Cultural Plurality in Ancient Magical Texts and Practices

Edited by
LJUBA MERLINA BORTOLANI,
WILLIAM D. FURLEY,
SVENJA NAGEL,
and JOACHIM FRIEDRICH QUACK

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32



Cultural Plurality in Ancient Magical Texts and Practices

Graeco-Egyptian Handbooks and Related Traditions

Edited by

Ljuba Merlina Bortolani, William D. Furley, Svenja Nagel, and Joachim Friedrich Quack

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Table of Contents

List of General Abbreviations Used Throughout the Volume	VII
Ljuba Merlina Bortolani/Svenja Nagel Introduction	1
Acknowledgements	23
Part I: Egyptian, Greek and Mesopotamian Traditions of Magic: Different Genres, Perception of the 'Other' and Possible Transcultural Exchange	25
Franziska Naether Magical Practices in Egyptian Literary Texts: in Quest of Cultural Plurality	27
William D. Furley Magic and Mystery at Selinus: Another Look at the Getty Hexameters	42
Daniel Schwemer Beyond Ereškigal? Mesopotamian Magic Traditions in the Papyri Graecae Magicae	62
Part II: Cultural Plurality and Fusion in the Graeco-Egyptian Magical Papyri (PGM/PDM)	87
Single Handbooks and Magical Techniques	89
Richard Gordon Compiling P. Lond. I 121 = PGM VII in a Transcultural Context	91
Svenja Nagel Illuminating Encounters: Reflections on Cultural Plurality in Lamp Divination Rituals	124
Ljuba Merlina Bortolani 'We Are Such Stuff as Dream Oracles Are Made on': Greek and Egyptian Traditions and Divine Personas in the Dream Divination Spells of the	

Magical Papyri	149
Christopher A. Faraone Cultural Plurality in Greek Magical Recipes for Oracular and Protective Statues	171
Specific Spells and Deities	189
Joachim Friedrich Quack The Heliopolitan Ennead and Geb as a Scrofulous Boar in the PGM: Two Case Studies on Cultural Interaction in Late-Antique Magic	191
Richard Phillips Traditions of Transformation and Shape-Shifting in PGM XIII 270–77	208
Adria Haluszka Crowns of Hermanubis: Semiotic Fusion and Spells for Better Business in the Magical Papyri	227
Marcela Ristorto Love Spell and Hymn to Aphrodite in PGM IV (2891–941)	238
Part III: Integration and Transformation of Graeco-Egyptian Magic in Jewish and Byzantine Spells	257
Gideon Bohak/Alessia Bellusci The Greek Prayer to Helios in <i>Sefer ha-Razim</i> , in Light of New Textual Evidence	259
Michael Zellmann-Rohrer Incantations in Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Greek: Change and Continuity	276
Bibliography	297
List of Contributors.	341
Index of Sources	345
Index of Names	364
Index of Subjects	370
Plates	

List of General Abbreviations Used Throughout the Volume

ANRW H. TEMPORINI, W. HAASE (eds.), Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt.

Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung, I-XXXVII,

Berlin/New York 1972-1996.

AP Anthologia Palatina.

BAM F. KÖCHER *et al.*, Die babylonisch-assyrische Medizin in Texten und Untersu-

chungen, Berlin 1963-.

BM British Museum, London (Museum Signature).

BoD Book of the Dead. For the hieroglyphic text cf. the philologically unsatisfacto-

ry (but un-superseded) edition of E.A.W. BUDGE, The Book of the Dead: the Chapters of Coming Forth by Day: the Egyptian Text According to the Theban Recension in Hieroglyphic Edited from Numerous Papyri, with a Translation, Vocabulary, etc., I–III, London 1898. In general, for translations see R.O. Faulkner, The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead, London 1985; C. CARRIER, Le Livre des morts de l'Égypte ancienne, Paris 2009; for the papyrus of Ani, including images see E. VON DASSOW, J. WASSERMAN (eds.), The Egyptian Book of the Dead: the Book of Going Forth by Day, San Francisco 1994.

BRM Babylonian Records in the Library of J. Pierpont Morgan, I–IV, New Haven *et*

al. 1912-1923.

CAD A.L. OPPENHEIM, E. REINER et al. (eds.), The Assyrian Dictionary of the

University of Chicago, Chicago 1956-.

CCAG Catalogus codicum astrologorum Graecorum, I–XII, Brussels 1898–1953.

CDD J.H. JOHNSON (ed.), The Demotic Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the

University of Chicago, Chicago 2001.

CG Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Cairo et al.

1901-.

CIA Corpus inscriptionum Atticarum, 1825—. CIL Corpus inscriptionum latinarum, 1863—.

CMAwR Corpus of Mesopotamian Anti-Witchcraft Rituals (Ancient Magic and Divination

8.1-2), I-II, Leiden/Boston 2011 and 2016. I: T. ABUSCH, D. SCHWEMER; II: T.

ABUSCH, D. SCHWEMER, M. LUUKKO, G. VAN BUYLAERE.

CT Coffin Texts. Synoptic edition of the hieroglyphic texts: A. DE BUCK, The

Egyptian Coffin Texts, I-VII, Chicago 1935-1961. An English translation is provided by R.O. FAULKNER, The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts, I-III,

Warminster 1973-1978.

CT (BM) Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum, London

1896-.

Dend. Le temple de Dendara, I-XV, Cairo 1934-2008. I-V: É. CHASSINAT; VI: É.

CHASSINAT, F. DAUMAS; VII-IX: F. DAUMAS; X-XV: S. CAUVILLE.

Edfou Le temple d'Edfou, I-XV. I-II: S. CAUVILLE, D. DEVAUCHELLE [Deuxième

édition revue et corrigée], Cairo 1984–1987; III: É. CHASSINAT, M. DE ROCHMONTEIX, Cairo 1928; IV–XIV: É. CHASSINAT, Cairo 1929–1934; XV: S.

CAUVILLE, D. DEVAUCHELLE, Cairo 1985.

FGrH F. JACOBY (ed.), Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker, 2nd edn, Leiden

1954-1969.

GMPT

IG

KAR

SpTU

Inscriptiones graecae, Berlin 1873-.

1919, 1920/23.

H.D. BETZ, (ed.), The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation - Including the

E. EBELING, Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts, I–II (Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft 28 and 34), Leipzig

Demotic Spells, 2nd edn, Chicago/London 1992 [1st edn, Chicago 1986].

LBAT T.G. PINCHES, J.N. STRASSMAIER, A.J. SACHS, Late Babylonian Astronomical and Related Texts, Providence 1955. LdÄ W. HELCK, E. OTTO (eds.), Lexikon der Ägyptologie, I-VII, Wiesbaden 1972-1992. LGG C. LEITZ, Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen, I-VIII (Orientalia Lovaniensia analecta 110-16, 129), Leuven 2002-2003. LIMC H.C. ACKERMANN, Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae, Zürich/ Munich 1981-2009. LKA E. EBELING, Literarische Keilschrifttexte aus Assur, Berlin 1953. H.G. LIDDELL, R. SCOTT, H.S. JONES, A Greek-English Lexicon, 9th edn, LSJ Oxford 1996. NP H. CANCIK, H. SCHNEIDER (eds.), Der neue Pauly: Enzyklopädie der Antike, I-XVI, Stuttgart 1996-2003. OED Oxford English Dictionary, Oxford 2001-. Papyri Demoticae Magicae according to the edition of H.D. BETZ (ed.), The PDM Greek Magical Papyri in Translation – Including the Demotic Spells, 2nd edn, Chicago/London 1992 [1st edn, Chicago 1986]. K. PREISENDANZ, A. HENRICHS, (eds.), Papyri Graecae Magicae. Die griechi-**PGM** schen Zauberpapyri, I–II [III], 2nd edn, Stuttgart 1973–1974 [1941]. A. PAULY, G. WISSOWA (eds.) Paulys Real-Encylopädie der classischen Alter-PRE tumswissenschaft, I-XXIV, Stuttgart 1894-1963; 2nd Series I-X, Stuttgart/ Munich 1920-1972; Suppl. I-XV, Stuttgart/Munich 1903-1978. PT K. SETHE, Die altaegyptischen Pyramidentexte nach den Papierabdrücken und Photographien des Berliner Museums, I-IV, Leipzig 1908-1922; trans. R.O. FAULKNER, The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts, Oxford 1969; J.P. ALLEN, The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts (Writings from the Ancient World 23), Leiden/Boston 2005. RAC T. KLAUSER et al. (eds.), Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum, I-, Stuttgart 1950-. SEG Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum, Leiden 1923-71, then Amsterdam SGG A. MASTROCINQUE (ed.), Sylloge Gemmarum Gnosticarum, I-II (Bollettino di numismatica, monografia 8.2.1, 2), Rome 2003-2008. Sm Smith (British Museum, London), Museum signature. SMR.W. DANIEL, F. MALTOMINI, Supplementum Magicum, I-II (Papyrologica Coloniensia 16.1-2), Opladen 1990-1992. **SMA** C. BONNER, Studies in Magical Amulets Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian (University of Michigan Studies, Humanistic Series 4), Ann Arbor 1950. Sp Spartoli (British Museum), Museum signature.

Spätbabylonische Texte aus Uruk, I–V. I: H. HUNGER (Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft in Uruk-Warka 9), Berlin 1976; II–III: E. VON WEIHER (Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft in Uruk-Warka 10, 12), Berlin 1983, 1988; IV–V: E. VON WEIHER (Ausgrabungen in

Uruk-Warka, Endberichte 12, 13), Mainz 1993, 1998.

STT The Sultantepe Tablets, I-II. I: O.R. GURNEY, J.J. FINKELSTEIN; II: O.R.

GURNEY, P. HULIN (Occasional Publications of the British Institute of Archae-

ology at Ankara 3 and 7), London 1957, 1964.

TLA Thesaurus linguae Aegyptiae (http://aaew.bbaw.de/tla).

TLL Thesaurus linguae Latinae, editus auctoritate et consilio academiarum quinque

Germanicarum Berolinensis, Gottingensis, Lipsiensis, Monacensis, Vindobo-

nensis, I-XI, Leipzig et al. 1900-.

Urk. IV K. SETHE, Urkunden der 18. Dynastie (= Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums

IV), Leipzig 1906-1958.

Throughout the volume, Greek spelling is generally used for the names of Greek deities, divine entities and persons. On the other hand, according to customary practice, Latinate forms are used for the names of ancient authors (abbreviated references mostly follow the LSJ but are sometimes slightly expanded to avoid ambiguity).

Ljuba Merlina Bortolani/Svenja Nagel

With the second half of the twentieth century and the reawakening of the scholarly interest in ancient magic the amount of valuable publications on the subject has been greatly increasing until today. They encompass editions of magical texts and objects, overarching studies of magic in the ancient world, as well as monographs on more specific topics. In particular, scholars had many opportunities to meet and exchange ideas thanks to various international conferences that resulted in significant volumes of Proceedings. However, despite this growing enthusiasm, the subject is vast and can be explored from numerous different perspectives, so that many aspects have not yet received the attention they deserve and more detailed research still awaits to be conducted.

In particular, as far as the ancient Mediterranean is concerned, the protracted political, cultural and trade contacts between different areas, especially increasing from the Hellenistic Period onwards, inevitably influenced also the religious-magical tradition. Accordingly, magical texts and objects from the ancient Mediterranean often appear to display a gradual rise in the incorporation of 'foreign' elements, i.e. elements of different cultural origin, whether limited to 'foreign' magical words or including 'foreign' deities, mythological references, ritual allusions, etc. Therefore, the final result

¹ Just to mention some of the more renowned books, e.g. mainly on Graeco-Roman magic GRAF, Gottesnähe; FLINT *et al.* (eds.), Witchcraft and Magic; DICKIE, Magic and Magicians; M. MARTIN, Magie et magiciens; DE. COLLINS, Magic in the Ancient; on ancient Egyptian magic, e.g. RITNER, Mechanics; KOENIG, Magie et magiciens; on Jewish magic, e.g. BOHAK, Ancient Jewish Magic; HARARI, Jewish Magic; on Mesopotamian magic, e.g. SCHWEMER, Abwehrzauber und Behexung; ABUSCH/VAN DER TOORN (eds.), Mesopotamian Magic.

² E.g. MERKELBACH/TOTTI (eds.), Abrasax; DIELEMAN, Priests; FAUTH, *Helios Megistos*; FAUTH, *Hekate Polymorphos*; FAUTH, Jao-Jahwe; ZAGO, Tebe magica; MARTINEZ, Greek Love Charm; FARAONE, Vanishing Acts; FARAONE, Ancient Greek Love Magic; PACHOUMI, Concepts of the Divine; LOVE, Code-Switching; DOSOO, Rituals of Apparition.

³ E.g. ROCCATI/SILIOTTI (eds.), Magia in Egitto; FARAONE/OBBINK (eds.), *Magika Hiera*; MEY-ER/MIRECKI (eds.), Ancient Magic; SCHÄFER/KIPPENBERG (eds.), Envisioning Magic; JOR-DAN/MONTGOMERY/THOMASSEN (eds.), World of Ancient Magic; MIRECKI/MEYER (eds.), Magic and Ritual; KOENIG (ed.), Magie en Égypte; CIRAOLO/SEIDEL (eds.), Magic and Divination; NOEGEL/WALKER/WHEELER (eds.), Prayer, Magic; BOHAK/HARARI/SHAKED (eds.), Continuity and Innovation; DE HARO SANCHEZ (ed.), Écrire la magie; SUÁREZ/BLANCO/CHRONOPOULOU (eds.), Papiros mágicos griegos; ASIRVATHAM/PACHE/WATROUS (eds.), Between Magic and Religion; PIRANO-MONTE/SIMÓN (eds.), Contesti magici; GORDON (ed.), Magical Practice; BOSCHUNG/BREMMER (eds.), Materiality of Magic; cf. also (though not the result of a conference) JÖRDENS (ed.), Ägyptische Magie; KAMLAH/SCHÄFER/WITTE (eds.), Zauber und Magie.

can often look like a cultural amalgam, product of the late Mediterranean melting pot (as it was often considered by early research on the subject).

Scholars should thus face the challenge not only of identifying the possible cultural origin of the single elements, but also of trying to discover which specific cultural background, if any, is hidden behind the multicultural components in order to eventually investigate the dynamics of exchange and shed light on how the mixture functions in context. Therefore, the study of the different facets of transcultural encounters remains fundamental for a deeper understanding of the source material, and thus of ancient magical practice itself. However, up to now, as a consequence of the traditional separation between modern research disciplines, the great majority of the publications have engaged with the subject mostly from one single cultural point of view. Only rarely have some studies attempted to overcome this impasse through the collaboration of scholars of different disciplines or with different expertise⁴ but, though representing an important step in the scholarly attitude and a reference point for future investigations, they were hardly exhaustive because of the vast scope of the material. Therefore, it remains fundamental to keep expanding our views beyond the borders of academic fields and to give to the transcultural perspective the importance it deserves in the study of ancient magic.

This spirit underlies two subsequent projects conducted at the University of Heidelberg: The Magic of Transculturality, which we undertook at the Cluster of Excellence Asia and Europe in a Global Context from 2012 to 2016; and Sexual Dynamis and Dynamics of Magical Practice in Graeco-Roman Egypt: Erotic Spells in the Greek and Demotic Magical Papyri (PGM and PDM) and their Cultural Traditions, funded by the DFG from 2017 until 2020. Through the detailed analysis of the divinatory and erotic rituals of the Greek and Demotic magical papyri from Roman Egypt (see below), the projects attempted to disentangle different cultural elements and to understand the interaction of these elements within the extant spells belonging to these specific genres. During the first project, in order to broaden our perspective, we organised a conference aimed at discussing examples of cultural plurality in ancient magical texts and practices from the Mediterranean and the Near East. This volume collects the papers delivered at this conference, which took place on the 12th-13th September 2014 in the Internationales Wissenschaftsforum of Heidelberg (IWH) and gathered international specialists in different areas of ancient magic who are often confronted with multicultural influences.

One of the key terms of our projects, and subsequently of the conference title, 'plurality', derives from the notion that discussions of cultural 'hybridity' have by now evolved beyond the naïve assumption that globalisation will result in increasing, and finally total, homogeneity. Still, the complex processes of partial integration of foreign elements clearly need more detailed attention. In principle, even within one culture, there can be a variety of responses to foreign components, depending on the specific discourse and factors such as public visibility or secrecy. Accordingly, different models may be used to describe and analyse these alterity experiences. Therefore, we

⁴ See e.g. BETZ (ed.), GMPT; MERKELBACH/TOTTI (eds.), Abrasax; A. DELATTE/DERCHAIN, Intailles magiques; MOYER/DIELEMAN, Miniaturization; CRIPPA/CIAMPINI (eds.), Languages.

chose to use the heuristic term 'plurality' complemented by the term 'fusion' (as different but often contemporaneous attitudes) since they are less loaded with previous theoretical models. The contemporary presence of elements of different cultural origin can thus be described as 'plurality', while instances in which these elements overlap to such an extent that it is almost impossible to disentangle them can be described as examples of 'fusion'. In detail, cultural plurality and fusion can manifest themselves in a range of different dynamics: from phenomena such as simple borrowing, through advanced adaptation, up to complete assimilation or even distortion of origin and meaning.

As far as these transcultural influences are concerned, an especially rich field of investigation is the corpus of Greek and Demotic magical papyri from Roman Egypt in which, apart from the main Egyptian and Greek components, it is possible to recognise e.g. Jewish, Mesopotamian and Christian elements. Due to their particular textual history (see below), these texts, especially the longer handbooks, offer us the unique opportunity to conduct both a synchronic and diachronic analysis. In particular, the diverse cultural influences displayed in the extant papyri can provide information not only as the reflection of the multicultural society of the period, but also as the result of the employment of earlier ritual or textual sources (and more generally magicoreligious traditions) during the different stages of compilation. Therefore, it is not surprising that the great bulk of contributions in this volume is dedicated, or refers, to this source material addressing many of the issues we set out to investigate. They include research questions such as: when elements originating in different religious traditions are found together, how do they interact among each other? Why were some elements from a specific culture chosen or preserved and others not? And how were they integrated in their new context? Is it possible to identify logical patterns? And how were the different cultural contributions conceived by the compilers of the magical texts? And what about the actual users of the spells? Were they still able to differentiate between various cultural influences? Or was this heterogeneous amalgam conceived as 'mysterious' in itself and thus inherent in the magical nature of these texts? Though often easier to analyse when considering an extensive corpus such as the magical papyri, these research questions apply also to other textual and material sources associated with ancient magic: other magical handbooks, remains of applied magic (see below page 11) and implements or material objects (such as amulets) produced and/or used in connection with magical practice.

The contributions devoted mainly to the rich source material of the magical papyri from Egypt are collected in the central part of this volume. They are framed by two complementary sections, which enrich the discussion by broadening the scope – geographically as well as chronologically – focussing on the analysis of other sources that are either directly or indirectly connected with ancient magic. The first section thus explores examples of different magical/ritual genres, the perception of foreigners and foreign rituals, and possible transcultural exchanges within the earlier magical traditions of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece. On the other hand, the essays assembled in the final part trace examples of integration and transformation of the Graeco-Egyptian magical lore in later Jewish and Byzantine formularies.

Part I

Egyptian, Greek and Mesopotamian traditions of magic: different genres, perception of the 'other' and possible transcultural exchange

The first three contributions provide insight into three different specific cultural milieus – Egyptian, Mesopotamian and Greek – and their respective magical traditions, especially in correlation with each other or with foreign rituals in general. How was foreign ritual power conceived by the ancient people themselves, and which political, religious or other factors and prejudices played a role in its evaluation? Can the integration or exclusion of foreign practices as described in one culture's own literary output, and thus presented from an emic point of view, be compared with the active admixture of specific foreign elements that appears to characterise religious and magical manuals such as the Greek and Demotic magical papyri from Roman Egypt?⁵ To what extent did earlier or contemporary indigenous apotropaic/magical traditions actually shape these Graeco-Egyptian handbooks? Can we talk of direct transmission or borrowing, or should we just assume looser cultural contacts naturally triggered by the circulation of ideas in the Mediterranean basin? In particular, a closely related phenomenon in Greek and Hellenistic (and later on, Roman) culture is the interplay between magic and mystery cults, which in their turn often incorporated Oriental traditions. This is evident in the famous cases of the cults of Isis and Mithras, which spread in the already quite globalised Hellenistic and Roman worlds, but Near Eastern influences have been hypothesised also for some earlier Greek cults (e.g. Dionysiac-Orphic mysteries). Apart from the (possible) inclusion of foreign religious concepts and practices, mystery cults share with magical rituals the relevance of the personal communication and involvement of the individual with the gods, as well as the central importance and subsequent instrumentalisation of their myths. However, to what extent did mystery cults influence the later or contemporary magical lore? In particular, is it possible to find traces of actual continuity between earlier Greek sources and Graeco-Egyptian magic?

⁵ See for the question of such foreign elements in the PGM and PDM, but also in earlier as well as later sources, e.g. THISSEN, Nubien; DIELEMAN, Priests, 138–43; WÜTHRICH, Eléments, 16–26 (Nubian elements); the contribution by D. SCHWEMER, in this volume (Mesopotamian elements); HOPFNER, Orientalisch-Religionsgeschichtliches; FARAONE, *Mystodokos*; QUACK, Zauber ohne Grenzen (various elements); in particular, for Jewish elements see below n. 43. Vice versa, on the inclusion of Greek magical texts into Jewish spells, cf. the contribution by G. BOHAK and A. BELLUSCI in this volume.

⁶ Cf. also the contribution by M. RISTORTO in this volume, 238–9, for the so-called 'Oriental Cults'; for the problematic and various aspects of the cults subsumed under this designation see NAGEL/QUACK/WITSCHEL (eds.), Entangled Worlds.

⁷ On links between magic and mystery cults see e.g. GRAF, Gottesnähe, 96–107 (especially on initiation rites); BETZ, Magic and Mystery.

In order to better contextualise the contributions of this section in connection with the later developments embodied by the Greek and Demotic magical papyri, it is important to remind that in Egypt foreign cultural elements, language and deities were adapted and integrated into religious texts already in earlier periods. This is especially well attested in the New Kingdom (c. 1550-1070 BCE), in which the extension of Egyptian power as well as diplomatic and military contacts with other peoples reached a peak. During this period, the cults of the Northwest-Semitic deities Resheph, Astarte. Baal, Hauron, Anat and Qadesh were installed in Egypt, some of them through the official initiative of Pharaohs like Amenhotep II and Ramses II. Interestingly, not all of these deities were integrated in the same way: some of them were actually 'needed' to fill certain gaps in the pantheon, since their competences covered also domains that were originally foreign to Egyptian culture and thus not yet under the patronage of an Egyptian deity, e.g. horses and chariots, which were imported from the Levant and accordingly remained assigned to Astarte. 10 On the other hand, in the case of the newly imported Baal, some parallels in character led to a perceived equivalency or even identity between him and the Egyptian Seth, who thus became, in spite of his Egyptian origins, a deity connected with foreigners and foreignness. 11 In contrast to the relatively great number of Near Eastern deities that were venerated in Egypt, gods from other neighbouring cultures, like Nubia or Libya, were hardly ever appropriated before the Ptolemaic Period. 12

However, diverse foreign deities and other elements were actually integrated more freely and frequently within ritual and magical texts of various nature. This process was obviously relatively independent from the (official) installation of cults of imported deities described above, since also other gods, who did not have a temple cult in Egypt, could be included in these sources together with demons, myths and (at least the concept of) recitations in foreign languages. Thus, in New Kingdom papyri, not only do we find Egyptian magico-medical recipes against the Mesopotamian demon Samanu who was responsible for a skin disease, but one of them is also written in foreign language, possibly Minoan. Spells incorporating Semitic, and more precisely Canaanite, incantations appear also in other papyri of this era. At the same time,

⁸ For cultural appropriation in pre-Ptolemaic Egypt in general, cf. SCHNEIDER, Foreign Egypt.

⁹ See e.g. ZIVIE-COCHE, Dieux autres; QUACK, Importing; LIPIŃSKI, Syro-Canaanite Goddesses; STADELMANN, Syrisch-palästinensische Gottheiten; TAZAWA, Syro-Palestinian Deities; MÜNNICH, Reshep, 80–115; LAHN, Qedeschet; WILSON-WRIGHT, Athtart, 27–71; BONNET, Astarté, 63–7; LILYQUIST, Hauron. The introduction of Resheph and Astarte was initiated by Amenhotep II, the cult of Anat was officially installed by Ramses II.

¹⁰ Cf. QUACK, Importing, 264. For another, earlier case of adaptation of this kind (the Nubian god Dedun), *ibid.*, 257.

¹¹ Cf. ZIVIE-COCHE, Dieux autres, 70.

¹² Cf. QUACK, Importing, 264-6.

¹³ Cf. KOENIG, Image of the Foreigner; KOENIG, Nubie; QUACK, Importing, 262–3 and 266.

¹⁴ See the detailed study by S. BECK, Sāmānu, esp. 171–252.

¹⁵ In P. BM EA 10059, see S. BECK, Sāmānu, 248; E. KYRIAKIDES, Language of the *Keftiw*; HAIDER, Minoische Sprachdenkmäler.

¹⁶ See e.g. R.C. STEINER, Northwest Semitic Incantations; SCHNEIDER, Mag pHarris XII; LEITZ, Magical and Medical Papyri, 49–50.

Nubian or even further South-East African, i.e. Puntite, ritual power and religious traditions seem to have been perceived as especially efficacious, ¹⁷ since they were appropriated even for official temple ritual ¹⁸ and in the Book of the Dead. ¹⁹ In both cases, sections in the (purportedly) respective languages were also included. In addition to these direct sources, Egyptian (narrative) literature often includes vivid descriptions of foreigners as well as foreign rituals.

FRANZISKA NAETHER presents an overview of examples from this material in the first contribution. She analyses Egyptian literary production, in which tales of magic, divine intervention and supernatural wonders abound.²⁰ The focus of her paper on the emic, albeit highly stylised, presentation of Egyptian priest-magicians as well as religion and (magical) rituals of neighbouring cultures serves to uncover the ancient Egyptians' own perception of the 'magic of the other', as opposed to their own. Although the selected source material (narrative and instructive literature) certainly had an agenda of its own and represented the - presumably idealised and narratively embellished – views of only a small group of Egyptian society, namely the literate and educated priestly and scribal elite, it grants us valuable insights into the self-reflection and self-representation of this group and their engagement with foreign, possibly inimical or vying powers. However, even if the 'authors' (if we may even call them that) of the written versions of these narratives were certainly from the described social stratum, there is an important debate going on about the probable orally transmitted roots of such stories, which would re-position the attitudes reflected in them within a broader fraction of Egyptian society.²¹ NAETHER's study of literary descriptions of concrete foreign magical practices and ritual experts is embedded in a broader perspective on the representation of foreigners in these texts. The description alone of some of the respective practices demonstrates a certain interest in foreign, exotic and possibly equally effective rituals, even though some of them might have existed only in fiction²² and therefore are only examples of a projection of Egyptian ideas of what foreign magic was supposed to be like.

The literary treatment of these themes is not only informed by political and historical experiences, but in a way reflects and elaborates upon actual documentary evidence for the fear of malign influences of foreign magic, such as the 'Oracular Amu-

¹⁷ Cf. KOENIG, Nubie; KOENIG, Image of the Foreigner, 227; QUACK, Nubisch-meroitische Lex-

¹⁸ During the Min festival, a ritual text is supposed to be recited by a 'negro of Punt', and some sections transcribe a non-Egyptian language, possibly 'Puntite', into hieroglyphs, see QUACK, Importing, 257; QUACK, Egyptian Writing.

¹⁹ In the 'supplementary chapters' BoD 162–5: WÜTHRICH, Eléments, esp. 16–26; WÜTHRICH, Édition synoptique; WÜTHRICH, Abracadabras méroïtiques. Cf. also the reviews by QUACK, Review of WÜTHRICH, Eléments; QUACK, Review of WÜTHRICH, Édition synoptique; and QUACK, Importing, 266.

ing, 266.

²⁰ For the prominence of these themes in Egyptian narrative literature in general cf. HOLLIS, Tales of Magic; SÉRIDA, Cultural Memory; DIELEMAN, Priests, 221–38; QUACK, Wer waren. Cf. also the paper by R. PHILLIPS in this volume.

²¹ See especially the recent study on the Demotic tales by JAY, Orality and Literacy.

²² On magical practices (like transformation) as described in fiction versus actually applied magic cf. also the contribution by R. PHILLIPS in this volume; and LOVE, Ritual Reality.

letic Decrees' from the Libyan Period (21st–22nd Dynasties).²³ In some of the texts of this genre, magic of explicitly outlandish origin (Syrian, Bedouin, Libyan and Nubian magic) is warded off next to Egyptian magic. That such worries were shared by the state is demonstrated by a letter of Pharaoh Amenhotep II to his viceroy, cautioning him against Nubian magicians.²⁴

In Classical Greece the situation was somewhat similar but also very different. As far as the adoption of foreign deities is concerned, the most famous and certain examples involve Near Eastern female goddesses such as the Anatolian Kybele and the Thracian Bendis, who were first worshipped in Greece around the sixth/fifth century BCE and were perceived as similar and/or identified with the Greek Gaia/Rhea/Demeter and Artemis respectively.²⁵ At the same time, foreign origins and/or influences have been hypothesised for various other deities of the Greek pantheon, for example Hekate, who plays an important role in early apotropaic/magical ritual and later magic and for whom an Anatolian origin, more specifically Carian, has been posed.²⁶ However, in cases like this, the possible foreign influences are very hard to trace since the earliest Greek sources present the deity as already integrated into the pantheon.²⁷ More importantly, even if Hekate had a remote foreign origin, it is unlikely (and impossible for us to confirm) that she was still perceived as foreign by Greek people worshipping her, or invoking her in apotropaic/magical texts. Similarly, the god Hermes who, when providing Odysseus with the herb moly so that he can be immune from Kirke's spells, appears to be one of the first deities displaying 'magical' competences in literary sources (Hom. Od. 10.27), could have hardly had any foreign connotation at the time.

In Homer, as has often been underlined, the fact that e.g. a god can be skilled in the use of wondrous herbs, and that Odysseus himself can perform necromancy to consult with Tiresias (Hom. *Od.* 11), does not seem to imply any explicit foreign influence or, even more importantly, any negative overtones. As a matter of fact, in Homer these practices are not subsumed under one overarching term. However, it is Kirke (the great-aunt of Medea who lives in the mythical island of Aeaea) who, apart from being capable of powerful incantations herself, instructs Odysseus on how to perform necromancy. This detail might already underlie a later notion that will develop in Greece especially from the fifth century BCE onwards together with the concept of magic itself: the tendency to label foreign ritual practice as 'magic' and attribute great magical power to some 'barbarian' lands and people as clearly shown by the evolution of

²³ EDWARDS, Oracular Amuletic Decrees; cf. e.g. LUCARELLI, Popular Beliefs. See FISCHER-ELFERT, *Magika Hieratika*, 82–95, 203–19, 250–52 for further examples.

²⁴ Urk. IV, 1344, 11–12; cf. KOENIG, Nubie, 105; RITNER, Mechanics, 140, n. 623; WÜTHRICH, Eléments, 22. For differing Egyptian attitudes towards different agents and aims of magic see also NAGEL, Narrations.

²⁵ See e.g. GARLAND, Introducing New Gods, especially 111–14; PACHE, Barbarian Bond; JANOUCHOVÁ, Cult of Bendis; ROLLER, Search of God, especially 119–86.

²⁶ And it is now generally accepted, see in particular KRAUS, Hekate, especially 54–64; BERG, Hecate; cf. e.g STRAUSS CLAY, Hecate.

²⁷ See e.g. Hes. Th. 411–52; h.Hom. 2.

the term 'magic' from *magos*, originally just a Persian religious specialist, ²⁸ and also by famous literary characters such as Medea from Kolchis. Likewise, Egypt and Egyptian priests became especially renowned for their magical lore²⁹ following an attitude partly comparable with what we saw in Egypt itself, e.g. for Nubian and Puntite ritual

However, in contrast with Egypt,³⁰ the notion of magic appears to have emerged in Greece specifically as a 'third-person attribution' with derogatory undertones. For it was used for practices that, when not attributed to alien and potentially dangerous 'barbarians', were connected with specific groups of people (within Greek culture itself) whose activities acquired a nuance of illicitness owing e.g. to fluctuations in socio-cultural views or to displacements from a public to a more private sphere. 32 Despite the different theories proposed by recent scholarship to explain the emergence of magic as an autonomous category in fifth century Greece, 33 there is general agreement the notion could be highly dependent on the individual point of view, and thus it often remained fluid and liable to variation. This strategy of self-definition through stigmatisation of the 'Other' might explain why, in early Greek evidence for autochthonous apotropaic/magical rituals, there are no clear traces of foreign influence, such as the adoption of foreign words or deities that we observe in New Kingdom Egypt.

For example, the earliest Greek defixiones (fifth century BCE) are very simple, do not include any foreign element and, when mentioning deities, they stick to the tradi-

²⁸ See e.g. NOCK, Paul and the Magus; GRAF, Gottesnähe, especially 24–31; BREMMER, Birth; OGDEN, Necromancy, 128-48; also HALL, Inventing, especially 143-54.

²⁹ See e.g. DIELEMAN, Priests, 239–54; LLOYD, Egyptian Magic, especially 99–105; cf. FRANK-FURTER, Religion, 217–21.

³⁰ In Egypt the native equivalent term for magic, hk³, did not have any negative connotation in itself, but embodied the performative force through which the transition from ideal (speech) to actual creation (matter) is achieved. This power, also personified by a deity (Heka), originally emanated from the creator god and it was supposed to be activated by priests as well during ritual performances. It was thus inherent in the creative process and it was not employed only by foreigners or a group of people outside official religion, but by gods and temple priests. See e.g. BORGHOUTS, 3h.w (akhu) and hk3.w (hekau); RITNER, Mechanics, 4-28, 217-20, 236-49; RITNER, Egyptian Magical Practice, 3353-5; RITNER, Religious, Social; KOENIG, Magie Égyptienne; cf. DICKIE, Magic and Magicians, 22.
31 J.Z. SMITH, Trading Places, 18.

³² See e.g. the famous examples of Plato, Resp. 364b-e, Lg. 909a-d, depicting 'beggar priests and prophets' offering every sort of spells as charlatans looking for profit; or Thessalian magicians and witches as a well-acknowledged group with special magical powers, see e.g. O. PHILLIPS, Witches' Thessaly; also HILL, Thessalian Trick; DICKIE, Magic and Magicians, especially 32-3, 103; OGDEN, Necromancy, especially 142-7, 202-7.

³³ For example it has been suggested that it was a spontaneous phenomenon (DICKIE, Magic and Magicians, 18–46). On the other hand, the rise of the notion of 'magic' has also been explained as the consequence of the development of philosophical theology and medical science, and of the subsequent separation of the natural and divine realms (GRAF, Excluding the Charming; GRAF, Gottesnähe; GRAF, How to Cope, especially 109-14); on the whole subject see also e.g. BRAARVIG, Magic, 37-40; GORDON, Imagining; JOHNSTON, Greek Divination, especially 145-53, also stressing that often the differences between magic and mainstream religion are just in details; cf. e.g. SEGAL, Hellenistic Magic; VERSNEL, Some Reflections; HOFFMAN, Fiat Magia; FRANKFURTER, Dynamics.

tional chthonic pantheon.³⁴ Similarly in Classical literature, while of course we keep finding examples of foreigners engaging with magic,³⁵ it is hardly possible to find any clear sign of cultural plurality in the descriptions of magical rituals performed by Greeks.³⁶ In fact, as far as Greek documentary, archaeological and literary sources testifying to magical practices are concerned, the clearly recognisable addition and integration of elements from different magico-religious traditions appears to be a later phenomenon, which seemingly started to develop from Hellenistic times onwards.

WILLIAM D. FURLEY, in the second contribution, offers an example of the early Greek attitude, focusing on a piece of evidence from Greek apotropaic-magical tradition that does not display any clear sign of transcultural influences; the so-called Getty Hexameters. The author provides a new edition and analysis of this apotropaic Greek metrical text (written on a lead tablet from the fifth century BCE Selinus), whose interpretation is still highly controversial. Thanks to original insights and new parallels, FURLEY reinforces the hypothesis that the text originated in connection with Dionysos' mysteries, in particular with the Orphic-Bacchic myth about the birth and childhood of the god. He also demonstrates how a passage in the text, which was previously interpreted as a Greek adaptation of an Egyptian mythical narrative, can be completely explained within the Greek religious framework and without assuming any foreign influence. Therefore, on the one hand FURLEY's contribution sets the base for comparison with later material, also highlighting some significant characteristics of early Greek apotropaic texts, such as their frequent connection with the mystery cults' milieu and their civic versus private connotation. On the other hand, it reminds us of various aspects of continuity between this early Greek tradition and the later Graeco-Egyptian magical texts, such as the use of the so-called *Ephesia Grammata*, 37 of specific epithets of Hekate and Apollo, and the prominent role attributed to these deities.

In particular, some verses of the Getty Hexameters are paralleled in two seven/eight hundred years later magical papyri (PGM LXX and SM 49). This demonstrates not only that the compilers of the later Graeco-Egyptian magical literature had access to much earlier ritual texts that originated in a Greek cultural environment, but also that these texts, with their long history of transmission, though apparently originally belonging to the ritual sphere of the mysteries, were still considered powerful enough to be integrated in the newer, redesigned magical scenario. The persistence of the Getty Hexameters testifies thus to the authoritative power given to earlier ritual texts by Graeco-Egyptian magical literature and provides an example of its possible compositional methods.

³⁴ See e.g. GAGER (ed.), Curse Tablets, 5–9, 12–13, cf. 26–7, 76–7 (no. 17), 86 (no. 19), 90 (no. 22), 124–30 (nos. 37–42), 138–42 (nos. 49–51), etc.; OGDEN, Binding Spells, 6–10, cf. 44–6.

³⁵ See e.g. Aesch. *Pers*. 607–93.

³⁶ See e.g. Pind. *Pyth.* 4.213–19; Eur. *Hipp.* 509–15; cf. also the later Idyll 2 by Theocritus.

³⁷ A string of magical words that belongs to Greek tradition; apart from W.D. FURLEY's contribution in this volume, see e.g. MCCOWN, *Ephesia Grammata*; BERNABÉ, Las *Ephesia Grammata*; BERNABÉ, The *Ephesia Grammata*.

³⁸ Col. 1, 8 is paralleled in PGM LXX 12 (third/fourth century CE) and col. 1, 8–14 is paralleled in SM 49.64–70 (third/fourth century CE).

This literature could attribute authoritative power not only to ancient sources but, as already mentioned, also to foreign traditions, especially when they belonged to lands already renowned for their magical lore or when they could strengthen the efficacy of a spell with the addition of an element considered powerful in another culture and/or apt to provide an extra halo of mystery. In fact, some spells of the PDM and especially the PGM do actually in themselves claim to use purportedly Nubian, Persian/Parthian, Jewish or other foreign language for single recitations and divine names, ³⁹ or attribute the origin of a specific prescription to the established repertoire of 'famous' (or not so famous) magicians of Hebrew, Persian, Syrian, Trojan and Thessalian origin, next to Egyptian and Greek ones. 40 Thus the texts reflect an international or transcultural selfperception claimed by their authors and/or possibly desired by their users/clients. While these references to foreign magical traditions and ritual power are clearly employed for the purpose of giving additional authority to the spells, 41 to what extent did the composers have knowledge of foreign practices and mythology? There have already been several studies on the actual presence, quality and meaning of the Jewish elements, voces magicae, 42 etc. Even if they are generally perceived as being rather abundant in the PGM and PDM, more detailed analyses demonstrate that they are used more superficially than previously thought, since they mainly concern divine names or single words. 43 Similar problems surround the supposed 'Mesopotamian' influences, names and other elements within the magical texts from Roman Egypt. 44

³⁹ Nubian: PDM xiv 1097–103 (= P. Mag. LL, vs., 20, 1–7); PDM lxi 95–9 (= P. BM EA 10588, 7, 1–5); see DIELEMAN, Priests, 138–43; THISSEN, Nubien. Hebrew/Jewish: PGM III 1–164 (now PGM III.1, see Love, 'PGM III' Archive); PGM V 96–172 (mysteries and true divine name transmitted to Israel). Hebrew and Syrian: PGM V 459–89. Divine name as spoken in various languages: PGM XII 201–69; PGM XIII 1–343 and 343–646 (including animal languages); cf. DIELEMAN, Priests, 165–70.

⁴⁰ Solomon (PGM IV 850–929); Moses (PGM VII 619–27); Jacob (PGM XXIIb 1–26); Ostanes (PGM XII 121–43); Astrampsouchos (PGM VIII 1–63); Pharaoh Nechepsos, i.e. Necho II (PDM xiv 309–34 = P. Mag. LL, 11, 1–26; for the identification see RYHOLT, New Light, esp. 62); Syrian woman of Gadara (PGM XX 4–12); Dardanos (PGM IV 1716–870); Pitys the Thessalian (PGM IV 2140–44); Philinna the Thessalian woman (PGM XX 13–19); cf. DIELEMAN, Priests, 260–69. PGM IV 3007–86 simply states in the end 'this charm is Hebraic'. The tradition of the powerful 'Thessalian witch' still continues in a Byzantine spell, see the contribution by M. ZELLMANN-ROHRER in this volume.

⁴¹ Cf. DIELEMAN, Priests, 276–80.

⁴² I.e. sequences of letters apparently without meaning but with a special sound or visual impact whose origin is often to be found in 'foreign' words or divine names, see e.g. BRASHEAR, Greek Magical Papyri, 3429–38 with rich bibliography; TARDIEU/VAN DEN KERCHOVE/ZAGO (eds.), Noms barbares; QUACK, Griechische und andere Dämonen.

⁴³ BOHAK, Linguistic Contacts, esp. 250–51; BOHAK, Hebrew, Hebrew Everywhere?; FAUTH, Jao-Jahwe; LIDONNICI, 'According to the Jews'; MO. SMITH, Jewish Elements; MARCOS, Motivos judíos; LEONAS, Septuagint; QUACK, Alttestamentliche Motive. For more details, cf. also below, part III of this Introduction.

⁴⁴ Cf. e.g. for divination techniques, BEERDEN, 'Dismiss Me'; FARAONE, Necromancy, esp. 275–7; VERGOTE, Joseph, 172–5; for specific magical spells/practices and structural elements FARAONE, *Mystodokos*; DICKIE, Learned Magician, esp. 183–9; GRAF, Gottesnähe, 154–7. See also the contribu-

Index of Sources

PGM/PDM/SM

PGM I (P. Berl. inv. 5025)	92, 102, 107, 127	PGM IV (Bibl. Nat. suppl.	gr. 574)
117–19	209	`	15, 94, 104, 107,
164	143		113, 116, 127,
222–31	222		147, 180, 185
232–47	231	1–85	130
247–62	222	86–7	130, 145
262–347	125, 127–9, 133,	154–285	145
	145–6	154-466	96
315–25	102	180	142
		218	142
PGM II (P. Berl. inv. 5026), cf. also PGM VI	296–466	101, 235
	14, 92, 107–8,	337	66
	127	348-56	279
2–4	161	436-61	102, 158
5–7	161	438–63	267
33	67	475–829 ('Mithras Litu	
64–183	124, 126–129,	`	122, 145, 231
	141, 146, 151,	604–18	231
	162, 164, 166,	641	142
	173	779–92	231
101	141	850–929	10, 129, 145
107	141	930-1114	16–17, 124, 126–
121	268		48
150-54	69	939–48	92
158	68	940	219, 221
		1115–66	129
PGM III (P. Mimaut; P. Lo	ouvre N 2391)	1146–7	142-143
•	14, 92, 94, 102,	1167–226	129
	106–7, 185	1195	143
1–164 (III.1)	10, 97, 122	1200	143
144 (III.1)	143	1227–64	129
187–262 (III.2)	233	1275–322	133
264–75 (III.2)	99	1331-89	145-6
275–81 (III.2)	118	1350–76	119
291 (III.2)	129	1390–495	70
292–310 (III.2)	16, 172	1416	67
328–31 (III.2)	99	1496–595	70
410–23 (III.2)	145	1596–716	163
494–611 (III.1)	163, 233	1643	143
551 (III.1)	142	1684	141
699 (III.1)	129	1716-870	10

1722		60	06.172	10.21
1722		69	96–172	10, 21
1724		233	256–66	99
1762		268	291–7	99
1801		268	304–69	70
1957	-89	102, 158	340	67
2005	-144	145	370–439	150–51, 155,
2140	44	10, 104		160-61, 164-66,
2217	-26	71		168-70
2359	-72	16, 19, 180, 228–	370-446	150, 175
		9, 232–4, 236	400–420	102
2365	-6	231	426	67
2365	- 7	289	440–46	175, 177
2373	-440	16, 19, 234	440-58	16, 150, 153,
2396		177		155, 168–70
2441		145	459–89	10
2469		250	466–7	143
2473		250		
2484			PGM Va (P. Holm., p. 42)	107
2524		267	3	129
2531		46	3	12)
2574			PGM VI (P. Lond. 47)	14, 108
2599		222	1–47+II 1–64	133, 142, 145,
2601		250	1-4/+11 1-04	150–51, 153–55,
	0 707			158, 161–2, 164–
		145		
2643		102	22 29	70
2661		222	22–38	108
2663		250		10 15 15 01
2708			PGM VII (P. Lond. I 121)	12, 15, 17, 91–
2749		250		123, 127, 132
2749		66–67	1–148	276
2819		267	149–54	111, 116
2846	- 7	48	169	111
2891		16, 19, 238–55	196	115
2913	-14	67	204–6	115
3007	-86	10	208	115
3020		21	217	116
3086	-124	16, 18, 145, 201–	220	115
		7	222–49	102, 108, 117,
3125	-71	16, 19, 177–8,		145, 150-51,
		232, 235		153-5, 158, 168-
3149		236		70
3153	-64	231	224	111
3165	_9	233	249	111
	-208	136, 150, 154–5,	250-54	150, 152
		168–70	250–59	116–17
			255–9	150, 152
PGM V	(P. Lond. 46)	102, 107, 112,	260–64	119
1	(185	260–71	117
1-53		68, 143	272–83	115
8		143	284–99	71, 74, 115, 118
54		129	299	116
57		12/	-//	110

201	120	500	116
301 311–17	120	590	
	117	591–2	111
316 317	115 67	593–619 598	120 111
319	129	601	111
319–34	71, 118	604–5	111
323	111 129	605–9	119 222
335		619–22	
335–6	118	619–27	10
336	111	620–27	114
348–58	117 117	628–31 628–36	120 120
359–63			
359–69	150, 154–6, 168–	628–42	117, 150, 155–6,
201	70	(22. 2	165, 168–70
381	119	632–3	118
385	115	643	101, 115
392	115	645–6	120
399	115	649	119
407–10	117	652–4	120
411–16	117	664–85	117, 150–51,
415–16	115		153, 155, 160–
421–2	115		61, 164–6, 168–
439–40	69	((0, 00	70
452–3	120	668–80	102
459–61	111	686–702	71, 117–18
461	115	690	111
462–6	111	695–6	266
464–5	115	700	269
466	118	703–21	117
467–504	115	703–26	150, 153, 155,
468	120	715	168–70
478–90	117, 118, 145,	715 25	115
	150, 153, 155–6,	715–25	119
470	168–70	727	129, 172
479	115	727–39	121
490–91	120	740–55	117, 150, 155, 168–70
494–5 505–28	118	756	
	117, 120		111
508	287	756–94 766–70	117
510	119	766–79	111
516 528–39	265 121, 133	780–85 795	111 115
	1		
537	115	795–845	114, 117, 121,
539 540–78	120 117, 121, 126–9,	810–21	150, 155, 168–70 115, 118
340-78			
	132, 136–8, 145,	846–61 860–61	145 115
542	148 120	862–918	
559–60	111	862–918 896	118, 121 67
579–60 579–90		898–907	115
	117, 145		
588	115	919	115

924–5	115	144–51	150, 155, 159,
930–39	119		168–70
931-60	116	153-60	139
940–60	119	175	269
973-80	110	190–92	21, 150, 152
981-1026	110	201–69	10, 18, 70, 197–
984–5	67		201, 269
993-1009	151	232–5	16, 192–201
1009–16	150, 155, 168–70	244-52	92
cols. I*–III	110	430	204
cols. I*–IV	111	438	69
col. IV	113	cols. I*–III*	104
col. XXIII	114	cols. I–IV	104
col. XXVII	110, 116		
col. XXVIII	115	PGM XIII (P. Leid. J 395)	('Eighth Book of
col. XXIX	110	Moses')	94, 103, 106–8,
			199
PGM VIII (P. Lond. 122)	108, 127	1–343	224
1–63	10, 16, 19, 233,	1–646	10
	235	38–9	103
7–8	231	69–71	222
11	220	109–10	68
21–2	231	194–5	68
36–8	198	206–9	68
42–4	231	250–52	70
59–60	236	267–70	222
60–62	231	270–77	16, 19, 208–26
64–110	102, 108, 124,	343	103
	126–8, 145,	666	68
	150–51, 154–5,	734–1077	145
74 01	158, 168–70	760–823	199
74–81	102	788–9	192
85	129	795–6	198
DCM V (D. 1 1 124)		823–41	69
PGM X (P. Lond. 124)	60	925	67
36–50	68	942	142
PGM XIa (P. Lond. I 125 rt	·	(PDM xiv/PGM XIV) P. M	•
	108, 221		13–16, 97, 103,
1–40	209		106–8, 127, 135–
			8, 147–8, 153,
PGM XII/PDM xii (P. Leid			280
	13–14, 92, 94,	cols. 1–10	127
	106–8, 201	1, 1 (= xiv 1)	102
14–95	156	1, 1–3, 35 (= xiv 1–92)	137, 142, 145
21–49	151	4, 1–22 (= xiv 93–114)	146, 150, 155–6,
47 (= col. I*, 26)	102	4 0 10 (- 37137 1 11)	168–70
87	141	4, 9–19 (= XIVa 1–11)	97
87–93	164	4, 10 (= XIVa 2)	243
96–106	236	5, 1–33 (= xiv 117–49)	21, 124, 126–8,
121–43	10		132, 136–8, 150,

	153–55, 157,	23, 9–20 (= XIVc 16–2	7)
	166, 168–70		97
5, 7	141	23, 10 (= XIVc 16)	142
5, 12–13	143–4	23, 13 (= XIVc 19)	268
5, 17	138, 143	23, 16 (= XIVc 23)	67
5, 18	144	23, 27–31 (= xiv 701–5	
6, 1–8, 11 (= xiv 150–2		25, 1–22 (= xiv 750–71	·
*, * *, * * (*** *** *	126–8, 132, 134–		144
	8, 150, 153–5,	cols. 27–9	127
	157, 166, 168–70	27, 1–12 (= xiv 805–16	
6, 6–7	141	27, 13–36 (= xiv 817–4	
6, 18–19	196	27, 13 30 (AIV 017 1	124, 126–8, 132,
7, 8–10	143		136, 153
7, 13	143	27, 17	141
7, 13–14		28, 11–15 (= xiv 851–5	
	142, 144	,	·
7, 20	143	29, 1–20 (= xiv 856–75	
7, 26	67	29, 20–30 (= xiv 875–8	*
8, 12–18 (= xiv 232–8)		17 1 9 (1070	125
10, 22–35 (= xiv 295–3	- í	vs., 17, 1–8 (= xiv 1070	
11 1 267 : 200 24	127, 142, 145	20 1 7 (: 1005	150, 152
11, 1–26 (= xiv 309–34)		vs., 20, 1–7 (= xiv 1097	
11, 8	133		10
11, 12	138	vs., 24, 1–13 (= xiv 114	
14, 1–34 (= xiv 395–42			151
	133	vs., 26, 1–27, 8 (= xiv 1	163–79)
15, 25–8 (= XIVb 12–1	5)		137
	97	vs., 31, 1–7 (= xiv 1199	-205)
cols. 16–18	127		126, 138
16, 1–17 (= xiv 459–75) 125–6, 128, 137–		
	8	PGM XVI	96
16, 15–16	135		
16, 18–30 (= xiv 476–8	8)	PGM XVIIb	102, 151
	125–6, 128, 136		
16, 19–22	135	PGM XIXa 7	67
17, 1–3	144		
17, 1–26 (= xiv 489–51	5)	PGM XX (Philinna papyru	s)
	125–6, 128, 136,	` 113	13, 53, 96–7
	137–8, 141, 145–	4–12	10, 71
	6	12–18	280
17, 6	138, 143–4	13–19	10
17, 13–14	142	15 17	10
17, 23–6	135	PGM XXI	
17, 26–18, 6 (= xiv 515		1–28	198–9
17, 20-10, 0 (XIV 313	125–6, 128, 137–	19	192
	8	19	192
17, 27–8	o 144	PGM XXIIb	
,			10
17, 31	138, 143–4	1–26	10
18, 7–33 (= xiv 528–53)		20–21	143
18,7 (= xiv 528)	102	27–35	150, 152
18, 13–14	144	DOMANDA CONTRACTOR	02 101 107
21, 2–3	104	PGM XXXVI (P. Oslo 1)	92, 101, 107

295-311	21	(PDM Suppl.) P. Louvre E	3229
312-20	133	11 /	14, 97, 103, 107-
			8
PGM XXXVIII 15	143	5, 14–15	158
		5, 14–22 (= Suppl. 130-	
PGM LII (P. Lips. inv. 429	9) 96		150–51, 155,
			157, 168–70
PGM LVII	96	6, 6–19 (= Suppl. 149–6	*
(DDM 1-:/DCM LVI) D. D.	A E A 10500		150–51, 154–5,
(PDM lxi/PGM LXI) P. BM		6 25 7 16 (= Sympl 16	161, 168–70
5 1	14, 107–8 159	6, 25–7, 16 (= Suppl. 16	151
5, 1 5, 1–15 (= lxi 63–78)	150–51, 153,		131
3, 1–13 (– IXI 03–78)	155, 159, 164–6,	SM 9 (= PGM XCI)	96
	168–70	SW 7 (TGW ACT)	70
7, 1–5 (= xiv 95–9)	10	SM 29 (= PGM LXXXIII)	
vs., 1, 31–2 (= LXI 31–		13–14	138
, , , ,	142		
		SM 46-51	101
PGM LXII 12-16	70		
		SM 49.64-70	9
PGM LXIII 4–7	68		
		SM 71 (= PGM CXVII)	13, 96
PGM LXX			
5–11	66–7	SM 72 (= PGM CXXII)	13, 96–7
12	9	5–15	70
PGM LXXII	96	SM 73 (= PGM CIII)	96
rum laan	90	SIM /3 (- POW CIII)	90
PGM LXXVII 18	269	SM 79.12-18	151–2
I GIVI EZZZ V II 10	20)	5141 77.12 10	131 2
PGM P2	290	SM 85	151-2
PGM P2a	290	SM 90 (= PGM CII)	102, 145, 151,
			154-5, 158
PGM P3	295		
		SM 96 (= PGM CXXIII a-	f)
PGM P7		48–50	290
15–22	288		
23–9	289	SM 97 (= $PGM CXXIV$)	70

Egyptian sources

Astarte and the Sea	31–2	Book of the Dead	163, 211–12
		Ch. 17	157
Bentresh Stela	33	Ch. 39	156
		Ch. 76–88	211
Bes Story	31, 34–5	Ch. 108	156

Ch. 125	165	Fight for the Armor of Inai	ros
Ch. 130-36	142		33–4
Ch. 137 A	136	12, 22	36
Ch. 151	164		
Ch. 162–5	6	Fight for the Prebend of Ai	mun
Ch. 177	133		33-4, 37
Ch. 182–3	160	16, 6–11	36
Book of Fayum 1030–38	205	Horus and Seth	215–17, 226
Book of the Heavenly Cow		Inaros-Petubastis-Cycle	33, 35
180	139		
		<i>Ipuwer</i> 3, 12–13	40
Book of the Temple	95	•	
•		Krugtexte	
Book of Thoth	220		
· ·		jar A, text 4	• •
Coffin Texts	211	16–17	30
I 2b	213	22–3	30
III 144d	213		
III 204b	213	Litany of Re (PIANKOFF, L	itany)
V 399c	213	Papyrus of Ta-Udja-Re	
VI 271h	213	84–97, 147–57	165
VI 296	213	04 77, 147 37	103
VI 338i	213	Meryre (P. Vandier)	216
VI 394d	213	3, 12–13	39
VII 152d	213	3, 12-13	39
VII 162m	213	Mysteries of the Four Pelle	ete Ritual
VII 173h	213	Mysteries of the Four Tette	165
VII 487d	213		103
Spell 80	139–40	Neferti	
Spen 60	139 10	Nejerii 47	40
Delta Papyrus (P. Brookly	n 47 218 84)	61–5	30–31
col. 1	198	01–3	30-31
6, 6–11	203	O. Ashmolean Museum inv	. 1045 40
x+12, 7	202	see Sinuhe	7. 1945.40
x+13, 1	202	see Sinune	
X 13, 1	202	O. Chicago OIC inv. 12074	4 34
Dendara		C	
II, 57, 11	193	O. Hor 10	253
Djoser and Imhotep	39	O. IFAO inv. 2188	34
F 46			
Edfou	102	O. Narmouthis 41, 4	193
I, 147, 2	193		7
II, 31, 4–5	132	Opening of the Mouth Ritu	
VII, 259, 1	133	500	165
Ellroh Tomb of Dobori	211	scene 59C	201
Elkab, Tomb of Paheri	211	scene 59D	196–7

Oracular Amuletic Decrees 6–7

P. Amherst, fragments m-q (B) see <i>Sinuhe</i>		P. Hearst Medical (Berkeley, Bancroft Library, P. Hearst 1)		
			11, 12–15	290
P. Berlin			D II : 1 II D 6	12 151
P. 302	22, see Sinuhe		P. Heidelberg Dem. 5	13, 151
P. 304	18	140	P. Insinger, 31, 19–23	200
P. 304	19		P. Jumilhac	215
(Tex	at B2), 8, 2–3	140	P. Louvre E 3452	212
P. 104	199, see Sinuhe		1, 2 col. 7	212 213
D 45			CO1. 7	213
P. 156		106	P. Michigan inv. 6124+613	1
11-1	12	196	B x+2, 12	193
12		194		
P. BM			P. Moscow	
EA 99	000	97	inv. 120, see Wenamun	
EA 10	0059	5	inv. 4657, see Sinuhe	
EA 10)477	97	P. Rhind	
			I	
EA 10	0508, 3, x+13–15	30	5d4-5	196
			5d6	196
EA 10	808	13	6d5	196
			10d6-7	196
P. Boula	q 6, rt. 4, 1	157	5h8	195–6
			6h4	196
P. Brook	lyn		6h6	196
47.21	8.47 vs.	13, 151	10h1-4	197
.,	0.17 10.	15, 161	10h5-6	196
47.21	8.84, see <i>Delta Pa</i>	pyrus	Mathematical	194
P. Cairo	CG 58031		P. Tebtynis Tait 14	253
4, 3-	5, 1	196	x+4	194
D G 11			X 4	194
P. Carlsb	erg		P. Vandier, see Meryre	
1		204		
			P. Vatican 38603	
284		203–4	fragment a	197
418		203	P. Vienna D 6920–22	104
n n :	I Madina 26	204	rt. x+2, 7–8	194
P. Deir e.	l-Medina 36	204	PSI	
P. Hal. K	urth Inv. 33		I D 00	126 120 122
vs. 3,	x+7	204–5	Inv. D 90	126, 128, 132

E	120	43.50	20
5	139	43–50	29
6	138	148–9	30
1 170 6 5	202	182–3	30
Inv. I 72, 6, 5	202	190–99	29
D 177		224–6	35
Pyramid Texts	122	B B 1: B 10400	
246 (§ 252b)	133	P. Berlin P. 10499	2.5
247 (§ 1150c)	156	65–6	35
302	211	67–74	29
521	211	87–8	29
537	211		
616	211	P. Moscow inv. 4657	
626–7	211	3, 1–4	29
655	211		
668	211	Statue Berlin 2293	160
682	211		
		The Swallow and the Sea	30
Setna I	208–9, 214		
		Tale of the Two Brothers	31–2, 214–15,
Setna II (P. Brit.Mus. inv.			217, 226
	36–9, 214,	8, 5–6	39
	216–17, 223, 226	11, 4–7	31
3, 13	216	12, 9–13, 2	39
5, 5–15	37	14, 5	214
5, 10–11	216	15, 1	214
5, 30–31	39	16, 10–17, 1	215
6, 3–5	37		
6, 16	216	Teaching of Menena	34
6, 21–3	217		
6, 24–5	38	Urk. IV	
a. I	20 21 24 5	115	212
Sinuhe	28–31, 34–5		
O. Ashmolean Museum	inv. 1945.40	1344, 11–12 (Letter of)	Pharaoh Amenho-
24–5	35	tep II)	7
32	29	(C)	,
vs., 32	35	Wenamun (P. Moscow inv.	120)
10., 52	30	,, chamber (1.1410500W IIIV.	32–3
P. Berlin P. 3022 + frg.	P Amherst m_a	1, 34 = 3, 12	32 32
(B)	1. / millerst iii q	1, 34 - 3, 12 1, 38 - 43 = 1, x + 3 - 8	33
42–3	30	1, 30-73 - 1, 13-6	55
74-3	50		

Greek and Latin sources

Aelianus		Aeschylus	
De natura anim	alium	Choephori	
10.27	121	350	58

Persae 607–93	9	Nubes 749–52	280
Aesopus (et Aesopica)		Vespae 804	102
Fabulae no. 301	294	Aratus	183
Aetius of Amida 6.94	280	Phaenomena 85	118
Alexander of Tralles		Aristoteles	
Therapeutica 12	284	Metaphysica 1040a30	267
Antoninus Liberalis	220	Athenaeus	
10 21	220 220	Deipnosophistae 12.2.16	245
Antidotarium Bruxellense § 147	294	Athenaios? (FURLEY/BREM Hymns)	MER, Greek
Anthologia Palatina 9.99 (Leonidas)	46, 59	Paian and prosodion to	Apollo 173
Apollodorus		Augustinus	
Apollodorus **Bibliotheca** 1.9.9 3.13.5	220 220	Augustinus De civitate Dei 7.35 18.18	147 224
Bibliotheca 1.9.9		De civitate Dei 7.35	
Bibliotheca 1.9.9 3.13.5		De civitate Dei 7.35 18.18	
Bibliotheca 1.9.9 3.13.5 Appianus Bellum Civile 3.4.28.15 Apuleius	220	De civitate Dei 7.35 18.18 Basilius Caesariensis Liturgia (MIGNE)	224
Bibliotheca 1.9.9 3.13.5 Appianus Bellum Civile 3.4.28.15	220	De civitate Dei 7.35 18.18 Basilius Caesariensis Liturgia (MIGNE) XXXI, 1636 Βερναρδάκειος μαγικὸς κώ	224 287 δικας
Bibliotheca 1.9.9 3.13.5 Appianus Bellum Civile 3.4.28.15 Apuleius Apologia 63 Metamorphoses 2.1	220 241 227 227 238–9 220	De civitate Dei 7.35 18.18 Basilius Caesariensis Liturgia (MIGNE) XXXI, 1636 Βερναρδάκειος μαγικὸς κώ f. 474v	224 287 δικας
Bibliotheca 1.9.9 3.13.5 Appianus Bellum Civile 3.4.28.15 Apuleius Apologia 63 Metamorphoses	220241227227238-9	De civitate Dei 7.35 18.18 Basilius Caesariensis Liturgia (MIGNE) XXXI, 1636 Βερναρδάκειος μαγικὸς κώ f. 474v Boeus Ornithogonia 2 Bolus of Mendes	224 287 δικας 280 220 74
Bibliotheca 1.9.9 3.13.5 Appianus Bellum Civile 3.4.28.15 Apuleius Apologia 63 Metamorphoses 2.1 2.12 2.22	220 241 227 227 238–9 220 136 220	De civitate Dei 7.35 18.18 Basilius Caesariensis Liturgia (MIGNE) XXXI, 1636 Βερναρδάκειος μαγικὸς κώ f. 474v Boeus Ornithogonia 2 Bolus of Mendes Callimachus	224 287 δικας 280
Bibliotheca 1.9.9 3.13.5 Appianus Bellum Civile 3.4.28.15 Apuleius Apologia 63 Metamorphoses 2.1 2.12 2.22 11.5.1-2	220 241 227 227 238–9 220 136 220	De civitate Dei 7.35 18.18 Basilius Caesariensis Liturgia (MIGNE) XXXI, 1636 Βερναρδάκειος μαγικὸς κώ f. 474v Boeus Ornithogonia 2 Bolus of Mendes	224 287 δικας 280 220 74

Cassius Dio		Cod. Leiden, UB	
72.20.3	181	VGF 25, f. 5 vs.	296
CCAG		VI O 50 6 100 -t	200
I, 60–72	284	VLQ 50, f. 160 rt.	288
	•••	Cod. London, BL	
IV, 74	280	Add. 17900, f. 54 vs.	285
VII, 245–6	295	Harley 5604	277
XII, 29	294	Royal 16 C. II	
CIA		ff. 47 vs.–48 vs.	291
I, 4	242	f. 49 vs. f. 66 rt.–vs.	290 286
•			
III, 268	242	Cod. Milan, BNA	
CIL		E 37 sup., f. 373 vs.	283
III, 5561	181	Cod. Mt. Athos, Mon. Meg	g. Lavras
Clemens Alexandrinus	51–2	Θ 20, f. 10 vs.	288
Protrepticus		Cod. Munich, BSB	
2.12.2 2.13.2	52 52	gr. 105, f. 320 rt.	285
2.17–18	51	Cod. Naples, BN	
Cod. Athens, Bibl. Boul.		II C 33, f. 235 rt.	283
124, f. 275 vs.	295	Cod. Olympiotissa mon.	
Cod. Athens, Bibl. Soc. Hist.		97, p. 28	291
223, f. 66 rtvs.	286	Cod. Oxford, Bodleian Lib	orary, Barocci
Cod. Athens, EBE		88, f. 61 vs.	286
1265, f. 38r	279	216, f. 5 rt.	281
2492, f. 128 rt.–vs.	283	Cod. Paris, BnF	
Cod. Florence, BML, Plut		gr. 2091	285
7.19, f. 195 rt.	285	ff. 51 vs.–52 rt.	285
28.34, f. 83 vs.	284	gr. 2219, f. 31 vs.	291
86.14, f. 28 vs.	280	gr. 2244, f. 116 rtvs.	281
89 sup. 83, f. 95 vs.	286	gr. 2286, f. 84 vs.	279

gr. 2294		Dioscorides	
ff. 73 vs95 vs.	283	Markening	
f. 79 rt.	282	Materia medica	121
		3.38–9	121
gr. 2316		4.31	122
f. 319 rtvs.	291		
f. 360 vs.	289	Euripides	
ff. 361 vs362 rt.	287	Bacchae	
f. 372 rt.	287	138–9	49
ff. 429 rt.–431 vs.	296	142–3	54
11. 129 10. 131 10.	270	426	58
gr. 2419, f. 199 rt.	296		36 245
gr. 241), 1. 1)) It.	270	565	
~ 2510 f 22 mt	202	1019	220
gr. 2510, f. 23 rt.	282	** *	
1 142		Helena	
suppl. gr. 142	20.5	375	245
f. 158 rt.	295		
ff. 160 vs.–161 rt.	286	Hippolytus	249, 251
ff. 161 vs.–162 rt.	291–2	447–50	241
		509-15	9
suppl. gr. 2316		1300	249
f. 340 rt.	285		
		Ion	
Cod. Vatican, BAV gr.		126	58
200 6 500	202		
299, f. 508 vs.	283	Iphigenia Aulidensis	
		1211	45
Cod. Venice, BNM, gr.		1211	13
Z 524	277	Medea	251
202.	_,,	1,10000	201
Cod. Vienna, ÖNB, med.	gr.	Phaethon	
	C	224–6	163
50, f. 59 vs. 285			
		Rhesus	
52, f. 88 vs. 293		530–31	241
		230 31	2.11
Corpus Hermeticum	100	fragmenta	
		1023	241
Damigeron/Evax		1023	2-71
De lapidibus	184	Eustathius Thessalonicens	sis
De iapiaious	104		
Demetrius		Commentarii ad Homei	ri Iliadem
Demetrus		4.226	295
Peri hermeneias/De el	ocutione		
71	182, 200	Firmicus Maternus	49, 51
		Matherine	
Diodorus Siculus	49, 51, 194	Matheseos	
4.6	254	2.11.10	110
		8.13.1–3	118
Diogenes Laertius			276 270
6.50	181	Geoponica	276, 278
	-	7.31.2	277

10.83.1–2	286	5.387	284
10.87.6	284	5.426–30	251
		5.749 (= 8.393)	284
Getty hexameters	9, 42–61	8.170	277
-		8.269	61
Herodas	50-51	10.139	284
		10.140	284
Mimiam b i		11.366	162
8	49–51	14.233	296
8.16	51	14.236	296
8.40	50		
8.67	50-51	17.339	162
8.69–70	50	19.161	46
0.05 70		22.13	221
Herodotus		22.395–403	283
1.105	252		
		Odyssea	219, 221, 225
1.105.3	240	2.169	60
1.131.10–132.1	243	4	211
4.105	218	4.417–18	220
		4.455	218
Hesiodus	251–2	4.456–8	220
Theresis	5.1	4.458	219, 135
Theogonia	51	4.460	219, 133
9–10	46		
10	59	8.256–369	254
192	252	10.27	7
196–8	240	11	7
205	252	13.79	296
224	241	18.193	240
411–52	7	19.476–9	223
934	240		
1008	240	Hymni Homerici	
1000	0	2	7, 46
Hippiatrica	278, 290	2.101-3	209
Піррішніси	278, 290	4	229
Cantabrigiensia		4.443	59
10.5	284	5	241, 251
		5.1	
Parisina			240
22	281	5.1–5	241
22	201	5.34–7	251
Homerus	7 42 59 221	5.47-8	251
Homerus	7, 42, 58, 221,	5.81	251
	269, 277, 283–4	6	245
Ilias	53, 104	6.16–18	245
1.37–41	162	30	241
1.229	60		
		IG	
2.22	161		
2.952	284	IV^2 .1, 131 (Hymn to the	Mother of the
4.196	61	Gods from Epidauros)	241
4.206	61		
5.330–31	252	X.2.1, 65	54
		*	

Isidorus		Lucretius	
Hymn 1	242, 253	De rerum natura	
		1.1–28	241
Joannes Chrysostomus		1.629	253
De incomprehensibili a	lei natura	2.1117	253
4.391	287	5.1362	253
In epistulam ii ad Cori	nthios (homiliae 1-	Lydus	
30)		De mensibus	
2.5	287	4.64	242
Joel		Macrobius	
Chronicle (Chronograp	ohia compendiaria)	Saturnalia	
, 01	283	1.7.14–15	206
John the Physician		Marcellus	279
	202	Daniel II.	
Therapeutics	283	De medicamentis 8.193	202
Leo Allatius	270 207	8.193 28.74	283 282
Leo Allatius	278, 286	28.74	282
De Graecorum hodie q tionibus epistola ¹	uorundam opinia-	Menander	
175–6 (§ 26–7)	278	Misumenus	
176–7 (§ 29)	278	1–14	241
Limenius (FURLEY/BREM	ER, Greek Hymns)	Nicolaus Cabasilas	
Paian and prosodion to	a Anollo	Explicatio divinae liturgiae	
1 dian and prosocion is	173	26.2	287
	175	20.2	207
Lucanus		Nonnus	
Pharsalia		Dionysiaca	
6	280	13.36	241
		40.44-5	220
Lucianus	175, 185	40.49	220
	,	40.56	220
De morte peregrini			
1	220	Oracula Sibyllina	
Dialogi Marini		fragmenta	
4	223	1.5	266
4.1	220		
		Origenes	99
Philopseudes		Contra Calarin	
12	291	Contra Celsum	99–100
26	174	1.24 5.45	
		3.43	100

¹ Repr. in Leo Allatius, *De templis Graeco-rum*, Cologne 1645, 113–84.

Orphica		P. Holmiensis	107
Hymni		D. Ovv	
Proem-hymn, 11	240	P. Oxy.	
3	241	1011.218-80	162
8.12	269		
10	241	1380.173-4	194
29	241		
40	242	1381	156
49	242		
55.2	241	3931	221
55.16	245		
55.24	245	4468	13, 96
71	242		
		P. Prag. I	
Lithica		6.1–5	288
319–33	180		
		Palladius of Galatia	
Lithica Kerygmata		Historia Lausiaca	
3.5–6	181	17.6–9	223
10	180	17.0–9	223
20.12–16	184	Pausanias	
		1.14.7	252
fragmenta (BERNABÉ)		2.30.2	182
664	54	2.35.4.9–11	242
		3.14.5.3	242
Orphic-Bacchic lamellae	45–47, 49, 53–4	3.23.1	242, 252
		10.16	55 55
Ovidius		10.10	33
Ars Amatoria		Periplus maris magni	
1.762	220	§ 57	292
1.702	220	3 3 /	2,2
Fasti	174	Philodemus	
Metamorphoses		Περὶ ποιημάτων	
2.663	224	1.181	49
8.730-31	224		
8.732	220	Philostratus	
8.735–7	220	Vita Apollonii	
11.244	220	1.4	218
15.356-60	224	8.5	221
P. Gurôb 1	51	Phlegon	
4	49		
7	49	De mirabilibus	
10	49	10.520	164
13–14	49	ni i ni	
18	49	Physica Plinii	204
22	55	3.22	284
22–3	49		
25	55		

Pindarus		Περὶ ἀγαλμάτων 3.32	241
Pythian		3.32	271
4.213–19	9	PsDiogenes	
4.214–16	249	1 sDiogenes	
		Epistulae	
Scholia in Pindarum, I	Nemean	36	181
4.156a	249		
Plato		PsGalenus	
Piato		De remediis parabilibi	ıs libri iii
Ion		14.495	279
534a	54		
		PsPlinius Secundus Iuni	ior
Leges			
909a–d	8	De Medicina	
707 u u	O	3.15.8	286
Respublica			
364	40.0	PsPlutarchus	
	48–9		
364b-e	8	Apophthegmata Lacon	
364e3-365a3	50	224e	49
380d	218		
		Quintus Smyrnaeus	
Plinius	279	3.619-20	220
Historia Naturalis	78		
		Romanus Melodus	
27.57	121–2		
		Cantica	
Plutarchus	51, 194	36.13.2–3	294
Aetia Graeca et Roma	na		
290.D.3	241	Sallustius	
270.D.3	2.11	Da diia at mum da	
Amatorius		De diis et mundo	5.4
	242	4.10	54
764.D.3	242		
D 16		SEG	
De defectu oraculorun		42.818	44, 46
416.E.4	241		48
		3 (verse 5)	
De Iside et Osiride		6 (verse 11)	47, 51
12 (355F–356A)	194	8 (verse 15)	48
33 (364B)	194	40.42.50	
		49.1360	46–7
De superstitione		4	48
166.A.5	241		
		50.1001	46
Porphyrius	185–6	3	47
	** *		
De abstinentia		Servius	
2.16.4-5	183		1. E.
		Commentarii in Vergi	_
De philosophia ex orac	culis	6.48	224
134	183		

Sophocles		ch. 266	285
Trachiniae	251	Theophrastus	
Strabo 16.2.39.12–13	147	Characteres 16.12	49
17.1.35, 809C	121	Theopompus of Chios	
Suda s.v. Ιϋγξ	249	<i>FGrH</i> 115F 344	183
Tacitus	174–5, 185	Varro	
Annales 12.22	173	ap. Augustinus, De Civ. 7.35	
Theocritus		Vergilius	284
Idyllia 2 15.86 15.100–105 15.136–44	9, 241, 249 249 249 249	Aeneis 3.443–52 4.129 (= 11.1) 6.74	164 284 164
Scholia in Theocritui 2.17	n, Idyllia 249	Eclogae 8.95–9	220
Theophanes Chrysobalantes (Nonnus)			
Theophanes Chrysobala	ntes (Nonnus)	Georgica 1.35	118
Theophanes Chrysobala Epitome de curatione NARD)		Georgica 1.35 4.442	118 220
Epitome de curatione		1.35 4.442	
Epitome de curatione	e morborum (BER-	1.35 4.442	
Epitome de curatione NARD) Acts	The Bible (includ	1.35 4.442 ding apocrypha)	220
Epitome de curatione NARD) Acts 28:1-7 Acts of John	The Bible (included)	1.35 4.442 ding apocrypha) 14:19–21 33:11 Genesis	220 263 263
Epitome de curatione NARD) Acts 28:1-7 Acts of John 88-9 Amos	The Bible (included) 291 219	1.35 4.442 ding apocrypha) 14:19–21 33:11 Genesis 1	220 263 263 140
Epitome de curatione NARD) Acts 28:1-7 Acts of John 88-9 Amos 5:19 Apocalypse of John	The Bible (included) 291 219 282	1.35 4.442 ding apocrypha) 14:19–21 33:11 Genesis 1 Isaiah 37:16	263 263 140

Matthew		41	296
6:9-11	138		
		1 Samuel	
Psalms	14, 296	4:4	120

Other sources

Babylonian Talmud	11, 65	text 10.6.2 (= BAM 46	51) 76
BM			, ,
36330 l. e. 27–30	77	text 11.4	72, 75
47457 obv. 15	73	CT (BM) 22, 1: 22	77
64514 (82-9-18, 4494)	65	Enheduana	253
BRM		Enmerkar and the En-suhg Ensukeshdanna	ir-ana / 39
IV, 19	72–5, 77, 82–3	Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratt.	
IV, 20	73–4, 84–5	Elimerical and the Bord of I	39
Cairo Genizah	21, 120, 259– 75	Esoteric Commentary 14–15	68
T(AYLOR)-S(CHECHTER 157.72	2) NS 262	Exorcist's Almanac	71–7
J 594 (= G39 R-S)	260	Gathas	200
JTSL ENA NS 12.5	260, 262	Graeco-Babyloniaca	11
Jerusalem, NLI Heb. 4°	577.5.30 261–4, 271	nos. 10–11 KAR 35 obv. 16	6575
CMAwR		LBAT 1626 (BM 35537 =	Sp 3, 43)
I text 7.8, 3.: 17'-30'	70		
,		Library of Ashurbanipal	77
text 8.3, 1.: 23	75	LKA 135 obv. 11–16	77
text 10.1	71	Maqlû	70–71, 75
text 10.2	71	I 91 III	75 65
II text 3.4, 3.: 5–6	76	IV 12 ritual tablet, 129'	75 69
text 7.12	75	Middle Assyrian Laws A 19–20	76

Prayer of Jacob	267	8117 (832), fol. 29a-l	b 272–5
PARPOLA, Letters		Paris, Heb. 849, fol. 62	b 272–5
300 obv. 4'	76	Tel Aviv, Bill Gross, 42	*
Sefer ha-Razim	20–21, 259–75		272–5
1, 232	137, 142	Sefer Raziel	260
Budapest, Oriental Library, 244, fol. 59	rary, Kaufmann A 272–5	Sm 1379	77
245, fol. 42b–43a	272–5	SpTU	
243, 101. 420 43a 272 3		II, 22 + III, 85 rev. IV 11–12	
Florence, BML, Plut. 44.13, fol. 120a 272-5			76
	272-3	II, 23 obv. 1–2	73
Moscow, Russian State Library,			
Günzburg		V, 35–6	73
248, fol. 298a	272–5		
720 61 120 1	272.5	V, 243	73
738, fol. 129a–b	272–5	STT 300	72–85
New York, JTS		~	, = 00
1879 (163), fol. 45a	272–5	Toledot Yeshu	219
8115 (829), fol. 27a	272–5	Uruanna III 48	70

Index of Names

Deities, Divine/Demonic Entities and Mythological creatures

Abizion: 290 Astarte: 5, 31-2, 252 Adonis: 248-50 Athena: 51, 223 Agathos Daimon: 178-9, 186, 233, 235-6 Nike: 182 Attis: 54 Agrius: 220 Aion: 143, 178–9, 186, 223, 233 Atum: 38, 159–60, 192–3, 196–7 Akakallis: 55 Amalthea: 47, 51-2 Baal: 5, 66 Bastet: 29 Amphitrite: 46, 57 Bendis: 7 Amun: 32-4, 96, 161, 193, 196 Bes: 102, 108, 115–16, 150–51, 154–5, 158, - Amun-of-the-way: 32 165, 178-9 Amun-the-bull-of-Meroë: 38 Brimo: 49, 185 Amun-Re: 159, 267 Anahita: 243, 245 Chnoubis: 179 Anat: 5 creator god: 8, 100, 137, 140, 143, 200, 208, Antaura: 288 222, 236, 266, see also solar creator god Anu: 71 Anubis: 96, 118, 125, 142, 157, 206, 214, 248, 254 Daphne: 155, 162, 164-6 Aphrodite: 19-20, 192-3, 195, 198, 238, Dedun: 5 239-43, 245-55, see also Venus Demeter/Deo: 7, 44, 46-7, 49, 52, 57, 59, - Kythereia: 240-42, 252 209, 242, 253 - Ourania: 121, 252 Malophoros: 182 Apis: 137, 155 Dionysos: 9, 49-54, 218, 220 Apollo: 9, 18, 51–2, 55, 128–9, 141–2, 152, Dionysos-Bakchos: 49, 52-4 155, 158, 161-6, 172-8, 185-6, 221, 229 Dioskouroi: 96 - Delphic: 172, 186 - Hekatos: 46 Ea: 67-8 - Ieios: 162 Echo: 249 - Klarios: 162, 173-5 Ellil: 68 - Lykeios: 121 Elpis: 54 - Paian: 52, 162, 173, see also Paieon/Paian Ennead: 18, 31, 191-9, 201, 206 - Phoibos: 57, 161-2 Ereškigal: 62, 66-7, 77-8, 185, 243, 248, 250 - Pythian: 172, 174-5 Eros: 155-6, 247 Apollo-Helios: 164, 166 Esenephthys: 192, 195 Apophis: 142, 156 Eumenides: 241, 243 Ares: 247 Artemis: 7, 46, 57, 288, 295 Gaia: 7, 241, 243 Artemis-Selene: 267 Geb: 39, 140, 191, 193-4, 201-6 Asalluhi: 67 God (Jewish/Christian): 143, 200, 262-4, Ash: 203 267, 283, 287-91, 294-6 Asklepios: 120, 155-6, 165-6, 173, 176, 183 Gorgon: 184

Graces: 241-2 Kirke: 7, 280-81 Kore: see Persephone/Kore Hades: 96, 242, 248-9, 251 Kouretes: 47, 49, 51 Harpokrates/Horus the child: 131, 133-4, Kronos: 18, 47, 144, 192, 194-5, 201-6 141-2, 144, 156, 165, 175 Kybele: 7, 253, see also Magna Mater and Hathor: 44, 47, 121, 193-4, 196, 239, 252, Mother of the Gods 254 Hauron: 5 Leto: 161, 162 Headless god: 102, 155, 158, 162, 164-6 Maat: 160 Heka: 8, 94 Hekate: 7, 9, 18, 46–8, 52–3, 60, 67, 98, Magna Mater: 249, see also Mother of the 182-6, 241-3, 249-50, 252 Gods and Kybele - Einodia: 46, 57 Medusa: 292 Helios: 21, 92, 99, 102, 121-2, 141-2, 158-Mercury: 18, 177, 180–82, 185–7, 227–8, cf. 60, 162-3, 165, 192-5, 222, 233, 243, also Hermes 247, 259–61, 263–7, 269–70, 272 Meskhenet: 164-5 Metis: 218 Helios-Apollo: 269 Hera: 249 Min: 6 Herakles: 46, 57, 61, 181, 289 Mithras: 4, 122, 243 Kallinikos: 181 Mnemosyne: 160-61 Hermanubis: 177, 227, 232, 235 Moirai/Fates: 282 Hermes: 7, 19, 102, 122, 150-51, 155, 159-Mother of the Gods: 49, 241, 253, see also 61, 164-6, 176, 180, 182-3, 186, 228-9, Magna Mater and Kybele 231-7, 254, 284, 289, cf. also Mercury Muses: 50 Trismegistos: 182, 236 Helikonian: 46, 59 Hermes-Thoth: 220 Horus: 38, 131, 133, 141–2, 144, 158–60, Nabû: 67, 249 177-9, 193, 196, 203, 205, 213, 215, 231-Nekhbet: 220, 254 Nemesis: 218 2, 235, 253 Horus-Thoth/Har-Thoth: 151, 155, 159, 166 Nemty: 215 Hours: 245 Nephthys: 96, 155, 157-8, 193-6, 209 Hydra: 46, 57, 61 Nergal: 243 Nut: 39, 140, 193-4, 196, 204 Iao: 68, 119-20, 137, 185, 197 Nyx: 241, 243 Imhotep: 104, 120, 150-51, 156, 165-6 Inanna: 39, 252-3 Ogdoad: 191-2, 199, 205 Io: 249 Orion: 295 Ipet: 196 Osiris: 38, 96, 118, 120, 125, 134, 137, 142, Isis: 4, 35, 38, 47, 96, 133, 144, 155, 157–9, 144-5, 151, 155, 157-9, 164-6, 177-8, 177, 192–6, 202, 205, 215, 231–6, 238–9, 192-6, 198, 204, 206, 213-14, 217, 232, 241-2, 248, 252-4, 267 234-6, 254 Isis-Hathor: 20, 248 Khentyamenti: 157 Ištar: 32, 252-3 Wennefer: 157–8 Iynx: 249 Osiris-Apis: 155 Osiris-Sarapis: 158 Jam: 31-2 Ouranos: 202, 240, 252 Juno: 224 Paieon/Paian: 43-6, 48, 52-3, 57-8, 162, see Kerberos: 175-6 also Apollo, Paian Khepri: 197 Pan: 183, 185 Khonsu: 33 Pantheos: see polymorphic deities

Peitho: 249 Shiva: 184 Persephone/Kore: 44, 46-7, 49, 51-3, 57-9, Shu: 139, 193, 195, 197, 203, 213 66-7, 242-3, 252 Sobek/Souchos: 198, 204-6, 211 Pleiades: 241 Sobek-Geb: 204 polymorphic deities: 18, 163-4, 176, 178-81, Sobek-Re: 205 185-7, 232, 236 Sokar: 137 Poseidon: 282 solar creator god: 131, 136, 159 Proteus: 135, 211, 218-21, 223-5 solar god: 31, 67–8, 125, 130, 133–5, 139, Ptah: 32, 38, 137-40, 156, 211 141-3, 145, 147, 155-7, 159-60, 163-6, 193, 196-7, 203-5, 243, 260-61, 263, Oadesh: 5 266-9, 287 Re/Pre: 67, 99, 122, 134-6, 139, 142, 160, Tatenen: 159-60 196-7, 205, 214 Tayet: 29 Re-Harakhti/Pre-Harakhti: 31, 38, 213 Tefnut: 193, 197-8, 202 Resheph: 5 Thetis: 218, 220 Rhea: 7, 49, 52, 241, 243 Thoth: 19, 37-8, 132, 151, 155, 157, 159-61, 164-6, 180, 203-4, 208-9, 213, 220, 233-Sabazios: 49 4.236 Sakhmet: 29, 138 Titans: 51-2, 54 Samanu: 5 Tutu: 164 Šamaš: 66-8 Tyche: 178-9, 233 Sanghulhaza: 76 Typhon: 142 Sarapis: 68, 143, 155–6, 159, 172–3, 175–6, Typhon-Seth: see Seth-Typhon 178-9, 185-6, 206 Sasm: 285, 290 Venus: 241, 253, see also Aphrodite Saturn: 206 Selene: 50, 250 Yahweh: 68, 120, 137, 262-4

Zeus: 47, 51–2, 57, 61, 152, 161, 179, 181, 202, 204, 249, 251–2, 277

Persons (Including Heroes and Fictional and Mythological Characters)

Abraham: 288, 290 Achilles: 221, 283 Agamemnon: 161 Agenor: 221 Agrippina: 173 Alexander the Great: 175

203–4, 206, 215, 290 Seth-Typhon: 67, 203

Seshat: 132

Alexander the Great: 17: Alfonso the Wise: 260 Alkamenes: 182–3 Amenemhat I: 29–30 Amenhotep II: 5, 7 Ameni: 31

Amunnenshi: 29, 35

Anubis (Tale of the Two Brothers): 31–2, 214

Seth: 5, 118, 153, 155–6, 158, 165, 193, 196,

Anu-ikşur: 65

Apollonius of Tyana: 209, 218, 221

Ashurbanipal: 77 Astrampsouchos: 10 Augustus: 35

Baqa', daughter of Aziza: 260

Bata (Tale of the Two Brothers): 31-2, 214-

15

Bēl-šumu-līšer: 65 Bentresh: 33

Bes (Story of Bes): 31, 35-6

Borsippa: 67 Bryaxis: 175

Claudianus: 101, 115, 121 Kisir-Aššur: 65 Claudius: 36 Clearchus of Methydrion: 183 Lazarus: 290-91 Commodus: 181 Leo the Mathematician of Thessalonike: 280 Leo VI 'the Wise': 280-81 Daniel: 288 Lollia Paulina: 173-6, 185 Dardanos: 10, 233 Longinus, St.: 290 Deianira: 251 Lucius: 220, 253 Democritus: 101, 112, 114, 118, 121, 150, Lugalbanda: 39 281 Lykourgos: 53 Demodocus: 254 Diomedes: 252 Makarios, St.: 223 Djoser: 156, 165 Mariam: 296 Domitian: 221 Mary/Mother of God: 288, 296 Masliah: 260 Medea: 7-8, 182, 251 Elijah: 288 Elizabeth (mother of John the Baptist): 289, Menelaos: 135, 223-4 291 Menena: 34 Enmerkar: 39 Merenptah: 31 Ensuhgir-ana: 39 Moeris: 220 Erichtho: 280 Moses: 10, 101, 114, 116, 119, 199, 222, 263 Eucrates: 174-6, 185 Mousaios: 49-50 Eurykleia: 223 Nechepsos/Necho II: 10 Gilgamesh: 39 Neferti: 30 Nestor: 284 Hannibal: 43 Noah: 259 Harvothes: 35-6 Hektor: 283 Ocyrhoë: 224 Odysseus: 7, 223, 284 Hippolytus: 251 Horus-son-of-Paneshe: 37-9, 216-17 Onchsheshongi: 30 Orpheus: 45, 49-50, 281 Horus-son-of-the-Nubian-woman: 36–9, 216-17 Ostanes: 10 Ieu: 101 Patapius, St.: 290 Imhotep: see under Deities Paul (apostle)/St. Paul: 291 Inaros: 36, 40 Pay-iry/Mery-Sakhmet: 34 Iqīšâ: 65, 73 Penelope: 223 Isaac: 288 Periklymenos: 218, 220 Phaedra: 249, 251 Ištar-šumu-ēreš: 69-70 Itti-Marduk-balātu: 65 Philinna the Thessalian woman: 10, 280 Ixion: 248-9 Phokas, St.: 290 Phylakis and Phylandros: 55 Jacob: 10, 200, 288 Pibechis: 101 James (apostle): 219 Pitys the Thessalian: 10, 104 Jesus Christ: 21, 218-19, 288-91, 296 Pnouthis: 101 John (apostle): 219 Proetus: 224 Ptolemy I Soter: 175 John the Baptist: 288-9, 290-91

Pythagoras: 101, 114, 118, 121, 150, 224

Ramses II: 5, 36

Joshua: 288

Justinian I: 277

Ramses III: 34, 95 Ramses IV: 34 Ramses V: 215 Romulus and Remus: 55

Sagburru: 39-40

Sarah: 288

Septimius Severus: 98

Setna Khaemwaset: 36-8, 209, 214, 216, 223

Simaetha: 249 Sinuhe: 29-30, 34-5

Siosiris: 36-8, 40, 214, 216-17, 223

Sisinnia: 289

Sisinnios: 288-90

Solomon: 10, 129-30, 259 Syrian woman of Gadara: 10, 71 Tantalos: 216, 293 Tasis: 35-6

Tiresias: 7 Titus: 283 Tiekerbaal: 32

Trajan: 282-3

Ur-ginuna: 39

Vespasian: 283

Wenamun: 32-3

Zoroaster: 286

Places

Abusir el-Melek: 97 Chimara: 283 Abvdos: 158 Chios: 278

Acropolis: 182, 185 Aeaea: 7 Aidepsos: 283 Aitolia: 288

Aleppo: 206

Alexandria: 50, 98, 106-7, 122, 147, 175-6,

179

Amsterdam: 260 Anatolia: 64

Aphroditopolis (Atfih): 121

Arabia: 30 Aratta: 39-40 Ashkenaz: 264

Asia Minor: 166, 172, 174

Aššur: 65

Assyria: 63-4, 252 Athens: 101, 182, 242

Babylon: 65, 73 Babylonia: 63-5, 74 Bakhtan: 33

Boeotia: 179 Byblos: 32, 34

Byzantium: 277, 284-5, 291-2, 295-6

Cairo: 20, 259-60, 264 Carnuntum: 288 Castille: 260

Constantinople: 277-8, 295

Crete: 52, 288

Cyprus: 33, 240, 245, 252

Dalmatia: 184 Delos: 180

Delphi: 51, 55, 173, 175, 185-6

Dendara: 242 Didyma: 172-3

Ebla: 63

Elephantine: 35, 138 Eleusis: 242

Eleutherna (Crete): 54

El-Kab: 211 Elyrus: 55 Emmaus: 219 Ephesos: 179 Epidauros: 165, 241 Euphrates: 64

Fayum: 97-8

Gebelein: 216 Gela: 181 Gurôb: 49

Hadrumetum: 101

Hattuša: 64

Heliopolis: 192, 198, 203 Hermonthis: 14, 108, 119 Hermopolis: 37, 191

Himera: 46

Israel: 10 Italy: 264

Jerusalem: 130

Kaneš: 63 Karnak: 161

Kepoureio (Macedonia): 295

Kerkyra: 286

Klaros: 172-5, 185-6

Kolchis: 8

Kolophon (Ionia): 162, 173

Koptos: 204–5 Krokodilopolis: 216

Kulaba: 39 Kurdistan: 181

Kusai (El Quseyya): 121

Kush: 39 Kythera: 240 Kyzikos: 181

Levant: 5, 28, 31-2, 34-5

Libya: 5

Lokroi Epizephyrioi: 46–7

Luxor: 33

Magna Graecia: 52

Mari: 64 Media: 289

Mediterranean: 1, 2, 4, 46, 181, 239

– Eastern Mediterranean: 65, 78, 176, 183

Memphis: 108, 120, 137–8, 156, 166, 199

Meroë: 39

Mesopotamia: 3, 63-6, 70, 76, 149, 199, 243

Middle East: 78 Middle Egypt: 121 Mirgissa: 35 Mount Carmel: 219 Mount Ida: 242, 277

Mount Olympos: 245 Mount Ossa: 58 Mount Tmolos: 242

Namer (Syria): 290

Napata: 39

Nazareth: 218

Near East: 2, 11, 29, 39, 63, 70, 195, 238

Nile: 98, 120–21, 194, 209 Nile Delta: 28, 35, 133, 204 – Eastern Delta: 31, 33–4 Nineveh: 64, 65, 77

Nubia: 5, 28, 34-7, 40, 217, 223

Olympia: 152

Oxyrhynchus: 288–90

Palestine: 259 Paphos: 296 Pergamon: 165 Phalasarna (Crete): 46

Philae: 242

Pompeii: 172, 181, 289

Punt: 6

Ra-Sehui: 205 Red Sea: 163 Rhodes: 289 Rome: 54, 180, 286

Russia: 292

Salo (Dalmatia): 184 Selinus: 9, 42–3, 48, 182 Sicily: 43, 45, 53, 279

Sinai: 34 Skythia: 218 Spain: 293 Sri Lanka: 99

Sultantepe (Ḥuzirīna): 64, 72 Syria: 64, 74, 78, 96, 286

Tebtynis: 95, 126, 132, 139, 147, 202, 204

Thebaïs: 121

Thebes (Egypt): 12, 33, 35, 102, 106, 108,

126, 135, 215, 219, 221, 224 Thebes (Greece): 152, 242

Thessaly: 54, 58, 96, 220, 280-81, 291, 356

Ugarit: 64

Upper Egypt: 12, 102, 171, 209, 211–12,

214, 216, 220, 224, 247 Upper Retjenu (Canaan): 29, 35

Urfa: 64

Uruk: 39-40, 65, 69-70, 72-3

Yemen: 264

Index of Subjects

acquatic animals and crustaceans: 146, 184, 210, 281–2, 294–5 agency: 229–30, 232–3, 237 aggressive magic: 74–7, 94, 117–18, 260, 277, see also curses and erotic magic alchemical texts: 107 amulets: 3, 21–2, 32, 37, 44, 72, 94, 98–9, 101, 103, 144–5, 148, 171, 177–9, 184–6, 200, 203–4, 222–3, 248, 276–8, 280, 283–5, 288–90, 292, 294–6, see also phylacteries	280, 286–7, 295 birds: 30, 38, 48, 99, 104, 122, 145, 155, 159, 161, 163, 175–81, 197, 203, 208, 210–13, 215, 217, 219–20, 222–3, 232, 246–7, 249, 253–5, 278, 286–7 blame-shifting: see slander/διαβολή borrowing: 3–4, 11, 20, 22, 28, 62–3, 66, 77, 96, 225, 285, 292 boy medium: see divination, divination with (boy) medium burning (magical): 38, 157, 245, 250, 283,
angels/archangels: 20–21, 100, 114–15, 119–20, 122, 137, 141, 155–6, 178–9, 186, 233, 259–60, 262–4, 288–9, 291–2	291 business spells: 15, 18–19, 69, 96, 117, 177– 82, 185–7, 227–37, 289
Gabriel: 155Michael: 119–20, 155, 262, 288	Byzantine literature: 283 Byzantine magic and ritual: 3, 10, 22, 276–96
- Raphael: 155	Byzantine magic and rituar. 5, 10, 22, 270–90
animal material: 29, 44, 46–7, 49–55, 57, 65, 69, 99, 104, 118, 120–21, 133–4, 145–6, 161, 177, 202, 204, 215, 222, 236, 246–7,	charakteres: 96, 99, 115–17, 230, 285–6 charitesia: 69–70, 73, 75, 77, 98, 117, 122, 138, 197
255, 279, 281, 286–7 anti-witchcraft rituals: 65, 70–71, 75–6 apotropaic magic: <i>see</i> protective magic	Christian tradition (and Christian elements): 3, 12–14, 20–22, 48, 92, 100, 103, 122, 130, 219, 223, 279–81, 283, 287–91, 296
applied magic: 3, 6, 12, 21, 93–4, 96, 101, 103, 260, 262, 276 appropriation: 5–6, 95, 100–102, 120–22,	clientele: 10, 14, 17–19, 42, 96, 98–9, 101, 105, 113, 117–19, 122, 186–7, 223, 230, 235–7, 249
187, 237, 239	coercive formulae: <i>see</i> compulsions
Aramaic magic and elements: 11, 65, 120, 198	compilation process (of magical handbooks): 3, 9, 13, 15–18, 20–22, 95–105, 113–19,
assimilation: 3, 100, 121, 163, 179, 181, 186, 194, 243, 252–3, 290	127–8, 130, 135, 138, 147–8, 192, 199–201, 207, 261, 263–5, 269–70
astral bodies: 71, 73–4, 109, 114–15, 118, 132, 134, 136, 141, 156, 159–60, 163,	compulsions: 13, 117, 131–2, 134, 150–51, 154, 243, 245–51, 255
176, 182–3, 196–7, 199–200, 203, 205, 213, 222, 240, 243–6, 248, 253–4, 266–9,	consecration rituals: 19, 175, 177–8, 184, 186, 201, 233, 269
280, 283–4, 286–7, 295, <i>see also</i> Ursa Major/Great Bear/Foreleg, Saturn (planet)	cosmogony/cosmology: 70, 103, 119–20, 132–3, 139–41, 192–3, 236, 253, 296
and Venus (planet) astrology and astral magic: 71–74, 77–8, 82–	cultural fusion: 2–3, 11, 16, 18–19, 23, 100, 152, 159, 161, 166–7, 228, 234–6, 247
85, 98, 115, 118, 121, 150, 163, 174, 199, 205, 284	cultural plurality: 2–3, 9, 11, 16, 18–19, 22, 27, 32, 41, 63–4, 124, 146, 152, 166–7, 171, 176, 181, 184–7, 201
Bacchants: 54	Cumaean Sibyl: 164
binding (magical): 96, 223, 235, 248, 250,	curse tablets: see defixiones

- curses: 35, 37, 96, 250-51, 260, 279-80
- defensive magic: see protective magic defixiones: 8, 43, 66, 92, 97, 138, 250, 278 demon/daimon: 5, 33, 41, 46, 69, 76, 98, 100, 117, 119–20, 124, 128–30, 146, 183, 185, 187, 222, 244, 246, 262–3, 280, 288, 294
- of the dead: 70, 76, 117, 125, 142, 144, 227, 262
- Demotic literature: 6, 30, 33–9, 199–200, 203, 208–9, 211, 214, 216–17, 223, 225, *see also* Egyptian literature
- dismissals: 131–2, 137–8, 144, 146, 148, 261 divination: 2, 10, 18, 21, 32–3, 35, 69, 71, 96, 99–100, 102, 107, 112, 115, 117, 125, 127–30, 132, 135, 144–5, 151–2, 162, 164, 171–2, 174–5, 185, 205–6, 218, 220, 260, 262–3, 280
- bowl divination, 99, 103, 118, 125, 127, 129, 137, 142–3, 145, 147
- deductive divination/omina: 42, 77, 147, 152
- direct vision: 99, 117, 121, 139, 172, 186, 201, 219
- divination with (boy) medium: 33, 103, 117, 119, 121, 125–6, 128–9, 137–9, 141, 145–6, 153
- dream interpretation: 35, 38, 99, 137
- dream oracles: 15, 17–18, 33, 99, 103, 114–18, 121, 124, 126–9, 133, 136–7, 142, 149–70, 173, 175–7, 185–6, 262–4, cf. also incubation
- ecstatic divination: 32, 33, 173, 218, cf. also oracles (institutional), Greek
- lamp divination: 15, 17–18, 99, 103, 121, 124–48, 151–5, 157, 165–6
- necromancy: 7, 142, 171, 280
- sunlight divination: 125, 139
- divine epithets: 9, 11, 16, 19–20, 44, 52, 67, 98, 120, 134, 138–9, 141–4, 147, 153, 155–63, 172, 178–9, 182, 186–7, 191, 193–6, 198, 200, 239–43, 245, 249–50, 252–4, 265–70
- divine iconography: 16, 18–19, 102, 141–2, 144, 155, 158–61, 163–4, 175–86, 202, 204–6, 229, 231, 235, 227–37, 247, 254, 292
- Djed-pillar: 137
- drawings (magical): 12, 16, 102, 104, 111–12, 115–17, 119–20, 145, 155, 158–9, 162, 184

- dream requests: *see* divination, dream oracles dream-sending spells: 116–17, 150
- efficacy: 6, 10, 28, 45, 58, 94, 224, 228, 230–35, 246, 251, 278, 283–4
- Egyptian literature: 6, 19, 27–35, 37, 40–41, 97, 139, 194, 202–3, 205, 209, 211, 214–16, 220, 224–5, 290, *see also* Demotic literature and hymns, Egyptian
- funerary literature: 6, 19, 133, 136, 139– 40, 142, 146, 156, 164–5, 195–7, 201, 209, 211–14, 224
- Egyptian magic, ritual and religion: 1, 3–8, 12–14, 17–20, 29, 31–9, 47, 64, 93–100, 103, 117, 120, 122, 128–9, 132–48, 152–3, 155–61, 163–7, 171, 177–8, 181–2, 186–7, 191–207, 209–17, 220, 224–5, 230–31, 234, 236, 238–9, 241, 245, 247–8, 253–5, 266–7, 290
- Egyptian priests: 6, 8, 13–14, 18, 29, 36, 39, 94–5, 97–8, 134, 144–6, 187, 200, 202, 210, 221
- Egyptian temples: 6, 12–14, 17, 37, 94–8, 104, 113, 120–22, 132–3, 144, 152, 161, 164, 187, 199, 242
- Ephesia Grammata: see voces magicae, magical logoi
- epiphany: 125, 128–9, 133, 140–41, 146, 201 erotic magic: 2, 19, 22, 69–70, 75–7, 96, 98, 101, 103, 112, 114, 116–18, 121, 127, 179, 223, 235, 238–55, 277, 279, 296
- exorcisms/exorcists: 11, 21, 63–5, 67, 69–70, 73–5, 77–8, 129–30, 280, 288, 291 eye-paint: *see* ointments
- figurines: 15, 18–19, 32, 70, 161, 171–87, 227–37, 289
- Greek literature: 7–9, 19–20, 42, 46, 48–54, 58–9, 119, 147, 161–2, 174, 182–3, 194, 209, 211, 218–21, 223–5, 240–42, 245, 249, 251–2, 254, 280, 291, see also hymns, Greek, and Homeric verses/references used for magical purposes/in magical hymns
- Greek magic, ritual and religion: 3–4, 7–9, 12–13, 17–20, 42–61, 63, 69, 75, 95–8, 100, 121–2, 128–9, 145, 152, 155–6, 159–67, 171–6, 179–84, 186–7, 201–2, 205–7, 218, 221, 228–30, 240–43, 245, 247–55, 269, 277, 280, 283, 289, 295

in modern Greece: 277–80, 282–3, 286, 288–9, 291–2, 295–6

healing spells: *see* iatromagic hemerology: 71–77, 79–85, 115, 118 *historiolae*: 44, 47, 53, 96, 234–5, 245, 249,

history of research: 11–15, 91–4, 106–9, 125, 210

Hittite magic and ritual: 11, 64, 66 *hk*³ (concept): 8, 14, 94, 215–16

Homeric verses/references used for magical purposes/in magical hymns: 135, 147, 161–2, 219–21, 276–7, 283–4, 296, see also Homeromanteion

Homeromanteion: 109–11, 113, 115–17, 121, 276

hymns:

- Egyptian: 134-5, 140-41, 194, 242, 253
- Greek: 20, 44, 46, 52–3, 59, 92, 98, 162, 172–3, 176, 229, 238–42, 245, 248, 251, 254, 269–70, 294
- magical: 16, 19–20, 44, 92, 98, 102, 108, 129–30, 135–6, 141, 147, 151, 158–63, 166, 173, 199–201, 219–20, 238–55, 267, 270
- Mesopotamian: 253

iatromagic: 5, 22, 29, 33, 36, 53, 71, 75, 94, 98–9, 103, 115, 117, 119, 204, 218, 236, 277–84, 286–90, 292–6

identification:

- between different deities: 5, 7, 19–20, 67, 156, 158–9, 162–6, 179–80, 193–5, 204, 234, 236, 238–9, 243, 247, 252–4, 290
- self-identification of the magician with divine entities: 13, 95, 133, 138, 143–4, 153, 158, 198–9, 201, 290–91

incubation: 18, 35, 37, 99, 149, 165–6, 173, 176–7, 185

insects and arachnids: 94, 98, 103, 111, 113, 116–17, 145, 156, 163, 176, 182, 211, 214, 285, 295

invisibility spells: 19, 38, 103, 114, 217, 221–3

Jewish magic and ritual (and Jewish elements): 3–4, 10, 12–13, 17, 20–21, 68, 99–100, 103, 119–20, 122, 130, 137–8, 142–3, 147–8, 153, 155, 157, 171, 186, 197, 200–201, 207, 222, 259–75, 277

- Adonai: 100, 119–20, 200
- Sabaoth: 100, 119-20, 155, 185, 197, 200

lamellae: 45–7, 49, 53–4, 99, 116, 232, cf.defixiones

lapidary handbooks: 18, 171, 181, 184–6, 205

laurel: 18, 69, 121, 129, 151, 153, 161–2, 164, 166–7, 172–3, 175, 186, 283

layout and structure of magical papyri: 15, 17, 101–5, 111–16, 125–7, 129–30, 132, 262

lecanomancy: *see* divination, bowl divination lectional signs: 15, 17, 96, 109–10, 112–14 – *paragraphos*: 104, 109, 130, 150

legal and ethical restrictions (of magic): 8, 75, 77, 173–4, 227, 276

love spells: see erotic magic

lycanthropy: 218

lychnomancy: see divination, lamp divination

Maat (concept): 30, 160, 165 magical gems: 15, 18, 66, 93, 97–8, 141, 164, 171, 175–9, 181–2, 184–6, 205–6, 278 magical implements: 149, 152

- bowls: 118, 125, 142, 145, 147, 172
- bricks: 18, 133, 151, 164-5
- inks: 151, 231, 293
- knots: 70, 120
- lamps: 17, 118, 120, 124–5, 128–30, 132–3, 135–6, 138–42, 144, 147, 149–54, 157, 175, 180
- nails: 43, 118, 286
- rings: 70, 149, 151, 155–6, 174–8, 185, 197, 201, 269

magical words/names: see voces magicae magicians: see ritual experts/magicians mammals: 29, 44, 46–55, 57–61, 69, 98–9,

120–21, 133–4, 137, 142, 163, 177, 182, 186, 191, 201–4, 206, 208–15, 218–20, 222–4, 232–3, 235–6, 246–7, 254, 281–4, 286, 290, 293–5

medical spells: see iatromagic

Mesopotamian literature: 11, 39–40, 65, 68, 250

Mesopotamian magic, ritual and religion (and Mesopotamian elements): 3–5, 10–13, 19, 21, 62–85, 147, 149, 185, 239, 243, 249–50, 253

metals: 9, 11, 29, 43–5, 47, 49, 53–5, 57–8, 66, 93, 99, 118, 143–4, 151, 172–3, 177–

```
minerals and stones: 29, 43-4, 48, 53, 57-8,
   69, 78, 93, 99, 139, 144, 155, 175-80,
   182, 184-5, 197, 229, 232-3, 281, 293,
mummy/mummification: 29, 144, 177-8,
   206, 248
mystery cults: 4, 9, 44, 46, 48-55, 58, 98,
   238-9
myth: 1, 4-5, 9-10, 18-19, 44-5, 46-9, 51-5,
   69-71, 142, 153, 157-8, 162, 202-4, 214-
   15, 217–18, 221, 229, 231, 234–7, 241–3,
   245, 248-50, 254, 281-3, 293
Netherworld: see Underworld
Nubian magic and ritual (and Nubian ele-
   ments): 4, 6–8, 10, 27–8, 34–40, 216–17,
   223
Nun: 141
offerings (including sacrifice): 29, 32, 37,
   45-6, 49-52, 57, 59, 98, 129, 133, 146,
   151-2, 172-3, 177, 180, 197, 215, 233,
   237, 245-8, 250-55
ointments: 97, 111, 118, 146, 151, 222
onomata barbara: see voces magicae
oracles (institutional):
- Egyptian: 158, 205
- Greek: 18, 42, 128, 152, 162, 164–6, 172–
   5, 186, cf. also incubation
Orion (constellation): 196
'Other', perception of the: 1-4, 6-8, 10, 27-
   41, 101, 146, 156
ouroboros: 112, 145, 197
palaeography: 17, 31, 65, 109-11, 206, 211,
paredros spells: 102, 156, 209-10
phylacteries: 18, 45, 69, 115, 117–18, 130–
   32, 144-6, 151, 177, 179, 184, 202, 204,
   206-7, 246, see also protective magic and
   amulets
plants: 19, 69–70, 96, 114, 120–22, 132–3,
   141, 145-6, 150, 154, 163, 172, 175, 177,
   180, 205, 208, 211–12, 215, 219–20, 222,
   231, 233, 246-7, 254, 276, 279, 281-4,
   286-7, 289, 293, cf. vegetal material, see
   also laurel
practitioners: see ritual experts/magicians
```

primeval creation: see cosmogony/cosmology

8, 184, 211, 215, 234, 248, 262, 284, 288,

290, 292-6

```
prosperity spells: see business spells
protective magic: 4, 7-9, 15, 18, 22, 32, 37,
   39, 42-61, 66, 69, 74-7, 94-5, 98, 101,
   103, 117, 144-6, 164-5, 171, 175-7, 179,
   181-7, 198, 204, 236, 246, 277-80, 284-
   6, 288-90, 295-6, see also phylacteries
pseudepigraphy: 10, 97, 101, 156, 181
Pythia: 164, 175
reptiles: 29, 52, 94, 98, 103, 142, 156, 163,
   176, 179, 183, 197-9, 204-5, 210-11,
   214-15, 219-20, 234, 291-5
restraining anger spells: 69, 75, 77
ritual experts/magicians: 6-8, 10, 13-14, 17-
   19, 32, 36-42, 48, 64, 67, 94-9, 101-2,
   105, 115-19, 122, 125, 128, 134, 138,
   141, 145, 152, 171-4, 187, 198-200, 202,
   206, 209, 216–18, 220–21, 223, 225, 229,
   231-3, 235-7, 242, 244, 247-52, 254,
   261, 264, 270, 280, 286, 290-91, 296, see
   also witches
ritual purity: 69, 95, 97, 134, 172-3, 255
sacrifice: see offerings (including sacrifice)
Saturn (planet): 205
secrecy: 2, 13, 19, 32, 69, 100, 114, 174-5,
   177, 180–81, 186–7, 204, 209, 236, 244,
   255
separation spells: 75, 98
shape-shifting: 6, 19, 38, 40, 135, 208–26
slander/διαβολή: 30, 35, 75, 102, 118, 120
statuettes: see figurines
syncretism: 17, 62, 64, 92-4, 100, 105, 147,
   166, 210, 236, 238–9, 241, 243, 247, 249,
   252 - 4
textiles: 99, 129, 144-5, 154, 157, 159, 172,
   202, 280
Theban Magical Library: 12, 102, 106-8,
   187, 208, 210
theogony: 51, 120, 192-3, 202
theurgy: 100, 102
threats (against divine entities): 13, 95, 153,
   206, 248, 250, 255, 279-80, cf. compul-
translation (ancient) of/in magical/ritual
   texts: 11, 18, 64, 66, 74, 143, 187, 193-5,
   207, 260
translation (concept): 14, 18, 160, 171, 179,
   186-7, 238
```

transliteration (ancient) of words or magical/ ritual texts: 6, 11, 18, 21, 65, 133, 137, 139, 143, 178–9, 181, 191–3, 195, 197–8, 200, 244, 260–61, 263–9, 277, 285 tripod: 172–3, 175, 186

Underworld: 20, 62, 66–7, 70, 156, 160, 165–6, 243

- Egyptian: 37–8, 142, 156–7, 159–60, 165, 197, 212–13, 216, 248
- Greek: 47, 52, 67, 160, 241–3, 252
 uraeus: 29–31, 157, 254
 Ursa Major/Great Bear/Foreleg: 71, 96, 118, 132, 146

vegetal material: 7, 65, 69–70, 93, 97, 118, 120–21, 125, 132–3, 145–7, 151, 153–4, 162, 172, 175, 177, 180–81, 183, 185–6,

201, 228, 230–35, 246–7, 252, 254, 280–85, 289, 293, *cf.* plants, *see also* laurel Venus (planet): 253

vocalic sequences: 62, 68–9, 99, 111, 179, 182, 199–200, 231

voces magicae: 10–11, 13, 16–17, 19–22, 62, 67–9, 91, 96, 99–100, 102–4, 106, 109, 113–14, 119–21, 133–9, 141–3, 147, 150–51, 154, 156, 178–81, 184–5, 191, 197–8, 228–35, 237, 243–4, 249–50, 252, 254, 262–4, 285, cf. vocalic sequences

- magical *logoi*: 9, 47–8, 67, 119, 137–8, 143, 176, 250, 285
- palindromes: 96, 119

wax: 37, 65, 70, 176–81, 183–7, 228–30, 232, 234

witches: 8, 10, 75, 182, 280

Plates



FIGURE 1: Sarapis enthroned with Kerberos (BM 30) (Photo: Christopher A. Faraone)





FIGURE 2A-B: Triple-headed god (BM 173) (Photo: Christopher A. Faraone)



FIGURE 3: Pantheos on thunderstone from Roman Ephesos



FIGURE 4: Pantheos on protective amulet (BM 290) (Photo: Christopher A. Faraone)



FIGURE 5: Triple Hekate statuettes (Reinach)



FIGURE 6: Roman plaque of Hekate (Vienna)

Pl. IV Figs. C.A. Faraone, Cultural Plurality in Greek Magical Recipes





FIGURE 7A-B: Hekate / ORARA (BM 69) (Photo: Christopher A. Faraone)