intended to deal with shivering fever (ῥιγοπύρετον). In terms of its content, it is fairly typical of the Greco-Egyptian magical tradition—there are a number of *charaktêres*, and a small stela in the form of a *tabula ansata*, as well as vowel sequences written in triangular formations. Where the deities invoked can be identified, they are Egyptian gods called by the Greek forms of their names—Thermouthis, the

211. See n. 103, above.

212. Gardner 1996, 101–131; Franzmann 2005; Pedersen and Larsen 2013, 11–12; Brand 2019, 309–312.

213. Bowen 2015, 233–234.

214. Bowen 2015, 235; Brand 2019, 87–88. This seems likely to be the case for the strictly magical material discussed here based on the stratigraphy; see the description of the relevant layers in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk 1999, 116.

215. Worp 1995, 214–217; cf. Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 2 in this volume.

serpent goddess of fertility, Ptah, the craftsman creator, and the Great God (*megas theos*), a title applied to several deities in the magical papyri, most prominently the solar deity and Iaō.²¹⁶ The only possible Christian element is the name *Iasakh*, perhaps the patriarch Isaac (fr. b line 21), although the fact that it appears in a longer sequence should make us wary of reading too much into this. In short, this seems to represent a fairly typical example of a Greco-Egyptian formulary in the form of a roll, primarily containing healing-protective procedures, similar to others such as *PGM LXV*, *GEMF* 78 (= P.Mich. inv. 4451), or *GEMF* 82 (= *PGM CXXIII*).

What makes this formulary unique, however, is that it was found in the same room as, and one level away from, an amulet (*P.Kellis Gr. I* 87) that apparently uses one of its formulae—the final one, whose purpose is not explicitly stated, but which mentions the names of Ptah and Thermouthis. The amulet's creator, whose hand is similar to, but less decorative than the one that created the formulary, seems to have slightly misunderstood the text, copying the instruction “below” (ὑποκάτω) rather than recognizing it as an instruction concerning where to place the different divine names.²¹⁷ Its nature as an amulet is clear, however, from the personal name that replaces the generic name marker, Pamour son of Lo. Although there were at least three individuals who lived in House 3 by the name of Pamour, the matronymic allows us to identify him with Klaas Worp's Pamour III, a figure from the third generation of the family, active ca. 350–ca. 380, whose mother's full name was Tapollos, here shortened to Lo, the form in which it appears in all of the Coptic texts.²¹⁸ A second amulet (*P.Kellis inv. 92.35.b*), also for a Pamour, whom we might well take to be the same person, was found in the same room and layer as the formulary;²¹⁹ although fragmentary, it is intended to protect against fever, and, though we cannot be certain, it may well have been copied from a lost part of the formulary. A second amulet against fever (*P.Kellis Gr. I* 86) was found a few rooms away. Created for a woman named Ela[.]ke, not otherwise attested in

216. See Worp 1995, 219.

217. Jordan 2001b, 34; cf. de Haro Sanchez 2008a, 88.

218. Worp 1995, 50–54; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk 1999, 30, 36; cf. Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock 1997, 8; Teigen 2018, 77–81; Brand 2019, 430–431. Jordan 2005b, 156, understands Λο as an abbreviation of λόγος miscopied from the abbreviation Λ, in turn miscopied from Δ (δεῖνα, “so-and-so”), but in fact Λο appears as a name in, inter alia, *P.Kellis Copt. V* 45 l. 12, *P.Kellis Copt. V* 48 ll. 20, 43, *P.Kellis Copt. VII* 70, ll. 42, 44.

219. Worp 1995, 218, n.l. 16.

Kellis,²²⁰ this amulet contains typical Greco-Egyptian magical features, such as vowel formations and the use of the palindrome (*A*)*thanalblanatha*, but also the names of the archangels Raphael, Michael, Ouriel, and Gabriel, most common in texts with clearly Jewish or Christian origins.

Taken together, the amulets and the formulary suggest that the inhabitants of House 3 not only possessed a magical handbook, but used it, primarily to create amulets for the household, but also, perhaps, in the case of Ela[.]ke, for those outside it. These seem to have been primarily intended to deal with fever, the chief concern in papyrus amulets from Roman Egypt,²²¹ and there are four other amulets from other parts of Kellis, three of which are against fever. With the exception of Ela[.]ke's amulet, found separated from the other texts and perhaps belonging to a different subarchive, the texts do not show any clear Christian, and much less specifically Manichaean, influence. Rather, it seems that the inhabitants of House 3 were still using older ritual traditions which lacked direct connections to their current faith. By contrast, the amulets from Houses 2 and 4 do contain much more explicitly Christian material, and were thus likely drawn from a different handbook.

Found close to the amulet for Ela[.]ke, albeit broken into several parts, is *P.Kellis Copt.* V 35, the famous letter from Ouales to Psais containing instructions for a separation ritual, written in the Coptic dialect L*, typical of the Manichaeans—though not the Orthodox Christians—from Kellis.²²² Ouales is the Greek writing of the Latin Valens, the name of a man who lived outside Kellis, and was perhaps a member of the Manichaean Elect.²²³ Psais, the Greek form of the Egyptian Pshai, is likely Psais III, a younger colleague—indeed, perhaps the biological brother—of Pamour III, who also lived in House 3.²²⁴ From mentions of Psais in other texts from the archive it seems

220. As noted in Worp 1995, 218, n.l. 16, this name, read as *Ἐλα.κη* or *Ἀλα.κη*, does not seem to be otherwise attested in any texts from Roman Egypt.

221. For amulets, see de Haro Sanchez 2010, 132; Kotansky 2019, 547–548. For the prevalence of fever in the ancient world more generally, see Draycott 2012, 72–81; Nutton 2013, 32–33.

222. In addition to the principal edition in Gardner, Alcock, and Funk 1999, for this text, see Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock 1997; Mirecki 2013. Note that, given the instructions included with the text, and the use of the generic name marker in the invocation, it is unlikely to be a “ready-made amulet” as implied in Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock 1997, 3. For dialect L*, see Gardner, Alcock, and Funk 1999, 84–95; Shisha-Halevy 2002; Zakrzewska 2015.

223. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk 1999, 34–35; Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock 1997, 5–6; Teigen 2018, 333–334, 359–360.

224. Gardner, Alcock, and Funk 1999, 41, 57–58; cf. Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock 1997, 6; Teigen 2018, 83–88; cf. Brand 2019, 433, although he does not list this text as among those associated with Psais III.

that he was at least partially responsible for the group's finances, arranging payments, purchases, and loans. Ouales and Pshai seem to both be involved with the copying of texts; in return for the separation spell he sends him, Ouales specifically asks Psais to copy and send to him quickly some texts in *quaterniones* (τετράς, 1.37);²²⁵ this is one of the most telling descriptions of the scribal activity of House 3's inhabitants, which may have been performed, as in this case, as a kind of almsgiving for the Elect.²²⁶

The magical text itself opens with a short Greek invocation of the Jewish-Christian god, called "the one who is sovereign, who sits upon the Cherubim and Seraphim," and continues in Coptic, with an invocation to separate a couple, describing a procedure that involves burning mustard and depositing an object (likely the mustard mixed with water) at the house of the victims; it ends with instructions to recite the ritual over water.²²⁷ In contrast to the amuletic texts, this ritual exists within a strictly Jewish-Christian textual tradition, although again, not explicitly Manichaean; it is perhaps notable that it lacks either *voces magicae* or *charaktēres*. Ouales mentions that Psais has requested a spell, and although he apologizes that this is not the one that was requested, it seems likely that it must have had the same function, namely, the separation of a couple. Paul Mirecki has suggested that this text may have been linked to the evangelical activity of the inhabitants of House 3: they may have had their eyes on a potential convert, and intended to use the spell to separate them from a family that may have opposed such a conversion.²²⁸ But this seems to place too much stress on their Manichaean identity; as Brand has pointed out, being Manichaeans was only one part of their identities, which

225. Cf. also *P.Kellis Copt.* VII 111, ll. 6 and 12. See Sophocles 1860, 536; Förster 2002, 804; cf. Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock 1997, 16 n. 49. Note that while the Latin word *quaternio* strictly refers to a group of four bifolios bound together, it may have developed a second meaning of "codex notebook" or "quire," without specific reference to the number of folios (see, e.g., Palladius, *Lausiaca History* 45.3). The terms "quire" in English and "cuaderno" in Spanish, derived from the Latin word, have a general meaning that does necessarily involve four bifolios.

226. Teigen 2018, 347–348.

227. Lines 19–21 should be corrected to "awaken conflict and strife and a thunderbolt between (her), NN, daughter of NN, (and) NN, son of NN. You pronounce these words over water" (τοῦτο οὕτως
 νοῦμιμε μὴ οὐτὶ τῶν μὴ οὐβερραγνός μὴ ἂν ἦν ἂν ντὰς ἂν ὄν ἂν ἐκἀτεογο νῶεχε ἀχμ̄ μαγ̄"); the positions of μὴ and ντὰς seem to have been reversed at some stage in the copying process. For the absence of the expected indefinite article before μαγ̄, cf. Shisha-Halevy 2002, 306 et passim on the frequent use of the zero article in this corpus. Compare the parallels gathered in Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock 1997, 25–27, and see p. 29 of this work for an alternative interpretation.

228. Mirecki 2013, 144.

could be deliberately performed, but need not be reflected in every aspect of their lives.²²⁹ Psais more probably requested the text for the same reasons a member of any other confessional group would have: to destroy a relationship he found unsuitable, because he desired one member of the couple, or even simply out of curiosity.

More can be inferred from Ouales' discussion of his difficulties in finding the text that Psais originally asked for.²³⁰ He seemingly possesses several magical texts, of which at least two are separation spells, and at least one of these—the one requested—was in the form of a sheet that he could not locate. Psais knew about these texts—in a general sense that Ouales had them, and in enough detail that he could request a specific one—and did not see anything wrong in requesting and receiving one in a letter that could potentially have been read by a messenger. All of these details confirm our general picture of texts existing in collections and manuscripts of various sizes, and circulating within circles of readers and users as they were recopied. Nonetheless, Ouales notes that he trusts Psais not to bring the text to the attention of a brother, Kallikles.²³¹ It is difficult to know exactly what to make of this, but the simplest solution seems to be that Kallikles, not an inhabitant of House 3, was someone who might disapprove of the text; he might have been a more senior Manichaean than Psais, and even Ouales, another member of the Elect, and the most obvious reason for his disapproval would be the text's magical nature, and perhaps specifically its aggressive nature. The discourse regarding magic within Manichaeism, as in orthodox Christianity and most other normative systems of Late Antiquity, was of one of disapproval, and its practice was forbidden to Manichaeans.²³² Ouales and Psais may have considered their practice legitimate, either because it called upon the Christian-Manichaean God, or because they possessed sufficient expertise or judgement to perform it in an acceptable manner, but others would likely have seen it as falling under the rubric of *mageia*, *goēteia*, or *pharmakeia*,

229. Brand 2019, 109–110, 329–339; cf. Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock 1997, 30.

230. Cf. the discussion of this text in Love 2016, 273–276.

231. Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock 1997, 31.

232. See, e.g., *The Kephalaia of the Teacher* 6: “Keep away from the magics (ΜΑΓΙΑ) and the sorceries of darkness (ΝΕΚ ΜΗΚΕΚΕ)!” (Polotsky and Böhlig 1940, 31.25–6; translation in Gardner 1995, 35–36; cf. Cologne Mani Codex pp.137.1–139.18 in Koenen and Römer 1988, 98–99. Mirecki 2013, 143 n.37; cf. Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock 1997, 10–11, who suggest that this prohibition, a century old by Ouales' time, and primarily written against Zoroastrian ritual, may not have been seen as applicable to magic in Kellis, but all of Mani's teachings were of approximately equal age, and “magic” in the context of Roman Egypt could surely only have been understood according to contemporary conceptions.

endangering their souls, and, if reported to the Roman authorities, their lives.²³³ Lastly, Ouales promises to send the text originally requested if he finds it; this may simply be because it might be preferable or more effective for Psais, but it is tempting to suspect that Psais may have been expected to carry out more than one separation ritual, that is to say, that magical rituals were a more than occasional activity for him.

Kellis is one of the very few Roman-period settlements in Egypt to be thoroughly excavated; thus the magical finds from the site, though slight in comparison to the larger magical libraries, are perhaps more significant for our understanding of the practice of magic in the Roman period. The finds from House 3 demonstrate that magical texts could be both owned and used by individuals who apparently had no cultic authority, who were neither “pagan” nor Christian clergy, but who nonetheless could use such texts thanks to their literacy, which they acquired both for professional and religious reasons—as artisans and merchants who wished to conduct business by correspondence, and as Manichaeans who wanted to be able to read religious texts. It is unclear whether one or more members of the household used their access to these texts in order to serve as a “ritual specialist”—implied perhaps by the amulet for a woman who does not seem to be part of the household, and Psais’ potential need for more than one separation ritual. On the other hand, the fact that all the recipes in the formulary seem to be for healing or protection, and that two seem to have been used for members of the household, may suggest that we are instead dealing with something like a household book of remedies of the type proposed by Lynn LiDonnici.²³⁴

We have also seen that the contents of the texts are not explicitly Manichaean; rather than carrying out rituals that aligned exactly with their religious confession, they seem to have simply used those which existed in the culture around them, and to which they had access through their contacts—Greco-Egyptian and Jewish-Christian. There is perhaps some hint that the cultural origin of the texts to which they had access changed over time—Pamour is associated with a handbook from the Greco-Egyptian tradition, while the younger Psais was sent a Jewish-Christian spell, in a letter found near Ela[.]ke’s amulet with the names of four archangels. We should however

233. For magic in Roman law, see Kippenberg 1997, 137–163; Rives 2003; 2006. Cf. the comments of Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock 1997, 11 n. 44.

234. LiDonnici 2003, 155 (Chapter 4 in this volume).

be cautious about reading this change, certainly true for Egypt as a whole, into any particular group of texts; the two manuscripts may be separated only by years or even months. We should also note that magical texts—defined as those belonging to specific ritual traditions distinct from temple or ecclesiastical cult and recognizable through genre markers—were only one kind of ritual performed by House 3's inhabitants; a copy of a Christian liturgical prayer for the unction of the sick was also found in the archive.²³⁵

We should remember that magical texts were found in three other houses in Kellis, something all the more significant when we consider how few survive. Most of these are amulets, demonstrating the breadth of their use, but none of them seem to share hands or content, and those from outside House 3 are Jewish-Christian in content. This would seem to imply that even in a town as small as Kellis—likely with a population of less than 1,500—the inhabitants had access to multiple practitioners over the course of less than eighty years, confirming our suspicion that it would not be unreasonable to likewise expect multiple practitioners in the much larger Theban region. This picture might be further confirmed by the astrological finds from Kellis; five of the astrological manuscripts (Horoscopes 2–4, *O.Kellis* 159–160) were found in the temple, implying that this site was used by an astrologer; one board (*P.Kellis.Gr.* I 84), found in House 3, was apparently written in the same hand as Horoscope 2, implying that this astrologer had contacts with the house's inhabitants.²³⁶ Alongside the priests of Tutu and the Christian churches, then, Kellis seems to have been home to a number of private magical and astrological practitioners.

5. Conclusions

Much of the research on magical manuscripts over the last 200 years has, understandably, focused on their rich and complex textual content, and yet, as this discussion has attempted to show, the material and archeological context of these texts may allow us to provide a much richer picture of the use of magic in Roman and Late Antique Egypt. Texts were composed, redacted, edited, transmitted,

235. *P.Kellis Gr.* I 88. This was perhaps modified from a version similar to that attested in the miscellaneous Montserrat codex *P.Monts.Roca* inv. 155, 19–inv. 156, 5 (IV CE; TM 59453); Roca-Puig 1994, 87–115; see Römer, Daniel, and Worp 1997 for a discussion of both texts.

236. de Jong and Worp 2001, 204, 213. Hoogendijk (2016, 600) suggests that this astrologer may also have owned the sortition-oracle book found in the same area.

and copied into manuscripts, but between this act of copying and their final deposition, they existed as physical objects—consulted, cared for, damaged, repaired,²³⁷ exchanged, collected, and dispersed. Much of this life is lost to us, but careful attention to manuscripts as physical objects, and as components of larger archives, allows us to tentatively reconstruct parts of these material histories.

This discussion has only scratched the surface, and there is much more work to do, such as studying the archives presented here in greater depth, perhaps expanding them with new texts or dividing them into smaller but more coherent and secure groups, or identifying new archives. As we have shown, even the most fragmentary magical material becomes more interesting when placed in a social context, particularly through its association with documentary texts, and it is for this reason that we have proposed shifting the focus to archives with magical content, rather than simply studying magical materials in isolation. We should note that the study of archives and dossiers with magical contents should not look only at papyri—scholars have also identified groups of magical gems, as well as curses and amulets on metal, that constitute coherent groups, and these may allow us to extend our investigation beyond the Egyptian desert and its papyrus-friendly climate.

One of the most important questions over the last thirty years has been the identity of the “magicians,” or users of magical books, of Roman Egypt, with the study of the texts themselves, and literary material, often suggesting Egyptian priests and Christian monks to some authors. This is almost certainly true for some texts, and yet we have seen another pattern that seems to be stronger in the papyrological evidence: the use of magical texts by individuals who had acquired literacy for their own practical and nonritual purposes, such as the small businessmen of Kellis, the tax collector Aurelios Philammon, and the lawyer Dioskoros of Aphrodito. The alchemical texts of the Theban Library and the later Berlin Library (seventh–eighth century CE) may suggest that their users, too, worked as artisans.

While we cannot know if this was true for the dozens of other magical manuscripts for which no clear context survives, it is tempting to see this as one typical social profile for a magical practitioner of first-millennium Egypt: members of a middle class that lived above subsistence, could acquire

237. See, e.g., *P.Mich.Copt.* 136, which shows the retracing of faded text, and *GEMF* 15 and 16 (*PDM/PGM* XII and *PDM/PGM* XIV, respectively), which both show extensive repairs; see Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 2 in this volume.

literacy, and own slaves,²³⁸ but which was far below the social level of the landed elite who composed the majority of the literary texts that survive from antiquity.²³⁹ Like the inhabitants of Kellis, such individuals could have incomes several times those of manual laborers, but orders of magnitude below those of the upper classes.²⁴⁰ Again, we might tentatively link this class to the contents of the magical papyri themselves, which show little concern with, for example, the fertility of fields, but do occasionally provide rituals for the success of workshops, and even more often for acquiring the favor of social superiors. These practitioners and owners were not necessarily the same as the individuals who composed magical texts, which likely circulated far beyond the scope of their original composers, like most other text types. If we accept for a moment the idea that Egyptian priests, writing in Greek in the Late Hellenistic or Early Roman periods, were the original composers, Manetho once again might serve as a good parallel; surviving citations in authors such as Josephus, Plutarch, and Porphyry show that Egyptian priests and the texts they composed could have a wide circulation. Magic—at least as far as we can trace it through the papyri—is a textual phenomenon, closely linked to literacy, and so, once magical texts were written in Demotic, Greek, or Coptic, anyone capable of reading these languages could, in theory, use them. If the original composers have left their marks in the texts themselves, it is in archives and manuscripts that we must look to find practitioners.

6. Appendix: A Provisional Checklist of Possible Archives and Dossiers with Demotic, Greek, and Coptic Magical Material from Roman and Early Islamic Egypt

The following is a nondefinitive list of magical papyri that seem to have relationships to other manuscripts, magical or nonmagical (shared findspot, writer, and so on), suggestive of the existence of an archive or dossier. Given the well-known problems with defining magic, we have adopted a broad

238. The comments of Apuleius, *Apology* 46 imply that the child mediums used in divination rituals may often have been slaves. On the economic profile of slave owning in the Roman empire, see Harper 2011, 49–55, 75–76; the individuals we are discussing here would fall into Harper's category of "bourgeois slave-holders."

239. Cf. Brown 2012, 343–344.

240. For estimates of incomes in Roman Egypt, see Morrisson and Cheynet 2002; Scheidel and Friesen 2009; Scheidel 2010, 427–436, 446–447.

definition, selecting material that would be classified as magical by many or most scholars, with the result that the manuscripts included here are quite diverse in terms of their content. Note that we are concerned here with groups of manuscripts with meaningful relationships to each other; while many surviving texts come from the Faiyum and Oxyrhynchus, the archives from these regions discussed below have criteria of belonging that go beyond geographical origin alone.

The archives are listed here in approximately chronological order, from earliest to latest. In cases in which a conventional name has already been assigned to a collection, we use these names; in other cases, we have assigned new designations as appropriate. The names given to the collections vary considerably; where possible, we have tried to adopt the neutral terms “archive” or “dossier” as appropriate, modified by “magical” if the archive is primarily or only magical in content, along with the name of the approximate findspot, current location, or some other description, as appropriate. The list is limited to material in Demotic, Greek, and Coptic that is known or believed to come from Egypt; there are a few other comparable archives and dossiers from the broader Greco-Roman world, but these lie beyond the scope of this discussion. Where relevant, the Trismegistos Archives identifier is provided (TM Arch ID), in order to allow the archive to be viewed on the online database of the same name (www.trismegistos.org/arch/index.php).

The bibliography provided here is not exhaustive, but focused on works that discuss relationships between manuscripts. Not all of these groupings are equally secure; all may be larger or smaller than they are presented here, or may not exist at all.

1. Hawara Magical Dossier

Date: Second–third century CE

Contents: *PGM XXXII*, *PGM XXXIIa*, *PGM LXVIII*

Principal bibliography: *PGM*² = Preisendanz and Henrichs 1974, 201; Guéraud 1935–1937, 202–203.

Description: Three applied love Greek spells on papyrus, apparently written in the same hand. *PGM XXXII* and *XXXIIa* seem to have both been found in the surface soil of the cemetery, the latter tied in a bundle with a clay figurine, and both represent examples of same-sex love spells. The exact provenance of *PGM LXVIII* is unknown, but it contains formulae parallel to *PGM XXXIIa*, and thus likely came from the same site.

2. Oxyrhynchus Astrological-Magical Archive
 Date: Second–third to fifth century(?) CE
 Contents: *P.Oxy.* III 433 (i); *P.Oxy.* VI 928 (ii); *P.Oxy.* LXXXII 5305 (iii); *P.Oxy.* LXXXII 5308 (iv); LXXXII 5311 (v); *P.Oxy.Astr.* 4136 (vi); *P.Oxy.Astr.* 4241 (vii); *P.Oxy.Astr.* 4240 (viii)
 Principal bibliography: Zellmann-Rohrer 2018, 197–198.
 Description: A hypothetical group of Greek texts proposed by Zellmann-Rohrer based on a likely close time and place of discovery. It would consist of one astrological manual relating to the moon (vi), six horoscopes, five dating to 150–201 CE (vii–viii), and one fragmentary formulary (i); still more speculative are a letter (ii), and, given their later dates (third–fifth century CE), a second formulary (iii) and two amulets (iv–v).
3. Theban Magical Library
 Date: Second–third century CE
 Contents: *GEMF* 31 (= *PGM* I), *GEMF* 30 (= *PGM* II + VI), *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV), *GEMF* 58 (= *PGM* V), *GEMF* 59 (= *PGM* Va) + *P.Holm.*, *GEMF* 15 (= *PDM* xii/*PGM* XII), *GEMF* 60 (= *PGM* XIII), *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM*/*PGM* XIV), *GEMF* 17 (= *PDM* Suppl.), *P.Leid.* I 397.
 Principal bibliography: Chronopoulou 2017; Dosoo 2016a; Zago 2010; de Haro Sanchez 2008b; Dieleman 2005; Brashear 1995; Tait 1995; Fowden 1993; Preisendanz 1933.
 TM Arch ID: 363
 Description: See discussion above.
4. *PGM* III Archive (questionable)
 Date: Third–fourth century CE
 Contents: *GEMF* 55 (= *PGM* III)
 Principal bibliography: Love 2017, Martín Hernández and Torallas Tovar forthcoming.
 Description: Love has argued that this manuscript should be understood as a small archive of two separate rolls, both written by the same two scribes who wrote in Greek and Old Coptic, however Martín Hernández and Torallas Tovar have demonstrated that it is a single roll.
5. Faiyum Magical Archive
 Date: Fourth century CE
 Contents: *GEMF* 68 (= *PGM* XXXVI), *GEMF* 69 (= *PGM* XXXVIII).
 Principal bibliography: Hickey et al. 2015; Dosoo 2016; Gee 1995; Eitrem 1925b.

Description: Two Greek papyrus formularies purchased by Samson Eitrem in 1920 near ancient Theadelphia in the Faiyum. Gee also includes PGM XXXVII and XXXIX, but the former, a Greek copy of the *Book of the Temple*, has no clear link to the others, and the second was purchased in a separate sale in 1923.

6. Kellis Area A House 3 Archive

Date: Second half of fourth century CE

Contents: Ca. 200 texts, largely documentary; clearly magical texts are *P.Kellis Gr. I 85a + b*, *P.Kellis Gr. I 86*, *P.Kellis Gr. I 87*, *P.Kellis. Copt. V 35*, *P.Kellis. inv. 92.35.b*

Principal bibliography: Bowen 2002a; Brand 2019; de Haro Sanchez 2008a; Gardner, Alcock, and Funk 1999; Mirecki 2013; Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock 1997; Worp 1995.

Description: See discussion above.

7. Kellis Area A House 4 Archive 4

Date: Fourth century CE

Contents: *P.Gascou 85*, *P.Gascou 86*

Principal bibliography: Worp 2016.

Description: See brief discussion above.

8. Hermonthis Magical Archive

Date: Third–fourth century CE

Contents: *GEMF 74* (= PGM VII), *GEMF 72* (= PGM VIII), *GEMF 73* (= PGM IX), *GEMF 76* (= PGM X), *GEMF 75* (= PGM XIa), *P.Lips. inv. 39 + P. Bonn inv. 147(?)*.

Principal bibliography: Dosoo 2016a; Gee 1995; Bagnall 1993; Martín Hernández 2020b; Martín Hernández and Gordon, Chapter 7 in this volume, p. 290–317; Mitteis 1906, 245–246.

Description: See discussion above.

9. Naqlun Hermitage 44 Archive

Date: Second half of fifth century CE

Contents: *Naqlun N.41/97 (i)*, *Naqlun N.44/95 (ii)*, *Naqlun N.45/95 (iii)* + further unedited texts.

Principal bibliography: van der Vliet 2000; Godlewski 2000.

Description: Group of texts found in Hermitage 44 of Naqlun in the Faiyum, 1.2 km from the Church of the Archangel Gabriel, inhabited by the monk Phoibammon. Only one Coptic curse is published (iii); the remaining texts are a Greek/Coptic formulary containing a reconciliation procedure and

healing recipes (i) and a broken Coptic parchment, perhaps containing a separation procedure (ii). An edition of these texts, along with other documentary texts found in the hermitage, is in preparation by van der Vliet.

10. Fustat Magical Archive

Date: Fifth–sixth century CE

Contents: *SM* 32, *SM* 36

Principal bibliography: Seider 1964.

Description: Two healing texts, the first in Greek, the second in Latin, reported by Carl Schmidt as having been found together in Fustat.

11. Multilingual Magical Workshop

Date: Fifth–sixth century CE

Contents: *GEMF* 82 (= *PGM* CXXIIIa) (i), *GEMF* 84 (= *PGM* CXXIV) (ii), *P.Mil.Vogl.* Copt. 16 (iii), fragments (incl. *PGM* CXXIIIb–f, *GEMF* 85 = *PGM* CXXVa–f).

Principal bibliography: Pernigotti 1993; Daniel and Maltomini 1991, vol. 2, pp. 231–268; Bresciani et al. 1973.

TM Arch ID: 380

Description: Three formulae—two Greek rotuli (i, ii) and a Coptic codex (iii) — and several fragments in Greek, Coptic, and Aramaic. Some of these fragments may be applied texts, and repeat text found in the formularies. The dialect of the Coptic text suggested to the editors that the group might come from the region of Beni Suef in Middle Egypt.

12. Archive of Dioskoros of Aphrodito

Date: 506–588 CE (based on dating of Greek texts)

Contents: Approximately 700 documentary, literary, and paraliterary texts, most Greek, approximately 80 Coptic; the only magical text is *PGM* 13a (= *ACM* 22, *P.Cair.Masp.* II 67188 v).

Principal bibliography: Fournet 1999; Fournet 2015b; MacCoull 1987; MacCoull 1988; Maspero 1911.

TM Arch ID: 72

Description: The largest archive of the sixth century, principally containing texts relating to Apollos and his son Dioskoros, the headmen (πρωτοκαμήτης) of Aphrodito. *PGM* 13a is a Greek prayer against demons, written on the same manuscript as a poem relating to the Panhellenic Games and an ethopoeia to Apollo (see MacCoull 1988, 126–129; Fournet 1999, 446–447), all in the hand of Dioskoros.

13. Sabinos Curse Dossier

- Date: Sixth century CE
 Contents: SM II 59, 60
 Principal bibliography: Björck 1938; Daniel and Maltomini 1991, vol. 2, 49–52.
 Description: A small dossier consisting of two Greek applied curse texts from Panopolis, perhaps written in the same hand. They are both “prayers for justice” on behalf of a man named Sabinos.
14. Coptic Wizard’s Hoard
 Date: Fifth–seventh century CE
 Contents: *P.Mich.* 593–603, *P.Mich.* 1294
 Principal bibliography: Meyer and Smith 1999, no. 133; Mirecki 1994; Worrell 1930.
 Description: A group of Coptic manuscripts acquired by E. A. Wallis Budge in 1921. Worrell divided their contents into three texts (A–C) contained in several manuscripts; only text A (593; 599 + 594 + 603 + 596) is edited to date.
15. Schmidt Coptic Magical Dossier
 Date: Sixth–seventh century CE (?)
 Contents: *Hs.Schmidt* 1 et 2.
 Principal bibliography: Meyer and Smith 1999, nos. 48, 72; Kropp 1930–1931, vol. 1, 11–14, vol. 2, 3–8.
 Description: Two Coptic formularies—one parchment, the other papyrus—containing *historiolae* concerning Horus and Isis, purchased in Cairo by Carl Schmidt and kept in his private collection.
16. British Museum Portfolio
 Date: ca. 600 CE
 Contents: British Library MS Or 6794; 6795; 6796 [2], [3], [1]; 6796 [4].
 Principal bibliography: Kropp 1930–1931, vol. 1, xi, nos. E–J, vol. 2, nos. XV, XXVIII, XXIX, XXX, XXXII, XL, XLI; Meyer and Smith 1999, nos. 129–132.
 Description: Four Coptic formularies in the form of rotuli purchased in 1907, perhaps from Thebes, written in the same hand, perhaps that of Seueros son of (Io)anna, whose name appears in nos. 6794 and 6795.
17. London Hay Collection
 Date: Eighth–ninth century CE
 Contents: London Hay 10122, 10376, 10391, 10414, 10434.
 Principal bibliography: Crum 1934a; 1934b; Meyer and Smith 1999, p. 127 and nos. 78–81; Kropp 1930–1931, vol. 1, no. M, vol. 2, no. XIV; Wills et al., forthcoming; Zellmann-Rohrer, 2020b.

Description: A group of manuscripts purchased by Robert Hay, probably in Thebes, and sold to the British Museum in 1868. All are written in Coptic upon leather in similar hands, and are probably to be understood as formularies.

18. Yale-Cologne Magical Dossier

Date: Sixth–seventh century CE

Contents: P.CtYBR inv. 882 (i), P.CtYBR inv. 3549 (ii), P.Köln inv. 1470 (iii).

Principal bibliography: Browne 1976; Meyer and Smith 1999, 216–217, 345, no. 107; van der Vliet 1998, 119–120; Weber 1975.

Description: Three Coptic formularies, the first a curse (i), the second a love spell (iii), the third a fragment (ii), all apparently written in the same hand.

19. Berlin Magical Library

Date: Late seventh–eighth century CE

Contents: *P.Berlin* 8313–8333 (= BKU I 1–21).

Principal bibliography: Erman 1895; Dosoo, forthcoming a; Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 2 in this volume, p. 86–87, 105–107; Richter 2020.

TM Arch ID: 435

Description: 20 papyrus and parchment Coptic formularies of various sizes and formats, with 21 fragments of further texts. Purchased by Dr. Reinhardt in the Faiyum, with the provenience confirmed by dialectal features. A protocol on *P.Berlin* inv. 8331 dating to the governorship of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Marwān (685–705 CE) provides a terminus post quem for this manuscript.

20. Archive of the Anchorite Frange (Theban Tomb 29)

Date: Eighth century CE

Contents: Over 600 texts, including *O.Crum* ST 18 (i), *O.Frange* 190 and 191 (ii–iii), *O.Frange* 220, 409 (iv–vi)

Principal bibliography: Boud’hors and Heurtel 2010; Crum 1921, no. 18; De Bruyn 2017, 45.

TM Arch ID: 321

Description: A large archive of texts produced by the anchorite Frange who occupied Theban Tomb 29 in the eighth century. One text contains a Coptic liturgical text copied onto both sides of an ostrakon (i), almost certainly intended for use as an amulet, as described in two letters responding to requests for such amulets (ii–iii). Other ostraca have

symbols resembling *charaktēres* (iv–vi), perhaps implying an acquaintance with “true” magical texts.

21. Asyut Bone Curse Dossier

Date: Ninth century CE

Contents: Asyut Tomb III So5/46 (i); Leiden F 1965/8.5 (Nahman Bone B) (ii); Os.Mil.Vogl. inv. 1 (Nahman Bone A) (iii)

Principal bibliography: Dosoo 2021b; Drescher 1948; Kahl 2016.

Description: Three applied Coptic curses written on the rib bones of a large animal, two against a man named Aaron, all containing variations on a single formula written by the same hand. Two (ii and iii) formerly belonged to the Cairo dealer Maurice Nahman, and were said to have been found in Akhmim, but the third, from a controlled excavation, was found in Asyut Tomb III.

22. Strasbourg Amulet Dossier

Date: Ninth–tenth century CE

Contents: *P.Strasbourg* K 201, 202.

Principal bibliography: Burns 2014; de Haro Sanchez 2014.

Description: Two small Coptic amulets written by the same hand, written for a woman named Anna and her son.

23. Heidelberg Magical Library

Date: Tenth–eleventh century CE

Contents: *P.Heid.Kopt. Inv.* 678–686.

Principal bibliography: Bilabel and Grohmann 1934; Dosoo forthcoming b, Torallas Tovar in this volume, Chapter 2, p. 99–100, 108–111; Johnston and Gardner 2018; Gardner and Johnston 2019; Kropp 1966; Meyer 1996; Meyer and Smith 1999, nos. 73, 86, 105, 135.

TM Arch ID: 421

Description: Nine Coptic formularies, sheets and codices on paper and parchment, purchased by Carl Schmidt in 1930 and 1933 through the dealer Maurice Nahman, and originating from the Faiyum. Six are by the hand of a man who identifies himself in *P.Heid.Kopt. Inv.* 682 as “Iohannes the Deacon” in a colophon dated to 967 CE.

CHAPTER 2

Roll vs. Codex

*The Format of the Magical Handbook**

Korshi Dosoo and Sofía Torallas Tovar

1. Introduction

GEMF 86 (= *P.Rainer Cent.* 39), the oldest known copy of the sixth-century *Testament of Solomon*, contains Book 18 of the story in which King Solomon interrogates a series of demons and forces them to reveal their secrets. While often considered a literary text, it was clearly used as a magical formulary; within its narrative, it contains the instructions for creating amulets to protect against, heal, and exorcise various demons and the maladies they cause. This use is suggested by the format of this text, where *ekthesis* indicates the beginning of each section in which the demon introduces itself, and confesses how it may be combatted, making it easy to identify the different sections and the recipes they contain. The text is written on a *rotulus* (reconstructed H. 150–200 x W. 27.9 cm), that is, a roll that unrolls vertically rather than horizontally and is written from top to bottom—a format not found in the best known of the Greek magical papyri, including the manuscripts of the Theban Magical Library.¹ This format, according to the text's most recent

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1. See Dosoo 2016; Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume.

editor, Robert Daniel,² aligns with the text's claim to be Solomon's testament; following the work of Eric Turner, Daniel suggested that the *rotulus* was primarily a documentary format, and cited the near-contemporary testament of Abraham of Hermonthis,³ which takes the same form. However, when we view this copy of the *Testament of Solomon* in the larger context of book production in Greco-Roman and Late Antique Egypt, and compare it with other contemporary magical handbooks, our perception changes. If we examine the overall trends in magical-handbook formats,⁴ we can see that from the fifth century onward the *rotulus* becomes one of the main formats for magical formularies.⁵ In the absence of a survey of magical formats, Daniel could not have known this, however. Our aim in this chapter is therefore to provide such a survey of the corpus of magical handbooks preserved from Egypt in Demotic, Greek, and Coptic, and to attempt to create a typology. By comparing this corpus with contemporary books from other genres, we will demonstrate that magical handbooks did not present anomalous characteristics in terms of their formats, but generally followed the trends in book production typical of their period. This work builds upon earlier studies, in particular those on iatromagical manuscripts by Magali de Haro Sanchez, whose general conclusions remain valid but may be extended in interesting ways.⁶ We should also mention here Gideon Bohak's observations about the shift from papyrus to paper and roll to codex (and, to a lesser extent, *rotuli*) implied by the forms typical of manuscripts of the Cairo Genizah.⁷ Magical handbooks were chiefly distinguished not by their form, but rather by their content, described in vivid and negative terms by the early sixth-century author Zacharias of Mytilene as including "various pictures of evil demons, barbarous names and arrogant and harmful promises."⁸ More prosaically, they

2. TM 64942; *editio princeps* Preisendanz 1956; re-edition Daniels 1983; see also Daniel 2013; Bailey 2018.

3. On the testament of Abraham of Hermonthis, see Garel 2015; Fournet 2009; on the use of the *rotulus*, see Stroppa 2011, 2013, 2020; Carlig 2020; Torallas Tovar 2021.

4. In order to provide a better understanding of the larger context, we have drawn upon the Kyprianos database of ancient ritual texts, created by the *Coptic Magical Papyrus* team in Würzburg, and containing over a thousand magical texts in several different languages. The database has allowed us to assemble a reasonably complete corpus of magical formularies from Roman Egypt.

5. As it does for other genres; see discussion below.

6. De Haro Sanchez 2012a, 2012b, 2017.

7. Bohak 2008, 220.

8. *Life of Severos* 81; Syriac text in Kugener 1907, 62; cf. Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, chapter 1, n. 100. English translation from Brock and Fitzgerald 2013, 66 (paragraph 81). Trombley 1993, vol. 2, 36–37 compares this to actual magical papyri.

might also include specific terminology, such as terms for ritual procedures, as well as abbreviations and symbols; a few of these will be mentioned below.

In order to understand the different formats used to create magical texts, it is important to recall the definition of a formulary or handbook as we use it here. A magical formulary is a manuscript containing the information required to carry out a “magical” ritual—either the formula to be spoken or written alone, or the formula accompanied by ritual instructions. Formularies can be contrasted with applied texts, which are written objects created in the course of rituals from these instructions, usually encountered in the form of amulets or curse texts. While the distinction is clear in theory, in practice some work needs to be done to define and distinguish the two types, and there are some texts, in particular fragmentary ones, whose classification remains uncertain.⁹

For our purposes here, signs that a text is a formulary include (but are not limited to): (1) instructions for more than one ritual, (2) titles and subheadings for recipes, and (3) the generic name marker (in Greek and Coptic usually δεινα, in Demotic *mn*, both meaning “so-and-so”) to indicate where personal names should be inserted.¹⁰ By contrast, applied texts will generally contain a single written formula, will provide the actual names of the individuals concerned (user or client, and/or victim[s]), lack paratextual apparatus such as headings, and often feature extensive folding, and sometimes even damage indicating that they have been pierced to be worn or displayed.¹¹

2. The Corpus of Magical Formularies

In order to explore the typology of the magical handbook, we have used a corpus of magical formularies from Egypt dating roughly from the second/first century BCE to the twelfth century CE, consisting of 312 manuscripts. With very few exceptions, magical manuscripts do not contain any explicit

9. There are also non-fragmentary texts that may still resist classification. Some manuscripts that contain the names of specific people nonetheless seem to also contain instructions mistakenly copied from the formulary, e.g., *PGM* LXXI; *SMI* 29; *P.Kellis* G I 87; Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana 5645 (TM 99588); Vienna, Nationalbibliothek K 07090 (TM 91408); other texts contain the generic name marker (NN child of NN, ἡ/ὁ δεινα τῆς δεινα in Greek), but nonetheless evidence very tight folding, which implies that they were used as applied texts (e.g., *P.CtYBR* inv. 1800 qua [TM 99993]). Other texts contain both the generic name marker and a personal name, implying that they were created either as a formulary or as an applied text that could later be adapted to a specific individual (e.g., British Library MS Or 6794 [TM 100017]; *PLond.Copt.* 524). For further discussions of such phenomena, see Bonner 1950, 50; Jordan 2001a, 2001b.

10. Cf. Dieleman 2010.

11. For applied texts with piercings, see, e.g., *MPER* N.S. IV 11; *P.Heid.Kopt.* 5.

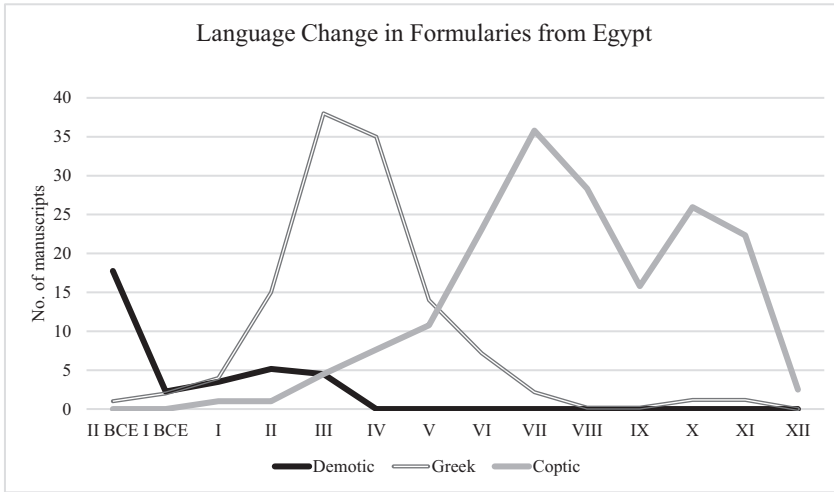


Fig. 2.1. Language use in formularies in Greco-Roman Egypt.

dates within their texts, and so nearly all of the dates used here are assigned paleographically.¹²

Of the manuscripts in the corpus, 37 contain Demotic, 99 Greek, and 175 Coptic. Broadly speaking, we can observe that in the second and first centuries BCE, the majority of formularies are in Demotic, but no Demotic formularies are later than the third century CE. Formularies in Greek survive continuously from the second century BCE to the seventh century CE, and from the first to the fourth centuries CE they constitute the majority. Those containing Coptic begin to appear in the third century CE, become predominant in the fifth century, and are attested continuously until the twelfth century.

In terms of geographical distribution, the sample broadly reflects the trends in findspots of Egyptian papyri more generally.¹³ About a quarter of the manuscripts

12. On paleography of the handbooks, see Nodar, Chapter 3 in this volume. While we are confident about general patterns, it is always possible that future work will alter the dating of particular manuscripts. Datings used here for Greek and bilingual Greek-Demotic manuscripts are taken from the re-editions in the series *Greco-Egyptian Magical Formularies*. In most other cases, we have used the dates provided in principal editions, revised where appropriate based on our own judgment. Among the rare examples of papyri whose contents allow a more specific dating are those containing horoscopes: e.g., *SM I* 85 (late 2nd cent. CE); *GEMF* 34 (= *PGM* LXII, mid-3rd cent. CE); or dated documentary texts: e.g., *GEMF* 8 (= *PGM* LXXII + LVII, Hadrian's era); *GEMF* 65 (= *PGM* XXIIa, 350–360 CE) or protocols: e.g., P.Berol. inv. 8331=TM 108888, on a protocol dating to 685–705 CE. A very few Coptic magical manuscripts contain colophons providing the exact date; see, e.g., *P.Baden V* 137 (967 CE; Gardner and Johnston 2019, 51–53).

13. This information is drawn from the details from the Kyprianos database, part of which is online at <http://www.coptic-magic.phil.uni-wuerzburg.de> We would like to thank Joachim Quack for making

(25.6 percent) have no recorded findspot, but can be assumed to come from somewhere in Egypt. Of the remaining three-quarters whose findspots have been recorded or can be reconstructed, about 10 percent each come from the Faiyum (10.2 percent) and the Theban region (9.4 percent), as a result of a number of interrelated factors: the favorability of these sites to the survival of texts, the intense formal and informal excavation in these regions over the last two centuries, and the large number of archives containing magical texts found in both regions (eight in the Theban region, five in the Faiyum).¹⁴ Slightly fewer (7.5 percent of manuscripts) come from the extensive excavations at Oxyrhynchus, and 6.6 percent from the area of Memphis, including Cairo, Babylon, and Saqqara. Far smaller numbers have been found in other locations, including Hermopolis-Antinoopolis (2.6 percent), Beni Suef (1.9 percent), Akhmim (1.6 percent), and the Eastern and Western Deserts (0.6 and 0.5 percent, respectively).

We should ask here the extent to which magical practice, and hence magical manuscripts, may have varied geographically—a question with implications for how representative our corpus may be taken to be. In terms of textual contents, regional dialectal variation is often apparent in the language of Egyptian texts, whether written in Coptic or Demotic script, although it is less clearly apparent in ritual practice.¹⁵ Despite some local theological and dialectal features present in the Demotic texts of the Theban Magical Library, in particular *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM* XIV),¹⁶ other parts of this same text show parallels with manuscripts from the Faiyum or seem to be copied from exemplars in a Lower Egyptian dialect, and similar cross-regional practices may be observed in other manuscripts.¹⁷ The fact that magical practice seems to have often transcended regional variation may mean that our corpus likewise transcends its geographical limitations, but we should nonetheless note the overrepresentation of Oxyrhynchus, the Faiyum, and the Theban Region, and the almost total absence of manuscripts from Lower Egypt, the most densely populated part of Egypt, and specifically from Alexandria, often hypothesized as the place of composition of many magical texts.¹⁸

In terms of materials, we may note that the vast majority of texts throughout this period are written on papyrus, with ostraca serving as an occasional

available to us unpublished Demotic manuscripts that are incorporated into the statistics given in the corpus, although a discussion of their formats must await their publication.

14. See Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume.

15. Coptic dialectal features are usually noted in text editions. For dialectal features of Demotic and Old Coptic magical texts, see e.g., Johnson 1977; Osing 1976, 11–13; Love 2016, 97–102.

16. See Johnson 1977; Tait 1995, 179–180; Dosoo 2016, 267 n.57.

17. See Dosoo, Chapter 5 in this volume; Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume; Dosoo 2016, 262.

18. Faraone 2000: 212–213; Dieleman 2005, 292–294; Cf. the comments of Mikhail (2016, 8–9). Note that at least one applied text does come from Alexandria, *SM* II 54 (3rd cent. CE), a lead curse tablet.

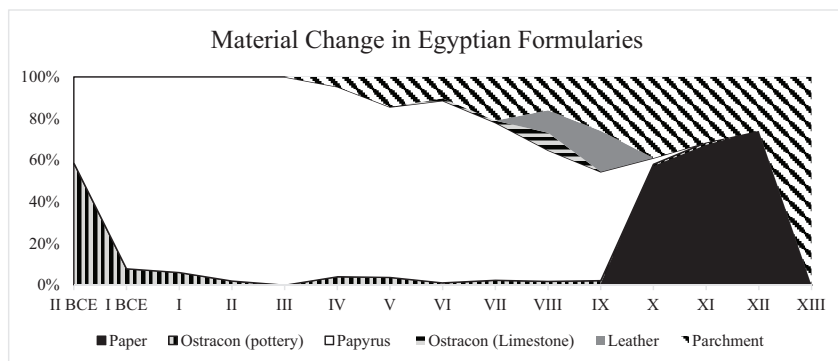


Fig. 2.2. Material change in Egyptian formularies.

alternative support; a group of 11 Demotic ostraca from second-century BCE Saqqara make up a significant proportion of these.¹⁹ Formularies written on parchment are first attested in the fourth century, and it remains a less-used alternative throughout the period under study. Paper is first used in the tenth century, and seems to have replaced papyrus as the main support within a few decades.²⁰ We may finally note that there are a few texts on leather, although these all belong to a small group of documents purchased in Luxor, and likely reflect a tradition specific to Upper Egypt and Nubia.²¹

3. *Formats of Magical Handbooks*

There are four main formats found in this corpus, all of which were common in ancient manuscript production more generally.

- *Roll (volumen)*

The earliest format attested is the papyrus roll,²² almost always written perfoliarily (along the fibers) first on its horizontal fibers (recto), and sometimes on its verso side (see below), in two or more columns.

19. See Ray 2013, 35–45, nos. 5A–L. We classify these as formularies, since their reconstructed text includes a title, although the large number found in a single location may imply these are instead mass-produced amulets.

20. For the use of paper in Egypt, see Boud'hors 1999, 75–84; Bloom 2001, 74–85 and passim; Buzi and Emmel 2015, 137, 139.

21. These are the London Hay manuscripts, nos. 78–81, 127 in Meyer and Smith 1999; cf. Richter 2015a, 87. See also O'Connell forthcoming.

22. On ancient rolls, Johnson 2004 covers all aspects of rolls in the Roman period, and calls attention to important issues. Still relevant is Turner 1978; useful comments on this work may be found in Maltomini 2016, 1097–1112. On rolls in Late Antiquity, see Stroppa 2020; Carlig 2020; Torallas Tovar 2021.

There are larger and smaller versions of the roll: the full-size roll takes advantage of the full height of a papyrus sheet, and is therefore ca. 30 cm in height, while smaller rolls, ca. 15 cm in height, seem to be the result of cutting a sheet in half on its horizontal axis. The horizontal roll was the basic book format for both literary and documentary texts in antiquity, until the transition from roll to codex.

- Rotulus (vertical roll)

The *rotulus* consists of a roll turned 90°; therefore, it will usually be 20–30 cm wide, over 30 cm long, and be written across the fibers (*transversa charta*), although in instances where texts are written on both sides, one will be in the direction of the fibers. There are some examples of narrower manuscripts, which are nonetheless clearly modeled on the larger *rotuli*, providing a parallel to the short horizontal rolls.

- Codex

The codex, the most familiar book format today, is produced by folding one or more sheets in two in order to form booklets of various sizes that could be read by turning their pages.

- Sheet

As we discuss below, the sheet is not necessarily to be understood as a standard format in the same way as the rolls (horizontal or vertical) and codex, but for our purposes here, we define a sheet as a manuscript written on a single piece of papyrus or parchment, generally less than 30 cm in either direction, and with a single column on either the recto or both sides; sheets often contain single recipes.²³

When we examine the whole corpus of magical handbooks, we can see a very clear pattern in the format's evolution (see below fig. 2.3).²⁴ At the beginning of our period, the roll is the predominant large format, peaking in the third century CE before declining in the fourth, with only two examples of rolls more than one meter wide that can be dated with some certainty to this century.²⁵ This decline is mirrored by the rise of the codex in the fourth century, and the *rotulus* in the fifth. Equally striking, though, is the importance of the sheet.

23. For more on the use of sheets, see, in this volume, Dosoo and Torallas Tovar (Chapter 1) and Faraone (Chapter 11).

24. Thanks to the paleographical analysis of the corpus of magical papyri (see Nodar, Chapter 3 in this volume), we have been able to assign more secure dates, and therefore better understand the evolution from horizontal roll to vertical roll or *rotulus* in the 5th century.

25. These are *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII) and *GEMF* 68 (= *PGM* XXXVI), both dated to the 4th century, and displaying similar hands; see Dosoo and Torallas Tovar (Chapter 1 in this volume).

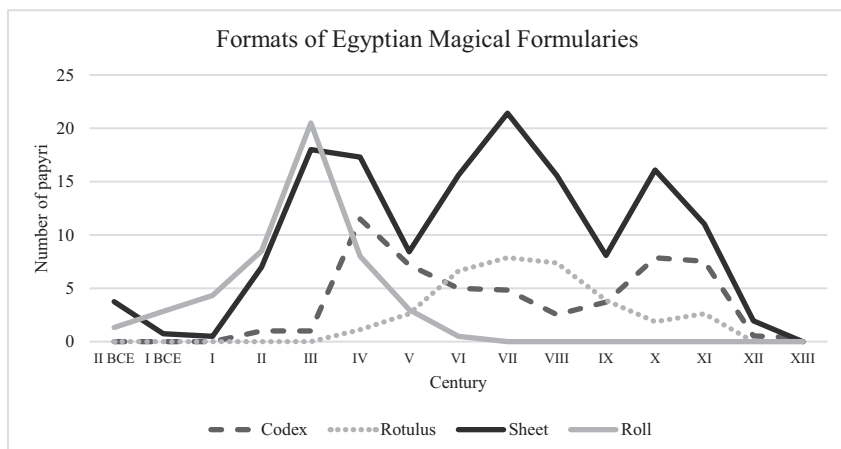


Fig. 2.3. Formats of magical formularies.

Throughout the period, approximately half of all magical formularies consist of single sheets, even as the larger-format manuscripts shift from roll to codex and *rotulus*. We should note here that there is some uncertainty about the exact number of sheets; our corpus contains 146, but there are some marginal cases that we have classed as sheets, but might be instead fragments of rolls or codices. Nonetheless, even if we exclude the uncertain sheets (around fifty), they would still constitute about 30–40 percent of the total number of formularies.

The popularity of the sheet as a format is likely due to the mechanisms underlying the circulation of magical texts; from various lines of evidence, we suspect that there was a process by which recipes were continuously being excerpted from larger collections, while at the same time practitioners copied individual recipes, and short collections, into larger formularies.²⁶ Such a process is implied by the letter-formulary *P.Kellis Copt.* V 35 (fourth century CE; TM 85886), in which the letter writer sends instructions for a separation procedure that he “found near him,” noting that he was unable to find another, requested procedure, since it was written on “a small fragment of papyrus” ([O]ΥΚΟΥΓΙ ΝΛΕΚΜΕ ΝΧΑΡΤΗΣ, r. lines 30–31). An interesting parallel to this may be found in the writings of Galen. In his recently discovered and edited treatise *De indolentia*,²⁷ he describes his library in Rome after the Great Fire

26. For a fuller discussion of this phenomenon, see Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume.

27. Edited in Boudon-Millot and Jouanna 2010; see also Rothschild and Thompson 2014; Petit 2018; and the discussion of Faraone, Chapter 11 in this volume, pp. 422–425.

of 192 CE. He talks extensively about books, the process of copying, and the organization of his library, describing an interesting phenomenon that could not be reconstructed without this kind of information:

(37) οὐ μόνον οὖν ἀπώλοντο κατὰ τὴν πυρκαϊᾶν αἱ διφθέραι πᾶσαι—καὶ γὰρ καὶ τοῦτο ἔτι μικρὸν ἐνόμιζον—ἀλλὰ πραγματεία μοι γεγονυῖα μετὰ πολλῆς ἀκριβείας ἡ περὶ συνθέσεως φαρμάκων ἐν ᾗ πῶς αὐτὸς ἂν τις συνθῇ [φαρμάκων] ἐμήνυσεν τὰ δοκιμώτατα· καὶ μόναι φαρμάκων εἰσὶν ὀλίγων γραφαὶ φθάνουσαι διδόνθαι τοῖς ἐταίροις.

Not only were all these parchment notebooks destroyed by the fire—this was somewhat trivial in comparison—but I lost my own highly accurate treatise *On the Composition of Drugs According to Kind*, in which I explain how to prepare the most effective medicines step by step. Only a few recipes lent to friends beforehand survived.

Galen tells us that that one of his medical books, likely a codex, was almost completely lost, with only a few of its prescriptions, which had been lent to colleagues, surviving; these individual prescriptions were most likely copied onto loose sheets.

These two testimonies suggest that loose sheets were widely used in the transmission of knowledge, which would explain the large number of them that we find not only in magic, but also in other genres of technical literature, including medical texts.²⁸ Ágnes Mihálykó has noted that a similar proportion (about 35 percent) of Christian liturgical texts from third- to ninth-century Egypt are written upon single sheets,²⁹ and while our statistics are less precise, we can say that sheets also seem to be one of the major formats of surviving medical and alchemical papyri.³⁰

Based on this textual and quantitative information, we can infer that at any one time, the plurality of manuscripts would likely consist of shorter handbooks, very often sheets. While huge collections of recipes, such as *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM* XIV) or *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV), tend to receive the most attention in

28. For a more detailed discussion of the implications of this passage and the circulation of medical texts, see Reggiani 2019. Some literary examples are listed in Stroppa 2013, 356–357; research on sheets of literary content is a desideratum.

29. Mihálykó 2019, 161–164.

30. The best-known surviving Greek alchemical texts are the 4th-century codices of the Theban Magical Library (*P.Holm.* and *P.Leid.* I 397), but there are also three fragments that may be sheets: *P.Flor. inv.* 22011 (TM 65816; 2nd cent. CE), a roll of which three columns survive in part, and *P.Land.* V 85 and *P.Oxy.* III 467 (both 1st–2nd cent. CE), fragments with only one surviving column of text and large surviving margins. Compare *BKU* I 21 (7th cent. CE), a sheet containing a Coptic alchemical text belonging to the Berlin Magical Archive; see Richter 2020.

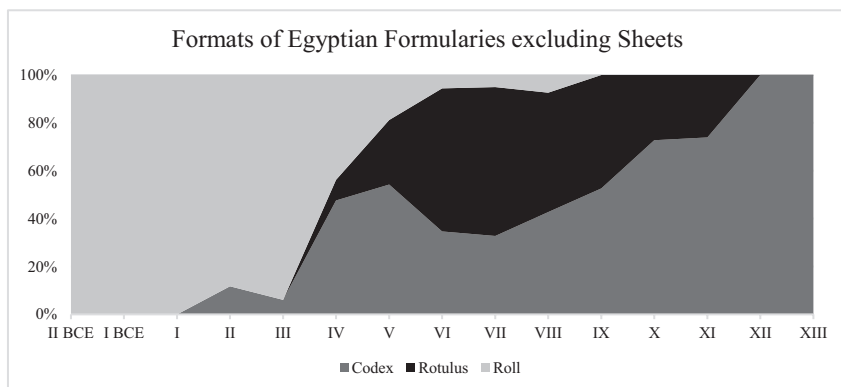


Fig. 2.4. Formats of magical formularies excluding sheets.

modern times, they should be understood as the exception rather than the rule, at least among surviving formularies.

The sheets, therefore, seem to be a constant in the equation, and if we remove them from Figure 2.4, we can see the pattern of change even more clearly: the codex (from the fourth century) and the *rotulus* (from the fifth) almost completely replace the roll by the end of the sixth century. The few rolls that are later than the fourth century are fairly short, generally consisting of less than three columns. The clearest late example is P.MMA 34.1.226,³¹ dated by its editor to the fifth or sixth century. Only 40 cm wide, with two columns preserved, it is a Coptic formulary containing four prayers for favor and protection. While the use of multiple columns implies that it was intended to be interacted with as a roll, it clearly belongs to a different context of use and production than the earlier, longer rolls such as *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM* xiv; W. 500 cm, 29 columns recto) or *GEMF* 31 (= *PGM* I; 80.2 cm wide, five columns).

4. Magical Handbooks within the Landscape of Book Production

4.1. Copyists and Models

A key question is the identity of the individuals who copied the magical formularies.³² In some cases, there are indications that we are dealing with

31. Zellmann-Rohrer 2017; cf. P.Mich. inv. 1190 (TM 98058; 5th cent. CE), W. 29.9 cm, with two columns each, recto and verso. For Coptic rolls in general, see the comments of Kahle 1954, vol. 1, 275–276.

32. For earlier discussions of book production in Late Antique Egypt, see Kotsifou 2007; Maravela 2008; Boud'hors 2008.

practitioners who copied the texts themselves, such as the presence of textual interventions—marginal notes in the main hand—or additions to the manuscript by the same hand over time.³³ In other cases, we might imagine that manuscripts were created by professional copyists, who produced texts of various genres as part of their regular economic activity without having any particular interest in their magical contents.³⁴ An interesting literary echo of this may be found in the *Life of Severos*, in which a man named George of Thessalonike gives a scribe (*kātōbā*) in Beirut a book of magical arts (*ktābā d-ḥarrāšūtā*) to copy.³⁵ Unfortunately for his would-be client, word of this commission reaches the local bishop, who orders the book to be seized and burned, along with others in the possession of the would-be magician.³⁶

These two possibilities—practitioner-copyists and professional scribes—need not be mutually exclusive. We know that Psais, the addressee of the abovementioned letter from Kellis (*P.Kellis Copt.* V 35), was involved in copying other, nonmagical texts, which he exchanged with his correspondent, Ouales.³⁷ He was thus both a copyist—although perhaps not “professional” in the sense of being paid for it—and likely a practitioner, since he probably requested the magical text for his own use. An interesting parallel may be found in the association, in medieval Europe and modern Ethiopia, between magic and literacy; in both contexts, the “cleric” (Latin *clericus*, Geʿez *dābtāra*), a term referring primarily to a literate man, is closely identified with the magician.³⁸

33. These might include *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII) (see Martín Hernández and Gordon, Chapter 7 in this volume), *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM* XIV) (see Dosoo, Chapter 5 in this volume), and the “Aktenbuch” of Aurelios Phoibammon (Poethke, Prignitz, and Vaelke 2012).

34. For examples of monks who earned their living by being copyists/scribes, see Palladius, *Lausiac History* 13.1 (on Apollonius), 32.12 (on the Pachomian scriptorium), 38.10 (on Evagrius Ponticus), 45.3; John Cassian, *Inst.* 4.12 and 5.28, (for Latin scribes).

35. *Life of Severos* 88 (Kugener 1907, 65–66; Brock and Fitzgerald 2013, 69). We would like to thank Erin Walsh for her help with the Syriac text. As noted by Brock and Fitzgerald (2013, 33 n.4), *kātōbā* is also used at the beginning of the tale to refer to a seller of books, implying that the same individuals were implicated in both copying and selling books. Compare perhaps the phenomenon of the *librarii*, attested in the earlier Roman empire; see Gamble 2012, 24–26, with further references; Cavallo 1978, 217–218, 231; Houston 2014, esp. 12–38, as well as the suggestion in Manekin-Bamberger 2020 that the producers of Jewish Aramaic incantation bowls were professional scribes (*soferim*). Rohmann (2016, 127) doubts that the content of the book was really “magical,” since “strictly magical literature was hardly ever written on parchment,” but the material used is not explicit in the text, and, even if it were, a magical codex on parchment would not be incongruous even in Egypt in the 5th century.

36. *Life of Severos* 88–91 (Kugener 1907, 65–70; Brock and Fitzgerald 2013, 69–71).

37. Gardner 2007, 4–6; Teigen 2018, 291–294; Brand 2019, 315–325. See also the discussion of magical texts from Kellis by Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume.

38. For the Medieval Latin west, see Kieckhefer 2014, 153–156; for Ethiopia, see Levine 1965, 71, 87 n.; Young 1975; Milkias 1976, 82–84; Mercier 1988, 461–467; de Ménonville 2018. Parallels between Late Antique Egyptian magic and the Ethiopian *dābtāra* have previously been suggested by Frankfurter (1998, 213, 216, 260; 2018, 196–197), and merit more careful attention.

Literacy would provide individuals with the ability both to access and copy magical formularies, and to produce applied texts.

Regardless, therefore, of whether a copyist was “professional” in the sense of deriving income from the copying of books, we may observe that many of them display a degree of proficiency, likely a consequence of practice, and more importantly, perhaps, training. Our evidence suggests that in acquiring the advanced literacy skills required to reproduce a text in a regular, fluent script, copyists would also have acquired proficiency in the techniques of page layout, and ultimately in the production of a document or a book according to a model. These models would have varied according to period, the parallel scribal traditions and technologies present in Egypt at any particular time (Egyptian, Greek, Roman), the practices connected to language (such as Demotic, Greek, Coptic), and genre (biblical, apocryphal, classical, documentary). As a result, although there might be specific characteristics found in particular genres, or in book production in different languages, we might expect some fluidity and interaction between different norms. Often the difference in quality or the choice of one large format or another might depend on the dexterity of the scribe in adopting or imitating models.³⁹

An interesting example of the interaction in cultural norms of book production may be found in *GEMF* 15 (= *PDM/PGM* XII), a second- or third-century bilingual roll from the Theban Magical Library. On the back side of a Demotic mythological text roughly a century older, the copyist initially began writing in the normal Demotic right-to-left format, although apparently without writing the square frames that were common in Egyptian literary texts from the Roman period, as seen in the two other bilingual rolls from this collection (see below). Seemingly dissatisfied with this layout, given the Greek texts he intended to include, the scribe turned the roll 180° and he (or perhaps a colleague) inscribed 13 Greek columns, then continued by writing three, predominantly Demotic, columns left to right, following the Greek reading order, and finally wrote a further two to the left of the Greek columns, in the same order.⁴⁰ This document, though likely written by an individual trained within the tradition of the Egyptian priesthood, given the use of Demotic, therefore adopted a Greek structure for the manuscript, to the extent that the Demotic columns seem to be intended to be read backwards (left to right rather than vice versa), and yet there are still hints of the influence of primarily Egyptian norms. Not only does

39. The variation in quality, making a handbook more or less literary or professional, is often more visible in the paleography than in the book format. For more on this topic, see Nodar, Chapter 3 in this volume.

40. Dieleman 2005, 32–33; Johnson 1975, 40 n. B; 48–50; Sarischouli, Chapter 8 in this volume.

the copyist insert occasional Demotic headings into the Greek text,⁴¹ but the width of the Greek columns—18–20 cm—is significantly wider than normal for a Greek roll, and closer to the widths found in the Demotic formularies.⁴²

4.2. Rolls, Codices, and Genres

The bulk of Greek magical handbooks, and the most remarkable exemplars, were produced in the period of the transition from roll to codex, described by Roger Bagnall as “one of the major technological changes of the Roman world.”⁴³ This transition took place over the first four centuries CE and affected not only literary texts, but also technical, liturgical, magical, scientific, and medical works.⁴⁴ An important question in the study of the shift from roll to codex has been that of the relationship of the codex to Christianity. There is no doubt that Christians in Egypt seem to have adopted the codex early, so that most Christian literary texts from Egypt are preserved in codices, even before this format becomes predominant in the fourth century.⁴⁵ For this reason, it might be tempting to believe that the shift from roll to codex is really a consequence of the Christianization of Egypt, which also took place over the fourth and fifth centuries. However, Colin Roberts and Theodore Skeat, writing in 1983, already recognized that the codex was in the course of becoming the predominant format even among non-Christians before this time, and statistical work by Bagnall and Benjamin Harnett, among others, has demonstrated convincingly that the rise of Christianity and the rise of the codex should be seen as largely separate phenomena.⁴⁶

In some measure, the study of the transition from roll to codex has thus been biased by subjective considerations based on genre and the religious or cultural affiliations of the scribes and readers. This subjectivity is applied to the

41. Dieleman 2005, 146.

42. Of the 18 rolls for which we have measurements, the maximum width of the Greek columns varies from 8 to 16 cm, with a mean of 11.6 and a median of 11.4; a major exception is *GEMF* 30 (= *PGM* II + VI, from the Theban Magical Library, whose widest columns are 23.5 cm. The other Demotic rolls of the Theban Magical Library have column widths of ca. 20.7 (*PDM* xiv) and 16.9 cm (*PDM* Suppl.). Johnson (2004, 100–108) found that most Greek prose texts from Oxyrhynchus had widths of ca. 4.5–9 cm, with columns wider than this “very exceptional.” On the width of columns in later Greek and Coptic rolls, see Torallas Tovar 2018; Torallas Tovar 2021.

43. Bagnall 2009, 71.

44. For overviews of the question, see Turner 1977; Roberts and Skeat 1983; Bagnall 2009, 70–90.

45. For discussions, see Roberts and Skeat 1983; Skeat 1994; Gamble 1995, 49–66; Elliott 1997; Crisci 2005; Hurtado 2006, 43–93; Bagnall 2009, 70–90; Harnett 2017; Chapa 2016, 119–123.

46. Roberts and Skeat 1983, 67–74; Bagnall 2009, 70–90; Harnett 2017.

study of scribal practice, readership, and book collection, and is combined with a broader problem concerning the dating of early manuscripts.⁴⁷ An additional issue is the use of restricted corpora that, for example, do not consider Coptic and Greek scribal production as a whole, or restrict samples by genre—particularly, biblical texts—rather than comparing them to documentary or other literary scribal production. While we think that exploration by genre may certainly be productive, comparison between contemporary texts belonging to different genres provides a vital part of the broader picture.

We present here two examples that demonstrate the usefulness of comparison across genres. Our first example is the Hanna Codex, part of the Bodmer Library, now in the Vatican, containing parts of the Gospels of Luke and John (ca. H. 27.5 x W. 13 cm).⁴⁸ Previously dated to the second century, it has recently been re-dated to the fourth century, thanks to comparison with other similar books and a more thorough paleographical analysis. When compared to the five fourth-century magical and alchemical codices from the Theban Magical Library (discussed more fully below), notable similarities in production are immediately apparent, not only of format but also of writing style. All five—the magical, alchemical, and biblical manuscripts—are tall, rectangular codices with similar formats,⁴⁹ written in an analogous writing style.⁵⁰

Our second example touches upon paleography and book format. The use of the roll in Coptic literature is usually considered an “oddity.”⁵¹ Accordingly, there is some reluctance among scholars to accept the use of the roll for Christian, and more specifically, Coptic literature.⁵² An example of this reluctance is seen in the case of the Coptic papyrus of the *Didache* (BL Or 9271). It is a very interesting piece, presenting quite an exceptional case of a papyrus sheet of H. 29 x W. 44 cm with no *kollēseis* (that is, points of overlap where two papyrus sheets, or *kollēmata*, were glued together to form a larger

47. Nongbri 2018, 47–82.

48. *P.Bodmer XIV+XV* (PB 14–15, Biblioteca Vaticana Hanna Papyrus 1, Mater Verbi) (P75). See Nongbri 2016.

49. *GEMF* 58 (= *PGM* V) is Turner Group 8, Aberrant 1; *GEMF* 59 + *P.Holm.* is classified by Turner as Group 6, *GEMF* 60 (= *PGM* XIII) as Group 7, and *P.Leid.* I 297 as Group 5 (Turner 1977, 142–143). These different categorizations are somewhat misleading, however, since all three manuscripts are similar in size and height-to-width ratio (see *Papyrus Codices*, below)

50. See Nodar, Chapter 3 in this volume.

51. Kahle 1954, vol. 1, 275; Buzi and Emmel 2015, esp. 140.

52. This is now no longer the case, however; see, e.g., the recent study of Coptic rolls in Carlig 2020; cf. Kahle 1954, vol. 1, 275–276.

roll).⁵³ It has two columns on the recto, written along the papyrus fibers, one clearly wider than the other, and one on the left of the verso, written against the fibers. While it has been edited and studied by several scholars, the most recent discussion is by F. Stanley Jones and Paul A. Mirecki, who review previous work on the papyrus.⁵⁴ They are reluctant to describe this piece as a roll, preferring to see it as a codex bifolio used for a scribal exercise. But this requires them to explain several anomalous aspects in order to make it fit their hypothesis: the first column begins in the middle of a sentence, the left-hand column is much wider than the right-hand one, and the column on the verso, also narrower than the first one, is not centered on the page.⁵⁵ Nathan Carlig is not convinced by this interpretation and suggests that this is one *kollēma* of a longer roll, which would have been written separately and then joined to other *kollēmata* to form a roll,⁵⁶ although we might alternatively suggest that it is the last in a series of loose sheets (see below). If we compare this manuscript to one of the shorter magical papyrus rolls—for example, *GEMF* 72 (= *PGM* VIII), a Greek formulary featuring three columns of text on a surface H. 28 x W. 49 cm—we can observe certain parallels, and we may note that no scholar has questioned whether this is a roll, perhaps because of its magical content, considered unsurprising for this format; if the *Didache* manuscript had been instead a magical text, the problem of how to classify it might never have arisen. The comparison is not perfect: *GEMF* 72 contains a complete text, while the roll of *Didache* begins *in medias res*; *GEMF* 72 presents *kollēseis*, while the *Didache* is a single sheet. However, the size and layout of the sheets are very similar.

On the other hand, from the paleographical point of view, the *Didache* papyrus has been dated to the fifth century. We find this hand, however, very close to the hand of *GEMF* 55 (= *PGM* III), a bilingual Greek-Old Coptic magical handbook on papyrus, kept in the Louvre in Paris, which has been instead dated to the third to fourth century, likewise on paleographical grounds.⁵⁷ Because the *Didache* roll is Coptic it tends to be dated later, and because it is Christian it cannot be a roll. These are the types of prejudices that sometimes bias the study of these artifacts.

53. Cf. the discussion of *GEMF* 31 (= *PGM* I) and 30 (= *PGM* II + VI) below in *Rolls* for examples of even wider *kollēmata*.

54. Jones and Mirecki 1994, 47–87; for previous editions and discussion on the format, see pp. 70–83.

55. Carlig 2020, 221–223.

56. Carlig compares *P Vat.* Gr. 11, for which see Bastianini 2011.

57. Nodar (Chapter 3 in this volume), describes the first Greek hand of *GEMF* 55 (= *PGM* III) as featuring some characteristics of the Biblical Majuscule canon as described by Cavallo (1967, 4–10).

We do not exclude the idea that there were preferences in the choice not only of book format but also of writing style, papyrus quality, and so on, dependent on genre; rather, our goal here is to explore scribal practice independent of genre, and try to understand the influence of scribal cultures, technologies, and traditions on the use of formats, assuming that there must have been a great deal of contamination between such norms throughout history.⁵⁸

5. Notes on Formats

5.1. Rolls

Given the focus in scholarly literature on the roll-to-codex shift, the study of the roll format's survival after the emergence of the codex has been somewhat neglected.⁵⁹ The use of the roll for Christian biblical and patristic texts is sometimes connected to secondary use or reuse, explained as opportunistic rather than planned,⁶⁰ although there are some examples of the deliberate use of previously unused rolls.⁶¹ The use of the horizontal roll among Christians became standard for the communications of the patriarchate of Alexandria, notably the Festal Letters circulated by the Bishop of Alexandria throughout Christian communities in Egypt, which were written perfoliatedly on horizontal rolls with distinctively wide columns until as late as the eighth century.⁶² Nonetheless, the use of rolls among magical formularies declined markedly after the third century, and there are very few examples after the fifth. This indicates that magical formularies are not consciously archaizing in their formats, as we might be tempted to assume; rather, they follow general trends in Egyptian book production.

The majority of the longest surviving rolls, *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM* xiv, W. 500 cm), *GEMF* 68 (= *PGM* XXXVI, W. 244 cm), and *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII,

58. Cf. Fournet forthcoming.

59. This is gradually being rectified; see Carlig 2019, 2020; Stroppa 2013, 2020; Nocchi Macedo 2018; Luijendijk 2011; Torallas Tovar 2021.

60. Stroppa 2013; 2022. Examples include *P.Mich.* XVIII 763, a letter or homily of the 2nd–3rd cent. CE, and P.IFAO gr. inv. 379 + Leiden, RMO, F 1949/78, a Panopolitan roll of Greek accounts dated to 275–299 CE (TM 130205) that bears on the verso the Coptic (Akhmimic) *Asceticon* of Isaiah, dated slightly later than the first text (TM 107888); cf. the comments of Carlig (2020, 217–218).

61. E.g., *P.Oxy.* LXV 4443; TM 61923 (1st–2nd cent.), a copy of the Book of Esther; *P.Oxy.* LXIX 4706 (2nd–3rd cent.), containing the *Shepherd of Hermas*, and BL Or 9271 (discussed above), containing the end of *Didache* in Coptic.

62. The last we have is dated to the eighth century. On Festal Letters on papyrus, see Camplani and Martin 2000; Camplani 2003, 25–34. Bastianini and Cavallo 2011; Konstantinidou 2019; Stroppa 2022.

W. 200 cm), would seem to represent something like working handbooks; all of them possess a core group of texts, laid out more or less regularly on the recto, alongside one or more quite differently formatted texts, occupying the verso and at times blank spaces on the recto.⁶³ On *GEMF* 16, dozens of short prescriptions and notes are written on the upper part of the verso, and in the blank spaces below columns, presumably to allow them to be consulted along with the longer recipes, while *GEMF* 74 has recipes added in different hands on the verso. Many rolls, however, are considerably smaller than these; of the 18 surviving magical rolls that we can assume to be reasonably complete, the narrowest are ca. 30 cm wide, and the median width is 78.9 cm.

A few rolls are worth discussing in detail here because of their unusual characteristics. Among these is *GEMF* 2 (= *PGM* CXVII), dated to the first century BCE, and therefore one of the earliest Greek-language formularies from Egypt; perhaps acquired in Aswan, it indicates the very early adoption of Greek-language magic in Upper Egypt. Although it is extremely fragmentary, enough remains of 23 columns that we can estimate that it would have been at least four meters long, making it the longest surviving purely Greek formulary, and the second-longest surviving formulary in the form of a roll overall in the corpus. The column widths (35 letters, ca. 13 cm) make it comparable in format to later rolls, as does the use of *ekthesis*, blank spaces, and enlarged capitals to individuate recipes and recipe sections, and the abbreviation Δ for the generic name marker δ(ε)ῖ(να) (“so-and-so”).⁶⁴ Similar features may be observed in the other manuscripts—all rolls—dating to the first centuries BCE or CE, for which we may observe more diverse geographical origins: the Faiyum, Herakleopolis, or Oxyrhynchus.⁶⁵ Rather than tentative experiments in a new genre, these manuscripts already appear to be confident creations, drawing upon scribal techniques both particular to magical texts and non-genre specific.

A different model of the magical roll may be found in two of the bilingual Demotic-Greek manuscripts of the Theban Magical Library, *GEMF* 17 (= *PDM*

63. On *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM* XIV), see Dieleman 2005, 35–40; Dosoo, Chapter 5 in this volume; on *GEMF* 74 (= *PDM* VII), see Martín Hernández 2015, 2018.

64. For a description of this manuscript, see the introduction to *GEMF* 2 edited by Colomo and Gerhardt in *GEMF*.

65. *GEMF* 4 (= *PGM* CXXXII; 33 cm wide (complete), 1st cent. BCE–1st cent. CE, Abusir), *GEMF* 3 (= *PGM* XX; ≥10 cm wide (fragmentary), 1st cent. BCE–1st cent. CE, Faiyum?); *GEMF* 5 + 6 (= *PGM* LII + *P.Oxy.* LXV 4468; ≥39 cm wide, 1st cent. CE, Oxyrhynchus); *GEMF* 7 (= *PGM* CIII; ≥7 cm wide, 1st cent. CE). For a discussion of column widths, see n. 42.

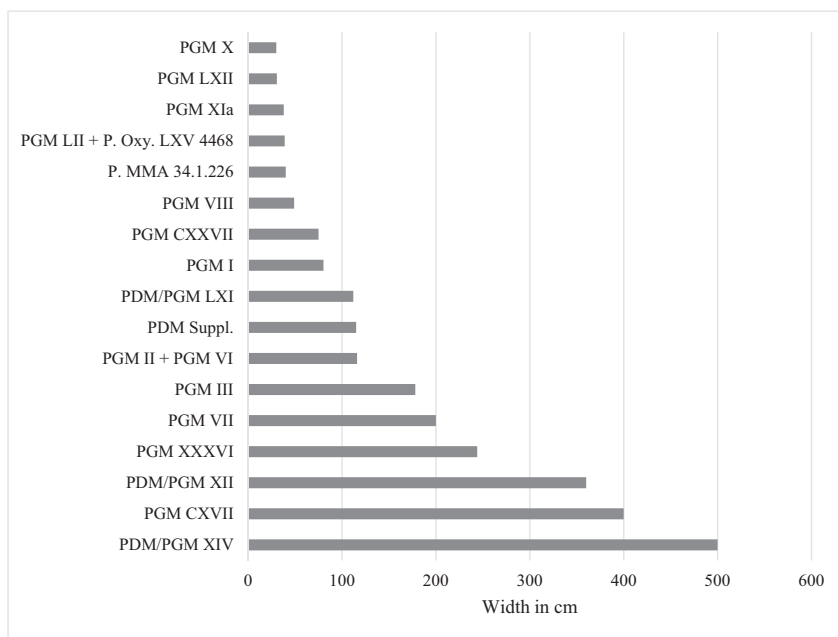


Fig. 2.5. Widths of magical horizontal rolls.

Suppl.) and *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM* XIV). While they share certain characteristics in common with *GEMF* 15 (= *PDM* XII)—the mixing of Greek, Demotic, and Hieratic, and the use of a Coptic cipher alphabet—they also show clear differences. As discussed above, *GEMF* 15 is largely Greek, and adopts a Greek left-to-right reading order. By contrast, *GEMF* 17 and *GEMF* 16 are written almost entirely in Demotic, and follow the norms of an Egyptian literary text of the Roman period,⁶⁶ with the entire recto of *GEMF* 17, and most of the recto of *GEMF* 16, being written right to left within frames ruled by horizontal margin lines and vertical *intercolumnia* lines, and using red ink to mark recipe and section headings, as well as certain other words, such as numerals, and, in *GEMF* 16, verse points.⁶⁷ Both texts abandon this model on the verso, instead

66. Tait 1986; Parkinson and Quirke 1995, 38–48; Dieleman 2011, 90–91.

67. For a discussion of the formal features of the Demotic magical papyri and their position within the older tradition, see Dieleman 2011, 90–91 and *passim*; cf. the discussion of the use of frames and other features in Dosoo, Chapter 5 in this volume. Note that the first lines in *PDM* xiv generally begin above, rather than below, the upper margin lines of the frames.

writing shorter texts on the upper parts of the rolls almost entirely without red ink. The fact that all three bilingual rolls display such otherwise similar features suggests that, although they are likely the products of different copyists, they were produced according to similar models and techniques, in the same or a similar environment. But while we might be tempted to see a shift from an Egyptian to a Greek model of manuscripts, the internal evidence of the manuscripts suggest that *GEMF* 16 is the latest of the three; the other two vary in their use of glosses, sometimes writing the Greek in right-to-left groups matching the Demotic writing below, at other times writing the Greek consistently in the left-to-right order consistently adopted in *GEMF* 16.⁶⁸ All three show other signs of Greek influence in at least some of their texts, from the use of originally Greek *voces magicae* and the Greek vowels, to the presence of the Greek abbreviation Δ in two of them.⁶⁹

The last of the major bilingual rolls, *GEMF* 18 (= *PDM* LXI; ≥ 112 cm wide, second–third century CE), is quite distinctive; there are no indications in its collection history that it belonged to the Theban Magical Library, and its hand is rather different from that of the other texts.⁷⁰ The recto is inscribed with eight columns, largely in Demotic, but with some Greek inserted into several of the columns. The verso has a further two columns, largely written in Demotic, inscribed at 180° to the recto, on the far left, and four Greek columns, written in the same orientation as the recto text, the last of which seems to be written in a different hand. The reading order, and hence the model adopted for the manuscript, is difficult to determine; on the verso, Greek columns 1–2 are part of a single recipe, so that we can be certain that these were intended to be read left to right. By contrast, the recto columns all seem to contain separate recipes, so that the text could have been written, and hence read, in either direction,⁷¹ although the narrow column 3, whose left margin curves around the right margin of column 4, and whose title, written in red ink, seems to extend above column 4, may imply that the text was written left to right, in the same Greek order adapted by *GEMF* 15. Like *GEMF* 15, *GEMF* 18 does not use frames to organize the Demotic text, although it does use red ink, including in one of the Greek titles of the recto (col. 4, l. 17=59), a unique occurrence among Greek-language texts in the corpus.

68. Johnson 1975, 49–50; Dieleman 2005, 35.

69. Dieleman 2010b; Dieleman 2011; Dosoo, Chapter 5 in this volume.

70. On the unknown provenance of this text, see Dosoo 2016, 268.

71. Ritner (in Betz, *GMPT*, 286–287) treats the first two columns as a single recipe, but they are too fragmentary for any conclusions to be drawn. See also Ritner 1986, 95, on column 2.

A distinctive type of roll may be found in another subarchive of the Theban Magical Archive, *GEMF* 31 (= *PGM* I) and *GEMF* 30 (= *PGM* II + VI), both dating to the second or third century CE, and with similar, though not identical, hands. They show the remarkable, and, in this corpus, otherwise unattested, characteristic of being without *kollēseis* despite their respective widths of 80.2 and 116 cm.⁷² *Kollēsis* is an artifact of the construction of the papyrus rolls, which were created by gluing together smaller sheets of papyri (*kollēmata*). According to the most detailed description, found in Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, these *kollēmata* were ca. 11–44 cm wide, with greater quality being associated with greater *kollēma* width.⁷³ William Johnson's study of *kollēma* size in literary texts from Oxyrhynchus (first century BCE–second century CE) found that most papyri had *kollēseis* ca 12–23 cm.⁷⁴ It is tempting to connect these very wide *kollēmata* to the highest grade mentioned by Pliny—the *macrocollum* (1 cubit = 44.4 cm wide)—yet even this is significantly smaller than our examples. While a few other manuscripts have wide *kollēmata*, these are generally closer to the ca. 40 cm of Pliny's *macrocollum*. There are only a few clear material parallels to our two rolls: one is a draft of an imperial rescript dated to 551 CE in the form of a *rotulus* (*P.Cair.Masp.* I 67025), which is 93 cm tall and apparently without *kollēsis*,⁷⁵ while the reconstructed rolls used to create the codices of the Nag Hammadi library have *kollēmata* widths of up to 162.5 cm.⁷⁶ The fact that such long *kollēmata* are best attested among sheets used to produce codices has led Marilena Maniaci to suggest that they may have been produced specifically for this purpose.⁷⁷

5.2. *Rotuli* (Vertical Rolls)

As mentioned above, we can see a shift from horizontal to vertical roll, from *volumen* to *rotulus*, in magical handbooks in the fifth century (see Fig. 2.3).

72. We owe this information to Marius Gerhardt and Myriam Krutzsch (Berlin). For the concept of subarchives, see Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume.

73. *Nat. Hist.* 13.80; see also Cicero, *ad Att.* 13.25.3 and 16.3.1.

74. Johnson 2004, 89–91. Turner (1977, 44) describes this 44.4-cm-long sheet as the largest he knows.

75. Fournet 2018, 614. The other copy, *P.Cair.Masp.* I 67024, has one *kollēsis*, and so it is made out of two sheets, each longer than 40 cm.

76. See the description of *NHC* II online at Paola Buzi (principal investigator), *PATHs: An Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature*, Version 1.18.4 <https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/manuscripts/663> (accessed June 4, 2020). We would like to thank Nathan Carlig for providing us with this reference.

77. In Bausi 2015, 79.

The *rotulus* was originally, and primarily, used for official documents, but its use soon spread to private documents.⁷⁸ The earliest examples of documents in the form of *rotuli* appear in the fourth century,⁷⁹ but they seem to have become more common, and to have largely replaced the horizontal roll in the fifth and sixth centuries.⁸⁰ However, in addition to the Festal Letters mentioned above,⁸¹ there are examples of petitions and official reports dating to the fifth and sixth centuries CE still on horizontal rolls.⁸²

After its introduction in administrative and private documents, the *rotulus* was quickly adopted for literary and Christian texts, with a few early fourth- and fifth-century examples, and greater numbers from the sixth century on.⁸³ In some cases, *rotuli* used for administrative purposes were reused on the verso for literary texts: an example is *P.Col.* VIII 192 (TM 61322; sixth century CE), the *Asceticon* of Isaiah of Scetis copied on the verso of a land sale contract.⁸⁴ As the editors point out, this is a somewhat unusual format for a literary text, and we might speculate that such reuses of documentary texts played a role in the initial adoption of the *rotulus* for literary texts. We also find the *rotulus* used for other technical genres alongside magic; two (perhaps three) *rotuli* belong to an archive of late Coptic alchemical and medical texts dating to the ninth or tenth centuries.⁸⁵

As mentioned above, while the archetypal *rotulus* was about 30 cm wide, there are many examples of narrower exemplars, from approximately

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78. See, e.g., the 6th-cent. imperial rescripts mentioned in n. 75, above; the Testament of Abraham of Hermonthis (*P.Lond.* I 77, TM 39851; 7th cent. CE; 111.8 x 35.5 cm; Turner 1978, 47); *P.Lond.* I 113.1, a record of a lawsuit from the Arsinoite nome (TM 41019; ca. 197 x 30 cm); cf. Fournet forthcoming.
79. See *POxy.* XXVII 2474 (TM 30460) from the late 3rd cent., the will of a Roman citizen (Turner 1978, 44; it is not clear if this is a re-use of the verso of a roll of accounts, or vice versa); *BGU* I 316 (TM 20204), a 359 CE slave sale on a vertical roll with three *kollēseis* (68 x 27 cm) (Turner 1978, 41; Crisci 1996 61–63, pl. 39).
80. Fournet 2009.
81. See Torallas Tovar 2021.
82. E.g., *P.Leiden* Z (SB XX 14606; W 30 x H 75 cm), the petition of the bishop of Syene to the emperor (ca. 425–430 CE), written in three columns along the papyrus fibers (Feissel and Worp 1988, 97–111); *P.Cair.Masp.* III 67283 (H. 30.5 x W. 190 cm), an early 6th cent. (before 547 CE) report to the Empress Theodora sent by the inhabitants of Aphrodito.
83. An early example is *P.CtYBR* inv. 1779 (TM 108426), a vertical papyrus roll of the 4th–5th cent. (H. 67 x W. 26 cm) containing Psalms 76–77 in Coptic, discussed in Stroppa 2013, 353.
84. *P.Col.* VIII 244, written across the fibers on the recto. The verso text is written perfibrally. The preserved part is H. 50 x W. 30 cm.
85. These are Bodl.MSS.Copt. (P) a.2, Bodl.MSS.Copt. (P) a.3, 45, and P.Louvre inv. 12530 (TM 383715; Richter 2014, n. 3, with image), a 9 cm wide and 90 cm long papyrus *rotulus*. The codex is Bodl. MS.Copt. (P) a.1 (codex). For the possibility that these texts belong to an archive, see Richter 2014, 167–168; 2015b, 165–166. Also worth mentioning is another medical *rotulus*, P.IFAO Copte inv. 441–448 (TM 108434, PATHs CLM 1156; Chassinat 1921).

9–15 cm wide, forming a parallel to the phenomenon of short rolls.⁸⁶ These are abundantly attested among later magical manuscripts, but there are also literary examples.⁸⁷ Since some of these are shorter than 30 cm tall, it may be tempting to classify them as sheets rather than *rotuli*, but their tall, narrow format, and their usually *transversa charta* writing suggests that they derive from the *rotulus* model.

There are over thirty examples of magical formularies in the form of *rotuli* from Egypt dating to between the fifth and eleventh centuries, so we may consider it as a preferred format in this period that coexisted alongside the codex.⁸⁸ The earliest surviving instance may be found on the verso of the horizontal roll *GEMF* 68 (= *PGM* XXXVI, fourth century CE) which was turned 90° and then used as a *rotulus*, but two other early examples may be found in the archive known as the Multilingual Magical Library, dating to the fifth or sixth century.⁸⁹ The first of these, *GEMF* 82 (= *PGM* CXXIII; fifth century CE), is 86 cm tall, but only measures 14 wide, belonging to the category of narrow *rotuli*.⁹⁰ Though not complete, *GEMF* 83 (= *PGM* CXXIV) should likely be understood as having a similar format; its surviving dimensions are H. 24 cm and W. 14.7 cm. A third well-preserved manuscript from this archive (*P.Mil. Vogl.* Copt. 16; TM 102252) is the form of a miniature codex, ca. 9 cm square.

The heights of the *rotuli* with magical contents vary considerably (see Table 2.1); the shortest are only ca. 23 cm high, while the tallest are approximately 2 m. The longest include the copy of the *Testament of Solomon* with which this discussion began (*P.Rain.Cent.* 39), 28 cm wide, and reconstructed to have been between 1.5 and 2 m long, as well as *P.Lond.Copt.* 1008 (TM 98061; sixth–seventh century CE), a narrow (13.5 cm) but very tall (195.8 cm) *rotulus* containing a long protective prayer to a being named Baktiotha. The median height for the corpus of *rotuli* is 50.4 cm, and, interestingly, width and height are only somewhat correlated (there are some relatively broad but short *rotuli*,⁹¹

86. See Johnson 2004, 88–89, on the standard width of papyrus sheets.

87. E.g., P.CtYBR inv. 4995 (TM 108323), a *rotulus* of the 4th–5th cent. (12 x 32 cm) containing the Book of Jubilees on the verso of a private letter; see Crislip 2003; Stroppa 2013, 353.

88. On *rotuli* in magic, cf. de Haro Sanchez 2017, 43–44.

89. On the Multilingual Library, see Dosoo 2014, 166. See also Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume. This library consists of *PGM* CXXIII and CXXIV, and *P.Mil. Vogl.* Copt. 16, as well as numerous fragments in Greek and Aramaic. For discussions and publications of these texts see Bresciani et al. 1973; Daniel and Maltomini 1992, *SM* II, 231–268.

90. Daniel and Maltomini 1992, vol. 2, 232–252. This text is currently being reedited by Maltomini as *GEMF* 82.

91. E.g., London Hay 10376 (H. 40.3 x W. 23.9 cm; 6th–7th cent. CE); British Library MS Or 5525 (H. 39 x W. 22.7 cm; 9th–11th cent. CE); cf. O'Connell, forthcoming.

as well as some very narrow tall *rotuli*⁹²), so that the median height of rolls narrower than 20 cm is 45 cm, while that of *rotuli* wider than 20 cm is 69.5 cm.

As we have already seen, there are often correlations of format within archives and subarchives—as in the Greek and bilingual rolls and codices of the Theban Magical Library and the *rotuli* of the Multilingual Library—and similar observations could be made about the rolls of the Hermonthis Archive.⁹³ We see similarly shared patterns among the *rotuli* of some of the later, predominantly Coptic-language archives: the British Museum Portfolio consists of four *rotuli* written in a single hand on papyrus, varying from 16.5 to 24 cm in width, and 59 to 163 cm in height, all dating to ca. 600 CE.⁹⁴ The London Hay Collection, likely written by two hands,⁹⁵ are more diverse in form, dating to the sixth or seventh century. Five of its seven manuscripts are *rotuli*, ranging widely from 6 to 23 cm in width and 15 to 65 cm in height; the remaining two manuscripts are small sheets.⁹⁶ The most coherent group of magical *rotuli* can perhaps be found in the Berlin Library, a group of 20 manuscripts and numerous fragments dating to the seventh or eighth century. While 14 of its manuscripts are sheets, discussed in more depth below, six are *rotuli*. Of these, five are very similar in format: narrow vertical rolls, 6.5 to 9 cm in width and 36 to 50.4 cm in height. The similarity is all the more striking given that two are written on papyrus, and two on parchment, and that one is alchemical rather than magical in content. The sixth *rotulus*, 23.4 cm wide and originally ca. 70 cm in height, seems to belong to a different model.⁹⁷

5.3. Codices

The earliest, though fragmentary, codex in our corpus dates to the second or third century, and the format continued to thrive into the Middle Ages and

92. E.g., British Library MS Or 6796 (1–3) (H. 162.9 x W. 18 cm; 6th–7th cent. CE) British Library MS Or 5987 (H. 195.8 x W. 13.6 cm; 6th–7th cent. CE).

93. On the Hermonthis Archive, see Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume.

94. On the Portfolio, see Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume.

95. Frankfurter in Meyer and Smith 1999, 259 claims that all the manuscripts were written by a single hand. The forthcoming edition of this group by Michael Zellmann-Rohrer distinguishes between hands 1a, 1b (perhaps, but not necessarily, identical to 1a), and 2.

96. This diversity may be due in part to the material upon which it is written—leather—whose production from stretched animal skins, like that of parchment, would result in less regular sizes than papyrus or paper, and thus in numerous offcuts of various sizes. Many parchment sheets demonstrate odd shapes, perhaps the result of the use of by-products of the fabrication of more regularly shaped sheets.

97. Narrow *rotuli*: P.Berol. inv. 8314 (H. 50.4 x W. 7.6 cm, parchment), 8315 (H. 36.8 x W. 8.1 cm, parchment), 8316 (H. 42 x W. 9 cm, papyrus), 8319 (H. 31.5 x W. 11 cm, papyrus), 8323 (H. 20.8 x W. 6.5 cm, papyrus); broad *rotulus*: P.Berol. inv. 8318 (H. 48.3 x W. 23.4 cm, papyrus).

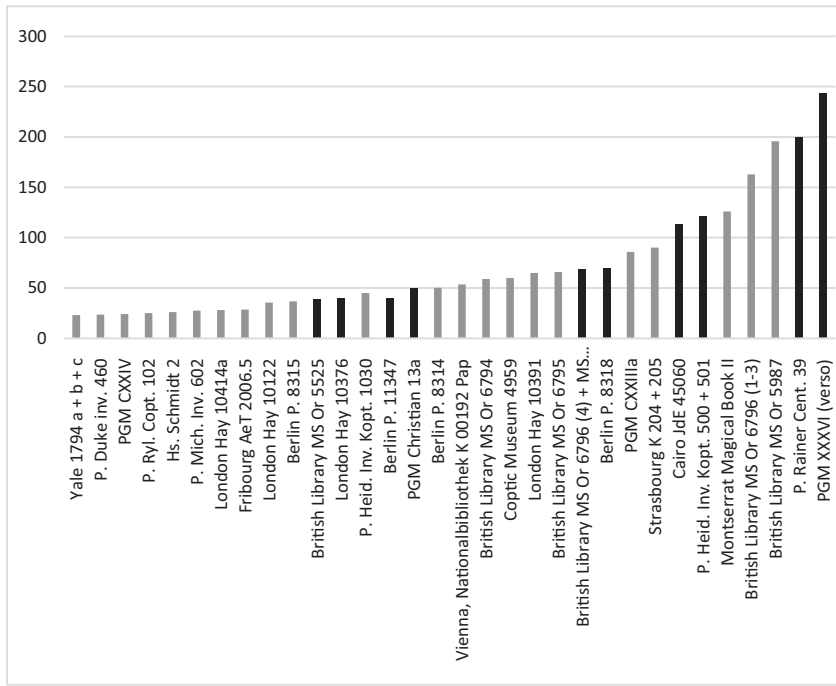


Fig. 2.6. Heights of rotuli. Grey bars indicate “narrow” rotuli (under 20 cm in width), while black bars indicate “broad” rotuli (over 20 cm in width).

beyond in the realm of magic. As we have seen, our latest horizontal rolls date to the fifth or sixth century, while a subsequent development brought the *rotulus* into competition with the codex for recording magical formularies from the fifth century onwards. Evidently, copyists of magical formularies had different options in the choice of format, and their choice was probably motivated by factors such as their training, cultural background, and resources.

Was the roll-to-codex shift in magical texts part of the larger shift in book formats, or was it motivated by different factors? The adoption of the codex has been explained by Bagnall in connection with the “privatization” of magical practice.⁹⁸ The persistent use of the roll in the fourth century could then be explained as a remnant of temple practice—a kind of conservatism. However, the contents of these rolls do not support this hypothesis: the texts of the longest fourth-century roll, *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII), do not seem to be clearly

⁹⁸ Bagnall 2009, 86.

connected to traditional temple practice, but are instead largely Hellenizing;⁹⁹ its *Homēromanteion* and content related to the context of a symposium might be imagined to point to public performance or reading, a function for which the roll may have been more suited,¹⁰⁰ but the same cannot be said for *GEMF* 68 (= *PGM* XXXVI), the other prominent fourth-century example. Rather, the roll seems simply to have remained one possible, though less-favored, format for formularies in the fourth century.

The use of the codex is easier to explain: the earliest examples of Greco-Egyptian magical formularies seem already to be intended for private use, and so the codex—highly portable, more efficient in its use of papyrus surface, possessing protective covers, and so on—would have been an ideal format, much as it was for alchemy, medicine, and other technical texts.¹⁰¹ Its adoption in this genre shows a similar pattern to that in other literary genres:¹⁰² it appeared in the second century, became dominant in the fourth, and coexisted with the *rotulus* from the fifth.

Papyrus Codices

The earliest magical codex is *GEMF* 21 (= P.Duke inv. 729), dated to the end of the second or beginning of the third century.¹⁰³ Although it is only a fragment, a few of its characteristics can be inferred. The margins are partially preserved, so we can estimate a page of H. 15 x W. 11 cm (ratio 1:0.73, Turner Group 9, Aberrant 1).¹⁰⁴ As we found in earlier rolls, the recipes are subdivided by *paragraphoi*, already demonstrating the page layout typical

99. See Martín Hernández and Gordon, Chapter 7 in this volume.

100. For the roll and public reading, see Johnson 2000.

101. To the alchemical codices mentioned below, we may add the recently published codex intended for business education, including mathematics, metrology and model contracts, published by Bagnall and Jones 2019. It is a single-quire codex with similar format and measures as the ones presented here.

102. A search for 'codex' and 'magic' in the LDAB produces 60 hits. However, many of these are biblical miniature codices considered protective amulets, and thus not useful for our study. Many of the hits also produce fragments which are not clearly codex folios, but could be sheets (P.Berol. inv. 17202, for which see Brashear and Kotansky 2002; SB 22 15230; SM II 99; P.Köln inv. 20826). Other fragments are not clearly magical formularies, such as *PKellis G* II 93 or *PAnt.* III 121, or are fragments of codices of magical formularies, but too small to determine their format, such as SB 15 15233 or *PLand.* V 87 (= *PGM* LVIII). This leaves us with a small but interesting set of Greek and Coptic codices.

103. Jordan 2006.

104. Turner 1977, 22, 25.

of Greek magical texts. It is perhaps risky to draw too many conclusions from a small fragment and a reconstructed page, but we may note that early literary codices are generally taller and narrower than this manuscript; this manuscript is reminiscent of early parchment codices, which tend to be more square.¹⁰⁵

The earliest completely—or almost completely—preserved papyrus codices containing Greek magical formularies appear in the fourth century. Among these are the three strictly magical codices of the Theban Magical Library, which we analyze here along with the two alchemical codices from the same library, one of which contains a loose magical sheet (*GEMF* 59 = *PGM* Va); together with *GEMF* 60 (= *PGM* XIII), which is predominantly written in the same hand, these last three manuscripts constitute a subarchive that we refer to as the “alchemical group” (Table 2.1).¹⁰⁶

The codices are quite diverse in length, from the short 16-page *GEMF* 58 (= *PGM* V), to the much longer 72-page *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV), with both *GEMF* 60 (= *PGM* XIII) and *P.Holm.* presenting an intermediate 32 and 30 pages respectively. Although the five codices are assigned to four separate groups by Turner, they are all quite similar in format, 27–30.5 cm in height; *PGM* XIII and the alchemical codices are on the broader size (W. 16–17 cm), while the other two magical codices are narrower (12–13 cm). Similar formats, with heights of about 30 cm and widths of about 15 cm, are known from other fourth-century codices, such as the Nag Hammadi manuscripts, the abovementioned Hanna Gospel Codex, and four of the Bodmer codices, including the Bodmer Menander (TM 61594).¹⁰⁷ The more elongated *PGM* IV and V are somewhat closer to codex Rahlfs 967¹⁰⁸ (late second–mid-third century; H. 34.4 x W. 12.9, ratio 1:0.38), containing portions of the Septuagint, which is larger but presents similar proportions.¹⁰⁹

These five complete examples (Table 2.2) provide us with an excellent opportunity to examine the manufacture of fourth-century magical codices.

105. Like the short roll and narrow *rotulus*, the pages of this codex would probably have been produced by cutting in half the ca. 30 cm height of a standard papyrus sheet; cf. Turner 1978, 50–53.

106. Cf. Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume.

107. Turner Group 8, 1977, 20; cf. Nongbri 2018, 198–202.

108. TM 61933; LDAB 3090; 34.4 x 25.4 cm, Group 8, Aberrant 1 (Turner 1977, 21)

109. M. V. Spottorno in Torallas Tovar and Worp 2014, 97–107.

Table 2.1. Codices of the Theban Magical Library; the codices whose names are underlined are largely written in the same hand

Codex name	Contents	GEMF	TM no.	Turner group ¹	Bifolios / pages ²	Measurements (H x W, cm)	Ratio H:W
PGM IV	Magical	57	64343	8 ab. 1	18/72	30.5 x 13	1:0.43
PGM V	Magical	58	64368	8, ab. 1	4/16	28 x 12	1:0.43
<u>PGM XIII</u>	Magical	60	64446	7	8/32	27 x 16	1:0.59
<u>P. Leid. X</u>	Alchemical	-	61300	5	10/40 ³	30 x 17	1:0.56
<u>P. Holm.</u>	Alchemical	59	64429	6	7/28 ⁴	30 x 16.5	1:0.55
+ <u>PGM Va</u>	+ magical				+ 1 sheet		

¹Turner 1977, 59 (and *passim*) includes the five codices in his Typology, and give them the signums: **M1**, **M2**, **M3**, **M4**, **M5** (the latter two are the alchemical codices).

²The number given here is the original page count as far as can be reconstructed; Note that not all these pages are complete or survive. Only 66 of *PGM IV*'s 72 pages have writing, the last two pages of *PGM V* are lost, as are the first two pages of *PGM XIII*, whose final five pages are likewise blank; the first 4 and final 10 folia of *P. Leid. X*, and the first and last bifolios of *P. Holm.* are also blank.

³We do not have access to images of all 40 pages, so we rely here on the description by Halleux 1981, 6–7, which accords with the nature of the 8 written folia. We might also speculate as to whether there were actually fewer bifolios, so that the codex conformed to an 8-bifolio (16 folios = 32 pages) format, found also in *PGM XIII* and *P. Holm.*

⁴See Halleux 1981, 7, who believes it was bound before being written.

The information they give us must be interpreted with some caution, since they all come from a single archive, and thus may provide only a partial image of book production. All five are single-quire codices, produced by stacking sheets of papyrus and folding them in the middle.¹¹⁰ Hugo Ibscher proposes that all papyrus codices up to the third century are single-quire codices, and that it was only from the fourth century that they began to be composed in more than one quire.¹¹¹ Multi-quire codices did not replace single-quire codices, however; virtually all surviving magical codices, together with a good number of other papyrus codices from the fourth century, such as those from the Nag Hammadi¹¹² and Bodmer collections,¹¹³ have a single-quire composition. The use of single-quire codices beyond the fourth century has also been taken as a sign that the codex was originally used as a notebook, for example, in school

110. See Kenyon 1933, vol. 1, 10–11.

111. Ibscher 1937.

112. Most, but not all, of the Nag Hammadi codices are single-quire codices; see Robinson 1975; Szirmai 1999, 7–14; Nongbri 2018, 29.

113. Nongbri 2018.

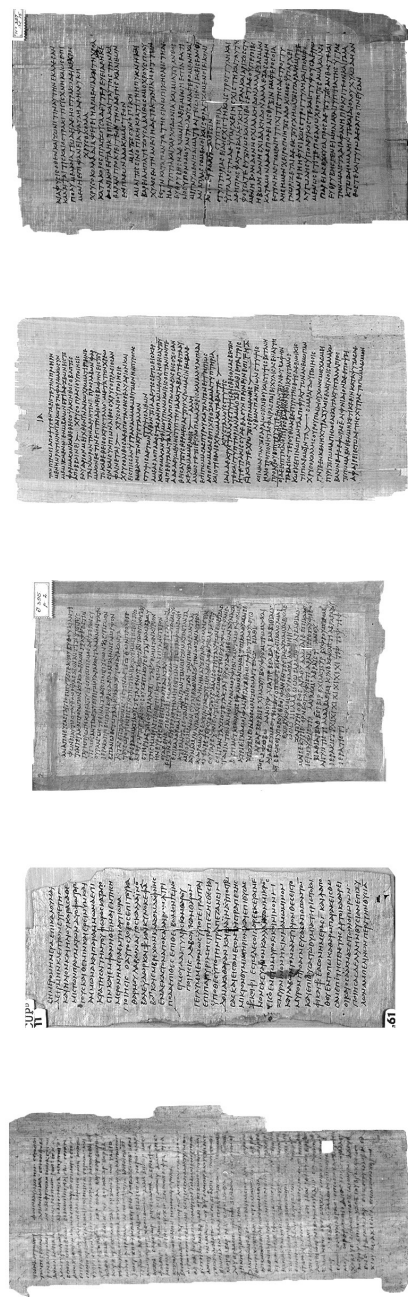


Fig. 2.7. Codices of the Theban Magical library: chosen pages as sample of the five codices at scale: in the following order: PGM IV, PGM V, PGM XIII, *P.Leid. X*, and *P.Holm*.

environments, rather than a finished book, but this is not obviously true of any of the Theban Library examples.¹¹⁴

Two different constructions are typically used for single-quire codices.¹¹⁵ The sheets can be stacked so that the same fiber pattern (horizontal or vertical) always faces upwards, with the result that when the codex is opened, facing pages present a contrasting fiber orientation, except for in the middle of the book. Alternatively, the sheets of papyrus might be stacked so that the pattern alternates, and when folded facing pages present the same fiber pattern. The former disposition—the identical stacking pattern—is for the most part the case for the five codices of the Theban Library. With the exception of *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV), the remaining four were formed from sheets stacked with their vertical fibers outward, so that the facing pages present the pattern $\rightarrow\downarrow$ in their first halves, and $\downarrow\rightarrow$ in the second halves.¹¹⁶ These are thus created in the same fashion as the Bodmer Menander codex, which, though longer than these codices (64 pages), likewise had its sheets stacked with vertical fibers outward, apparently the most common pattern.¹¹⁷ *GEMF* 57 is more complex. Here the majority of the sheets were stacked in the opposite direction, horizontal fibers outward, thus presenting the pattern $\rightarrow\downarrow$ for the facing pages in the first half and $\downarrow\rightarrow$ in the second; the second through sixth bifolios (corresponding to pages 2–6 and 31–35, in gray in Table 2.2), however, were stacked with their vertical fibers outward instead.

In addition to these striking similarities of construction, the codices show other parallels in their format. The three texts of the alchemical group all leave their first folio blank, likely as a protective “cover”; their last folios are likewise blank, but this is less striking, since all have several blank pages at their ends. *GEMF* 57 had a blank first folio (although a brief text was later added to the top of the second page),¹¹⁸ and we might speculate that this was also true of *GEMF* 58 (= *PGM* V), although this hypothetical blank bifolio

114. Cf. Van Haelst in Carlini 1991, 108, n. 10. For a full survey on the subject, see Robinson 1978 and Turner 1977, 51–55, 61.

115. Described in Nongbri, 2018, 27, where he also points out that in some single-quire codices the bifolios were stacked in alternating order, so that the facing pages would present the same fiber pattern, more pleasing to the eyes.

116. For *PGM* XIII, see the description in Daniel 1991, x–xi; and Turner 1977, 67–68, for the pattern of the fiber direction.

117. Turner, 1977, 64–65; on the Menander codex, see Turner, 1977, 57.

118. *GEMF* 57 (= *PGM* IV) 1–4.

→	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	
↓	→	→	→	→	→	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
↓	→	→	→	→	→	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	
→	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	
36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	

↓	→	↓	→	↓	→	↓	→		→	↓	→	↓	→	↓	Lost
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13	14	15/16

$$\begin{array}{cccccccccccccccc|cccccccccccccccc} \downarrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow & \rightarrow & || & \rightarrow & \downarrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow & \rightarrow & \downarrow \\ 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 & 8 & 9 & 10 & 11 & 12 & 13 & 14 & & 15 & 16 & 17 & 18 & 19 & 20 & 21 & 22 & 23 & 24 & 25 & 26 & 27 & 28 & 29 & 30 \end{array}$$

$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	$\downarrow$	$\rightarrow$	
28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	

¹We have confirmed the patterns of fibers in pages 2-27, 4-25, 6-23, 8-21, 10-19, and 12-17.

An interesting question is the order in which writing and binding occurred: were the texts first written on unbound sheets, or were the codices

bound and trimmed before being inscribed? All three manuscripts of the alchemical group make use of catchwords, that is, words repeated on the last line of one page and the first line of the next, which would have facilitated checking page order when binding sheets.¹¹⁹ Though less decisive, *P.Holm.* also presents page numbers, the only one of the five manuscripts to demonstrate this feature; these numbers, written in the upper margin, were clearly inscribed before the texts.¹²⁰ Evidence for this is found on page 16 (see Figure 2.8), where the running text of the first line overlaps with the number, and on the page numbered 28, which is otherwise empty.

Against such possible indications that these codices were written before being bound, there are a few arguments that might imply the opposite. Two of these codices contain significant numbers of blank pages at their ends: five for *GEMF* 60 (= *PGM* XIII), ten for *P.Leid.* X. This might support Robert Halleux's suggestion that the alchemical codices were bound before being written.¹²¹

GEMF 58 (= *PGM* V) presents no indications of its writing and binding order, while *PGM* IV presents a more complex case. The internal pages of the codex have a much narrower column/writing surface than the pages on the external sections, both at the beginning and the end.¹²² This is due to the fact that when folding a quire composed of a large number of bifolia (here 36) and then trimming the edges so that they preserve a uniform profile, the central pages are necessarily narrower than the external ones, allowing less space for writing.¹²³ This might imply, a priori, binding before writing. But it is also possible, though less plausible, in our opinion, that the codex's creator planned for this narrowing, so that either the sheets were cut before writing with gradually decreasing width, or that the columns widths themselves were

119. Although the use is not consistent; in *P.Holm.*, catchwords appear in pp. 2/3, 9/10, 10/11, 16/17, 18/19, 21/22, 24/25, 26/27. In *P.Leiden* X, the scribe uses catchwords in, e.g., pp. 10/11, 12/13, and 13/14; *PGM* XIII also presents catchwords on most pages, particularly in cases when the recipes cover subsequent pages. On this see Gordon and Yuen-Collingridge *GEMF* 60 and Chapter 6 in this volume, and Blanco Cesteros forthcoming.

120. And not subsequently, as Turner (1977, 75) suggests. Several early manuscripts present page numbers, although they do so inconsistently; see Mugridge 2016, 72–75.

121. Halleux 1981, 8.

122. LiDonnici 2003, 148 (Chapter 4, p. 173, in this volume), cites Turner 1977, 73–74.

123. On trimming single-quire codices, see Turner 1977, 58; Nongbri 2018, 27–28, 36. See also Pietersma 1978, 1, on *P.Chester Beatty* XIII.

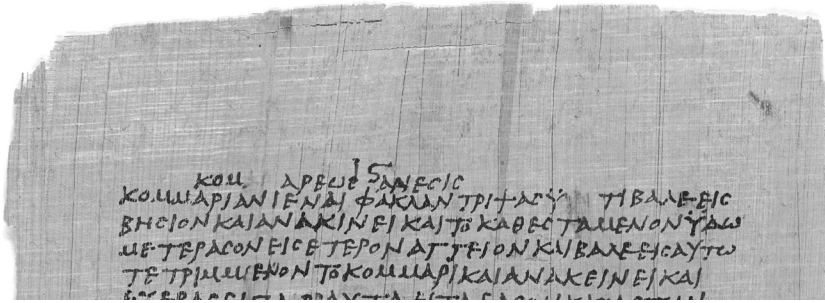


Fig. 2.8. Top of p. 16 of *P.Holm*, where it is evident that the page numbers had been copied before the text.

planned to be narrower from the beginning.¹²⁴ This phenomenon offers a contrast with *GEMF* 60 (=PGM XIII), however; the scribe of this codex is more irregular, and does not maintain either the margins or the level of the lines with the same consistency.¹²⁵

Lynn LiDonnici nonetheless argues that *PGM* IV was planned from the beginning and copied onto unbound sheets before being folded and cut.¹²⁶ One argument she adduces for this is the empty page at the beginning of the codex, a feature also present in the alchemical group. Another is the fact that folio 16r/v is also blank, which she argues is a result of it being inserted after 17r/v had been copied, in order to add an additional folio in the second half of the codex; since the manuscript seems to have been copied from one or several more complete exemplars, the copyist would have had a clear idea of the total quantity of text remaining to be copied.¹²⁷ There are, however, parallels for unwritten pages left inside other (nonmagical) codices from the Theban area.¹²⁸

124. Scribes were aware that the central pages needed to be narrowed, and thus constructed codex sheets with decreasing width: see Ibscher 1937, 12; Robinson 1978, 40.

125. There is a notable downward slope to the lines on pages 14–15, for example.

126. LiDonnici 2003 146–151 (Chapter 4 in this volume)

127. LiDonnici, Chapter 4 in this volume.

128. Wouters (1988, 24) notes that the Chester Beatty manuscripts he analyzes present a number of blank pages, both at the beginning and between written pages, although he states that he is not able to find an explanation for them.

The writing order is thus not easy to establish. Turner considered it unlikely that codices would be bound before being written.¹²⁹ On the other hand, it is clear that some codices were written by the same person at different moments, and even with different calami and ink,¹³⁰ implying an extended period of writing—perhaps an indication that they were already bound before being inscribed. The evidence we have presented here could support writing either before or after binding; even the extensive blank pages, surprising in a preplanned codex, might be understood as the initial copyist deliberately leaving additional space for later additions in a preplanned manuscript, as we see in the roll *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV).¹³¹ Further research on these and similar manuscripts will be necessary to fully resolve such questions.¹³²

The best candidate for a premade codex intended to be gradually filled with text over time—is the “Aktenbuch” of Aurelios Philammon (*GEMF* 66 = *PGM* XXIIa). This is a papyrus codex from Hermopolis, which can be precisely dated by its documentary contents to the years 357–359 CE, composed of two “quires.” The first consists of four bifolia and three single folia with stubs:¹³³ two between the first (innermost) and the second bifolium, and one more between the second and the third. The second “quire” is composed of three single folia with stubs.¹³⁴ The size of the pages is, on average, H. 24 x W. 13 cm, ratio 1:0.54 (Turner Group 8), presenting a similar aspect to the Theban codices, albeit somewhat shorter. Facing pages present in general different fiber patterns, but not consistently. It seems that the codex was prepared without much care: the sixth folio even contains part of a *prōtokollon*, and thus, fibers in both directions are present on the same surface. The overall impression is of a codex made out of leftovers, with sheets of papyrus that could not be used for full bifolios bound into the codex without fiber direction being taken into consideration. Its miscellaneous content also points in the direction of a notebook:¹³⁵ the

129. Turner 1977, 74, contra Nongbri 2014, 31–32.

130. Ghigo and Torallas Tovar 2020, on the different inks of the *Codex Miscellaneus* from Montserrat. See Nodar, Chapter 3 in this volume, on the evolution of the hand of *PGM* IV.

131. See Dosoo, Chapter 5 in this volume, on *GEMF* 16.

132. Cf. Nongbri (2018, 36–37), who cites evidence for both orders (copying then binding, binding then copying), but notes that the normal medieval order was copying then binding.

133. A stub (French “talon”) is a narrow strip of material that is part of a singleton, joined to it by a spine fold. A stub is often the result of cutting off one leaf of a bifolio leaving a strip in order to bind the half bifolio to the rest of the quire. For discussion of codicological terms, such as “stub” and “singleton” and diagrams thereof, see Gumbert 2010.

134. For a graphic representation of the composition of the codex, see Poethke, Prignitz, and Vaelske 2012, 9.

135. The chronological sequence of the texts copied in the book are summarized in Poethke, Prignitz, and Vaelske 2012, 22.

majority of texts relate to the *annona militaris* (an in-kind tax intended to support the Roman army), the collection of which was one of Philammon's functions as an *epimelētēs* (overseer of tax collection), and include lists of deliveries, receipts for payments in kind, and a copy of a warning letter sent to the exactors of Hermopolis. Alongside these, however, are found seven reports of fictionalized model court cases, and magical texts. Although the most recent editors distinguish five different hands in the codex, these are all very close, and so we suggest that Philammon likely copied or composed all of the texts himself, with his hand varying slightly over time.¹³⁶ The relationship between the different kinds of texts is not completely clear; the documentary texts relate to Philammon's professional work, while the court cases seem to have been intended for entertainment and/or as studies in rhetoric.¹³⁷ The editors propose to understand the magical recipes as an appendix to the court cases, providing examples of magical texts, perhaps from confiscated manuscripts, which would serve as exemplars or warnings for types of magic that might be illegal, or be examined to determine their acceptability.¹³⁸ But we might equally imagine that Philammon had simply collected a number of recipes that he might have wanted to use himself;¹³⁹ the texts are of common types, including a number of victory procedures, a silencing curse, a love procedure, and several healing prescriptions making use of Homeric verses. The nature of some of these latter recipes—dealing with menstrual problems, breast pain, and contraception—leads Christopher Faraone to propose that some of these may have been intended for the use of women of his family or household.¹⁴⁰ It is therefore clear that the codex was used for specific, and perhaps interrelated, purposes, but it is also clear that it is a notebook rather than a planned work.

Later papyrus codices again seem to adhere to contemporary book-production procedures rather than presenting archaizing features. AMS 9 is a codex dating to approximately the sixth century, of which 16 sheets have survived, with a leather binding decorated with parchment.¹⁴¹ The pages measure H. 22 x W. 14.5 cm (ratio 1:0.66, Turner Group 7, Aberrant 1).¹⁴² The codex is composed

136. Poethke, Prignitz, and Vaelske 2012, 12–17; cf. Zellmann-Rohrer 2016b, 134, n. 567.

137. Kanavou and Papathomas 2016.

138. Poethke, Prignitz, and Vaelske 2012, 131–133; cf. van Minnen 2013, 333.

139. Van Minnen 2013 thinks only the *nikētikon* (9, 9–12) might be connected to the legal cases.

140. Faraone, Chapter 11 in this volume, p. 436.

141. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in Leiden shelfmark 134, TM 100023; PATHs 3355.

142. Turner 1977, 19.

of three quires of different composition (a ternion, a quaternion, and a singleton), featuring not only pagination, with folio numbers indicated on the upper left of the verso of each sheet, but also quire numbers.¹⁴³ The manuscript is described by its first editors as having been found by Jean d'Anastasy in Thebes in 1829, but this is impossible given the history of the Anastasy collection; this is rather the date of its arrival in Leiden, and no provenance is given for the manuscript in Anastasy's corresponding 1827 catalogue.¹⁴⁴ Nonetheless, as Anne Boud'hors has observed, this codex resembles contemporary Theban manuscripts, such as BM EA 71005, whose size (H. 20.3 x W. 14.4 cm, ratio 1:0.71) and hand are close, and these similarities may even suggest that AMS 9 was produced, like these other texts, in a monastic environment.¹⁴⁵ These observations touch on questions regarding the circulation of magical texts among monks that go beyond the scope of this chapter, although the commonalities in this book's format with other contemporary manuscripts produced in the monasteries of the Thebaid may simply be a matter of book production techniques specific to that time and place.

All the codices discussed thus far are single-column examples, as is the case with the vast majority of formularies in this format. There are a few examples, however, from the fifth century onward, of double-column codices.¹⁴⁶ *GEMF* 80 (= *PGM* XCIV; *SM* II 94) is a fragmentary fifth- or sixth-century papyrus codex from Antinoupolis,¹⁴⁷ of which only one page survives; it clearly displays two columns of text preserving 13 magico-medical prescriptions, broken up by various lectional signs, including *paragraphoi*.¹⁴⁸

Parchment and Paper Codices

Although they were in use in Rome from at least the first century CE, the earliest parchment codices appear in the papyrological record in Egypt in the fourth century.¹⁴⁹ The bilingual Greek-Coptic *P.Mich.Copt.* 136 (TM 92874),

143. On the unusual pagination of this manuscript, cf. Sanzo 2019a, 232 n. 8.

144. The catalogue of the sale, compiled before July 11, 1827 (the date on which the catalogue was sent to Leiden), is Rijksmuseum van Oudheden inv. 3.1.6, in which AMS 9 appears on p. 95 as no. 9. For a discussion of the timeline of the sale, see Halbertsma 1995, 92–105.

145. Boud'hors 2017.

146. See Turner 1977, 35–36, on the fact that the double-column format was more frequent in parchment than in papyrus codices; cf. Hurtado 2006, 165–169. Fournet 2002 convincingly shows that these codices were initially reserved for rhetorical texts.

147. The papyrus is written in a sloping semiliterary hand dated to the 5th cent. CE (TM 64757)

148. Cf. *BKT* IX 51 (6th cent.) for the healing of the sick, but not clearly magical.

149. On parchment codices in Rome and Egypt, Roberts and Skeat 1983, 11–16; Cavallo 1992, 101; Winsbury 2009, 23–25. For formats, Turner 1977, 26–30.

though dated by its original editor to the sixth century or later,¹⁵⁰ was already suspected to be older by Paul Kahle, and has recently been re-dated to the fourth century by Michael Zellmann-Rohrer and Edward Love.¹⁵¹ It is a single-quire codex, consisting of four bifolios (16 pages), H. 12.4 x W. 10.5 cm (ratio, 1:0.85, Turner Group XI),¹⁵² and is thus a small manuscript, with the square dimensions typical of early parchment codices. The first sheet, whose recto was left blank to serve as a cover, is now lost, and the surviving seven pages are numbered 2–8 and inscribed with 14 magical and medical recipes in Greek and Coptic in a single hand. A further three hands have then copied another 18 recipes on the unnumbered pages 9–14, purely in Coptic; the extensive use of this codex is attested by wear and tear to its texts, which have in places been retraced by a later user.¹⁵³

The two other published parchment codices from Egypt containing Greek—PGM XCIII (fifth century CE; SM II 100, TM 64759) and *P.Carlsberg* 52 (seventh century CE; H. 15.5 x W. 12.5, ratio 1:0.81, bilingual Greek-Coptic)—are fragmentary, the former so much so that its original dimensions cannot be reconstructed. The latter consists of a fragmentary bifolio and a single sheet written on the hair side; perhaps this is the remains of a bifolio which would have served as a cover for a small codex.¹⁵⁴

The majority of preserved parchment codices are written purely in Coptic and are in general later. One of the earliest Coptic parchment codices is *P.Macq.* I 1 (seventh to eighth century CE; H 13 x W 11.3, ratio 1:0.87), formed from four sheets stacked with hair-side down, and a fifth bifolio added after page 14 to give a total of 20 pages, with a small slip with an additional recipe tied into the binding at the same point; the first page, and the last three, left blank.¹⁵⁵

An interesting case of related codices may be found in the Heidelberg Magical Library, a group of nine magical manuscripts written upon paper and parchment, apparently from the Faiyum and dating to the eleventh century.¹⁵⁶ Six of these texts are written on sheets, but three are codices—the first,

150. Worrell 1935.

151. Kahle 1954, vol. 1, 254 n. 5, suggests a 4th-century dating, confirmed in Love and Zellmann-Rohrer 2022.

152. Turner 1977, 26–32.

153. Dosoo 2021b; Love and Zellmann-Rohrer 2022.

154. Lange 1932; Brashear 1991, 16–17.

155. Choat and Gardner 2013.

156. Meyer 1996, 1–2; Meyer and Smith 1999, 323–324; 2013, 359–360; Johnston and Gardner 2018. See also Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume.

P.Heid. inv. 684 is the most anomalous of the three, formed from four paper bifolios (16 pages), H. 14.3 x W. 9 (ratio 1:0.63), and inscribed with a complex erotic procedure attributed to Cyprian of Antioch in a neat sloping uncial.¹⁵⁷ The remaining two are P.Heid. inv. 685 and 686, both containing a series of recipes, the former including a copy of the “Prayer of Mary ‘at Bartos,’”¹⁵⁸ the latter containing a long prayer attributed to the Archangel Michael which may be adapted to over twenty different uses.¹⁵⁹ Both are written upon individual sheets taken from older literary manuscripts (see below): 685 from five bifolios formed from folding these older sheets in half, 686 from three such bifolios, and four single sheets made from cutting the larger sheets in two. As a result, both contain a total of 20 pages, and both leave their first pages blank. Both are roughly the same size—considerably taller than the small, square folios we have looked at so far: H. 21.1 x W. 13.45 cm, ratio 1:0.64 (686) and H. 17.3 x W. 11.7 cm, ratio 1:0.67 (685). Both are written by the same scribe, who identifies himself in a colophon from another text from the archive as Deacon Iohannes.¹⁶⁰ Given the origin of the manuscripts in the Faiyum, and their copying by a deacon, Iain Gardner and Jay Johnston have plausibly proposed that these manuscripts once belonged to one of this region’s monasteries, like the much larger literary manuscripts of the Phantou Library (ninth to tenth century), which contain similar colophons attesting to their copying by deacons; the original literary texts over which these magical codices are written as palimpsests do indeed resemble the slightly earlier manuscripts of the Phantou Library in both their dimensions and hands.¹⁶¹

There are three late paper manuscripts that take the form of simple bifolios, written on all four pages: Cairo JdE 42573 (H. 14.8 x W. 10.6 cm, ratio 1:0.72); Strasbourg K 550 (H. 18.7 x W. 14.25, ratio 1:0.76); and P.Heid. inv. 514 (H. 20.7 x W. 16.15, ratio 1:0.78), all likely dating to between the ninth and eleventh centuries. Like earlier short rolls, this format probably represents the simplest way that copyists of their time could produce extended texts on small supports, but at a time when the predominant format was the codex, they mimic the codex rather than the horizontal roll. The variation in sizes likely represents the variety of mold sizes used to produce paper, with the copyists using the full

157. Johnston and Gardner 2018, 139–140.

158. Meyer 1996.

159. Kropp 1966.

160. Johnson and Gardner 2018; van der Vliet 2005, on P.Heid. inv. 682.

161. On the Hamuli Library at Phantou, see Emmel 2005. On the manuscripts, see Depuydt 1993.

size of the sheet folded in two. A similar bifolio, albeit written upon parchment and only on its inner pages, is Freer Coptic Fr. 10 (F1908.41) (H. 20 x W. 15.1 cm, ratio 1:0.76).

A final parchment codex worth mentioning is that of which the bifolio Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli I.B.14.06–07 (H. 30.5 x W. 23 cm: ratio 1:0.75) is the sole remainder.¹⁶² A bifolio with the page numbers 241–244, it would have been part of an enormous codex containing multiple quires, likely dating to between the ninth and eleventh centuries. Not strictly magical, it contains dozens of medical prescriptions, including one with instructions for healing the skin disease known in Coptic as *paiše*, through the use of an adjuration of an angel of a type familiar in Coptic magic.¹⁶³ This manuscript is striking for its quality: considerably larger than any of the codices discussed thus far, its parchment is very smooth and white, while the hand is a perfectly regular sloping uncial, with each recipe marked by an enlarged capital and *paragraphos*, both of which are decorated and retraced in red ink. Apparently once part of the Library of the White Monastery in Sohag, this manuscript is a rare attestation of a truly luxury manuscript containing magical texts.¹⁶⁴

5.4. Sheets, Ostraca, and Series

Trends in Sheet Formats

Individual sheets outnumber surviving formularies in other formats; as we have already noted above, this is likely due to their use in copying and circulating individual recipes or small collections.¹⁶⁵ Yet the category defies ready characterization or definition. In principle, here we define a “sheet” as a manuscript written on a support less than 30 cm in either direction, written in no more than one column on either side. Yet there are a few anomalous cases, in which we can see the sheet overlapping with other formats, such as the short roll and the narrow *rotulus*. P.Berol. inv. 8313 (TM 98044; seventh–eighth century CE) is a Coptic formulary written on a “sheet,” H. 23.1 x W. 36 cm, with the recto written on the horizontal fibers in two columns. It thus resembles a roll in some respects, and yet it also has a single column on the back, written

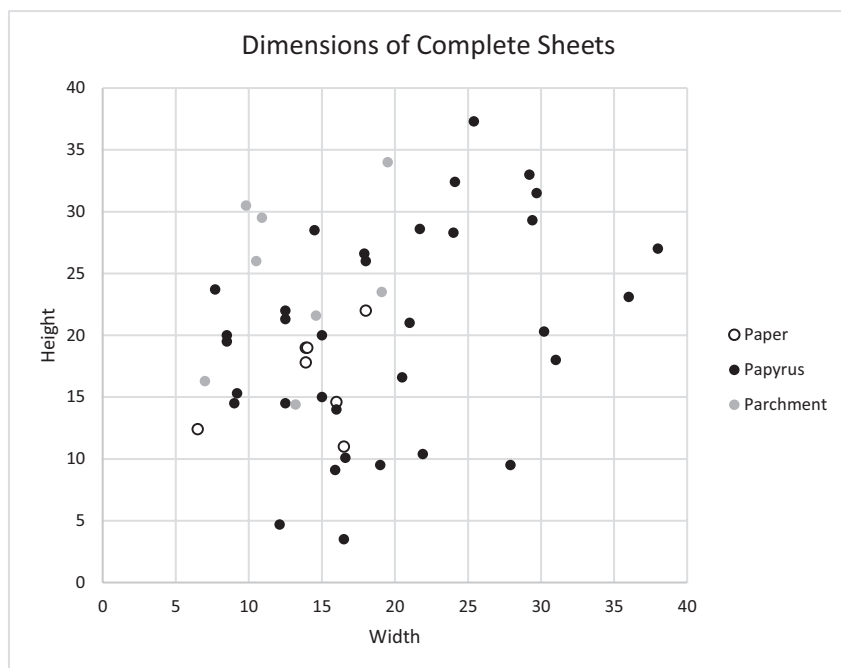
162. Buzi 2009, 277; Richter 2014, 191, no. 27.

163. On *paiše*, see Till 1951, 33.

164. Orlandi 2002.

165. See Faraone, Chapter 11 in this volume.

at 180° to the front, and has damage resulting from extensive folding on both axes, a treatment typical of sheets rather than rolls, which are rolled on their horizontal axis ($\leftrightarrow$). Likewise, we may observe that most sheets have heights less than twice their widths; manuscripts that exceed this ratio, and are taller than ca. 25 cm in height, are generally classified here as *rotuli*, and yet there are many borderline cases where it is difficult to decide if a short but very narrow manuscript should be defined as a *rotulus* or a sheet. While we have attempted here to assign each manuscript to one category or the other based on the consideration of all relevant criteria, there remain nonetheless many cases where either classification might be considered appropriate. P.Berol. inv. 8323 (TM 108884; seventh to eighth century CE), for example, is a narrow papyrus sheet (H. 20.8 x W. 6.5 cm) whose small size would allow its contents to be examined in a single glance, yet it is written *transversa charta*, and is similar in its format to other, taller manuscripts from the same archive that are more clearly *rotuli*. For this reason, we classify it as a narrow *rotulus*—but absent this context, it might rather be considered a sheet.



Sheets vary considerably in their dimensions; there are 149 sheets in our corpus, but many of these are quite fragmentary, leaving their original size, and even their classification as sheets, in doubt. Of the 51 whose dimensions can be reconstructed with reasonable accuracy, their widths vary from 6 to 38 cm, while their height varies from 3.5 to 37.3 cm, and the H:W ratio varies from approximately 1:5 to 3:1. The bulk of the manuscripts (33, or 64.7 percent), however, seem to range from 10 to 35 cm in both directions.

Can we observe any trends in the use of sheets over time? Jean-Luc Fournet has noted that letters in Roman Egypt undergo a shift in the fifth century. At the beginning of this period, they are generally tall, narrow strips cut from larger rolls, written perfibrally. At the same time as we see the shift to the *rotulus*, however, writers increasingly turn papyrus sheets 90° to write *transversa charta*, mimicking the writing of a vertical roll while producing letters that are typically short yet broad.¹⁶⁶ Formularly sheets are similar to letters in several respects: they are generally written in single columns on small supports, and are frequently folded in order to be stored, and perhaps in some cases, carried. Indeed, the existence of *P.Kellis Copt.* V 35, a formularly in the form of a letter—a tall, narrow letter written perfibrally, as we would expect for a fourth-century example—might suggest that other formularies circulated as letters, and thus that the sheet formularly might mimic the form of the letter.

It is very difficult, however, to discern any trend in the formats of sheets, and, insofar as one may be observed, it seems to be in the opposite direction, that is, a tendency to shift from shorter and broader to taller and narrower sheets from the second to the eleventh century. It therefore seems that magical texts follow the trend identified by Mihálykó in liturgical sheets. In Mihálykó's liturgical corpus, only 6 of 95 sheets (6.3 percent) take the form of broad sheets similar to late letters, while a third of cases from the eighth and ninth centuries take the form of a narrow sheet or small *rotulus*.¹⁶⁷ Nonetheless, the liturgical texts discussed by Mihálykó seem to be rather systematic in their construction—ca. 30 cm (the height of a normal papyrus roll) in either height or width. By contrast, the magical sheets take a much broader range of sizes, suggesting that their construction was much more haphazard, perhaps often using offcuts.¹⁶⁸ This implies that magical sheets, while coherent in representing

¹⁶⁶ Fournet 2009, 28–32.

¹⁶⁷ Mihálykó 2019, 155–158.

¹⁶⁸ This is a common practice with parchment; see Torallas Tovar 2021; Stroppa 2013, 353, on miniature *rotuli*.

small supports that can be contrasted with the larger-scale rolls, *rotuli*, and codices, do not represent a single “format” in the same way. Such a conclusion, interestingly, may be implied by *P.Kellis Copt.* V 35, the letter in which the writer, Ouales, mentions having a recipe on a piece (*lekme*) of papyrus.¹⁶⁹ We have not found any other instances in which the Coptic term is used to refer to a sheet of papyrus, and it may also be used for “pieces” of items as diverse as bread and bone; much the same is true of its Greek equivalents, Greek *klasma* and *psōmos*.¹⁷⁰ Ouales was not, therefore, referring to a standard format, in the same way that the *tetras* mentioned later in the same letter seems to refer to a *quaternio* (a four-bifolio codex);¹⁷¹ rather, he is simply talking about a small piece of papyrus that could not be characterized by a more standard term.

The contents of the sheets display a similar diversity; we cannot of course summarize here their content, which is as broad as that found in the large-format manuscripts.¹⁷² We may, however, observe that while the vast majority of manuscripts have only one or two recipes, a few—in particular later, Coptic manuscripts—may have many more. *GEMF* 46 (= *SM* II 86 (H. 14.8 x W. 17.2 cm), a fragmentary fourth-century Greek formulary written on the verso of a cutting from a roll containing an older philosophical text, contains five surviving recipes, written in two columns. *P.Ryl.Copt.* 104 (paper, H. 19 x W. 14 cm; eleventh–twelfth century CE) and Leiden 1964/4.14 (parchment, H. 23.5 x W. 19.1 cm; eleventh century CE), contain eight and 13 recipes, respectively. In part, this large number of texts on small surfaces is made possible by the fact that such late Coptic recipes are frequently much shorter than earlier Greek material, using standardized and abbreviated ritual instructions and relatively short formulae, which may be shared by recipes for different purposes.

GEMF 46 (= *SM* II 86) is a short formulary written on the verso of a philosophical text; this is a relatively common occurrence—23 of the 149 sheets in our corpus (15.4 percent) are clearly written on supports previously used for other texts, either as palimpsests or by writing on the verso. While this is not

169. *P.Kellis Copt.* V 35.30–31.

170. *Klasma* and *psōmos* literally mean “fragment” and are used for all kinds of materials; see Crum 1939, 139 s.v. *λακμή*; *LSJ*, s.v. *κλάσμα*, *ψωμός*.

171. The standard Greek form is *τετράδιον* (*LSJ*, q.v.); there are few examples before the Byzantine era: *Apophthegmata Patrum* (ser. alphab.) Mark 1. For mentions of *quaterniones* in Greek papyri, see *P.Oxy.* XVII 2156, *SPP* III 146 and *SPP* XX 194 (all 6th–7th cent.). The form *τετράς* is used in Palladius, *Lausiaca History* 45.3 as a scribal material, and for Coptic documentary texts, see Förster 2002, 804. Cf. Sophocles 1860, 536; Mirecki, Gardner, and Alcock 1997, 16 n. 49.

172. Cf. Faraone, Chapter 11 in this volume.

unheard of for other formats (see below), it is most prominent in the case of sheets, suggesting, once again, that this category often includes scraps that were used because they were ready to hand, rather than because it was an especially desired format. Mihálykó has observed an even stronger trend among liturgical texts, among which 27 of 95 (28.4 percent) written on sheets are not written on new supports.¹⁷³

The Hermonthis Magical Archive

As with other formats, it is instructive to look at the details of sheets belonging to larger archives. *GEMF* 73 (= *PGM* IX; fourth century CE) is a small sheet belonging to the Hermonthis Magical Archive.¹⁷⁴ A broad, short sheet (H. 9.5 x W. 27.9 cm) written *transversa charta*, it corresponds to the format of the Late Roman letter identified by Fournet.¹⁷⁵ While its format is, at first glance, quite different from that of the other manuscripts of the Hermonthis Archive, which are all rolls of varying lengths, we may observe that the width of *GEMF* 73 is almost the same as the heights of two of them, *GEMF* 72 (= *PGM* VIII) and *GEMF* 75 (= *PGM* XIa) both 28 cm high. It is true, of course, that ca. 30 cm was the normal height of a papyrus sheet, but a further link may be found in the fact that *GEMF* 72 is written in a hand that is either close to or identical with *GEMF* 73.¹⁷⁶ These facts suggest that all the manuscripts may have come from a similar context of production: the sheet was produced by cutting a short width of a papyrus roll of the same height as the others, and turning it 90° before writing a short recipe on the front and adding a drawing on the back. We may observe that *GEMF* 73, like many formulary sheets, shows clear evidence of folding, in this case along one vertical and three horizontal creases, which would have created a package about H. 2.4 x W. 14 cm.

The Berlin Magical Library

The seventh- or eighth-century Coptic Berlin Library contains 14 sheets, alongside six *rotuli*, written on a mixture of papyrus and parchment supports.¹⁷⁷ They display a wide range of formats, which we may briefly describe here.

173. Mihálykó 2019, 161–162.

174. On this archive, see Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume.

175. Fournet 2009, 28–32.

176. See Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume. We have observed certain resemblance in the hands of all these papyri, all cursives with striking similarities. See also Nodar, Chapter 3 in this volume.

177. For the Berlin Library, see Dosoo, forthcoming.

Table 2.6. Formats of the papyrus manuscripts of the Berlin Library; inventory numbers should be prefixed by P.Berol inv.

Starting Point	Height	Written perfibrally (→)	Written transversa charta (↵) so that original height becomes width
Full roll	ca. 30 cm height	8319 (narrow rotulus); 8322	8313
Short roll (?)	ca. 20 cm height	8323 (narrow rotulus), 8324, 8325	8318 (rotulus), 8327, 8317, 8332
Half roll (?)	ca. 10–15 cm height	8320, 8321	8316 (narrow rotulus), 8326

P.Berol. inv. 8322, written perfibrally on a sheet of H. 34 x W. 22.5 cm, would represent the simplest format: taking a roll and cutting the desired width while retaining the full height. Similar is P.Berol. inv. 8313, in which a similar cutting has been turned 90° to produce a sheet of H. 23.1 x W. 36 cm and written with two columns *transversa charta*, with a third column on the back. The other formats seem to have been formed either from smaller rolls of approximately 20 cm in height, or else by cutting the height of the standard roll in half to give a height of 10–15 cm, a practice attested by the short rolls and narrow *rotuli* discussed above.¹⁷⁸

Three manuscripts—P.Berol. inv. 8327 (H. 27 x W. 21.1 cm), 8317 (H. 26 x W. 18 cm), 8332 (H. 19.5 x W. 20.6)—are written *transversa charta* on part of a roll (or a cutting of a roll) originally ca. 20 cm high, to create sheets of similar widths, with varying heights. An even taller example of this format, P.Berol. inv. 8313 (H. 48.3 x W. 23.4), is classed as a *rotulus*. A fourth format is identical to this, but half the width; the sole example is P.Berol. inv. 8326 (H. 17.1 x W. 8.6 cm), but again, a longer version of this format was used to create a narrow *rotulus* in the case of P.Berol. inv. 8316 (H. 48.3 x W. 9 cm). Yet another format consists in writing perfibrally on a sheet constructed in this same way: the examples of this are P.Berol. inv. 8320 (H. 10.4 x W. 21.9 cm) and 8321 (H. 10.1 x W. 16.6 cm). A final format takes the full height (ca. 20 cm) of the short roll, and cuts it to a narrow width before writing perfibrally; we may observe that although these rolls are short, and written perfibrally, they do broadly imitate the form of the *rotulus*, in being narrower than they are tall, and could thus be considered short *rotuli*; these manuscripts are P.Berol. inv.

178. For a discussion of roll heights, see Johnson 2004, 141–143.

8324 (H. 15.3 x W. 9.2 cm) and 8325 (H. 17.3 x W. 10.3 cm). We have hesitantly identified an even narrower version of this format (P.Berol. inv. 8323, H. 20.8 x W. 6.5 cm) as a *rotulus*. The remaining manuscripts are difficult to classify; three (P.Berol. inv. 8330, H. 14.1 x W. 12.3 cm; 8331, H. 17 x W. 11.5 cm, one fragment of 8332) are written on Arabic *prōtokolla*, while there are also two parchment sheets—P.Berol. inv. 8328 (H. 17.5 x W. 10.5 cm) and 8329 (H. 15 x W. 9 cm)—that both seem to take the form of the “short *rotulus*,” very similar in dimensions to the papyrus examples.

While this description is necessarily complex, we can see that the papyrus manuscripts of the Berlin Library use six essential formats, formed by taking rolls of various heights—full (ca. 30 cm), short (ca. 20cm), and half (ca. 10–15 cm)—cutting them to various widths, and then writing on them perfoliated, or rotating them 90° to write *transversa charta*. This usage, and the dimensions produced, again blur the lines between the *rotulus* and the sheet; some tall, narrow sheets resemble *rotuli*, while some *rotuli* are written perfoliated, and some broader sheets are written *transversa charta*. Thus, while the formats follow certain patterns, the copyists of the Library were either willing to produce a wide variety of formats in order to copy texts, or else had access to a wide variety of offcuts in similar sizes.

A final point to note here is the extensive folding of many of the manuscripts. None of them contain personal names, although several contain the generic name marker, and a few contain several different recipes. These details, and the fact that they were all found together, implies to us that they should be considered as formularies, although the extensive folding might suggest that we should understand them as applied texts. Yet the extensive folding is even apparent in the texts that are most clearly formularies. P.Berol. inv. 8313 contains two recipes for different purposes (childbirth and stomachache) with the generic name marker, yet it has seven horizontal and ten vertical creases, implying that its folded size would be approximately H. 3.3 x W. 3.6 cm. It is of course possible that a set of formularies was later reused as amulets, but the presence of erotic procedures and curses, and the fact that they were all likely found together, given their collection history, suggests that we do indeed have a “library” of sorts. This example demonstrates a fact which may be observed in many other sheets, namely that folding likely served as a way to protect, store, and transport them, comparable to rolling a roll or *rotulus* or closing a codex.

The Heidelberg Magical Library

Alongside its three codices (discussed above), the tenth- or eleventh-century Heidelberg Library contains six sheets: four made of parchment, and two of paper.¹⁷⁹ The two paper sheets, P.Heid. inv. 678 (H. 27.2 x W. 18 cm) and 679 (H. 19 x W. 13.9 cm) are written in a hand similar, indeed perhaps identical, to that of the paper codex, inv. 684, whose folio sizes are in turn almost identical to the second of the sheets (H. 14.3 x W. 18.5 cm). We may plausibly speculate that the codex bifolios were produced in the same mold, but folded in half to create the codex. The codex and sheets therefore seem to come from the same context of production, with the same individual using two very different formats. We may note that both sheets show extensive folding.

The remaining four parchment sheets are all written in the hand of Deacon Iohannes, who is also responsible for the two parchment codices.¹⁸⁰ One, P.Heid. inv. 683, is written on a relatively broad parchment sheet (H. 21.6 x W. 14.6 cm), while the remaining three—680 (H. 16.3 x W. 7 cm), 681 (H. 29.5 x W. 10.9 cm), and 682 (H. 30.5 x W. 9.8 cm)—are written on slender sheets reminiscent of the narrow *rotulus* format. All are somewhat irregular, however, with curved sides that narrow and broaden across their heights. As noted earlier, similar irregularities may be observed in other parchment and leather sheets, perhaps indicating that they were often written on offcuts.¹⁸¹

Ostraca

The term “ostrakon” refers to two different types of support—fragments of limestone and pottery sherds—both used to write texts that are usually, though not always, relatively short.¹⁸² While pottery and limestone sherds represent rather different supports, they were referred to in Late Antique Egypt by the same terms—ὄστρακον in Greek and ⲃⲗⲭⲉ (*blje*) in Coptic (Demotic *blḏ(·)*)—and seem to be used in a similar way, that is, as readily accessible, small-scale supports in contexts in which access to papyrus or parchment is limited.

The majority of magical ostraca are applied texts, most of which seem in turn to be curses, although there are also some amulets which may have been worn or carried by humans or animals, or else displayed in places to be protected.¹⁸³

179. For the Heidelberg Library, see n. 156 above; Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume.

180. Johnson and Gardner 2018, on Deacon Iohannes.

181. Cf. *P.Moen* 3; London Hay 10434 (parchment); see also n. 96 above on the use of offcuts.

182. Bülow-Jacobsen 2009, 14–16; Cuvigny 2003; Bagnall 2011, 134–135; Maltomini 2014; Lougovaya 2018. See more recently Caputo and Lougovaya 2020.

183. Martín Hernández and Torallas Tovar 2014a; cf. de Bruyn and Dijkstra 2011.

Nonetheless, there are seven manuscripts in our corpus of formularies written on ostraca, of which five are pottery and two are limestone.¹⁸⁴ The earliest, and the sole Demotic example, is O.Strasbourg dem. 1338 (dated to the Roman Period), which contains a curse or healing formula to cause a woman to bleed, while there are two Greek examples, *SM* II 58 (fourth–fifth century CE) and *GEMF* 67 (= *SM* II 89 (fourth century CE), the former written on the back of an account. The remaining four, dating, as far as can be ascertained, to between the sixth and eleventh centuries, are in Coptic, and include the two limestone examples. Both were found at the site of the Monastery of Apa Phoibammon, the former temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri in Thebes;¹⁸⁵ the Demotic text and one of the Greek manuscripts also seem to have been acquired in Thebes.¹⁸⁶ In part, this is likely due to the importance of the Theban region in excavations of texts, but the use of ostraca does seem to have been particularly common in this area. The last manuscript with a known provenance, a Coptic invocation to bless a cup, was found in Mazura, near Oxyrhynchus.¹⁸⁷

While it is difficult to generalize from such a small sample, ostraca broadly seem to be used in a similar way to sheets, to write single recipes, or else multiple short recipes, on readily acquired supports that required little to no preparation. While they would have been slightly less portable than sheets, they would have been even cheaper to acquire, since both pottery and limestone sherds were—and are—strewn across the desert that fringes the Nile Valley. Once again, then, their magical use mirrors their documentary use, in which they alternate with sheets as a way to write brief texts such as accounts, receipts, and letters.

Manuscript Series

A final format, rare but telling as to the context of formularies' creation and use, is that which we refer to here as the "series."¹⁸⁸ This format might be used by copyists who intended to copy one or more recipes but were unable to complete the copy because their support was too small, and they lacked the means to increase its length, by, for example, adding new *kollēmata* to rolls or binding new folios into codices. As a result, series consist of sheets, or their

184. Cf. Martín Hernández and Torallas Tovar 2014a, 797.

185. O'Connell 2007.

186. O.Strasbourg dem. 1338, a Roman-period Demotic ostrakon from Thebes; for provenance, see Ritner 1995a, 3343. The Greek ostrakon from Thebes is *SM* II 58 (= O.Bodl. II 218or).

187. Girard 1927.

188. We would like to thank Roxanne Bélanger Sarrazin for pointing out the existence of this category to us. Cf. Mihálykó 2019, 166–167, on series of ostraca in liturgy, and 163–164, for series of sheets.

equivalent, ostraca, in which the text continues from the end of one support to the beginning of the next. The clearest published example of this is *O.BYU Mag.* 1–3 (seventh–eighth century CE), a series of three pottery ostraca that contain a single erotic procedure on their convex sides, a text whose nature as a formulary is suggested by its use of the generic name marker and three separate supports, since we might imagine that an applied text, which might require deposition, would be written on both sides of a single ostrakon.¹⁸⁹

More complex is the series of papyrus sheets made up of P.Mich. inv. 599 + 594 + 603 + 596 (sixth–seventh century CE), a copy of a Coptic invocation attributed to the Biblical Seth, belonging to the archive known as the Coptic Wizard’s Hoard.¹⁹⁰ Written in a highly irregular and unpracticed hand that is responsible for a number of other texts from the archive, it preserves a text also found in the 20-page papyrus codex P.Mich. inv. 593, also from the same archive, but written in a much more practiced and regular hand. Unlike 593, however, the series does not seem to have ever been bound; while the majority of its sheets are similar in size (ca. 30 cm square), one (inv. 603) is the same height as the others, but significantly narrower (20.3 cm). The fiber direction of the sheets is also inconsistent: although all are written on both sides, the recto varies between being written perfibrally and *transversa charta*; even more surprising, the last sheet (inv. 596) is written in two columns on either side, while the others are in single-column format; since much of this part of the text consists of a list of *voces magicae*, we might conjecture that the narrower columns might facilitate the reading of the sequence of unfamiliar names, but this is highly speculative. An interesting feature of this series is that, in the three out of the four cases in which it can be verified, the sheets make use of catchwords of the type used in codices, with the first line of each sheet repeating a few words from the end of the last one, facilitating sequential reading.¹⁹¹ The recto of the last sheet even seems to preserve a “page number” ($\Delta=1$), despite being the seventh page; in fact, three other sheets from the archive are numbered $\mathbf{B}-\mathbf{\Delta}$ (2–4), so that the series was even larger. The text of these last three pages, however, is unpublished, and seems not to be directly related, so that the larger formulary likely represented a collection of multiple unrelated texts like those

189. Blumell and Dosoo 2018.

190. Mirecki 1994; Worrell 1930.

191. For catchwords in the Theban Library, see above. Although not noted in the previous editions, catchwords are found between P.Mich. inv. 599 and 594 and between 603 and 596; there may have been one between 594 and 603, but the last line of the former is lost.

found in other formats.¹⁹² In some ways—with its more or less regular sizes, page numbers, and catchwords—the series seems to mimic the features of a codex, but, lacking the skills or materials to construct one, the copyist instead simply used an unbound series of sheets.

Although we here consider series as single manuscripts, similar to codices in intent but unbound for practical reasons, it is easy to see that there is some fluidity between series and archives; since larger manuscripts often consist of unrelated texts copied one after another, archives or subarchives consisting of sheets (and even larger formats) copied by a single individual could likewise be considered as larger manuscripts whose separation is contingent rather than resulting from their conception as separate documents. We discuss this fluidity between manuscript and archive elsewhere,¹⁹³ but we may here note that there are a few practical cases of this:¹⁹⁴ one example is the British Museum Portfolio, a series of four Coptic *rotuli* inscribed with different recipes by a single copyist.¹⁹⁵

The use of series to copy manuscripts is not unique to magical texts. As mentioned above, it was also used in copying Greek and Coptic liturgical texts; likewise, we may see a similar use of sets of ostraca in Demotic and Coptic documentary texts.¹⁹⁶

6. Reuse and Use of the Verso

6.1. Opisthograph and Amphigraph Rolls

The study of the reuse of texts is important for understanding the way in which handbooks were used and interacted with. Characterizing a book as a

192. The numbering is as follows: P.Mich. inv. 598 (⌘), 597 (r), 595 (Λ). Worrell 1930, 240) lists these as belonging to texts B (598 + 597) and C (594), in contrast to the (main) text A of the main series, but it is not clear that B is a continuous text in the same way as text A.

193. See Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume.

194. Love 2017 argues that the two putative manuscripts of PGM III would be a second example of this type, but cf. Martín Hernández and Torallas Tovar, forthcoming, who argue that this is indeed a single manuscript.

195. Kropp 1931, vol. 1, 35–40, no. G, 41–45, no. H, 45–46, no. I; Meyer and Smith 1999, 275–278.

196. Blumell and Dosoo 2018, 209; an extreme example provided by Francesca Maltomini 2014, is that of ODN 100–188, a set of 89 bilingual ostraca (mainly Demotic with some passages in Greek) with the account of a long legal dispute. The ostraca are numbered; for a possible Demotic astrological example, see Winkler 2016, 262.

“notebook,” “commercial copy,” or “luxury copy” is often insufficient. Further or continued use is traceable in marginal notes or additions; many magical handbooks can be characterized as “living books,” constantly growing and changing.¹⁹⁷

Horizontal rolls were generally written on the recto (→), leaving the verso blank. The verso would generally be exposed to more damage, being on the outside when the manuscript was rolled up, and subject to constant rubbing as it was read. There are some cases in which we find the continuation of a text on the verso of a roll, whether by deliberate choice or the result of inadequate planning by the scribe. By contrast, at times we encounter the reuse of the verso of a prewritten roll for a different text. These two situations are often difficult to distinguish when examining a papyrus, particularly if they are written by the same hand and the texts have related content. Following Raquel Martín Hernández, we will use two terms to distinguish these two situations: an *amphigraphos* (or “true opisthograph”) is a roll written on both sides with the same text by the same scribal hand, and an *opisthographos* is a roll written on both sides as the result of reuse, addition, or annotation.¹⁹⁸

In *amphigraphoi*, the main text generally starts on the horizontal fibers of the recto, and continues on the vertical fibers of the verso.¹⁹⁹ Both edges of the verso are usually left blank for the practical purpose of avoiding damage caused by rubbing when the reader handles the roll. In some texts, the blank sides of the verso may be used for writing at a later time; among magical texts this may be seen in *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII)²⁰⁰ and *GEMF* 55 (= *PGM* III).²⁰¹ A third possibility, already seen in the case of *GEMF* 68 (= *PGM* XXXVI), is writing on the verso at 90° of the text on the recto, essentially using it as a *rotulus*;

197. Examples of such texts might include *GEMF* 15 (= *PDM/PGM* XII), *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV), *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII), and P.Mich. inv. 136.

198. We thank Raquel Martín Hernández, to whom we owe the use of these terms, for her assistance on this topic. On the term “opisthograph,” see Manfredi 1983.

199. Examples of this phenomenon include the Montserrat Athanasius roll (P.Monts. Roca inv. 14; Torallas Tovar 2018); P.Jen. inv. 18 + 21 (= P.Jen. Irenaeus; TM 61318 + TM 64069); There are not many magical examples for this particular case. P.Berol inv. 9772 (*BKT* V 2), of the 2nd cent. BCE, however, represents a different phenomenon, as the text on the verso is not a continuation of the recto, but a different literary text. See also *P.Oxy.* LXXXVI 5093 and *GEMF* 17 (= *PDM* Supplementum).

200. See the re-edition of Raquel Martín Hernández in Faraone and Torallas Tovar, forthcoming vol. 2, as *GEMF* 74; see also Martín Hernández 2015; Martín Hernández and Gordon, Chapter 7 in this volume.

201. This papyrus roll presents a complex situation. It was first written in Greek, and later on, reused on the back and the remaining blank spaces in Old Coptic; Love 2017 has proposed that it is in fact two different rolls, but cf. Martín Hernández and Torallas Tovar, forthcoming, whose re-examination has confirmed that it is a single roll.

the reasons for using a papyrus like this are unclear, but we have a few other examples of documentary and literary manuscripts from the third and fourth centuries that use this same format.²⁰²

As discussed above, all three of the bilingual Demotic-Greek rolls from the Theban Library are written on both sides, but in quite different ways. *GEMF* 15 (= *PDM/PGM* XII) is written on the verso (↓) of a papyrus roll whose recto contains an older mythological text, the Demotic *Myth of the Sun's Eye*, perhaps an indication of its origin in the environment of an Egyptian temple.²⁰³ This manuscript is thus opisthographic, but not an *amphigraphos*. By contrast, *GEMF* 17 (= *PDM* Suppl.) is closer to a typical *amphigraphos*, being written with similar content by the same hand on both recto and verso, with spaces left at either side of the verso columns; nonetheless, the different formats of the two sides (discussed above) may imply that the verso columns were added at a later time, rather than constituting a strictly continuous text like a true *amphigraphos*. *GEMF* 16 (= *PDM/PGM* XIV) is even more problematic, since its verso columns are written only on the upper part of the roll to avoid their being rubbed, in a format quite different to the recto, albeit in the same hand.²⁰⁴

The clearest example of a true opisthographic roll or *amphigraphos* is the text of *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII).²⁰⁵ The main text is written by the same hand, although likely over an extended period of time, and covers both the recto and the center of the verso. The use of textual marks clearly shows the careful distribution of the text into sections. The sequence of writing began with the recto being inscribed continuously by a single copyist. The roll was then turned 180°, so that the top of the columns inscribed on the verso corresponds to the bottom of the text written on the recto. On the verso the same copyist continued by writing in the center of the surface, leaving both extremes blank. These empty sides were filled at later moments; one of these later columns

202. *P.Flor.* I 32 (r) and 33 (v) is a case from 298 CE. The recto is a *tomos synkollesimos* containing a series of declarations of property. The verso has been used in one column at 90°. A similar situation can be observed on *P.Oxy.* XXXI 2562 (330) (= *P.Oxy.* LIV 3766–3767), with a *tomos synkollesimos* on the recto with declarations of price, and a fragment of proceedings on the verso, at 90°; finally *P.Oxy.* XXVII 2474 (3rd cent. CE) has three fragmentary columns of a land register on the recto and the draft of a will of a Roman citizen on the verso at 90°. Cf. Turner 1978, 51. The Coptic translation of a Festal Letter of Cyril, ÖNB K 10157 (also mentioned above) contains two different texts by the same hand and with the verso at 90°.

203. For a description of this handbook, see Sarischouli, Chapter 8 in this volume; Dieleman 2005, 29–35. See also Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume.

204. See Dosoo, Chapter 5 in this volume.

205. On this roll, see Martín Hernández 2015; Gordon and Martín Hernández, Chapter 7 in this volume.

was inscribed by the main copyist on the left-hand side of the roll, upside down with respect to the text in the center of the verso, and thus in the same orientation as the text on the recto.²⁰⁶ The right-hand part was inscribed by two or three other copyists. The texts of the recto and the center of the verso therefore constitute one single textual entity, while the additions on the sides are subsequent (re)uses.

The fact that the verso of *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII) is written at 180° of the recto would have posed a problem for continuous reading; the roll must be turned, and partially rerolled, to get back to the beginning. A similar phenomenon may be seen in *GEMF* 84 (= *PGM* CXXIV), a *rotulus* whose preserved text corresponds to the lower part of an opisthograph roll whose verso is likewise written at 180° of the recto. While this last layout would have made for an easier reading experience, the practical difficulties posed by opisthographic rolls is perhaps a sign that these books were intended for the consultation of specific passages rather than continuous reading. Their nature as reference or technical works also explains the fact that they might have been expanded by the same or different copyists during their use life. New recipes, glosses, and notes might be added in different ways, either on the back or in the margins.

Reuse

The reuse of older, nonmagical texts to copy formularies is a fascinating phenomenon, yet frequently understudied, since magical texts are often published independently from the original texts over which or on the back of which they are written.²⁰⁷ A consideration of texts chosen to be reused as formularies might tell us something about the social context of their users; even if we cannot assume, for example, that documentary texts would have been reused as formularies by the same individuals to whom they refer, they might at least give us indications of their geographical origin, and the manuscripts to which copyists had access.²⁰⁸ On the other hand, they also tell us something about the copyist's conception of the work. Many of the magical recipes instruct their users to use a new or clean support, implying that the creation of

206. Martín Hernández 2018.

207. A notable exception here is Poethke, Prignitz, and Vaelske 2012 (*PAktenbuch*).

208. For the Nag Hammadi library, see Dosoo and Torallas Tovar, Chapter 1 in this volume, p. 15, 49 and 83, with bibliography.

empowered objects required the absence of prior use for the sake of purity.²⁰⁹ The fact that so many formularies reuse preexisting manuscripts may imply that they must be seen as practical guidebooks rather than the possessors of magical power in themselves—that is, books of magic rather than magical books.²¹⁰ While any conclusions at this point may only be preliminary, a survey of the formularies and applied manuscripts in the Kyprianos database shows that 17.5 percent of formularies, but only 7.6 percent of applied manuscripts, show signs of prior use, apparently confirming this general impression.²¹¹

The most common type of manuscript reused for magical text is the documentary text; here we may often assume that there is no relation in content between the two texts, but rather that documentary texts simply served as scrap papyrus which could be readily repurposed.²¹² Where the contents of the texts might imply interests more closely aligned with magic, establishing whether there is a relationship between original text and reuse is more complicated. We have already seen this in the case of *GEMF* 15 (= *PDM/PGM* XII), copied on the verso of a Demotic mythological text, but a similar case can be made for reused philosophical texts,²¹³ and even more so, reused astrological texts.²¹⁴ In some cases, as we have seen, magical texts themselves may be “reused,” or perhaps better, supplemented with further magical texts, with the separate writing indicated by spatial separation and/or different hands.²¹⁵

209. Use of clean or pure papyrus is required in prescriptions in *GEMF* 55 (= *PGM* III) 17, 57 (= IV) 78, 74 (= VII) 193, 219, 703, 940–968, 68 (= XXXVI) 70, 100, 69 (= XXXVIII) 1; similar requirements are already found in pharaonic times; see Töpfer 2018, 41.

210. Cf. Bremmer 2015.

211. As of May 10, 2021, Kyprianos contains 280 formularies from Egypt dating to between the 2nd century BCE and the 12th century CE, of which 49 demonstrate reuse, and 406 applied texts, of which 31 demonstrate reuse.

212. *GEMF* 75 (= *PGM* XIa), 11 (= LXIX), 56 (= LXX), 65 (= LXXXI), XVIIB, 43 (= XXI), 38 (= CXIXa–b), 37 (= CXXIX), 79 (= *SM* II 58, ostrakon), II 83; P.Berol. inv. 5527, British Library MS Or 4926 (3).

213. On *GEMF* 15’s reuse of the *Myth of the Sun’s Eye*, see Sarischouli, Chapter 8 in this volume; Dieleman 2005, 29–31; Tait 1995, 171–173. Cf. *GEMF* 46 (= *SM* II 86) with the remains of three columns of an unpublished philosophical text, and *GEMF* 62 (= *PGM* CII); (*POxy.* XXXVI 2753), with a fragment of Plato’s *Republic* on the recto. *GEMF* 32 (= *PGM* XIXb) is written on the verso of an unpublished philosophical text.

214. *POxy.* XXXI 2554 + 2546 has Pseudo-Manetho’s astrological poem *Apotelesmatica* on one side, and a list of astrological omens on the other side, accompanied by instructions for creating protective amulets. See also *SM* II 85, which has horoscopes on the recto, and further horoscopes and a magical text for a dream oracle on the verso, although both sides seem to have been written by the same hand.

215. Alongside *GEMF* 74 (= *PGM* VII), discussed extensively above, see also *GEMF* 40 (= *POxy.* LXXXII 5304 + 5315), for an example of a magical manuscript containing largely binding curses and love spells, reused on its verso for healing recipes using bird droppings in a different hand.

The reuse of magical texts for nonmagical material is apparently rare; we might imagine that this is due in part to the rarity of magical texts, and in part to the fact that they were considered illicit for most of the period for which they are attested papyrologically, so that individuals would be unlikely either to acquire them accidentally, or to reuse them for mundane purposes when they did so. Nonetheless, *PGM XX* seems to have been reused to write a documentary text, while *P.Morgan Copt.* 10 (seventh century CE) is a sheet containing an invocation to allow a woman to become pregnant; the verso has been reused to write an account of wine.²¹⁶

As noted above, three manuscripts from the Berlin Library reused protocols—the upper parts of papyrus rolls which were pasted with “stamps” giving the ruler under whose authority they were produced; such reuse is quite widely attested in the late Roman and Early Islamic periods, and is found in two other Coptic magical *rotuli*.²¹⁷

Coptic Parchment Palimpsests

An interesting subgroup of reused texts is found in the phenomenon of Coptic parchment palimpsests. A palimpsest is a document whose first-use text has been erased in order to write a second text on top; sometimes this procedure could even be repeated for a third use. This practice of recycling or reuse can be traced as far back as the third century BCE for Greek texts, but became more widespread in Late Antiquity. Although there are a few cases of palimpsest papyri,²¹⁸ it is more common to find parchment palimpsests, since this material is resistant enough to survive the process of erasure through washing, abrasion, or scraping. It is normally understood that books were effaced and subsequently used to copy a new work because they were perceived as obsolete,²¹⁹ no longer of interest, or had become illegible because they were in “damaged or defective condition.”²²⁰ Here we will highlight the existence of the surprising phenomenon of a number of Coptic magical formularies copied as palimpsests on older biblical, liturgical, or hagiographical manuscripts. Because many of these manuscripts are unpublished, our remarks will be brief.

216. MacCoull 1982, 10–14.

217. Cairo JdE 45060, Strasbourg K 204 + 205 (Hevesi 2018).

218. Schmidt 2009.

219. Lowe 1964, 483 refers to this as “cultural obsolescence.”

220. Declercq 2007, 13.

The earliest of these manuscripts is P.CtYBR inv. 1781a Beinecke parchment codex leaf, reconstructed from five fragments that belonged to a sixth- or seventh-century codex of Daniel in Sahidic, reused for a Coptic magical text, written in two hands partly parallel and partly perpendicularly to the *scriptio inferior*.²²¹

Among the Coptic magical texts preserved at the Abbey of Montserrat, there are two long-form manuscripts, which we refer to here as Magical Book I (*P.Monts.Roca* II 25–27)²²² and Magical Book II (*P.Monts.Roca* II 3–8).²²³ The first of these consists of the remains of three pages taken from Sahidic Coptic translation of Ephesians and Philippians; the magical *scriptio superior*, apparently consisting of a series of erotic procedures and curses, is written in the same direction as the biblical texts, although it is not possible to ascertain whether the formulary was somehow bound as a codex or kept as a series of separate sheets. The second book is a *rotulus*, formed from stitching together pages from a parchment codex of the Sahidic Coptic translation of 2 Samuel. Both manuscripts seem to have been deliberately destroyed at some point, perhaps by being slashed with a razor.

Three cases of reuse have already been mentioned. P.Heid. inv. 685 and 686 are both parchment codices formed from folding in half the much larger codices of earlier parchment codices. The former is a Sahidic Lectionary containing the Pauline letters, while the *scriptio inferior* of the latter has not yet been identified;²²⁴ another example is Leiden F 1964/4.14, a magical text written over a Bohairic literary text.²²⁵

It is tempting to suggest that the biblical texts underlying the magical formularies had been chosen with the idea that they would convey some power to the book. However, the fact that other palimpsests of this type reuse Patristic or hagiographical texts would seem to disprove this hypothesis,²²⁶ and their deliberate effacement itself would seem a further argument against this. We may note, however, that at least two of these palimpsest codices were copied

221. (PATHs 6340 TM 108029); Emmel 1990, 17–22.

222. Edition of the *scriptio inferior* and description: Torallas Tovar 2007, 103–111; pls. 26–28.

223. Edition of the *scriptio inferior* and description: Torallas Tovar 2007, 19–42; pls. 2–6.

224. Meyer 1996; cf. Gardner forthcoming for an identification.

225. Green (1987, 29) suggested that the text dated to the 10th cent. without being able to identify it; the appearance of the letter *khai* (ⲭ) indicates the text to be Bohairic in dialect.

226. See the unpublished magical manuscript belonging the Collège de France, written over a copy of the *Life of Marinos* (Pezin 1983, 27); British Library MS Or 4714 (1), a copy of the “Prayer of Mary in Bartos” written over a Patriarchal history; see Crum 1897, 218–222.

by deacons,²²⁷ suggesting perhaps that all or most of these manuscripts should be understood as originating from monastic contexts—in which liturgical text would be kept, and could be reused when they had worn out, or simply when someone with access to them decided to copy a new text. This reuse might also indicate something of the status of the magical texts copied on them; three are copies of the *Prayer of Mary 'at Bartos'*, two are copies of the *Prayer of the Archangel Michael*, one contains other prayers attributed to saints, and one is a list of recipes using the Psalms.²²⁸ These contents—attributed to Orthodox saints or to be used alongside scripture— may have therefore been understood to have possessed an authority that justified the erasure of otherwise sacred texts in order to record and preserve them.

7. Conclusions

This survey has attempted to contextualize and classify the many formats that magical formularies might take. We have aimed to balance descriptions of manuscripts, of primary interest to papyrologists and archeologists, with speculation concerning the reasons behind the development and use of particular formats, of greater interest to historians of society, religion, and magic. This cannot be considered a definitive discussion; rather, it sketches out the lines along which future research might proceed, highlighting particular problems, such as the differentiation of the sheet from the narrow roll or short *rotulus*, and the relationship between original use and reuse.

Before concluding, it is perhaps worth recalling the diversity of the manuscripts we have examined here, not only in terms of their formats, but in terms of subtler features that we might think of as indications of “quality.” We have seen examples of, on the one hand, large and very luxurious rolls and codices, carefully laid out and decorated, and on the other, loose series written in unpracticed hands, as well as a wide range of variations in between. As is often the case, the surviving documents are likely only the tip of an iceberg;

227. For Deacon Iohannes, the copyist of part of the Heidelberg Library, see Johnson and Gardner 2018. One of the unpublished manuscripts belonging the Collège de France contains a colophon attributing it to the Deacon Raphael (see Pezin 1988, 27, who was however unable to decipher the title “deacon”).

228. For an overview, see Pezin 1983, 1988; an edition of these manuscripts is being prepared by Korshi Dosoo.

we might imagine rarer and still more luxurious texts that are now lost, which might have contained the kind of more literary pseudepigraphical magical texts to which Pliny's sources had access, a few of which survive through the medieval manuscript tradition (such as the *Cyranides* and the Greek and Latin lapidaries).

In addition, there were likely other possible formats and materials for handbooks. One example might be found in *GEMF* 26 (= *GMA* 32), a small copper *lamella* (H. 9.1 x W. 5.6 cm) found folded in half along the vertical axis, whose contents indicate that it, unlike most such *lamellae*, was likely a formulary. Its text is written on ruled lines created by folding the *lamella* along the horizontal axis before inscribing it.²²⁹ A second example is *GEMF* 27 (Anapa, Historical Museum, inv. 835), a second- to third-century spherical agate gemstone (3.5 cm in diameter) inscribed in a neat bookhand with a text that follows handbook language throughout, beginning with a title "For the sendings away of (hostile) incantations" and ending with a list of the parts of the human head and a corresponding series of *charaktēres* to be used against illness.²³⁰ Christopher Faraone has suggested that this gem might have been used as a master copy, with inscribers finding gems of the same type, and then copying the required symbols depending on the problem. It might even have been one of a series of similar such "manuscripts," which could have been one of a series of gemstone formularies dealing with the maladies of different parts of the body.²³¹ These represent rare examples of formularies found outside the dry sands of Egypt, and imply the existence of a much larger corpus of non-Egyptian formularies—a world of which we occasionally catch glimpses in amulets and curse tablets from the wider Roman world that seem to have been copied from lost formularies. How closely these manuscripts resembled examples from Egypt in their contents and formats is a question that we must leave unanswered for now.

Book formats are generally still studied and considered within a very conservative framework that often emphasizes textual contents and ignores the wider context of book production. This has led to the development and application of certain heuristic rules, or perhaps prejudices, that may not always be appropriate—for example, assumptions that rolls are always earlier

229. Faraone 2000; Chapter 11 in this volume.

230. Faraone 2010a; Faraone 2012, 51–66 with appendix no. 18.

231. Faraone 2010a, 108–111.

than codices, or that Coptic manuscripts must be later than Greek. Here we have attempted to demonstrate that examining magical manuscripts within the framework of the writing cultures of Roman and Early Islamic Egypt may point the way toward a more nuanced understanding of these questions, one that focuses on materiality and takes into account not only content and genre, but also a broader range of linguistic and contextual features.

Figure Credits

Figure 2.7 courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, British Library Board (Papyrus 46), National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, and Kungliga Biblioteket Stockholm.

Figure 2.8 courtesy of Kungliga Biblioteket Stockholm.