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A KIND OF MAGIC

Understanding Magic in the New Testament and its Religious Environment

Edited by
MICHAEL LABAHN &
BERT JAN LIETAERT PEERBOLTE

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PREFACE

The phenomenon of magic in antiquity has received much attention over the past century. General introductions have been written, collections of case studies have been presented, and numerous publications present the material remains of the practice of magic in antiquity.[1] The study of magic in antiquity has thus resulted in a greater availability of material relevant to biblical scholars. Still, it is precisely here that work remains to be done. How should, for instance, the impact of Morton Smith's *Jesus the Magician* be assessed thirty years after he published his work? And how should the borderlines be drawn between stories of magic and miracles in early Judaism and Christianity? What do Jewish elements in pagan magical papyri tell us of the religious interaction between Jews and the surrounding world? Did Christians take part in the practice of magic? Is 'magic' a valid category in attempts to understand the traditions of early Christianity?

This volume offers a collection of essays, earlier versions of which have been presented in the Early Christianity between Judaism and Hellenism seminar of the European Association of Biblical Studies during its Annual Meeting in Groningen, July 2004. It is the aim of this seminar to study Early Christianity and its literature within its social, religious, and historical contexts.[2] As a result, case studies are given here on magic in early Judaism, in pagan antiquity, and in early Christianity itself.

Part One of this collection of essays focuses on general remarks and hermeneutical aspects. Daria Pezzoli-Olgiati faces in her article the problem of magic in the study of religion by giving a critical introduction to recent contributions and by analysing ancient sources. She is offering new perspectives for further studies including the recommendation of including theories of communication. Emmanuel Nwaoru gives a contemporary African perspective on the study of magic in the Bible.

1. Bibliographical references to the literature on magic are given in most of the individual articles in this volume.

2. Earlier results from this same seminar that were published in the present series are: J. Zangenberg and M. Labahn (eds.), *Christians as a Religious Minority in a Multicultural City. Modes of Interaction and Identity Formation in Early Imperial Rome* (JSNTSup, 243 = ESCO; London and New York: T&T Clark, 2004); M. Labahn and B.J. Lietaert Peerbolte (eds.), *Wonders Never Cease: The Purpose of Narrating Miracle Stories in the New Testament and its Religious Environment* (LNTS, 288 = ESCO; London, New York: T&T Clark, 2006).

Part Two offers four contributions dealing with magic in relation to the New Testament. Tom Holmén and Graham Twelftree both focus on the study of Jesus and the practice of magic, though from very different angles: whereas Holmén asks for the picture of Jesus as a performer of magic in relation to the issue of theodicy, Twelftree approaches the subject from the angle of exorcisms. Michael Becker focuses on the use and meaning of the term μάγοι in early Christianity, and places the New Testament texts in which this term is used in their religio-historical context. Stanley Porter offers a discussion of the picture of magic in the Book of Acts.

Part Three concerns Old Testament, early Jewish, Jewish and pagan aspects of magic. Thus, Ann Jeffers' contribution offers a new paradigm for the study of magic in the Old Testament by taking Deut. 18.9-14 as a starting point. Eibert Tigchelaar presents a study and edition of 4Q230 1, a fragmentary text that raises the question whether it is a magical incantation, a liturgical text or both. Christiane Kunst presents the practice of magic by women in pagan circles and approaches the subject from a gender-oriented perspective. Ulrike Riemer asks whether or not the practice of magic was actually forbidden in ancient Rome, and argues that Apuleius' case is illustrative here: the authorities tried to stop the practice of magic, but at a popular level it never lost its attractiveness. Pieter van der Horst discusses the relevance of the Great Magical Papyrus from Paris (PGM IV) for the study of the Bible. Finally, Bert Jan Lietaert Peerbolte offers a discussion of a papyrus preserved in the Leiden Museum of Antiquities, PLeid. J395, which contains the so-called 'Eighth Book of Moses'. This pagan text appears highly relevant for the study of the interaction of early Judaism and its religious surroundings.

It is the editors' hope that this volume offers a new contribution to the understanding of early Christianity and the religious world in which it originated. In presenting this publication the editors express their gratefulness to the contributors who were not only willing to participate in the 2004 seminar, but also revised their papers for this volume.[3] We also thank the Groningen organization and the participants who contributed to the success of this seminar. A final word of thanks concerns the staff members of T&T Clark who have guided this volume through the process of publication, especially Joanna Taylor and Rebecca Vaughan-Williams.

Halle and Kampen, January 2006
Michael Labahn, Bert Jan Lietaert Peerbolte

3. A special word of thanks concerns Emmanuel Nwaoru. It was hard in 2004 to experience the political division between Africa and Europe that kept him from obtaining the visa he needed to present his paper. That he has nonetheless been willing to contribute to this volume is greatly appreciated.

Abbreviations

AA	*Archäologischer Anzeiger*
AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	D.N. Freedman (ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992)
AEL	M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* (3 vols.; Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1973–80)
AfO	*Archiv für Orientforschung*
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
AJP	*American Journal of Philology*
AMD	Ancient Magic and Divination
ANET	J.B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950)
ANRW	H. Temporini and W. Haase (eds.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1972–)
AOS	American Oriental Series
BA	*Biblical Archaeologist*
BAT	Botschaft des Alten Testaments
BDAG	W. Bauer, F.W. Danker, W.F. Arndt and W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 3rd edn, 2000)
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
Bib	*Biblica*
BibInt	*Biblical Interpretation: A Journal of Contemporary Approaches*
BJ	*Bonner Jahrbücher*
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BSac	*Bibliotheca Sacra*
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZ	*Biblische Zeitschrift*
BZNW	Beihefte zur *ZNW*
CahRB	Cahiers de la Revue biblique

CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CEJL	Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (Berlin: Reimer, 1862–)
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
DNP	H. Cancik, H. Schneider (eds.), *Der neue Pauly, Enzyklopädie der Antike* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1999–)
DT	A. Audolent, *Defixionum tabellae quotquot innotuerunt tam in graecis Orientis quam in totius Occidentis partibus praeter atticas in Corpore inscriptionum atticarum editas* (Paris: Fontemoing, 1904)
DTA	R. Wünsch (ed.), *Inscriptiones Graecae 3,3 Appendix continens defixionum tabellas in attica regione repertas* (Berlin: Reimer, 1897)
EHS.G	Europäische Hochschulschriften. Reihe 3, Geschichte und ihre Hilfswissenschaften
EKKNT	Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
EncRel(E)	M. Eliade (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1987)
EWNT	H. Balz (ed.), *Exegetisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2nd edn, 1992)
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GAP	Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha
GP	*Gospel Perspectives*
HAW	*Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft*
HBS	Herders Biblische Studien
HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion
HO	Handbuch der Orientalistik
HSCP	*Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HTR	Harvard Theological Review
ICC	*International Critical Commentary*
IDB	G.A. Buttrick (ed.), *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (4 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962)
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal*
ILS	H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae* (3 vols.; Berlin: Weidmann, 1892–1916)
JA	*Journal asiatique*
JAAR	*Journal of the American Academy of Religion*
JANESCU	*Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*

JEA	*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JPGMJ	*The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JR	*Journal of Religion*
JRAS	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JSAI	*Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*
JSHJ	*Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus*
JSNTSup	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, Supplement Series
JSOTSup	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, Supplement Series
JSPSup	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*, Supplement Series
JSQ	*Jewish Studies Quarterly*
JSSSup	*Journal of Semitic Studies*, Supplement Series
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
JWCI	*Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute*
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LSJ	H.G. Liddell, Robert Scott and H. Stuart Jones, *Greek–English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 9th edn, 1968)
MM	J.H. Moulton and G. Milligan, *Vocabulary of One Greek New Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1930)
NASB	*New American Standard Bible*
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
NEB	*New English Bible*
NewDocs	*New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity*
NIGTC	The New International Greek Testament Commentary
NJB	*New Jerusalem Bible*
NMES	Near and Middle East Series
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NovTSup	Supplement to *Novum Testamentum*
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
NTTS	New Testament Tools and Studies
Or	*Orientalia*
OTP	J. Charlesworth (ed.), *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983–85)
PB	Papyrologica Bruxellensia
PGM	K. Preisendanz (ed.), *Papyri graecae magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri* (A. Henrichs, rev. edn.; 3 vols.; Stuttgart: Teubner 1973)
Ph.	*Philologus*

PLIAJS.ST	Philip W. Lown Institute of Advanced Judaic Studies, Brandeis University. Studies and Texts
PW	A.F. von Pauly and G. Wissowa (eds.), *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1894–)
PWSup	Supplement to *PW*
RA	Revealing Antiquity
RAC	*Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*
RArch	*Revue archéologique*
RB	*Revue biblique*
REA	*Revue des Etudes Austustiniennes*
REJ	*Revue des études juives*
RevQ	*Revue de Qumran*
RGG^4	H.D. Betz *et al.*, *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 4th edn, 1998–2006)
RGRW	Religions in the Graeco-Roman World
RhM	Rheinisches Museum
RIGI	*Rivista indo-greco-italica di filologia, lingua, antichità*
RMP	*Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*
RVV	Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten
SBG	Studies in Biblical Greek
SBHT	Studies in Baptist History and Thought
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	SBL Dissertation Series
SBLMS	SBL Monograph Series
SBLSP	SBL Seminar Papers
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SCO	*Studi classici e orientali*
SecCent	*Second Century*
SGRR	Studies in Greek and Roman religion
SHCANE	Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East
SHR	Studies in the History of Religions
SNT	Studien zum Neuen Testament
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SÖAW.PH	Sitzungsberichte der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse
SOTBT	Studies in Old Testament Biblical Theology
SP	Sacra Pagina
SPAW	Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften
SPAW.PH	Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse
SPB	Studia postbiblica
SSN	Studia Semitica Neerlandica

STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
StudOr	Studia orientalia
STW	Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Wissenschaft
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
SVTP	Studia in Vateris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha
TAPA	*Transactions of the American Philological Association*
TB	*Tyndale Bulletin*
TDNT	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (trans. G. W. Bromiley; 10 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–)
TDOT	G.J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren (eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1974–)
ThWNT	G. Kittel, G. Friedrich (eds.), *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933–79)
TRE	G. Krause, G. Müller (eds.), *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993–)
TRGF	A. Nauck, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (Leipzig: Teubner, 2nd edn, 1926)
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
USQR	*Union Seminary Quarterly Review*
UTB	Uni-Taschenbücher
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	*Vetus Testamentum*, Supplements
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WDF	Wege der Forschung
WS	World Spirituality
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZPE	*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*
ZRGG	*Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*

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Part 1

FROM ΜΑΓΕΙΑ TO MAGIC ENVISAGING A PROBLEMATIC CONCEPT IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION[1]

Daria Pezzoli-Olgiati

Magic belongs, like 'religion' or 'ritual', among the basic concepts in the study of religions. Nevertheless, it is practically impossible to give an exhaustive survey of the different meanings associated with magic in anthropological and cultural studies, since there is no consensus at all in defining this term that has been used since antiquity: 'Magic is a word with as many definitions as there have been studies of it' summarizes John Middleton in M. Eliade's *Encyclopedia of Religion*.[2]

The first aim of the present paper is to explain why it is so difficult to conceive of and define magic as a unitary phenomenon. For this purpose I will briefly discuss selected theories on magic that have greatly influenced the way we approach magic today. This retrospective on different positions will lead to some general considerations about the relationship between religion and magic.

Secondly, I will reflect on theoretical approaches to magic as heuristic instruments to read ancient sources starting with a short consideration of two different descriptions of 'magic' within the symbolic systems of ancient religions.

1. *Defining Magic in the Light of Selected Positions in the History of Research*

a. *'Magic': Interactions Between Common, Etymological and Scientific Usage*

Magic is not only a scientific category employed in religious, ethnographical, sociological, anthropological and psychological studies. It is also a very popular word within narrative and science fiction: Rowling's *Harry Potter* series or Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* are famous contemporary

1. I thank Ann Jeffers and Anna-Kathatrina Höpflinger who took the time to read and correct this manuscript.

2. J. Middleton, 'Theories of Magic', in Mircea Eliade (ed.), The *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 9 (New York: Macmillan, 1987), pp. 81–89 (82).

examples of literary and cinematographic productions where magic plays a central role. In daily language, 'magic' assumes a broad range of usages: it can mean wonderful, exciting, enchanting, or express 'the quality of something producing surprising results'.[3] Furthermore, magic is not only a scientific, *etic* category in the study of religions but an *emic* self-definition in various new paganist groups.[4]

The notion of magic is no easier to approach from an etymological point of view. As a translation for μαγεία Liddell and Scott indicate (1) theology of the Magians, (2) magic; and for μάγος (1) Magian, one of a Median tribe, (2) one of the priests and wise men in Persia who interpreted dreams, (3) enchanter, wizard.[5] Therefore the Greek terms relate 'magic' on the one hand to a particular Persian professional class, and on the other hand to various specialists of particular ritual activities.

Furthermore μαγεία can assume a polemic meaning, defining such rituals and praxis with a pejorative connotation. The Latin *magia* covers the same broad spectrum of meaning, however the pejorative usage is more frequent.[6] These observations about the etymological components, although very concise, are sufficient to show the multi-layered connotations of this word since its advent in western traditions: specific meanings are combined with value-judgements, distinguishing 'serious' religious specialists, from the 'charlatans' described using the same word.

In the numerous attempts to define magic as a category within scientific discourse, the various meanings and possible associations at the level of etymological and common usage are not necessarily involved. Nevertheless, in approaching such a complex and evasive concept, it is important to be aware of the connotations given to such an elusive term as magic. This term, used for millennia in different cultures and languages and on different levels of communication, associated with various value-judgements ranging from religious and ritual practices considered legitimate or necessary to the absolutely repellent, can hardly be

3. R.E. Allen (ed.), *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990) p. 712.

4. Cf. as an example the Wiccan notion of magic, spelt 'magick' to distinguish it from other usages, J.R. Lewis: *Witchcraft Today: An Encyclopedia of Wiccan and Neopagan Traditions* (Santa Barbara, CA, Denver, CO; Oxford: ABC-Clio, 1999) p. 183.

5. H.G. Liddell and R. Scott (eds.), *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon,1968) pp. 992, 1070–71.

6. Following the etymological development of the word, we focus here on μαγεία and *magia*. In both Greek and Latin there are several other correlated notions such as γοητεία, φαρμακεία and *veneficium*, *maleficium*. For semantic implications and intersections of these concepts cf. F. Graf, *Gottesnähe und Schadenzauber. Die Magie in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (München: Beck, 1996), pp. 24–57, F. Graf and S.I. Johnston, 'Magie, Magier', in *DNP* 7 (1999), pp. 662–74 (662–64); M.W. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 18–46; and the contribution of M. Becker in this publication, pp. 87–107.

completely detached in its scientific or *etic* usage from all these implications. The difficulties inherent in envisaging magic as a scientific category, are illustrated in the following stylized survey on selected central positions in the history of the study of religion.

b. *Survey of Selected Theories on Magic*

A broad discussion about the essence and the origin of magic arises towards the end of the nineteenth century. In this scientific context, magic is considered as a universal anthropological and/or sociological category; a wide range of meanings are expressed; the developments are controversial; the approaches to magic are very different. Some of these concepts of magic remain influential in contemporary reflection on magic within the study of religion.[7] In this short survey it is not possible to deal with all the contributions about magic produced in more than a century. The focus will be restricted to a few selected, characteristic positions, aiming to reconstruct the main stages of the development in approaching magic on a scientific level.

At the end of his monumental work *The Golden Bough*[8] James George Frazer (1854–1941) reviewed his concepts of evolution in the history of mankind with a suggestive image:

> Without dipping so far into the future, we may illustrate the course which thought has hitherto run by likening it to a web woven of three different threads – the black thread of magic, the red thread of religion, and the white thread of science, if under science we may include those simple truths, drawn from observation of nature, of which men in all ages have possessed a store. Could we then survey the web of thought from the beginning, we should probably perceive it to be at first a chequer of black and white, a patchwork of true and false notions, hardly tinged as yet by the red thread of religion. But carry your eye farther along the fabric and you will remark that, while the black and white chequer still runs through it, there rests on the middle portion of

7. Cf. e.g. H.H. Penner, 'Rationality, Ritual, and Science', in J. Neusner, E.S. Frerichs and P.V. McCracken Flesher (eds.), *Religion, Science, and Magic: in Concert and in Conflict* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 11–24; H.S. Versnel, 'Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic–Religion', *Numen* 38 (1991): 177–97; E. Thomassen, 'Is Magic a Subclass of Ritual?', in D.R. Jordan, H. Montgomery and E. Thomassen (eds.), *The World of Ancient Magic, Papers from the First International Samson Eitrem Seminar at the Norwegian Institute at Athens, 4–8 May 1997* (Papers from the Norwegian Institute at Athens, 4; Bergen: The Norwegian Institute at Athens, 1999), pp. 55–66.

8. The *Golden Bough* was published several times in different editions: first in 1890 with the subheading 'A Study in Comparative Religion' in two volumes; then in 1900 with the new subheading 'A Study in Magic and Religion' in three volumes; then from 1911 to 1915 with the same subheading in 12 volumes and finally in 1922 in the shortened version quoted above. In 1936 the thirteenth and last volume of the long version of 1911–15 appeared.

> the web, where religion has entered most deeply into its texture, a dark crimson stain, which shades off insensibly into a lighter tint as the white thread of science is woven more and more into the tissue.[9]

This quotation illustrates very well two aspects that are central in our context. Firstly we can directly notice the late romantic, dramatic style characterizing *The Golden Bough*; secondly the main chronologically conceived stages of Frazer's theory of evolution are shortly, but clearly presented: magic, religion and finally science. Magic represents the most primitive strategy of the human coping with life and the world: it is the first attempt of man to dominate his hostile environment. Magical rites are performed following similarity and/or contact between different things (sympathetic or contagious magic), but magic in general is based (in Frazer's words) on a false, pre-scientific, assumption, since it is founded on a logical mistake:

> The fatal flaw of magic lies not in its general assumption of a sequence of events determined by law, but in its total misconception of the nature of the particular laws which govern that sequence.[10]

As the uselessness of magical practices is recognized, supernatural beings are integrated into the image of the world, which allows mankind a more effective way to interact with the world. At this moment the link between man, world and supernatural being can be defined as 'religion'.[11] Frazer's position received criticism almost immediately: particularly the concept of a homogenous, continual evolution of human history, starting with magic and leading to science, and also the definition of magic, religion and science as general, universal categories was not considered acceptable even at the beginning of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, Frazer had an enduring influence on the definition of magic as a contrast to religion and was also often used in popular literature.

Emile Durkheim (1858–1917) approached magic laterally: he in fact focuses on religion, defining it from a sociological, functionalistic point of view. Religion and magic are seen initially as similar, since both are complex systems of beliefs, rituals and myths. But they are radically different, or quite opposite, in their social collocation. In *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, Durkheim defines religion as follows: 'Une religion est un système solidaire de croyances et de pratiques relatives à des choses sacrées, c'est-à-dire séparées, interdites, croyances et pratiques

9. J.G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* (London: Macmillan, 1950 [1922]), p. 713.

10. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, p. 49.

11. Concerning the passage from magic to religion cf. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, pp. 57–8.

qui unissent en une même communauté morale, appelée Église, tous ceux qui y adhèrent.'[12]

The radical difference between religion and magic lies in their different social function. While religion builds a collective, magic is addressed exclusively to the individual; religion builds a 'church', magic can only have customers.[13]

Bronislaw Malinowski's (1884–1942) writings reflect a new form of scientific approach to magic and religion based on research in the field. His considerations about magic are tightly related to his stays in Mailu (Neuginea) and in the Trobriant islands. Malinowski's definitions of magic and religion are no longer conceived as general categories but seen mainly in the context of the cultures he had directly observed and analysed in his field work. Although the influences of Frazer and Durkheim are evident, his contribution is original; within the scientific discussion about magic, Malinowski's position focuses on psychological aspects, on emotions. Magic is seen as a fundamental stabilizing aspect in 'primitive' culture. The following quotation from *Magic, Science and Religion* illustrates this new dimension in the scientific approach to magic as a ritual technique:

> What is the cultural function of magic? We have seen that all the instincts and emotions, all practical activities, lead man into impasses where gaps in his knowledge and the limitations of his early power of observation and reason betray him at a crucial moment. A human

12. E. Durkheim, *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse: Le système totémique en Australie* (Bibliothèque de philosophie contemporaine; Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 6th edn, 1979), p. 65.

13. See Durkheim, *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*, pp. 58ff: 'La magie, elle aussi, est faite de croyances et de rites. Elle a, comme la religion, ses mythes et ses dogmes; ils sont seulement plus rudimentaires, sans doute parce que, poursuivant des fins techniques et utilitaires, elle ne perd pas son temps en pures spéculations. Elle a également ses cérémonies, ses sacrifices, ses lustrations, ses prières, ses chants et ses danses. Les êtres qu'invoque le magicien, les forces qu'il met en oeuvre ne sont pas seulement de même nature que les forces et les êtres auxquels s'adresse la religion; très souvent, ce sont identiquement les mêmes ... Faudra-t-il donc dire que la magie ne peut être distinguée avec rigueur de la religion; que la magie est pleine de religion, comme la religion de magie et qu'il est, par suite, impossible de les séparer et de définir l'une sans l'autre? Mais ce qui rend cette thèse difficilement soutenable, c'est la répugnance marquée de la religion pour la magie et, en retour, l'hostilité de la seconde pour la première ... Voici comment on peut tracer une ligne de démarcation entre ces deux domaines. Les croyances proprement religieuses sont toujours communes à une collectivité déterminée qui fait profession d'y adhérer et de pratiquer les rites qui en sont solidaires. Elles ne sont pas seulement admises, à titre individuel, par tous les membres de cette collectivité; mais elles sont la chose du groupe et elles en font l'unité ... Il en est tout autrement de la magie ... Il n'existe pas d'Eglise magique. Entre le magicien et les individus eux-mêmes, il n'y a pas de liens durables qui en fassent les membres d'un même corps moral, comparable à celui qui forment les fidèles d'un même dieu, les observateurs d'un même culte. Le magicien a une clientèle, non une Eglise ...'

> organism reacts to this in spontaneous outbursts, in which rudimentary modes of behaviour and rudimentary beliefs in their efficiency are engendered. Magic fixes upon these beliefs and rudimentary rites and standardizes them into permanent traditional forms. Thus magic supplies primitive man with a number of ready-made ritual acts and beliefs, with a definitive mental and practical technique which serves to bridge over the dangerous gaps in every important pursuit or critical situation. It enables man to carry out with confidence his important tasks, to maintain his poise and his mental integrity in fits of anger, in the throes of hate, of unrequited love, of despair and anxiety. The function of magic is to ritualize man's optimism, to enhance his faith in the victory of hope over fear. Magic expresses the greater value for man of confidence over doubt, of steadfastness over vacillation, of optimism over pessimism.[14]

In the work of Edward Evan Evans-Pritchard (1902–83), the interrelation between field-work observation and theory on magic became very important:

> All scientific theory is eclectic for a scientist takes the hypotheses of his predecessors and examines them by logical tests and checks them by observation. By these means he selects what he finds to be valid in each hypothesis and works them into a co-ordinated system. He adds his own observations and inferences and these in turn serve as hypothesis till they are verified by independent workers and are recognised as true by the consensus of specialised opinion. I have worked for several years on the subject of magic both by reading and by repeated observation of magical operations among savage peoples in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and have therefore had occasion to acquaint myself with most theories of magic and test them by direct observation.[15]

This synthesis of theoretical approaches and direct observation leads to a critical analysis of the previous theoretical position on magic.[16] Evans-Pritchard approaches phenomena such as 'religion' or 'magic' as parts of a whole culture, arguing that it is possible to understand them only within a determinate culture, which the anthropologist is living in and dealing with. The link between *etic* and *emic* categories is stressed; magic can be only described in a clear context, as a partial aspect of a whole system of thought:

14. B. Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion, and Other Essays* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1954), p. 90.

15. E.E. Evans-Pritchard, 'The Intellectualist (English) Interpretation of Magic', *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford*, IV, 3 (1973): 123–42 (123).

16. See V. Merten, *Eine gezielte Beschreibung. Edward E. Evans-Pritchards Beitrag zur Theorie der Magie* (Zürich: Fadenspiel, 1994).

> To try to understand magic as an idea in itself, what is the essence of it, as it were, is a hopeless task. It becomes more intelligible when it is viewed not only in relation to empirical activities but also in relation to other beliefs, as part of a system of thought; for it is certainly often the case that it is primarily not so much a means of controlling nature as of preventing witchcraft and other mystical forces operating against human endeavour by interfering with the empirical measures taken to attain an end.[17]

The focus is no longer on the question about the origins of magic and its development in human history and/or society; magic is considered instead as part of the complex web of belief and practice systems.

This schematic survey of selected positions in the history of research into magic aimed firstly to emphasize the diversity of approaches and points of view represented by the several authors. Secondly it is important to point out the fact that the discussion about the definition of magic is always strongly related to the definition of religion.[18] Thirdly it is also essential to consider the direct scientific context, where a determinate definition of magic is situated.

The selected positions do not reproduce the complete discussion on magic. Nevertheless the survey illustrates some basic tendencies in the different strategies of argumentation of the selected authors. Summarizing the relevant aspects for our purpose, it is important to distinguish between functionalistic definitions of magic from substantialistic definitions. A further fundamental difference lies between 'intellectualistic' theories of magic and definitions based on empirical research and, finally, between theories of magic focusing on a general, historical, or psychological–individual phenomenon. In other words: the plurality of definitions of magic arises not only due to different premises, different kinds of historical or ethnographical sources but also by the different aims and points of interest focused on by a determinate definition of 'magic'. The broad range of definitions of magic proposed in the last century or more of research in the study of religions, anthropology and sociology, legitimate a general scepticism toward the possibility of describing completely different kinds of practices with a general, abstract definition produced in a tradition where magic has been mainly considered as a secondary, non-relevant issue, often associated with negative connotations.[19]

17. E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *Theories of Primitive Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), p. 111.

18. For a more complete introductive comparative reading on the classical positions on religion and magic, see G. Cunningham, *Religion and Magic: Approaches and Theories* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999).

19. The history of the discovery of the Greek magical papyri offers a good illustration of the ambivalent status of magic as an issue in scientific research. See K. Preisendanz, 'Zur

As a possible way to escape this congested situation, it has been proposed to renounce a general definition of magic and to concentrate instead on concrete practices or sources in their peculiarity.[20] This option is surely possible if the comparative aspect does not play a role. Others suggest the use of definitions as heuristic tools, as instruments of orientation. This option seems also practicable and can be useful for a comparative perspective. The latter option must nevertheless be associated with further methodological reflection on the relationship between the chosen theoretical approach (used as a heuristic tool), the selected sources that are to be analysed, and the historical, religious, social and cultural frame, where the sources have been produced.[21] A heuristic usage of a definition of magic leads to the question about the performance of a theoretical approach for the analysis of concrete religious materials: in the case of this essay, ancient iconographic and textual sources in the broadest context of the Hebrew and Greek scriptures.

2. *Performance of Implied Definitions of Magic in a Few Selected Ancient Texts*

To illustrate this rather abstract introduction to the general problem of defining magic in the study of religions, we will now consider some examples of ancient texts dealing with magic: a few spells from the collection of the *Greek Magical Papyri* (*PGM*) and a passage in Apuleius' *Apology*. Both, the selected charms and Apuleius' *Apology*, contain the term 'magic'. This will allow us to read these sources side by side, although they belong to very different linguistic, religious, social and cultural contexts. Since it is not possible to give here a complete analysis of the quoted texts, we direct our attention toward a few elements: specifically the meaning of magic in the sources and the situation, where they were possibly employed.

Überlieferungsgeschichte der spätantiken Magie', in *Aus der Welt des Buches, Festgabe zum 70. Geburtstag von G. Leyh* (Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen Beiheft, 75; Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1950), pp. 223–40; H.D. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago, IL and London: University of Chicago Press; 1992), pp. xli–liii. Cf. also D.E. Aune, 'Magic in Early Christianity', in *ANRW* II.23 (1980), pp. 1507–57 (1507–10).

20. Cf. as an example for this position H.G. Kippenberg, 'Einleitung: Zur Kontroverse über das Verstehen fremden Denkens', in H.G. Kippenberg and B. Luchesi (eds.), *Magie: Die sozialwissenschaftliche Kontroverse über das Verstehen fremden Denkens* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 2nd edn, 1995), pp. 9–51.

21. Cf. also M. Becker, 'Die "Magie"-Problematik in der Antike. Genügt eine sozialwissenschaftliche Erfassung?', *ZRGG* 54 (2002): 1–22.

a. PGM *I.232–247 and 262–347*[22]

The magic spells we consider here are heterogeneous both in their contents and in their formal structure. *PGM* I.232–247 contains a spell for memory:[23]

> Take hieratic papyrus and write the prescribed names with Hermaic myrrh ink. And once you have written them as they are prescribed, wash them off into spring water from 7 springs and drink the water on an empty stomach for 7 days while the moon is in the east. But drink a sufficient amount.
>
> This is the writing on the strip of papyrus.'καμβρη χαμβρη· σιξιωφι 'Αρπον Χνουφι βριντατηνωφριβρισκυλμααρουαζαρβαμεσεν κριφι νιπτουμι χμουμαωφ Ακτιωφι αρτωσι βιβιου βιβιου σφη σφη νουσι νουσι σιεγω σιεγω νουχα νουχα λινουχα λινουχα χυχβα χυχβα καξιω χυχβα δητοφωθ ιι αα οο υυ ηη εε ωω.'
>
> After doing these things wash the writing off and drink as is prescribed.
>
> This is also the composition of the ink: myrrh troglitis, 4 drams; 3 karian figs, 7 pits of Nikolaus dates, 7 dried pinecones, 7 piths of the single-stemmed wormwood, 7 wings of the Hermaic ibis, spring water. When you have burned the ingredients, prepare them and write.

The text encompasses four distinct parts: (a) The function of the spell is declared by the first word, μνημονική; (b) detailed instructions over the performance of the specialist follow, then (c) there is a long list of *voces magicae* that have to be written on the piece of papyrus, and (d) in conclusion, a recipe to prepare the special myrrh ink of Hermes. These parts are correlated to a different usage of written and spoken language. The instructions resume a series of actions the specialist has to carry out exactly as written to reach a satisfying result. The list of *voces magicae* illustrate a different dimension of language: the meaning of the words seems not to be as important as are the phonetic structure of the names and syllables and their sequence.[24] The power of the word sustains the

22. The English translations are from Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri*, for the Greek text cf. K. Preisendanz (ed.), *Papyri Graecae Magicae – Die griechischen Zauberpapyri* (Sammlung Wissenschaftlicher Kommentare; Stuttgart: Teubner, 2nd edn, 1973).

23. Cf. Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, p. 2.

24. On the usage, structure and possible hidden significance of the *voces magicae* cf. W.M. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri: An Introduction and Survey; Annotated Bibliography (1928–1994)', ANRW II.18.5 (1995), pp. 3380–3684 (3429–3438, 3576ff). Brashear (3429) reports a polemical description of the *voces magicae* and their effect in a letter St Jerome writes to the widow Theodora: 'and altogether refused to embrace Armagil, Barbelon, Abraxas, Balsamum, and the absurd Leusibora. Such are the portentous names which, to excite the minds of unlearned men and weak women, they pretend to draw from

action of writing them on the papyrus and washing them off with spring water. The recipe can be understood as a simple list of ingredients with a few remarks on how to prepare the ink. Here the semantic dimension of the language is fundamental: the ingredients and the measuring systems must be known and combined in the proper proportion to guarantee the quality of the ink.

In this text there is no explicit allusion to magic. The spell belongs to the knowledge of an insider and deals with a concrete problem within his practice. It offers a support for memory in the form of a potion. There is no critical reflection on the real power of this kind of means, nor is there any information about the addressees of the formula. We do not find any indications about the context in which the spell should be used. We learn only that this remedy has to be drunk daily for a week. All further information seems to be evident to the insider specialist using this text. The link to Hermes is clear.

The last unit of *PGM* I.262–347, deals with a further, more complex practice entitled 'apollonian invocation'.

> Take a seven-leafed sprig of laurel and hold it in your right hand as you summon the heavenly gods and the chthonic daimons. Write on the sprig of laurel the seven characters for deliverance.
>
> The characters are these:  . Write the first character onto the first leaf, then the second again in the same way onto the second leaf until there is a matching up of the 7 characters and 7 leaves. But be careful not to lose a leaf [and] do harm to yourself. For this is the body's greatest protective charm, by which all are made subject, and seas and rock tremble, and daimons [avoid] the characters' magical powers which you are about to have. For it is the greatest protective charm for the rite so that you fear nothing.
>
> Now this is the practice:[25] Take a lamp which has not been coloured red and fit it with a piece of linen cloth and rose oil or oil of spikenard, and dress yourself in a prophetic garment and hold an ebony staff in your left hand and the protective charm in your right, i.e. the sprig of laurel. But keep in readiness a wolf's head so that you can set the lamp upon

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Hebrew sources, terrifying the simple by barbarous combinations which they admire the more the less they understand them.' *Epist.* 75.3.1 (English translation: W.H. Fremantle, *The Principal Works of St. Jerome* [trans. W.H. Fremantle; Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, 6; Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), p. 156. On different religious usages of language cf. F. Stolz, 'Verstehens- und Wirkungsverweigerung als Merkmal religiöser Texte', in *Ausgewählte Aufsätze* (ed. D. Pezzoli-Olgiati *et al.*; Göttingen; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), pp. 45–61.

25. Greek: πρᾶξις, Beta, *The Greek Magical Papyri*, translates 'rite' (p. 277).

> the head of the wolf, and construct an altar of unburnt clay near the head and the lamp so that you may sacrifice on it to the god. And immediately the divine spirit enters. The burnt offering is a wolf's eye, storax, gum, cassia, balsam gum and whatever is valued among the spices, and pour a libation of wine and honey and milk and rainwater, [and make] 7 flat cakes and 7 round cakes. These you are going to make completely [near] the lamp, robed and refraining from all unclean things and from all eating of fish and from all sexual intercourse, so that you may bring the god into the greatest desire toward you.
>
> Now these are the names, [which] you are going to write on the linen cloth and which you will put as a wick into the lamp which has not been coloured red
>
> 'αβεραμενθωουλερθεξ αναξ εθρενλυοω θνεμα ραιβαι· αεμινναε βαρωθερ ρεθωβαβ εανιμεα.'
>
> When you have completed all the instructions set out above, call the gods with this chant: ...

PGM I.297–328 contains a hymn to Apollo with a doxological character. Apollo is accompanied by several gods and other figures such as Zeus, Iaô,[26] Michael, the archangel Gabriel, Abrasax,[27] Adonai. The hymn contains also further *voces magicae* and a supplication to the god, to send the *daimon*. The text continues as follows (328–31):

> And when (the daimon) comes, ask him about what you wish, about the art of prophecy, about divination with epic verses, about the sending of dreams, about obtaining revelations in dreams, about interpretations of dreams, about causing disease, about everything that is a part of the magical knowledge (ὅσων ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ μαγικῇ ἐμπειρίᾳ).

The spell concludes (332–47) with several indications about how to release the god (action and hymn).

PGM I.262–347 is particularly interesting for our purpose: the structure of the unit allows some consideration about different moments of the performance. The text is characterized as ἀπολλωνιακὴ ἐπίκλησις:[28] the focus lies in the contact between the performer of the ritual and Apollo. It begins with instructions on how to prepare a protective charm with a sprig of laurel supplied with special characters (262–76). This preventive measure is due to the great power of the spell: the presence of a god requires a special protection for the performer, for he is only a human

26. On the gnostic character of Iaô in this context cf. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', p. 3422.

27. For an interpretation of αβρασάξ see Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', p. 3577.

28. 'Incantation', 'praise', cf. Liddell, Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 638.

being.[29] In 277–97 the text lists the several actions necessary to constrain the *daimon* to obey the magician. In 294–96 there are *voces magicae* making palindromic word-constellations to be written on a piece of linen involved in the ritual described above. The rest of the text is dedicated to the spoken part of the practice: the hymn to Apollo with some incomplete metric elements[30] and again *voces magicae* that this time must be pronounced (297–328). The spoken text assumes two different connotations: the praise shows the divine power by combining Apollo with the names of other powerful figures.[31] The *voces magicae* seem again to operate by their particular sounds, which are incomprehensible to outsiders. Before indicating how to dismiss the spirit, lines 328–31 explain in detail what kind of knowledge the performer of the ritual may obtain by the presence of a divine figure. The passage deals with the essence of the μαγικὴ ἐμπειρία, that encompasses several techniques like prophecy, divination with epic verses, several practices with dreams, harming with diseases, and some more not expressly named techniques. Magic is described here as a practical knowledge[32] dealing with different techniques whereby the communication between the specialist and the gods plays a fundamental role. In this text the spirit is supposed to be able to give to the magician information about the whole magic art.

The structure of the spell gives further information about the communication between the god and the magician: since the performer of the charm is protected by the sprig of laurel from the presence of the *daimon* and must not fear him, he possesses great authority over the god. The magical technique enables the specialist to call the god, to bring him revelation of divine knowledge, and to send him back when he wants. The

29. The use of mysterious signs stresses the power of the spell. Cf. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', p. 3440: 'For an illiterate, ignorant clientele any sign or symbol, be it alphabetic, cryptographic or simply a product of the magician's fantasy, has strong magical potential'.

30. Cf. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri*, p. 10, note 56, and Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', p. 3420.

31. Cf. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri*, pp. xlv–xlvi: 'The historian of religion will be especially interested in the kind of syncretism represented in the Greek magical papyri. This syncretism is more than a mixture of diverse elements from Egyptian, Greek, Babylonian, and Jewish religion, with a few sprinkles of Christianity. Despite the diversity of texts, there is in the whole corpus a tendency toward assimilation and uniformity'. Cf. also H.D. Betz, 'Magic and Mystery in the Greek Magical Papyri', in H.D. Betz, *Hellenismus und Urchristentum. Gesammelte Aufsätze* I (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1990), pp. 209–29 (218).

32. Liddell, Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 544, translate ἐμπειρία as 'experience' and 'practice, without knowledge of principles, esp. in medicine, empiricism'. Cf. also F. Graf, 'How to Cope with a Difficult Life: A View of Ancient Magic', in P. Schäfer and H.G. Kippenberg (eds.), *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar and Symposium* (SHR, 75; Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 93–114 (113–14).

relation between human being and god is reversed, during the ritual the magician has power over the *daimon*.

The two examples selected from the collection of spells in *PGM* I address the magician, the specialist, not his possible addressees. For instance, in *PGM* I.262–347 it is clear that only the performer can be involved: the encounter with the god serves to consolidate his position as an expert in magical techniques.

We know little about the context in which this literature is embedded. The texts in *PGM* date between the second century BCE and the fifth CE; they are situated in Graeco-Roman Egypt. *PGM* I is dated in late antiquity, at the end of the fourth or in the fifth century CE. Since we know little about the usage and context where the *PGM* were produced,[33] the information given by the sources themselves is particularly precious. The charms do not contain considerations about the mechanisms that sustain the efficacy of the magical practice nor offer a critical analysis of the phenomena implied by the charms. These texts are documents formerly used by religious experts for their work; they belong to collections where this kind of knowledge was collected and transmitted. The spells represent an *emic* insight on magic seen as a practical discipline.

b. *Apuleius'* Apology 26[34]

In his *Apology*, Apuleius, a philosopher living in Oea, in the Roman province of Africa, presents himself in a trial, in a situation where he has to demonstrate his innocence against the accusation that he compelled his wife Pudentilla to marry him with magic. The text, written in the middle of the second century CE, is conceived as a defence speech and is written in a refined rhetorical style.[35] In *Apology* 26, Apuleius gives a brief definition of magic that is very important for our context. Apuleius argues here on

33. See Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, p. 1, and Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', p. 3492. This chronological situation is referred to in the production of *PGM* as a book, that seems to be more like a compilation, collection or anthology than an 'original' handbook for magicians: 'All this makes it obvious that the III-VI-VII a. A.D. texts on papyrus and parchment in our collections today cannot be the original works of the scribes who penned them, but are rather compilations from a multitude of various sources – PGM I 46's claim to be compiled from "thousands of sources" being colloquially exaggerated!' (Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', p. 3415).

34. For a critical edition cf. V. Hunink, *Apuleius of Madauros: Pro Se De Magia (Apologia), vol. I: Introduction, Text, Bibliography, Indexes* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1997).

35. For the purposes of the present paper, *Apology* 26 is considered as a literary source. It is not possible here to discuss the problem of the historicity of the trial. For an initial orientation cf. P. Schenk, 'Einleitung', in *Apuleius: De Magia* (eingeleitet, übersetzt und mit interpretierenden Essays versehen von J. Hammerstaedt, P. Habermehl, F. Lamberti, A.M. Ritter und P. Schenk; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002), pp. 23–57 (39–45), Hunink, *Apuleius of Madauros*, p. 11–12, and the paper of U. Riemer, 'Fascinating but forbidden? Magic in Rome', in this volume, pp. 160–72.

two distinct levels; magic is presented from two different points of view. On the one side, magic is described as a divine, ancient art, belonging to a most respectable historical, religious and social context with references to Persian magicians and a quotation of Plato (26.1–4):

> Auditisne magiam, qui eam temere accusatis, artem esse dis immortalibus acceptam, colendi eos ac venerandi pergnaram, piam scilicet et divini scientem, iam inde a Zoroastre et Oromaze auctoribus suis nobilem, caelitum antistitam, quipped qui inter prima regalia docetur nec ulli temere inter Persas concessum est magum esse, haud magis quam regnare? Idem Plato in alia sermocinatione de Zalmoxi quodam Thraci generis, sed eiusdem artis uiro ita scriptum reliquit: τὰς ἐπῳδὰς εἶναι τοὺς λόγους τοὺς καλούς.

On the other side, resuming the accusation against him, he reproduces the common opinion that a magician is a specialist disposed of great power over the gods (26.6–7):

> Sin uero more vulgari eum isti propriae magum existimant, qui communione loquendi cum deis immortalibus ad omnia quea velit incredibili[a] quadam vi cantaminum polleat, oppido mirror, cur accusare non timuerint quem posse tantum fatentur. Neque enim tam occulta et diuina potentia caueri potest itidem ut cetera.

In contrast to the examples in *PGM*, Apuleius describes magic not as an insider, but intentionally as an outsider, from the perspective of a philosopher. Although his interest (within this literary context) is to demonstrate his innocence, he considers magic almost with a scientific, rational intention. The historical–philosophical background of magic emphasized by Apuleius in *Apology* 26.1–4 projects a positive light on this phenomenon. Furthermore, the definition stresses the importance of the communication between the magician and the gods: through the spells the magician gains a great power over the immortal beings and is able to obtain whatever he wants. In this polemical, rhetorical context, Apuleius describes the magical power as absolute, uncontrollable by outsiders. It works through the incredible power of words ('communione loquendi cum deis immortalibus', 'incredibili vi cantaminum').[36]

c. *Magic in Antiquity Between Practice and Conceptualization*

A brief comparison of the sources mentioned in this paper, the *PGM* and Apuleius' *Apology*, highlights immediately the differences in the language

36. See V. Hunink, *Apuleius of Madauros: Pro Se De Magia (Apologia). vol. II: Commentary* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1997), p. 90; F. Graf, 'Theories of Magic in Antiquity', in P. Mirecki and M. Meyer (eds.), *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World* (RGRW, 141; Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 93–103.

employed, the implied level of literary quality, and the perspective on magic. *PGM* represents the inner view of the magician practising his work and dealing with recipes and detailed prescriptions that should lead to positive results. The *Apology* represents a philosophical approach to a common, recurrent practice that avoids a clear judgement. Apuleius is not arguing that magic does not exist, he argues only that he did not have recourse to such a technique.

Although these documents represent only a very narrow range of ancient sources on magic they testify to a multi-layered discourse on magic: magic is a self-definition of a widespread practice, magic is also an issue in a philosophical reflection on human relations and on possible links between the human and divine worlds. Moreover, although both the spells in *PGM* I and the defence speech of Apuleius, presuppose a wide range of terms around this sort of practice, for the general designation of the phenomena, from *emic* and *etic* perspectives, μαγεία and *magia* are used. Finally it is interesting to remark that both texts do not deal with the relationship between the practice of magic and the religious system that they implicitly refer to. Magic is considered in both cases as a possibility to reach special goals by influencing directly the gods or simply by recourse to some divine elements. The religious symbol system as a whole builds the undisputed frame where the practice is embedded.

3. *Relating Sources with Theories: A (Provisory) Conclusion*

This introduction to the problematic concept of magic within the study of religions started with a concise survey of selected, classical positions. A complex mix of substantial, functional, empirical, sociological, psychological and cultural arguments characterize the discussion of magic; magic can be considered in radical opposition to religion or identified with it. There are approaches focusing on the origin of magic or on the social and/or individual performance of magical practices. As we have seen, the range of possibilities is considerable indeed; in some cases the plurality of theories of magic has directly led to the dissolution of the concept.

On the other hand, reading ancient sources on magic stresses some interesting aspects of the concept of magic, at least in its *emic* usage within a particular culture. Contrasting the strikingly different texts of the *PGM* spells and Apuleius' *Apology*, we recognize different usages of the concept of μαγεία and *magia* within the inner-cultural discourse. While in the *PGM* texts magic is the self-definition of a practical activity encompassing different techniques of action and of language, the rhetorical and forensic context of the *Apology* reveals a rational, rather theoretical approach to a phenomenon belonging to the ordinary experience of the author. Although we did not presuppose a particular definition of magic when

approaching the ancient texts, we observe that the sources themselves propose a general term.

Can we relate to these considerations? Where is a possible link between modern theories on magic with their ambivalent complexity on the one hand and the ancient sources with their (more or less) abstract concepts on the other? Is there an interest in searching for such a link between the theoretical approaches and the historical religious dimension of magic? In a provisory, tentative answer to these questions, the following aspects must be pointed out.

The theories on magic from the end of the nineteenth century to the present day and the ancient texts on magic are primarily historically related, since they can all be seen as products within the Mediterranean–European history of religions. Some of the classics quoted above grounded their definition of magic on ancient sources, particularly from the Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman world.[37] Magic – the etymological aspect stresses this even more – is a typical European, perhaps even eurocentric category. Consequently, a critical analysis of ancient sources and a critical reception of modern theories on magic can both be seen as necessary phases in the same interpretative process sustained by an accurate hermeneutical reflection.

In modern study, theories of magic are always related to theories of religion. In the sources considered, on the contrary, the relation between magic (in an *emic* perspective) and the religious reference system is not explicitly explained, it is simply presupposed. In the *PGM* spells the recurring deities can be reinterpreted as an implicit link, while Apuleius, arguing that magic must be related to the 'community of speech with the immortal gods', situated magic automatically within the religious symbol system. The strong, but not explicitly explained connection between magic and religion on the level of the historical documents requires in my opinion also a theoretical approach from the *etic* perspective.

Envisaging all these aspects, it seems reasonable to make use of a heuristic definition of magic and religion that is strong enough to bring methodological clarity but open enough to respect the particularity of the sources we are dealing with. Religion could be provisionally described as a symbol system producing images of the world that guarantee an orientation on the social and the individual level, transforming uncontrollable dimensions of human life into at least partially controllable ones; therefore the religious symbol system must be considered as a general system of communication.[38] Magic, as a particular aspect of the religious symbol system, directs the communication process to the total control of

37. See Frazer, *The Golden Bough*.

38. See C. Geertz, 'Religion as a Cultural System', in *The Interpretation of Cultures. Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 87–125; N. Luhmann, 'Die

uncontrollable aspects. Approaching magic as a system of communication, it is interesting to look for particular articulations of its message. As a working hypothesis, the focus could be guided by typical constellations of the magical message that are articulated on several levels and overlap with different forms of communication at the same time. The oral language in the forms of prose, poetics, *voces magicae*, and the written word in the forms of descriptions, lists, magical symbols, again *voces magicae* (but in an optical effect forming palindromes or particular shapes) constitutes an important repertoire. Images and visual representations seem also to play a central role; the aspect of materiality in general is particularly stressed (ingredients for recipes, artefacts, amulets). Furthermore, with regard to the aspect of the performance, several actions and action successions with different modalities to realize them is also fundamental. All these levels contribute to the magical communication a particular density. Finally, a functionalistic approach orientated on theories of communication could allow an integration between rational, critical reflections on magic within the same symbol system. In fact, the magical communication includes several actors: the gods, the specialists performing and transmitting the knowledge, the users and clients, as well as the spectators and sceptics.

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gesellschaftliche Funktion der Religion', in N. Luhmann, *Funktion der Religion* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 3rd edn, 1992), F. Stolz, *Grundzüge der Religionswissenschaft* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 3rd edn, 2001), pp. 101–45.

MAGIC IN THE ANCIENT WORLD AND AFRICAN CULTURE

Emmanuel O. Nwaoru

Introduction

I am handicapped in giving this paper because the very medium of communication (the English language) constitutes the greatest obstacle to understanding the meaning of magic in the ancient world and in Africa. There are so many definitions (concepts and notions) of the English 'magic' today that it becomes almost impossible to speak about the meaning of the term in the ancient world and African culture.[1] This paper does not intend simply to challenge existing definitions, especially those dependent on religious (Judaeo-Christian) bias and on the works of early anthropologists. It is rather meant to recapture the concept of magic in the ancient world and to consider the impact of this concept on the creativity and freedom exercised by African Christians in the interpretation and application of biblical magic narratives in their context.

Since ancient Israel forms an integral part of the ancient world, this paper will rely heavily on biblical indexes for perspectives on the nature and function of magic in the ancient world. Here the Hebrew *hartōm* comes readily to hand to give us a clue. Without prejudice to the semantics of this Egyptian loanword, from *hry-tp* ('chief lector priest, magician'),[2] Bible translators unanimously render its plural *hartummîm* as 'magicians'.[3] It must be remarked that the biblical authors specifically used this

1. Today, magic as magic is confused with witchcraft, sorcery, divination, soothsaying, augury, necromancy, etc. I will try to avoid being drawn into accepting uncritically the definitions and notions of magic that are handed down to us by the early anthropologists and other writers on the subject, since those definitions lack consensus among scholars.

2. See J. Queagebur, 'On the Egyptian Equivalent of Biblical *Hartummîm*', in S. Israelit-Groll (ed.), *Pharaonic Egypt, the Bible, and Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1983), pp. 162–72; S.B. Noegel, 'Moses and Magic: Notes on the Book of Exodus', *JANESCU* 24 (1996): 45–59 (45).

3. Cf. NRSV, NEB, NASB, NJB, etc. Contrast this with the lack of consensus reflected in the way commentators make reference to and interpret the catalogue of prohibited practices in Deut. 18.10-11.

term in relation to the foreign magicians of ancient Egypt (Gen. 41.8, 24; Exod. 7.11, 22; 8.3[7], 14[18], 15[19]; 9.11) and Babylon (Dan. 1.20; 2.2, 10, 27; 4.4[7], 6[9]; 5.11). What they do could be said to reflect more the practice of magic in the ancient world than modern definitions would.

Magic in the Ancient World Through the Eyes of the Bible

Some Old Testament magic narratives betray Egyptian and Babylonian backgrounds, suggesting that these were truly the home of ancient magic.[4] The magicians of ancient Egypt and Babylon are named together with the *ḥ^{a}kāmîm*, wise people (Gen. 41.8; Exod. 7.11; Dan. 5.11; cf. 1.20), who are associated with the royal court and trained in the Wisdom tradition. This makes magic in its earliest form 'a matter of intelligence not morals' as Mantovani rightly put it.[5] Those who possess such intelligence have at their disposal natural forces they can always put in motion to take care of the difficulties of their daily lives without any recourse to the divine. And it is considered legitimate for them to do so. This marks magic out *ab initio* from mysterious ritual acts. For an onlooker this form of magic may appear to be mere trickery. It requires neither invoking the deity nor manipulating any supernatural powers by incantations as many classical definitions of magic propose without differentiation. In fact, magic at this level depends more on the ingenuity and practical sense of the individual than on anything else.

For instance, Jacob's tapping the forces in the natural order by using the rod to influence the breeding of Laban's flocks and herds (Gen. 30.37-42) is identified as having magical features.[6] This act is carried out without recourse to YHWH and it is designed to redress Laban's injustice to Jacob.[7] Another act of similar import is Rachel's use of mandrakes to cure her sterility and produce conception (Gen. 30.14-15). J.J. Burden calls it

4. Cf. E.M. Yamauchi, 'Magic in the Biblical World', *TB* 34 (1983): 169–200 (170).

5. P.A. Mantovani, 'La Magia nei Testi Preesilici dell'Antico Testamento', *Henoch* 3 (1981): 1–21 (9). This is also evinced in R.B. Zuck's notion of the *ḥartummîm* as 'men of the priestly caste, who occupied themselves with the sacred arts and sciences of the Egyptians, the hieroglyphic writings, astrology, the interpretation of dreams, the foretelling of events, magic, and conjuring, and who were regarded as the possessors of secret arts'. Cf. 'The Practice of Witchcraft in the Scriptures', *Bibliotheca Sacra* 128 (1971): 352–60 (354), quoting C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, The Pentateuch* (trans. J. Martin, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1866), 1, p. 349.

6. Cf. J.J. Burden, 'Magic and Divination in the Old Testament and their Relevance for the Church in Africa', *Missionalia* 1 (1973): 103–11 (107).

7. This contrasts with the Elohist (E) account in 31.10-13 where it is presented as a 'miracle' issuing from divine intervention.

'productive magic'.[8] Even the Deuteronomistic historian could not suppress such features in the Elisha cycle as we see them in the multiplication of the widow's oil to offset her debt (2 Kgs 4.1-7),[9] the making whole of a pot of food by throwing some flour into it (2 Kgs 4.38-41)[10] and the episode of the floating axe-head (2 Kgs 6.5-7).[11] Strikingly enough these magical features are not associated with the *hartummîm* but with non-professional magicians and the 'man of God'. Each act is characterized by the use of human endeavour or natural intelligence to deal with a particular, difficult life-situation.[12] This shows that magic in its unadulterated and uncomplicated form in the ancient world was not a mere ritual act.

The type of magic in the exodus event is a little different. The deity gives the agent a command to discharge an act that is magical in nature and the order is executed without further reference to the deity or any other supernatural being/force. A typical example is Moses' using his rod before the Pharaoh and his magicians. He casts down the rod and it turns into a snake (Exod. 7.8-12; cf. 4.2-4),[13] an act that Van Seters places not within

8. Cf. 'Magic and Divination', p. 107; P.A. Mantovani ('La Magia', pp. 7–8) also recognizes the magical character of Rachel's act.

9. Cf. Mantovani, 'La Magia', pp. 16–17.

10. G.H. Jones calls it imitative magic, a designation that characterizes most of the magical acts at this stage; cf. Jones, *1 and 2 Kings*, II (NCBC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), p. 411.

11. Cf. J.A. Montgomery, H.S. Gehman, *Kings* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1951), p. 381; K.-D. Fricke, *Das zweite Buch von den Königen* (BAT; Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1972), p. 78; Mantovani, 'La Magia', pp. 17–18.

12. In fact, some of the Egyptian and Babylonian *hartummîm* use their natural wisdom to interpret dreams (Gen. 41.8, 24. Dan. 2.2; 4.4) and reveal mysteries (Dan. 2.27; cf. 4.6).

13. The general belief was that Egyptian magicians had the ability to change inanimate objects into animals, as typified in the tale of the lector priest Webaoner who turned a wax crocodile he had fashioned into a writhing snake and 'bent down, picked it up, and it became wax again'. Cf. J.D. Currid, *Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1997), p. 93. However, parallels to the Exodus episode are found in ancient Egypt in the magical practice of turning a wooden rod into a snake, an act that Currid sees as a matter of pride in the early periods. He agrees with other authors that the practice is native to Egypt, especially among the group called the *Psylli* who are credited with the power 'to make a serpent go into a state of catalepsy in which it becomes rigid and appears to look like a cane'. Cf. J.D. Currid, 'The Egyptian Setting of the "Serpent" Confrontation in Exodus 7,8-13', *BZ* 39 (1995): 203–24 (215); also E.W. Hengstenberg, *Egypt and the Books of Moses* (Edinburgh: Thomas Clark, 1845), p. 100. Evidence from archaeology illustrates this practice by the many scarabs depicting a man or a god holding in his hand a snake straight as a rod. See L. Keimer, 'Histoires de Serpents dans l'Egypte ancienne et moderne', *Memoires de l'Institute d'Egypte* 50 (1947): 16–17, figs. 14–21. In fact, P. Montet asserts: 'On a scarab from Tanis, I believe I can recognise a magician doing his tricks before a divine trio', (*Tanis: Douze années de fouilles dans une capitale oubliée du delta égyptien* [Paris: Payot, 1942], p. 219, fig. 63). Cf. Currid, *Ancient Egypt*, p. 95. See also the elaborate treatment of Noegel who with B. Jacob rightly illustrates the slight differences in the parallel between the Egyptian and biblical

the context of the plague but of 'a contest among magicians'.[14] The greatest irony and humour of the story is in the rod/snake of Moses/Aaron swallowing that of the Egyptians (v. 12).[15]

With the rod Moses performs other acts like winning a battle (Exod. 17.9-13); but the most prominent of these acts that have been interpreted as magical are found in the plague account.[16] They include making water turn into blood (Exod. 7.19-22);[17] conjuring frogs (Exod. 8.1-3 [5-7]); causing gnats to appear (Exod. 8.12-14 [16-18]); bringing about boils, a feat that routed the Egyptian magicians (Exod. 9.8-11); causing hail to fall (Exod. 9.22-25); and causing darkness to come over the land (Exod. 10.21-23).[18] We can see the special role of the rod at this level of magic;[19] it does

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accounts. According to him the Egyptian account deals 'with snakes that turn into staffs, not the reverse as here – staffs which turned into snakes!' Cf. 'Moses and Magic', pp. 46–50; also B. Jacob, *The Second Book of the Bible: Exodus* (trans. W. Jacob and Y. Elman; Hoboken, NY: Ktav, 1992), p. 254.

14. J. van Seters, 'A Contest of Magicians? The Plague Stories in P', in D.P. Wright, D.N. Freedman and A. Hurvirtz (eds.), *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), pp. 339–49. Noegel observes that the Egyptian magicians would have seen the act of 'casting down' the rod as magically significant because it is a practice known to them in magical exorcism and spells. Cf. 'Moses and Magic', p. 48. Following the evidence of Egyptian magical texts provided by Ritner, Noegel demonstrates that the act of one snake swallowing another and of Moses grasping the snake has a great magical significance for the Egyptians. 'To them', he said, 'the act was tantamount to the harnessing of the creative and potentially hostile forces of nature.' Cf. 'Moses and Magic', pp. 49–50, esp. 50; J.G. Gager, 'Moses the Magician: Hero of an Ancient Counter-culture?' *Helios* 21,2 (1994): 179–88; Mantovani, 'La Magia', pp. 1–21 (13).

15. Naturally, it is a grim sight to witness a snake swallowing another. It is not only that both creatures are heading for mutual self-destruction, the phenomenon is considered as a bad omen, a sign of impending disaster. In the culture of many African societies like the Igbo of Nigeria it is indeed a taboo.

16. In spite of the mixed tradition (J and E) in the plague account, many authors agree that certain events in the story are typically magical. Cf. Mantovani, 'La Magia', pp. 12–15; J.G. Gager, 'Moses the Magician', pp. 179–88; Noegel, 'Moses and Magic', pp. 45–59. Cf. also Exod. 7.15, 17; 17.5, 6.

17. Egyptian literature presupposes that the art of turning water into blood is magical. The story of Rameses II's (1279–1212 BCE) son, Setne Khamwas and Si-Osire (*Setne* II) narrates the promise of the magician from the land of Nubia to his mother, the Nubian woman, to make her water turn the colour of blood as a sign for her to come to his rescue in a magic contest in Egypt if he is defeated. Cf. *AEL* III, 148; also Noegel, 'Moses and Magic', p. 51. In the Admonitions of Ipuwer the author bemoans the state of chaos in Egypt, a situation which causes the water of the river to turn to blood, leaving the people to thirst for water. Cf. *AEL* I, 151; also *ANET* 441. Although the text does not link this directly to magic, it could be part of the tragedy resulting from magic being everyman's affair. Cf. *ANET* 442.

18. Cf. *AEL* III, *Setne* II, 144–51 (144, 149).

19. H. Simian-Yofre acknowledges that the rod has a quasi-magical power, especially in Exod. 7–10; 14.16; 17.9. Cf. '*matteh*', *TDOT* VIII (1997), pp. 241–49 (242). It was widely used in Egyptian magical practices. In fact, the rods that Pharaoh and the Egyptian magicians

not matter whether the accompanying gestures include casting the rod down (Exod. 4.3; 7.9, 10; 8.12) or stretching out the hand with (Exod. 7.19; 8.1[5]; 9.22; 10.12, 21) or without it (Exod. 9.22; 10.21). What indeed matters here is that these acts are performed by human agents under YHWH's command but without further divine intervention at their execution.

Another type of magic reflects a situation in which magicians start to emerge from sole reliance on their natural intelligence or being prompted by divine command, to employing prayer (intercessions, incantations, spells) and ritual acts in their practices. For instance, Moses sweetened the water of Marah by throwing into it a piece of wood that the Lord showed to him after prayers had been offered (Exod. 15.23-25).[20] At Massah and Meribah (Exod. 17.2-6) both prayer and obedience to a divine command were required before Moses could produce water by striking the rod on the rock.[21] Prayer and ritual act, which could be interpreted by an onlooker as magical, accompany Elisha's raising the son of the Shunamite woman to life (2 Kgs 4.31-37). Bob Becking confirms this when he writes: 'It can be assumed that the ritual act carried out by Elisha on the deceased son of the woman from Shunem has a magical character'.[22] Even though some authors[23] argue that the combination of prayer (v. 33) and ritual act (v. 34) belongs to two different textual layers with the prayer being a later addition, others believe that both belong to the same and original layer of the story.[24]

Another episode is that of Elisha's command to the king to shoot arrows in the direction of the enemy for victory (2 Kgs 13.15-19). G.H. Jones identifies this as creative or sympathetic magic.[25] For W. Boyd Barrick the pronouncements in 2 Kgs 13.17 are not oracular in a strict

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used were said to be endued with divine character. Cf. Currid, *Ancient Egypt*, p. 151. The magical power of the rod cannot be overlooked even in Ancient Greece as Circe with the magical rod turned the companions of Odysseus into animals. Cf. Homer, *Odyssey* 4,221; 10.388ss. M. Lurker, *Wörterbuch biblischer Bilder und Symbole* (München: Kösel, 1973), p. 352; F. Graf, 'Excluding the Charming: The Development of the Greek Concept of Magic', in M. Meyer and P. Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (RGRW, 141; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), pp. 29–42 (36).

20. Cf. Mantovani, 'La Magia', pp. 14–15.

21. Cf. Mantovani, 'La Magia', p. 15.

22. B. Becking, '"Touch for Health..." Magic in II Reg 4:31-37 with a Remark on the History of Yahwism', *ZAW* 108 (1996): 34–54 (47); also H.D. Preuss, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* I (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1991), 296ff.

23. Cf. A. Schmitt, 'Die Totenerweckung in 2 Kön. 4:8-37 – eine literaturwissenschaftliche Untersuchung', *BZ* 19 (1975): 1–25 (7).

24. Cf. Becking, 'Touch for Health', p. 54.

25. Cf. Jones, *1 and 2 Kings*, p. 502.

sense but incantational.[26] Thus, the act is given magical potency by a possible accompanying incantation. Elisha's putting his hands on those of the king has been interpreted variously. Lindblom however maintains that the act is designed to 'make the magic action (of the bowshot) still more effective'.[27] The combination of prayer and ritual act is typical of many Mesopotamian magical practices.[28]

When Gehman claims that magic 'involves living, intelligent demonic beings', he may be thinking of magic as presented by western anthropologists and not as initially practised in the ancient world. For he also agrees that magic can be a plaything, a thing for entertainment, 'an intentional deception by a specialist in order to defraud people and obtain their money' and, therefore, has a very natural explanation.[29] On the contrary, the types of magic we have so far discussed have good connotations; they are always employed to enhance the fortune and well-being of the individual or the society at large. In this regard Burkert is right to argue that magic does not simply belong to the world of secrecy; it has to do with social concerns of the world.[30] Moreover, magic in its original and unadulterated form is seen as a gift of the gods[31] to mankind. Hence it is considered legitimate to practise it.[32] In this regard, the magician has and should always have a good image. He is not a villain of society, which many designations today have uncritically made him. Rather, he is a respected and respectable individual and, on many occasions, the hero of the people.[33] Even in later Judaism it is clearly

26. Cf. W. Boyd Barrick, 'Elisha and the Magic Bow: A Note on 2 Kings XIII 15-17', *VT* 35 (1985): 354–63 (359–60).

27. J. Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel* (Oxford and Philadelphia, PA: Basil Blackwell, 1962), p. 51. O. Keel interprets the act along with the Egyptian coronation ritual during which the king, assisted by the deity, shoots arrows into the four quarters of the heavens as a sign of his domination of the world. Cf. *The Symbolism of the Biblical World* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997), p. 264, fig. 356.

28. Cf. Becking, 'Touch for Health', p. 54, following other literary evidence of *Šurpu* I and V–VI; *Maqlû* IX; see also K. van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction in Israel and Mesopotamia: A Comparative Study* (SSN, 22; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1985), pp. 147–54.

29. R.J. Gehman, *African Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective* (repr., Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1993), p. 110.

30. W. Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), p. 24.

31. YHWH to Moses, Aaron, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph etc., and, in the Mesopotamian context, Asalluhi and Marduk, the gods of magic, are the distributors of such a gift. Cf. J.A. Scurlock, 'Magic', *ABD* 4 (1992), pp. 464–68 (465).

32. In fact, Currid gives magic a primordial status when he claims: 'Magic was the ultimate power in the universe, even above the gods, themselves. All other things in the cosmos – people, animals, plants, rocks – were dependent on magic to secure their proper places in the primitive democracy. The more magical ability each creature or object had, the greater was its position in the hierarchy of the cosmic state.' Cf. *Ancient Egypt*, p. 40.

33. Cf. I. Mendelsohn, 'Magic, Magician', *IDB* 3 (1985), pp. 223–25 (224).

stated: 'Only he is to be called a magician who produces a real act, but not the man who produces an optical illusion, a kind of jugglery.'[34]

However, the meaning of primitive magic changed when magic became the reserve of specialists, i.e., those who have the ability to tap, harness and even command the divine beings and supernatural forces for their own benefit and that of their clients. They make claims to powers, which not only belong to the gods but are superior even to those of the gods. Thus conjuring by using spells or by saying special words or doing special things[35] becomes the preponderant art of magic.[36] In this way the specialists now bring the supernatural powers under control or coerce them to be submissive to them. As Graf puts it: 'they claim to be able to force the gods and to use them like their slaves'.[37] Here magic begins to interfere with the realm of the gods and with religion. It begins to answer to more concepts than one, ranging from the manipulation of physical objects to recitation of formulas or incantations to influence situations, the people and the gods. Thus magic henceforth is equated, or rather confused, with witchcraft, sorcery, divination, necromancy, etc. A magician attains professionalism by adequate training and magic becomes a trade for which fees could be demanded from the client. It is claimed that the specialist is called into office in a dramatic way by spirits or in dreams.

The Bible unequivocally prohibits arts such as these (Lev. 19.26-31; Deut. 18.10-11; cf. Jer. 27.9-10); their practitioners are indicted[38] or condemned.[39] Even though there is a strong inclination of practitioners of mystical arts to be antisocial by inflicting physical or spiritual harm on

34. *b. Sanh.* vii.4,11; also M. Gaster, 'Magic (Jewish)', in J. Hastings (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* 8 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1924), pp. 300–305 (301).

35. See the entry 'magic' in A.S. Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary of Current English* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

36. This is achieved by constant repetition of a specific refrain of an incantation in the manner of the Sumero-Akkadian magicians. Cf. Becking, 'Touch for Health', pp. 40–42.

37. Cf. Graf, 'Excluding the Charming', p. 39. The same idea is re-echoed in Currid's definition of magic as an art through which 'an external and mystical force beyond the ordinary power of both gods and humans can be brought to bear on natural and human events'. Cf. *Ancient Egypt*, p. 30.

38. Cf. 2 Kgs 17.17; 21.6//2 Chron. 33.6; Isa. 47.9, 12; 57.3; Mal. 3.5; also Mic. 5.12(11).

39. Cf. Ezek. 13.18, 20. For the perspectives from the New Testament see Acts 13.10; Gal. 5.19-21; Rev. 9.21; 18.23; 21.8; 22.15; cf. 2 Tim. 3.8. There is a little confusion about how to classify Simon Magus. Although Acts 8.9 calls him a sorcerer, his type of magic seems to be designed to entertain people (Acts 8.11). There is evidence from the apocryphal *Acts of Peter*, which describes how Simon astounds the public at Rome by his magical flights until Peter's prayer causes him to crash to the ground. Cf. E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha* II (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1965), pp. 289–316; Yamauchi, 'Magic in the Biblical World', p. 172.

people,[40] pure magic has been successfully employed to meet the needs and aspirations of the society.[41] The use of 'violent' force to obtain a desired goal in adverse circumstances betrays lack of trust in the deity, who is the magician[42] par excellence and whose prerogative it is to bequeath the gift of magic to others, gods and humans alike.[43]

Magic in African Culture through Linguistic Evidence

The lack of unanimity that characterizes the concept of magic among western scholars finds its way into Africa through the works of early Christian missionaries and anthropologists who were often very quick to label whatever they could not properly understand as magic and fetish.[44]

40. Sorcery in Mesopotamia, for instance, is punishable by death. Cf. *MAL* A 47; *ANET* 184.

41. For more elaborate treatment on Mesopotamian, Hittite, Egyptian and Ugaritic magical practices, see Scurlock, 'Magic', 464–68; also *ANET* pp. 326–29, 532–33; 538–41; J.C. de Moor, *An Anthology of Religious Texts from Ugarit* (Nisaba, 16; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1987), pp. 141–45, 181–86. Magic had always been employed in Egypt to secure an afterlife. For details see *AEL* 1, pp. 29–50, 131–33; *AEL* 2, pp. 119–32; E.M. Yamauchi, 'Magic in the Biblical World', *TB* 34 (1983):169–200 (170 nn. 3–5).

42. In the light of the Exodus narrative of the rod/snake and plague episodes (Exod. 7–12) YHWH clearly assumes, through his initiating Moses into the art (Exod. 4.2-4), the posture of a mighty magician superior to the Pharaoh and the Egyptian gods. As Currid would put it, the contest was not only to demonstrate who was a more powerful deity, but also who was a better magician. The same analogy is made in Ea's and Marduk's victories over Apsu and Tiamat respectively. Cf. *Ancient Egypt*, p. 39. In Sumero-Akkadian and Canaanite religions, particular gods in the pantheon are known to be specialists in the use of spells and rituals. Cf. Mendelsohn, 'Magic, Magician', p. 223. See El's magical cure for King Keret. Cf. *ANET*, p. 1486, and other practices in *ANET*, pp. 106–109.

43. Cf. *Enuma Elish*, Tab. 1, 60–70. In fact, it is believed that from the gods humans learnt to wear amulets to protect themselves (*ANET*, pp. 111–13) and to ensure success in their undertakings.

44. This is even evinced in the works of modern scholars like Burden who firmly believe that the magician, the diviner and even the medicine man are placed under God's judgement. Cf. 'Magic and Divination', p. 112. R.J. Gehman, *African Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1993), p. 69, the work of another missionary, shows much ambivalence. His view is not conclusive on whether mystical powers including magic come from evil spirits (demons) or are mere self-delusion or deceit by the specialist. In spite of this doubt, he goes on to draw very sour conclusions like: 'Magic is part of all idolatry in opposition to personal faith in God' and: 'One thing we can be sure of is that mystical powers ... are contrary to the will of God and that the dynamic in all magic and divination, witchcraft and sorcery, white magic and black magic, medicine men and witches is from the kingdom of darkness.' Cf. Gehman, *African Traditional Religion*, p. 119. The problem with such statements is that they are too generalized to promote further research into the fluid subject of magic in Africa. Moreover the inability of the authors to make distinctions between the various arts which they consider as parallel subjects leaves the African with little chance of coming to grips with the issue.

Although this has affected the concept of magic in Africa today as the works of some African scholars[45] indicate, it is still evident that Africans had their original notion of magic before they came in contact with western missionaries and colonialists. The residual knowledge of this notion can be gained through language, which expresses the ways of feeling, thinking and living proper to a particular culture.

Contrary to the impression created by early anthropologists, ancient Africa has always made a distinction between magic proper and medicine, divination, fortune-telling, witchcraft, sorcery, etc., even though these arts have existed side by side. Therefore, magic in Africa is no umbrella term for a conglomerate of arts and practices. For in many African societies each of these arts has its own name and its own specialist, though one practitioner can be a specialist in more than one art. The difference is very fundamental; for instance, magic is a learnt art, a technique.[46] That means for one to qualify to perform publicly as a magician one 'is usually trained according to [the] rules'.[47] Often the place where the art is learnt is surrounded with mysteries.[48] This is not always the case with medicine, which is often an inherited art. In other words, the art does not belong to the medicine person as an individual but to the entire family (nuclear or extended) within which it is handed over from one generation to another. The practice of medicine can also be vocational just as divination is. A deity or spirit (*agwu*) can summon a diviner to mission and get him or her initiated into the 'league' of diviners. Among all the arts, witchcraft is the most peculiar phenomenon. Its origins are quite diverse and unclear. One can become a witch (wizard) by initiation, intentionally but very frequently unintentionally. It seems however that most witches inherit their art as seen among the Kamba people of Kenya and Ga of Ghana.[49]

45. For instance, J.S. Mbiti confirms that the English term 'witchcraft' is used in popular speech to refer to all harmful employment of mystical powers. Cf. *African Religions and Philosophy* (repr., London: Heinemann, 1980), p. 202. Cf. Gehman, *African Traditional Religion*, p. 69.

46. Cf. E.A. Nida, *Customs, Culture and Christianity* (London: Tyndale Press, 1963), p. 147; Secretariatus pro Non-Christianis, *Meeting the African Religions* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Ancora, 1969), p. 88; E.B. Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A definition* (London: SCM Press, 1973), p. 189.

47. W. Dupré, 'Magic', in *New Catholic Encyclopaedia* 9 (repr.; Palatine, IL: Jack Heraty and Associates, 1981), pp. 65–67 (66).

48. This is the case with the specialist, Emenike Nwoye in John Munonye's novel *Obi*. We read: 'It was said that he studied all that in India. And Emenike never made any attempt to disclaim the tribute, or to tell the world the truth, which was that he had been in Yoruba land all the years he was supposed to be practising in Asia. Emenike has returned to Ozala only a few years before, and since then his reputation had been growing steadily among the neighbours.' Cf. *Obi*, p. 105.

49. Cf. K. Kombo, 'Witchcraft: A Living Vice in Africa', *African Journal of Evangelical Theology* 22,1 (2003): 74; also Burden, 'Magic and Divination', p. 111.

By the nature of the art a witch is distinct from a magician, sorcerer,[50] a religious person or a spiritualist.[51] In fact, what Gaster observes with regard to Jewish magic when he says, 'divination and charms are not part of Jewish magic' applies completely to magic in Africa.[52]

Terms used for magicians in various African languages point to the residual understanding of magic among African peoples and, consequently, to the earliest form of magic in Africa in contradistinction to other related concepts. The terms among some societies in Nigeria include: *ndi amansi* (Igbo), *Pidanpidan* (Yoruba), *mai dabo/mai sihiri* (Hausa), *egbeneke* (Urhobo). These words literally mean 'those who perform magic'. From other African societies are the terms *ɔkurukyireni/ ɔkɔnrfoɔ* (Asante-Twi, Ghana); *waganga*[53] (Swahili); *ngaka/inyanga/ igqira*[54] (Southern Africa). Further analysis of the terms shows that along the western coast of Africa the magician is not necessarily an evil person. *Ndi amansi* among the Igbo or *Pidanpidan* among the Yoruba are mere tricksters/jugglers just as the *ɔkurukyireni* of Asante-Twi are conjurers. The difference here is remarkable; while the *ɔkurukyireni* are found among the traditional priests, *ndi amansi* and *Pidanpidan* are not necessarily priests. Nevertheless, the magician's playing on the people's intelligence and his devising entertainment strategy are of paramount importance to the art.

The image of the magician among the Urhobo of Nigeria and some East African societies, especially Kenya, is a little different. The word 'magician' has negative connotations. This view contrasts with the good magicians – *ngaka/inyanga/igqira* – of southern Africa. There are still some other groups like the Hausa who think that magic is a neutral concept as depicted in *mai dabo/mai sihiri*. The proper use or abuse of the technique depends solely on the disposition of the practitioner just like the use of other natural things at human disposal.[55] In the main, however,

50. Cf. E. Ikenga-Metuh, *God and Man in African Religion* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1981), 100. This contrasts with the view of Mbiti who surprisingly supposes that African societies do not often draw such 'distinction between witchcraft, sorcery, the evil eye and other ways of employing mystical powers to harm someone or his belongings'. Cf. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, p. 202.

51. D.E. Aune makes a useful distinction between a witch and a sorcerer. According to him 'the former is feared but usually tolerated, while the latter is feared and subjected to various penalties from persecution or ostracism to death'. Cf. Aune, 'Magic, Magician', in G.W. Bromiley *et al.* (eds.), *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* 4 (Grand Rapids, MN: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1990), p. 214.

52. Gaster, 'Magic (Jewish)', p. 300.

53. Cf. Dan. 2.2, 27 in *Bibilia Takatify*. However, there is a mix-up in the translation of both 'magicians' and 'sorcerers' as *wachawi* in Exod. 7.11.

54. Cf. Burden, 'Magic and Divination', p. 111.

55. Cf. J.S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 2nd edn, 1991), p. 166.

magic as magic in Africa is a plaything, an awe-inspiring affair. It is placed within the realm of amusement, signs and wonders, or even 'miracles' depending on how one perceives it. In other words, magic in Africa is neither an object such as a charm nor a product of ritual acts as in divination, sorcery, witchcraft, etc.[56] The magician does not need to invoke the spirits or use 'medicine' and charms in order to perform his/her art. Even when he is believed to engage in intense repetition of words or/ and the incorporation of unusual ritual acts,[57] he may do so to mystify his art and to heighten its acceptability by the people. The basic principle is: 'The more you look, the less you see.' But the true nature of magic in Africa is that it is an art rooted in psychological techniques and not religious principles, notwithstanding its aura of mystery. This is why African religion cannot be construed as or constructed around magic.[58]

The Mechanics of Magic in Africa

A short narrative from Uchendu's work *The Igbo of Southeast Nigeria*[59] gives us a glimpse into the mechanics and functionality of magic in Africa, though in its residual and elementary form. Here is the story:

> She [mother] has packed her wares in a rectangular wicker basket [*abo*]. As she is helped to put the load on her head, her children, who are hanging around to give her the 'market wish', come up one after the other and say:
>
> *Nne zugbuo ndi ahia* [Mother, gain from market people]
>
> *Ndi ahia azugbula gi* [Market people, lose to mother]
>
> As each child gives his market wish, he spits into the mother's cupped palms. When this ritual is over, mother rubs her palms together and ritually cleanses her face, thus symbolically, ensuring 'good face' for the day's bargaining operations.

56. Cf. E.G. Parrinder, *African Traditional Religion* (London: Sheldon Press, 3rd edn, 1974), pp. 122–23; Yamauchi, 'Magic in the Biblical World', p. 169, especially n. 1; but Mbiti fails to make this distinction when he classifies medicine and witchcraft as magic. Cf. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, pp. 166–67.

57. This is part of Gehman's problems in understanding magic in Africa. Cf. Gehman, *African Traditional Religion*, p. 70.

58. The distinction between African religion and magic is well made by the Vatican's Secretariatus Pro non-Christianis, when its document *Meeting the African Religions* affirms that religion is a relation '*ad personam*' while magic is a relation '*ad rem*' (cf. p. 88); cf. also Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, p. 19.

59. Cf. V.C. Uchendu, *The Igbo of Southeast Nigeria* (New York and London: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965), pp. 15–16.

Uchendu calls the act 'market wish ritual', but one may prefer to see it as 'good face' magic, still borrowing his expression.[60] This act performed by the children 'each time their mother prepares to set out to the village market' is believed to work for both parties, children and mother, as magic because of its expected mutual benefit. A mother looking forward to a successful market transaction and sale of her wares cannot therefore gloss over the importance of such a magical practice performed by innocent children. It is based on the culturally accepted belief that social relations can be mutually manipulated with each party trying to get the better of the other. For the children, the mother's successful sales at the market mean plenty of market gifts, *ihe ahia* ('things of the market'). The art of manipulation is the bedrock of all forms of magic in Africa. It is based on the fact that the world is a 'marketplace', thus making the human activities therein subject to bargain. It is the uncertainties about the result of the bargaining that keep magic alive in African culture to enable the individual to maximize profit and escape loss.

It is interesting to note in the short story the imperative nature of the simple words of the children and their non-pretentious 'ritual' acts that give rise to the magical, wonderful/successful bargaining operations in the market. Although this magical 'ritual' is situated in the context of the Igbo of Nigeria, it is a familiar feature in Africa. To be remarked also is that in this magic drama the practitioners (here, the children) do not elicit the power of the demon or evil spirits as many western authors have characterized magic in Africa; rather, they give cause for amusement, an important feature in African magic.[61]

We can therefore conclude that although there is considerable overlap in the various arts, there is certainly some differentiation. By its name, nature and meaning, magic is a distinctive art, even though it may be closely related to other arts. The secrecy in magical art does not necessarily connote the idea of evil – sorcery or wizardry. Magical technique is no more secretive than the arts of rainmaking and medicine in Africa. Its secrecy is not only designed to heighten the expectations of the uninitiated but also to protect the patent rights of the specialist. In all, magic in Africa, 'by its nature and definition', as Idowu puts it, 'presupposes reflection and planning in order to secure an expected end'.[62]

60. Cf. Uchendu, *The Igbo of Southeast Nigeria*, p. 16.

61. The same can be observed in African footballers who in as much as they play to score and to win, devote their arts to entertain the spectators. For instance, the Nigerian footballer, nay football magician, J.J. Okocha in answer to the question why he dribbles and exhibits special arts in play responds thus: 'The spectators deserve some comfort and entertainment for their gate fees.'

62. E.B. Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A Definition* (London: SCM Press, 1973), p. 192.

Some Biblical Magic Narratives with Special Interest for Africa

In the Exodus narrative there are a series of acts performed by Moses and Aaron using a rod in a contest with the Egyptian magicians, which relate to the liberation of Israel, that are of great interest in Africa. They include changing the rod into a snake (Exod. 7.8-12)[63] and other magical acts exhibited in the plague narrative discussed above (cf. Exod. 7–15).

Another story of liberation that is partly accomplished by magical art is Jacob's regaining his independence from Laban's oppression (Gen. 30.37-42). The narrative interests Africans because it involves some reliance on native ingenuity and natural intelligence to devise a means[64] of redressing the injustice done to one who is powerless and is being cheated out of existence by the strong. From an African perspective, the efficacy of Jacob's magical art depended on his 'proof of innocence' (*ogu*) as against Laban's injustice which led to Jacob's being refused wages (v. 31).

The narrative in the prophetic ministry of the 'men of God' holds great interest for pastors and ministers of the Christian churches and leaders of prayer houses in Africa because of the signs and wonders that accompany the works of those men. The legendary magical practices of Elisha (cf. 2 Kgs 4.31-37; 13.15-19; also 1 Kgs 17.17-24) and the miracles of Jesus[65] and his disciples[66] are believed to serve as paradigms for all kinds of healing ministries.

Appropriations of Biblical Magic Narratives in an African Context

By appropriations here we mean the actualizing of the text, understanding it vis-à-vis human relationship in society and seeing how it fits into the African worldview and into people's definite system of values. This entails

63. Cf. Van Seters, 'A Contest of Magicians?', pp. 339–49; Noegel, 'Moses and Magic', pp. 45–59. The survival of Moses/Aaron's rod/snake after devouring the Egyptian one is a very important aspect of this episode. It demonstrates that a superior power is behind Moses' magical art, as the Egyptian magicians eventually realized (Exod. 8.15). It shows also that the magical contest is not just between the Egyptian and Israelite magicians; it is a contest between the God of Israel (cf. Exod. 7.17; 14.18; also 8.15; 9.14) and the deities of Egypt, including their vicegerent, Pharaoh, to whom they bequeath great magical abilities. Cf. Currid, 'The Egyptian Setting', p. 212.

64. According to C. Westermann, 'what is peculiar to Jacob's artifice is not the notion behind it, but its deliberate manipulation with the intention of producing a particular breeding effect'. Westermann, *Genesis 12-36: A Commentary* (trans. J.J. Scullion; Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985), p. 483. This does not however vitiate the fact that it is YHWH, the God of Jacob, who places such a technique in the hands of Jacob as the alternative account (Gen. 31.10-13) shows.

65. See especially Mt. 8.16, 28-34; 9.32-34; 11.5; 12.22-28; Mk 1.32-34, 39; 3.19-22; Lk. 7.22; Jn 11.17-44 and their parallels.

66. Cf. Mk 6.13; Acts 3.1-10; 5.12-16; 9.32-35; 14.8-10; 19.11-12.

understanding magic in African tradition and practices and allowing those practices to enter into dialogue with the biblical magic narratives. It builds on the belief that the biblical authors, like African writers, did not tell stories for their own sake. There is always some message, which the stories intend to promote, namely human liberation, moral discipline, justice, preferential option for the poor and the weak of the society.

However, there is hardly any consensus on how to interpret and appropriate the biblical magic texts. The disagreement is much deeper between the evangelicals and the fundamentalists of the mainline Churches, especially their 'born-agains', and the Pentecostal/Charismatic groups. While the former considers any type of magic as covenanting with the evil spirit and supernatural forces,[67] the latter and the African Independent Churches (AIC) tolerate magic on the basis of its effect on the here-and-now lives of the people and as God's empowerment of the people to continue in the fight for the liberation of all of humanity. In the narrative the AIC fully perceive the power of God to make possible what is seemingly impossible on behalf of those oppressed by the strong. This is a view that the mainline Churches will certainly not refute.

The meeting point is that all African Christians, irrespective of denominations, easily recognize the continuity between the biblical and African worlds. In this regard, the African belief system makes credibility in, and appropriation of, any biblical narrative that sees magic as salutary, possible. Thus the miracles, or rather magical wonders, believed to have been performed today by some African Christian leaders, priests, pastors and ministers find anchor in such biblical narratives.

Another factor that encourages appropriations is the fact that Africans consider magic in its positive sense as pro-life. When Africans see Moses and Aaron performing signs and wonders in the exodus event (Exodus 7–8), or 'Jesus casting out demons, restoring the sick people to health, and filling empty stomachs with food', they see people who are pro-life and who act as channels for the flow of life from God.[68] Indeed, not a few of the 'men of God' in Africa identify themselves with such a course today. The same is true for an average African Bible reader because he or she too identifies behind every act the hand of God, who has a keen interest in what befalls the physically or spiritually oppressed and intervenes to help them. Thus there is in biblical narrative a convergence of biblical and

67. The evangelicals and the fundamentalists of the mainline Churches, especially their 'born-agains', toe the line of Paul in relation to the magician, Bar-Jesus, whom he describes as full of deceit and fraud, as son of the devil and as enemy of righteousness (Acts 13.10). Cf. Gehman, *African Traditional Religion*, p. 112.

68. Cf. D.W. Waruta, 'The Bible and Prayer in Africa', in W.R. Farmer *et al.* (eds.), *The International Bible Commentary* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1998), pp. 162–64 (164).

African belief in the active involvement of a deity in human affairs. Some magic narratives are no exceptions.[69]

In the ancient world the gods are magicians par excellence as we have earlier observed; they initiate their agents to legitimize their practices.[70] The way Christians in Africa, especially among the African Independent Churches[71] read and understand the biblical magic passages is very much determined by God's own attitude towards magic and magicians in and outside the biblical world. Although the context of Old Testament magic narratives is Egypt and Babylon, the God of Israel did not dismiss magical arts as evil or superstitious or even pass judgement on the magicians themselves.[72] In fact, Israelite 'magicians' like Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Daniel, etc., engaged themselves in acts similar to those of foreign magicians with YHWH's full support. Thus African practitioners of magic may believe that they have no reason to suppose that God's attitude towards them and their magical art would be any different.

Today the magical acts of Joseph, Jacob, Moses, Aaron and Daniel find expression in the activities of Christian communities, especially in the African Independent Churches. For instance, adherents consult frequently the ministers of these Churches as one would consult Joseph or Daniel. For those ministers are believed to possess native ingenuity or divine power to interpret events and find answers to difficult issues of life bothering the individual, the family or the community. Consequently, African Christian pastors and ministers are familiar with and tend to imitate the magical acts of the great healers and wonder-workers of all times in the Bible. The 'men of God' like Elijah, Elisha and particularly Jesus are seen as enviable models for Christian healers in Africa. Hence Christians are ever more determined to fight on the side of the more powerful Israelite God against forces of evil and oppressive regimes and, indeed, 'whatever may betide them'.

We can at this point summarize the indicators for the appropriations of biblical magic narratives by Christian communities in Africa thus:

- There is a motif of liberation behind the narrative.
- The ultimate protagonist of the narrative is pro-life.

69. Indeed, one must not fail to recognize how the 'magical acts' of Joseph, Moses and Aaron in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon facilitate God's maintaining a link with his people, even in foreign lands, until he grants them freedom.

70. For instance, see Exod. 4.2-5 in the case of YHWH in relation to Moses.

71. For relevant information on the attitude of the African Independent Churches to the Bible and its usage, see E.E. Uzukwu, 'Bible and Christian Worship in Africa', *Chakana* 1 (2003): 7–32 (21–32).

72. We have earlier noted that magic in its true and unadulterated form in the ancient world and in Africa is clearly distinguishable from those practices condemned in Deuteronomy.

- The narrative demonstrates the superior power of the God of the Bible over pagan deities, thus challenging all other powers divine or human.
- The narrative shows that God stands always by the side of the weak and the unjustly treated.
- It demonstrates vengeance against the enemy and requital for injustice.
- The narrative legitimizes the mission of God's human agents and proves them to be truly 'men of God' through the acts performed by them.

It is within the context of these indexes and more that one can understand the enormous interest one notices among Christians in Africa concerning the biblical magic narratives. The impacts are felt among Church adherents and leaders, pastors, ministers, etc., although these have been acerbated by foreign influence and other factors to be examined in the next section.

Hazards of Uncritical Appropriations of Biblical Magic Narratives

It would be right to suppose that what Dupré calls 'magic ideology' is at work in many Churches and Christian communities in Africa today, seeing that Christians have been made to believe that 'life can be ordered or controlled by the help of certain manipulations, incantations, prayer-like practices, amulets, and rites, or through special knowledge'.[73] This ideology, which was prominent in the religion of the early Graeco-Roman world, found its way among early Christians and ultimately into Africa through the agency of modern western 'evangelizers'. The ideology thrives under the influence of some biblical texts that have been misinterpreted and, so, have been uncritically appropriated.

Today not a few Christian pastors and ministers prove themselves to be protagonists of this ideology as they depart from the traditional understanding of magic that Africa shares in common with other ancient cultures and lead their adherents into 'neo-paganism'. Yet, it is from the miracles of Jesus, which are considered not only as signs and wonders but also as saving acts,[74] and Jesus' mandate to his disciples on mission[75] that those who use sorcery to cast out evil spirits (a practice much in vogue in

73. Dupré, 'Magic', p. 65.
74. Cf. Mk 3.4; 5.23; Mt. 9.21, 22; Lk. 8.36; 17.19; Acts 14.8-13.
75. Cf. Mk 3.15; 6.13; Mt. 10.8; Lk. 9.1-2; cf. Acts 3.1-10; 14.8-13.

some Christian Churches today) claim to take their cue. There is an incurable 'fever' among Christians to be delivered from evil spirits that purportedly seek to keep them in captivity and draw them away from the true faith. Here the ministers/miracle (magical) workers are always on hand to give ready-made answers. They provide recipes and make promises as one finds illustrated in some prayer manuals. In Nigeria, for instance, the prayer manuals of Olukoya[76] and Ezekwe[77] are typical examples. What these manuals, like many others, purport to accomplish reminds one of the promises in *Pap. Leyden* 347,12 in the context of ancient Egypt that reads:

> He who recites this book is blessed every day: he hungers not, thirsts not, lacks not clothes, and is not melancholy. He does not enter into the law-court, nor does judgement go forth against him. But if he enters the law-court, he goes forth vindicated, praise being given to him like a god. Nor does his popularity depart from him.[78]

Such miracle-workers, 'men of God' as they call themselves, combine meaningless words and phrases,[79] feigning to speak in tongues. In fact, their insistent invocation of and conjuring in phrases like 'in Jesus' name', 'in the blood of Jesus', and calling down 'Holy Ghost fire', etc., make these prayer-like phrases counter-spells. In this way, they make prayer assume a magical force and become for many Christians a command that God must necessarily obey rather than an act of praise, petition and worship. More still, prayer becomes the medium for controlling and manipulating supernatural forces and divine powers, making Jesus' name in prayer almost a neutral incantation for performing signs and wonders.

76. D.K. Olukoya's titles include: *Pray your way to Breakthroughs, Spiritual Terrorist, Power Against Coffin Spirits, Power Against Destiny Quenchers, Overpowering Witchcraft, Prayers that Bring Explosive Increase, Power Against Marine Spirits, Prayer Strategies for Spinsters and Bachelors, Daily Fire, Violent Prayers to Disgrace Stubborn Problems, Drawers of Power from the Heavenlies*, etc. Each of these prayer booklets is published at Lagos by the Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries. Cf. A.I. Umoren, *The Christology of Romans 1:3-4 and Popular Power Christology among Christians in Abuja* (Unpublished Dissertation of the Catholic Institute of West Africa; Port Harcourt, Nigeria, 2004), p. 61.

77. V.N. Ezekwe's *Liberation Prayers* include: Prayer to challenge Satan, to call down Holy Ghost fire against anti-prayer demons and spirits of distraction, to seek divine favour in helpless situations, to overcome those who threaten your life or business, to invoke fire, to soak the driver (pilot, captain) with the blood of Jesus, to chain evil agents in the vehicle, to break family curses and be free, ... to obtain fruit of the womb miraculously, to open the door of business, to overcome impossible sickness, to fight anti-progress demons. ... to defeat those witch-hunting you in office, to rescue job seekers, to attain success miraculously in examination. Cf. Ezekwe, *Liberation Prayers* (Lagos: Mumson International Publishers, 2000) pp. 22ff; also Umoren, *The Christology of Romans 1:3-4*, p. 61.

78. Quoted in Hastings (ed.), *Encyclopaedia*, p. 264.

79. Similar combinations as Yamauchi affirms are witnessed in antiquity. Cf. Jamauchi, 'Magic in the Biblical World', p. 172.

One interesting example among others is seen in Ezekwe's *Prayer to Break Family Curses and be Free*. It reads:

> With Jesus Christ and His blood as my armour I cancel and reject all the curses, covenants, initiations and cooperation with forces and darkness in my family known and unknown. I come against all the powers of darkness that are withholding my prayers, progress, promotion and success. Lord Jesus, lift me up, out of poverty, sickness and backwardness and fortify me with your precious blood, Amen.[80]

Although in the New Testament the term *magos* (magician, sorcerer) may be applied positively as in the case of the magi in Mt. 2.1-12, who are presented as wise men in the sense of those trained in astrology and dream interpretation, it has, in the main, together with *mageia* (magic, magical art) a bad connotation,[81] as in the case of Simon Magus (Acts 8.9-24), Bar-Jesus/Elymas (Acts 13.6-12) and the exorcists, the seven sons of Sceva (Acts 19.13-19). Definitely, the various New Testament accounts of exorcism hold great interest for Christians in Africa today. Like the seven sons of Sceva, the Jewish high priest in quest of Paul's powers of healing (Acts 19.11-17), many ministers, pastors and freelance Christian miracle-workers are desperate to acquire magical powers for 'miracles'. Some would even want to go as far as Simon of Samaria to buy the spiritual gifts or/and powers to enhance their performance (Acts 8.9-22).

The more the prophets/prophetesses of the prayer houses and the ministers/pastors of the African Independent Churches and even of the mainline Christian Churches constantly claim to have powers to drive away witches and liberate those under the spell of whatever forces, the more they popularize the quest for 'easy Christianity', a Christianity without the cross and without suffering. The belief is that the alleged use of mystical powers makes the ministers and pastors appear to replace the traditional witch-doctors, diviners, fortune-tellers and sorcerers, since their activities are comparable to those of the traditional practitioners. Like them they claim to put right what has gone wrong, to unlock what

80. Ezekwe, *Liberation Prayers*, p. 42. Also Umoren, *The Christology of Romans 1:3-4*, p. 62.

81. Evidence from Ignatius, *Eph.*19.3, Justin Martyr *Dial. Trypho* 78, Tertullian *Idolatry* 9, Origen *Contra Celsum* 1.58-60, etc. shows also that the term was used pejoratively by the Apostolic Fathers and other extant sources. Cf. E.M. Yamauchi, *Persia and the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2nd edn, 1996), p. 485. But some positive images of the *magos* emerged by the third century CE when Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, referred to himself as *magos philosophos* in his *Confessio Sancti Cypriani*, 7 and in his *Homologia* as he *Cyprian the Magus* was said to busy himself with magic and possessing magical scriptures. Cf. Mendelsohn, 'Magic, Magician', p. 223. For more on the attitude of early Christians and the Church Fathers on magic, see Hastings (ed.), *Encyclopaedia*, p. 277.

other sorcerers or witches have locked, to heal, to protect, to restore the health of mind and body.[82]

Although Christian miracle-workers may refute allegations on the use of charms and diabolical means, given that demons cannot fight themselves, their claims to cast out demons have become in part a type of self-justifying show of holiness. Their ministerial activities with their focus on miracles have become a lucrative business, resulting in a proliferation of churches and healing homes. Some of the homes and churches are known to be creating health hazards for their adherents and clients and therefore vitiate the pro-life essence of magic/miracle in Africa. It is perhaps the mixing of the sorcerer's art with Christian faith, which is observably prevalent in the practices of those homes and churches, that constitutes one of the greatest problems facing Christian religion today. In other words, full-blown syncretism, no matter in what form, stunts the growth of Christianity in Africa in the same way that misappropriations and misinterpretations of the biblical magic narratives hinder deepening of Christian faith and practices. This is manifest in the urgent importunity among Christians in casting themselves upon the mercy of God and at the same time attempting to coerce the divine to do for them what he otherwise would not have done or would do in his own time.[83]

The fact is that the non-Christian practitioners of sorcery and other related arts have refused to yield to Christian influence to abandon their beliefs and practices, seeing that a number of Christians have become practitioners or beneficiaries of one form of mystical art or the other. This is partly the price Christians in Africa are paying for a sort of double allegiance. Almost all the Christian Churches in Africa are in the dilemma today of reconciling what their members claim to believe with what they actually do. Their pastors and ministers preach acceptance of the power of Jesus as personal Lord and Saviour and, at the same time, resort to mystical powers in order to perform 'miracles' and gain fame and followers. They are vocal in condemning mystical arts in a general way and promise deliverance to all, but at the same time enter into an unholy alliance through cabbalistic powers. This is the bane of the ministries of the miracle-inducing 'ministers of God' who are operating today not only in Africa but also all over the world.

82. For more on the functions of these specialists see Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, pp. 164–74; E. Ikenga-Metuh, *God and Man in African Religion* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1981) pp. 79–81, 97–103.

83. Cf. W. Amewowo, 'Experiences and Discoveries with the Bible in West Africa', *Biblical Pastoral Bulletin* 6 (1987): 27–38 (34–36).

Conclusion

From this study one can arrive at a few conclusions. The non-differential use of the term magic has led to a confusion in understanding the original meaning of the word and, consequently, to a lack of consensus on its use. There are many practices that are classified today as magic, which were different in meaning and operation in the ancient world. Magic in its traditional sense is based on employing natural forces and human ingenuity. Its ultimate goal is directed more to the social than to the spiritual life of the society. Hence it is not surprising that magic is an art indigenous and integral to social life in Africa; it is relevant to both the practitioner and the entire community within a given context.

The biblical magic narratives have helped Christians, especially those of the African Independent Churches, to rediscover the values of magic in Africa and to find more reason for integrating them into Christian practices. Their appropriation of the magical acts narrated in the Bible is supposedly motivated by YHWH's being behind those acts and by his guaranteeing their success. Today, some inevitable consequences arising from the misappropriations of the biblical narrative have become a matter of serious concern. There is a genuine worry over the meaning of a text, the interpretation of which turns out to be solely dependent upon the cultural value system of the interpreter and the one applying it. In fact, such apprehension is already looming Africa in the face because of the new-found utilitarian understanding of salvation as deliverance from many, if not all problems of life. Many Christians do not bother much about biblical prohibitions on the use of mystical powers so long as those powers are believed to improve their personal fortunes in life and help them to find basic answers to socio-economic and health problems. In other words, the average Christian in Africa looks to the biblical narrative for a means to cope with the numerous experiences of pain, suffering and sorrow that militate against life.[84] Even at that it will be an aberration in the traditional African concept of magic to use the 'secret arts' to serve any purpose other than the social benefit of the individual or community. Today such aberrations are on the increase, thus resulting in a mix-up between the art of magic and other traditional practices like sorcery, witchcraft and divination, which were once considered distinct from magic.

All said, magic is essentially a child of its own tradition; its scope is as wide as human desires.[85] Hence in the words of Dupré, it 'is not restricted

84. Dupré ('Magic', p. 65) observes that the man concerned with magic wishes to overcome the threatening powers of nature and to enlist the help of the good or favourable forces.

85. Cf. Hastings (ed.), *Encyclopaedia*, p. 263; also C. Ifemesia, *Traditional Humane Living among the Igbo: An Historical Perspective* (Enugu: Fourth Dimension, 1979), p. 108.

to specific levels of culture or to specific peoples but exists rather as a possibility in all cultures and among all peoples, although in different ways'.[86] This is why magic also finds a home in Africa and why room must be allowed for different perspectives on the subject.*

86. Dupré, 'Magic', p. 65.

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Part II

JESUS AND MAGIC
THEODICEAN PERSPECTIVES TO THE ISSUE

Tom Holmén

1. Introductory Remarks

The study of the theme 'Jesus and magic' has above all been confused by the difficulty of determining what can be regarded as magic. For example, some scholars think that the miracle and exorcism activity of Jesus puts him neatly in the category of magic practitioners,[1] for Jesus simply does the things that magicians do.[2] Other scholars, again, consider such a conclusion ill-founded. In their view, there may have been certain technical similarities between Jesus' activity and magical practices of the time,[3] but the similarities remain much too superficial to justify characterizing Jesus as a magician.[4] Historical categorization aside, disagreement on what can be considered magic blurs even the assessment of the question whether Jesus was ever branded a magician by his contemporary adversaries. According to some experts, Jesus' wonder-

1. M. Smith, *Jesus the Magician* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1981), pp. 94–139; J.D. Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991), pp. 137–67, 303–53. See also D.E. Aune, 'Magic in Early Christianity', *ANRW* II.23.2 (1980), pp. 1507–57 (1523–39). However, although Aune regards the wonder-working activities of Jesus as magical practices, he thinks that 'historically and sociologically, the most appropriate designation for the role which Jesus assumed is that of messianic prophet' (Aune, 'Magic in Early Christianity', 1527; cf. also 1538–39).

2. Smith, *Jesus the Magician*.

3. Such as touching, the use of saliva, and authoritative commands; see Aune, 'Magic in Early Christianity', pp. 1523–39.

4. G. Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist: A Contribution to the Study of the Historical Jesus* (WUNT 2.54; Tübingen: Mohr, 1993), pp. 190–207; J. P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*. Vol. 2: *Mentor, Message and Miracles* (AB Reference Library; New York: Doubleday, 1994), pp. 537–52; G. Theissen and A. Merz, *Der historische Jesus: Ein Lehrbuch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), pp. 276–77; J.D.G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* (Christianity in the Making, 1; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), pp. 689–94; B. Kollmann, *Jesus und die Christen als Wundertäter: Studien zu Magie, Medizin und Schamanismus in Antike und Christentum* (FRLANT, 170; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), pp. 314–15.

working activities would probably have spurred his critics to charge him with magical practices.[5] In fact, as these scholars point out, the accusations that Jesus was in league with Beelzebub[6] and was a deceiver who was leading people astray[7] equal a charge of black magic or sorcery.[8] Other scholars, however, do not agree with this estimate but think that no charge of magic can be discerned in the gospel tradition.[9] Instead, they suggest that the fact that 'Jesus could be accused by his opponents of using the power of the prince of demons without any talk about "magic" surfacing ... simply underlines the point that there was no inextricable link between the two'.[10]

The aim of this article is not to weigh the accuracy of the scholarly claims of Jesus being or not being a magician, i.e., to arrive at a historical categorization of Jesus. Instead, by taking a more modest (though perhaps not less meaningful) approach, I shall focus on the question of whether (some of) Jesus' deeds should be seen as having invited charges of magic from his contemporaries. I shall bring into view a perspective which, I hope, has something new to offer in tackling this question. The perspective is contemporary theodicean thinking. Theodicy does not immediately come to mind as a framework for assessing the deeds of Jesus or the issue of magic. Therefore, to understand the relevance of this perspective, we must first consider the theodicean principle of 'action–consequence'.

2. *The Action–consequence Principle in the Context of Jesus*

a. *A Theodicean Principle*

The principle of action–consequence denotes the idea that goodness/good deeds will lead to happiness while wickedness/wicked acts will cause one to suffer. The idea was shared by almost all people of antiquity and considered an indispensable element of their theodicean thinking:[11] If there is a just god who cares for human beings, this god will operate

5. G.N. Stanton, 'Jesus of Nazareth: A Magician and a False Prophet Who Deceived God's People?', in J.B. Green and M. Turner (eds.), *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ. Essays on the Historical Jesus and New Testament Christology* (Festschrift I.H. Marshall; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), pp. 164–80 (178); N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Christian Origins and the Question of God, 2; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1996), p. 440.

6. Mk 3.22-26; par. Mt. 12.24-26/Lk. 11.15, 17-18; cf. also Jn 7.20; 8.48, 52; 10.20.

7. See, for example, Mt. 27.63-64; Lk. 23.1-14; Jn 7.40-52.

8. Stanton, 'Magician and a False Prophet?'; Wright, *Victory of God*, 189–91, 440; Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, pp. 458, 689.

9. Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, pp. 198–204, 207; Meier, *A Marginal Jew* 2, pp. 551–52.

10. Meier, *A Marginal Jew* 2, p. 574.

11. A notable exception: the Epicureans.

according to the action–consequence principle. In other words, for good or ill, god(s) will see to it that 'you reap what you sow'.[12]

The following short samples will illuminate the imperativeness of the principle for different religious–philosophical spheres. The principle was deeply rooted in the heart of Israelite belief, the covenant:

> I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.[13]

In fact, sustaining this order was a criterion for the true God, a criterion false gods did not meet:

> Whether one does evil to them [*sc.* false idols] or good, they will not be able to repay it. They cannot set up a king or depose one. Likewise they are not able to give either wealth or money; if one makes a vow to them and does not keep it, they will not require it.[14]

Further, a Hittite text tells about a god:

> He/she [a deity] it is who always vindicates just men, but chops down evil men like trees, repeatedly striking evil men on their skulls ... until he/she destroys them.[15]

More contemporarily to Jesus' time we can find for instance this kind of statement in Cicero's *De natura deorum* (3.85):

> Destroy this, and everything collapses; for just as a household or a state appears to lack all rational system and order if in it there are no rewards for right conduct and no punishments for transgression, so there is no such thing at all as the divine governance [*moderatio*] of the world if that governance makes no distinction between the good and the wicked.

Of course, the harsh reality of life many times suggested that the principle did not quite hold true. This experience was a constant cause of struggle. A famous example is Seneca's tractate *De providentia*, where he seeks to 'plead the cause of the gods' (1.1) by attempting to answer the question

12. Gal. 6.7. For further instances of Jewish and Graeco-Roman applications of this metaphor, see R.N. Longenecker, *Galatians* (WBC, 41; Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1990), p. 280. See also note 41 below.

13. Exod. 20.5-6. These words seal the covenant agreement. See also, for example, Exod. 34.7; Lev. 26.39; Num. 14.18; Deut. 5.9-10; Pss. 103.17-18; 105.8; Jer. 32.18-19; Tob. 3.3-5. Cf. Deut. 7.9-10; 24.16; 2 Kgs 14.6; 2 Chron. 25.4; Jer. 31.29-30; Ezek. 18.

14. *Ep. Jer.* 6.34-35. See also for example Ps. 82.1-4. Cf. even Deut. 32.39; 1 Sam. 2.2-10; Jer. 10.2-16.

15. According to H.A. Hoffner, 'Theodicy in Hittite Texts', in A. Laato and J.C. de Moor (eds.), *Theodicy in the World of the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), pp. 90–107 (96–97).

why 'men who are good ... labour and sweat and have a difficult road to climb' while 'the wicked ... make merry and abound in pleasures' (1.6).

Judaism also knew this struggle:

> I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For they have no pain; their bodies are sound and sleek. They are not in trouble as others are; they are not plagued like other people ... All in vain I have kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence. For all day long I have been plagued, and am punished every morning.[16]

The apparent deviations from the principle which were manifest in real life were indeed acknowledged and often even accompanied by a complaint against the covenant God. Nonetheless, he was never ultimately pictured as unjust, nor was the ultimate validity of the action–consequence principle surrendered.[17] For instance, the book of Ecclesiastes concludes with an editorial statement which seems to take back previous utterances that in deep frustration had almost given up the principle:[18]

> Fear God, and keep his commandments; for that is the duty of everyone. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.[19]

I must refrain from further recourse to literature,[20] but the point is, I think, clear: the action–consequence principle, among other things of course, should be regarded as being operative in the background when Jesus proclaims his message in word and deed. The healings of Jesus, for example, would have provoked thoughts in accordance with the principle, thereby eliciting questions about human guilt and suffering and the acts of the just God. Before engaging in studying gospel texts we need to consider how the action–consequence principle links theodicy with magic.

16. Ps. 73.3-5, 13-14. See also for example Jer. 12.1; Job 21.7-8; Eccl. 7.15; 8.14; Hab. 1.13; *4 Ezra* 4.23. The sentiment was universal. See, for instance, R.K. Williams, 'Theodicy in the Ancient Near East', in J.L. Crenshaw (ed.), *Theodicy in the Old Testament* (Issues in Religion and Theology, 4; London: SPCK, 1983), pp. 42–56.

17. J.H. Charlesworth, 'Theodicy in Early Jewish Writings', in A. Laato and J.C. de Moor (eds.), *Theodicy in the World of the Bible*, pp. 470–508 (507–508).

18. A similar tension can be observed elsewhere in the book as well. Compare Eccl. 2.26; 3.17; 8.10-12 with Eccl. 2.14; 7.15; 8.12-13; 8.14; 9.2.

19. Eccl. 12.13-14.

20. For a detailed exposition, see my forthcoming *Theodicy and the Cross of Christ: A New Testament Inquiry*. See also *passim* in the grand study of J. Krašovec, *Reward, Punishment, and Forgiveness: The Thinking and Beliefs of Ancient Israel in the Light of Greek and Modern Views* (VTSup, 78; Leiden: Brill, 1999).

b. *The Principle as a Link Between Theodicy and Magic: A Certain Deviation from the Principle*

As maintained, the harsh experiences of life could challenge the validity of the action–consequence principle. Often – or at least sometimes – bad things appeared to happen to good people and *vice versa*, thus calling God's justness into question. The observation created an enduring problem of theodicy and aroused abundant philosophic and theological discussion.[21] A host of explanations were generated to solve the apparent deviations from the principle.[22] One particular type of deviation concerns us now: deliberate thwarting or getting rid of suffering that results from wrongdoings, that is, averting the punishment for one's sins. I shall consider the issue mainly from the Jewish perspective.

'Why do the wicked prosper?' was the emphatic question voiced by religious minds generation after generation. Obviously, the wicked would try to avoid the consequences of their actions. Ideas of God as almighty and all-seeing would then be evoked to discourage the wicked. They would not be able to flee the just God. However, there was also a legitimate way to escape suffering punishment for one's sins: appealing to God's forgiveness. In other words, when wishing to cause a particular exception to the action–consequence principle, namely a default of punishment for misbehaviour, one could hope that God would, out of mercy, exempt one from the proper consequences of one's doings. In this way, God's forgiveness being involved, what would otherwise have been deemed a violation of the action–consequence principle could be regarded as acceptable.

As one can fathom, knowing how to get a share of divine forgiveness was of crucial importance. Much was at stake simply because this knowledge would help one to get free from punishment. However, the knowledge was also crucial in respect to gauging whether God had indeed sanctioned a lack of retribution. For, understandably, people would not have been all too eager to see wrongdoers as exempted from the due outcome of their misdeeds. Although Yahweh was self-evidently the

21. In Judaism, the covenant belief greatly aggravated the problem; J. Bowker, *Problems of Suffering in Religions of the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 7–14; J.L. Crenshaw, 'Introduction: The Shift from Theodicy to Anthropodicy', in J.L. Crenshaw (ed.), *Theodicy in the Old Testament*, pp. 1–16 (5). In other respects, one is referred to the Graeco-Roman discussion under the title of divine providence (e.g. Seneca, Plutarch).

22. An excellent systematic arrangement of a wide variety of views can be found in A. Laato and J.C. de Moor, 'Introduction', in A. Laato and J.C. de Moor (eds.), *Theodicy in the World of the Bible*, pp. vii–liv (xxx–liv). See also, for instance, Bowker, *Problems of Suffering*, pp. 12–24.

absolute controller of the divine pardon,[23] the Torah warranted certain 'triggering factors', such as sacrifice and remorse.[24] Clearly, some ambivalence was always involved in judging their efficacy and appropriateness. We may recall for example Isaiah's and Jeremiah's warnings against careless trust in sacrifices and Jonah's dissatisfaction with God's decision to be merciful with the repentant city of Nineveh.[25]

A key question is now: Were there any alternatives to the divine pardon in causing the exception under consideration? Now it would be helpful to make our thinking more concrete. An example that will benefit the present article even later on pertains to healing. There was a widespread and long-prevailing conviction that ailments of various kinds were a form of punishment resulting from one's misdoings. For a sick person to get well, it was imperative to settle accounts with God, to obtain divine pardon.[26] Therefore, everywhere in the Jewish tradition, it was ultimately the Lord who healed the sick.[27] So can we think of any alternative here? Besides appealing to God's forgiveness, could any other pursuit cause the particular kind of exception to the action–consequence principle, that is, cause a default of due punishment?

Thinking of healing, one might suggest medicine. Early Judaism attests to a turn from the earlier rather pejorative attitude towards physicians to a more favourable and trusting position. However, despite the acceptance of the use of drugs and medicaments, atonement for sins through the appropriate means was still regarded as essential for healing.[28] For this reason, as far as I can see, and at least when it comes to healing, there was only one clear alternative to appealing to God's forgiveness. This alternative was magic.

As is evident in various sources, warding off suffering – which was different in its forms and in relation to its causes, but often also caused by

23. Cf. Exod. 33.19.

24. See, for example, E.P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE-66 CE* (London: SCM Press, 2nd impr., 1994), pp. 103–18, 251–57, 270–78.

25. See Isa. 1; Jer. 7; Jon. 4. Cf. also, for instance, Prov. 21.27; Amos 5.21-24; *2 En.* 45.3; Sir. 34.19.

26. J.Z. Baruch, 'The Relation Between Sin and Disease in the Old Testament', *Janus* 51 (1964): 295–302 (298–300); M.L. Brown, *Israel's Divine Healer* (SOTBT; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), pp. 239–40.

27. Exod. 15.25-26; Pss. 103.2-3; 107.20; Job 5.18; Hos. 6.1; Sir. 38.10; Tob. 13.14-15; Wis. 16.12-13; H.C. Kee, *Medicine, Miracle and Magic in New Testament Times* (SNTSMS. 55; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 12–21; J. Scharbert, 'Krankheit II', *TRE* 19 (1990), pp. 680–83 (682–83); Brown, *Divine Healer*, pp. 237–38.

28. See, for example, Sir. 38.9-15; G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), pp. 60–61; see further Kee, *Medicine, Miracle and Magic*, pp. 19–26.

ailments[29] – was one of the major purposes for people to pursue magic.[30] These magical traits were widely known and practised in antiquity; they were also known in the Old Testament and in early Judaism. While some religious–cultural traditions embraced magic specifically as a way given by god(s) for human beings to get rid of suffering,[31] others were more doubtful.[32] We can make the remark that, in modern critical reading, the Old Testament view of magic may appear ambiguous. Irrespective of this, the Judaism of the change of the eras, as well as early Christianity, regarded magic – or better, what they perceived as magic – as unambiguously proscribed by the God of the Scriptures.

Hence, moving on swiftly, I summarize that in Jesus' Jewish context the only legitimate procedure to cause the exception to the action–consequence principle that has been in view, namely a release from punishment, was appealing to divine pardon. While it was known and believed that magic could also be used to bring about the same effect, resulting for instance in healing, this was clearly an unacceptable pursuit. And now to the gospel texts and the Jesus tradition where I shall first review some teachings which are suspicious from the perspective of the action–consequence principle.

3. *Suspicious Theodicy in the Teaching of Jesus*

The present treatment of the Jesus tradition cannot pursue a systematic analysis of authenticity, i.e., a verification of the historicity of the variegated information provided by the tradition.[33] Nonetheless, I shall

29. Kee, *Medicine, Miracle and Magic*, pp. 114–15; A. Jeffers, *Magic and Divination in Ancient Palestine and Syria* (SHCANE, 8; Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 230–35; P. Schäfer, 'Magic and Religion in Ancient Judaism', in P. Schäfer and H.G. Kippenberg (eds.), *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar and Symposium* (SHR, 75; Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 19–43 (34).

30. Kee, *Medicine, Miracle and Magic*, p. 112; J.A. Scurlock, 'Magic: Ancient Near East', *ABD* 4 (1992), pp. 464–68 (465–66); F. Graf, 'How to Cope with a Difficult Life: A View of Ancient Magic', in P. Schäfer and H.G. Kippenberg (eds.), *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar and Symposium*, pp. 93–114.

31. See E.F. Sutcliffe, *Providence and Suffering in the Old and New Testaments* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1953), pp. 22–25; Scurlock, 'Magic', 465; A. Loprieno, 'Theodicy in Ancient Egyptian Texts', in A. Laato and J.C. de Moor (eds.), *Theodicy in the World of the Bible*, pp. 27–56 (32–33). Cf. *1 En.* 7, 8.

32. For example, the 'official' Greek and Roman thought generally rejected magic; H.-D. Betz, 'Magic in Greco-Roman Antiquity', *Encyclopedia of Religion* 9 (1987), pp. 93–97 (95); Aune, 'Magic in Early Christianity', pp. 1518–19. Irrespectively of this, magical traits teemed; H.-J. Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions* (trans. B. McNeil; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2003), pp. 209–31.

33. Restrictions on length prohibit me from making an elaborate analysis. For one model of authentication, see T. Holmén, *Jesus and Jewish Covenant Thinking* (BibInt Series, 55; Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 24–36.

attempt to make the claims that will be put forward to bear on the historical Jesus as well.

The Jesus tradition holds quite a number of teachings that would appear suspicious with regards to theodicean thinking. Most expressly the issue of theodicy is reflected in some sayings, such as in the Beatitudes.

> Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.[34]

These utterances go against what would have been the most obvious line of theodicean thinking. Not those living in happiness but those who endure travails are the blessed ones.[35] This difficulty is, however, quite easy to overcome by means of somewhat deeper theodicean reflection well known at that time. The fact that trouble was often the lot of good and righteous people could be explained for instance by referring to the reward in the afterlife.[36] Still, it is noteworthy that Matthew tends to spiritualize the hardships of the blessed by calling them 'the poor in spirit' and 'those who hunger and thirst for righteousness'. Thus, the theodicy suggested by the Beatitudes, although it might not be properly called bewildering, nonetheless displays a somewhat surprising attitude.

Greater puzzlement with respect to theodicean thinking is presented by the beginning verses of Luke 13, which relate two fateful disasters. Some people had been killed by a pagan overlord while they were bringing offerings to God.[37] Others, again, had abruptly been struck dead by the unexpected fall of a tower.[38] Such exceptional calamities would normally have been seen as indicating that the people in question had drawn the wrath of God upon themselves in some special way.[39] Naturally, the just God would repay each person according to his or her

34. Lk. 6.20-21.

35. Cf. for example Deut. 33.26-29; Ps. 128; *Pss. Sol.* 15.7, 8.

36. See, for instance, Dan. 12.1-3; *2 Bar.* 21.11-25; 44.11-15; *1 En.* 38-39; *Sib. Or.* 4.179-190; R.J. Faley, *The Cup of Grief: Biblical Reflections on Sin, Suffering and Death* (New York: Alba House, 1977), pp. 77–88; Bowker, *Problems of Suffering*, pp. 26–32. Accordingly, it stands in the Beatitudes that the hungry will be filled and the weepers will laugh.

37. An explanation for such a drastic injustice would have been that God found the sacrifices (and, thus, their bearers) unacceptable; see, for example, Amos 5.21-24; Isa. 1.11-17; Prov. 15.8; *2 En.* 45.3; Sir. 34.19.

38. The sudden and fateful death corresponds to what was often seen as the inevitable end of wicked people. See, for instance, Ps. 73.16-19, which describes the abrupt termination of the lives of the godless.

39. I.H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC, 3; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978), p. 553; F. Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas. 2. Teilband: Lk 9,51-14,35* (EKKNT, 3; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1996), p. 376. This follows the concept of 'measure for measure'; D.L. Bock, *Luke Volume 2: 9:51-24:53* (BECNT, 3b; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), p. 1206.

deeds.[40] Correspondence between the sin and the punishment was central to the expected justness of the Divinity.[41] Contrary to this, the theodicean viewpoint put forward by the Jesus of the text loosens the action–consequence principle by suggesting that the graveness of the punishment need not always be in proportion to the deeds committed.[42] Such thinking apparently lumps grave and petty sinners together in anticipation of mutual doom.[43] Would not God be more discriminating?

Some of the so-called parables of reversal are similarly confusing with respect to theodicean thinking.[44] In the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Lk. 16.19-31, the words of Abraham to the rich man who after his death finds himself in Hades approximate the theodicean view already encountered in the Beatitudes:[45]

> Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony.[46]

More puzzling theodicy can be found in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican in Lk. 18.10-14. Many of the caricaturing elements of the parable can be discarded as secondary amendments.[47] Even so, the parable's vindication of the publican upon his appeal to God for forgiveness comes as rather unsurprising. Instead, without the caricaturing features, it is the picture of the Pharisee who thanks God for the good life he is leading that begins to provoke questions of theodicy. The Pharisee has followed the guidance of the Torah[48] and, at first, everything

40. 1 Kgs 8.39; 2 Chron. 6.30; Neh. 6.14; Ps. 62.13; Prov. 24.12; Ezek. 36.19; Sir. 16.12; 35.24; *1 En.* 95.5.

41. J. Barton, 'Natural Law and Poetic Justice in the Old Testament', *JTS* 30 (1979): 1-14. For the multifaceted correspondence between sin and judgement, see P.D. Miller, *Sin and Judgment in the Prophets: A Stylistic and Theological Analysis* (SBLMS, 27; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982), pp. 7–110. Cf. also the principle of poetic justice (Barton, 'Poetic Justice', 9–14) in, e.g., Hos. 8.7; 10.13; Pss. 7.15-17; 9.16; 57.7; Job 4.8; 15.35; Prov. 1.17-18; 5.22; 14.32; 22.8; 26.27; 28.10; Eccl. 10.8-9; Est. 7.10; 9.1; Dan. 6.24; Wis. 11.16; 12.23; Sir. 27.25-27; Tob. 14.10. See even Exod. 20.5; Num. 32.23; Job 8.4; Prov. 10.24.

42. J. Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34* (WBC, 35b; Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1993), pp. 718–19.

43. Cf. Lk. 13.3 (ὁμοίως), 5 (ὡσαύτως).

44. For the label and the relevant parables, see J. D. Crossan, *In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 53–78.

45. J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke (X-XXIV)* (AB, 28; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), pp. 1127–28, 1133.

46. Lk. 16.25.

47. See Holmén, *Jesus and Jewish Covenant Thinking*, pp. 118–25.

48. See the tithing liturgy of Deut. 26. The paraphrase of the liturgy in *Ant.* 4.242–43 intriguingly increases the parallelism with Lk. 18.10-14. See C.A. Evans, 'The Pharisee and the Publican. Luke 18.9-14 and Deuteronomy 26', in C.A. Evans and W.R. Stegner (eds.), *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel* (JSNTSup, 104; Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity, 3; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), pp. 342–55.

seems to hit the mark. Now, for once, it has become manifest already within the present worldly life that goodness/good deeds will lead to happiness. Now, for once, God has acted clearly and indisputably according to the action–consequence principle and given a person the good life he in his justness has promised to all who pay heed to his will. But then it appears, as the parable's comments on the Pharisee continue, that this is somehow completely wrong! The publican is justified, not the Pharisee. It seems – and indeed this may be the upshot of all the Jesus traditions we have now reviewed – as if the proper theodicean state of affairs should not be welcomed.

In addition, there are some broad, sweeping statements that would seem to turn the action–consequence principle completely upside down: 'The tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you' (Mt. 21.32); 'I tell you, many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness' (Mt. 8.11-12); and finally, 'but many who are first will be last, and the last will be first' (Mk 10.31).

What we can learn from these short examples is that the Jesus tradition, and probably to some extent also the authentic teaching of Jesus, put forward ideas that would have appeared curious from the theodicean point of view. The existence of such teachings of Jesus, then, would have enhanced people's sensitivity to seeing similar curiosities as manifested by his deeds as well. I shall now turn to consider some features of the deeds that possibly, perhaps even probably, would have occupied the minds of Jesus' contemporaries.

4. *Healings as Suspect of Magic due to Suspicious Theodicy?*[49]

I shall begin by making some remarks on the healing story in John 9. In doing this, I realize that the story does not present an original compositional whole.[50] The present shape of the story does, however, illuminate what I believe can hold true even with respect to the historical healing activity of Jesus.

The story opens by mentioning a man who has been blind from birth. Jesus' disciples pose a question which actualizes a problem of theodicy:

49. The following discussion will not consider Jesus' exorcisms. See the remark in section 6 below.

50. See, for instance, C.H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp. 181–88; Meier, *A Marginal Jew* 2, pp. 694–98; M. Labahn, *Jesus als Lebensspender: Untersuchungen zu einer Geschichte der johanneischen Tradition anhand ihrer Wundergeschichten* (BZNW, 98; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999), pp. 373–74.

who had sinned, the man or his parents? The disciples' question plausibly reflects the contemporary understanding of the action–consequence principle.[51] Since the man had always been blind and it was accordingly rather difficult to ascribe the sin, ultimately causing the blindness, to the man himself, the Torah passage quoted at the beginning of this article (Exod. 20.5-6) became relevant. For some, it would have been easier to see the consequences of sin as having been transferred from the parents to their child.[52]

Somewhat like the opening verses of Luke 13 reviewed above, Jesus' answer to the disciples' question here rescinds the consistent application of the action–consequence principle. However, this time, according to Jesus, the evil that has come to pass is in no proportion whatsoever to the deeds committed: there is no sin that would have led to the man's blindness.[53] The important point to observe now is that only by assuming the truth of Jesus' estimation of the theodicy of the situation does the healing that follows present itself as unobjectionable. Feeling inclined to embrace Jesus' estimation, as we modern readers of the text perhaps are, it may be difficult to realize this objectionability. For Jesus' contemporaries, however, the view that no sin was involved would have made God suspect of a grave injustice. It would thus have been an unlikely interpretation of the situation, to say the least.[54] For them, therefore, the healing falls short of acknowledging the problem of sin and guilt.

Before I make any further comments, let us consider another healing story. The healing of a paralysed man in Mk 2.1-12 also contains elements that in a tradition-critical analysis may be deemed secondary as to their provenance.[55] My point is again that the story serves in highlighting some

51. Brown, *Divine Healer*, 241. See, for instance, Lev. 26.14-16 and Deut. 28.27-28, which both mention, among other things, blindness as resulting from transgressions against the covenant stipulations.

52. See the references in note 13 above. The thought was, in fact, common in antiquity. Gen. 25.22-23 had inspired rabbis to generate speculations about the possibilities of the foetus to sin in the womb; *Gen. R.* 63.6; see also *Ruth R.* 6.4. See even Wis. 8.19-20; *T. Naph.* 2.2-4.

53. Jn 9.3; cf. Lk. 13.2-3.

54. Correctly Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 187 (commenting on both John 9 and Luke 13): 'The interlocutors tacitly assume the principle that suffering, under the dispensation of a just Providence, must be retribution for sin.'

55. See, for example, H.-W. Kuhn, *Ältere Sammlungen im Markusevangelium* (SUNT, 8; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), pp. 53–57; H.-J. Klauck, 'Die Frage der Sündenvergebung in der Perikope von der Heilung des Gelähmten (Mk 2,1-12 parr)', *BZ* 25 (1981): 223–48 (225–36); H. Hendrickx, *The Miracle Stories of the Synoptic Gospels* (Studies in the Synoptic Gospels; San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1987), pp. 106–21; J. Marcus, *Mark 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB, 27; New York: Doubleday, 1999), pp. 218–24.

questions that can be relevant even to the historical healing activity of Jesus.

Contrary to what was established as regards the healing story in John 9, here in Mark 2 Jesus' statements are consistent with the action–consequence principle. The connection between sin and the defect in question is evident in the words he addresses directly to the paralysed man ('son, your sins are forgiven'), in his comments on the unspoken thoughts of the scribes ('the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins'), and in the subsequent healing itself. Contrary to John 9, as is thus evident, here in Mark 2 Jesus indeed seems to acknowledge the problem of sin and guilt. However, as the present form of the text suggests, although Jesus apparently thinks that the problem is not only acknowledged but also adequately dealt with by what he says and does, all do not concur. For some, Jesus' dealings remain questionable. Obviously, there is no sign or mention of the use of any of the means of atonement, which would have been necessary to indicate the subordination of the issue under God's authority.[56]

The general historicity of Jesus' healing activity needs not be doubted. No matter what origin or role in Jesus' ministry one ascribes to the healings, they form an integral part of the tradition and are nowadays regarded as one of the most reliable facts about Jesus.[57] Naturally, this statement is not an automatic endorsement of the authenticity of every individual healing tradition. Accordingly, I have uttered some due reservation vis-à-vis the discussed healing stories of John 9 and Mark 2. However, the features that have been under inspection are not tied up with these precise traditions (although they are most recognizable here), but are well conceivable elsewhere, too. In a way of commenting on both John 9 and Mark 2, I would now like to pose three questions and this time bring them to bear on the historical level of Jesus' work as well.

(1) Did Jesus of Nazareth sometimes – by token of explicit denial or otherwise – appear to ignore the problem of sin and guilt when healing people? In my view, even if the direct statement of Jn 9.3 is deemed inauthentic, he probably did. Healing accounts that through silence seem to bypass the question about the sin and guilt of the people that are cured are numerous and widely attested.[58]

56. Cf. Mk 2.7.

57. Cf. B. L. Blackburn, 'The Miracles of Jesus', in B. Chilton and C. A. Evans (eds.), *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research* (NTTS, 19; Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 353–94 (392).

58. Mt. 8.5-13 (Jn 4.46-54); Mk 1.29-31; 3.1-5; 5.22-24, 35-42; 5.25-34; 7.31-35; 8.22-25; Lk. 13.10-17; 14.1-6; Jn 11.1-44. I have discounted instances where Jesus' exorcism activity is reported (see note 49 above).

There is no reason to think that this feature would in its entirety be a secondary construction.

(2) When he practised healing, did Jesus sometimes seem to deal with the problem of sin and guilt in a way that would have been deemed inadequate by those who regarded themselves as capable of and/or responsible for gauging such issues? Answering this question requires some more contemplation. Besides the story of Mark 2, there is not much clear evidence that Jesus ever focused on the problem of sin and guilt. Thus, if he did not, this second question is inessential. But if he did focus on the problem of sin and guilt when healing, all evidence suggests that he never consistently demanded the use of the means of atonement in the way that would have been considered appropriate.[59]

Hence, to summarize likely answers to these two questions: many times in Jesus' reported healings, the problem of sin, reflecting the theodicean principle of action–consequence, seems to have been either ignored or was solved in a way that to some of his contemporaries would have appeared inadequate. This sentiment would have been strengthened by the suspicious-looking theodicy of some of Jesus' teachings.

(3) Along with the third question we come to the culmination point of the present article. The fact that people were healed through Jesus' activity constituted visible and inarguable evidence that the kind of deviation from the action–consequence principle that was discussed in section 2b above had indeed taken place. Since, as was the common idea, there was an intimate bond between sin and sickness, the healings obviously attested to the fact that through Jesus' deeds people were getting rid of the suffering sins had caused them. The question is now: If those who viewed Jesus more critically could not or would not deem the healings and the deviation from the action–consequence principle as having taken place in the only legitimate way possible, namely by appealing to God's forgiveness, what alternative interpretations were there left to account for the things that evidently had happened? Yes, I think that the idea that magic was involved was the only alternative.

5. *Concluding Remarks*

Hence, I put forward the following suggestion: the fact that some of Jesus' deeds appeared to rescind the action–consequence principle in an illegitimate way, that is, in a way not based on appealing to God's forgiveness, opened the way for suspicions that they were magical in

59. Healings which pay attention to the question of sin but which do not seem to deal with it in a proper manner: Mk 2.1-12; Jn 5.1-14. In addition, Lk. 7.11-15 might be included.

nature. The perspective adopted in this article would thus corroborate the scholarly interpretations that have suggested that the deeds were indeed labelled as magic by some contemporary people. Of course, Jesus himself may not have considered any of his deeds to be based on magic. In such a case – and this is a matter which needs further research – he would either have regarded the action–consequence principle as not being (fully) valid or, alternatively, he would have seen his work as happening within a larger, overarching framework of God's forgiveness.

The discussion here has not considered Jesus' exorcisms. In the Judaism of Jesus' time, illnesses were often connected with demons. In some such cases, the traditionally held bond between sin and sickness became blurred. Through being possessed by an evil spirit, a person could meet with an illness without this being a result of his or her wrongdoings. The model proposed by the present article is not applicable in such instances but, in my view, remains otherwise useable.[60] Despite the belief in the activity of evil spirits, sin retained a role in explaining ailments in two ways: (a) diseases and defects were not always seen as connected with spirit possession;[61] (b) culpability could be regarded as a part of the problem, alongside the activity of the spirits.[62] Jesus' exorcisms may have inspired the accusation that he was in league with the prince of demons. However, this does not rule out other kinds of denunciations in other types of situations.

60. See, for instance, the references in notes 58–59 above.

61. See G. Theissen, *Urchristliche Wundergeschichten: Ein Beitrag zur formgeschichtlichen Erforschung der synoptischen Evangelien* (SNT, 8; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Mohn, 1974), pp. 94–102; U.B. Müller, 'Krankheit III', *TRE* 19 (1990), pp. 684–86 (684–85).

62. Kee, *Medicine, Miracle and Magic*, pp. 21–26; J.J. Rousseau, 'Jesus, an Exorcist of a Kind', in E.H. Lovering (ed.), *Society of Biblical Literature 1993 Seminar Papers* (SBLSP, 32; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993), pp. 129–53 (142, 150).

JESUS THE EXORCIST AND ANCIENT MAGIC[1]

Graham H. Twelftree

1. Abbreviations: *AIT* = J.A. Montgomery, *Aramaic Incantation Texts from Nippur* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Museum, 1913); *AMB* (followed by page, bowl or amulet number = J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls. Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 3rd edn, 1998); *AMIB* (followed by page or bowl number) = J.B. Segal and E.C.D. Hunter, *Catalogue of the Aramaic and Mandaic Incantation Bowls in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 2000) on which see the important critical reviews by C. Mueller-Kessler, 'Die Zauberschalensammlung des British Museum', *AfO* 48/49 (2001-2002), pp. 115-42, and J.N. Ford, 'Notes on the Mandaic Incantation Bowls in the British Museum', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 26 (2002), pp. 237-72; BDAG = W. Bauer, F.W. Danker, W.F. Arndt, W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago and London: University of Chigaco Press, 3rd edn, 2000); *CMB* (followed by page or bowl, i.e., M, number) = D. Levene, *A Corpus of Magic Bowls: Incantation Texts in Jewish Aramaic from Late Antiquity* (London, New York, NY, and Bahrain: Kegan Paul, 2003); *GMA* (followed by part and text, and page number) = R. Kotansky, *Greek Magical Amulets: The Inscribed Gold, Silver, Copper, and Bronze 'Lamellae': Text and Commentary. Part I: Published Texts of Known Provenance* (Abhandlungen der Nordrhein-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Sonderreihe Papyrologica Coloniensia, 22.1; Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994); *GMP* (followed by text and line or page number) = H.D. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation Including the Demotic Spells, Vol. I: Texts* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2nd edn., 1992); MM = J.H. Moulton, G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1930); *MSF* (followed by page or bowl number) = J. Naveh, S. Shaked, *Magic Spells and Formulae: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1993); *PGM* (followed by papyrus and line number) = K. Preisendanz, A. Henrichs (eds.), *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Teubner, 2nd edn., 1973 and 1974) and, for convenience, the magical papyri published afterwards in *GMP* also found in the following: *SM* 1 or 2 (followed by text and line number) = R.W. Daniel, F. Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum*. 2 vols. (Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften; Sonderreihe, Papyrologica Coloniensia; 16.1/2; Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990 and 1992).

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Although it has not always been so,[2] the importance of ancient magic in helping to understand the exorcisms of Jesus is increasingly agreed.[3] Of course, it is not to be doubted that, in order to give a more nearly balanced picture of Jesus in relation to his exorcisms, a wider perspective is required than is offered in this paper, including taking into account what we know about charismatic figures of the second sophistic.[4] This notwithstanding, in that the material remains of ancient magic probably reflect the most common forms of exorcism in late antiquity, including first-century Palestine,[5] the purpose of this paper is to describe how and by whom those responsible for the materials of ancient magic, two or three centuries either side of the origins of the synoptic traditions,[6] thought unwanted spiritual beings could be controlled and removed from people (see sections 2 and 3 below). This will help develop a sharper image of Jesus the exorcist and bring some correctives to the way he is presently

2. See, e.g., E. Fascher, *Die formgeschichte Methode: Eine Darstellung und Kritik Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der synoptischen Problem* (BZNW, 2; Giessen: Töpelmann, 1924), pp. 127–28; W. Grundmann, *TDNT* 2.302; S.V. McCasland, *By the Finger of God: Demon Possession and Exorcism in Early Christianity in the Light of Modern Views of Mental Illness* (New York: Macmillan, 1951), pp. 110–15; V. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan, 1952), p. 176; S.E. Johnson, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London: Black, 1960), p. 48. More recently see R. Latourelle, *The Miracles of Jesus and the Theology of Miracles* (New York: Paulist, 1988), p. 167.

3. Cf. C.K. Barrett, *The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition* (London: SPCK, 1966), p. 61; J.M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic and the Synoptic Tradition* (London: SCM, 1974), esp. pp. 142–45; M. Smith, *Jesus the Magician* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1978); D.E. Aune, 'Magic in Early Christianity', *ANRW* II.23.2 (1980), pp. 1507–57 (1523–39).

4. Cf. G.H. Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist: A Contribution to the Study of the Historical Jesus* (WUNT, 2.54; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck and Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), §3.

5. Twelftree, *Exorcist*, §3 and see the discussion below. Note the discussion by E. Eshel, 'Genres of Magical Texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls', in A. Lange, H. Lichtenberger and K.H.D. Römheld (eds.), *Die Dämonen Demons* (Tübingen; Mohr Siebeck, 2003), pp. 395–415, for solid evidence of such material in Palestine at the turn of the era.

6. On the one hand, restricting the discussion to these parameters not only ensures a more reliable background to Jesus the exorcist but also keeps the amount of material manageable. On the other hand (as will be seen from the citations below), such broad parameters are justified in the light of the relative stability of ideas and practices in ancient magic. Cf. S.R. Garrett, 'Light on a Dark Subject and Vice Versa: Magic and Magicians in the New Testament', in J. Neusner, E.S. Frerichs and P.V. McCracken Flesher (eds.), *Religion, Science and Magic in Concert and Conflict* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 142–65 (162).

Though dating can only be done along the roughest of lines, it is notable that, from the earlier part of the period under consideration, there is only a curse tablet from Carthage. S. Horn Fuglesang, 'Amulets as Evidence for the Transition from Viking to Medieval Scandinavia', in D.R. Jordan, H. Montgomery and E. Thomassen (eds.), *The World of Ancient Magic: Papers from the First International Samson Eitrem Seminar at the Norwegian Institute at Athens 4-8 May 1997* (Bergen: The Norwegian Institute at Athens, 1999), pp. 299–314 (128) offers a date of the third century BCE.

viewed (see sections 5 and 6 below). We will also be able to assess the notion that the materials of ancient magic carry in them the memory of Jesus as a successful exorcist (see section 4 below).[7]

There is little agreement on a definition of 'magic',[8] and it continues to be defined pejoratively over against religion[9] or

7. That the references to Jesus in ancient magic (see n. 108 below) could be expected to carry with them the memory of his being an exorcist see, e.g., S. Eitrem, *Some Notes on Demonology in the New Testament* (Symbolae Osloenses fasc. supplet. 20; Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1966), p. 14; M. Smith, *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 230, and Twelftree, *Exorcist*, pp. 139–40.

8. So, e.g., A.F. Segal, 'Hellenistic Magic: Some Questions of Definition', in R. van den Broek and M.J. Vermaseren (eds.), *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions presented to G. Quispel* (Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'Empire romain, 91; Leiden: Brill, 1981), pp. 349–75 (349). However, it is generally agreed that the debate has moved beyond seeing magic as developmentally prior to religion – as did J.G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (New York: Macmillan, 1935, 1937), most accessible in J.G. Frazer, *Magic and Religion: Being Chapters I to VII of the Abridged Edition of 'The Golden Bough'* (London: Watts, 1944); see also his *Aftermath: A Supplement to the Golden Bough* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1990), p. 1; or that magic is a corrupted, degenerated form of religion – as did A.A. Barb, 'The Survival of Magic Arts', in A. Momigliano (ed.), *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), pp. 100–25; or, though with less certainty, as functionally separate from religion – as did B. Malinowski, 'Magic Science and Religion' (1925), in *Magic Science & Religion and Other Essays* (Selected, and with an Introduction by R. Redfield; Boston, MA: Beacon, 1948), pp. 1–71 (67–70) and E.R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, 13 vols. (New York: Pantheon, 1963), 2, p. 155. See J.G. Gager, 'A New Translation of Ancient Greek and Demotic Papyri, Sometimes Called Magical', *JR* 67 (1987): 80–86 (80) and J.G. Gager, 'Introduction', in J.G. Gager (ed.), *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 3–41 (24–25); and C.A. Hoffman, 'Fiat Magia', in P. Mirecki and M. Meyer (eds.), *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World* (RGRW, 141; Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 179–94.

9. E.g., J. Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20* (Dallas, TX: Word, 1989), p. 423; C.S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), pp. 56, 139–40; cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke the Theologian: Aspects of His Teaching* (New York: Paulist, 1989), pp. 150–51.

See the discussion in C. Bell, *Ritual: Perspective and Dimensions* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 46–52, on the rethinking of magic so that the recent tendency has been to subsume cultural activities – magic, social or religious – as examples of ritual behaviour. On the religion–magic continuum see Neusner, Frerichs and McCracken Flescher (eds.), *Religion, Science, and Magic*, and H.S. Versnel, 'Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic – Religion', *Numen* 38 (1991): 177–97. On ancient theories of magic see, e.g., Segal, 'Hellenistic', pp. 349–75; R. Markus, 'Augustine on Magic. A Neglected Semiotic Theory', *RÉA* 40 (1994): 375–88; F. Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), esp. chapters 1 and 2; F. Graf, 'Theories of Magic in Antiquity', in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, pp. 93–104; T.E. Klutz, 'Reinterpreting "Magic" in the World of Jewish and Christian Scripture: An Introduction', in T.E. Klutz (ed.), *Magic in the Biblical World* (JSNTSup, 245; London and New York: T&T Clark, 2003), pp. 1–9 (1–5).

miracle.[10] Therefore, it needs to be clarified that, for the purposes of this paper, the term 'ancient magic' is used neutrally. It will be used as a term of convenience to describe the kinds of materials and literature well known in, but not limited to, the magical papyri[11] where, in relation to the expulsion of unwanted spiritual beings, what is said and done is more important than the identity of the exorcist.[12]

Of prime interest to us are the more recognizably exorcistic texts used to coax out unwanted spiritual beings that were thought to have infiltrated and somehow taken up residence in a person.[13] This will be set out in the first part of the paper (see section 1 below). But there is also material from

10. So, e.g., J.P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, vol. 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1991), p. 550.

11. See, e.g., the collection in *GMP*. On the implication of labelling these texts and activities 'magical', see Gager, 'Translation', pp. 80–86 (80–81), an extended review of *GMP* (1987). For the magical papyri as exemplars of ancient magic see, e.g., Hull, *Magic*.

12. Cf. Twelftree, *Exorcist*, §3. Even though 4Q510 and 4Q511 are for singing by the Maskil (cf. 4Q510.4) his particular identity is probably not important other than that he is leading public liturgy (cf. 4Q511 fr. 63, 4.1–3). See B. Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry* (STDJ, 12; Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 238–39; cf. P.S. Alexander, '"Wrestling Against Wickedness in High Places": Magic in the World View of the Qumran Community', in S.E. Porter and C.A. Evans (eds.), *The Scrolls and the Scriptures: Qumran Fifty Years After* (JSPSup, 26; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), pp. 318–37 (319, 321).

13. See the discussion below. Cf. e.g., Mk 1.21-28; 5.1-20; 7.24-30; 9.14-29. Exorcistic vocabulary alone is of only limited help in understanding the control of unwanted spiritual beings in ancient magic. E.g., R. Kotansky, 'Greek Exorcistic Amulets', in M. Meyer and P. Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (RGRW, 129; Boston and Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 242–77, focuses, in part, on the ὁρκίζω family of words rather than the expulsion from their abodes or control of unwanted spiritual beings. Exorcistic vocabulary was also used for other purposes. E.g., in *GMA* I.51 (a first-century BCE to first-century CE Jewish amulet from Berytus, p. 265) ἐξορκίζω is used as a synonym for ὁρκίζω in an oath to get a 'womb' to stay in place. However, this could be what was thought of as a roaming, evil *Hysteria*. See A.A. Barb and J. Gwyn Griffiths, 'Seth or Anubis?', *JWCI* 22 (1959): 368–71 (370), also cited in *GMA* I.51 (p. 265). More recently on the wandering-womb texts see C.A. Faraone, 'New Light on Ancient Greek Exorcisms of the Wandering Womb', *ZPE* 144 (2003): 189–97 (esp. 190–91 and those cited). Also on ἐξορκίζω cf. see R. Kotansky, 'Remnants of a Liturgical Exorcism on a Gem', *Le Muséon* 108 (1995): 143–56 (145), D.R. Jordan and R.D. Kotansky, 'A Solomonic Exorcism', in *Kölner Papyri (P. Köln)*, Band 8 (Abhandlungen der Nordrhein-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Sonderreihe, Papyrologica Coloniensia, Sonderreihe, VII/8; Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1997), pp. 55–56.

For the exorcism of buildings see the list of house phylacteries in W.M. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri: An Introduction and Survey; Annotated Bibliography (1928–1994)', *ANRW* II.18.5 (1995), pp. 3380–684 (3501); cf. n. 122 below. Cf. the Phalasarna tablet, line 1/B: 'I bid you flee from our houses', D.R. Jordan, 'The Inscribed Lead Tablet from Phalasarna', *ZPE* 94 (1992): 191–94 (194); C.A. Faraone, *Talismans and Trojan Horses. Guardian Statues in Ancient Greek Myth and Ritual* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 81–84. For bowls dealing with the removal of daimons from homes see, e.g., *AMIB* 020A; 068A; (069A?); 076M; 080M; 098M; *CMB* M50; M101; M107; M112; M117; M121. On *AMIB* see the important critical reviews by C. Mueller-Kessler, 'Die

the period which deals with daimons under the assumption that they are troubling a person from the outside. Therefore the cure is not so much to expel them but to cause them to flee.[14] Sometimes, the precise activity of the unwanted spiritual being is difficult to determine.[15] More broadly, some texts were expected to provide general protection against magical powers, including daimons,[16] though some were specifically for either the

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Zauberschalensammlung des British Museum', *AfO* 48/49 (2001–2002): 115–42 and J.N. Ford, 'Notes on the Mandaic Incantation Bowls in the British Museum', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 26 (2002): 237–72.

14. E.g., (1) Tob. 6.1–8.3; of Palestinian origin in the third or, more likely, second century BCE. See J.A. Fitzmyer, *Tobit* (CEJL; Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 2003); pp. 50–54; cf. M. Rabenau, *Studien zum Buch Tobit* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), pp. 175–90. (2) *LAB* 60 (see also next note); 50–150 CE. See H. Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum, with Latin Text and English Translation* (2 vols.; AGJU, 31; Leiden and New York: Brill, 1996), I, pp. 199–210, who argues for a Palestinian provenance; cf. C. Perrot and P.-M. Bogaert, *Pseudo-Philon: Les Antiquités Bibliques* (2 vols.; SC, 229; Paris: Cerf, 1976), 2.38–39, 74. (3) Cf. 4Q196 i 12; 4Q197 i 13-14; also 4Q444 on which see A. Lange, 'Considerations Concerning the "Spirit of Impurity" in Zech 13:2', in Lange, Lichtenberger, Römheld (eds.), *Dämonen*, pp. 256–59, and E. Eshel, 'Genres', p. 402.

On the edge of our time frame is the Phalasarna tablet. This inscribed and folded lead tablet from Phalasarna (the western tip of Crete) is from the fourth or third centuries BCE. The Phalasara tablet has been recently traced, reconstructed and translated by Jordan, 'Phalasarna', pp. 191–94. See also William D. Furley, 'Besprechung und Behandlung: Zur Form und Funktion von ΕΠΩΙΔΑΙ in der griechischen Zaubermedizin', in G.W. Most, H. Petersmann and A.M. Ritter (eds.), *Philanthropia kai Eusebeia. Festschrift für Albrecht Dihle zum 70. Geburstag* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), pp. 80–104, (96–99). That this tablet was written against Erinyes-like avenging ghosts that had been sent against the holder of the charm see Kotansky, 'Amulets', pp. 254 n. 26 and 253 n. 24 for further bibliographical information.

15. E.g., in *LAB* 60 the relationship of the 'evil' (*pessimus*) spirit to the person is unclear, or perhaps a distinction between occupation and influence is not important, for David's song is said to cause the spirit to 'withdraw' (*recedo*, 60.1) or 'depart' (*parco*, 60.2). However, in that, initially, the spirit is said to 'choke' (*praefoco*) Saul (60.1) and David's song calls on the spirit not to 'trouble' (*molesta*) Saul, perhaps the daimon was thought to have withdrawn from influencing or troubling his body rather than ceasing to occupy it.

16. E.g. (1) *Jub.* 10.1-4; 12.19-20; *ca.* 160–150 BCE on which see the summary discussions by O.S. Wintermute, 'Jubilees', *OTP* 2.43–44, and J.C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (GAP; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001), pp. 17–21. (2) *PGM* I.195–222 (dedicated to protection 'against all excess of magical power of aerial daimon', 215); VII.579–90 which begins: 'A phylactery, a bodyguard against daimons, against phantasms, against every sickness and suffering' (579–80); (3) *PGM* XII.255–64 (a rite for the consecration of 'a little ring [useful] for every [magical] operation and for success', 202); (4) *PGM* XX.13–19, a first-century CE charm to cause a headache to flee; and (5) *PGM* CXIV.1–14, a phylactery for protection '[from all] evil acts [and from every] demonic visitation [and] ... of Hekate and from ... attack and [from every onslaught (?)] in sleep ... [from] mute daimons [and from every] epileptic fit [and from all] epilepsy and ... and ...'. Cf. XCVI.1–8. See also, *GMA* I.59 (third century CE, p. 347). (Cf. *Suppl. Mag.* 1.15.6–7, fourth or fifth centuries CE: 'Protect the wearer').

A blue- and white-painted chalcedony gem from Asia Minor that Kotansky, 'Gem', pp.

control of daimons (*PGM* I.96–132; III.1–164) or for protection against them.[17] There are also texts that deal with the expulsion of fevers or other diseases rather than daimons.[18] This variety of approaches will help us in gaining a sense of perspective on Jesus the exorcist in relation to ancient magic (see section 5 below).

144–56, assigns to the second, or possibly early third, century CE may have been intended as a protective amulet rather than as a means of exorcism. For, although the text on the amulet (which is complete) uses ἐξορκίζω σε (see n. 13 above), it does not mention a spirit or daimon nor its removal, and the demand of this amulet is σῶσον (cf. Kotansky, 'Gem', p. 154), which is regularly associated with protection and safety (see MM; cf. LSJ).

17. See the hymns 4Q510 and 4Q511 which, because of their bearing a close resemblance to other psalms (esp. 1QH), M. Baillet, *Qumrân Grotte 4 III (4Q482-4Q520)* (DJD, 7; Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), pp. 215–62, did not class among the 'Songs over the stricken'. See B. Nitzan, 'Hymns from Qumran – 4Q510–4Q511', in D. Dimant and U. Rappaport (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research* (STDJ, 10; Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 53–63 (54), who also notes they do not carry a clear message that they would have functioned as scaring off evil spirits. See also Nitzan, *Prayer*, pp. 238–52. Cf. Alexander, '"Wrestling"', pp. 318–37 (319–24).

See also 11Q11, a badly damaged scroll of at least four psalms, the fourth being a version of MT Ps. 91, the script of which is to be dated between 50 and 70 CE. See Eshel, 'Genres', p. 398. It was suggested by J. van der Ploeg, 'Le Psaume XCI dans une recension de Qumran', *RB* 72 (1965): 210–17 (216) and J. P. M. van der Ploeg, 'Un petit rouleau de psaumes apocryphes (11QPsAp*)', in G. Jeremias, H.-W. Kuhn and H. Stegemann (eds.), *Tradition und Glaube: Das frühe Christentum in seiner Umwelt, Festgabe für Karl Georg Kuhn zum 65. Geburstag* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), pp. 128–39 (129); cf. Alexander, '"Wrestling"', pp. 325–29, that these are the four 'songs for singing over the stricken' mentioned in 11Q5 (11QPs*) 27.9-10. See also A. Lange, 'The Essene Position on Magic and Divination', in M. Bernstein, F. García Martínez and J. Kampen (eds.), *Legal Texts and Legal Issues: Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies Cambridge 1995* (STDJ, 23; Leiden: Brill, 1997), pp. 377–435 (381). However, those for whom these psalms are useful are not said to be 'the stricken' (המנוגעים, col. 4.2) but are described as anticipating and preparing for Belial's attack (cf. 11Q11 IV.5-14; V.4-12). Cf. Nitzan, *Prayer*, p. 233.

See also *PGM* I.195–222; IV.86–87 (phylactery); IV.2145–240; VII.579–90 (phylactery); CXIV.1–14; cf. XII.201–69, a fourth- or fifth-century CE amulet of unknown provenance which ends with the words, 'protect the wearer'.

See also *GMA* I.38 ('Protection for Phaeinos from Demons', a phylactery from Amphipolis, Thrace, second to third centuries CE, p. 206). Cf. *GMA* I.52 (fourth century CE phylactery from Berytus to protect [διαφύλαξον, line 6] an individual from demonic affliction, pp. 270–71). *GMA* I.67 ('An Exorcism for a Young Girl', late Roman? from Mt. Sûr-Taš, Sea of Azov, p. 383) is probably to be included here for, using ἀποστῆνε[=νσι] ('keep away', see LSJ, 'ἀφίστημι', citing Dioscorides, *de Materia medica*, 2.96; Galen, 13.846; Plato, *Politics* 282b and Theophrastus, *de Causis Plantrarum* 3.32), it is more reasonably taken to be a protective amulet.

18. E.g., *GMA* I.56, third to fourth century CE (pp. 312–13).

1. *Exorcism in Ancient Magic*

In view of the importance of exorcism for Jesus and, at least, his first followers, the number of known non-Christian texts reflecting a view of exorcism in which what is said and done is more important than the identity of the exorcist is, while growing, surprisingly few,[19] even if we include texts that mention exorcism as one of a number of their supposed functions.[20] Before looking more closely at the well-known magical papyri, which have dominated discussions of exorcism in ancient magic,[21] there is other material to take into account, for it broadens our understanding of the background to Jesus the exorcist.

(a) Among *the Qumran scrolls* a number of texts show that the community practised magical exorcisms.[22] (1) We can only guess that the fragmentary 4Q560[23] is a list of ailments followed by a scripit for exorcism,[24] since a spirit[25] that enters the flesh or body (4Q560 1.3) is directly addressed and adjured (4Q560 2.5-6).[26] In that the papyrus itself shows no sign of having been rolled or folded, it was probably not used as an amulet but may have

19. So also Kotansky, 'Amulets', p. 251.

20. *PGM* IV.2145–2240 (esp. 2170: 'It also keeps off daimons and wild animals'); XII.270–350 (esp. 280–82: 'It also works for demoniacs. Just give it [to one] to wear, and the daimon will immediately flee') and XXXVI.275–83 (279: 'it also works on those afflicted by daimons').

21. E.g., Hull, *Magic*; Meier, *Marginal*, pp. 535–57; cf. Smith, *Jesus*, on which see E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM, 1985), p. 165: 'a kind of Strack-Billerbeck to the miracle stories, with the *PGM* taking the place of the Talmud and Midrash'.

22. 4Q560; 11Q5 (11QPs^a) 1Q11; 4Q510; 4Q511. The story of Abraham in 1QapGen 20 is an example of an exorcism in which the identity of the exorcist is important rather than in what is said and done. See Twelftree, *Exorcist*, pp. 43–46. On the Prayer of Nabonidus (4Q242) not being an exorcism see Lange, 'Divination', p. 379 n. 7.

Even if some of the texts cited below were brought in from outside the Qumran community – see Eshel, 'Genres', pp. 401, 403 – they can be taken to reflect the views of at least some members of the community.

23. Paleographically 4Q560 is to be dated from the middle of the first century BCE. So J. Naveh, 'Fragments of an Aramaic Magic Book from Qumran', *IEJ* 48 (1998): 252–61 (254, 261). Cf. 8Q5 1 on which see J.M. Baumgarten, 'On the Nature of the Seductress, in *4Q184*', *RevQ* 15 (1991): 135–36; Eshel, 'Genres', pp. 401–402.

24. Rather than a defence against an evil spirt as suggested by Alexander, '"Wrestling"', p. 330.

25. D.L. Penney and M.O. Wise, 'By the Power of Beelzebub: An Aramaic Incantation Formula from Qumran (4Q560)', *JBL* 113 (1994): 627–50 (632–34), reconstruct 'Beelzebub' in col. 1.1. However, see the discussion by Naveh, 'Fragments', pp. 254–55.

26. In line with their rather speculative recreation of the text, Penney and Wise, 'Beelzebub', p. 640, suggest that the adjuration was by Yahweh. Though see *AMB*, p. 222, Geniza 4 (Middle Ages), with remarkable parallels to 4Q560, including the use of the name of God to drive out demons. However, for corrections to Penney and Wise, 'Beelzebub', see Naveh, 'Fragments', pp. 252–61.

formed part of a manual of similar texts, perhaps used by a Maskil or copied for a village scribe.[27] (2) We are on more certain ground with 11Q5 (11QPs[a]) which states that David was responsible for composing four 'songs for making music over the stricken' (הפגועים, 27.9-10), a word used both in the Qumran documents and in later literature of those possessed or tormented by evil spirits.[28] Expecting that these no-longer-extant songs or poems[29] would be consistent with Qumran's apotropaic psalms,[30] we can reasonably conjecture that these exorcisms would be conducted by a Maskil or scribe, perhaps in a public worship setting,[31] who, as part of the adjuration, declared (hymn-like) the splendour and protection of God and his angels in order to reassure the faithful as well as subdue the spirits. These exorcisms would also involve hurling abuse at the spirit and, probably without use of the tetragrammaton, adjuring it by God[32] – or asking God to send a powerful angel (cf. 11Q11 IV.5) – causing it to be sent to the great abyss (11Q11 IV.7-9). If the exorcisms were public events the people might be expected to respond, 'Amen, Amen' (cf. 4Q511 4; 11Q11 V.14). Also (3) the Tobit fragments[33] can probably be taken as indicating endorsement of the divinely ordained (Tob. 6.4; 11.4, 7-8) method of fumigation for popular use, to cause potentially fatal daimons to flee from attacking people.[34]

27. See Penney and Wise, 'Beelzebub', p. 650; cf. Alexander, '"Wrestling"', p. 330.

28. See J.A. Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11 (11QPs[a])* (DJD, 4; Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), p. 93, citing *y. Šhabb.* 6.8b; *'Erub.* 10.26c; *b. Šebu.* 15b. See also 11Q11 4.2; also M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerusalemi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York: Pardes, 1950), p. 1135.

29. See n. 17 above. Whether or not these songs involved music, including instruments, see Nitzan, *Prayer*, p. 228 n. 8.

30. See 11Q11; 4Q510; 4Q511; 6Q18. For a thorough discussion of these texts note Nitzan, 'Hymns', pp. 53–63; see also Eshel, 'Genres', pp. 394–415 who takes 11Q11 to be exorcistic rather than apotropaic.

31. See 4Q511 frag. 63, col. 4.1-3, on which see Alexander, '"Wrestling"', p. 321.

32. Cf., e.g., 4Q511 35; 8Q5 1; 11Q11 III.1-12 on which see Baumgarten, 'Seductress', p. 136; Eshel, 'Genres', pp. 401–402, 404. For the free use of the tetragrammaton up to the beginning of the second century BCE and at Qumran see Lange, 'Divination', pp. 380–81 and nn. 8 and 14.

33. 4Q196-200, to be dated from between 100 BCE and 20 BCE. See J.A. Fitzmyer, 'Tobit', in M. Broshi, *et al.* (eds.), *Qumran Cave 4:XIV* (DJD, 19; Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), pp. 1–76 summarized by C.A. Moore, *Tobit* (AB, 40A; New York: Doubleday, 1996), pp. 37–38. 4Q478 is no longer considered a fragment of Tobit. See E. Larson, L.H. Schiffman, 'Miscellaneous Texts', in G. Brooke, *et al.* (eds.), *Qumran Cave 4:XVII* (DJD, 22; Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), pp. 295–96.

34. 4Q196 i 12; 4Q197 4 i 13-14; cf. 4Q197 1 3. On Jews taking up Greek medicine – which was considered pagan and forbidden (cf. Tob. 2.10) – when it was divinely ordained (cf. Sir. 37.27–38.15), see Lange, 'Divination', pp. 384–85 citing J.G. Snaith, *Ecclesiasticus or*

(b) *Josephus* tells a story of Eleazar, a Jew (*Ant* 8.45-49; cf. *War* 7.180-85),[35] as an example of the exorcisms he has seen Eleazar conduct which were dependent on traditional 'poetic songs' (τὰς ἐπῳδάς) and 'methods' (τρόποι). From this vocabulary, as well as the story itself, it can be assumed that Eleazar and his peers had in their keeping texts which included directions on how they were to be used, along with directions for accompanying activity. Since Eleazar is not designated a healer or exorcist, such an activity, presumably, formed only part of his professional life. Eleazar is said to exorcize a demon without the use of words; putting a ring to the nose of the sufferer and, as the man smelled the roots in it, drew out the daimon.[36] Only when the man had fallen down after the demon had left does Eleazar turn to using the poems or songs, for he 'adjured (ὥρκου) the daimon never to come back into him, speaking Solomon's name and reciting the poems (or songs, τὰς ἐπῳδάς) which he had composed' (*Ant* 8.47). In this story, the identity of the (probable) professional who performs the exorcism, though given, is unimportant. What is important are the words and methods used by Eleazar, said to stem from, and be dependent for their efficacy upon, a well-known exorcist, Solomon.

(c) *Justin Martyr* (*ca.* 100 – *ca.* 165) reports that both Jews[37] and Gentiles 'make use of craft when they exorcize ... and employ fumigations and incantations'.[38] How the incantations and the activities for these exorcisms were related he does not say.

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the Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach (CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 184, and B. Kollmann, 'Göttliche Offenbarung magisch-pharmakologischer Heilkunst im Buch Tobit', *ZAW* 106 (1994): 289–99.

35. The *War* cannot be dated exactly, but it came out after 75 CE and the *Ant* appeared in 93/94 CE; T. Rajak, *Josephus: The Historian and His Society* (London: Duckworth, 2nd edn., 2002), pp. 195 n. 23 and 237–38.

36. The phrase 'the signet-ring of Solomon' is found in many magic bowls. So C.D. Isbell, *Corpus of Aramaic Incantation Bowls* (SBLDS, 17; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975), p. 7. H.St.J. Thackeray and R. Marcus, *Josephus*, 9 vols. (LCL; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press and London: Heinemann, 1926–65), pp. 5, 597, note that T. Reinach plausibly conjectures that the root under the seal of the ring was the *baaras* plant described in *War* 7.180-85. If this is the poisonous, strong-smelling *Mandragora officinale*, the demon was probably thought to be drawn out by the smell. Cf. Song 7.13.

37. On the Jewish reputation in 'magic' see, e.g., 4Q186; 4Q318; 4Q510; 4Q511; 4Q560; 4Q561; 11Q11; Acts 19.13-20; Josephus, *Ant* 8.46-49; Justin, *Dial.* 85.3; Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 2.6.2; Juvenal, *Satire* 6.542-47; Origen, *Cels.* 1.26; cf. Nitzan, *Prayer*, chapter VIII; Alexander, '"Wrestling"', pp. 318–37; P.S. Alexander, 'Jewish Elements in Gnosticism and Magic c. CE 70 – c. CE 270', in W. Horbury, W.D. Davies, J. Sturdy (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Judaism* III (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 1052–78 (1067–69); P.S. Alexander, 'Magic and Magical Texts', in L.H. Schiffman and J.C. VanderKam (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 502–504.

38. Justin Martyr, *Dial.* 85.3; cf. Tob. 6.7-8; 8.2-3; 4Q196 i 12; 4Q197 4 i 13-14.

Nevertheless, Justin is enlightening in that, after describing Christian exorcisms,[39] he shows how simple some exorcisms were. Of exorcism by Jews he says, 'if any of you exorcize it [a daimon] in [the name of] the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, it will perhaps be subject to you' (*Dial.* 85.3).[40] The popularity of this simple incantation – which does not seem to be restricted to professional use – is attested in its also being cited in *PGM* IV (cf. Origen, *Cels.* 4.33-34). In view of the reputation of exorcism in ancient magic being complex (see n. 119 below), the simplicity of this widely used method of exorcism is to be noted.[41]

(d) It is tempting to take into account the rabbinic anecdote in which someone is said to describe exorcism to Yoḥanan ben Zakkai: 'People bring roots and smoke them under him and sprinkle water on the spirit and it flees'. However, the story must be excluded for the earliest version we have of it is in *Pesiqta de Rab Kahana* 4.5 from the sixth or seventh century,[42] and is likely to be fictitious.[43]

(e) Although the use of *magical bowls* is widely attested in the ancient world,[44] in the period of interest to us they seem to have fallen out

39. Justin cites Christian exorcisms conducted 'in the name of this very Son of God, who is the First-born' (*Dial.* 85.3).

40. Cf. Origen, *Cels.* 1.24-25 on the use of names 'for certain purposes' and the discussion by Gager, 'Translation', p. 84.

41. The brevity of some exorcisms in ancient magic is also supported by the uncertain evidence we have from the brevity of a protective psalm from Qumran, 11Q11.

42. On the general difficulty of dating see J. Neusner, *Introduction to Rabbinic Literature* (AB Reference Library; New York: Doubleday, 1994), p. 652: 'We have no basis on which to assign a firm, specific, determinate date to any document of the Judaism of the dual Torah, not the Mishnah, not the Tosefta or Sifra, not the Talmud of the Land of Israel or the one of Babylonia not the Genesis Rabbah or Leviticus Rabbah or the Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan – not to a single compilation of any kind'. For the dating of Ben Zakkai see J. Neusner, *First-Century Judaism in Crisis: Yohanan ben Zakkai and the Renaissance of Torah* (Nashville, TN, and New York: Abingdon, 1975), pp. 26–27. More importantly, *Pesiqta de Rab Kahana* is perhaps to be assigned to the sixth or seventh century CE. See J. Neusner, *Pesiqta de Rab Kahana: An Analytical Translation* (2 vols; BJS, 122–23; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1987), I. f65. For other versions of this Ben Zakkai story see *Pesiqta Rabbati* 14.4; *Tanḥuma Ḥuqqat* 26; *Num. R.* 19.8.

43. See J. Neusner, *Development of a Legend: Studies on the Traditions Concerning Yohanan ben Zakkai* (SPB, 16; Leiden: Brill, 1970), pp. 167, 182.

44. Magical bowls have been found in Egypt dated from the third millennium BCE. See C.H. Gordon, 'Two Aramaic Incantations', in G.A. Tuttle (ed.), *Biblical and Near Eastern Studies: Essays in Honor of William Sanford LaSor* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978), pp. 231–44 (231), citing his 'Egypto-Semitic Magic Bowls' (in Hebrew), *Hagut Ivrit be'Amerika* 1 (Tel Aviv: Yavneh, 1972), pp. 165–73, and in less technical form his 'Ancient Letters to the Dead and Others', *Natural History* 78 (Feb 1969): 94–99. Bowls have also been found in Crete dating from the middle of the second millennium BCE. Two Minoan incantation bowls from Knossos were published in W.C. Brice (ed.), *Inscriptions in the Minoan Linear Script of Class A* (London: The Society of Antiquaries, 1961), texts II.1 and

of use[45] only reappearing – along with echoes of ancient Babylonian rituals[46] – to flourish in the Sasanian period or a little after (from the fourth or sixth to the ninth century CE),[47] from which period close to one thousand examples have been collected.[48] Not surprisingly, there are many points of contact between some of the bowls and rabbinic literature[49] and, as a corpus, the bowls reflect magical praxis in talmudic times.[50] Nevertheless, despite the geographical and chronological distance from the focus of our study, the bowls may still shed some light on exorcism in first-century Palestine. Notably, from comparing the

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II.2 (p. 15), cf. plates XXIIa and XXII. See the brief discussion by C.H. Gordon, 'Leviathan: Symbol of Evil', in A. Altmann (ed.), *Biblical Motifs: Origins and Transformations* (PLIAJS.ST, 3; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), pp. 1–9 (5), and also, C.H. Gordon, 'Incantation Bowls from Knossos and Nippur', *AJA* 68 (1964), pp. 194–95; Gordon, 'Two Aramaic Incantations', p. 27 and pl. IX.

45. W.S. McCullough, *Jewish and Mandean Incantation Bowls in the Royal Ontario Museum* (NMES, 5; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), pp. xiv–xv.

46. Cf. *AIT*, p. 42 and the discussion by E.C.D. Hunter, 'The Typology of the Incantation Bowls: Physical Features and Decorative Aspects', in *AMIB*, pp. 163–88 (176–77).

47. See Isbell, *Bowls*, p. 2, citing C.H. Gordon, *Adventures in the Near East* (Fair Lawn, NJ: Essential, 1957), p. 161. See also S.A. Kaufman, 'A Unique Magic Bowl from Nippur', *JNES* 32 (1973): 170–74 (173 n. 19); Gordon, 'Two Aramaic Incantations', p. 231. More recently, E.C.D. Hunter, 'Combat and Conflict in Incantation Bowls: Studies on Two Aramaic Specimens from Nippur', in M.J. Geller, J.C. Greenfield and M.P. Weitzman (eds.), *Studia Aramaica* (JSSSup, 4; Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 61–75 (61); E.C.D. Hunter, 'Incantation Bowls: A Mesopotamian Phenomenon?', *Or* 65 (1996): 220–33 (220 and n. 4) and *AMIB*, p. 21.

48. S. Shaked, 'Popular Religion in Sassanian Babylonia', *JSAI* 21 (1997): 103–17.

49. Cf. J.N. Epstein, 'Gloses Babylo-Araméenes', *REJ* 73 (1921): 27–58 and 74 (1922): 40–72.

50. So B.A. Levine, 'The Language of the Magical Bowls', Appendix in J. Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia*, vol. 5 (SPB, 15; Leiden: Brill, 1970), pp. 343–75 (343). Cf. Isbell, *Bowls*, p. 7. *AIT*, p. 43 n. 19, noted the possibility that *b. B. Meṣi'a* 29 b (= *b. Hul.* 84b), 'the cup of the sorcerers and not the cup of those who break sorcery', could be a reference to the magical bowls. See the discussion by D. Levene, '"A Happy Thought of the Magicians", The Magical *Get*', in R. Deutsch (ed.), *Shlomo: Studies in Epigraphy, Iconography, History and Archaeology in Honor of Shlomo Moussaieff* (Tel Aviv and Jaffa: Archaeological Center Publications, 2003), pp. 174–84 (175, 181–83).

Also, *CMB*, p. 130 drew attention to the discussion in *m. 'Abod. Zar.* 1.5 and the *t. 'Abod. Zar.* 1.21 (followed up in both the Talmuds: *b. 'Abod. Zar.* 13b-14a, and *y. 'Abod. Zar.* 1.1, 39a) concerning the prohibition of the sale of a white cock to a Gentile for sacrificial purposes in light of bowl *CMB* M163.6 from the collection of Dr. Shlomo Moussaieff mentioning a white cock being used in conjunction with the bowl, perhaps buried with it. For Levene, *CMB* M163.6, cites a first century Greek *defixio* from Carthage which implies a cock was buried with it; see A. Audollent, *Defixionum Tabellai* (Paris: Fontemoing, 1904), No. 241.16–18. Also see C.A. Faraone, 'Hermes but no marrow. Another look at a puzzling magical spell', *ZPE* 72 (1988): 279–86 (282 n. 10), citing Audollent, *Defixionum Tabellai*, Nos. 111–12.

metal amulets from Palestine and surrounding countries with the Mesopotamian bowls, Naveh and Shaked concluded that there were several cases of clear Palestinian influence on Mesopotamian magic but rarely, if ever, in the other direction. More importantly for us they also concluded that when formulae from the two areas converged, 'it may be invariably established that the origin of the theme is Palestinian, rather than Babylonian' (*MSF*, p. 21). Also, even though, to my knowledge, no bowls have been found there,[51] Palestine was no less interested in the 'magical' than countries further east.[52] Therefore, potentially, the bowls may contribute to our understanding of magical exorcism in first-century Palestine.

Some of the magical bowls are written as, or contain, letters of dismissal or bills of divorce (the magical *get*) of various kinds[53] issued to unwanted spirits in order to remove or keep them away.[54] Although there is no evidence of this approach to controlling daimons apart from the bowls,[55] that it may have been known in Palestine in our period could be evident in Tob. 3.17. There, Sarah, who is about to marry, is to be 'set free (λῦσαι) from the wicked demon Asmodeus' (MS S); λῦσαι being sometimes used for divorce.[56] That the idea of a magical *get* is at least adumbrated here is enhanced by Tob. 6.15 (G^I) saying that 'a demon is in love

51. Of the earthenware bowls *AMB*, p. 13 say, 'all of them, as far as it is possible to tell from controlled excavations, [were found] in the area of Mesopotamia and Iran'. Cf. *AMB*, p. 13 n. 2.

52. Note L. Blau, *Das altjüdische Zauberwesen* (Jahresbericht der Landesrabbinerschule in Budapest für das Schuljahr 1897-98; Strassburg: Trübner, 1898), p. 23: 'The Babylonians were infected by the belief in magic more than the Palestinians'. For the counter view see S. Lieberman, *Greek in Jewish Palestine: Studies in the Life and Manners of Jewish Palestine in the II-IV Centuries C.E.* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1942) and the discussion in *MSF*, pp. 20–22.

53. On the different types of divorce formulas occurring in the bowls see R. Lesses, 'Exe(o)rcising Power: Women as Sorceresses, Exorcists, and Demonesses in Babylonian Jewish Society in Late Antiquity', *JAAR* 69 (2001): 343–75.

54. E.g., *AMB*, B5; *AMIB* 013A; *CMB* M50/M59; M103/M119. On the magical *get* see *AIT*, p. 159: 'The magical writ affects the same forms and formalism as that of the divorce court.' See also Neusner, *History*, 5, pp. 227–41. However, S. Shaked, 'The Poetics of Spells, Language, and Structure in Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity', in T. Abusch and K. van der Toorn (eds.), *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical, and Interpretative Perspectives* (AMD, 1; Groningen: Styx, 1999), pp. 173–96 (176), takes the *get* to be a metaphor so that it is an act of sympathetic magic. See the discussions by Levene, *CMB*, pp. 18–21 and 58–62. See also Levine, 'The Language of the Magical Bowls', in Neusner, *History*, 5, pp. 349–50, and C.H. Gordon, 'The Aramaic Incantation Bowls in Historic Perspective', in M. Brettler and M. Fishbane (eds.), *Minha le-Nahum: Biblical and other Studies Presented to Nahum M. Sarna in Honour of his 70th Birthday* (JSOTSup, 154, Sheffield: JSOT, 1993), pp. 142–46 (143).

55. Cf. Neusner, *History*, vol. 5, p. 227 who says he does 'not know of any case of the occurrence of this magical *Get* outside of the bowls'.

with Sarah'.[57] As the notion implies, the *get* seems to have been used in order to ban or banish the unwanted being from troubling the person (e.g., *AMIB* 034A.3-4). In the bowls dealing with the removal of evil spirits,[58] it is not only assumed that a person is troubled by them because they are possessed but also because their home could be inhabited by a daimon. Hence attention to getting rid of, or gaining protection from, an evil spirit could be focused on the person or on the home or a particular room,[59] which probably explains why most bowls have been found buried upside down – perhaps as 'daimon traps'[60] – under the floors of homes.[61]

(f) There are *magical papyri* and *amulets* that are probably to be assigned to the second century CE[62] or a little

56. See, e.g., 1 Cor. 7.27 and BDAG. P.E. Dion, 'Raphael L'exorciste', *Bib* 57 (1976): 399–413 (407–408), has argued that what is described in Tob. 3.17 is the equivalent of a magical *get* found in the bowls. See also the discussion by Levene, 'Happy', pp. 183–84.

57. Cf. 4Q196 14 i 4-5; 4Q197 4 ii 9. See also Moore, *Tobit*, p. 158.

58. E.g., of twenty Jewish Aramaic bowls transcribed and discussed by D. Levene (see *CMB*, p. 2) two offered protection against curses and oaths in general, two were for protection against the malicious magic of named enemies, two others were dispensed for the protection of unborn or young babies, three more relate to healing specific sicknesses, seven were intended for general protection against demons and other agents, and only another four were also for general protection and include the notion of the *get* against the evil spirits (*CMB* M50; M59; M103; M119). For the concept of a daimon that 'sits upon (a part of the body)' causing disease see C. Müller-Kessler, 'Dāimon + *YTB 'L* – Ein Krankenheitsdämon: Eine Studie zu aramäischen Beschwörungen medizinischen Inhalts', in B. Böck, E. Cancik-Kirschbaum and T. Richter (eds.), *Munuscula Mesopotamica: Festschrift für Johannes Renger* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1999), pp. 342–54.

59. E.g., *AMB*, B1; B8; *AMIB* 015A; 016A; 020A; 023A; 027A; 048A.VI; 068A; *CMB* M50; M131; M142; *MSF*, B14; B15. In *CMB* M155, perhaps in the name of Christ (see *CMB*, pp. 112, 115), the daughter of Lilith is commanded to 'carry away the evil spirit from the belly of ... ' and *AMIB* 029A and 013A where the evil spirits are instructed to leave the clients as well as the home; cf. *AMB*, B5; B10; *MSF*, B15; B16.

60. Cf. E.A. Wallis Budge, 'Babylonian Terra-Cotta Devil-Traps', in E.A. Wallis Budge, *Amulets and Talismans* (New Hyde Park, NY: University Books, 1961), pp. 283–90.

61. There is no agreement as to the praxis associated with the bowls. Note Gordon, 'The Aramaic Incantation Bowls in Historic Perspective', pp. 142–46 (142–43). Although many bowls have been found in cemeteries (*AMB*, pp. 15–16 and n. 10), for those relatively few bowls for which we have excavation reports we know that they were usually buried bottom-up just beneath the floors of houses. See H.V. Hilprecht, *Explorations in Bible Lands During the 19th Century* (Philadelphia, PA: A.J. Holman, 1903), p. 447: 'most of the one hundred bowls excavated while I was on the scene were found upside down in the ground'; cited in *AIT*, p. 41. See also Hunter, 'Combat', pp. 61–62. For an outline discussion of the use of the bowls see H. Juusola, *Linguistic Peculiarities in the Aramaic Magic Bowl Texts* (StudOr, 86; Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 1999), pp. 4–9; cf. *AMB*, pp. 15–16.

62. See *PGM* V.96–172. C.W. Goodwin, *Fragment of a Graeco-Egyptian Work Upon Magic From a Papyrus in the British Museum* (Cambridge: Deighton, 1852), p. iii, dates the contents to the second century CE; Brashear, 'Introduction', p. 3492. E.G. Turner, *The Typology of the Codex* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977), No. M2 (p. 142), the fourth century CE.

later.[63] *PGM* IV, the long and well-known manual for preternatural therapists, includes two sections devoted to exorcism; *PGM* V, a similar but shorter manual, contains another.[64] In turn, each of these sections is highly composite and provides a professional with

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See *PGM* LXXXV.1–6. J.E. Powell, *The Rendel Harris Papyri* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936), No. 56 (p. 36); *GMP* LXXXV.1–6: first or second century CE.

See *PGM* XCIV.17–21. Brashear, 'Introduction', p. 3492: fifth century CE. So also R.A. Pack, *The Greek and Latin Literary Texts from Greco-Roman Egypt* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2nd edn, 1965), No. 2391, and Turner, *Codex*, No. 393b, who suggests it may have been edited earlier (p. 120).

See *GMA* I.25: an 'Amulet to Expel an Evil Spirit' from the Roman period (p. 100).

63. In assembling material that can reasonably be expected to reflect views on exorcism in first-century Palestine the following is to be kept in mind. (1) From the second or third centuries CE there is *GMA*, I.46 (p. 239) from Beroea, Syria, using λύσατε as the demand (*GMA* I.46.8–9).

(2) Notably, the contents of *PGM* IV.1227–64 and 3007–86 may date from the second century CE. There is general agreement that the composition or compilation of *PGM* IV dates from the fourth century CE. See Turner, *Codex*, 142 (No. M1); Smith, *Jesus*, p. 63 (n., p. 183) states that *PGM* IV was written between 300 and 350 CE. Cf. Brashear, 'Introduction', p. 3492, who dates *PGM* IV from the fourth century CE and E.N. Lane, 'On the Date of PGM IV', *SecCent* 4 (1984): 25–27, who, in light of taking μηνοτύραννε (line 2664) to refer to the Attis Menotyrannus inscriptions, which are dated between 374 and 390 CE, sets the *terminus post quem* for the compilation of *PGM* IV as *ca.* 380 CE. In earlier literature see C. Wessely, cited by *PGM* vol. 1, p. 64, suggesting the extant papyrus is nearer 300 CE than 400 CE. However, there is also general agreement that the contents of *PGM* IV are more likely to come from the second century CE – so A.D. Nock, 'Greek Magical Papyri', *JEA* 15 (1929): 219–35 (219 n. 4), reprinted in Z. Stewart (ed.), *Arthur Darby Nock: Essays on Religion and the Ancient World* (2 vols; Oxford: Clarendon, 1986), 1. pp. 176–94 (176 n. 4). See also A.J. Festugière, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste* 4 vols; (Paris: Gabalda, 1949–54), 1. p. 303 n. 1 followed by, e.g., Hull, *Magic*, p. 25.

(3) Outside our period is *GMA* I.35 from the third to fourth centuries CE (p. 169).

(4) A text published by Jordan and Kotansky, 'Solomonic', pp. 53–69, is dated from the third or fourth century CE. Also, in view of the extensive contact with NT vocabulary, which Jordan and Kotansky note, this text is precluded from our discussion. The Greek exorcistic phylacteries discussed in D.R. Jordan and R.D. Kotansky, 'Two Phylacteries from Xanthos', *RArch* (1996): 161–71, are also Christian and just outside our period.

(5) *GMA*, I.68 (p. 387) is also to be excluded from our discussion for it is a fourth century CE fragment of a Christian liturgical exorcism from Cyprus.

(6) The third century CE J. Paul Getty Museum amulet (Acc. no. 80.AJ.53) for deliverance 'from every evil spirit and from every epileptic fit and seizure' (lines 4–7) is possibly Christian. See R. Kotansky, 'Two Amulets in the Getty Museum: A Gold Amulet for Aurelia's Epilepsy and An Inscribed Magical-Stone for Fever, "Chills", and Headache', *JPGMJ* 8 (1980): 181–88 (181).

(7) Kotansky, 'Amulets', pp. 266–67 takes *PGM* VII.260–71 to be an exorcism. However, even though ἐξορκίζω σε occurs twice (VII.260, 269), a womb is being conjured to remain in place; nothing is being cast out so that the ἐξ- is probably to be taken as intensive rather than perfective. Cf. J.H. Moulton and W.F. Howard, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), pp. 309–10.

(8) The Palestinian amulets published in *AMB* are generally agreed to be from the fifth to sixth centuries CE or later. See *AMB*, p. 24.

the spoken texts as well as the directions for ritual activities before, during and after an exorcism.[65] In *PGM* IV.1227–64 the power-encounter thought to take place in an exorcism is expressed in the dominance involved[66] in the direction to speak 'over' (ἐπί) the person's head[67] and stand behind the sufferer (IV.1228–30), as well as to use an olive branch as a whip during the exorcism (IV.1248–52).[68] The other *PGM* IV text (lines 3007–86) calls for boiling a concoction while the practitioner says some magical words, as well as 'come out from (ἔξελθε ἀπό) NN'.[69] Perhaps we can speculate that the steam coming out from the boiling pot was thought to

64. *PGM* IV.1227–64, 3007–86 and V.96–172. In *PGM* V.96–172, beginning with 'Stele of Jeu the hieroglyphist in his letter', the exorcistic use of the text may be overlooked. For it contains a repeated call on the creator of earth and heaven (V.98–99): 'mighty Headless One, deliver him, NN, from the daimon which restrains him' (V.125–26). For more on this text see G. Twelftree, *Christ Triumphant: Exorcism Then and Now* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1985), pp. 40–42.

PGM XCIV.17–21 is too brief and mutilated to determine more than that it is 'for those possessed by demons (δαιμονιαζομονους) ... to go away (ἄπελθε)' (lines 17–18) and that the name 'Solomon' is involved (line 20). See *SM* 2.94.18 (p. 216) for ἀπέρχομαι, in place of the usual ἐξέρχομαι for the departure of a daimon citing John Chrysostom, *De capto Eutr.* 11 (*PG* 52, 407, l. 12) ἄπελθε ἀπ' αὐτοῦ.

65. Both texts from *PGM* IV begin with a title designating them as exorcistic and as effective. This was perhaps to increase confidence in the user or, like an index, to facilitate the search for what was thought to be a particularly powerful remedy. Cf. *PGM* IV.1227: 'Excellent rite for driving out demons (ἐκβάλλουσα δαίμονας)'. The verb ἐκβάλλω frequently occurs in NT exorcism stories: cf. Mt. 7.22; 8.32; 9.33/Lk. 11.14; Mt. 10.1, 8; Mk 1.34/Mt. 8.16; Mk 1.39; 3.15, 22/Mt. 9.34/12.24/Lk 11.15; Mt. 12.27 [x2]/Lk. 11.19 [x2]; Mt. 12.28/Lk. 11.20; Mk 3.23; 6.13; 7.26; 9.18/Lk. 9.40; Mk 9.28/Mt. 17.19; Mk 9.38/Lk. 9.49; Mk 16.9, 17; Lk. 11.14, 18; 13.32. *PGM* IV.3007: 'A tested charm of Pibechis for those possessed by daimons (δαιμονιαζομένους)'. The latter papyrus goes on to assure the user that this charm is 'terrifying to every daimon' (IV.3016) and that 'every spirit and daimon ... will be subject to you' (IV.3080–81).

66. Cf. the battle implied in, e.g., Mk 5.1-13; *PGM* IV.3007–86. See also Mk 3.27.

67. Cf. *PGM* IV.745; cf. 2735. See also Lucian, *Philops.* 31. Although the idea cannot be traced back to the historical Jesus, see also Lk. 4.39 (a Lukan addition to Mk 1.31 and part of Luke's program of blurring the distinction between exorcism and other healings) where there is a similar practice of focusing attention on the head in healing. See G. Twelftree, 'Ει ΔΕ ... ΕΓΩ ΕΚΒΑΛΛΩ ΤΑ ΔΑΙΜΟΝΙΑ ...', in D. Wenham and C. Blomberg (eds.), *The Miracles of Jesus* (GP, 6; Sheffield: JSOT, 1986), pp. 361–400 (394 n. 17); G.H. Twelftree, 'Demon, Devil, Satan', in J.B. Green and S. McKnight (eds.), *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (Downers Grove, IL, and Leicester: IVP, 1992), pp. 163–72 (170–71); Twelftree, *Miracle*, pp. 147–48.

68. That this instruction for preparation occurs in the text after the conjuration, yet before directions for aftercare, is further evidence of the highly composite nature of the texts with which we are dealing. See the discussion in Brashear, 'Introduction', pp. 3422–29.

69. In *PGM* XII.270–350 the preparation to wear a ring is considerable; performing a rite (which is to be kept secret) three times a day for fourteen days in order that the 'greatest god' being called up can give the image divine and supreme strength to make it effective against all opponents, including moving spirits (XII.300–24). See also n. 75 below.

represent the daimon coming out of the person so that the activity is understood to have a symbiotic relationship with the spoken words.[70]

In the *PGM* V text the exorcist is to write a formula on a piece of new papyrus and extend it across his forehead, with the assurance that 'all daimons will be obedient to you' (*PGM* V.159–71). The assumptions are, probably, not only that writing out the text doubles its strength,[71] but also that what is written on the sheet of papyrus is transferred to, or is reinforced in, the mind of the exorcist so that what is spoken is more likely to be effective. We can only guess that requiring the papyrus to be new may be so there is no residue of other scripts to confuse or contaminate the process.[72]

After the instructions for the preparation for the exorcism the text of *PGM* IV.1227–64 directs the practitioner to say (the italicized text is in Coptic): '*Hail,*[73] *God of Abraham; hail, God of Isaac; hail, God of Jacob; Jesus Chrestos,*[74] *the Holy Spirit, the Son of the Father, who is above the Seven, who is within the Seven. Bring Iao Sabaoth; may your power issue forth* from NN, *until you drive away this unclean daimon satan,*[75] *who is in him*' (IV.1231–39). There can be little doubt this brief, concentrated, amalgam of

70. The idea of acting out what is thought to be taking place in the exorcism probably also holds good for the instructions given to the exorcist at the end of this text: 'while conjuring, blow once, blowing air from the tips of the feet up to the face, and it will be assigned (*PGM* IV.3083–84; cf. Josephus, *Ant* 8.47). Cf. Lucian, *Philops.* 16.

71. Cf. C.D. Isbell, 'The Story of the Aramaic Magical Incantation Bowls', *BA* 41 (1978): 5–16 (6), citing 2 Kgs. 22 and Jer. 36.

72. In *PGM* XII.301–306 the function of the activity associated with exorcism is also said to aid the transfer of power to a finger ring: 'I have called on you ... that you may give divine and supreme strength to this image and may make it effective and powerful against all [opponents]'. Cf. *PGM* XXXVI.275–83 where, for the amulet to function, a sacrifice has to be offered and a string of characters inscribed on a silver tablet over which frankincense is put before wearing it. From Josephus, *Ant* 8.47 it can be assumed that the exorcist would have had to prepare the roots to be placed under the seal of the ring to be used in the exorcism.

73. While the six olive branches are probably not used in a ritual crowning of the demoniac (as Kotansky, 'Amulets', p. 261, suggests), noting this honorific language may explain the six olive branches – joined end-to-end – placed in front of the patient as crowns to represent the invoked god.

74. B. Layton, *The Gnostic Treatise on Resurrection from Nag Hammadi* (HDR, 12; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979), pp. 44–45, says that even though they were pronounced the same, the words 'Christos' (Christ) and 'Chrēstos' (excellent), in Coptic manuscripts of the classical period were not generally confused, even though this was not the case among pagans. In this particular case we can only suppose that, while it is clear that, from the context, the name Jesus Christ is intended, the confusion must have come about in pagan Copts taking up the term.

75. A similar use of 'satan' as an individual or class of daimon, rather than the Christian arch-daimon, is found in 4Q213a.1.17 and 11Q5.XIX.15–16; see M.E. Stone and J.C. Greenfield, 'The Prayer of Levi', *JBL* 112 (1993): 247–66 (262–65).

Jewish,[76] Christian and 'pagan' ideas is a once-independent secondary intrusion.[77] The rationale behind this spell is that a daimon is expected to come out of a person because the power of a god comes to drive it away (*PGM* IV.1239; see also IV.3025). This indicates that the exorcist is not presuming to function in his own power or any power he may have imbibed from the god; the god is called up and asked to perform the exorcism.

The earlier version of this text (before the Coptic interpolation) embodied a different view of exorcism. The exorcist began his rite in the first person; 'I conjure [or "*oath*"] you (ἐξορκίζω σε), daimon, whoever you are, by (κατά) this god ... [*voces magicae*][78] come out (ἔξελθε) ... and stand away (ἀπόστηθι)' (IV.1239–41). In using κατά[79] in place of the accusative construction after ὁρκίζω,[80] what is already implied in ὁρκίζω σε τόν is made abundantly clear: the exorcist himself is performing the exorcism using the strength or authority of the gods named. Thus, the text continues, 'Come out (ἔξελθε), daimon, since (ἐπεί) I bind (δεσμεύω) you' (*PGM* IV.1245–46). In other words, the forceful expulsion[81] of the daimon from the person is expected to be successful because the practitioner is using the god as his means to affect the eviction.

76. See Justin, *Dial.* 85.3 (cited above) for an almost identical Jewish incantation for exorcism without mention of Jesus or Satan. On the use of divine names by rabbis to control angelic forces and power see R. Lesses, 'The Adjuration of the Prince of the Presence: Performative Utterances in Jewish Ritual', in Meyer and Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, pp. 185–206. Cf. comments by Alexander, '"Wrestling"', p. 328.

77. So also, Kotansky, 'Amulets', pp. 253 n. 24, 261. As evidence we can note that there is the change to Coptic; both the Coptic and Greek texts are able to stand alone as complete rites of exorcisms; and the invoked god in the Coptic section is relied upon to perform the healing unaided rather than the exorcist being actively involved, as in the ensuing Greek lines.

78. While we may not understand these words or letters we cannot conclude they were meaningless for those who used these texts (cf. n. 103 below). In relation to ritual practice in Ceylon/Sri Lanka, S.J. Tambiah, 'The Magical Power of Words', *Man* 3 (1968): 175–208 (177–206), repudiated the 'gibberish theory' for *voces mysticae*. See Gager, *Curse Tablets*, pp. 9–10, who also cites R.T. Wallis, 'The Spiritual Importance of Not Knowing', in A.H. Armstrong (ed.), *Classical Mediterranean Spirituality* (WS, 15; New York: Crossroad, 1986), pp. 460–80.

79. In the three major texts under discussion here see *PGM* IV.1240, 3019, 3039. See κατά in MM I (4); LSJ A.II.4 and BDAG A.2.a. On κατά in Greek magical amulets see *GMA* I.28.3; 45.5; 56.12; 59.4; 67.1–2.

80. This phrase (ὁρκίζω σε τόν) can mean 'I adjure you, god' or, as is required by the context here, 'I adjure you *by* the god'. Cf. W. Brashear, *Magica Varia* (PB, 25; Bruxelles: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1991), p. 51.

81. That the exorcism is understood to be the forceful expulsion of the daimon from the person is clear from using ἐκβάλλω (in the three major texts under discussion here see *PGM* IV.1227, 1252, 1254), ἐξορκίζω and ἔξελθε, on which latter two words here see Kotansky, 'Amulets', pp. 250–51 (perhaps making too great a distinction between the use of ὁρκίζω in curses and exorcisms), p. 261; though see pp. 273–75.

Even though the Coptic insertion has a different view of exorcism, for the most recent users of this text, the insertion is pressed into service to broaden the spiritual power base by providing a wider repertoire of gods called on, for the phrase 'by this god' (κατὰ τούτου τοῦ θεοῦ) now refers to gods before and after it.[82]

The other text from *PGM* IV on which we are focusing (lines 3007–86) is also dominated by the use of the first person; 'I conjure you by (ὁρκίζω σε τὸν or κατά) ...'.[83] That is, the exorcist is not expected to ask the power-authority to perform the exorcism but to assume some personal ability or at least responsibility, and take a significant part of the exorcistic equation.[84] The text then reverts to calling on the god, not to drive away the daimons or for them to be ordered to come out, as we have come to expect from the other two papyri, but to 'deliver him (ἀπαλλάξον τόν, cf. V.133), NN, from the daimon which restrains (συνέχοντος) him' (V.125).[85]

After the expulsion of the daimon, *PGM* IV.1227–64 ends instructing the practitioner to hang around the person a tin-leaf phylactery on which there are seven lines of magical words ending with 'protect him, NN' (IV.1252–62). Thus, not only is an amulet expected to drive out daimons (as in XXXVI.275–83) but also to provide ongoing protection, presumably from the threat of the daimon returning (cf. IV.1244; Josephus, *Ant* 8.47).[86]

82. This calling on a god to be used against evil spirits is also illustrated in the Phalasarna tablet which begins: 'I bid you to flee from these houses of ours ... I call on Zeus the averter of ills, Herakles the sacker of cities, Iatros, Nike, Apollon ...'. However, the usual procedure of invoking the god before calling the daimon to flee is reversed here. We also note here that Zeus, the god called on, is appropriately known for being able to turn away sickness. In this spell the daimons driven out are to go back to their own 'homes' (δώματα). From Jordan, 'Phalasarna', p. 194.

83. There is a brief reference to the view of exorcism that the conjured god would, without the aid of the exorcist, deal directly with the offending daimon in *PGM* IV.3025.

84. Similarly, *PGM* V.96–172 also summons a power-authority at the beginning of the text: 'I summon you (σὲ καλῶ), Headless one' (V.98–108). However, in continuing in the first person ('I am Moses your prophet', V.108) the practitioner is probably adding credence to his call by listing his assumed credentials.

85. This switching between first and second person verbs – alternating from the exorcist demanding the daimon to the exorcist calling on the god to do it – may also be reflected in the verbal inconsistencies in the Phalasarna tablet. See Kotansky, 'Amulets', p. 255 n. 28. In using ἀπαλλάσσω (V.125, 130, 133) – see F. Büchsel, 'ἀπαλλάσσω', *TDNT* 1.252–53 and also *GMA* I.25.3 – with its connotations of removal and deliverance, this could suggest a different kind of maliferous relationship between the daimon and the sufferer: one of exterior rather than interior trouble. There is some justification for this conclusion in that *GMA* I.25 uses ἀπαλλάσσω in relation to κακοποιός which is used in the magical papyri of the malevolent influences of the planets. So *GMA*, p. 102.

86. Perhaps for this reason the body of the incantation of *PGM* IV.1227–47 concludes: 'I deliver you into the black chaos in perdition' (ἐν ταῖς ἀπωλείαις). Cf. MM.

2. *So Far* ...

Despite the magical papyri often being accepted as the benchmark for ancient magic, our taking into account a range of material shows that if our understanding of exorcism had begun with, or was too heavily dependent on, the magical papyri, we may have gained a distorted and overly complex view of exorcism in ancient magic. For, perhaps the most striking result of our discussion so far is that, at base, an exorcism in this tradition was relatively simple in conception and expression;[87] even the longer elaborate magical papyri dedicated to exorcism are essentially highly eclectic compilations of shorter, simpler texts. This indicates that the simpler forms are likely to be the earliest.[88]

In the literature we have surveyed the eviction of an unwanted spirit was understood to be possible on one of a number of simple premises. (a) A god or power-authority could be engaged to drive a spirit from its habitat[89] or, (b) a person could undertake an exorcism through using a spiritual being as a power-source (e.g., *PGM* IV.1240, 3019). Alternatively, (c) this power could be transferred or linked to an object (such as a ring) in order to drive out a daimon (e.g., *PGM* XII.281–82; cf. XXXVI.275–83). The assumption here being that the mere presence of supranatural power was sufficient to cause a daimon to depart. Sometimes (d) exorcisms were performed through carrying out an activity, unaccompanied by words, since actions as much as words were thought able to contain and convey spiritual power or effect results (e.g., Josephus, *Ant* 8.46-47). (e) If Tob. 3.17 is an adumbration of the notion of the magical *geṭ* exorcism may have been understood as issuing an order to a demon releasing a person from an intimate and previously binding relationship. (f) Although a Qumran exorcism probably only relied on the force of a hymn and a command in the name of God, what is missing from all these

87. Sometimes, however, in what appear simple methods, such as wearing an amulet or a ring, there was considerable preparation. Cf. *PGM* IV.2145–2240; XII.270–350; XXXVI.275–83.

88. The scope of this paper precludes discussion of the development of exorcism in ancient magic.

89. Even though exorcists may not be unimportant in the spiritual transaction, in light of the significance and roles of the power-authorities sought by these practitioners, a stronger or more significant notion than 'assistant' (the usual translation for παρέδρος) seems to be in mind. Cf. LSJ 'παρέδρα-'. Indeed, in *PGM* I.95–131, where there is a sacred rite for acquiring a παρέδρος, this 'assistant' is described as, for example, being a god, able to kill, destroy, free prisoners, cause invisibility, stop ships, quickly bring daimons, stop evil daimons, carry you into the air, hurl you into the sea, quickly freeze rivers and seas. In fact, 'he will serve you suitable for [whatever] you have in mind', being a 'powerful' (κράτιστος) assistant, the only lord of the air (I.126, 128). See the discussion by L.J. Ciraolo, 'Supernatural Assistants in the Greek Magical Papyri', in Meyer and Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic*, pp. 279–95.

approaches is the very simple notion that a person alone, unaided, could cause a daimon to leave, as we find in, for example, the exorcisms of Rabbi Simeon ben Yose (*b. Me'il.* 17b)[90] or, later, of Apollonius of Tyana (*Life* 4.20) or the Syrian from Palestine about whom Lucian writes (*Philops.* 16).

3. *The Exorcists of Ancient Magic*

We have seen that the words and actions of exorcism in ancient magic were sometimes well and widely known and could be used by anyone following generally accepted lines (cf. Justin, *Dial.* 85.2-3). This notwithstanding, there were also professional practitioners (cf. Josephus, *Ant* 8.45-49)[91] or, as in the case among the Qumran people, designated practitioners. However, as the material also attests, they were more than exorcists.[92] The material collected in *PGM* IV shows that they were called upon to help people find a lover, restrain anger, get rid of a friend, produce a trance, gain control of a god, acquire business and customers, and cause sickness, for example. Often peripatetic,[93] these professionals were so knowledgeable and proficient in the use of a wide range of ancient magical skills that their presence was sought in the highest circles (Josephus, *Ant* 8.46).[94]

They collected, amalgamated and preserved with varying degrees of

90. See the discussion in M.J. Geller, 'Jesus' Theurgic Powers: Parallels in the Talmud and Incantation Bowls', *JJS* 28 (1977): 141–55 (141–42).

91. That professionals rather than individual amateurs are responsible for many magical papyri is seen particularly in the longer papyri being composites of a wide variety of prescriptions which would be of more value to a professional than an individual or patient (cf. *PGM* IV; XCIV). Also, some instructions make most sense if the texts are intended for professional rather than individual or patient use, such as saying that another version of a text included a phylactery (*PGM* IV.1264). Similarly, charms that are described as either multipurpose or as originally intended for other purposes (*PGM* I.115–20; XII.270–350; XXXVI.275–83), or inform the user that they are also effective for those afflicted by daimons, can be best understood to have been the property of professionals. Also, the professional is probably in mind where repeated use of the spell is assumed (*PGM* IV 3084–85) and in saying that, if every spirit is to be subject to him, he must not eat pork and is to keep pure because the charm is preserved among pure men (IV.3084–85; cf. XII.276–77). Further, the titles of some spells including a statement on their value make most sense if they were in the collection of someone choosing between spells. Cf. also Graf, *Magic*, p. 147.

92. The term 'exorcist' does not appear, even in relation to Eleazar (Josephus, *Ant* 8.46), though it is used in Acts 19.13 of the seven sons of Sceva. On the earliest uses of the term see Kotansky, 'Amulets', p. 249 n. 14.

93. See W. Burkert, *The Orientalizing Revolution: Near Eastern Influence on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age* (RA, 5; Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 41–46; Twelftree, *Exorcist*, pp. 27–34; Kotansky, 'Amulets', p. 253, n. 23.

94. Betz (*GMP*, p. xlvii) calls them crisis managers, all-purpose therapists and agents of worried, troubled and troublesome souls.

care,[95] a library of a great range of texts[96] (sometimes in multiple copies,[97] perhaps for sending to colleagues, cf. *PGM* IV.2006–2014),[98] and would have had at their disposal the tools necessary for copying out the texts as a whole or in part (e.g., *PGM* IV.1252–61). Aside from the designated practitioners of the Qumran texts who needed only a text, they also had on hand a wide range of materials, including vegetable matter and sheets of papyrus and metal, for example, and, we can assume, possessed such containers and utensils that facilitated the preparation of their prescriptions.[99] They could perform exorcisms using words alone or include activities or, perhaps, dispense some article (e.g., a finger ring) or phylactery – or both – that was already imbibed with preternatural power (cf. *PGM* XII.266) to drive away, or give the patient ongoing protection from, a spiritual being (e.g., *PGM* IV.1252-61).[100]

Added to this is the likelihood that some exorcists had the assistance of, and responsibility for, apprentices, who may have included family members.[101] We also know that they gave attention to their personal diet as well as to ritual purity.[102] It goes without saying that the exorcists were literate[103] and, at least in some cases, bilingual, for their collecting of new spells crossed language[104] as well

95. For an insightful discussion of an example of copying out (and correcting) various recipes onto a single papyrus (P. Berol. 17202), see W.M. Brashear amd R. Kotansky, 'A New Magical Formulary', in Mirecki and Meyer (eds.), *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, pp. 3–24 (6–7), dating the papyrus from the fourth century CE.

96. Cf. Nock, 'Papyri', p. 220.

97. See Penney and Wise, 'Beelzebub', p. 630 and n. 13.

98. This raises questions about the view that one of the characteristics of 'magic' is that it was private or secret. Cf. M. Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 24, discussed by Meier, *Marginal*, pp. 550, 571–72 n. 66.

99. Cf. Brashear and Kotansky, 'Formulary', p. 6.

100. Cf. Penney and Wise, 'Beelzebub', p. 630 and n. 12. Lady Drower has what E.M. Yamauchi, *Mandaic Incantation Texts* (AOS, 49; New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society, 1967), p. 17, describes as a charming portrait of a Mandaean priest in his small dark shop in Baghdad in more recent times; see E.S. Drower, 'A Mandaean Book of Black Magic', *JRAS* (1943), pp. 149–81 (150).

101. Cf. Mt. 12.27/Lk. 11.19; Acts 19.14. See also Burkert, *Revolution*, pp. 44–46. Contrast Meier, *Marginal*, p. 549: 'the magician did not usually operate within a fairly stable circle of disciples or believers'.

102. *PGM* IV.3079–84. Cf. Burkert, *Revolution*, pp. 55–64.

103. Isbell, *Bowls*, p. 14, suggests that magical bowl texts containing pseudoscript-letters but no words may indicate the illiteracy of the composer. On the other hand it could be that, as they were buried, the bowls were not designed to be read or understood by mortals (cf. n. 78 above).

104. In this there is an inherent warning not to use script to determine the religious affiliation of the scribe or the person for whom the text was intended. See the review of *AIT* by J.N. Epstein, 'Glosses babylo-araméenes', *REJ* 73 (1921): 27–58 and 74 (1922): 40–72, (41–43) followed by J.C. Greenfield, 'Notes on Some Aramaic and Mandaic Magic Bowls', *JANESCU* 5 (1973): 149–56 (150). See also Geller, 'Bowls', pp. 149–50.

as religious[105] boundaries. Nevertheless, most of this exorcistic material is 'Jewish' or, in the case of the magical papyri, under such Jewish influence that it is reasonable to suppose that it has its origins among Jews of some kind.[106]

4. *Jesus in Ancient Magic*

Just as the incantational use of, for example, Solomon's name in ancient magic[107] betrays the belief that he had preternatural powers, was a great exorcist, and could control daimons, it has been argued that the same can be concluded in relation to the use of Jesus' name (see n. 7 above).[108]

105. These professionals absorbed a considerable range of ideas including Christian and especially Jewish traditions, as is clear from e.g., *PGM* IV.3020: 'I conjure you by the god of the Hebrews, Jesus ...'. See A. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), p. 256 n. 4. This is not surprising, for it is widely recognized that the notion of exorcism is peculiarly Semitic, not generally taken up by the Greeks until around the first and second centuries CE. See W.D. Smith, 'So-called Possession in Pre-Christian Greece', *TAPA* 96 (1965): 403–26, esp. p. 409; F.E. Brenk, 'In the Light of the Moon: Demonology in the Early Imperial Period', *ANRW* II.16.3, pp. 2068–145 (2081). Indeed, it is the OT descriptions of God, particularly those associated with creation and the light and salvation of the exodus, that they most frequently invoked. See the discussion in Kotansky, 'Amulets', pp. 263–65. With these images – e.g., the radiant Jewish God who appears in the fire and shining pillar and is called the 'phosphorescent' (or 'light-bearing') god (*PGM* IV.3045–46) – they combined echoes of Greek religion. They used such gods as ἀδάμαστος, the 'unsubdued, inflexible' one of Hades (cf. Homer, *Iliad* 9.158; LSJ), a title quite uninfluenced by biblical traditions. See Kotansky, 'Amulets', pp. 255–56. They referred to him who 'leads out from the unseen' (*PGM* IV.3048), a reference to the Homeric description of the famed wonder-worker leading 'from Hades the spirit of a dead man'. See Kotansky, 'Amulets', p. 265, citing Empedocles, fragment 101. See M.R. Wright (ed.), *Empedocles: The Extant Fragments* (London: Duckworth; Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1995), p. 133. Also appearing in a text is ἄβυσσος (*PGM* IV.3062–64), that place, in Hellenistic conception, 'in which renegade spirits are confined'. So J. Jeremias, 'ἄβυσσος', *TDNT* I.9, citing *Jub.* 5.6-8; *1 En.* 10.4-6, 11-13; 18.11-13, etc.; Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2.4.

106. It is not least in this strong Jewish element in ancient magic that the value of ancient magic for shedding light on Jesus the exorcist is assured. On the Jewish influence on the magical papyri note M. Smith, 'The Jewish Elements in the Magical Papyri', *SBLSP* 25 (1986), pp. 455–62, noting (456) the difficulty of distinguishing characteristically Jewish elements.

107. E.g., 11Q11 II.2; Josephus, *Ant* 8.45-49. See D.C. Duling, 'Solomon, Exorcism and the Son of David', *HTR* 68 (1975): 235–52. Cf. K. Preisendanz, 'Salomo', in *PWSup* 8 (1956), cols. 660–74 (666–72); P.S. Alexander, 'Incantations and Books of Magic; Appendix: Solomon and Magic', in E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, 3 vols (ed. G. Vermes, F. Millar and M. Goodman; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, third edn, 1973–87), 3.1, pp. 375–79; Lange, 'Divination', pp. 377–435. On *T. Sol.* see Aune, 'Magic', pp. 1525–27, and those cited.

108. *PGM* III.420, 1233; IV.3020; XII.192; XIII.289; C.1–7; CXXIII a–f.49; CXXVIII.1–11. To these, Smith, *Jesus*, p. 63. adds IV.2929 which he suggests may contain an

However, the evidence is not what we might expect. More generally, to begin with, it is the names of gods and figures from antiquity that are involved in these texts or are used as a source of exorcistic authority and power in ancient magic rather than those of recent or contemporary figures.[109] More particularly, only two of the nine references to Jesus (or Christ) in the magical papyri have a non-Christian origin and relate to our theme of exorcism.[110] Notably, both of these include mention of the God of the Jews.

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anagrammatized reference to Jesus in an invocation to Aphrodite for a love charm. Our discussion excludes Christian texts; e.g., P. Berol. 17202 (fourth century CE); see Brashear and Kotansky, 'Formulary', p. 10.

109. E.g., on Moses see J. G. Gager, *Moses in Greco-Roman Paganism* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1972), pp. 142–43 (cf. *PGM* V.109); on Solomon see n. 107 above; on Pibechis (*PGM* IV.3007), a legendary magician from Egypt, see K. Preisendanz, 'Pibechis', in *PWSup* 8 (1941), cols. 1310–12 cited by *GMP*, p. 96 n. 386.

110. Three of the references from the magical papyri (and the one from the magical bowls) have to be discounted as Christian interpolations: (1) In *PGM* XIII.288–96 – dated by Brashear, 'Introduction', p. 3492, at 346 CE – the name of Christ appears as part of a Christian interpolation. See H.D. Betz in *GMP*, p. 180 n. 68. Turner, *Codex*, p. 142 (No. M3), dates *PGM* XIII from the fourth century CE.

(2) *PGM* C.1–7 should also be excluded. Following *Suppl. Mag.* I.20 (pp. 55–57), correcting D. Wortmann, 'Neue magische Texte. Nr. 5: Heilamulett für eine Thaes', *BJ* 168 (1968): 56–111 (102–104), *PGM* C.1–7 is a healing amulet for a Thaesas in which there are the words, 'Lord God, Lord of all gods, heal Thaesas ... release (ἀπόλυσον) in the name of Jesus Christ ... heal Thaesas, now, now, quickly, quickly'. Although Wortmann, 'Neue magische Texte', p. 102, dates the papyrus from the fifth or sixth centuries CE, W. Schubart, *Griechische Palaeographie* (HAW, I.4; München: Beck, 1925), Abb. 56, says the handwriting could be as early as the middle of the fourth century. Cited by *Suppl. Mag.* I.20 (pp. 55–57). In any case, although the name of Christ is associated with healing, in this syncretistic or, perhaps, even Christian text, there is no indication that this would have been thought to include exorcism.

(3) *PGM* CXXVIII.1–11, 'A Phylactery for fever', containing the line: 'Jesus Christ ... quickly, quickly, heal John, son of Zoe', is probably a fifth century CE Christian text. See Brashear, 'Introduction', p. 3493 and F. Maltomini, 'Due papiri magici inediti', *SCO* 31 (1981): 111–14 (111). See also *Suppl. Mag.* I.28.5–6 (p. 77): Ἰωάννης υἱὸς Ζωῆς either the name of the person to be protected identified as the son of his mother (Zoe), or the name followed by a Christian formula in a fever amulet, citing A. Vassiliev, *Anecdota Graeco-Byzantina* (Moscow: Sumptibus et typis Universitatis Caesareae, 1893), p. 339, no. 19: γράφε. ἡ ζωὴ ὁ Υἱός. (The first column of this section of the papyrus is a list of five magical words, on which see *Suppl. Mag.* I.28 [p. 77] and those cited.)

(4) There is one explicit allusion to Jesus in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic bowls (*CMB* M163.29; cf. p. 137): 'In the name of I-am-that-I-am YHWH Sebaoth and in the name of Jesus who conquered the height and the depth by his cross and in the name of his exalted father and in the name of his holy spirits for ever.' However, not only is this too late for our consideration but its purpose is not exorcistic but to curse the two clients' antagonists. Also the text is clearly dependent on Christian traditions. See D. Levene, '"... and by the Name of Jesus ..." an unpublished Magic Bowl in Jewish Aramaic', *JSQ* 6 (1999): 283–308, and S. Shaked, 'Jesus in the Magic Bowls: Apropos Dan Leven's "... and by the name of Jesus ..."', *JSQ* 6 (1999): 309–19.

(a) In *PGM* IV.1231–39 Jesus' name appears as part of a text of Jewish origin in which a power-authority is being called up to 'drive away this unclean daimon satan, who is in him' (*PGM* IV.1239, cf. above). If the name of Jesus found its way into an earlier edition of this text because he was considered an effective exorcist, in the present form of the text, that memory has been lost. For, in appearing with two other Christian divine titles ('Jesus Chrestos, the Holy Spirit, Son of the Father') that do not relate to exorcism but perhaps echo a trinitarian formula for exorcism encountered by the scribe, it is more likely that these names were appended to the widely known Jewish incantation (cf. above on Justin, *Dial.* 85.2-3) as a series of names thought to be effective in spiritual encounters rather than as names of powerful exorcists.

(b) *PGM* IV.3020 also has the line: 'I conjure you by the god of the Hebrews, Jesus ...'.[111] With the use of the names of gods and individuals from antiquity, and with so little evidence that even a vague knowledge of Christian exorcism has led to the inclusion of

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Four further citations have no apparent connection with exorcism. (a) *PGM* III.420 – post 300 CE, see Brashear, 'Introduction', p. 3492 – contains some Coptic text (italicized) in a rite for gaining memory which reads, 'The name of the soul of the god is: *NGŌOU DNI IĒSOUS PNETO* [Jesus our great one]'. (Translation suggested by Marvin W. Meyer in *GMP*, p. 29 n. 83. On this line containing the name 'Jesus' see Smith, *Jesus*, p. 63.) This text bears no relation to exorcism and the name of Jesus is used because it is understood to be that of a god not because of its association with healing or exorcism.

(b) In *PGM* CXXIII a–f.49 – late fifth or sixth century, see F. Maltomini, 'I papiri greci', *SCO* 29 (1979): 55–124 (55) – the name of Christ is associated with giving birth: 'For childbearing: "Come out of your tomb, Christ is calling you"'. On the parallels to this invocation see Maltomini, 'I papiri greci', pp. 55–124, esp. pp. 81–84. This is obviously an echo of Jesus calling Lazarus from the tomb, and could be taken as a form of healing. However, there is no indication that Jesus is remembered as an exorcist.

(c) *PGM* XII.190–92 – dated between 300 and 350 CE by Brashear, 'Introduction', p. 3492 – is headed 'Request for a dream oracle spoken to the Bear' (i.e., the constellation of the Bear; cf. *PGM* IV.700, 1275, 1331; VII.687; XXIII.10; *GMP*, pp. 62–63 nn. 173, 181). Apart from two words at the beginning of the ensuing invocation, one of which is the name of Jesus, the remainder of the text is lost (cf. *GMP*, p. 160 n. 59). Even though there is nothing in the text to suggest Jesus' name is associated with healing or exorcism, we can conjecture, at least, that Jesus was thought to be an effective power-authority in magic.

(d) A lead curse tablet from the late first or early second century CE from Megara conjures Althaia Kore (i.e. Persephone), Hecate, and Selene to put a curse on the victim's 'body, spirit, soul, mind, thought, sensation, life, hear'. The goddesses are conjured 'by the Hecatean words and Hebrew conjurations ... <Jes> us, Earth, Hecate, <Jes> us'. See Smith, *Jesus*, p. 63, who notes that emendations proposed and defended by R. Wünsch, *Antike Fluchtafeln* (KT, 20; Bonn: Markus und Weber, 2nd edn, 1912), no. 1, have generally been accepted. However, once again, there is no evidence that this has to do with exorcism; cf. Eitrem, *Notes*, p. 14.

111. On the use of the name of God in ancient magic see R. Reitzenstein, *Poimandres: Studien zur Griechischen-Ägyptischen und Frühchristlichen Literatur* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1904), pp. 14–15 nn. 1–2.

his name in incantations,[112] once again, being associated with 'the god of the Hebrews', it is likely that the name of Jesus was included here because it was known to be associated with the Jewish God – or is taken to be a name for the Hebrew God – who was understood to be a useful power-authority in spiritual transactions.

We are bound to conclude, therefore, that if ancient magic carried the memory of Jesus as an exorcist it was only very faint at best.[113] Nevertheless, the references do indicate that the name of Jesus was considered a powerful source of authority in preternatural transactions and, along with other gods, taken into the 'divine democracy'.[114]

5. *Jesus the Exorcist and Ancient Magic*

When Jesus the exorcist is placed against the background we have sketched a number of things stand out, including some correctives that are needed to the way he is viewed. To begin with, it is suggested that Jesus' methods are nearer that of Apollonius of Tyana (Philostratus, *Life* 4.20) or that of a first-century Jewish charismatic than what we have seen in ancient magic;[115] without aid, ordering unwanted spiritual beings out of a person. However, this ignores the import of Jesus saying that he cast out daimons 'by the Spirit (or finger) of God' (Mt. 12.28/Lk. 11.20).[116] This is evidence that he understood he was not operating unaided but was using a power-authority – the Spirit or finger of God. Also, in the previous verse ('If I cast out daimons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them

112. Cf. n. 106 above. Contrast W.L. Knox, 'Jewish Liturgical Exorcism', *HTR* 31 (1938): 191–203 (193–94), citing A.D. Nock's review of H. Jonas, *Gnosis und spätantiker Geist*, Teil 1 (FRLANT, 45; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1934) in *Gnomon* 12 (1936): 605–12 (607).

113. In relation to the magical bowls, cf. Geller, 'Bowls', p. 149: 'we are surprised to find but few references to Jesus in the Babylonian magic bowls'.

114. The term is Morton Smith's in 'How Magic was Changed by the Triumph of Christianity', *Graeco-Arabica* 2 (1983): 51–58 (53).

115. Cf., e.g., G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (London: SCM, 2001), p. 50: 'a man whose supernatural abilities derived, not from secret powers, but from immediate contact with God', see also p. 60; cf. p. 195.

116. On the probability that this verse can be traced back to the earliest reports of the historical Jesus see G.H. Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle Worker: A Historical and Theological Study* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1998), p. 268. See also Mk 3.28-30. Cf. *AMB*, p. 57 (amulet 4.31–32): 'I adjure you, by his right hand and the might of his holiness', fifth or possibly fourth century CE from Aleppo, first published by M. Schwab, 'Une amulette judéo-araméenne', *JA* 7 (1906): 5–17; cf. M. Schwab, 'Amulets and Bowls with Magic Inscriptions', *JQR* 7 (1916–17): 619–28 (624), for dating, followed by J.-B. Frey, *CII*, vol. 2 (Rome: Pontificio Instituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1952), p. 62.

out?"), Jesus places himself on a level with other healers[117] and takes up the assumption that he is using a power-authority for his exorcisms. In other words, even though, in the reports of his incantations (see n. 124 below), Jesus makes no mention of a power-authority,[118] in these two sayings – the most explicit about his methods of exorcism – it is plain that he shared the same view of exorcism as some of those involved in ancient magic: using a power-authority to perform an exorcism.

Further, it is not uncommon to read that, in his method of exorcism, Jesus stands over against ancient magic.[119] It is true that in relation to ancient magic there appear to be distinctive features in the exorcisms of Jesus: (a) there is no evidence that he collected, maintained or used artifacts or a library of incantations; (b) his recorded commands to the daimons were extremely brief; and, as just noted, (c) according to the reports, during an exorcism he did not mention his power-authority. Also, (d) alongside exorcism, the great interest in the control of, and protection from, unwanted daimons that is evident in ancient magic is not reflected in the Jesus tradition.[120] To these differences we add the observation (e) that Jesus appears to reserve exorcistic language and technique for the removal of daimons; that is, he does not rebuke sickness.[121] Also, (f) even though such a belief may be reflected in the synoptic traditions, Jesus shows no

117. Mt. 12.27/Lk. 11.19. See the discussion in Twelftree, *Miracle*, pp. 266–68; cf. Twelftree, *Exorcist*, pp. 106–10.

118. At least from Mark's perspective there is the assumption that the source of Jesus' power-authority is known by the daimons, cf. Mk 1.24.

119. C.C. Caragounis, 'Kingdom of God, Son of Man and Jesus' Self-Understanding II', *TynBul* 40 (1989): 223–38 (230–31): 'The various acts or rituals, the magical formulae, the incantations, the threats of banishment and punishment, if demons did not obey, etc., are all absent from Jesus' expulsion of demons, whose simple word is sufficient.' From this Caragounis concludes that Jesus is not to be lumped together with Jewish or Hellenistic exorcisms. Cf. W. Everts, 'Jesus Christ, No Exorcist', *BSac* 81 (1924): 355–62 (357); A. Oepke, 'ἰάομαι, κτλ', *TDNT* 3.194–215 (210). See also, e.g., W. Grundmann, 'δύναμαι/δύναμις', *TDNT* 2.285–317 (302); McCasland, *Finger*, pp. 110–15; Taylor, *Mark*, p. 176; Johnson, *St. Mark*, p. 48; Latourelle, *Miracles*, p. 167; J.J. Rousseau, 'Jesus, an Exorcist of a Kind', *SBLSP* 32 (1993), pp. 129–53 (148). As an example of a reluctant acknowledgement of 'magic' in the miracle stories of Jesus see W.L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974), pp. 192–93.

120. The two places in the synoptic tradition where Jesus is said to address the issue of the control of daimons – he is said to order a daimon not to return (Mk 9.25) and also to warn hearers of the dangers of returning spirits (Mt. 12.43-45/Lk. 11.24-26) – perhaps suggest that protection was thought to come from either the presence of the kingdom of God or from being associated with his followers. Further, see, G.H. Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, forthcoming).

121. At least, no gospel story has Jesus rebuke sickness. On Lk. 4.39 ('he stood over her and rebuked the fever') see n. 67 above.

interest in exorcising buildings or places.[122] Further, (g) although like his contemporary professionals exorcism was only part of Jesus' activity, the synoptic tradition conveys the impression that exorcism dominated his public ministry.[123]

However, the distance between Jesus the exorcist and his contemporaries is not to be exaggerated and, indeed, narrows when we take into account, first, that all his commands, or supposed words of power, have parallels in ancient magic.[124] Taking into account the Spirit/finger saying (Mt. 12.28/Lk. 11.20), this suggests that, like his contemporaries in ancient magic, Jesus was using language he understood to be performative (or empowered) because it was dependent on (or infused with) a power-authority.[125] Thus, neither Jesus nor his contemporaries coerced the deity;[126] both Jesus and healers reflected in the magical papyri assumed the right to use, at will, their respective power-authorities.

Second, even though Jesus' methods and commands were relatively brief,[127] a careful reading of the material remains of ancient magic shows

122. See Mt. 12.29/Lk. 11.21-22; Mt. 12.43-45/Lk. 11.24-26 on which see Twelftree, *Exorcist*, pp. 13–14. Cf. Twelftree, *Christ*, pp. 175–76. See also n. 13 above.

123. See G.H. Twelftree, 'The Miracles of Jesus: Marginal or Mainstream?' *JSHJ* 1 (2003): 104–24.

124. (1) Mk 1.25: Φιμόω is strongly related to preternatural restriction rather than simply to the control of talking, putting someone in a position where they are unable to function (cf. P. Oslo 1.161-62 has 'a remedy to prevent the wrath of a person ... *bind* the mouths which speak against me ...'. For φιμοῦν and καταδεῖν as equivalents see Eitrem, *Notes*, p. 38 citing P. Lond. 121.396, 967; *PGM* IX.9; XXXVI.164.

(2) Mk 1.25; 5.8; 9.25: ἐξέλθε. See, e.g. *PGM* IV.1243–45; for the similar expression, ἀπαλλαττέσθαι ('to quit'), see *PGM* IV.1243–45.

(3) Mk 5.9: 'What is your name?' See *T. Sol.* 2.1; cf., e.g., 3.6; 4.3, 4; 5.1; *PGM* IV.1017–19; V.247–303; VIII.6–7, 13; cf. H. Bietenhard, 'ὄνομα', *TDNT* 5.250 on the importance of knowing the name of a spiritual adversary.

(4) Mk 9.25: καὶ μηκέτι εἰσελθῇς εἰς αὐτόν; see Josephus, *Ant* 8.47; *PGM* IV.1254; cf. 3024–25. Cf. Aune, 'Magic', p. 1532: 'The great gulf which some New Testament scholars would place between "the powerful word of the Son" and "magical incantation" is simply non-existent.' Further see Twelftree, 'ΕΚΒΑΛΛΩ', pp. 378–81, and Twelftree, *Exorcist*, pp. 153–55. Also on parallels to aspects of the exorcisms of Jesus see Geller, 'Bowls', pp. 141–55.

125. Cf. *PGM* XII.301–306. See Iamblichus, *de Mysteriis* 5.26. Cf. the discussion by Graf, 'Theories', pp. 94–95.

126. Contrast Meier, *Marginal*, p. 548. Also, that 'all miraculous activity takes place within the overarching Gospel context of Jesus' obedience to the Father' (p. 548) may not only have been generally lost on his audience but also does not distance him from his contemporaries for they also were calling on God or gods.

127. It is notable that the command of Mk 9.25 contains 16 words in Greek; about the same as or slightly longer than the incantation used by the Jews as reported by Justin, *Dial.* 85.3.

they also witness to an approach that – if not generally as clipped[128] – was simple and uncluttered by any artifacts or extended incantations.[129] In other words, Jesus shared with some traditions of ancient magic a simple understanding of exorcism:[130] a command (given on the assumption that it was backed by a power-authority) could dislodge an unwanted spiritual being from a person.

Yet, third, the view that, in the absence of the use of artifacts, Jesus as an exorcist is set apart from ancient magic cannot stand in light of the report of the healing of the Gerasene demoniac (Mk 5.1-20). If the report is historically reliable,[131] Jesus used a herd of pigs into which he is said to have allowed the daimons to go, in a process which transferred the daimons from the man into the water, one of their assumed habitats.[132]

Fourth, the initial dramatic confrontation that is reported to have taken place between Jesus and the demoniacs (cf. Mk 1.23-24; 5.6-7)[133] could have its parallel in ancient magic expecting daimons to flee from the presence of rings and amulets that had been charged or infused with supranatural powers.[134] The natural conclusion to be drawn from this is

128. Not taken fully into account by Aune, 'Magic', p. 1532, in saying: 'The short authoritative commands of Jesus to demons in the gospel narratives are formulas of magical adjuration.' In replying to Aune, Meier (*Marginal*, pp. 550, 571 n. 65) overplays the difference between the exorcisms of Jesus and those reflected in the magical papyri.

129. This simple approach can be seen in the amulets and the various once-isolated incantations that are now components of the more complex and developed forms reflected in some of the magical papyri (e.g., *PGM* IV.1227–64), and particularly in the report Justin gives of Jewish exorcisms (*Dial.* 85.2–3). See also the comments on incantations from Qumran by Eshel, 'Genres', p. 405.

130. Contra, e.g., L.L. Morris, *The Cross in the New Testament* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1965), pp. 56–57; Taylor, *Mark*, p. 171; Meier, *Marginal*, p. 548.

131. It has long been generally agreed that this story cannot be traced back to the first reports associated with the historical Jesus. See, e.g., M. Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel* (Cambridge: Clarke, 1971), pp. 88–89 and, more recently, R. D. Kotansky, 'Jesus and Heracles in Cádiz (τὰ Γάδιρα): Death, Myth, and Monsters at the "Straits of Gibraltar" (Mark 4:35–5:43)', in A.Yarbro Collins (ed.), *Ancient and Modern Perspectives on the Bible and Culture: Essays in Honor of Hans Dieter Betz* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1998), pp. 160–229 with a response by D.E. Aune, 'Jesus and the Romans in Galilee: Jews and Gentiles in the Decapolis', in Collins (ed.), *Ancient and Modern Perspectives*, pp. 230–51. Arguing for the general historical reliability of the Mk 5.1-21 report see Twelftree, 'ΕΚΒΑΛΛΩ', pp. 381–83 and Twelftree, *Exorcist*, §7.

132. O. Böcher, *Christus Exorcista: Dämonismus und Taufe im Neuen Testament* (BWANT, 5.16; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1972), pp. 20–32. On the transfer of daimons from one habitat to another see Twelftree, 'ΕΚΒΑΛΛΩ', p. 382 n. 80 and those cited; Burkert, *Revolution*, p. 62 and n. 30; Twelftree, *Exorcist*, pp. 74–75. 155.

133. On the probable historicity of this aspect of the Jesus tradition, even though it was probably taken up and enhanced by Christian tradition, as in Mk 3.11, see Twelftree, 'ΕΚΒΑΛΛΩ', pp. 371–72, and Twelftree, *Exorcist*, pp. 146–48.

134. See *Pesiqta de Rab Kahana* 4.5; *PGM* IV.2145–2240; XII.270–350; XXXVI.275–83.

that Jesus would have been understood (and understood himself) to be infused with, or linked to, such powers.

6. *Finally...*

The material remains of ancient magic help us see that, while Jesus appeared to use the methods of a powerful charismatic figure, he was operating with the rationale of the exorcists of ancient magic.[135] Given the common occurrence of exorcisms like his and that Jews did not habitually look for miracles as eschatological signs,[136] it is most astounding that Jesus chose to conduct so many of them – far greater than any other figure known to us[137] – and then make the unique claim[138] that his particular exorcisms[139] were not only the vanguard of his battle with Satan, but, concomitantly, the coming or operation of the kingdom of God itself.[140]

135. Contra Howard Clark Kee, 'Magic and Messiah', in Neusner, Frerichs and McCracken Flescher (eds.), *Religion, Science, and Magic*, pp. 121–41, who, having caricatured the efficacy of the incantations in the magical papyri as depending on reciting multiple divine names and the forcefulness of the orders, concludes that 'there is no evidence in the gospel tradition that Jesus engaged in methods of magic' (139).

136. Cf. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, p. 163 followed by C.A. Evans, *Jesus and His Contemporaries: Comparative Studies* (AGJU, 25; Leiden: Brill, 1995), p. 220.

137. E.g., J. Becker, *Jesus of Nazareth* (New York and Berlin: de Gruyter, 1998), p. 170: 'To no miracle worker in all of Antiquity were as many miracles attributed as there were to Jesus.'

138. Cf. Twelftree, *Exorcist*, e.g., p. 228, and D. Trunk, *Der messianische Heiler: Eine redaktions- und religionsgeschichtliche Studie zu den Exorzismen im Matthäusevangelium* (HBS, 3; Freiburg: Herder, 1994), p. 426, cited by G. Theissen and A. Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide* (London: SCM, 1998), p. 290.

139. This takes into account the parable of the strong man – Mk 3.27/Mt. 12.29; Lk. 11.21-22, which is probably a reasonably close reflection of something Jesus said: R. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium*, 2 vols. (HTKNT; Freiburg: Herder, 1980), 1, p. 219, and Twelftree, *Miracle*, p. 269 – and giving full weight to the 'I' (ἐγώ / אנא), Mt. 12.28/Lk. 11.20) by which Jesus draws attention to the importance of *his* conducting the exorcisms. Further see Twelftree, *Exorcist*, pp. 108–109. On the status of ἐγώ in the text see the apparatus of the Greek NT. See also the discussion by J.D.G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* (Grand Rapids, MI, and Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2003), p. 695, n. 384.

140. Also Twelftree, *Exorcist*, p. 227. Cf. L. Goppelt, *Theology of the New Testament*, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981), 1, p. 147. Thus, exorcisms are not preparatory to the kingdom – so, e.g., O. Betz, 'Jesu Heiliger Krieg', *NovT* 2 (1958): 116–37; R.H. Hiers, *The Kingdom of God in the Synoptic Tradition* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida, 1970): the exorcisms are not signs of the kingdom – so, e.g., A. Richardson, *The Miracle Stories of the Gospels* (London: SCM, 1941), pp. 45–50; H.C. Kee, *Miracle in the Early Christian World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983), p. 155; nor were the exorcisms considered indications that the kingdom had arrived – so, e.g., C.L. Mitton, *Your Kingdom Come* (London: Mowbray, 1978), p. 37. R.H. Fuller, *Interpreting the Miracles* (London: SCM,

Given that, under critical examination, the gap between exorcists of ancient magic and Jesus the exorcist narrows, the audacity of this claim for his activity stands out all the more starkly.

1963), p. 40, misrepresents Jesus' understanding of his miracles in saying they 'foreshadow ... the establishment of his [God's] Reign in the last days'. Cf. R.H. Fuller, *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1954), pp. 37–38.

Μάγοι – ASTROLOGERS, ECSTATICS, DECEITFUL PROPHETS: NEW TESTAMENT UNDERSTANDING IN JEWISH AND PAGAN CONTEXT*

Michael Becker

Because of the increasing interest in the phenomenon of 'magic', recent years have seen a vast number of publications on different subjects and with different views in substance and terminology.[1] Most publications deal with

*. This essay is dedicated to Professor emeritus Ferdinand Hahn on the occasion of his eightieth birthday on 18 January 2006, for the many years of encouragement and kind support in Munich.

1. To get an impression of the tremendous production of literature of the last decade see the survey of the following major publications, i.e. central monographs and collections: B. Ankarloo and S. Clark (eds.), *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome* (London: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999); M. Becker, *Wunder und Wundertäter im frührabbinischen Judentum: Studien zum Phänomen und seiner Überlieferung im Horizont von Magie und Dämonismus* (WUNT, II.144; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002); R.M. Berchman (ed.), *Mediators of the Divine: Horizons of Prophecy, Divination, Dreams and Theurgy in Mediterranean Antiquity* (South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism, 163; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1998); J.N. Bremmer and J.R. Veenstra (eds.), *The Metamorphosis of Magic from Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002); L. Ciraolo and J. Seidel (eds.), *Magic and Divination in the Ancient World* (Ancient Magic and Divination, 2; Leiden: Brill, 2002); M.W. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (London: Routledge, 2001); M.T. Fögen, *Die Enteignung der Wahrsager: Studien zum kaiserlichen Wissensmonopol in der Spätantike* (stw, 1316; Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997); F. Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* (Revealing Antiquity, 10; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997 [German edn: *Gottesnähe und Schadenszauber: Die Magie in der griechisch-römischen Antike*, München: Beck, 1996]); N. Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World: Pagans, Jews and Christians* (London: Routledge, 2001); A. Jeffers, *Magic and Divination in Ancient Palestine and Syria* (SHANE, 8; Leiden: Brill, 1996); S.I. Johnston and P.T. Struck (eds.), *Mantikē. Studies in Ancient Divination* (RGRW, 155; Leiden: Brill, 2005); A. de Jong, *Traditions of the Magi: Zoroastrianism in Greek and Latin Literature* (RGRW, 133; Leiden: Brill, 1997); D.R. Jordan, H. Montgomery and E. Thomassen (eds.), *The World of Ancient Magic: Papers from the First International Samson Eitrem Seminar at the Norwegian Institute at Athens, 4-8 May 1997* (Papers from the Norwegian Institute at Athens 4; Bergen, 1999); P. Kingsley, *Ancient Philosophy, Mystery, and Magic: Empedocles and Pythagorean Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995); H.-J. Klauck, *Magic and Paganism in Early Christianity: The World of the Acts of the Apostles* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000); T.E. Klutz, *Magic in the Biblical World: From the Rod of Aaron to the Ring of Solomon* (JSNTSup, 245; London: T & T Clark, 2003); B. Kollmann, *Jesus und die Christen als Wundertäter: Studien zu Magie, Medizin und Schamanismus in Antike und Christentum* (FRLANT, 170; Göttingen:

the pagan world around the Mediterranean and in the Ancient Near East, only a small number of them include Jewish and Christian conceptions as well. In total these studies lead to the opinion that saying what 'magic' 'is' seems to be a rather difficult enterprise – considering the phenomena in antiquity in particular. Considering recent proposals it soon becomes clear, that we cannot force our understanding of the processes in antiquity by pressing them into a unified system of modern concepts associated with the word 'magic', and that modern dichotomous differentiations rest on the reduction of a very complex development of ideas and concepts.[2]

The current investigation therefore focuses its attention on a small section of ancient terminology – particularly the usage of the μάγος-terminology. It presents aspects of the historical and phenomenological development and against this background it wants to illuminate several facets of New Testament usage.[3] By limiting this study to the horizon from which early Christian scriptures depart, not all issues can be discussed. Significant and

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Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996); M. Meyer and P. Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (RGRW, 129; Leiden: Brill, 1995); P. Mirecki and M. Meyer (eds.), *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World* (RGRW, 141; Leiden: Brill, 2002); A. Moreau and J.-C. Turpin (eds.), *La Magie. Actes du colloque international de Montpellier 25-27 Mars 1999* (4 vols.; Montpellier: Services des Publications, Université Paul Valéry, 2000); P. Schäfer and H.G. Kippenberg (eds.), *Envisioning Magic. A Princeton Seminar and Symposium* (SHR, 75; Leiden: Brill, 1997).

2. Such a dichotomous system of magic and religion seems to be a later, chiefly modern invention, even if there were some differentiations already in antiquity. Cf. J.N. Bremmer, 'The Birth of the Term "Magic"', *ZPE* 126 (1999): 1–12 (9–12); for further discussion see A.F. Segal, 'Hellenistic Magic: Some Questions of Definition', in R. van den Broek and M.J. Vermaseren (eds.), *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions* (FS G. Quispel; Leiden: Brill, 1981), pp. 349–75; A.F. Segal, 'On the Nature of Magic: A Report on a Dialogue between a Historian and a Sociologist', in L.M. White and O.L. Yarbrough (eds.), *The Social World of the First Christians* (Essays in Honor of W.A. Meeks; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1995), pp. 275–92; H. Remus, '"Magic or Miracle"? Some Second-Century Instances', *SecCen* 2 (1982): 127–56; Remus, '"Magic", Method, Madness', *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 11 (1999): 258–98; H.S. Versnel, 'Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic-Religion', *Numen* 38 (1991): 177–97; J. Braarvig, 'Magic: Reconsidering the Grand Dichotomy', in D.R. Jordan *et al.* (eds.), *World of Ancient Magic*, pp. 21–54; E. Thomassen, 'Is Magic a Subclass of Ritual?', in Jordan *et al.* (eds.), *World of Ancient Magic*, pp. 55–66.

3. For the biblical understanding cf. G. Delling, 'μάγος, μαγεία, μαγεύω', *ThWNT* 4, pp. 360–63; H. Balz, 'μάγος', *EWNT* 2, pp. 914–15; F.A.M. Wiggermann, H.-D. Betz *et al.*, 'Magic', RGG[4] 5, cols. 661–79; F. Wiggermann, I. Wandrey, F. Graf, S.I. Johnston, I. Toral-Niehoff, 'Magie, Magier', *DNP* 7, cols. 662–73; J.A. Scurlock, 'Magic', *ABD* 4, 464–71; C.H. Ratschow, R. Albertz, D. Harmening, 'Magie', *TRE* 21, pp. 686–701; D.E. Aune, 'Magic in Early Christianity', *ANRW* II.23.2, pp. 1507–57; M. Aubin, 'Beobachtungen zur Magie im Neuen Testament', *ZNT* 4/7 (2001): pp. 16–24. For a similar concern about the meaning of the New Testament usage of the μάγος-terminology see also the classic article of A.D. Nock, 'Paul and the Magus, in A.D. Nock, *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World* (selected and edited, with an Introduction, Bibliography of Nock's Writings, and Indexes, by Z. Stewart; Vol. 1; Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), pp. 308–30.

influential advances include not only the change in the thinking about 'magic' of the last years, which has led to a better understanding of the phenomena in antiquity with new texts, editions, and archaeological finds, but also the enormous advances in the social sciences. Major stages in this discussion can be outlined by its protagonists: beginning with the famous but – because of their dichotomous structure – problematical assessments of E.B. Tylor and J.G. Frazer, followed by the studies of É. Durkheim, M. Mauss, L. Lévy-Bruhl, M. Weber and W.J. Goode representing some transitions, up to the empirical models of B. Malinowski, A.R. Redcliffe-Brown, and E.E. Evans-Pritchard. The last stage mentioned already includes a critical tendency regarding universal definitions. Presently most of the earlier models are substituted by functionalistic paradigms related to ethnological and anthropological concepts.[4]

1. Μάγος – *The Background of the New Testament Terminology*

As already mentioned, research in the areas of history and philology has made great progress. Several points can give an impression of this improvement, even though they represent only a small selection of a much greater advance in the recent debate. To get a clearer notion of the relations to pagan and Hellenistic-Jewish support of the μάγος-terminology a TLG-search with some supplementary evidence is helpful. The following survey lists the number of references and places them together in different groups with rough outlines of their historical appearance.

μάγος-terminology[5]		μάγος κτλ.
Earlier than 200 BCE		~175
200 BCE – 125 CE	Pagan[6]	~195
	Early Jewish	~35
Later than 125 CE	Pagan/Christian (~1:3)	~2350

4. Cf. J. Middleton, 'Magic. Theories of Magic', *EncRel(E)* 9 (New York: Macmillan, 1987), pp. 82–89; D.L. O'Keefe, *Stolen Lightning. The Social Theory of Magic* (New York: Continuum, 1982); H.G. Kippenberg and B. Luchesi (eds.), *Magie. Die sozialwissenschaftliche Kontroverse über das Verstehen fremden Denkens* (stw, 674; Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1987 [first publ. 1978]); L. Petzoldt (ed.), *Magie und Religion: Beiträge zu einer Theorie der Magie* (WdF, 337; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1978). For the problems connecting theological perspectives with social science options see my proposals: 'Die "Magie"-Problematik der Antike: Genügt eine sozialwissenschaftliche Erfassung?' *ZRGG* 54 (2002), 1–22.

5. Without Latin evidence and excluding the eight references in the New Testament.

6. Including 104 references to different manuscripts of the *Historia Alexandri Magni*. This number influences the relationship between the categories. Possibly the actual number is much smaller.

But before going into detail on the meaning of this terminology we have to acknowledge a few aspects which limit the range of this survey. (a) The texts behind the numbers have many problems of interpretation (e.g. text-critical matters, the historical verification of traditions, problems of the sources), which I cannot treat here. Therefore the bare numbers seem to be problematic – but the overall relations and the main categories of understanding are still significant. (b) We now have access to an increasing number of archaeological finds and non-literary evidence, which raises many questions about the practices and their relationship to the practitioners – especially to the μάγοι and those characterized by other terms. This study cannot provide answers to these questions. And (c) customarily an investigation into terminology cannot be restricted to Greek-speaking antiquity. In nearly all other languages spoken in the eastern Mediterranean and the Ancient Near East we can find some lexemes which were connected with quite similar phenomena. Most interesting for our purpose, μάγος-terminology itself shows a broad expansion – not only in Greek, but also in Latin whereto the terminology was imported since the first century BCE. This corresponds to the expansion of the Roman Empire, but implies a complete reworking of the concept, because of the massive incorporation of juridical matters and categories, which before that time were only of marginal interest. Additionally, prediction of the future – especially by astrological means – sees in this time a hitherto-unknown expansion and the entire increase is connected with a social rise of the phenomenon in its different facets in the second century CE. All this had an enormous influence on later Christians and also on the development of our modern understanding of the term 'magic'. But even if we cannot stress enough the importance of this influence it is in the most part too late to influence the New Testament understanding.[7]

7. The statistical increase in the terminology especially from the fourth century onward is significant. It depends on several factors connecting the interests of the Roman emperors with the dominance of Christian belief. Cf. Fögen, *Enteignung*. Regarding the earlier development in the later republic and the time of the Caesars cf., besides the overview of Graf, *Magic*, pp. 36ff; esp. R. MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order: Treason, Unrest, and Alienation in the Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), pp. 95–162 (46–94); R. Garosi, 'Indagine sulla formazione del concetto di magia nella cultura romana', in *Magia: Studi di storia delle religioni in memoria di Raffaela Garosi* (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 1976), pp. 13–93; A.-M. Tupet, *Magie dans la poésie latine I. Des origines à la fin du règne d'Auguste* (Paris: Société d'Édition 'Les belles Lettres', 1976); A.-M. Tupet, 'Rites magiques dans l'Antiquité romaine', *ANRW* II.16.3, pp. 2591–675; J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979); D. Potter, *Prophets and Emperors: Human and Divine Authority from Augustus to Theodosius* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1994); J.-B. Clerc, *Homines Magici: Etude sur la sorcellerie et la*

a. *The Pagan Horizon*

For the formative period up to the Hellenistic era several aspects must be taken into account. While some studies try to follow 'magical' practices back to the archaic time, the 'birth' of a terminologically based concept marking a difference between legitimate and illegitimate phenomena seems not to occur until the fifth century BCE.[8] Already before that time a number of narratives were told (e.g. the famous story about Circe in Homer's *Odyssey* [10.135ff.])[9] and different words were used – some with quite critical implications. The literary evidence we have witnesses to phenomena which function either on a 'natural' basis – like herbal essences – or on the basis of a 'mythological' belief operating with the numinous power of gods and demigods. We also have some discussion about the abuse of such phenomena, even by the gods. But calling those phenomena 'protomagic'[10] does not really catch the point, although we can find some limiting of distinct practices before the rise of μάγος-terminology. Quite a few other words[11] – like γόης,[12]

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magie dans la société romaine impériale (EHS.G, 673; Bern: Peter Lang, 1995); H.G. Kippenberg, 'Magic in Roman Civil Discourse: Why Rituals could be Illegal', in Schäfer and Kippenberg (eds.), *Envisioning Magic*, pp. 137–63; F. Graf, 'Magic and Divination', in Jordan *et al.* (eds.), *World of Ancient Magic*, pp. 283–98; Dickie, *Magic*, pp. 124–250.

8. Cf. the different options of R. Gordon, 'Imagining Greek and Roman Magic', in Ankarloo and Clark (eds.), *Witchcraft*, pp. 159–275 (165, 178ff.), with those of Graf, *Magic*, pp. 33–35, and Dickie, *Magic*, pp. 27ff. Even if we can find a discussion on the power of herbal essences already in Homer, it seems to be correct, that in Greece no terminological basis for a concept we may call 'magic' – or 'religion' – existed in archaic times.

9. This 'discussion' at best is implicit; cf. Homer, *Od.* 1.261; 2.329f; 4.220ff.; 19.457 (ἐπαοιδή); *Iliad* 4.190f; 7.740f, 846f. Most of the phenomena are an integral part of the archaic understanding, which has seen no change before the rise of the democratic *poleis*. Cf. F. Graf, 'How to Cope with a Difficult Life: A View of Ancient Magic', in Schäfer, Kippenberg (eds.), *Envisioning Magic*, pp. 93–114 (109–10); F. Graf, 'Excluding the Charming: The Development of the Greek Concept of Magic', in Meyer and Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic*, pp. 29–42 (36–7).

10. Cf. H. Perry, *Thelxis: Magic and Imagination in Greek Myth and Poetry* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1992), pp. 8, 21.

11. On terminology in general cf. Dickie, *Magic*, pp. 12–17.

12. The lexeme γόης offers a significant change in the understanding from earliest beginnings to late antiquity. In the beginning the meaning is that of a singer of songs for the dead, who builds up a connection between this world and the other one. The γόης, his songs and conjurations stand in close relation to the early mystery-cults as well. But in late antiquity a γόης seems to be only a deceitful charlatan and 'disenchanted sorcerer'. This terminology is older (cf. Homer, *Il.* 21.124 and 22.353) than that of the μάγος but it is very seldom used in parallel with it (Aeschines 3.137 [but see also Gorgias, *Hel.* (B 11.10) in view of μαγεία and γοητεία]; cf. Zeno in Diodorus Siculus 5.55.3). For the term γόης see W. Burkert, 'GOHS: Zum griechischen "Schamanismus"', *RMP* 105 (1962), pp. 36–55; S.I. Johnston, *Restless Dead: Encounters Between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece*

ἀγύρτης,[13] μάντις,[14] φαρμακεύς and some others[15] – cover the range and characterize practitioners in the sectors of mantic healing and communication with supernatural elements. But on the whole it seems to be impossible to assign separate spheres of activity to the different terms or to extract a substance of 'magic'. For that reason, it seems too easy to look for only an isolated term, when attempting to appreciate the whole phenomenon of practices – but this is not my issue here.

On the other hand it also seems to be too easy to assume that the ancient Greeks already had a concept of 'magic' from the dawn of their culture onward. They rather developed the possibility to identify, criticize and discuss some phenomena. In the fifth century there seems to be a certain concentration and shaping of aspects, connected with the encounter with new cults and rites and the challenge of the traditional ones. This corresponds on the other hand with the political development, the influence of foreign practices accompanying the Persian conquest – including the rise of the μάγος-terminology.[16]

According to recent proposals on the usage of this terminology, two or, actually, three types of μάγοι can be isolated.

First, there is an almost neutral, ethnographic usage used primarily by the historians[17] describing authentic *magi*.[18] Prototypical of all other evidence in this category is Herodotus with more than 70 occurrences.[19] He gives various testimonies speaking of individuals and of *magi* as a

(Berkeley, Los Angeles, CA and London: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 102–23; Johnston, 'Songs for the Ghosts: Magical Solutions to Deadly Problems', in Jordan *et al.* (eds.), *World of Ancient Magic*, pp. 81–102 (92ff.).

13. An ἀγύρτης was connected with similar performances, which were later associated with the domain of the μάγοι (cf. Plato, *Resp.* 364bc). His work was a 'professionally' managed craft or business, and he was paid for his services. Cf. H.S. Versnel, *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion I: Ter unus. Isis, Dionysos, Hermes. Three Studies in Henotheism* (SGRR, 6 I, Leiden: Brill, 1990), p. 110 (incl. n. 58) and p. 117.

14. The lexeme μάντις underwent certain changes too. In the pre-classical period a μάντις was a highly esteemed courtly institution, whereas the democratic *polis* did not rely on his talents any more. Cf. J.N. Bremmer, 'Prophets, Seers, and Politics in Greece, Israel, and Early Modern Europe', *Numen* 40 (1993): 150–83 (151–59); A. Karp, 'Prophecy and Divination in Archaic Greek Literature', in: Berchman (ed.), *Mediators*, pp. 9–44.

15. Cf. for example the lexeme θελξις (see Perry, *Thelxis*) or different words for amulets, enchantments and other rites.

16. Cf. Dickie, *Magic*, pp. 27ff.

17. Besides Herodotus see Ctesias and Xenophon – and later on Polybius, Diodorus Siculus and Strabo.

18. Cf. C. Colpe, *Iranier – Aramäer – Hebräer – Hellenen: Iranische Religionen und ihre Westbeziehungen* (WUNT, 154; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), pp. 448–54, 634–48.

19. Perhaps Xanthos of Lydia presents in his Lydian history the oldest Greek references. But the fragments (FGrH 765 F 31f.) connecting the μάγοι with incest and wife-swapping and also with the heredity of Zarathustra have many problems not to be discussed here. Cf. L. Pearson, *Early Ionian Historians*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1939), pp. 117–20; de Jong,

Median tribe.[20] He also makes a distinction between the usual priests and the *magi*.[21] But in sum his *magi* can be identified by their practices as religious specialists. Xenophon brings this to the point when he characterizes them as οἱ περὶ τοὺς θεοὺς τεχνῖται.[22] Interpreting dreams and signs,[23] sacrificing – even human victims – and singing incantations and theogonic songs[24] the *magi* are associated with different practices including funeral rites[25] and weather-'magic'.[26] All that seems for Herodotus the typical behaviour of the *magi* – and by calling them μάγοι he lays the foundation for the Greek understanding. But besides their duties as priests, several texts also give witness to a strong political accent.[27] Some of the *magi* were close consultants of the Persian kings, belonging to the retinue of their court, or they were members of local government. Remarkably a number of prominent *magi* were thought to be involved in intrigues.[28] This aspect is important in view of the integration and adaptation of the *magi* to Greek language and thought (cf. also Sophocles, *Oed. tyr.* 387).

Secondly we have evidence for pejorative characterizations in three different subgroups. Quite a few of these references seem to be almost as old as the earliest references of the authentic *magi*, but in total this usage represents already a development of the terminology. A certain difference is located in the fact that these references are related to phenomena not supposed to be genuine Persian, but Greek. In the first subgroup most of the references to μάγοι seem to be connected with private cults and religious practices.

Traditions; P. Kingsley, 'Meeting with Magi: Iranian Themes among the Greeks, from Xanthus of Lydia to Plato's Academy', *JRAS* III 5 (1995): 173–209; Bremmer, 'Birth', pp. 4–5.

20. *Hist.* 1.101; cf. de Jong, *Traditions*, pp. 387–413, esp. 391–92.

21. *Hist.* 1.131f.; cf. de Jong, *Traditions*, pp. 76–120; on the priesthood of the *magi* cf. pp. 387ff.

22. *Cyr.* 8.3.11.

23. Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.107–108, 120, 128; 7.19, 37 (cf. de Jong, *Traditions*, pp. 396–99); Xenophon, *Cyr.* 4.5, 51.

24. Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.132, 140; 7.43, 113–14. (In this part the offering is characterized as φαρμακεύσαντες! Cf. Bremmer, 'Birth', p. 7; Dickie, *Magic*, pp. 33–34); Xenophon, *Cyr.* 4.6.11; 5.3. 4; 7.3.1; 5.57; 8.1.23–24, 3.11.24. See also D. Jong, *Traditions*, pp. 399–402.

25. Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.140.

26. Herodotus, *Hist.* 7.191.

27. Cf. Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.61–80, 88, 118, 126, 140, 150, 153; 4.132; Xenophon, *Cyr.* 4.5.14; 7.5.35.

28. Some figures can be isolated on the literal level. Besides the *magi* in Herodotus (esp. in book 3) and Ctesias (F 13) cf. Aeschylus, *Pers.* 318, where an Arab commander of the Persian army with the name '*magos*' is mentioned; cf. R. Schmitt, *Die Iranier-Namen bei Aischylos* (SÖAW.PH, 337; Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1978), pp. 38–39; see also Bremmer, 'Birth', pp. 3–4. Cf. also the Behistun inscription, which confirms a historical basis of this reproach.

The most famous, but difficult, reference for the first subgroup is a fragmentary saying of Heraclitus handed down by Clement of Alexandria: τίσι δὴ μαντεύεται Ἡράκλειτος ὁ Ἐφέσιος; νυκτιπόλοις, μάγοις, βάκχοις, λήναις, μύσταις· τούτοις ἀπειλεῖ τὰ μετὰ θάνατον, τούτοις μαντεύεται τὸ πῦρ· τὰ γὰρ νομιζόμενα κατ' ἀνθρώπους μυστήρια ἀνιερωστὶ μυοῦνται.[29] The phenomena criticized by Heraclitus through the different expressions lead neither to a unified picture of that people nor of each group in itself. But in connection with other traditions we get some hint of the private rituals and 'spirituality' of Dionysiac-Bacchic mysteries. Certainly the vocabulary used does not seem to be an invention of Clement[30] and it already implies a strong polemical and pejorative accent, even if the characterization as 'magicians' in a modern sense is not adequate. Perhaps we can find some allusion to the itinerant 'priests' offering rituals – e.g. private cathartic rites and *defixiones* – a bit later on also connected with the ἀγύρται and γοηταί.[31] We discover here a broader development of the terminology that elucidates the needs of the times.[32] There was a strong interest in private rites even if the discussion still remains a conflict in marginal parts of society.

In this first subgroup it is not quite clear who the opponents of the μάγοι were. Certainly, some of them were classified as deviant in the eyes of some inhabitants of the *polis*, but there are other issues. Thus, different factors join together and facilitate the integration of the terminology: a struggle between ideologically marginalized people; certain changes in society, including the political structures; a rhetorical marginalization by the well-known phenomenon of criticizing a practice by identifying the

29. *Protr.* 22.2 (DK 22 B 14); cf. Bremmer, 'Birth', pp. 2–3; Graf, *Magic*, p. 21 with n. 9; Dickie, *Magic*, pp. 28–29.

30. Against K.J. Rigsby, 'Teiresias as Magus in *Oedipus Rex*', *GRBS* 17 (1976), pp. 109–14 (110); cf. the discussion with further references in Bremmer, 'Birth', pp. 2–3.

31. In a similar direction leads the proof in the Hippocratic document *de Morbo Sacro* (1.23), because there the μάγοι are placed on the same level as the καθαρταί, ἀγύρται and ἀλαζόνες (cf. also Sophocles, *Oed. tyr.* 387). They are altogether criticized because of calling this disease 'holy' and not using a causal–analytical, non-metaphysical explanation. In the view of the author this disqualifies those persons as charlatans. Cf. to this text G.E.R. Lloyd, *Magic, Reason and Experience. Studies in the Origin and Development of Greek Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 15ff.; Braarvig, 'Magic', pp. 37–40; Graf, 'Excluding', pp. 38–39; Bremmer, 'Birth', pp. 3–4.

32. Cf. also the Derveni papyrus (esp. cols. VI and XX; on the papyrus and its interpretation see the collection: A. Laks and G.W. Most [eds.], *Studies on the Derveni Papyrus* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1997]); cf. the pleading on the importance of this document by Bremmer, 'Birth', pp. 7–8. See also W. Burkert, 'Craft versus Sect. The Problem of Orphics and Pythagoreans', in B.F. Meyer and E.P. Sanders (eds.), *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition 3: Self-Definition in the Greco-Roman World* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress 1983), pp. 1–22, 183–89 (3–12).

practitioner with the eminent but enigmatic specialists of the political enemy[33] – but even these explanations are still not sufficient.

Let us turn to the references of a second subgroup. They chiefly originate from Attic tragedy. Based on a remark of Photius, Jan Bremmer has offered the proposal that we can find there the origin of the first conception of 'magic'. Identifying a negative type in the Attic tragedy, he interprets the evidence mainly as a reaction to the spreading influence of itinerant μάγοι in fifth-century Ionia and criticism of them in Athens a little later.[34] Even if the evidence for that argument is small,[35] the references in Euripides can confirm a development from an unspecific critique of itinerant priests to a rhetorically sound usage of the lexeme, as a label denouncing different practices, not only as not legitimate, but also using the term as an identity marker of typical behaviour.[36]

Essential for change is linguistic development as well. One of the main steps in the direction of a concise concept is related to the formation of derivates of μάγος-terminology: the nouns μαγεία[37] and μαγεύμα,[38] the adjective μαγικός[39] and the verb μαγεύω.[40] This implies an autonomous terminological reality, which could be used to characterize a number of very different phenomena (ritual, medical,

33. Cf. the proposal of Graf, *Magic*, p. 29, and the critique by Bremmer, 'Birth', pp. 6–7. Bremmer seems to be quite right in supposing a very ambivalent relationship between Greek and Persian culture in the fifth century. Cf. E. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989) and M.C. Miller, *Athens and Persia in the Fifth Century BC: A Study in Cultural Receptivity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

34. 'Birth', pp. 3–4, 6, 8–9. On Athenian religion, the dissatisfaction with classical religion and the growing interest in private cults, see R. Parker, *Athenian Religion: A History* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996); R. Garland, *Introducing New Gods: The Politics of Athenian Religion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).

35. Besides a discussion on a few fragments (cf. Bremmer, 'Birth', pp. 3–4), we only have the early, but difficult evidence in Aeschylus, *Pers.* 318 (cf. n. 28), Sophocles, *Oed. tyr.* 387, and three records of the late Euripides, *Orest.* 1497b; *Suppl.* 1110 and *Iph. taur.* 1338.

36. Cf. the phrase μάγων τέχναι in Euripides, *Orest.* 1497b; see also Sophocles, *Oed. tyr.* 387–89 and Plato, *Pol.* 280c.

37. For the abstract μαγεία Gorgias' Helena (B 11.10) counts as the earliest proof (cf. Nock, 'Paul', p. 309). The usage is indirect, because it is set in analogy with rhetorical means. But Gorgias offers in the larger context almost the whole arsenal of 'magical' terminology: besides γοητεία see also the lexemes ἐπῳδή, ἐπαγωγή, τέχνη and θέλγειν, to strengthen his point. Rhetoric is seen as a similar means of bewitchment as manipulative μαγεία. Both are not identified with each other, but they are set in parallel. Therefore we have a metaphorical usage of μαγεία with a negative connotation. Cf. Ch.P. Segal, 'Gorgias and the Psychology of the Logos', *HSCP* 66 (1962): 99–155; W.J. Verdenius, 'Gorgias' Doctrine of Deception', *Hermes* 44 (1981), pp. 116–28; Braarvig, 'Magic', pp. 35–37; Graf, 'Excluding', p. 34; Graf, *Magic*, p. 26.

38. Hippocrates, *Morb. sacr.* 18.19 (varia lectio: μαγείης); Euripides, *Suppl.* 1110.

39. Plato, *Pol.* 280e (μαγευτική); Aristoteles in Diogenes Laertius 1.8.

40. Ctesias, F 17; Hippocrates, *Morb. sacr.* 1.60,76; Euripides, *Iph. taur.* 1338 (part.).

rhetorical and even political matters) as deviant.[41] Even if a limited connection with the *magi* and their practices cannot be excluded *a priori*, μαγεία and μαγεύειν do not refer to their practices, but to those people whom the Greeks called μάγοι.[42] The difference in the usage of the derivate μαγεία is obvious, because there is no equally neutral connotation as with the μάγος in the ethnographical sense until the *Papyri Graecae Magicae*.[43]

Finally we have to look at a last subgroup with some occurrences in the context of philosophical and political matters. Plato[44] uses the lexeme twice: (a) in the context of a certain critique of an illegitimate influence on the youth by lawless education (*Resp.* 572e),[45] and (b) in the context of skills and techniques, where he excludes 'magical' practices (*Pol.* 280e).[46] This negative view in the context of doing harm to one's neighbours through the employment of a professional implies a criminalization of the practices.[47] That seems to summarize the average standards and rules of the Greek *poleis* against malign 'magic'. But the evidence in this area regarding the μάγος-terminology is relatively sparse, possibly because the majority agree with that opinion. This is also a good example for the comment already offered that it is not sufficient to examine only one lexeme. Most interesting, in view of this usage of the term μάγος, is that several philosophers a bit later bear witness to another and different usage of the word.

41. With Fritz Graf we can resume: 'Magie, bisher integraler Teil der religiösen Tradition, wird ausgeschieden und negativ bewertet.' (only in the German edition: *Gottesnähe*, 31).

42. With the only exception of Ctesias, F 17.

43. Against R. Beck, 'Thus Spake not Zarathuštra: Zoroastrian Pseudepigrapha of the Greco Roman World', in M. Boyce and F. Grenet (eds.), *A History of Zoroastrianism* III: *Zoroastrianism under Macedonian and Roman Rule* (HO, I 8.1.2.2; Leiden: Brill, 1991), pp. 491–565 (512–13). For references see *PGM* I.127; IV.2319, 2449, 2454; cf. *PGM* I.331; IV.210, 243, 2081, 2290; LXIII.4 (?).

44. Cf. Bremmer, 'Birth', p. 4. On Plato see A. Motte, 'À propos de la magie chez Platon: L'antithèse sophiste-philosophe vue sous l'angle de la pharmacie et de la sorcellerie', in Moreau and J.-C. Turpin (eds.), *La Magie*, Vol. 1, pp. 267–92; T.J. Saunders, *Plato's Penal Code: Tradition, Controversy, and Reform in Greek Penology* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991); E.A. Wyller, 'Platons Gesetz gegen die Gottesleugner. Nomoi 10, 907D-909D', *Hermes* 85 (1957): 292–314. See also O. Reverdin, *La religion de la cité Platonicienne*, (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1945); É. des Places, A. Diès and L. Gernet (eds.), *Platon. Œuvres complète*, XI: *Les Lois*; Paris: Société d'Édition 'Les belles Lettres', 1951), pp. XCIVff. (CXCIV).

45. In a similar direction leads the denouncing of Demosthenes as μάγος καὶ γόης by Aeschines (3.137); cf. Bremmer, 'Birth', p. 4.

46. Cf. Theophastus, 9.15.7. See also *Ax.* 371a, where Ps.-Plato speaks of Gobryas as ἀνὴρ μάγος in a quite neutral way, using the ethnographic sense of the lexeme.

47. Cf. additionally Plato, *Leg.* 909a–b; 932e–933e; *Resp.* 364b–c. The main point of Plato's critique seems to be that the 'magicians' miss the true worship, because they do not want to adore the gods, but to persuade them.

This represents a third type, which is correlated either to the pejorative characterizations of the μάγοι and also to the, for the most part neutral, view of the 'authentic' *magi*.[48] On the one hand these writers want to establish an alternative to the practice of the μάγοι. But they also suggest that the authors are familiar with some of the *magi* – or possibly more correctly – with an idea or conception of them.[49] The aim of these references is to show that the prejudices against the *magi* are wrong and that therefore an identification of them with the μάγοι in the sense of 'magicians' is mistaken. Therefore, the texts provide evidence of an apologetic and anti-critical understanding in the early Hellenistic period.[50] They reflect a tendency to stress positive aspects of the *magi* and to regard them as separate from the abusive meaning of the term μάγος. But it is striking, that even texts like Ps.-Plato, *Alc.* 1.122a and the Aristotelian Fragment 36 (Diogenes Laertius 1.8)[51] implicitly confirm a pejorative connotation of the word μαγεία. Because saying that it is not μαγεία but θεῶν θεραπεία that the *magi* teach, or that they do not know γοητικὴν μαγείαν,[52] implies a negative meaning for μαγεια.

Whether we can go one step further by associating some of the most polymorphic characters of that early period – like Epimenides,[53] Pythagoras[54] and Empedocles[55] – with those characterizations, is the

48. Cf. Ps.-Plato, *Alc.* 1.122a; Aristotle (*Metaph.* 1091b; F 6 Rose), and the fragmentary evidence of Eudoxus, Heraclides Ponticus and Dinon. Cf. Bremmer, 'Birth', pp. 5–6.

49. A social basis for this reaction may be seen in the experience of some *magi*, their wisdom and a pedagogical practice after the defeat of the Persian Empire. But perhaps this is only, or for the most part, a fictitious construction, like the attempts to connect famous philosophers and wise men with *magi* as their teachers. Perhaps we can observe here the beginning of a stylization of the *magi* as 'wise men', which increases until the end of antiquity and leads in Hellenistic and Roman times to models of the history of 'magic' beginning with its invention in Persia by Zoroaster, Ostanes and Hystaspes (cf. Pliny the Elder, *Nat. Hist.* 30.1ff, and the earlier evidence of Ps.Plato, Aristotle and Dinon). Cf. F. Graf, S.I. Johnston, 'Magie, Magier III. Griechenland und Rom', *DNP* 7 (1999), pp. 662–72 (662).

50. Graf, *Magic*, p. 29.

51. The claim by Diogenes Laertius that Aristotle had written a *Magica* is problematic, because the Suda attributes this work to Antisthenes.

52. On the lectio varia: γοητικὴν μαντείαν see de Jong, *Traditions*, pp. 221–22.

53. Cf. B 10 = Plutarch, *Solon* 12; cf. W. Burkert, 'Itinerant Diviners and Magicians: A Neglected Element in Cultural Contacts', in R. Hägg (ed.), *The Greek Renaissance of the Eighth Century B.C.: Tradition and Innovation* (Skifter utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Athen, 4. Ser. 30; Stockholm: Paul Åströms Förlag, 1983), pp. 115–20 (115–16).

54. W. Burkert (*Weisheit und Wissenschaft: Studien zu Pythagoras, Philolaos und Platon* [Erlanger Beiträge zur Sprach- und Kunstwissenschaft, 10; Nürnberg: Hans Carl, 1962], pp. 113–23, [122–23]) classifies the legends of Pythagoras (see esp. Aristotle, *Fr.* 191 [Rose]) among the earliest parts of his tradition; cf. M.L. West, *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), pp. 213–18, 229–31.

55. Cf. the citation of Satyros mentioning Gorgias, who as disciple of Empedocles had seen him working charms/miracles (γοητεύειν) in Diogenes Laertius 8.59, and the episode about the ἄπνους in Diogenes Laertius 8.61; cf. B 111–12, 146, A 1 and 156; see M.R.

subject of a very subtle discussion.[56] One of the main problems with these identifications is the historical reliability of the material connecting these people with the μάγοι/*magi*. In general only authors of late antiquity such as Pliny the Elder, Apuleius, Philostratus, Diogenes Laertius and Porphyry have handed down the traditions.[57] Even if there are still many questions regarding the trustworthiness of the majority of these traditions and the meaning of these characterizations is left open, it is interesting, in view of the New Testament and its religious environment, that these characters undergo a revival in the first to third centuries CE. This phenomenon is linked with the development of secret sciences in the Hellenistic period and it is also connected with the name of Bolos of Mendes in the contemporary literature. He stands only as *pars pro toto* for a much greater innovation, which is related to Neopythagorean and Neoplatonic circles and the internationalization of the phenomena later on.[58]

If we look for further evidence of the term μάγος in the Hellenistic and early Roman era, we find some special developments. Besides the general trend confirming a great interest in learned religion or religious expertise from the East we have to stress the internationalization of the phenomena at large. But it seems quite correct to emphasize the early evidence, as the classical literature was nevertheless in use in later times because of the Atticist tendencies. The opinions of the old were held in high esteem. And therefore it is no wonder that the categories and the evaluations of the classical period were still very effective. The historians up to Polybius, Diodorus Siculus and Strabo use the term μάγος much like their former colleagues as an ethnographically coined lexeme. This corresponds to the fact that *magi* functions as an official title until Sassanid times.[59] The

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Wright, *Empedocles: The Extant Fragments*, Yale 1981 (extended version: London and Indianapolis, IN: Bristol Classical Press, 1995); A. Chitwood, 'The Death of Empedocles', *AJP* 107 (1986): 175–91; Braarvig, 'Magic', pp. 31–35; Johnston, 'Songs', p. 93; West, *Early Greek Philosophy*, pp. 233–35.

56. Cf. the studies of Burkert (*Weisheit*, pp. 86ff. [and especially for the connection to the Orphics, pp. 98ff.]; and 'Craft').

57. In his *Metaphysica* (1091b) Aristotle parallels already an opinion of Pherecydes – and also of Empedocles and Anaxagoras – with that of the *magi*, but he does not link them together. Theopompus (F 64a.65) and Eudemus (F 89.150) cite convictions of the *magi* too.

58. For Bolos see J.H. Waszink, 'Bolos (demokriteische Literatur)', *RAC* 2, pp. 502–508; W. Burkert, 'Hellenistische Pseudopythagorica', *Ph.* 105 (1961): 16–43, 226–46 (232ff.); P. Kingsley, 'From Pythagoras to the *turba philosophorum*: Egypt and Pythagorean Tradition', *JWCI* 57 (1994): 1–13; P. Kingsley, *Ancient Philosophy*, pp. 298–99, 325–28, 335–47; R. Gordon, '*Quaedam veritatis umbrae*: Hellenistic Magic and Astrology', in P. Bilde *et al.* (eds.), *Conventional Values of the Hellenistic Greeks* (Aarhus: University Press, 1997), pp. 128–58 (134–39); M.W. Dickie, 'The Learned Magician and the Collection and Transmission of Magical Lore', in Jordan *et al.* (eds.), *World of Ancient Magic*, pp. 163–93 (177–89).

59. Cf. Nock, 'Paul', p. 309.

separation of the *magi* from their Persian roots seems to be something new in the historical context, because we have several hints for wandering *magi* in Asia Minor in Greek texts, especially Strabo. This seems to be the only reliable basis for the 'Hellenized Magi'. On the other hand, this concept, especially the connection with a corpus of Zoroastrian pseudepigrapha, requires critical reading, because of its fictional character.[60]

What really is a bit puzzling is that the pejorative aspect seems to be almost entirely abandoned in the textual evidence at that time.[61] This could be due to the pure state of preservation of the texts of this period; nevertheless the later Hellenistic era is among the most 'enlightened' periods of antiquity. But it is obvious, that during the entire period of antiquity the pejorative connotation never displaced the ethnographic expression, even if that expression itself saw a lot of change. Thus the ambiguity of the Greek word μάγος is one of the most evident concomitant facts of the phenomenon 'magic' in late antiquity. Its image was in no way homogeneous and was therefore very flexible, because it was built up from different aspects. For our ears the negative connotations often seem dominant, but this is only one of the facets and it is a judgement from an external position – even in antiquity. The cause for the social devaluation can be seen in those phenomena, which are usually collected under the title malign 'magic'. But this critique is not at all the general opinion of pagan antiquity and the pejorative overtones reveal the popular usage of the term. There was always a pluralistic usage[62] of the word μάγος – not so of μαγεία – and in Roman times this ambiguity was even exploited as a defence against accusations of 'magic'.[63]

b. *The Jewish Perspective*

Many things could be said about Jewish conceptions and Hebrew terminologies connected with 'magic', but again I want to focus on the interpretation of the μάγος-terminology. A survey of the evidence reveals

60. Cf. esp. the study of De Jong, *Traditions*, *passim*; on Zarathushtra see now M. Stausberg, *Die Religion Zarathushtras: Geschichte – Gegenwart – Rituale*, vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2002).

61. Besides some early Hellenistic traditions (cf. Aeschines; Aristoxenus; Python; Theophrast) and the Jewish evidence only a few exceptions exist; cf. Andronicus Rhodius, Pass. 5.1 (= Chrysipp, *Fragmenta moralia*, F 401); see also Aesop, *Fabula* on the γυνὴ μάγος (K. Halm, *Fabulae Aesopicae Collectae* [Leipzig: Teubner, 1863], p. 112; A. Hausrath, *Aesopische Fabeln* [München: Heimeran, 1940], p. 56), which is difficult to date; cf. Bremmer, 'Birth', p. 5.

62. Cf. Graf, *Magic*, p. 29; Nock, 'Paul', pp. 323–24.

63. Cf. the Apology of Apuleius (25.6ff.; cf. A. Abt, *Die Apologie des Apuleius von Madaura und die antike Zauberei* [RVV, 40/2; Gießen: Töpelmann, 1908], pp. 106ff.); cf. also Apollonios of Tyana, *Ep.* 16f.

that, with the exception of some fragmentary texts,[64] we only have references from our main sources: the Septuagint[65] and the versions,[66] Philo[67] and Josephus.[68]

These references can be sorted into two main categories: on the one side we have a number of general or systematic statements, particularly in the form of vice-catalogues, and on the other side we have characterizations of people and historical events: a part of this material looks like the ethnographic tradition, but most of the evidence represents a negative qualification of a person or situation identified with that label.

To begin with the second category, the terminology is used for the qualification of some of the best-known events of Jewish history: the 'magicians' of Pharaoh, Balaam and the 'magicians' at the royal court of Babylon connected with the Daniel tradition.

(a) The 'magicians' of Pharaoh get a negative qualification throughout Jewish literature, but only Philo calls them – almost in a pejorative sense – 'σοφισταί' and 'μάγοι' (*Mos.* 1.92). Slightly different is the second reference in *T. Reub.* 4.9. There we get a description of the encounter of Joseph and the Egyptian woman and her failure to win his love. Therefore, it is said, she uses φάρμακα and the help of μάγοι. And according to Josephus (*Ant.* 2.284, 286; cf. 2.320) Moses' works surpass the 'μαγεία' of the Egyptian priests so far as things divine are remote from what is human. The last reference in Wis. 17.7 mentions that the deception of the 'μαγικῇ τέχνῃ' had ceased at the time of the exodus.

(b) Although he did not curse Israel, Balaam seems to be one of the most ambiguous figures in the whole of biblical and Jewish history. He is therefore also called a 'μάγος' by Philo. But Philo opens a quite interesting alternative, stating that a really inspired prophet is possessed by the holy spirit, which makes it impossible for Balaam to act at the moment of his blessing as he normally would: with magical sophistication 'μαγικὴ σοφιστεία' (*Mos.* 1.276f.).

(c) Already in the Daniel tradition of the Septuagint (Dan. 2.2,10) and more frequently in the version of Theodotion (Dan. 1.20; 2.2, 10, 27; 4.4; 5.7, 11, 15) some μάγοι are mentioned as honourable Babylonians. Although there exists a latent competition and they

64. *Jub.* 4.15 (μαγεία); *Mart. Isa.* 2.5 (μαγεία); *Ps.-Phoc.* 149 (μαγικός); *T. Reub.* 4.9 (μάγος).

65. LXX: Wis. 17.7 (μαγικός); Dan. 2.2, 10 (μάγος).

66. Theodotion-LXX Dan 1.20; 2.2, 10, 27; 4.4; 5.7, 11, 15 (μάγος).

67. *Mos.* 1.92, 276 (μάγος), 277 (μαγικός); *Spec. Leg.* 3.93, Philo, 100 (μάγος), 100 (μαγικός); *Prob.* 74 (μάγος).

68. Josephus, *Ant.* 2.284, 286 (μαγεία); 10.195, 198 (2x), 199 (2x), 203, 216, 234-36; 11.31; 20.142 (μάγος).

always fail in their attempt to interpret the dreams of the king, no absolute devaluation is given. The same can be seen in Josephus: the μάγοι of his tradition – who should be experts in interpreting the future by dreams – are not dangerous: they are just incompetent (*Ant.* 10.195, 198 [2x], 199 [2x], 203, 216, 234–36).[69]

(d) We only have one text in which a contemporary person is called a μάγος. In his *Antiquities* (20.142) Josephus speaks very briefly of a Jew from Cyprus named Atomos, who acts in the name of Felix wooing for his bride Drusilla and claiming to be a μάγος.

On the other side we have some more systematically structured statements in vice-catalogues[70] such as *Ps.-Phoc.* 145–52 (where in 149 μαγικὰ βίβλα are mentioned) and *Mart. Isa.* 2.5. These texts are typical of the pagan, Jewish and Christian way of giving ethical advice. Interestingly, it seems that in all of these catalogues, and in some external statements,[71] μαγεία and the art of φαρμακεία are paralleled. This is valid also for some Christian texts like *Did.* 2.2; 5.1 and *Barn.* 20.1, whereas the texts in the New Testament (Gal. 5.19-21; Rev. 9.21; 21.8 and 22.15) only talk about φαρμακεία. The usage in the catalogues is remarkable, because it gives evidence not only of the negative character and connotations of these lexemes, but also of the existence of a concept of limitation of deviant behaviour in analogy with the pagan context.

Most interesting is the mention of the Persian *magi* by Philo (*Spec. Leg.* 3.93,100 [2x]; *Prob.* 74), because on the one hand he criticizes the μάγοι καί φαρμακευταί, for their calculated murder (*Spec. Leg.* 3.93), but on the other hand he stresses their scientific concern and their interest in the truth – especially of nature (*Spec. Leg.* 3.100; *Prob.* 74). He also makes a difference between real 'magical' visionary understanding and the deformation of the quacks, which reminds some of the Platonic differentiation and the Stoic understanding of the ὀπτικὴ ἐπιστήμη.[72] Therefore we can add Philo to those philosophers defending the art of the *magi*, but we do not get from this text any idea of what reality lies behind those statements about the *magi* in the days of Philo. By the way, Philo seems to be the Jewish author most familiar with the phenomena: he is acquainted with the ambiguity of the terminology and the difference between μάγοι and *magi*, and he does not condone the usage of μαγεία.

69. In Josephus, *Ant.* 11.31 we are also told about the killing of the *magi* and the end of their reign, a topic some pagan historians discuss.

70. Cf. S. Wibbing, *Die Tugend- und Lasterkataloge im Neuen Testament und ihre Traditionsgeschichte unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Qumran-Texte* (BZNW 25, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1959).

71. Cf. *T. Reub.* 4.9; *Jub.* (gr. Frag.) 4.15; Philo, *Spec. Leg.* 3.93.

72. Cf. G. Veltri, *Magie und Halakha: Ansätze zu einem empirischen Wissenschaftsbegriff im spätantiken und frühmittelalterlichen Judentum* (TSAJ, 62, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), pp. 60–62.

2. *The Evidence of the New Testament – Some Remarks and Conclusions*

If we now turn to the New Testament and the evidence there, the first observation is the paucity of proofs. At first glance this surprises us. In all 27 documents of the New Testament we find only eight proofs in three special text-units – always characterizing persons and their behaviour. This is perplexing because of the relevance of the concept in later Christian and also modern discussion. These three texts are: the famous story about the μάγοι from the East adoring the child at Bethlehem in Matthew 2, the equally famous account of Simon, who obtains the surname 'Magus' (but not in the New Testament), in Acts 8; and the story about the clash of Paul and Barjesus Elymas in Cyprus in Acts 13. In Matthew 2 and Acts 13 there are six occurrences of the noun 'μάγος', and in Acts 8 we find as a *hapax legomena* on the participle of the verb μαγεύω and the noun μαγεία characterizing the former and current behaviour of Simon. Decisively we do not have any other occurrences of a verbal clause or an adjective at all.

Even if we should not overemphasize the absence of this vocabulary,[73] it seems to be significant, that we do not have a unified usage of it in the New Testament. According to the majority of scholars Matthew's Gospel and Acts differ in their connotations, because Matthew's μάγοι seem to have a distinctly more positive appearance than Luke's.[74] But there is no broadly accepted differentiation and no clear-cut consensus about what either meant by using these words.

Above all there are a lot of remarkable questions, which raise many more problems: Are Matthew's μάγοι astrologers? Is Bar-Jesus Elymas a magician? ... Even though these and other queries are interesting, we have to realize, that historical or ontological identifications are very knotty. The texts in antiquity would not give an easy answer to questions like these, because their semantics follow another kind of logic. The lexemes are not like terms, which relate to a quite precise semantic connotation. We have already seen that the terms in most occurrences are used as labels to characterize not an individual but a certain type. This has to be taken into consideration when we ask, how the usage in the New Testament fits in with the overall development of the terminology. And because of the

73. There are some other terms like φαρμακεία etc. used in the New Testament functioning to keep a critical distance from those practices thought illegitimate; cf. Rev. 18.23 and especially the vice-catalogues: Gal. 5.20; Rev. 9.20; 21.8; 22.15. Cf. also 2 Tim. 3.13: γόης.

74. Cf. especially J.M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic and the Synoptic Tradition* (SBT 2/28; London: SCM Press, 1974), p. 126; Nock, 'Paul', p. 324 with n. 90.

limitations of space, I have to restrict my discussion to some hints, especially on the level of the redaction of these texts.

a. *Matthew's* μάγοι ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν[75]

The μάγοι are introduced by Matthew as μάγοι ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν. They are heathens,[76] but the, not very precise location, suggests that it is not important where they really come from. They can give expensive gifts with highly symbolic implications, but it is never said that they are kings. They are qualified only by their observation of a miraculous star. This designates them, in the context of the Greek and Jewish evidence, as those who have access to astronomical knowledge. Even if that seems not to be completely sound, as the μάγοι are connected with the interpretation of dreams and signs, but they are not renowned for their astronomical wisdom (like the Chaldeans), it seems to fit with a trend in Hellenism that allows an exchange of the attributes of the religious specialists from the East.[77] Those people are also involved in the prediction of the future at the birth of kings.[78]

But it is not quite clear, whether Matthew wants his readers to understand those μάγοι as wise men and ideal-types of understanding.[79] The social and religious background of Matthew's community does not coincide with a purely positive picture of μάγοι, and Matthew usually tries to reduce the 'magical' aspects he received from his tradition.[80] But

75. For a detailed analysis of Mt. 2.1-12 including the *Wirkungsgeschichte* see the commentaries, esp. U. Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (Matthäus 1-7) (EKKNT, I.1; Düsseldorf etc.: Benziger and Neukirchener Verlag, 5th edn, 2002), pp. 156–78 (Lit.!); cf. also Hull, *Hellenistic Magic*, pp. 122–28; M. Hengel and H. Merkel, 'Die Magier aus dem Osten und die Flucht nach Ägypten (Mt 2) im Rahmen der antiken Religionsgeschichte und der Theologie des Matthäus', in P. Hoffmann *et al.* (eds.), *Orientierung an Jesus. Zur Theologie der Synoptiker* (FS J. Schmid; Freiburg etc.: Herder, 1973), pp. 139–69; M.A. Powell, 'The Magi as Wise Men: Re-examining a Basic Supposition', *NTS* 46 (2000): 1–20.

76. Cf. Hengel and Merkel, 'Magier', p. 144. Most interesting seem to be the diffuse analogies with the tradition of Balaam: Num. 23.7 (LXX): ἀπ' ἀνατολῶν; Num. 24.17: the star; Philo, *Mos.* 1.276f: Balaam is called a μάγος. But there are also differences, which should not be neglected – in particular that the μάγοι are not acting against their will. Cf. Luz, *Matthäus*, p. 161; Hull, *Hellenistic Magic*, pp. 124–26; Hengel and Merkel, 'Magier', pp. 144–45.

77. Cf. e.g. the connections between *magi* and the gymnosophists or the Egyptians in Diogenes Laertius 1.8–9; 9.61.

78. Cf. Cicero, *Div.* 1.47; see also Suetonius, *Aug.* 94.5; *Tib.* 14.2; and the prediction of the birth of Moses in Josephus, *Ant.* 2.205f. Cf. Hengel and Merkel, 'Magier', p. 151 n. 54.

79. Cf. the critical assessment by M.A. Powell ('Magi'). His argument seems to overshoot the mark, because the μάγοι of Matthew appear as neither wise men nor 'magicians' and an argument with Mt. 11.25, which characterizes the μάγοι as fools, is inadequate; cf. Luz, *Matthäus*, p. 172 n. 88.

80. Cf. Hull's characterization of the Gospel of Matthew as 'The tradition purified of magic' (*Hellenistic Magic*, p. 116).

nor can we find any explicit criticism of the μάγοι. Therefore it seems to be quite correct to associate them with the common ethnographical meaning and its erosion in Hellenistic times. They seem to be some authority – but of a foreign and exotic kind, which does not fit into the usual patterns of Jewish and early Christian convictions.

Only if we take a more serious look can we observe a subtle critique: the μάγοι have to ask in Jerusalem for the king of the Jews (v. 2). They really do not know him. And they also have no idea about his special kingship. That sort of information a star cannot give. Only the Scriptures of Israel, especially the Prophets, can do this. And in general it is the providence of God which leads the μάγοι (v. 12) – not their wisdom or astronomical/logical knowledge. At the end of the story they just disappear as suddenly as they stepped in. Never more are they mentioned in the Gospel and they have no other function than to bridge the gap between the heathen and the Jewish world. Their appearance therefore is highly symbolic. Matthew's aim in the first two chapters of his Gospel seems to be quite clear. Standing at the transition to a mission to the heathen world, he wants to introduce Jesus as that Messiah, who is perceived and revered by heathen religious authorities.

b. *Luke's Simon 'Magus' and Bar-Jesus Elymas*

The appearance of Luke's μάγοι seems to be highly symbolic too. Both narratives are situated in the story of Acts at characteristic places. After we are given information about a new situation (in chapter 8 the persecution in Jerusalem forces the Christians to go to Samaria, in chapter 13 Barnabas and Saul take a further step in the direction of a universal mission), a story about a certain μάγος confronts the reader with the problems of that mission. In both stories a further circle of the concentric programme of Acts 1.8 is reached. This cannot be purely accidental. Therefore we have to look at both stories in close parallel and focus on the main usage of μάγος-terminology.[81]

Both stories also have a similar internal structure: first the reader is informed about a new missionary territory and some success there (8.4-8; 13.4-5), then the missionaries meet a certain 'μάγος', who competes with them (8.9-11; 13.6-8), and finally the superiority of the Christian missionaries is demonstrated (8.12-13; 13.9-12). Moreover the story

81. For further details of the text, pre-lukanic elements, and several other questions concerning the texts see the commentaries. Cf. also S.R. Garrett, *The Demise of the Devil. Magic and the Demonic in Luke's Writings*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989), pp. 61–87 (on Garrett's socially coined understanding cf. Aubin, 'Beobachtungen', pp. 19–21, and D. Frankfurter, 'Luke's μαγεία and Garrett's "Magic" ', *USQR* 47 [1993]: 81–89); Klauck, *Magic*, pp. 13–23, 47–55; D. Marguerat, 'Magic and Miracle in the Acts of the Apostles', in Klutz, *Magic*, pp. 100–24.

about Simon includes a large additional narrative about the encounter with Peter (8.14-25). There the problem shifts to another issue: the question about the reception of the πνεῦμα. This is also relevant in the second story, because the πνεῦμα seems to be the *differentia specifica*, which distinguishes legitimate and illegitimate actions (13.4, 9).[82] In general both stories not only illustrate the competition of a missionary and a 'μάγος', but also a conversion that apparently failed and an attempt to prevent a conversion.[83]

If we look at the description of the μάγοι, we also can observe a number of analogous elements, with some characteristic peculiarities. Both stories are deeply rooted in the missionary situation and both represent a competitive setting. The terminology therefore is used as a helpful instrument in a pejorative sense. 'Μάγος' here is a label to identify deviant behaviour seen from an inner-Christian perspective.[84] These 'μάγοι' will lose not only their financial support if the Christian missionaries are successful, but their whole former lives will be affected. It is impossible to extract a substantial definition of 'magic' from these stories, but the texts give some hints for a differentiation. The actions seem on both sides nearly the same. The μαγεύων of Simon seems not to be very different from the working of σημεῖα by Philip (8.7), and Paul's blinding of Bar-Jesus (13.11) does not differ very much from opposing the missionaries and turning the governor away from faith (13.8). But they differ in the label and there seems to be an even greater difference in the more ambiguous μαγεύων and the characterization μάγος, or the actions of Philip and the actions of Paul.

But besides the later distinction in paying for the spirit (8.18-9), the gazing on miracles (v.13) – which seem to be different from the great rejoicing in the city (v. 8) – is peculiar to Simon.[85] He himself amazes and captivates many people (vv. 9, 11) by his practising magic (μαγεύων) and he is amazed and captivated by the signs of Philip (v. 13). Luke stresses the parallel between the working of miracles and practising magic, but doing something similar is not really the same.[86] The main difference consists in the preaching of the gospel. Therefore Philip's miracles are called σημεῖα, because they are done in the name of Jesus (v. 12) and function as witnesses for the gospel. And therefore amazement and captivity are not the proper reception of these signs. In contrast the main item of Simon's own 'missionary' activities is himself – presenting himself in a godlike

82. Cf. the Balaam tradition in Philo, *Mos.* 1.276–77.

83. The second story has only a partial happy end in the conversion of Sergius Paulus, because Bar-Jesus experiences an analogous situation to Paul's at Damascus – but with an insecure end. Cf. Klauck, *Magic*, pp. 54–55.

84. Cf. Klauck, *Magic*, p. 17.

85. Cf. Klauck, *Magic*, p. 18; Marguerat, 'Magic', pp. 117–18.

86. Cf. Klauck, *Magic*, pp. 18–19.

manner with possibly some local implications (vv. 9-10).[87] In the later tradition – but perhaps in correspondence to his self-presentation – he is connected with a message, his gnosis. But this is material for another investigation.[88]

Peculiar to Bar-Jesus is the characterization throughout as a 'μάγος'. And even the last piece of ambiguity is taken away by the additions: that he is a false prophet (ψευδοπροφήτης)[89] and called 'son of the devil' by Paul.[90] He is said to be a Jew and his surname Elymas depends probably on the Aramaic *ḥaloma*,[91] and means an interpreter of dreams or just a 'μάγος'. He has probably drawn on the special image of a Jewish prophet doing his job in a foreign country.[92] But the presentation using μάγος-terminology identifies him as an evildoer opposing the early Christian missionaries. In this conflicting situation we find the reason for the massive counter-reaction of Paul, because a spell can only be defeated by a more powerful counter-spell.[93]

87. Cf. J. Zangenberg, 'Δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ. Das religionsgeschichtliche Profil des Simon Magus aus Sebaste', in A. v. Dobbeler, K. Erlemann and R. Heiligenthal (eds.), *Religionsgeschichte des Neuen Testaments* (FS K. Berger; Tübingen and Basel: Francke Verlag, 2000), pp. 519–40; Klauck, *Magic*, pp. 15–17, 19; Marguerat, 'Magic', pp. 118–20.

88. For this complex discussion see the recent publications: St. Haar, *Simon Magus: The First Gnostic?*, (BZNW 119; Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003); A. Tuzlak, 'The Magician and the Heretic: The Case of Simon Magus', in P. Mirecki and M. Meyer (eds.), *Magic*, pp. 416–26; G. Theissen, 'Simon Magus – die Entwicklung seines Bildes vom Charismatiker zum gnostischen Erlöser: Ein Beitrag zur Frühgeschichte der Gnosis', in v. Dobbeler, Erlemann and Heiligenthal (eds.), *Religionsgeschichte des Neuen Testaments*, pp. 407–32; F. Heintz, *Simon "le magicien". Actes 8,5-25 et l'accusation de magie contre les propètes thaumaturges dans l'antiquité*, (CahRB, 39; Paris: Gabalda, 1997); K. Berger, 'Propaganda und Gegenpropaganda im frühen Christentum: Simon Magus als Gestalt des samaritanischen Christentums', in L. Bormann, K. del Tredici and A. Standhartinger (eds.), *Religious Propaganda and Missionary Competition in the New Testament World* (NovTSup. 74; FS D. Georgi; Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 313–17.

89. Cf. Klauck, *Magic*, p. 48.

90. Even if that story gives a good example for the thesis of Susan Garrett 'The Demise of the Devil', the implication of a general connection of magic and demonology seems to be questionable for other stories in Acts.

91. Cf. Klauck, *Magic*, p. 50.

92. Cf. Acts 19.13 and Josephus, *Ant.* 20.142. Cf. Klauck, *Magic*, p. 50.

93. Cf. Klauck, *Magic*, pp. 51ff.

MAGIC IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

Stanley E. Porter

1. *Introduction*

My interest in the topic of magic in Acts comes about through two different causes. The first is my interest in the book of Acts itself, first generated through a number of individual studies, then a monograph, and, eventually, a full-length commentary.[1] The second cause of my

1. S.E. Porter, 'Thucydides 1.22.1 and Speeches in Acts: Is there a Thucydidean View?' *NovT* 32 (1990): 121–42; repr. and revised in S.E. Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament: Theory and Practice* (SBG, 6; New York: Peter Lang, 1996), pp. 173–93; 'The "We" Passages', in D.W.J. Gill and C. Gempf (eds.), *The Book of Acts in its Graeco-Roman Setting* (The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting, 1; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), pp. 545–74; repr. and revised in S.E. Porter, *The Paul of Acts: Essays in Literary Criticism, Rhetoric, and Theology* (WUNT, 115; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), pp. 10–46; with W.J. Porter, 'Acts of the Apostles 1, 1-5 and 1, 7-11' (P. Harrauer 2), in B. Palme (ed.), *Wiener Papyri als Festgabe zum 60. Geburtstag von Hermann Harrauer (P. Harrauer)* (Vienna: Holzhausen, 2001), pp. 7–14 with plate; 'Developments in the Text of Acts before the Major Codices', in T. Nicklas and M. Tilly (eds.), *The Book of Acts as Church History. Die Apostelgeschichte als Kirchengeschichte: Text, Textual Traditions and Ancient Interpretations. Text, Texttraditionen und antike Auslegungen* (BZNW, 120; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), pp. 31–67; 'Hanno's Periplus and the Book of Acts', in A. Piltz, J. Akujärvi, V. Sabatakakis, K. Blomqvist, G. Walser and L. Nordgren (eds.), *For Particular Reasons: Studies in Honour of Jerker Blomqvist* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2003), pp. 259–72; 'Baptism in Acts: The Sacramental Dimensions', in A.R. Cross and P.E. Thompson (eds.), *Baptist Sacramentalism* (SBHT, 5; Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003), pp. 117–28; 'The Genre of Acts and the Ethics of Discourse', in T. Phillips (ed.), *Acts and Ethics* (New Testament Monographs, 9; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005), pp. 1–15; 'Scripture Justifies Mission: The Use of the Old Testament in Luke–Acts', in S.E. Porter (ed.), *Hearing the Old Testament through the New: The Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament* (McMaster New Testament Studies; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), pp. 104–26; 'The Messiah in Luke and Acts: Setting the Captives Free', in S.E. Porter (ed.), *The Messiah in the Old and New Testaments* (McMaster New Testament Studies; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, forthcoming); 'The Genre of Acts and the Ethics of Discourse', in T. Phillips (ed.), *Acts and Ethics* (New Testament Monographs; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, forthcoming); *The Paul of Acts: Essays in Literary Criticism, Rhetoric, and Theology*; repr. *Paul in Acts* (Library of Pauline Studies; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2001); *The Acts of the Apostles* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, in preparation); *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction* (Carlisle: Paternoster, in preparation).

interest stems from recent work that I have done on magical texts, in particular Greek *lamellae* as well as papyri.[2] Once one begins to study each of these subjects, and especially when one combines them, as I do, one is immediately confronted with the concept of 'magic'. The burgeoning research in this area has made scholars aware of the wide range of issues that are raised by the simple use of the word 'magic', if we are to use the term at all (that is part of the debate).

The use of the word 'magic' brings to the fore a number of topics – each of which in itself could merit discussion in a paper such as this. Let me mention some of them very quickly. One is the relationship between 'magic' as a notion and a variety of other notions, such as 'religion', 'miracle', 'science' and 'medicine', among possibly other terms as well. In a variety of ways, each of these terms has been used in relation to 'magic', sometimes synonymously, sometimes antonymously and sometimes in even more complex conceptual relations.[3] Another topic that has a bearing on discussion of magic is the variety of means by which one can socially conceptualize the ancient world. Various approaches have been brought to bear on the discussion of magic, such as social anthropology, sociology, sociology of knowledge, social description, myth and ritual, history of religions, and other terms and categories. In recent discussion of 'magic', there has been the attempt to come to terms with the term and its connotations by means of various social-scientific models, some of them older and some of them more recent. Some social-science advocates are more inclined toward model building while others are inclined toward description and interpretation. Related to this second set of terms is the notion of 'emic' versus 'etic' description. Based upon an application of terms developed in linguistics by Kenneth Pike,[4] this distinction essentially asks whether the modern interpreter should, or can, penetrate within the categories of thought of the ancients (an emic approach), or whether the modern interpreter should, or must, develop and confine oneself to modern conceptualizations (an etic approach). A final topic to mention here (although far from being the final topic brought into this discussion) is the significance of contemporary religious belief, for example belief in miracles, endorsement of Christianity, one's view of the Christian canon, etc., in interpreting the events recorded in a document such as the book of Acts. As will be noted below, each of

2. I intend to publish a silver *lamella* soon, and have recently examined most of the Vienna magical papyri.

3. See J.Z. Smith, 'Trading Places', in M. Meyer and P. Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (CRGRW, 141; Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 3–27 (13), who points out that with three (or more) terms it is impossible to see them as simply opposed.

4. K.L. Pike, *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior* (The Hague: Mouton, 2nd edn, 1967), p. 37.

these issues, and others besides, enters into contemporary discussion of the notion of 'magic'.

What I wish to do in this paper is to discuss three recent theories that have been brought to bear on the study of 'magic', especially in relation to the book of Acts – first briefly describing the theory, then offering a critique, and concluding with an assessment in the light of ancient evidence – before offering a fourth theory of my own. Once I have done that, I wish to single out several key events in the book of Acts where what we might call 'magic' enters into the discussion.

2. *Definitions of Magic and their Problems*

Andy Reimer's recent work, entitled *Miracle and Magic*, attempts to overcome recent problems with the major definitions of 'magic' (see below) by proposing a third perspective.[5] Here I will offer a brief presentation and analysis of these three positions, dependent upon his representation of them, and then propose a fourth definition that I will use in the following section. One of the strengths of his study is that he attempts to move beyond what he perceives as an impasse by proposing a third perspective, and then he takes both the book of Acts and Philostratus's *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* into account as parallel test-cases for his theory.[6]

a. *Anthropological Absolutism*

The first position is what might be called anthropological absolutism. This position, based upon the work of fundamental anthropologists such as James Frazer and Bronislaw Malinowski,[7] is heavily dependent upon notions of social evolution, and reflects the perspective of the history of religions approach. It continues to be seen in such scholars as John Hull

5. In my discussion below, I am thankful to A.M. Reimer, *Miracle and Magic: A Study in the Acts of the Apostles and the Life of Apollonius of Tyana* (JSNTSup, 235; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), for his discussion and reference to bibliography, both of which I draw upon. Cf. also his 'Virtual Prison Breaks: Non-Escape Narratives and the Definition of "Magic"', in T. Klutz (ed.), *Magic in the Biblical World: From the Rod of Aaron to the Ring of Solomon* (JSNTSup, 245; London: T&T Clark, 2002), pp. 125–39.

6. On the basis of problems with dating *VA*, there is question whether it is the best parallel text to analyse. This does not concern me here.

7. E.g., J. Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A History of Myth and Religion* (London: Macmillan, abridged edn, 1922), pp. 49–51; B. Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays* (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1955).

and Howard Clark Kee.[8] In the course of the evolution of religions, this model sees 'magic' as the inferior form of religious expression. In fact it is often contrasted not only with 'miracle', but with 'religion' itself, and in some instances linked to the lower and uneducated classes. Whereas 'miracle' is the permissible form of religious expression, in which the gods are supplicated for their favour, 'magic' is the perverse form, in which the gods are manipulated in an attempt to glean from them what one wants, to satisfy selfish desires.

The major criticisms of this method of viewing 'magic' are related to all of its assumptions, especially as this model is seen as the product of Enlightenment thought. Virtually all of its major underpinnings have been subjected to critical scrutiny.[9] The evolutionary social model is no longer endorsed, nor is the history of religions approach to the development of human religion. And certainly the linking of a particular religious perspective with educational and social levels has been called into question. Reimer also suggests that the 'death blow' for this definition was 'simply the ambiguous nature of the ancient evidence itself', where there are examples from the ancients in which those involved in magic supplicated their gods, while miracle-workers or other religious people manipulated their gods.[10] The objections to this approach to descriptions of 'magic' have grown to the point that a number of scholars, such as Jonathan Smith, would say that the term should not be used at all.[11]

Despite the opinion expressed, however, there is still some merit in examining whether this model has anything to offer. Some advocates of this model seem to be wanting to establish 'etic', if not universal categories, regarding the development of human religion and its conceptualization. This is bound to raise questions, especially in a climate of suspicion regarding such matters. As William Dickie has argued, when one takes an 'emic' approach to the data, one finds – without necessarily having to answer the question of whether the ancients were right or even 'what happened' in the events recorded in the ancient world – that the ancients themselves seemed to distinguish 'magic' from other forms of

8. J.M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic and the Synoptic Tradition* (SBT, 2.28; London: SCM Press, 1974), pp. 54–57; H.C. Kee, *Christian Origins in Sociological Perspective* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1980), pp. 63–66.

9. This perspective is seen in classical studies in the work of J. Ferguson, *The Religions of the Roman Empire* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1970), although this type of perspective had already been questioned by A.D. Nock, 'Paul and the Magus', in F.J. Foakes Jackson and K. Lake (eds.), *The Beginnings of Christianity. Part 1: The Acts of the Apostles* (5 vols.; London: Macmillan, 1926-33), vol. 5, pp. 164–88 (169–71).

10. Reimer, *Miracle and Magic*, pp. 7–8, citing D.E. Aune, 'Magic in Early Christianity', in *ANRW* II.23.2, pp. 1507–57 (1513).

11. Smith, 'Trading Places', p. 6, where he sees no reason to use the term in scholarly discourse.

religion.[12] Thus Sophocles in his *Oedipus the King* has Oedipus condemn Tiresias the prophet as a 'magos, plotter of stratagems, a crafty begging priest who only sees the profit and is blind towards the rule of his art' (397–98).[13] Plato in his *Republic* talks of 'seers and priests' who go to rich people to convince these people 'that they [also] would posses a faculty which they obtained from the gods through sacrifices and incantations, to heal them through joy and feasts in case their ancestors or they themselves had committed some injustice; and in case they would like to harm an enemy, they would be able, at low cost, to injure righteous people as unrighteous ones through some incantation and defixion because they were able, as they brag about, to persuade the gods to help them' (2.364B).[14] In his *Laws*, Plato talks of passing laws against those 'who, having lost their humanity, think that the gods do not exist or that they were careless or venal and who despise their fellow human beings and seduce many of the living by pretending that they could seduce the souls of the dead, and promise to persuade the gods through the magic of offerings and prayers and incantations, thus proposing, in order to make money, to destroy individuals, families and entire cities' (10.909A).[15] Gorgias the rhetor, in his Encomium of Helena, speaks of how 'the ecstatic incantations of words bring joy and drive away gloom, because, when the power of incantation enters our soul with the help of belief, it charms and persuades and transforms the soul through goetic art. There are two techniques of goetic and magic art: both are the error of the soul and the illusion of belief.'[16] And in his 'On the Sacred Disease', Hippocrates speaks of the magician coercing and lacking proper respect for the divine.[17] Thus, Friedrich Graf concludes that 'the Frazerian dichotomy between magic and religion is already present in Heraclitus [cited by Clement of Alexandria, *Protrepticus* 22.2] and in Plato: in the *Laws*, *goeteia* is characterized by the intention to persuade the gods, while the proper conduct would be to leave them free choice; they know better than we what will prove useful to us. This comes close to Frazer's view that magic forces the gods, while religion prays submissively. Keith Thomas had argued that the Frazerian dichotomy had its roots in Protestant theology of the seventeenth century; even though correct, this is somewhat shortsighted, since the dichotomy is deeply entrenched in the

12. M.W. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 19.

13. F. Graf, 'Excluding the Charming: The Development of the Greek Concept of Magic', in Meyer and Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic*, pp. 29–42 (33).

14. Graf, 'Excluding the Charming', p. 33.

15. Graf, 'Excluding the Charming', p. 33.

16. Graf, 'Excluding the Charming', p. 33.

17. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians*, p. 26.

continuum of our cultural heritage',[18] that is, in the ancient Greeks themselves.

b. *Terminological Relativism*

The second position might be called terminological, or positional, relativism. Influenced by a rejection of an absolutist interpretive stance, such a position, reflected in the work of such scholars as Robert Grant, David Aune and Jonathan Z. Smith, reflects developments in the sociology of knowledge and recognizes the influence of group identity, social location and social construction of reality.[19] As a result, this position claims that any stance is merely a matter of positioning in relation to the other, and that there is no privileged viewpoint in the debate. Therefore, 'miracle' is a term reserved for those with whom one agrees and 'magic', with all of its pejorative connotations, is reserved for those with whom one disagrees.

This position itself has been subject to criticism along several lines. As Reimer indicates, the position itself has become absolutized, so that all points of disagreement can be subsumed under the rubric of social construction, with the resultant emphasis upon sociological analysis as a substitute for substantive analysis.[20] There is the further issue that even if one admits that each interpreter is socially conditioned and, at least in part, constructs his or her own reality, that surely cannot be all that there is. That is, how does one prove that this is the case, unless one has a vantage outside of the simple social conditioning from which one makes this observation? This position can become a dodge for substantive weighing of alternatives, no matter how uncomfortable that may make one.

There is some evidence, nevertheless, that this is in fact a way that the ancients looked at themselves, and that terminological relativism has some validity. As Naomi Janowitz points out, Herodotus depicts *foreign* priests chanting at sacrifices (1.132), Diogenes Laertes describes at length the *foreign Persian* priests (1.2), Cicero refers to the 'augurs and diviners among the *Persians*' (*Div* 1.41.90-91), Roman law goes so far as to condemn magicians to be burned alive (*Sent.* 5.23.17), and, among Christian writers, Justin talks of turning to Christianity *from magic* (*1 Apology* 14), Irenaeus links *heretics* and *magicians* together (*Haer.* 1.13.1-6), and Origen condemns *Graeco-Roman religion* as magic (*Celsus* 5.5;

18. Graf, 'Excluding the Charming', p. 35.

19. R.M. Grant, *Gnosticism and Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), p. 93; Aune, 'Magic'; Smith, 'Trading Places', pp. 13–20.

20. Reimer, *Miracle and Magic*, pp. 9–10.

7.69; 8.2).[21] In all of these, there is a sense of us versus them, insiders and outsiders, believers and magicians.

Thus, Janowitz concludes that 'many of the people labeled "magicians" in the first three centuries were simply practicing traditional forms of their religious practice. Since they were often pagans much of what people claim as "ancient magic" is modern imaginings of ancient Greco-Roman religion',[22] but described from the standpoint of those who were not adherents to that particular form of religious practice or belief.

c. *Power Plays*

The third position is based upon an SBL paper by Anitra Bingham Kolenkow,[23] and developed into a full model for exploration of the categories of miracle and magic in Acts by Reimer. Attempting to break out of what he calls the sociology of knowledge loop, Reimer uses the analogy of a moving picture instead of a photograph to capture the need to move beyond entrenched and static positions. He attempts to create what he calls a polythetic classification, in which a complex of various factors, not all necessarily applying at the same time, are brought to bear. The characters that he intends to analyse he calls 'intermediaries', since they 'serve as some sort of bridge between the culturally defined "natural world" and the realms of the "supernatural" or "spiritual"'.[24] He then discusses such intermediaries in terms of three major categories – (1) their desire for power (including their withdrawal from the social network by means of abandoning society, undertaking travel and disregarding their personal safety; their performing miraculous events in order to encourage belief, build their reputation, function as an 'inspired' speaker and punish through miracles; their avoiding ambition by minimizing power and their recognition of the dangers of wealth); (2) their power as it intersects with that of others (including established religious groups and cults, by tying into some religious institutions, and being accepted by some and rejected by others; their own community, as they become travelling companions and function within local communities; and political authorities, including issues of interest for the authorities and creating opposition); and (3) their defending power (including defending it against charges brought by others and the defences offered by intermediaries). In essence, Reimer differentiates good from bad intermediaries, that is, essentially miracle-workers from magicians, on the basis of their conformity to or divergence from the

21. N. Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World: Pagans, Jews and Christians* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 9–19.

22. Janowitz, *Magic*, pp. 2–3, cf. 16.

23. A.B. Kolenkow, 'A Problem of Power: How Miracle Doers Counter Charges of Magic in the Hellenistic World', *SBLSP* (1976), pp. 105–10.

24. Reimer, *Miracle and Magic*, p. 48.

good characteristics mentioned above. Thus, illustrating the complexity involved, a miracle-worker would not be seeking personal power but would be tied to an established religious group even if he is pushing the boundaries of that group.

Reimer is no doubt to be commended for developing a more complex model for analysis of 'magic' in the ancient world, but there are several questions that his programme raises. Although his scheme is more complex in some ways, in other ways it is as reductionistic as other ones, essentially utilizing the notion of power – how one at times conforms to and at other times deviates from it – as the controlling criterion. A second observation is that Reimer's scheme is clearly etic, rather than emic. That is, he creates a set of criteria that is designed to promote the usefulness and favourable characteristics of the miracle worker, since this is a person who reflects certain commendable (modern) behaviours. There is little evidence provided that such a characterization, to say nothing of such a complex scheme, would have found a place within the ancient world. A final observation is that one cannot help but think that, despite the complexity of the scheme, it has been developed with at least one eye clearly focused upon the book of Acts and the values that it promotes in terms of the characters depicted within it, and then these characters have been used to retroactively formulate the evaluative scheme. This is not necessarily a criticism of the results, but it does call into question its etic – or universal – usefulness.

d. *Theological Advancement*

In the light of this discussion, and before entering into discussion of the book of Acts, I would like to offer a fourth – or perhaps, better, a refined – perspective on the notion of ancient magic. Several observations may be made on the basis of the discussion above. The first I wish to make is that the ancients recognized a place for what might still best be called supernatural events. Those supernatural events that were useful and societally productive were not condemned, but were embraced as a recognition of the activity of the divine within their sphere. A wide range of such events was recognized, with at least some of them being seen as contiguous with events within nature. In this sense, the kinds of distinctions now often made between 'magic', 'miracle', 'medicine' and 'science', at least in terms of modern categories, cannot be clearly made or maintained so far as the ancients were concerned. One need only read the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*, the Bibles of the ancient world, to see this. A second observation is that the ancient Greeks and Romans themselves were concerned to make distinctions regarding miraculous and magical behaviour. There are types of supernatural activity, some to be welcomed and some to be condemned. They themselves in fact – not inadvertently,

but clearly for the most part – ridiculed, disparaged or condemned outright certain types of activities, what they often called and categorized as magic, usually attributing it to individuals or groups who were 'other'. A third observation is that this kind of distinction between welcomed and condemned supernatural events continued not only in Greek and Roman religious writing, but in Christian writing as well. No doubt each group positioned itself in relation to others and therefore in some sense created its own conceptual and behavioural reality. This is clearly seen in the varied writings from the various groups within the ancient world.

This, of course, begs the question of whether such miraculous or magical acts actually occurred – then or now – but the purpose of this paper is not to argue for or against this particular point, but to consider how the ancients themselves chose to characterize these events, in particular the author of the book of Acts. As far as the book of Acts is concerned, I believe that Reimer has, in the course of his own discussion, in fact provided the key to distinguishing between 'miracle' and 'magic' in the book of Acts, when he notes that the primary function of magical or miraculous behaviour is 'to provoke belief, to convince'.[25] As Reimer clearly articulates: 'Simply stated, miracles in the Acts narrative world are primarily there to provoke belief, to convince.' By the same token, those supernatural events that do not provoke belief, but in some way thwart it or are simply self-serving, are to be condemned, and could well be characterized, in terms of how the ancients tended to see it, as 'magic'. This provides a useful paradigm for an internal (or emic) assessment of magic in the book of Acts.

3. *Magic in the Book of Acts*

In the light of this framework, I wish to examine briefly four key episodes in the book of Acts, in order to bring out a number of elements that might help us to appreciate the magical (and perhaps miraculous) elements being depicted. Because of space, I will only treat episodes that reflect what I have defined as magic above, and that show clear evidence of the conception that I think the author of Acts utilizes.[26] Exploration of magical elements in the book of Acts has increased recently. An example worth noting, besides Reimer's treatment, is Klauck's narrative approach to a number of crucial incidents, although these range far beyond simply magic to include a variety of features of paganism as well. Despite this

25. Reimer, *Miracle and Magic*, p. 89.

26. Cf. the treatment of miracle in Acts (which I had not seen when I wrote the first draft of this paper) by D. Marguerat, 'Magic and Miracle in the Acts of the Apostles', in Klutz (ed.), *Magic*, pp. 100–24. He emphasizes the miraculous over the magical, and so there is only some overlap.

increased interest, however, it is perplexing to note that in the *Hellenistic Commentary to the New Testament*, in the section on Acts, there is only reference to a single text that might be characterized as magical. This is cited at Acts 19.19, the incident of the burning of the books by those who practised magic.[27] I will return to this passage below. In the course of my discussion, I will draw on a number of magical texts that have been of interest to me in my recent work.[28]

a. *Simon the Magician (Acts 8.9-25)*

The episode of Simon the magician depicts him as one who had practised supernatural events that had clearly had the effect of astonishing the people in Samaria (v. 9). Not only did he claim to be someone great (v. 9), but the people themselves were acclaiming him to be the power of God, the one called Great (v. 10). This attribution has been widely discussed, although discussion has been diverted by too much concentration on the later fortunes of Simon (and whether he, or his consort Helena, existed, and what his role was in later religious developments). There are two inscriptions that have both grammatical and conceptual similarities to Simon's title: 'one god, ruler of all things, great Kore, the unconquered' (Samaria, second/third century);[29] and 'one god in the heavens, great heavenly Men, great power of the immortal god' (Lydia; no date).[30] The reference in Acts to 'great' may be a periphrastic reference to God or a god, and the inscriptions may indicate the typical religious complexity of the time (what we used to call syncretism).[31] Perhaps even more noteworthy in this context is the similarity of the title to the formula in a bear charm in the Paris magical papyrus: 'I call upon you, the great power, who is in the heaven, appointed from god' (*PGM* IV.1275–79).[32]

27. M.E. Boring, K. Berger and C. Colte (eds.), *Hellenistic Commentary to the New Testament* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1995), pp. 331–32. The example, *PGM* III.1–164, is not particularly pertinent for the events in Acts, but only for the notion of a magician.

28. See especially *PGM* I, II, III; *Suppl. Mag.* I, II; R. Kotansky, *Greek Magical Amulets: The Inscribed Gold, Silver, Copper, and Bronze Lamellae*. Part I: *Published Texts of Known Provenance* (Papyrologica Coloniensia, 22.1; Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994); and C. Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1950).

29. *NewDocs* 1 (1981), no. 68. There is the possibility that the second half of this line refers to a second divine being, rather than its being a single being.

30. *NewDocs* 3 (1983), no. 7.

31. I hesitate to use the word syncretism, since the term seems to imply picking and choosing features from a hodgepodge of religions. What I mean is that religions of the time, including Judaism, were not the 'pure' religious systems that they are sometimes depicted as being, but complex systems that had many elements that did not conform to an anticipated purity.

32. This is incorrectly referred to as IV.1225–29 in F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 3rd edn, 1990), p. 219, and *NewDocs* 1 (1981), no. 68, p. 107.

The title that is given to Simon may well reflect the kinds of titles used in magical contexts where various gods are invoked. One notes that, once Simon believes, he himself is 'astounded' at the 'signs and great miracles' (v. 13; cf. v. 11) that Philip performs. Simon's desire to be able to do the same kinds of miracles – done in conjunction with Philip's proclaiming the good news about the kingdom and Jesus Christ (v. 12) – is rebuffed, because he desired to purchase the gift, rather than receive it through the Holy Spirit. That is, he is intent upon receiving the gift through his own means, and presumably for his own ends, rather than to proclaim the good news because it is the good news, and thus he is denied this.

b. *Bar-Jesus (Acts 13.4-12)*

On Cyprus, Paul confronts a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, named Bar-Jesus (v. 6). He was with Sergius Paulus, the proconsul, who requested that Barnabas and Saul/Paul speak God's message to him (v. 7). This request was opposed by the magician, whose name, Acts says, is translated as Elymas. All scholars appear to reject the notion that Elymas can in any way be a direct translation of Bar-Jesus, so a variety of proposals have been made regarding how to understand Elymas. Luke Timothy Johnson advocates that 'translate' really means 'interpret', as is shown elsewhere in Acts (4.36),[33] and in effect most interpreters take the word 'translate' in this way. Some look to a Semitic language for an explanation, whether Arabic or Aramaic, while others look to various Greek proposals. Some accept the reading in D, ἑτοιμάς, 'son of the ready', others think it should read ὁ λοιμός, 'the pestilent one', and still others suppose that it is the same person Josephus refers to as ἄτομος (*Ant.* 20.142).[34] The form itself, Elymas, is not widely known (see BDAG), although there is an inscription with the name ηλειμ (*OGIS* 594).[35] I note that there is also a name (or magical word) used in a number of magical documents, *eulamo* (*PGM* III.57; VII.401; IX.8; XVI.18; *Suppl. Mag.* I.44.17; II.96 A 11; II.53.106; II.57.8–13, 21–26, 22–25, 23–28), that has similarities as well. Admittedly, it would require two phonetic shifts, the first before a liquid consonant (a fairly common phenomenon) while the second, between *y* and *a*, is perhaps not elsewhere known.[36] Nevertheless,

33. L.T. Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (SP, 5; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), p. 223.

34. For these proposals, see H. Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1987), p. 100; Johnson, *Acts*, p. 223; Bruce, *Acts*, p. 297; MM, s.v. Cf. H.-J. Klauck, *Magic and Paganism in Early Christianity: The World of the Acts of the Apostles* (trans. B. McNeil; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), p. 50.

35. Conzelmann, *Acts*, p. 100.

36. Note however the various changes in configuration that are made with the name in *Suppl. Mag.* II 57.

Klauck suggests that Elymas may have been an astrologer in Sergius Paulus's court, which would also perhaps account for his being called a false prophet by the author of Acts.[37] In any case, there is some difficulty in understanding who Elymas is, apart from the fact that he is the same magician known as Bar-Jesus, also described as a false prophet. In light of this, Paul apparently condemns him and invokes blindness (vv. 10-11). The result is that Sergius Paulus believed, being amazed at the teaching of the Lord. The one who stood in the way of the teaching of the Lord had his spiritual blindness reinforced by physical blindness, while the one open to the teaching of the Lord received it openly.

c. *Zeus and Hermes (Acts 14.8-20)*

In this episode, Barnabas and Paul are involved in a series of events that in many ways mirror the kind of patterns of magical activity that we have already seen. Paul first heals a man who had no strength in his legs, was in this condition since birth, and had never walked. Paul sees that this man had 'faith to be saved' (v. 9),[38] and heals him. The response of the crowd is to want to worship Barnabas as Zeus and Paul as Hermes, the mistaking of certain humans for gods being a fairly common feature of literature of the time[39] – although Paul and Barnabas have some difficulty in understanding this since the crowd is speaking Lycaonian, rather than Greek.[40] Zeus was the older and more imposing figure, while Hermes was his son by Maia and the messenger god or spokesman. This may account for the crowd's selecting Barnabas and Paul as they did,[41] as there is inscriptional evidence from the area attesting to Lystran veneration of Zeus and Hermes. Furthermore, Breytenbach has recently argued that there was a fertility cult associated with Zeus in the area, which, if it were known to Barnabas and Paul, may have prompted their decisive response.[42] In any event, the opportunity was ripe for them to assume

37. Klauck, *Magic*, pp. 51–52; cf. 48–49, where Klauck notes accommodating tendencies of Judaism of the time, including a number of Hebrew/Aramaic and Jewish Greek magical papyri that are designed to cast spells. These are found in *PGM*; *Suppl. Mag.* I, II; and Kotansky, *Greek Magical Amulets*, among others. See below also.

38. H.K. Kee, *Miracle in the Early Christian World: A Study in Sociohistorical Method* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983), p. 101, takes 'save' to mean 'heal' in the Asclepius cult.

39. Johnson, *Acts*, p. 248, citing especially the Hellenistic novel, such as Chariton, *Chaereas and Callirhoe* 1.1.16; 1.14.1; 3.2.15–17; Xenophon, *The Ephesians* 1.12.1; Heliodorus, *The Ethiopians* 1.2.1.

40. Lycaonian persisted as a local language, until about the sixth century. See C. Brixhe, *Essai sur le Grec Anatolien au début de notre ére* (Nancy: Presses Universitaires, 1987), p. 11.

41. See Bruce, *Acts*, pp. 321–22. One example is *MAMA* VIII.

42. C. Breytenbach, 'Zeus und der lebendige Gott: Anmerkungen zu Apostelgeschichte 14,11-17', *NTS* 39 (1993): 396–413.

the roles of magicians, much like Elymas or Simon the magician. However, they rejected the attempt at elevation, and turned the opportunity into one to proclaim the living God (vv. 15-17).

d. *Ephesus and the Sons of Sceva (Acts 19.11-20)*

Some might be tempted to label what happens in Ephesus as magic, when Acts says that as people touched Paul's facecloths or aprons they were healed (v. 12). However, this episode reveals the contrast between magic and miracle when it is shown that the things connected with Paul's mission of glorifying God result in healings and related phenomena, while, when the same things are taken over by those who are not promoting the gospel, they do not function similarly. Paul's healings take place within the context of God performing extraordinary events through Paul's hands (v. 11).[43] The seven sons of Sceva, itinerant Jewish exorcists, attempt to avail themselves of the power that they had seen displayed by God through Paul. They invoke the language of magic: 'I command (ὁρκίζω) you by Jesus whom Paul preaches' (v. 13). The use of ὁρκίζω is common in the magical papyri and related texts, both Jewish and pagan:[44] for example in the Paris Magical Papyrus at *PGM* IV.3019: 'I command you according to the god of the Hebrews, Jesus',[45] where the name of Jesus is invoked in a Jewish curse.[46] Similarly, there is a lead tablet from Adrumetum, upon

43. See Klauck, *Magic*, p. 98, although when he goes on to say that 'ultimately, it [this episode] is all a question of interpretation', he loses momentum.

44. Note that there is a textual variant with ἐξχορκίζω in P^{38} and some other texts – a common word also in the magical papyri.

45. See also, e.g., *PGM* IV.3029: 'I command you with rash words'; *PGM* IV.3033–37: 'I command you by the one seen by Israel in a pillar of light and cloud by day and rescued his word of the work of Pharaoh and put upon Pharaoh the ten plagues because of his disobedience'; *PGM* IV.3037–41: 'I command you, every demonic spirit, to say whoever you might be, because I command you according to the seal which Solomon put upon the tongue of Jeremiah and he spoke'; *PGM* IV.3045–46: 'I command you by God the light bearer'; *PGM* IV.3052–55: 'I command you by the great God Sabaoth, because of whom the Jordan River went up into the back parts and the Red Sea which Israel travelled and it stood unpassable'; *PGM* IV.3056–58: 'I command you by the one who differentiated the 140 tongues and divided by his own command'; *PGM* IV.3058–61: 'I command you by the one who burned up [the crowd] of stiff-knecked giants by lightning, whom the heaven of heavens hymn, whom the wings of the cherubin hymn'; *PGM* IV.3065–66: 'I command you by the one who shakes the four winds'; *PGM* IV.3069: 'I command by the one in pure Jerusalem'; *PGM* IV.3075–77: 'I command you, every demonic spirit, by the one who looks upon the earth and makes the foundations traumatized'; *PGM* IV.3078–79: 'I command you, the one who receives this command'. I have used the edition in A. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* (trans. L.R.M. Strachan; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 4th edn, 1927), pp. 254–64, with photograph.

46. See Bruce, *Acts*, p. 410, who notes that Jesus' name was invoked by those other than his disciples, no doubt because it was thought to have miraculous powers.

which a lengthy Jewish magical text was written:[47] for example, note lines 1–2: 'I command you, demonic spirit lying here, in the name of the holy Aoth Abaoth the god of Abraham and of Jao that of Jakou'.[48] I am in the process of working with a collection of Greek *lamellae* on gold, silver, bronze, tin and the like – some Christian, others not – one of which begins: 'I command these names of the holy Ariel ...' (*P.Vindob.* G 60411). In other words, the sons of Sceva are clearly meant to be seen as invoking a magical formula to be able to command the power of Paul's God. However, the evil spirit they are attempting to command (note the similarity in language to the command formulas noted above), while rightly recognizing Jesus and Paul,[49] not only does not respond, but does not recognize them. Instead, in a reversal, the evil spirit overpowers them (vv. 15-16). The result is that people recognized the greatness of the Lord (v. 17) and came to confess their wrongdoing and repent of their previous actions (vv. 18-19). This included those who had practised magical works[50] bringing their valuable magical scrolls to be burned. Adolf Deissmann, followed by F.F. Bruce, speculates that what is referred to here is what we would now recognize, and may well have in later copies, as the magical papyri.[51] Ephesus was connected with magic in the ancient world, as is evidenced by the term 'Ephesian writings', a term for such magical documents.[52]

47. A. Deissmann, *Bible Studies* (trans. A. Grieve; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2nd edn, 1909), pp. 273–79, with text and translation.

48. See also lines 8–10: 'I command you by the great god the eternal and praised and all powerful, the one above the upper gods'; lines 10–11: 'I command [you] by the one who creates the heaven and the sea'; line 11: 'I command you by the one who divides the holy'; lines 11–12: 'I command you by the one who divided the rod in the sea'; lines 15–16: 'I command you by the one who made the mule to not give birth'; lines 16–17: 'I command you by the one who divided the [light] from the dark'; line 17: 'I command you by the one who crushes the rocks'; line 18: 'I command you by the one who divides the mountains': lines 18–19: 'I command you by the holy name which is not spoken'; lines 23–24: 'I command you by the one who made the planets and stars in heaven'; line 25: 'I command you by the one who shakes the inhabited world'; lines 27–28: 'I command you by the one who made signs in heaven'; and lines 32–33: 'I command you by the great eternal and all powerful god.'

49. Klauck, *Magic*, p. 100.

50. See Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, p. 323 note 5, who shows that the word here in Acts translated 'magic' (τὰ περίεργα) is indeed a technical term for the notion. In fact, the word for 'practice' (πρᾶξις) is also a technical term for a spell.

51. Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, p. 323; Bruce, *Acts*, p. 412.

52. See Bruce, *Acts*, p. 412; C. Arnold, *Ephesians: Power and Magic: The Concept of Power in Ephesians in Light of its Historical Setting* (SNTSMS, 63; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 14–16.

4. *Conclusion*

Much more could no doubt be said about each of these passages, and no doubt other passages in the book of Acts could be selected for attention as well. However, I believe that the passages that have been selected illustrate the findings of the theoretical discussion regarding the issue of how one defines 'magic'. The term 'magic' has proved to be highly problematic in recent discussion. The place to begin discussion, I believe, is with how the categories are drawn within the texts being examined, and in this instance especially in the book of Acts. The author appears to draw a distinction between magic and miracle, with magic confined to those people or groups who are attempting to manipulate the power of God through various means for their own purposes, rather than utilizing this power as support for or demonstration of the proclamation of the gospel. At several key points in the narrative, the author of Acts clearly shows, it seems to me, that those who are depicted as engaging in magic are of a type with those recognized from other non-biblical documents as participating in magical practices. Even though some if not most of these would have fitted within some forms of Graeco-Roman religion, they clearly are not recognized as being a part of recognized and endorsed early Christian practice.

Part III

MAGIC FROM BEFORE THE DAWN OF TIME: UNDERSTANDING MAGIC IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: A SHIFT IN PARADIGM (DEUTERONOMY 18.9-14 AND BEYOND)

Ann Jeffers

Introduction

The recent resurgence of interest in magic spurs one to re-examine what we understand by it, and in particular how it has been assessed in the Old Testament. My aim is to look at how magic has traditionally been interpreted in the Old Testament and to consider how these interpretations have affected our understanding of it. I will show that there has been a significant shift in the scholarly assessment of magic from understanding it to be a degenerate or deviant form of religion to reassessing its place within the framework of ancient Israelite religion. I will also in the course of this paper examine the function of magic in the Hebrew Bible before drawing some conclusions.

1. *Searching for a Definition of 'Magic'*

In the absence of any self-definition, defining magic has proved to be very difficult. with no real consensus to date: scholars will often unconsciously project understandings/constructs of magic onto the text, which are themselves the product of a specific ideological background. To take two very English examples of definitions of magic:

a) Samuel Johnson's definition[1] is a case in point:

> 1. Magick: The art of putting in action the power of spirits: it was supposed that both good and bad spirits were subject to magick; yet magick was in general held to be unlawful: sorcery; enchantment.
>
> 2. The secret operations of natural powers. [This is followed by a rather pointed quote from Bacon] 'the writers of natural magick' attribute

1. *Dictionary of English Language* (1755).

> much to the virtues that come from the parts of living creatures, as if they did infuse immaterial virtue into the part severed [the mind boggles!].

b) Neither is the Oxford English Dictionary exempt from ideological bias:

> The pretended art of influencing the course of events, and of producing marvelous physical phenomena, by processes supposed to owe their efficacy to their power of compelling the intervention of spiritual beings, or of bringing into operation some occult controlling principle of nature; sorcery, witchcraft.

A brief look at biblical dictionaries tellingly divides articles on magic into two sections: one dealing with the Ancient Near East, which usually takes the form of a survey, and the second made up of a list of terms usually based on (and limited by) Deut. 18.10-11 (although the *ABD* has a section on the relationship between magic and religion).[2]

So, traditionally, magic is understood to represent the manipulation and coercion of supernatural powers in order to control events (in the realm of war and politics for instance), or people, for good (e.g. healing) or for harm (inflicting disease and death). Divination, as a branch of magic, is easier to define as 'the art of deciphering and interpreting signs in which the future can be glimpsed'.

All these definitions presuppose a worldview, a cosmology, in which living things, objects and events are interconnected in a complex web of relationships. *How* has magic been understood, how does it connect with other forms of intermediation and *what place and function* it occupies is the subject of the next three sections.

2. *Interpreting Magic in the Old Testament: a Bird's Eye View*

To interpret the (western) interpreter's view of magic, we need to start with the classics and Plato,[3] who expresses the first shift in paradigm. When in Ancient Greece the earliest meaning of *magoi* was as a 'religious specialist' like any other, Plato introduced the now traditional statement that 'magicians *coerce* the Gods, while the religious man *submits* to their will'. This gave rise to the famous dichotomy between religion and magic, a dichotomy relentlessly pursued by early Christian writers, and later by the Protestant reformers whose polemic against the Roman Catholic church and the debate about the sacraments appropriated the Platonic categories. In fact the enlightenment continued the dichotomy while dressing it up with rationalism and romanticism.

2. *ABD* 4 (1992), pp. 464–71.

3. Cf. *First Alcibiades*, 122A: 'Science of the Magoi, is in fact the worship of the Gods', with Republic, 2.364b.

The nineteenth century saw a resurgence of interest in forms of religious behaviour. Rationalism firmly stamped the interpretative process allied with its corollary, a search for the historical phenomena. To this add a touch of Romantic interest in the subject: the general historical atmosphere of the nineteenth century puts the emphasis on the religious and spiritual development of human life, from childhood, to gradual maturity and decline. This pattern in many ways mirrors Hegel's idea of development as set out in his philosophy of history. This pattern to a certain extent is present in Frazer's *Golden Bough*. The latter occupies a place of choice in the history of interpretation of magic, with its emphasis on the distinction, and the development of magic, religion and science. As is well known, his understanding of magic is expressed by the laws of similarity and contact.

But what about Old Testament interpreters? Although as Rogerson makes clear[4] there does not seem to be a direct correlation between the ideas of the historico-criticism of Wellhausen and Frazer's ideas as set out in the *Golden Bough*, I think that there is what I would call an 'ambient' connection, with Darwin and Hegel providing the blueprint for the twin ideas of evolution and historical development: the search for the childhood of religion dominates the investigation. Von Rad is a good illustration of this. In his *Old Testament Theology*, he says:

> One thing is bound to strike the historian of comparative religion, namely the dwindling part played by magic in this religion. Its absence already gives an exceptional position within all the fairly comparable forms in the history of religion, especially the religion of the Ancient East.[5]

Magic in this context is to be understood either as a 'primitive' form of religion, a kind of 'pre-religious' or 'natural' stage pertaining to what was called with great interest by western (and colonialist) scholars 'primitive mentality' (let us not forget that political correctness had not yet been invented!).

Methodology is of the essence. The historico-critical method makes it easy to confine magic to the area of classified additions of an ancient and quickly forgotten past. The theology based on that method controls its impact by relegating magic to the domain of the foreign and illegal. It pays too much attention to the literal, rather than the literary, to the diachronic instead of the synchronic. It is interesting to note that in modern anthropology, what Frazer would have called 'magic' is considered under the broader category of 'symbolic instrumentation',

4. J. Rogerson, *Anthropology and the Old Testament* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978).

5. G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (2 vols.; trans. D.M.G. Stalker; Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1966) I, pp. 34–35.

magic becomes 'an external representation of a well-formed mental intention';[6] a sociological approach that takes seriously magic's place within the institutions and belief system of a given society.[7]

When we turn to the Old Testament, one is struck by the sheer number of magical terms and references that pervaded the whole of Israelite life. This extensive vocabulary encompasses a plethora of practitioners[8] and techniques.[9] But there are problems which are specific to the Old Testament:

(1) The question of terminology is one such problem: when we talk about magic it is striking that we utilize a Greek and Latin term (*mageia–magia*) which carries with it a number of presuppositions. When we talk about 'magic' we are talking about a Greek word, expressing a Hellenic worldview. Hence the necessity of broadening the semantic field, beyond the (in)famous list of Deut. 18.10-11 with its specialized list of practitioners.[10]

The semantic field of practitioners, people known to practise magic (and its corollary, divination) include: the man of God/*ish elohim*, wise man/*hakam*, prophet/*nabi*, seer/*roheh* and *rozeh*, and ordinary people from all walks of life: priests, prophets and prophetesses, kings but also common soldiers, ordinary men (Jacob) and women (Rachel and Leah or the so-called 'witch' of Endor for instance).

(2) Another problem we face when looking at magic in the Old Testament is the diversity of the material: the most famous passage dealing with an extensive condemnation is Deut. 18.9-14 but this can be contrasted with overt and pervading practices in the cult (Urim and Thummim; the ephod) and outside the cult (Ezek. 21.21), among officials and royal characters (David's multiple consultation in Samuel). The question of the interaction between the practice and the prohibition needs to be looked at (a problem

6. S. Tambiah, *Magic, Science, Religion, and the Scope of Rationality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

7. This reflects L. Levy-Bruhl's sociological explanation of magic (*How Natives Think* [London: Allen & Unwin, 1926]). Another landmark in social-science work on magic is D.L. O'Keefe, *Stolen Lightning: The Social Theory of Magic* (New York: Continuum, 1982), who enumerates 13 postulates, a kind of summary of positions taken from Freud, Malinowski, Durkheim and Weber. Although his approach is comprehensive, his claim that magic ought to be understood as a universal category must be viewed with caution.

8. See A. Jeffers, *Magic and Divination in Ancient Palestine and Syria* (SHCANE, 8; Leiden: Brill, 1996) chapter 2, for a comprehensive list.

9. For instance, in no particular order, astrology (Josh. 10.12; Amos 5.26), rabdomancy (Gen. 30.31-39), hepatoscopy (Lev. 3.3-4; Ezek. 21.21), hydromancy (Gen. 44.5-15), necromancy (1 Sam. 28.7-25) etc.

10. קסם, קסמים, מעונן, מנחש, מכשף, חבר חבר, consulting the אוב and the ידעני, passing children through fire.

which I suspect is also present in the New Testament). I have suggested elsewhere that the prohibition (i.e. a change in practice) is due to a shift in ideology,[11] and could be understood as part of a priestly take-over and subsequent control of the tradition (however we must not forget that *if* this is the case they have not done a very good job of it – there are still too many traces of magic – this is positively sloppy!)

(3) A third problem arises from the nature of the world we seek to understand. Ethnologists, anthropologists and sociologists when studying so called 'primitive' pre-literate or barely literate societies have a 'hands on' approach: when we come to the Old Testament no field work is possible anymore. There is no possibility of interviewing the natives through sophisticated questioning designed to help people articulate their perception of the world and their belief system. We have to rely on texts, for we are dealing with a highly sophisticated literate society.

3. *Examining some Presuppositions in Need of Reassessment*

a. *Magic versus religion*

The idea that religion and magic (and science too) are separate fields of activity, and that magic is either a deviant form of religion or a primitive stage in the religious striving of humanity towards an ever more refined spirituality, goes back a long way, as we have seen earlier, and is clearly based on ideological presuppositions.

It is useful here to quote Ricks:[12] 'there is no difference between "religion" and "magic" – this distinction is a scholarly evaluative fiction'. I would propose that both religion and magic are part of a wider system of intermediation and interconnection between the world of nature, human, animal, vegetal and mineral. In fact magic belongs to a specific cosmology, a worldview that presupposes a certain organization and ordering of the universe and is connected with ideas of creation. Religious or religio-magical intermediation is best understood not so much as a crude, mechanical manipulation, nor a symbolic re-enactment but as a manifestation of a vivified universe. As Keel reminds us:

> In the biblical and ancient Eastern conception, the world is open and transparent to things above and beneath the earth. It is not a lifeless

11. See Jeffers, *Magic and Divination*; also F.H. Cryer, *Divination in Ancient Israel and its Near Eastern Environment: A Socio-Historical Investigation* (JSOTSup, 142; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994).

12. S.D. Ricks, 'The Magician as Outsider in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament', in M. Meyer and P. Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (RGRW, 129; Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp.131–43 (131 n.2).

> stage. The universe is thoroughly alive, and, therefore, the more capable of sympathy with man and of response to the rule of its creator, on whom both man and universe directly depend.[13]

In this world magic is real, i.e. part of the concept of reality.

b. *The Question of Dominance and Power: 'Official' Yahwism Versus 'Popular' Religion*

Yahwism is seen by the authors of our texts, without any question, as the religious 'norm'. This ideology presupposes that ancient Israelite religion was monolithic. Yet there has recently been a number of monographs which question such an assumption, notably that of Ackerman[14] who demonstrated that the Old Testament presents a 'diversity of beliefs and practices ... accepted by the ancients as legitimate forms of religious expression'.[15]

This view has serious implications when examining the place and function of magic in the Old Testament, for it places magic in the centre rather than at the periphery. Indeed magic is used in all walks of life: from birth (Rachel/Leah and the fertility root/mandrake in Gen. 30.14-15; the story of the birth of Tamar's twins with the tying of the red thread around the wrist of the first born: Gen. 38.27, the fertility specialists of Ezek. 13.17-23, naming (e.g. the naming of Eve as 'mother of all living'), times of national crisis: war (Joshua 6; 10.12-13), and death (1 Kgs 17.17-24 and 2 Kgs 4.18-37).

c. *Magic as the Lore of the Outsider and as Foreign Product*

The classic definition of magic, of the magician as outsider, is the one formulated by Blau. This is usually backed up by a reference to Deut. 16.9-14: indeed an impressively technical list of magical and divinatory practices are outlawed because they are not of 'true' Israelite origins. Three remarks are necessary here: firstly, this is a sophisticated list of eight expressions of such specialization as to beg the question of their real place in the life of the ancient Israelites; in other words, *even if* these terms were of foreign origin (which is by no means certain) they have been appropriated and integrated into the life of the community. Secondly, there is an ideological bias pertaining to the book of Deuteronomy itself:

13. O. Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms (trans. T. J. Hallett; London: SPCK, 1978), p. 56.*

14. S. Ackerman, *Under Every Green Tree: Popular Religion in Sixth Century Judah* (HSM. 46; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1992). See also Z. Zevit, The Religions of Ancient Israel. A Synthesis of Parallectic Approaches (London and New York: Continuum, 2000).

15. Relevant texts are Ezek. 8.14 (lamenting Tammuz) and 13.17-23 (prophetesses), 1 Sam. 28; Jer. 7.18; 44.17, 21 (offering cakes to the queen of heaven), Isa. 57.3-13; 65.3-7.

any condemnation of what is *perceived* by its writers to go against the theology of the book and in particular to clash with the centralization of the cult needs to be taken with a pinch of salt. Is Deut. 18.9-14 a blueprint from which to understand and assess all things magical? Or is it an ideological rethinking of a situation, a masterly attempt to control religious intermediations by reducing them to a rather narrow understanding of prophecy?

Thirdly, examples of native magical practitioners and techniques abound in the Old Testament: kings and priests have access and recourse to magic, for example in their consulting oracles and lots in times of crisis (e.g. Jacob in his sneaky manipulation of sticks to ensure the multiplication of his flocks: Gen. 44; David's oracular consultations in times of military crisis: 1 Sam. 22.13-15; 23.2-4, 9-12; 2 Sam. 2.1). Moses and Aaron are similarly not above using magic rods in Exodus 7–10 and 14. Ordinary people use it too; notably to aid fertility (e.g. Leah and Rebekah in their fertility contest: Genesis 30).

Dreams, another form of supranatural communication, are dreamt by characters beyond foreign suspicion: Jacob again (Genesis 28), Joseph (Gen. 37.5; 40.9ff), Solomon (1 Kings 3) and Daniel (Daniel 2). All of them, and these are only a few examples, are beyond question fine specimens of Israelites whose allegiance and active participation in God's plan cannot be faulted.

d. *Gender Issues*[16]

It was once a cliché to say that women practise magic and men 'do' religion. This obviously needs reassessing: 1 Samuel 28 shows how an isolated and vulnerable woman is compassionate (and politically sensitive) to the man responsible for her marginalization. Ezekiel 13 is a curious text, which, according to a recent suggestion, may indicate that the prophetesses be viewed positively as 'healers'[17]. Feminist interpreters have already pointed out Deborah's judicial, prophetic and military functions in Judge 4.3. Furthermore, there is a suggestion that her association with *Lappidoth* (translated as 'flame' or 'spirit') presents her from the outset as an inspired woman. She is also the recipient and transmitter of the predictive word of God, as Judg. 4.9 shows.

16. There are many texts concerning women's involvement in magic (see some examples in this article). The fate of women magicians has followed the same fortune as the fate of popular religion vis-à-vis the rise of Yahwism. The control of the priestly caste extended to the whole of ancient Israelite life and religious forms with devastating results for the religious (non-Yahwist) women practitioners who were now branded.

17. N. Bowen, 'The Daughter of your People: Female Prophets in Ezekial 13.17-23', JBL 18(1999): 417-33.

4. *The Literary Function of Magic in the Old Testament*

Without claiming exhaustive coverage of the question, I shall illustrate a number of functions by means of a couple of examples.

(a) The first example I have chosen is that of Moses in Exodus 7–10: the magical contest of Moses and Aaron against the magicians of Pharaoh. The story is well known and I do not need to retell it here. In this narrative, magic is used in the most spectacular fashion to demonstrate the power of Yahweh over Pharaoh, the power of life over death. The fact that strikingly the same tools are used by both parties in the contest shows that there is a very thin line between 'good' magic and 'bad' magic and that the distinction on technical grounds is rather spurious. The point is that magic is used as a theological tool to demonstrate God's power. It is also noteworthy that ideas of magic are intimately connected with creation in this text. Magic is that which 'undoes' the world, so that God can recreate it, and show his total control over the world. Indeed, it is clear that magic is best understood within the framework of a theology of creation.

(b) The case of Elijah and Elisha: I have chosen the narratives of 1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 9 because of the high concentration of 'magical events' in a relatively short literary piece. The main function of the stories is the retelling of the religious situation as put across by the Deuteronomistic historians. This is done through stories of great deeds beyond the ordinary power of normal people. When the editors want to show that Elijah and Elisha's actions have strong backing from Yahweh, they are consistently shown as tapping into the divine energy through direct inquiry of Yahweh, the performance of miracles and acts of magic. There are numerous examples of their magical endeavours: from the catastrophic control of weather and its subsequent withdrawal of fertility (1 Kings 17) to manifesting primal forces (fire: 1 Kgs 18.38; rain: 1 Kgs 18.1; we can include here 2 Kgs 2.8, 14: the parting of waters with a rolled-up coat); the manipulation of fire (2 Kgs 1.10-14); delivering an oracular death sentence on Ahaziah (2 Kgs 1.6); healing (2 Kgs 5.1-16); inflicting disease (2 Kgs 5.25-27; 2 Kgs 6.18); possible resurrection of the dead (1 Kgs 17:17-24; 2 Kgs 4.1-37); multiplication of food (Elijah: 1 Kgs 17.6; Elisha: 2 Kgs 4.1-7, 42-44), use of ecstatic techniques in order to deliver an oracle (Elisha: 2 Kgs 3.15); control over animals (2 Kgs 2.23-24); cleansing poisonous waters (2 Kgs 2.19-22) or making a meal poisonous (2 Kgs 3.16-20); and retrieving metal axes from the bottom of a lake (2 Kgs 6.5-7). Although it has been argued that the behaviour of Elijah and Elisha present striking parallels to shamanistic

behaviour,[18] it is the literary function of their actions that I would like to reflect on. All the examples I have given are concerned with creational activity: magic is concerned with life, fertility, food and death, i.e. the basics of human life.

What is noteworthy here is not so much the prophetic behaviour or the miracle per se, than the *scale* of wondrous acts of the two prophets: these are larger than life. From a literary perspective magic is clearly used to reinforce the Deuteronomistic claim to establish prophecy: Elijah and Elisha are presented within the literary–prophetic framework of the figure of Moses, as both figures are presented as suggesting Moses himself: the 'spirit' of Yahweh rests on both of them (1 Kings 17 and 19, see also the succession story and the passing on of the mantle to Elisha: 1 Kings 19.19). Both are deeply set within the political world: they guard the faith of Yahweh. This is to be understood within the privileged position given to prophets and prophecy by the Historical Books. It could be said that the privileged position of the prophet is shown as participation in the divine power, through the forces of creation.[19] Participation in divine power may also explain successful forthtelling.

The preceding remarks warn us against the danger of looking at isolated passages.

When instances of magic and divination occur they are often part of situations of crisis: anxiety in a war setting where the outcome is far from obvious, or indeed where a section of the army or a group of men are in dire straits, trapped or in helpless situations. Similar contexts of magical or divinatory activity are reflected in the entire Ancient Near Eastern world of Mesopotamia, Egypt and Ugarit.

As the examples given above demonstrate, there is a great variety of techniques, and of practitioners: practising magic and divination is part of Ancient Near Eastern society. It is often the case that these techniques are exercised by some individuals on behalf of the group rather than by solitary individuals (as seen for instance in post-biblical times).

It seems also that within a worldview which takes magic at face value another function seems to be the acquisition of knowledge. A case in point is David's use of divination techniques, mostly associated with situations of political crisis and war.[20]

Another function, as has been argued above in the context of the Elijah and Elisha narratives, is to reinforce the concept of prophecy.

18. A.S. Kapelrud, 'Shamanistic Features in the Old Testament', in C.M. Edsman (ed.), Studies in Shamanism (Stockholm: Almqvist Wiskell, 1967), pp. 90–96.

19. The forces of creation are just that: 'forces'. Their negative aspects i.e. cursing or inflicting disease and positive aspects i.e. healing are a product of the will of the practitioner.

20. 1 and 2 Samuel, especially 2 Sam. 21.1.

Lastly it could be contended that the principal function of magic in the Old Testament is theological: 'inquiring of the Lord' was common. In the debate that argues for the distinctiveness of magic versus religion, the question of the purpose of the Historical Books is particularly relevant: Israel is not fighting on her own (e.g. Joshua 6): it is Yahweh who fights on her behalf. In many examples the use of magic is to show that deeds of war and conquest are impossible without God's intervention, and even the division of land, the basis of ancient Israel's identity, is owed to God's will. Through its portrayal of 'impossible' circumstances, which cannot be resolved by ordinary means, magic is a vehicle expressing, not so much the general anxiety of the people in times of crisis but their dependence on Yahweh.

Conclusion

To sum up, although there is no simple answer to the complicated question of understanding magic in the Old Testament, I have attempted to give a whistle-stop tour of the major problems surrounding the area of magic. The history of interpretation and a search for the definition of magic unearthed a major shift in paradigm: magic is shown to be an inadequate term, in the sense that it is loaded not only with ideological presuppositions but also with a history of interpretation which is based on a Platonic view of magic, thus emphasizing a hierarchical view, subordinating magic to religion while at the same time perpetuating the dichotomy between magic and religion. Equally the assumptions of foreign-ness and gender bias should make us suspicious of ideological tampering.

Our re-evaluation suggests that, when taking into account its world-view, magic is perceived to be 'real': it is part and parcel of the world of the ancient Israelites. The occurrences of magic at all levels of society certainly suggest that. We can also say that magic is used for a variety of functions, from obtaining personal or public knowledge to being a vehicle for theology.

Both magic and religion are usually ill-defined and their relationship is to be understood as part of a belief system within ancient Israelites' variety of modes of intermediation with the divine. More specifically, what we call 'magic' in the Old Testament can only be understood as part of an ancient cosmology and as an example of a creator God. Thus, magic is truly 'magic from before the dawn of time'.

CATALOGUE OF SPIRITS, LITURGICAL MANUSCRIPT WITH ANGELOLOGICAL CONTENT, INCANTATION? REFLECTIONS ON THE CHARACTER OF A FRAGMENT FROM QUMRAN (4Q230 1). WITH APPENDIX: EDITION OF THE FRAGMENTS OF IAA #114

Eibert Tigchelaar

The completion of the first publications of virtually all the Dead Sea Scrolls fragments in the series Discoveries in the Judaean Desert within a period of little more than ten years has been a veritable *tour de force*, for which the editor-in-chief, Emanuel Tov, should be credited. Nonetheless, also after this completion, some more fragments, not published in the series, have been published. This goes for fragments which belonged to private collections, and also for some already known fragments which by accident had been overlooked. An example of the latter are fourteen fragments on IAA #114.[1] Thirteen of those fragments had been photographed on the bottom half of the photograph PAM 43.327. The Reed Catalogue recorded these fragments as 'M125C *Liturgical Ms with Angelogical content*',[2] and the contents of the larger fragment suggest that this is the text which Milik called *Catalogue of Spirits*. I recently presented a preliminary transcription of and comments on the largest fragment.[3] In this contribution I shall reflect further on the genre and possible use of this very fragmentary text which mentions evil spirits.[4]

1. Formerly ROC inv. nr. 114, but the fragments are no longer kept in the Rockefeller Museum.

2. S.A. Reed, M.J. Lundberg, M.B. Phelps, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Catalogue: Documents, Photographs and Museum Inventory Numbers* (SBLRBS 32; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1994), pp. 146, 320, 328 and 376. The Catalogue also uses the names *Liturgical MS* and *Liturg. MS with angelic content*, and mentions the ROC Inventory number 114, as well as the earlier PAM photographs 41.422 and 41.712. The 'M' in the siglum M125C indicates it was a text assigned to Józef Milik, so it seems safe to infer that he provided the name.

3. E.J.C. Tigchelaar, '"These are the names of the spirits of ..." : A Preliminary Edition of *4QCatalogue of Spirits (4Q230)* and New Manuscript Evidence for the *Two Spirits Treatise* (*4Q257* and *1Q29a*)', *RevQ* 84 (2004): 529–547.

4. P.S. Alexander, '"Wrestling against the Wickedness in High Places": Magic and the Worldview of the Qumran Community', in S.E. Porter, C.A. Evans (eds.), *The Scrolls and the Scriptures: Qumran Fifty Years After* (JSPS 26; Roehampton Institute London Papers 3;

1. *Text and Comments*

The largest fragment, 4Q230 1, has the following text:

1.]ורוח ה]טמ[אה
2.]גזל ורוח תופלה[
3.]. ורוח בוז ואגרוף רשע[
4.] אלה שמות רוחות ה[
5.]חושך *vacat* ונקל[ות]ה בכול[
6.]עם כול פועל[י] און עד[
7.] אש *vacat* [

bottom margin

1.] and [the] un[clean] spirit[
2.] robbery and a spirit of insolence [
3.] and a spirit of contempt and a wicked fist [
4.] These are the names of the spirits of the [
5.] darkness *vacat* and cursed are [you] in all [
6.] with all the evildoer[s] until [
7.] fire. *vacat* [

bottom margin

Let us start with a few basic comments and observations. Clauses with אלה שמות, 'these are the names', usually conclude a list of names, whereas clauses with ואלה שמות, 'now these are the names', introduce lists of names. Hence line 4 would seem to conclude a list of names of spirits. It is therefore tempting to interpret the phrases in lines 2 and 3 as names of spirits: '[a spirit of] robbery', 'a spirit of insolence', 'a spirit of contempt', and 'a wicked fist'. The few remains of line 1 should probably be read as ורוח ה]טמ[אה, 'and the spirit of impurity'. This expression may be part of the list, or, in view of its general character, as part of the heading of the list.

If line 4 concludes a list, then the following lines should be part of a new section. The small gap between 'darkness' and 'and cursed are you (sing.)',[5] as well as the introduction of a second person address, may suggest that the latter introduces a new section, but the conjunction 'and' could indicate that this is merely the second part of the final unit. Due to the fragmentary character of the text it is not clear who is being addressed.

Sheffield : Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp. 318–337, and F. García Martínez, 'Magic in the Dead Sea Scrolls', in Jan N. Bremmer, Jan R. Veenstra (eds.), *The Metamorphosis of Magic from Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period* (Groningen Studies in Cultural Change 1; Leuven: Peeters, 2002), pp. 13–33, both treat texts dealing with evil spirits as magical texts.

5. The words 'and cursed are you' (ונקל [וה] ה) are not complete, but I don't see how it should be reconstructed in any other meaningful way.

The same goes for the identity and nature of the evildoers in line 6, and for the overall statement of lines 6–7. The text ends in line 7 with 'fire', and since the bottom margin is much larger than usual in the scrolls, this probably was the end of the scroll. Therefore, it is most likely that lines 5–7 in their entirety belong to a final section consisting of a curse.

Any attempts towards a more specific interpretation must be based on assumptions about the possible genre and function of the text to which this fragment belonged. For each possibility we may refer to different texts from Qumran.

2. *A Catalogue of Spirits*

The enumeration of different spirits, as well as the concluding remark: 'These are the names of the spirits of', apparently prompted Milik to give it the provisional name *Catalogue of Spirits*. This is a remarkable list. Three of the four items of lines 2–3, '[a spirit of] robbery', 'a spirit of insolence', and 'a spirit of contempt', are not attested elsewhere.[6] The fourth item, 'a wicked fist', is found in a literal sense in Isa. 58.4. In addition, lists of spirits referring to a disposition or to behaviour, do occur in some other texts, but nowhere are these referred to as names of spirits. The phrase: 'These are the names of the spirits of ...' instead of a mere 'These are the spirits of ...' may indicate some degree of individuality or personification of these dispositions.

The list of spirits may be compared to the *Two Spirits Treatise (1QS III 13–IV 26)*,[7] an independent composition within the *Rule of the Community* (1QS), and *T. Reub.* 3.2-6. Part of the *Two Spirits Treatise* consists of the section on the two ways (1QS IV 2-14), which lists the ways (virtues) belonging to the 'spirit of humility' (IV 2-8) and those (vices) belonging to the 'spirit of injustice'. Due to the consecutive enumeration of these virtues and vices (and the existence of different recensions) the syntactical structuring of these lists is not entirely clear.[8] The 'catalogue of virtues' mentions two spirits, a 'spirit of humility' (IV 3), and a 'spirit of

6. In fact, in other catalogues listing vices most of these titles are absent. Cf., however, *Didache* 5:1 which includes ἁρπαγαί, 'robbery', and θρασύτης, 'insolence'.

7. All quoted Qumran texts are available in Hebrew/Aramaic and English in D. Parry, E. Tov, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader* (6 vols.; Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004-2005), and in F. García Martínez, E.J.C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans; Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2000).

8. E. Kamlah, *Die Form der katalogischen Paränese im Neuen Testament* (WUNT 7; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1964), 46–47, and Jean Duhaime, 'Les voies des deux esprits (1QS iv 2-14)', *RevQ* 75 (2000): 349–67, both discern two groups of seven, beginning with a 'spirit' clause. Shaul Shaked, 'Qumran and Iran: further considerations', *Israel Oriental Studies* 2 (1972): 433–46, at 439, regards the first 'spirit' clause as the general heading, and then sees four groups of three virtues or spirits.

knowledge' (IV 4), as well as eleven or twelve virtues, whereas the list of vices begins with the 'spirit of injustice' (IV 9), and mentions a series of vices, one being attributed to a 'spirit of lust' (IV 10).[9] *T. Reub.* 3.2-6 lists the seven spirits of deceit: the spirit of impurity, the spirit of insatiate desire, the spirit of fighting, the spirit of flattery and trickery, the spirit of arrogance, the spirit of lying, and the spirit of unrighteousness. Where 1QS IV 9 attributes a series of vices to the 'spirit of injustice', *T. Reub.* refers to seven specific 'spirits of deceit'. In the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* '(personified) vices and the spirits of these vices are mentioned together and are virtually interchangeable',[10] and in fact, several times they are seen as the evil spirits of Beliar, 'the prince of deceit' (*T. Sim.* 2.7; *T. Jud.* 19.4).[11] Most scholars see the spirits in the *Two Ways Section* of the *Two Spirits Treatise* as human dispositions, rather than personified vices. However, if one reads the *Two Spirits Treatise* in the light of the *Testaments*, then the (personified) vices may be seen as the spirits belonging to Beliar or the Angel of Darkness. This has been argued long ago by Shaked, who described systemic correspondences between the Iranian worldview and the view of some Qumran texts, and argued that in the *Two Spirits Treatise* 'spirit', like Zoroastrian *mēnōg*, is 'applied in a triple manner, to designate a psychological faculty, a metaphysical entity and a divine being (angel or demon)'.[12] The *Catalogue of Spirits* provides evidence for the view that at least in some cases 'spirit' in Qumran can denote both a disposition (a vice) and its personification in the form of an

9. Duhaime sees the clause with the reference to the 'spirit of lust' as part of an intermezzo, not of the actual list of vices.

10. H.W. Hollander, M. de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. A Commentary* (SVTP 8; Leiden: Brill, 1985), p. 50. See, e.g., *T. Dan* 1:3 'anger' (as vice) and 1:7-8 'One of the spirits of Beliar conspired with me ... Now this is the spirit of anger.' Cf. also P.A. Munch, 'The Spirits in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs', *Acta Orientalia* 13 (1935): 257–63. Another example is the 'spirit of hatred' and 'hatred' in *T.Gad* 3-5.

11. Cf. L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte, *The Antecedents of Antichrist. A Traditio-Historical Study of the Earliest Christian Views on Eschatological Opponents* (JSJS 49; Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 289–95.

12. Shaked, 'Qumran and Iran', 436. Cf. also S. Shaked, 'The Notions *mēnōg* and *gētīg* in the Pahlavi Texts and their Relation to Eschatology', *Acta Orientalia* 33 (1971), 59–107, at 83: 'There is, it should be remembered, a high degree of abstraction in Zoroastrian literature right from the *Gāthā*, where the whole pantheon consists of terms which denote abstract ideas... On the other hand, it is likely that on the lower level of religion these expressions were taken literally, and the concepts of demonology, as well as those connected to the relationship between man and the good spirits, were understood in concrete form.' Due to a reaction against pan-Iranian approaches of the first period of Qumran research, Shaked has not received much approval from Qumranologists, except recently from F. García Martínez, 'Iranian Influences in Qumran?', in M. McNamara (ed.), *Apocalyptic and Eschatological Heritage. The Middle East and Celtic Realms* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), pp. 37–49. Most scholars take the approach that in any given text 'spirit' can only refer to one of these

evil spirit or demon. A comparison with the *Two Spirits Treatise* is also for another reason of interest. In 1QS the entire section on the two ways is headed by: 'And these are their ways upon earth', referring to the 'ways' or 'operations' of the two opposed spirits. The list of virtues (or paths of the spirit of humility) is concluded by: 'These are the counsels of the spirit ...', but the parallel list of vices or paths of the spirit of unrighteousness lacks such a concluding remark. 4Q230 1 4, however, presents such a conclusion which is missing from the similar list in 1QS.

Should one then regard 4Q230 1 as a catalogue of spirits, perhaps even as a parallel to the section on the two ways in the *Two Spirits Treatise*? This would be fitting for the first four lines, and perhaps also for some of the smaller fragments. Fragment 8 may also refer to vices or evil spirits, the most notable word being חפנה, 'pollution', which is (in the alternative form חנף) one of the vices mentioned in 1QS IV 9-11. The occurrence of the word תול ד[וה, 'natures', in frag. 9 also reminds one of the *Two Spirits Treatise*. On the other hand, the רוח בינה, 'spirit of insight', in frag. 12 may have belonged to a list of positive spirits.

The comparison with the lists or catalogues of the *Two Spirits Treatise* and *T. Reuben* does not explain the use of the second person address in line 5 'and cursed are you'. One may argue that both the curse in lines 5–7, including the 'fire', and the concluding judgement in 1QS IV 11-14 of the list of vices are comparable with regard to the final fate of these spirits or those who walk in their ways, but the difference between a description or an instruction on the one hand, and a direct address of those concerned asks for further considerations. Apparently, the work included some kind of catalogue of spirits, but that characterization does not explain all features of the fragment.

3. *A Liturgical Manuscript with Angelogical Content*

The designation 'M125C *Liturgical Ms with Angelo[lo]gical content*' shows that this name preceded the later '4Q230–4Q231 *Catalogue of Spirits*$^{a\text{-}b}$', since sigla like M125C were used prior to the 4Q numbers. This title seems strange, since it is not immediately clear in what sense the text would be liturgical, and why the spirits which are associated with negative attributes would be referred to as 'angels'. Yet, the photograph (PAM 43.327) of the fragments of 4Q230 on the same plate as those of 4Q280 (4QCurses) suggests a possible explanation of this former characterization. The main fragment of 4Q280, frag. 2, consists of a series of curses, which are comparable to those of 1QS II 2–18 and 4Q286 (4QBerakhot^{a})

entities: a human disposition, a metaphysical entity, or a demon. Cf., e.g., A.E. Sekki, *The Meaning of* Ruah *at Qumran* (SBLDS 110; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989). Sekki by and large ignores Shaked's views (references to Shaked are on 19 n. 57, 195 n. 10 and 197 n. 17).

7 ii (paralleled in 4Q287 6). Those two latter texts describe part of the liturgy of blessings and curses which was part of the annual covenantal ceremony. The most extensive form of these curses appears in 4QBerakhot, which contains a complex series of curses on Belial, the spirits of his lot, the sons of Belial, and all those who execute their wicked schemes. Somewhat similar curses, but in a different context, are found in 1QM (War Scroll) XIII 2-6, where Belial and the spirits of his lot are cursed. The expression 'spirits of his lot' which is used in the curses in 4Q286 and 1QM XIII, is quite rare, but also occurs in the *Two Spirits Treatise* (1QS III 24) to refer to the angels allied to the Angel of Darkness.[13]

The vocabulary of the judgement in the *Two Spirits Treatise* (1QS IV 11-14) corresponds in several unique details to that of the curses.[14] This means that the description of the judgement that is related to the ways of the spirits of injustice in the *Two Spirits Treatise* resembles the curses spoken against Belial, the spirits of his lot, and those (human beings) who follow their ways. The preserved vocabulary of 4Q230 is different from that of the texts mentioned above. The fragment does attest though a combination of literary forms: a specification of the spirits of the lot of Belial is followed by a curse.

The curses in 1QS II, 4Q280, 4Q286 7 ii and 1QM XIII all belong to liturgical settings. 4Q230 1 preserves nothing that indicates such a setting, and the evidence of the other fragments is very meagre. One may speculate that the beginning of line 5 could have read:

ואמרו ארור אתה מלאך הח]שך ונקל[ות]ה בכול

> And they will say: Accursed be you, Angel of dark]ness, and cursed be you in all.

One or two of the other fragments may support the hypothesis that this composition consisted of a liturgical combination of both blessings or praise and curses. Frag. 12 line 2 reads]שמות בל[,[15] which may be an address to God who has placed something in the speaker's or someone

13. The other occurrences are in 11Q13 (*11QMelchizedek*) 2 12-13; and in a prayer in 4Q449 1 5. R.A. Werline, 'The Curses of the Covenant Renewal Ceremony in 1QS 1.16-2.19 and the Prayers of the Condemned', in R.A. Argall, B.A. Bow, R.A. Werline (eds.), *For a Later Generation. The Transformation of Tradition in Israel, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000), pp. 280–88, draws parallels between the judgement of the watchers in *1 En.* 12-16 and the language of the curses.

14. Cf. אף עברת אל, 'the furious anger of God', only in 1QS IV 12 and 4Q286 7 ii 10; שחת עולם, 'eternal pit', in 1QS IV 12 and 4Q286 7 ii 5 (cf. also 4Q418 69 ii 6); זעוה, 'terror', only in 1QS II 6, IV 12, and 4Q280 2 3.

15. In ' "These are the names of the spirits of. . .:" A Preliminary Edition', I transcribed שמח, but the fragment itself clearly shows a *taw* and not a *het*. For this expression 'you have placed in my/his heart', cf. 1QH[a] X 18; 4Q435 2 i 2 par 4Q436 1 ii 1.

else's heart. The following line mentions the רוח בינה, 'spirit of understanding'. The combination of these two phrases is found in 4Q444 1-4 i+5 3:

ורוח דעת ובינה אמת וצדק שם אל בל[בבי

> And God put a spirit of knowledge and understanding, truth and righteousness in my heart.

This evidence for a liturgical use is extremely limited, and not enough to prove anything. Yet, it shows that the preserved fragments may perhaps be read as part of a liturgical manuscript that deals with spirits and ends with a curse of the evil spirits.

4. *Incantation or Apotropaic Prayer*

The interpretation of the text as a liturgical manuscript does not explain the enumeration of the different kinds of spirits. Other curses in liturgical texts merely refer to 'all the spirits of his lot'. However, a listing of spirits is not only found in the catalogues of the *Two Spirits Treatise* and *T. Reub.* 3, but, in a different manner, also in incantations and apotropaic prayers from Qumran.[16] Thus, 4Q444 1-4 i+5 refers to 'spirits of wickedness', 'bastards', the 'spirit of impurity', whereas 'the thief' or 'the thiev[es]' might also refer to spirits. Likewise, 4Q510 1 5 lists 'all the spirits of the destroying angels, and the spirits of the bastards, the demons, Lilith, the howlers, and the yelpers'. The background of some of these terms, notably the 'bastards' is to be found in *1 Enoch* and in *Jubilees*, which state that the evil spirits both lead man to stray or to sin and cause afflictions and illnesses.[17] In the Dead Sea Scrolls the emphasis is generally on the first aspect, the harm which Belial and his spirits try to do to the community and its members by leading them into error, but at the same time the influence that spirits have on the body is attested in several texts. This is attested most explicitly in texts that are generally viewed as non-

16. On incantations and apotropaic prayers see most recently and comprehensively: Esther Eshel, 'Genres of Magical Texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls', in A. Lange, H. Lichtenberger, K.F.D. Römheld (eds.), *Die Dämonen/Demons. Die Dämonologie der israelitisch-jüdischen und frühchristlichen Literatur im Kontext ihrer Umwelt/The Demonology of Israelite-Jewish and Early Christian Literature in Context of their Environment* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), pp. 395–415; 'Apotropaic Prayers in the Second Temple Period', in: E.G. Chazon (ed.), *Liturgical Perspectives. Prayer and Poetry in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 48; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 69-88.

17. The literature is vast. Cf. in general P.S. Alexander, 'The Demonology of the Dead Sea Scrolls', in: P.W. Flint, James C. VanderKam (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 2, pp. 351–53, and J.C. VanderKam, 'The Demons in the Book of Jubilees', in Lange, Lichtenberger, Römheld (eds.), *Die Dämonen*, pp. 339–64.

sectarian, such as 4Q560, which in its preserved parts contains an incantation against two different male and female illness demons that 'enter into the flesh' and 'enter into the tooth',[18] or in the *Plea for Deliverance* (11QPsa XIX 15-16): 'Let not Satan rule over me, nor an unclean spirit; neither let pain nor the evil inclination take possession of my bones'.

The idea that illness and physical affliction are due to spirits or demons having entered into, or sitting in, the body or specific bodily parts is widely attested in Aramaic magical texts.[19] The texts mainly refer to exorcism of spirits or eradication of illness from persons, their bodies or specific bodily parts.[20] The terminology shows that in these magical texts spirits are agents of illnesses, and that spirits and their illnesses are not always differentiated.[21]

In the Dead Sea Scrolls the terminology is on the whole not identical to that of the later Aramaic incantation texts, but a limited number of texts do refer to the presence of spirits in the bodies of individuals. 4Q444 (4QIncantation) mentions 'spirits of controversy' (רוחי ריב) in the speaker's 'bodily structure' (במבניתי) and in 'innards of flesh' (תבמי בשר). These spirits of controversy are mentioned in the next lines, namely 'the spirit of knowledge and understanding, truth and righteousness' which God has bestowed on the one hand, and 'spirits of wickedness' on the other hand. For the notion of struggle between spirits in individuals, the editor refers to the *Two Spirits Treatise* (1QS III 23): 'Until now the spirits of truth and deceit struggle in the heart of humans'.[22] The incantation text 4Q444 is closely related to the *Songs of the Sage* (4Q510 and 4Q511), which also refers to a war between

18. The official edition of this text in the *Discoveries in the Judean Desert* series is being prepared by Emile Puech, but cf. J. Naveh, 'Fragments of an Aramaic Magic Book from Qumran', *Israel Exploration Journal* 48 (1998): 252–61, with references to earlier treatments of this fragment.

19. Cf. the texts in J. Naveh, S. Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls. Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press/Leiden: Brill, 1985); eidem, *Magic Spells and Formulae: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1993). Christa Müller-Kessler, 'Dämon + YTB 'L - Ein Krankheitsdämon. Eine Studie zu aramäischen Beschwörungen medizinischen Inhalts', in B. Böck, E. Cancik-Kirschbaum, T. Richter (eds.), *Munuscula Mesopotamica. Festschrift für Johannes Renger* (AOAT 267; Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 1999), pp. 341–354.

20. Cf. some examples from the Amulets in Naveh, Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Spells*: 'from the body' (Amulet 2 l. 8-9), 'from the body and the two hundred and forty eight limbs' (Amulet 9 2-3; cf. also 19 l. 5-6, 25-28), 'from the body and her foetus in her belly' (Amulet 27 ll. 4-7), 'from his eyes, from his nostril, from his head, from his tendon[s,] [from the eye-]lids' (Amulet 5 ll. 5-6), 'from the head' and 'from the bones (?) of the chest' (Amulet 11 l. 4-5, 10).

21. Cf. for a short survey Naveh, Shaked, *Magic Spells*, pp. 34–39.

22. E. Chazon, *DJD* XXIX, p. 375.

contending spirits in the speaker's body.[23] In these texts it is not entirely clear whether the struggle has a conceived physical element, or whether the references to the body should be understood metaphorically. However, the unique term חבמ׳ם, often translated as a general word 'organs', 'vitals' or 'innards', but perhaps 'blood vessels', which has only been attested in Qumran Hebrew, is used in a real physical sense in the *Hodayot*, where it is always connected to some kind of evil that is in these חבמ׳ם.[24] Several of the hymns in the *Hodayot* describe physical pain and agony, but in many cases it is not clear whether this refers to the physical condition of the author, or is used metaphorically. One of the cases which is most clear, although dependent on some reconstruction of only partly preserved words, is a hymn in 1QH[a] frag. 4 (now attributed to col. XXII), which refers to the plagues that afflict humans and pains, and refers to the rebuke (or exorcism) of every adversary who ruins. All these texts may be understood as general apotropaic prayers that request protection against the evil spirits, to be recited at specific liturgical times.[25]

Unlike those texts, the fragmentary text of 4Q230 has no references to the body, and hardly preserves the terminology of those incantations or apotropaic prayers, apart from the use of קלל, 'to curse', in 4Q230 1 5 and 4Q511 11 3.[26] Another verbal correspondence with these texts can be found, as stated above, in 4Q230 frag. 12 where God may be addressed as having placed something in the author's (?) heart (?), possibly the 'spirit of understanding' mentioned in the next line. However, a major difference with the texts classified by Eshel as apotropaic prayers is the second person address in the form ונקל[ות]ה, 'and cursed are you'.

The use of a direct address, in combination with the previous enumeration of names of spirits, allows for the possibility that the curse has been directed to one (or more) of those spirits, and that the spirits were listed either in order to determine which one should be addressed, or to include them all. In this respect, the listing of names may be compared to the question preceding some incantations about the identity of the demon spirit. One example from Qumran is 11Q11 (*Apocryphal Psalms*) V 5-6: 'When he comes to you in the night, you shall say to him: Who are you, the one who was born of man and of the seed of the holy ones?' The

23. For parallels between 4Q444 and 4Q510-4Q511, cf. Chazon, *DJD* XXIX, pp. 370–71.

24. The *Hodayot* abounds with body language, and often it is not clear whether this is used literally or metaphorically. Yet, 1QH[a] XIII 28 'an incurable pain, a wasting disease in the *innards* of your servant', may be seen as a metaphor, but E. Qimron, 'Notes on the 4QZadokite Fragment on Skin Disease', *JJS* 52 (1991): 256–59, suggests that the reference is to a skin disease that affects the blood vessels.

25. Eshel, 'Apotropaic Prayers', pp. 83–84, who consider the annual covenant ceremony, or the days of the appointed times. 1QH[a] frag. 4 refers to the daily periods of evening and morning.

26. Cf. also the use of the noun קללה, 'curse', in 11Q11 (*Apocryphal Psalms*) IV 10.

direct address invites us to seek for a specific occasion for such a curse, for example when a person suffers from an affliction that may be attributed to an unknown spirit.

Within this line of interpretation one may suggest a corresponding explanation of the 'evildoers' of line 6. The term is not used elsewhere in the Dead Sea Scrolls, but it is found repeatedly in the Hebrew Bible, especially as a reference to some of the enemies of the psalmist.[27] Mowinckel suggested that in Psalms 6 and 28 the 'evildoers' had brought about the sickness of the psalmist, and these should be regarded as 'sorcerers'.[28] This suggestion, however cautiously made, has been much criticized, but the resurgence of the term in a context dealing with spirits suggests that it has been interpreted in Second Temple Judaism in a similar manner, referring to those connected to or responsible for illness.

The late Aramaic incantations of evil spirits with names referring to specific illnesses or connected to body parts, such as 'fever', or 'spirit of the bones' seem to stand worlds apart from such personified spirits of vices such as 'spirit of insolence', or 'spirit of robbery'. Yet, the relation between specific vices and bodily parts is indicated in *T. Reub.* 3.2-3 according to which the spirit of impurity is seated in the nature and the senses, the spirit of insatiate desire is in the belly, and the spirit of fighting in the liver and the gall. A different kind of list which relates bodily parts to functions includes 'the liver for wrath, the gall for bitterness' (*T. Naph.* 2.8; cf. also Hebrew *T. Naph.*10.6).[29] However, perhaps one need not be so concrete. The identification of the spirit responsible for the illness need not have depended on the organ affected, but on the behaviour or attitude of the sufferer. The relation between sin, spirits and affliction is assumed in many Qumran texts, and the identification of the sin of the sufferer would allow one to identify and exorcize the spirit responsible for both the sin and the illness.

In that case, the curse at the end of the text could have a double function: it serves as an incantation to expel the impure spirit and to annul the illness provoked by that spirit, and at the same time it is cathartic: implicitly the sufferer denounces both the spirit and his own disposition or behaviour.

5. *Conclusion*

We hardly have any means of determining how texts and manuscripts were used in practice at Qumran. The physically strange form of 4Q444

27. Twenty-three occurrences, of which fifteen are in the Psalms.

28. S. Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (2 vols.; transl. D.R. Ap-Thomas; Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), 2, pp. 6–7, and esp. the translation on p. 11.

29. Cf. briefly on this list, M. de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Study of their Text, Composition and Origin* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1975), pp. 57–58.

(4QIncantation), consisting of strips of leather sewn top to bottom to one another, has given rise to speculation that its form might be related to its magic character, a suggestion discarded by Shaked.[30] Another incantation text, 11Q11 (*Apocryphal Psalms*) is unique in being the only scroll from Qumran with a handling stick (sewn to the end of the scroll), which may suggest an everyday usage. 4Q230 has no special features at all, apart from the fact that it is a rather unevenly written text. On the basis of texts that only give the words to be spoken during rituals and liturgies, one is inclined to reconstruct a community with a mainly verbal way of expressing its beliefs and, in this case, warding off spirits.

The attribution of the apotropaic *Songs of the Sage* (4Q510–4Q511) to the Sage or Maskil, as well as the references in other texts on this Maskil, suggest that he was the one person in the community who, apart from other functions, was responsible for dealing with, and teaching on the spirits.[31] It is no coincidence that the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, which aim at a mystical human participation in the angelic liturgy, the *Two Spirits Treatise*, which describes the nature of the spirits, as well as the *Songs of the Sage*, which aim to ward off evil spirits, are all to be recited by a, or the, Maskil. The Maskil also has the power to transfer blessings (1QSb) and curse (4Q511). 4Q230 is a text which combines elements of both the *Two Spirits Treatise* and the *Songs of the Sage* (or the related text 4QIncantation). Read within the context of Qumran literature, we have here an incantation embedded in a dualistic framework in which revealed knowledge is required to understand the nature of the spirits, and to defend oneself and one's community from the evil ones. It is the framework that determines the forms of magic, as well as our perceptions as to whether one should refer to such incantatory texts as magic or religion.

Appendix: Edition of the Fragments of IAA #114

The Israel Antiquities Authority Inv. Nr. 114 contains the thirteen fragments which were photographed in the bottom part of PAM 43.327,[32] as well as one additional small fragment. With permission of the IAA, I examined these fragments both with infra-red light, and with a microscope, in August 2005 in Jerusalem. I wish to thank the staff of the IAA for all their practical co-operation. For convenience' sake I maintain the numbering given to the fragments in the *Revue de Qumran*

30. Chazon, *DJD* XXIX, p. 368, n. 3.

31. Compare also P.S. Alexander, ' "Wrestling against the Wickedness in High Places" ', esp. p. 336.

32. The bottom half of photograph PAM 43.327 was published in *RevQ* 84 (2004): 532.

plate, even though one of the fragments (frag. 10) does not belong with the others. These fragments may be referred to as 4Q230 frags. 1–13.

The hand of the fragments is irregular and displays variation even in single letters, which makes it difficult to determine on the basis of the hand alone which fragments belong together. The distinction between *waw* and *yod* is not always clear to me. The colour of the fragments varies from light (frags. 2–4) to dark (frags. 7–8, 10). Many fragments suffer from small damages to the surface, sometimes resulting in loss of the upper skin at places (frag. 1 line 4; frag. 9). Fragments 7–8, which are both photographed in PAM 42.761, seem to be thinner than the other fragments. Spacing between the words is irregular, and in frag. 1 line 3 two words are joined. This may also have been the case in frag. 3 line 1, in frag. 4 line 2, and in frag. 5 line 1. The orthography with full spelling conforms to that of most Qumran writings.

4Q230 Frag. 1

1.]ורוחֹ[ה]טמ[אה
2.]גזל ורוח תופלה[
3.]. ורוח בוז ואנרוף רשע[
4.] אלה שמות רוחות ה[
5.]חֹושך *vacat* ונקל[ות]ה בכול[
6.]עם כול פועל[י] און ער[
7.] *vacat* אש [

bottom margin

1. The blank piece of leather after ורוחֹ virtually excludes the reading ורוחֹ[ות]טמ[אות
3. A small trace at the right side of the fragment belongs to the head of a letter.
5. Microscopic examination of the fragment reveals a tiny part of *het* on the right side.

4Q230 Frag. 2

1.]מֹנ[
2.]ב כה[
3.]בֹב[

4Q230 Frag. 3

1.]שלמל[
2.]תה אל[

4Q230 Frag. 4

1.]בֹס[
2.]ותלת[
3.]. שי [

2. The last letter has a basestroke. This either is an uncommon word like e.g. וחלחה[ח, or the remnants of two words without a word-dividing space.

4Q230 Frag. 5

1.]לפי[
2.]להתהלך
3.]כולכ[
4.].[

1. Or לף followed by a new word.
2. The last letter is probably *kap* or *mem*, but may be the first letter of a new word.

4Q230 Frag. 6

1.]ול[
2.]כש[

bottom margin or *vacat*

2. Last letter is *śîn* or *'ayin*.

4Q230 Frag. 7

1.]ומשמע[
2.]שמע .[
3.].[

2. Last letter is *dalet*, *he*, or even *ḥet*.

4Q230 Frag. 8

1.]אפ.[
2.]איש [
3a.]נפש
3.]חנפה *vac*[
4. ל]הדריך פעמ[י
5.]ומפשע[

4Q230 Frag. 9

1.]וחול ד[
2.]וצדק[
3.].א[

4Q230 Frag. 10

1.]את.[
2.].כי מן[
3.]אלף ים .[

Both the hand and the appearance of the skin are different from the other

fragments, and the fragment clearly does not belong with the other fragments.
3. If this is the correct reading, then the scribe may originally have written the singular אלף and then corrected it to a plural by adding ם.

4Q230 Frag. 11

1.]ול מערן[
2.]..[

4Q9 (Gen 42.38–43.2)[33]

4Q230 Frag. 12

1.]ש...[
2.]שמת בל[
3a.]רוח בינה[
3.]..[

4Q230 Frag. 13 [not in PAM 43.327]

1.]..[
2.]קול[
3.]..[

33. Cf. E.J.C. Tigchelaar, 'Minuscula Qumranica I', *RevQ* 84 (2004): 646.

THE DAUGHTERS OF MEDEA: ENCHANTING WOMEN IN THE GRAECO-HELLENISTIC WORLD

Christiane Kunst

Magic practised by women is a frequently documented phenomenon in antiquity dating back to Greek myths. At a quick glance it is apparent that mythical witches, Medea and Circe, are beautiful and attractive women, whereas their counterparts in Horace or Apuleius are ugly and repulsive hags. What we call magic was not a well-defined concept, let alone universally prosecuted,[1] but rather a set of activities encapsulating rituals which aimed at bettering one's fortune by using some sort of material aid. From this it becomes clear that not every ritual we have learned to call magic was negative or destructive or perceived to be alarming. The distinction between magic and religion and the characterization of magic as unsanctioned religious activities is not a historical one.[2] Yet the destructive power of rituals applied in private was universally feared. Plato writes:

> Begging priests and soothsayers go to rich men's doors and make them believe that they by means of sacrifices and incantations have accumulated a treasure of power from the gods ... and that if a man wishes to harm an enemy, at slight cost he will be enabled to injure just and unjust alike, since they are masters of spells and enchantments that constrain the gods to serve their end [ἀγύρται δὲ καὶ μάντεις ἐπὶ πλουσίων θύρας ἰόντες πείθουσιν ὡς ἔστι παρὰ σφίσι δύναμις ἐκ θεῶν ποριζομένη θυσίαις τε καὶ ἐπῳδαῖς, ... ἐάν τέ τινα ἐχθρὸν, πημῆναι ἐθέλῃ, μετὰ σμικρῶν δαπανῶν ὁμοίως δίκαιον ἀδίκῳ βλάψειν

1. C.R. Phillips III, '*Nullum Crimen sine Lege*: Socioreligious Sanctions on Magic', in C. Faraone and D. Obbink (eds.), *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 260–76.

2. M. Becker, 'Die "Magie" – Problematik der Antike: Genügt eine sozialwissenschaftliche Erfassung?', in *ZRGG* 54 (2002): 1 – 22; M. Becker, μάγος - und μαγεία. Ursprung und Wandel der griechischen "Magie" – Vorstellung, pp. 87–107 of this book; M.W. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), pp. 18ff; F. Graf, 'Excluding the Charming: The Development of the Greek Concept of Magic', in M. Meyer and P. Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (RGRW. 129; Leiden: Brill 1995), pp. 29–42; H.S. Versnel, 'Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic – Religion', *Numen* 38 (1991): 177–97.

> ἐπαγωγαῖς τισὶν καὶ καταδέσμοις, τοὺς θεούς, ὥς φασιν, πείθοντές σφισιν ὑπηρετεῖν].[3]

The curse tablets (*defixiones*) especially reflect the daunting aspect of magic: to harm a victim or to force a person under the will of the agent. The elder Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* 28.19) remarks: 'there is indeed nobody who does not fear to be spell-bound by imprecations' (*defigi quidem diris precationibus nemo non metuit*). Gravestones attest to a strong feeling of living under a constant threat, particularly when inexplicable illnesses occurred. An epitaph from the first century deplores:

> As I was approaching my fourth birthday I was seized and put in the ground. when I could have been sweet to my mother and father. A magic hand stole me away, everywhere cruel. While she is on earth she can also harm you and your children; guard them, parents, lest sorrow be driven into your hearts [*in quartum surgens comprensus deprimor annum/cum possem matri dulcis et esse patri. eripuit me saga manus crudelis ubique,/cum manet in terris et nocit [sic] arte sua/vos vestros natos concustodite parentes/ni dolor in toto pectore fixsus eat*].[4]

A Roman officer from Africa was convinced that his beloved wife, Ennia Fructuosa, was 'cursed by spells' (*carminibus defixa*) which killed her after a period of severe suffering.[5] More than 1500 known curse tablets show that the fear was not entirely unjustified. Some of the documents were found on or together with voodoo dolls. The most prominent example is a naked female figurine today kept in the Louvre, probably made at Antinoopolis in Egypt during the Severan period or later, with the limbs bound behind the back and the body pierced with needles (12 still in place). While the majority of the *tabellae defixionum* contain little more than the name or the binding words, those produced for a specific purpose can be divided up into five groups:[6] litigation curses, competition curses, trade curses, erotic curses and prayers for justice. The earliest spells to gain advantage in court, the political arena or in competition date from the fifth century BCE,[7] whereas trade curses almost entirely belong to the

3. Plato, *Resp.* 2, 364b-c.

4. CIL VI 19747 = ILS 8522 cf. Hor. *Epod.* 5.

5. CIL VIII 2756 Lambaesis/Numidien (after 212 CE).

6. D. Ogden, 'Binding Spells: Curse Tablets and Voodoo Dolls in the Greek and Roman Worlds', in B. Ankarloo and S. Clark (eds.) *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome* (London: The Athlone Press; Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), pp. 1–90 (31ff.); F. Graf, *Gottesnähe und Schadenzauber: Die Magie in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (München: Beck Verlag 1996), pp. 108ff.; J. Gager, *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 42–109.

7. C.A. Faraone, 'The Agonistic Context of Early Greek Binding Spells', in C.A. Faraone and D. Obbink (eds.), *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 3–32.

classical and Hellenistic period. A quarter of all classifiable extant tablets fall into the category of erotic curses. Erotic magic dates back to the archaic period,[8] whereas erotic curse tablets first appear in the fourth century BCE. Most of the early examples deal with separating the beloved one from a current partner. Not until the second century CE onwards, when binding tablets had spread all over the Mediterranean world, do we find specific curses on tablets to attract lovers. Διάκοποι, separation spells, were often applied by women to win or win back a man.[9] They disappear in the third century CE. Ἀγωγαί, attraction curses, which torture the victim and drive her to the agent are used primarily by men to gain sexual access to a specific woman.[10] Was there a specifically female role in practising 'magic'? Only recently has a controversy over the capacity of women's use of magic started. Whereas Chris Faraone in his book on Greek love magic (1999) emphasized that magic by woman was born out of desperation on the side of the home-bound Greek women, who tried to prevent her man from leaving,[11] Matthew Dickie (2001) portrayed the destructive ambitions of courtesans and other demi-monde ladies to employ magic.[12]

The present paper seeks to demonstrate that both positions are part of different ancient discourses on magic. The parallelism between femininity and magic will be expounded, starting from the reception of the witches Circe and Medea from archaic down to Hellenistic times. This literary tradition will then be contrasted with the documentary evidence from curse tablets and binding spells, asking what the aims of female involvement were.

The ambiguity of magic is already present in Plato's definition of φάρμακον (drug), the older term for μαγεία.

8. Homer, *Iliad* 14.198–223; 292–351: Hera borrows Aphrodite's band as a love charm to seduce Zeus; Homer, *Od.* 1.51–9; 5.148–59 cf. 9.94–5, 10.236, 12.184–5: Calypso makes Odysseus 'forget' Ithaca and his wife Penelope. C.A. Bonner, '*Kestos himas* and the saltire of Aphrodite', *AJP* 70 (1949): 1–6; C.A. Faraone, 'Aphrodite's *kestos* and Apples for Atalanta: Aphrodisiacs in Early Greek Myth and Ritual', *Phoenix* 44 (1990): 219–43.

9. C.A. Faraone, *Ancient Greek Love Magic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 96ff.

10. Faraone, *Ancient Greek Love Magic*, pp. 41ff. An exception and early attraction-curse tablet from Macedonia dates to the late fourth or early third century. Here a man attempts to bind two or three people and submit them to his desire; cf. D.R. Jordan, 'Three Curse Tablets', in D.R. Jordan, H. Montgomery and E. Thomassen (eds.), *The World of Ancient Magic* (Papers from the Norwegian Institute at Athens, 4; Bergen: Paul Åstrōm Förlag, 1999), pp. 115–24, no. 3.

11. Faraone, *Ancient Greek Love Magic*; now C.A. Faraone, 'Agents and Victims: Constructions of Gender and Desire in Ancient Greek Love Magic', in M.C. Nussbaum and J. Sihvola (eds.), *The Sleep of Reason: Erotic Experience and Sexual Ethics in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Chicago, IL and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 400–26.

12. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians*.

> A division in our treatment of poisoning cases is required by the fact that, following the nature of mankind, they are of two distinct types. The type that we have now expressly mentioned is that in which injury is done to bodies by bodies according to nature's laws. Distinct from this is the type which, by means of sorceries and incantations and spells as they are called, not only convinces those who attempt to cause injury that they really can do so, but convinces also their victims that they certainly are being injured by those who possess the power of bewitchment [διτταὶ γὰρ δὴ φαρμακεῖαι κατὰ τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων οὖσαι γένος ἐπίσχουσι τὴν διάρρησιν. Ἣν μὲν γὰρ τὰ νῦν διαρρήδην εἴπομεν, σώμασι σώματα κακουργοῦσά ἐστι κατὰ φύσιν· Ἄλλη δὲ ἣ μαγγανείαις τέ τισι καὶ ἐπῳδαῖς καὶ καταδέσεσι λεγομέναις πείθει τοὺς μὲν τολμῶντας βλάπτειν αὐτούς, ὡς δύνανται τὸ τοιοῦτον, τοὺς δ' ὡς παντὸς μᾶλλον ὑπὸ τούτων δυναμένων γοητεύειν βλάπτονται]. (Plato, *Laws* 9.933a)

Plato's view that a professional doctor or sorcerer had to die if he caused the death of a client, but a sentence for a layman had to be imposed depending on the severity of guilt, did not come through. The outcome of magic was punished, not necessarily the practice. In Rome for instance it was prosecuted by the *lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficiis*.[13]

The ambiguity or normality of magic is confirmed by Pliny who notes at the beginning of book 30, that *magi* operate in three fields: *medicina*, *religio* and *artes mathematicae* – medicine, ritual and astrology. While our sources concerning astrology in this respect are quite meagre, medicine and ritual offer insight into female behaviour.

The Transformation of Circe and Medea

First we have to look at Circe and Medea. Kottaridou has shown how the original goddesses were turned into witches, and experienced as alien by the strongly patriarchal–aristocratic way of thinking of the early archaic period.[14] That is of quite some interest because at the same time a tendency developed to cleanse male figures of older enchanting or shamanistic qualities and portray them as belligerent heroes. Still in the fifth century BCE traces of once well-established magical practices among mythical heroes can be found. Jason employs love magic in Pindar's fourth Pythian ode (462 BCE) to seduce Medea at Colchis.[15]

13. A. Lotz, *Der Magiekonflikt in der Spätantike* (Bonn: Rudolf Habelt Verlag, 2005).

14. A. Kottaridou, *Kirke und Medeia: die Zauberinnen der Griechen und die Verwandlung des Mythos* (Universitätsdissertation; Köln, 1991).

15. Pindar, *Pyth.* 4.211–50. C.A. Faraone, 'The Wheel, the Whip and other Implements of Torture: Erotic Magic in Pindar Pythian 4.213-19', *Classical Journal* 89 (1993): 1–19.

Both women, Medea and Circe, were knowledgeable in the effects of herbs, but neither used her wide-ranging knowledge for medical purposes. Both witches embody in their myths an inverted/upturned and therefore threatening world. Circe practises the transformation of men into animals, an old threat to humanity. Medea on the other hand is an expert at rejuvenation – still today a dream of mankind. Already in early archaic Greece the magic activities of both women tended to be shunted abroad or to exotic isolation. By the end of the archaic period Medea's rejuvenation magic is characterized as a life-threatening trap and in classical Athens she is unmasked as a swindler who has no miraculous remedies at her disposal but commands tricks and poison only. Again and again the citizens are warned not to get involved with magic. Belief in magic befits silly women alone. The figure of the insidious sorceress, who commands forbidden knowledge, is styled as a personification of an irrational and dangerous female nature. This is connected with the polarization of the sexes as part of the patriarchal order of the *polis*.

Magic and the Threat to the Polis

Potentially the female endangers the order of the *polis* in democratic Athens and therefore has to be subjected to permanent control or, to put it differently, the female has to be kept away from political life. Now Circe is paralleled with a corrupting courtesan. Medea however symbolizes the incarnation of evil within the *oikos*. In 431 BCE Euripides has her appear in the role of the Attic wife deploring the fate of women (*Med.* 230–51). The good wife does not require magic; for instance; Andromache dismisses Hermione's accusation of having prevented her from getting pregnant by her husband Neoptolemos (415 BCE):

> It is not because of my drugs that your husband hates you but because you are unpleasant to him. I'll tell you a love potion [*philtron*]: it is not beauty but good character that delights one's lover [οὐκ ἐξ ἐμῶν σε φαρμάκων στυγεῖ πόσις / ἀλλ' εἰ ξυνεῖναι μὴ πιτηδεία κυρεῖς. / φίλτρον δὲ καὶ τόδ'· οὐ τὸ κάλλος, ὦ γύναι, / ἀλλ' ἀρεταὶ τέρπουσι τοὺς ξυνευνέτας]. (Euripides, *Andr.* 205–208)

The transformation of Circe and Medea is a good example of how something is labelled as magic because it does not fit the normative order or has to be kept at a distance. In classical Athens this is the order of the *oikos* and the exclusion of women from public order. The valid concept from the fifth century onwards is to call rituals outside (public) religious practice 'magic' while 'religion' in itself is not defined.[16] Foreign

16. F. Graf, *Gottesnähe und Schadenzauber*, pp. 31ff.

Thessalian women now become the personification of witchcraft.[17] Significantly in Periclean Athens the expulsion of the witch is a popular theme in literature,[18] in tune with the ideological conviction that rationality governs the city.

In the same context a discourse upon gender is taking place. The female role in *oikos* and *polis* however was as ambivalent as the ritual. An Attic *crater* from around 430 BCE illustrates this for Medea.[19] The vase depicts the death of the giant Talos, who tried to prevent the Argonauts from landing in Crete by throwing stones at them. Until Medea uses her magic powers to make Talos weak-willed, Jason and his men cannot overcome the giant. On the *crater* two of the Argonauts hold the feeble Talos. Jason kneels in front of him and removes the nail from the ankle of the left foot. Medea stands behind Jason with her magic casket and seems to give advice on the operation.[20] In contrast to the occasion of the cooking of Pelias, she is not depicted as a barbarian but as a Greek woman with Greek dress. This means she is portrayed as a fellow countrywoman as long as she acts for the benefit of the Greeks, and not as an enchanting foreign barbarian anymore. This points to the healing skills performed by women for the benefit of the *oikos*.[21] Already Helen of Sparta serves a *pharmakon* to the exhausted warriors.[22] The wife of Mulios, Agamede, daughter of Augeias is characterized as: 'golden-haired Agamede, who knew the virtues of every herb which grows upon the face of the earth' [ξανθὴν Ἀγαμήδην, ἣ τόσα φάρμακα ἤδη ὅσα τρέφει εὐρεῖα χθών] (Homer, *Iliad* 11.740). Demosthenes[23] mentions Theoris from Lemnos,

17. Aristophanes, *Clouds* (423 BCE) 746–57; Sosiphanes of Syracuse (fourth century BCE), *Meleager* TrGF 92 F1; Plato, *Gorgias* 513a.

18. Kottaridou, *Kirke und Medeia*, pp. 86ff.; 260ff.

19. A. Lesky, 'Eine neue Talos-Vase', *AA* 88 (1973): 115–19.

20. H. v. Hesberg, 'Das Werkzeug des Arztes und der Stab der Zauberin: Bilder von Heilungs- und Verwandlungsvorgängen aus der griechisch-römischen Antike', in A. Karenberg and C. Leitz (eds.), *Heilkunde und Hochkultur II: 'Magie und Medizin' und 'Der alte Mensch in den antiken Zivilisationen des Mittelmeerraumes'* (Naturwissenschaft – Philosophie – Geschichte, 16; Münster: LIT, 2002), pp. 119–52 (143–44).

21. Medea protects Jason: Apollonios of Rhodes, *Argonautica* 3.838–67 (third century BCE).

22. A.L.T. Bergren, 'Helen's "Good Drug" in Odyssey iv 1-305', in S. Kreslic (ed.), *Contemporary Literary Hermeneutics and the Interpretation of Ancient Texts* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press 1981), pp. 200–14; J. Scarborough, 'The Pharmacology of Sacred Plants, Herbs and Roots', in C.A. Faraone and D. Obbink (eds.), *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 138–74.

23. Demosthenes, *Or.* 25 (against Aristogeiton) 78–80. Philochros (FGrH 328 F60: Harpocration s.v. Theoris) calls Theoris a fortune-teller (*mantis*), who is executed because of sacrilege (*asebeia*). See Plutarch, *Dem.* 14, where probably another Theoris is meant, a priestess (*hiera*), who was accused by Demosthenes of instigating slaves to defraud their masters.

the witch (*pharmakis*), who transferred her medical knowledge to her son (*ca.* 330 BCE). Female capacity for magic is often condensed into magical potions (*philtra*) together with incantations (*epodai*).[24] Documents attest to women using magical practices in the context of gynaecological problems, illness and childbirth.[25] Still it was apparently looked upon as a potential danger that women might use contraceptive potions, thus endangering the very existence of the *oikos*, or apply love potions to kill a husband or make him insane.[26]

The affinity of women and magic is apparent in the literary sources. Dickie has correctly pointed out that we know a lot more about male magicians in fifth and fourth century Athens.[27] But our literary evidence suggests that women were much more competent and experienced in this field. In Euripides' *Hippolytus* (428 BCE) the wet nurse says to Phaedra who is madly in love:

> There are incantations and bewitching words. A drug [*pharmakon*] will be found for this disease. Men would be slow to find solutions, if we women didn't (εἰσὶν δ' ἐπῳδαὶ καὶ λόγοι θελκτήριοι·/φανήσεταί τι τῇδε φάρμακον νόσου. / ἦ τἄρ' ἂν ὀψέ γ' ἄνδρες ἐξεύροιεν ἄν,/εἰ μὴ γυναῖκες μηχανὰς εὑρήσομεν).[28]

Love Magic

It is certainly not pure coincidence that in a literary context women are mostly concerned with love magic. Magic is applied to compel the husband away from the concubine. The theme was dealt with by Sophocles, using Deianeira and Heracles as exemplars. Sophocles characterizes Deianeira as a faithful wife and efficient housewife, who has already suffered many of her husband's extramarital liaisons. But when he decides to invite a younger woman to live in the house with her, Deianeira does not see any way out but to use love magic in order to win back her husband's favour. The remedy turns out to be poison, which kills

24. Circe is appealed to in a curse (*Homeric Hymns* 14) from the fifth century BCE as '*polypharmake*'.

25. *PGM* VII.208–9; *PGM* VII.260–71 (women's diseases); amulets for contraception: Soran. *Gyn.* 63, Pliny the Elder, *Nat. Hist* 29.85; Aetius 16.17; cf. S. B. Pomeroy, *Frauenleben im klassischen Altertum* (Stuttgart: Krõner, 1985), p. 255.

26. For insanity see Plutarch, *Coniug. Praeg.* 5 (= *Mor.* 139a); C.A. Faraone, 'Sex and Power: Male-Targeting Aphrodisiacs in the Greek Magical Tradition', in *Helios* 19 (1922): 92–103.

27. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians*, pp. 79ff.

28. Euripides, *Hipp.* 478–81 cf. 507–18.

Heracles slowly and painfully.[29] The moral is obvious. It is better not to interfere with a husband's affairs, no matter how honourable the motive may be. And wives have to beware of other women's insinuations. With Antiphon it was the unsuspecting concubine who was made the instrument of deadly magic (*Antiphon* 1.14–20). In real life another stepmother, Philip of Macedon's wife Olympias, was suspected of having caused the mental debility of her stepson Arrhidaeos by a magical potion.[30] Ironically his mother Philinna was a Thessalian, who were considered to be experts in magic.

Courtesans, on the other hand, in classical Athens were held to bewitch their victims.[31] Circe's transformation into a *hetaira* has already been mentioned. The application of magic and love potions was well established among courtesans and feared in popular belief. Love potions were especially common.[32] Repercussions of these mysterious practices were believed to be recognized in the confusion of those spineless men who yielded to the influence of courtesans without resistance.[33] Under normal circumstances and according to current moral beliefs a man would not neglect his familial duties. Exactly this charge was brought against various men in court trials who were well acquainted with courtesans and therefore had not cared for the provision of their family or not supplied a daughter's dowry.[34] By magical power alone could a woman keep a man away from his own *oikos*. Society excused such behaviour by considering the man a victim of higher powers. This variation of the theme is still current in assessing the love between Jason and Medea during the Roman Imperial period. Hypsile, the abandoned lover, deplores:

> It is not because of her beauty or her good deeds that you find Medea pleasing, but she knows incantations and she culls dreadful plants with her enchanted sickle. She works hard to draw the struggling moon down from its path and to bury the horses of the sun in darkness. She reigns back waters and brings rivers to a halt in their descent. She moves woods and living stones from their place; she wanders through tombs, dishevelled, with spread-out hair, and gathers the pick of the bones from

29. Sophocles, *Trach.* (esp.) 531–87; 672–707, 750–93; Diodorus Siculus 4.36.38. C.A. Faraone, 'Deianira's Mistake and the Demise of Heracles: Erotic Magic in Sophocles Trachiniae', *Helios* 21.2 (1994): 115–35.

30. Plutarch, *Alex.* 77.

31. Cf. M.M. Henry, *Menander's Courtesans and the Greek Comic Tradition* (Frankfurt. M.: Peter Lang, 1985), p. 34, for sources.

32. *Is.* 6.21; *Antiph.* 1.17; *Dem.* 25.80. Ironic remarks of Socrates about magical practices of courtesans: Xenophon, *Mem.* III 11.16ff.

33. *Is.* 6.21; *Dem.* 48.55; see also *Dem.* 48.56.

34. For the economic threat to families imposed by courtesans cf. E. Hartmann, *Heirat, Hetärentum und Konkubinat im klassischen Athen* (Campus Historische Studien; 30; Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2002), pp. 201–202.

> warm pyres. She places binding spells on people from afar, moulds voodoo dolls out of wax, and pushes fine needles into their pathetic livers. She does other things it would have been better for me not to know. Love should be acquired through character and beauty. It is wrong that it should be sought through herbs [*nec facie meritisque placet, sed carmina novit/diraque cantata pabula falce metit./illa reluctantem cursu deducere lunam/nititur et tenebris abdere solis equos/ illa refrenat aquas obliquaque flumina sistit;/illa loco silvas vivaque saxa movet./per tumulos errat passis discincta capillis/certaque de tepidis colligit ossa rogis./devovet absentis simulacraque cerea figit,/et miserum tenuis in iecur urget acus /et quae nescierim melius. male quaeritur herbis/ moribus et forma conciliandus amor*]. (*Heroides* VI, 83 – 95)

The case of Cleopatra VII, whose influence on the Roman general Anthony is described as if she had bewitched him,[35] is different. Anthony, the defeated *imperator*, was negligent of his duties out of his own doing. At least, that was the picture drawn by Augustan propaganda and later historiography. In other words male failure can be excused as the result of magic,[36] but a strong and truly manly personality withstands.[37] Olympias for instance certifies that her husband Philip II had been attracted by the beauty of a Thessalian woman and no magical powers had been involved (Plutarch, *Coniug. Praeg.* 23; *Mor.* 141B).

With Olympias we again touch the Hellenistic period, where a slight shift in perspective can be detected in relation to the myth of Circe and Medea. Especially Medea is styled as the great witch, who knows all herbs, can tame the fire, makes a river flow backwards and commands moon and stars.[38] But Medea fell in love with Jason and used her knowledge to aid and protect her lover. This romantic side has to be connected with a new female role which was shaped through the establishment of the Hellenistic dynasties, which drew heavily on the erotic attraction of the Hellenistic king to his queen to explain her influence.

The most famous literary magical performance in Hellenistic time comes from Theocritus's second idyll: φαρμακεύτρια – the sorceress. Young Simaitha improvises a magical ritual to win her lover Delphis back after having consulted a number of professional witches in Alexandria to no avail. During the ritual Simaitha appeals to the examples of Circe and Medea as arch-witches:

> Render these drugs no less powerful than those of Circe, Medea, or

35. Josephus, *Ant.* 4.1; Cassius Dio 50.5.3; 50.26.3; Plutarch, *Ant.* 60.1–2.

36. A lover who suffers from impotence is excused as victim of a witch who stole his virility (Ovid, *Am.* 3.7.27–36; 73–84).

37. Pliny the Elder, *Nat. Hist.* 28.17.

38. Apollonios of Rhodes 3.528-534.

> blonde Perimedes [φάρμακα ταῦτ' ἔρδοισα χερείονα μήτε τι Κίρκας μήτε τι Μηδείας μήτε ξανθᾶς Περιμήδας]. (Theocritus, *Idyll* 2.15–16)

The interpretation of this figure, the simple girl from an Alexandrian suburb, is highly controversial. On the one hand stands the conviction that Theocritus deprived the female magical world of its mystique by describing the ordinary, on the other hand the ubiquity of dangerous magical activity in everyday life has been emphasized.[39] Indeed Theocritus' technique is quite noticeable. He blends dangerous magic, consisting of a multiple ritual accompanied by repetitive wording, and the scenery of the everyday life of naive Simaitha, who has to borrow a cloak to take part in a certain religious ceremony. The young woman calls for Hecate and Selene and a few moments later gossips with Selene as if she were her next door neighbour. Despite divergence on the correct interpretation it seems crucial that during the Hellenistic period Medea as well as Circe were regarded as women left by men – like Simaitha – whose witchcraft did not help them to win the lover back. This will probably also be Simaitha's fate. She may perform magical rites in the privacy of her home, but they will not change her public position as an unmarried woman. In the adaptation of the theme by Vergil, the husband returns to the house by the end of the ritual, but firstly he is the husband and secondly it is unclear whether he comes back out of his free will or not. Thus the discourse on magic and gender is again reduced to the simple-mindedness of the female sex. The development continues in Roman times, suggesting only silly people and women believed in such magical rituals. Though this was an intellectual view it was closely connected to Stoic ideas about women in the Roman empire of the first and second centuries, insisting that women were educatable.[40] Plutarch remarks: 'and she will not swallow any beliefs in magic charms while she is under the charm of Plato's or Xenophon's words' [καὶ φαρμάκων ἐπῳδὰς οὐ προσδέχεται τοῖς Πλάτωνος ἐπᾳδομένη λόγοις καὶ τοῖς Ξενοφῶντος].[41] Ordinary people would want to play safe, like Thais' husband from Oxyrhynchos, who, in the first century BCE, had his bride commit herself in the wedding contract: 'nor shall I prepare love charms against you, whether in your beverages or in your food...'.[42]

39. L. Gibbs-Wichrowska, 'The Witch and the Wife: A Comparative Study of Theocritus, *Idyll* 2, Simonides, *Idyll* 15 and Fatal Attraction', in L. Archer, S. Fischler and M. Wyke (eds.), *Women in Ancient Societies: An Illusion of the Night* (New York: Macmillan Press, 1994), pp. 252–68.

40. I. Stahlmann, *Der gefesselte Sexus: Weibliche Keuschheit und Askese im Westen des Römischen Reiches* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1997), chapter 1.

41. Plutarch, *Coning. Praec.* 48 = *Mor.* 145C.

42. G. Vitelli *et al.*, *Papiri greci e latini: Pubblicazioni della Società Italiana per la ricerca dei papiri greci e latini in Egitto* (Florenz: Le Monnier, 1912-32), I, p. 64 (from Oxyrhynchos first century BCE).

Curse Tablets

For us, curse tablets are the only comprehensible documentary part of the 'magic' which Pliny called ritual. Though only a minority of these tablets mentions the purpose of their production, important conclusions concerning women can be drawn. Women are often the object in these documents without it being possible to define the cursing person's sex.[43] Curse tablets show the economic activity of numerous women, such as shopkeepers, craftswomen, criminals, prostitutes, etc. It is noticeable that the rituals' victims are mostly identified by a matrilinear origin as opposed to the usual practice of adding a patronymic. This practice was applied firstly because reference to the mother was a much securer item of identification because, unlike paternal descent, maternal descent was unchangeable by civil law. Secondly this attitude reflects the attachment of femininity to the ground through the cycle of fertility. Menses especially were attributed magical powers.[44]

It is quite amazing how few familial problems found expression in the curse tablets. But just this topic dominates the rare number of *defixiones* commissioned by women in Hellenistic times. Curses of separation as well as curses of binding are practised against unfaithful companions. Close to despair over their situation, the helplessness can be felt, which drives the women to use curses in order to gain a respectable place in society as wives.[45] Artemisia curses the father of her children because he had deprived their daughter of a proper funeral.[46] Other spells are used to split up couples so that the cursing woman can take the place of the wife.[47]

Economic competition has an important place in curse tablets. Where the sex of the originator of a curse can be recognized, women are in an

43. A binding spell against a woman who is called 'a witch in her behaviour'; cf. Ostrakon Wien D 70 ed. K.-Th. Zauzich, *Enchoria* 18 (1991): 135–51; for invectives against women see H. J. Thissen, 'Tadel der Frauen', *Enchoria* 14 (1986): 159–60.

44. Pliny the Elder, *Nat. Hist.* 28.33; 7.64.

45. A woman who wanted to replace the wife of Cabeiras, Zois, lists meticulously the superior qualities of her opponent cf. E. Ziebarth, 'Neue Verfluchungstafeln aus Attika, Boiotien und Euboia', in *SPAW.PH* (Berlin: Verlag der Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1935), pp. 1022–50, no. 22 = DT 96.

46. U. Wilcken, *Urkunden der Ptolemäerzeit* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1927 and 1957), 11 = *PGM* XL (from the Ionian community in Memphis, late fourth century BCE).

47. Voutiras 1998, 8 (fourth century BCE from Pella); DTA, 78 (fourth century BCE); E. Ziebarth, 'Neue Verfluchungstafeln aus Attika, Boiotien und Euboia', pp. 1022–50, no. 23 = DT 95 (third/second century BCE); magic against a woman without mentioning reasons: G. Kaibel, *Epigrammata Graeca ex lapidibus conlecta* (Berlin: Reimer, 1878), no. 1136 (third/second century BCE, Athens).

inferior position.[48] Anyway it is difficult to determine whether a professional or a manual was consulted for designing the tablets. This is most likely regarding the striking uniformity of many texts. But only in literary sources are professional women and not men mentioned. In his *Politeia* (II 364C), written *ca.* 375 BCE, Plato gives a clear hint that itinerant priests and soothsayers appeared in the houses of the rich to offer their help. This again shows that binding curses and other magical rituals were not restricted to the lower layers of society.

In the Roman Empire, women, more than men, practised evil-banning magic like Rufina from Amisus in Pontos, who placed a kind of amulet in a grave (Gager, Nos. 120; 125; 127). Others are accused on tablets of having put a spell on various people which has to be broken. (Gager, No. 124 [Jewish, fourth–sixth century]). Tatia for instance is said to have cursed her son-in-law Iucundus, and made him lose his mind. In vain she later tried to purify herself through counter-measures in a temple.[49] Instructions seem to have been available, especially for defence against curses (Gager, Nos. 129–32), reaching from protective drawings to formulae. During the early Empire, accusations against women of using magic to harm the emperor were the cause for a number of immediate trials for treason (*maiestas*). Exoneration was apparently difficult, but this is an altogether different topic.[50]

Summary

Whereas the literary sources offer a dense picture of female magic. documentary evidence is far less specific and shows that men and women were both equally concerned with magic. Apart from the typically female province of pregnancy and childbirth there is no specifically female target in using magical rituals. Still women and men have different aims when it comes to erotic magic. Despite that it is more than difficult to talk of a specific female practice of magic. Rather different antique discourses on magic with different paradigms have to be contrasted. The ambivalence in judging female magic is striking. On the one hand we have the potential threat of the (suspect) female to the *oikos*/*domus* or the order of the *polis* encapsulated in a reproach for magic. In this context the common fear of

48. Together with men as victims of curse tablets: DTA no. 78 (fourth century BCE [shopkeepress]); D.R. Jordan, 'Three Curse Tablets', in D.R. Jordan, H. Montgomery, E. Thomassen (eds.), *The World of Ancient Magic* (Papers from the Norwegian Institute at Athens, 4; Bergen: Paul Åström Förlag, 1999), pp. 115–24, no. 2 = DT 52 (fourth century BCE [prostitutes]).

49. Gager, *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World*, no. 137.

50. Claudia Pulchra: Tacitus, *Ann.* 4.52; Domitia Lepida: Tacitus, *Ann.* 12.65; Lollia Paulina: Tacitus, *Ann.* 12.22, Dio Cassius (Xiph.) 60.32.4; Servilia: Tacitus, *Ann.* 16.31.

spells and curses is used for the construction of gender roles. On the other hand magical ritual practised by women was closely connected to healing applied by women for the good of the household. Only slowly was such medicine defeminized and characterized as harmful or the female contribution marginalized.

FASCINATING BUT FORBIDDEN? MAGIC IN ROME

Ulrike Riemer*

'Magie ist ein fester Bestandteil der antiken Religionen Griechenlands, Roms, des alten Italiens.' With this sentence Fritz Graf starts his work dealing with magic in the Graeco-Roman world.[1] One major problem, however, lies in the lack of a clear definition of what the term 'magic' means. Some ancient religious practices nowadays would be held to be 'magic', and even today there might be arguments about the magical character of ceremonies such as blessings in church during worship. Moreover after two thousand years of Christian influence the word 'magic' at first has a negative ring (even if today 'white magic' is coming into fashion again).

In antiquity someone who prayed to the gods for help or shelter could also use this religiosity for doing harm to others by calling down a curse upon them. Paradoxically for this purpose the imperial *effigies* were also and especially useful: their power, which should make them an object of worship, was equally suitable for abuse. Therefore people were afraid of the statues of those emperors who had fallen into *damnatio memoriae*: their faces were painted black in order to prevent people from being harmed (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 9.11.2). On the other hand invocation of a god could as well turn into damage to an emperor: according to Pliny the fall of Domitian went back to the curse of senators who had been heard by Jupiter (Pliny, *Pan.* 94.1). Tacitus traces the death of Germanicus back to a malediction and says that leaded sheets with the name of Germanicus on them had been found next to the dead body (Tacitus, *Ann.* 2.69).

So it is no wonder that Roman caesars apparently made several attempts to stop magical practices. But the picture is contradictory: some rulers, especially those of older age or extremely suspicious character, prosecuted magic, astrology, reading the future and fortune-telling. This applies to emperors like Tiberius and Claudius, but the latter especially also used magic when it suited his purposes (Suetonius, *Cl.* 29.3). Others

* I have to express my gratitude to Susanne Noy, Saarbrücken, for helping me to translate the text.

1. F. Graf, *Gottesnähe und Schadenszauber: Die Magie in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (München: C.H. Beck, 1996), p. 9.

such as Hadrian patronized magicians and if required fell back upon them.[2] During the reign of Tiberius 'astrologers, Chaldaeans, soothsayers, and others' (*mathematicis Chaldaeis ariolis et ceteris*) were expelled from Rome by a *senatus consultum* (*Coll.* 15.2.1). Tacitus passed down several *senatus consulta*, according to which astrologers and magicians (*mathematici et magi*) were expelled from Italy and some of them were even sentenced to death and executed (Tacitus, *Ann.* 2.32.2). On the other hand he calls a similar resolution from 52 CE referring to an expulsion of *mathematici* out of Italy as 'harsh but inefficient' (*atrox et irritum*; *Ann.* 12.52.3). But these examples are exceptional: there is no clear standpoint from the official side. One possibility of getting a glimpse into the ways of dealing with magic and magicians is offered by literature.

I

The only court speech which has reached us from imperial times tells us about a trial dealing with magic. But the reliability of both the speech and the trial is controversial: the testimony of the early Father Augustine (*Civ.* 8.19.35; *Epist.* 138.19), who explicitly speaks of an *oratio*, is the only ancient evidence we have. Still, he wrote 200 years later and based his description just on the speech itself. Most scholars still vote for the reliability of both trial and speech.[3]

The following background derives from the text: according to Apuleius, either in the winter of 158/159 or 160/161 CE he was accused in Oea, North Africa (today Tripolis, Libya). The problem was his marriage to a much older and wealthy widow, Pudentilla. The family of her deceased husband were worried about the fate of the family property: in the case of a re-marriage, part of the property would become the widow's dowry; a part which the brother of the deceased husband had expected for himself when, by order of his father, he had courted his widowed sister-in-law (*Ap.* 68.4). When she rejected him, her father-in-law threatened to withdraw the patrimony from her two sons if she should marry again. Only when the grandfather had died and the grandsons had received their patrimony, was their mother able to think about a new marriage (*Ap.* 68.4; 70.6).

2. D. Liebs, 'Die Rechtslage bei Apuleius', in U. Mölk (ed.), *Literatur und Recht: Literarische Rechtsfälle von der Antike bis in die Gegenwart* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1996), pp. 25–36 (30–31).

3. Cf. B.L. Hijmans, 'Apuleius Orator: Pro se de magia and Florida', *ANRW* II 34.2, pp. 1708–84 (1715–19, 1724–26). Against it U. Schindel, 'Die Verteidigungsrede des Apuleius', in U. Mölk (ed.), *Literatur und Recht* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1996), who takes the speech for literature (p. 13), that is, fiction (p. 19); though he does not clearly express his opinion on the question of the reality or fiction of the trial.

Pudentilla's second son Pudens, a juvenile adult, was presumably the plaintiff; apparently pushed by the eldest brother-in-law of the widow, Sicinius Aemilianus. The death of her elder son Pontianus, however, complicates matters: during Apuleius' stay in Oea, Pontianus, a fellow-student, had invited him into his house and had offered him his mother in marriage (*Ap.* 72.6; 73.3). Although Apuleius at first declined (*Ap.* 73.5-7), he later agreed. The wedding was delayed until after the marriage of Pontianus and the full age of Pudens (*Ap.* 73.9). But soon after Pontianus' wedding he quarreled with his mother and Apuleius (*Ap.* 74.2ss.). Apuleius and Prudentilla got married on the quiet (*Ap.* 87.9). Pressed by Apuleius, the mother transferred her fortune to her sons (*Ap.* 93.3-6). The opponents became reconciled (*Ap.* 94.2), but surprisingly Pontianus dies shortly afterwards (*Ap.* 96.5). Apuleius implies that this death was one of the accusations laid against him, but that it had been dropped from the indictment. At his initiative, Pudentilla, who had been in bad health after the death of her elder son, changed her will in favour of her younger son (*Ap.* 99.3-5).

A short time later, Apuleius served as her advocate in a lawsuit against the family of the Granii. In the course of this trial he was accused of several 'magical' delicts by the lawyers of Aemilianus, among them having murdered his stepson and friend Pontianus (*Ap.* 1.5). Apuleius alleged that as a result he had demanded that Aemilianus present a formal accusation, which he had done (*Ap.* 1.6–2.3).

Even if the reason for and the circumstances of the speech correspond with the facts, the legal position of the (pretended) trial remains doubtful. We know nothing about the exact tenor of the accusations or about the law on which they were based. The latter especially has brought forth a flood of publications by scholars of the history of law. The burden of proof is on the plaintiff. Apuleius could confine himself to questioning the accusations proffered against him or explaining them as plausibly as possible (cf. *Ap.* 90.2-4).[4]

2

In his defence Apuleius comments on the allegations quite late. First he only hints at 'calumnies'[5] (*maledicta*) then increasing to 'evil magical practices' (*magicorum maleficia*; *Ap.* 1.5), before in the climax he clearly

4. P. Schenk, 'Einleitung', in J. Hammerstaedt (u.a.), *Apuleius: Über die Magie* (Sapere, 5; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002), p. 46.

5. The English translation of the *Apology* follows the translation by V. Hunink in S. Harrison, J.Hilton and V. Hunink (eds.), *Apuleius: Rhetorical Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 25–121.

announces the 'allegation of magic' (*calumnia magiae*; *Ap.* 2.2). A similar structure can be found in the *peroratio*, again in three steps: 'monstrous crimes' (*scelera immania*), 'forbidden sorcery' (*inconcessa maleficia*) and finally 'heinous practices' (*artes nefandas*; *Ap.* 25.4).[6]

Leading over to the (second) *refutatio*[7] Apuleius reduces the several accusations to one, that is being a magician, and asks, what – strictly speaking – is a magician (*quid sit magus*; *Ap.* 25.8). First of all a 'magus' is – and he refers to the Persian language – nothing else but a priest, whose duties consist of 'to have the proper knowledge, competence, and experience of ceremonial rules, sacred rituals, and religious laws' (*Ap.* 25.9). This kind of magic will not only be welcome to the gods, but is also among the activities of kings. Cleverly he then asks his accusers, why though regarding him as dangerous they nevertheless accuse him – without any fear or precautions against him? Subliminally he alleges the accusers do not believe in magic, because if they did believe, there would be two possibilities for them: either they withdraw from accusation being afraid of the dangerous magician or they try to protect themselves against bewitchment by amulets or other aids which might, however, get them accused of practising magic.

It is not unimportant that Apuleius avails of the opportunity of aligning himself with the great Greek philosophers. Some of those he mentions, such as Anaxagoras, Democritus, and Epicurus, had been accused by the ignorant (*imperitores*) of being irreligious (*irreligiosos*), others (Epimenides, Pythagoras) of being magicians, and Empedocles, Socrates and Plato had been treated in a similar manner (*Ap.* 27.1-3). So far Apuleius congratulates himself for being rated among these famous men (*gratulor mihi*; *Ap.* 27.4).

To sum up: proceeding cleverly during the first chapters of his speech Apuleius has formulated two basic items of defence:

(1) Magic does not necessarily have to be harmful or bad. In any case it can not be proved. Whoever wants to stop magic, shows that he himself believes in it (and needs magic means to defend himself against it).
(2) Philosophers easily fall under suspicion of impiety or magic because of their enlightened mental attitude. But only uneducated persons argue like that.

6. Quite interestingly *magia* as a noun is not attested before Apuleius: It occurs in the *Metamorphoses* 3.16 and 6.26 and in the *Apology* first in 2.2.

7. To the structure of the text cf. Schenk, 'Einleitung', p. 28.

3

In the main parts of the *refutatio* Apuleius deals more closely with the several allegations which want to show him to be a magician: in detail it is a matter of dissecting particular sorts of fish, bewitching a slave and a freeborn woman, possessing mysterious objects wrapped in a linen cloth, nocturnal sacrifice, adoring a wooden statuette and – last but not least – gaining a rich and older widow with the help of magic.

Apuleius first considers the allegation that he ordered some species of fish from fishermen for money (29.1). Polemically he asks if a philosopher is not allowed to eat fish or whether it would be better to buy fish from embroiderers or if it is more clever to consume hares? Only at the end of the argumentation does he mention the accusation of having desired *special* fish (*Ap.* 40). Again he answers quite self-confidently: being neither uninterested (*instudiosus*) nor incompetent (*imperitus*; *Ap.* 40.1) he has only searched for medicine. Besides he has done nothing in secret, but everything openly, and finally he is very suprised that they know of one little fish (*unum pisciculum*; *Ap.* 40.6) and are yet not informed about the great number (*plurimos*) of fish he had dissected. The accusation of being familiar with magical names for the animal is trivialized by him: what reasonable man really takes related words as a sign of a similarity of facts (*Ap.* 34.4)? He confronts the accusers with the reproach that if they believe in this they could as well heal cancer with crabs (*Ap.* 35.6). Actually this is a procedure recommended by Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* 32.134). But this is exactly what magic means! Some scholars like Vincent Hunink hold that Apuleius has played down the accusation and left out several important points: for example he has obviously been alleged to have ordered '*some particular* fish from *specialized tradesmen* paying *much* money for them'.[8] Taking from this allegation only the fact of his having bought fish from fishermen it became easy to reject it and could be done to everyone's amusement.[9] This poses the basic problem I have already mentioned, that this speech is our only authority: if we take it seriously, the allegations against Apuleius are indeed ridiculous. But if we do not want to trust Apuleius on all points and prefer to speculate about the exact accusations, the question arises: on what basis these speculations should be made – and how far they are allowed to go. Basically judges and audience as well should have been able to hear the slight, but subtle difference – following Hunink – between the accusation and its repetition by Apuleius.

As the next accusation Apuleius tells us about a so-called bewitched boy who was supposed to have been enchanted by him and collapsed on the spot (*Ap.* 42.3). He objects that the accusation has said nothing about a

8. Hunink, *Apuleius*, pp. 98–99.
9. Hunink, *Apuleius*, pp. 98–99.

prophecy, and this is the intended use of such a magical act (*Ap.* 42.4). The incident could easily be explained: the slave suffers from epilepsy, other slaves can testify to this. Therefore a magician would be identified if the boy remained standing up for some time in his presence (*Ap.* 43.10). The weak point of the accusation, says Apuleius, is that against their announcement the accusers cannot produce other juvenile victims (*Ap.* 46). But Apuleius himself cannot present the epileptic slave, and he long-windedly excuses this failure as if it were unnecessary (*Ap.* 45.1). If, however, it had been a magical ritual, Apuleius maintains that he would be very unlikely to perform such a ritual in front of 15 witnesses, since in the Laws of the Twelve Tables such a ritual was prohibited (*Ap.* 47.3). The accusation increases with another victim, a freeborn woman. She should have been inspected by Apuleius but instead, being bewitched, collapsed (*Ap.* 48.1). This case, too, deals with an epileptic patient, an opinion Apuleius seeks to prove in a quite detailed medical treatise (*Ap.* 49–51). Thereafter he attacks his opponent Aemilianus. Like the slave, Aemilianus collapses, but – unlike the slave – he raves against others, the epileptic slave against himself. So Aemilianus distorts the truth, the slave his eyes (*Ap.* 52). Again Apuleius fails to bring the woman as witness – and what even is more astonishing – he does not even mention her name, though we have heard the name of the slave. The reason why he fails to do this remains unclear.

The next accusation concerns mysterious objects wrapped in linen, which Apuleius has kept with the household gods of his friend and stepson Pontianus (*Ap.* 53.2). The defendant first turns the allegation to ridicule: the accusers pretend not to know what is wrapped in the linen cloth although it has been without ties, open to everyone, often enough; yet they claim it must have contained magical tools (*Ap.* 53.4.8). Apuleius solves the enigma saying it contained symbols and souvenirs (*signa et monumenta*) of initiations into mystery cults in Greece (*Ap.* 55.8). Then he once again attacks his opponent as a despiser of the gods (*ob deorum contemptum*) who therefore has the nickname 'Mezentius' (*Ap.* 56.7; cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 7.648-654), whereas he himself devoutly (*me sanctissime*; *Ap.* 56.8) preserves *signa et memoracula* of the initiations. But further details of these objects cannot be disclosed in the presence of the uninitiated (*Ap.* 55.10).

Apuleius presents himself as a shining example of ancient piety in contrast to his ungodly opponent. Very cleverly on the one hand he brings to light the mystery of the wrapped tools, but on the other hand pleads religious arguments when he does not want to explain precisely the nature of the doubtful tools. Drawing a parallel between Aemilianus and the Mezentius of Virgil, an Etruscan tyrant and despiser of the gods who is killed by Aeneas, neatly forces the audience to identify the poet Apuleius with *pious* Aeneas.[10]

10. Cf. Hunink, *Apuleius*, p. 152.

So far it had been quite easy for the defendant to reject the evidences of the accusers. Now it gets harder, for the testimony of a certain Junius Crassus weighs heavily: Apuleius is claimed to have held 'nocturnal sacrifices' (*nocturna sacra*; *Ap.* 57.2) in his, that is Crassus', house together with a friend named Quintianus. Although it must be left open whether at that time this was a capital delict,[11] in antiquity secret sacrifices always had a disreputable aura. Thus Cicero reproaches the Caesar-intimate Vatinius, in an invective, with 'mental depravity' (*pravitas mentis*) and 'madness' (*furor*), because he holds 'godless rituals' (*nefaria sacra*) raising ghosts of the dead (*inferorum animas elicere*) and soiling the divine ancestors with boys' guts (*puerorum extis deos manis mactare*; Cicero, *Vat.* 14).

The testimony of Crassus in this case is lame because he himself was absent at the time in question. He had let the house to Quintianus who by the return of the owner had already moved out. Only now Crassus claims to have noticed the walls defaced by soot and bird's feathers. He has allegedly got to know of the sacrifices by asking a slave (*Ap.* 58.2). His testimony was given in written form, he was not personally present (*Ap.* 59.1). As another point of criticism Apuleius claims it is strange that the accusers mention this testimony but do not dare to rely on it entirely (60.4). The defendant himself hardly responds to the allegations. He only points out the impossibility to trace sooty walls and bird's feathers to magic rather than to normal kitchen activities. Finally he counters with the statement that, if the matter had been forbidden magical practices, he surely would have done those in his own house and afterwards covered the tracks (*Ap.* 58.3.9).

An additional accusation refers to a statuette made of ebony. According to the accusation Apuleius had this statuette fabricated from exquisite, but unusual, wood in the form of a skeleton, and worshipped it as '*basileus*' (*Ap.* 61.2). He refutes this accusation step-by-step: the making did not take place in secret but in public as a gift of Pontianus and Pudentilla. The maker is well known and present at the trial (*Ap.* 61.4–62.4). The kind of wood was chosen by Pontianus who placed the material at his disposal (*Ap.* 61.7). Not in the least does the statuette represent a skeleton but the god Mercury; Apuleius was allowed to show the statuette (*Ap.* 63.5). For the title '*basileus*' Apuleius refers to Plato: as a Platonist he adores only the supreme transcendent God under this name (*Ap.* 64.5-7). His argument rests on a weak foundation: leaving the choice of the god which he wants to adore in the statuette to the artist (*Ap.* 61.6) sounds untrustworthy. After all Mercury/Hermes definitely is not far from magic as his supposed accidental choice and his minimizing as 'Mercuriolus' (*Ap.*

11. Hammerstaedt, *Apuleius*, p. 265, n. 420; equally Hunink, *Apuleius*, p. 154, referring to *Pauli Sententiae* 5.23. Cf. p. 171.

61.8) would suggest. Previously the defendant himself has pointed out that in sorcery rituals Mercury, carrier of spells, used to be invoked for magical operations (*solebat ad magorum cerimonias advocari Mercurius carminum vector*; *Ap.* 31.9) and that in a magical ritual a boy beholding an image of Mercury in the water predicted the future (*Ap.* 42.6). What is more, Apuleius curses Aemilianus (*Ap.* 64.1s.) for his lie, and he does so in a very impressive way, not only calling some demons and ghosts against him, but even Mercury himself as a wanderer between heavenly and subterranean forces (*superum et inferum commeator*; *Ap.* 64.1). This curse, if spoken in a court room,[12] must have been a shock to the audience: Apuleius has only just protested his innocence, now he appears as the frightening magician with whom one better not start a fight. Why? The explanation that he wanted to reduce the audience to silence or to intimidate them[13] is just as unconvincing as the attempt to play down the curse as a joke[14] or as 'playing with fire'.[15] One has to remember how unbelievable the whole argument must have been at that moment. It really is 'not easy to imagine Apuleius actually pronouncing [these words] in court'.[16] Yet another point of view follows if the curse is seen together with the self-confident threat in chapter 25. Apuleius picks up his practical arguments there and shows their consequences in a very impressive manner: whoever attacks a magician must be aware of the risks. Believing in magic means to take the curse seriously. Therefore one has to make use of magic in order to protect oneself from danger. An interesting point: the one who is now in most danger is the accuser, not the defendant! In a real trial, however, 'playing with fire' like this might not only be quite risky, but sheer madness: he could as well have committed suicide at once. Such an action only makes sense in theory, in literary fiction.

At the end of the second *refutatio* Apuleius has presented himself as a philosophically educated, scientifically interested and at the same time exemplarily religious husband and citizen of Rome – and all of this in an amusing and humorous manner.

12. Hunink, *Apuleius*, p. 163, thinks that the curse has been added during the publication of the speech.

13. Hunink, *Apuleius*, p. 163.

14. T.D. McCreight, *Rhetorical Strategies and Word Choice in Apuleius' Apology* (UMI, Ann Arbor, MI: Duke University Dissertation, 1991), p. 255: 'Apuleius does exactly that with which he is charged, but clearly as a joke'. See also p. 256.

15. Hunink, *Apuleius*, p. 169.

16. Hunink, *Apuleius*, p. 169.

4

In the third *refutatio* Apuleius now comes to speak of his marriage with the widow Pudentilla. This time the accusation is of having forced the widow into marrying after having seduced her with magic (*Ap.* 67). Pursuing Apuleius the accusers argue on three points against the voluntariness of the marriage: the long widowhood of the woman, her age (it varies between the early 40s and 60; cf. *Ap.* 89.1 und 89.5) and the dowry.

First of all Apuleius has read a letter from Aemilianus to Pudentilla (*Ap.* 69.7s; the text is missing) showing that long before his arrival the woman had been thinking of getting married again. Her long widowhood Apuleius explains was the result of family pressure and the duty of the mother to ensure her sons' patrimony, her sudden decision to marry was the result of long-delayed desire and medical grounds (*Ap.* 70.6). The choice of himself Apuleius attributes to fortune and the eldest son's grave concerns: Pontianus, whom the mother had told of her plans, hurried home full of fear that his mother would fall into the hands of a 'greedy man' and the fortune would pass over 'as it so often happens' to another family (*Ap.* 71.4). Pontianus has been the one who persuaded both to marry (*Ap.* 73.8).

In a *digressio* Apuleius then introduces another person, Pontianus's father-in-law, Herennius Rufinus. He has to explain the change of mood (*Ap.* 74.2) of his most important, but now unfortunately dead, key witness, Pontianus (*Ap.* 95.1) and he does so by presenting him as the victim of suggestions by Herennius Rufinus and his daughter, who is Pontianus' wife (*Ap.* 77). However, the mother, Pudentilla, should have rejected all of Pontianus's accusations (*Ap.* 77.7). Being told that his father-in-law had flown into a rage in front of many listeners (*multis audientibus*), calling the woman a hussy (*amatrix*) and Apuleius a magician and poisoner (*magus et veneficus*; *Ap.* 78.2).

But apparently he was not the only one to say that. It is difficult for Apuleius to counteract a letter which has been written by Pudentilla to her son during the quarrel with him. We do not know the exact words, for the text is again missing, but obviously she confesses to being seduced by Apuleius. The accused now tries to interpret this confession as a female trick: women always prefer to seem compelled than to admit any desire (*Ap.* 79.1). By rhetorical finesse he seeks to deny his own wife's probative force: if she says he was a consul, will this mean, he indeed is (79.4)? If she writes she has been seduced, would she be sane – therefore not suffering from injury by magic – or is she insane – then she is not to be trusted (*Ap.* 80)? Besides the (Greek) statement has been torn out of the context (*Ap.* 82), because at the end of the letter Pudentilla has declared her love herself and denied every interference of sorcery (*Ap.* 84).

In chapter 90 Apuleius finally comes to – as he says – 'the very root of the accusation' (*ad ipsum stirpem accusationis*; *Ap.* 90.1), that is why he should have tempted Pudentilla into marriage with charms and philtres (*carminibus et venenis*; *Ap.* 90.1). The argument of a substantial dowry he rejects, because it had been modest (*modicam*) and what is more not even given (*datam*) but only promised (*promissam*;[17] *Ap.* 91.7) on condition that in the case of her death her dowry should not go to her husband but to her sons by her first marriage and, should the occasion arise, at least in part to a child by the marriage with Apuleius (*Ap.* 91.8). Rightly Apuleius mentions that his behaviour towards his stepson ensuring him his inheritance, which his mother has testified to, tells against any interest in the dowry on his part (*Ap.* 93). Believing that he has refuted all reproaches of being a legacy hunter, he emphasizes his innocence by an oath: if there can be proved any financial profit to him from the marriage, he really would like to be considered as one of the most famous magicians – and then he enumerates some well-known names, from a now unknown Carmendas to Zoroaster (*Ap.* 90.5s.). The mention of this list in court might have evoked bad feelings in the audience: if Apuleius is familiar with all these magicians, he might appear to be an authority in this field.[18] But again the risk is small if this is a literary fiction.

Apuleius picks up this most important argument as he sees it again in the *peroratio*: the accusers can provide no motive why he should have compelled Pudentilla to marry, what profit would he have had of that? The age of the widow told against the blessing of further children, it is not due to her beauty as Apuleius says, his attitude to the dowry, the donations to the sons as well as the testament (*Ap.* 102.8) tell against greed.

At the end he comes back to the previously mentioned list of charges in order to disprove the accusations: if he refuted 'all calumny' (*calumnia*), all allegations (*crimina*) and evil rumours (*maledicta*), and never diminished the honour of philosophy (*philosophiae honor*), which is of greater importance for him than his own rescue, he will wait for the sentence calmly (*Ap.* 103.4).

Actually we also do not know anything about the sentence. Many arguments have been put forward for an acquittal: otherwise he would not have published the speech, we do not hear anywhere else anything about a sentence or a penalty, and the trial obviously did not prejudice his career. But each of these arguments can as well be used for a condemnation: Cicero, too, published his revised version of the *Milonia* though he had

17. The text follows the edition of Hammerstaedt.

18. Hunink, *Apuleius*, p. 222, stresses as he did before 'the threatening and intimidating effect, especially on the prosecution' and points out how safe Apuleius must have felt though: 'The defendant ... runs a real risk.' Cf. p. 239 and n. 12.

failed in trial poorly; in case of an acquittal might Apuleius not proudly refer to it elsewhere? So this question must be left open.

5

The legal position regarding the punishability of sorcery and fortune-telling is unclear and contradictory. Unfortunately it is not as 'einfach und unproblematisch' as Fritz Graf would like to see it: 'Apuleius wird der *magia maleficia* angeklagt, sein Ankläger insistiert auf dem *crimen magiae*' and 'man wird nicht zweifeln können, daß der Prozeß sich auf die Lex Cornelia *de sicariis et veneficis* abstützte'.[19] To be exact we do not know a *crimen magiae*, and the *Lex Cornelia* from 81 BCE only judges murder and manslaughter including murder by poisoning as capital crimes. But according to his speech the accusation of murder by his stepson has been dropped before the trial started (*Ap.* 1.5). Apuleius himself uses the quite worn-out term *crimen* only indirectly speaking of the allegations against him in a very vague manner (*Ap.* 27.5[20]). If this, however, suffices to talk about a *crimen magiae* as a constituent fact must remain doubtful. Here a clear definition of what 'magic' means is badly missed. Characteristically Matthew W. Dickie excepts some practices such as necromancy from 'illegal', prosecuted magic, but nevertheless thinks that in antiquity practising magic 'generally' has been criminal and therefore justly relies on Apuleius.[21] Following Detlef Liebs almost everything surrounding sorcery and fortune-telling is criminal, but he admits that obviously it was up to the particular judge to prosecute really serious cases.[22]

It is right that Apuleius himself refers to the punishability of binding spells in the Laws of the Twelve Tables (*Ap.* 47.3). They provide the death penalty for binding spells.[23]

Two other statements in greater detail belong to the third century CE, but fall back on older regulations. According to Ulpian those who had sought to know the emperor's future were punishable by death. This at first seems unreasonably hard but makes sense when we realize that

19. Graf, *Gottesnähe und Schadenzauber*, p. 62. Since F. Norden, *Apuleius von Madaura und das römische Privatrecht* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1912), p. 32.

20. The second reference in 96.2 is unclear concerning grammar and may be therefore corrupt. Cf. Hammerstaedt, *Apuleius*, p. 655: text with annotations.

21. 'That magic was generally understood to be illegal and that those who practised it were thought to do so at their peril. That is the understanding of Apuleius': M.W. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 149. Unfortunately he keeps silent about the fact that Apuleius in the corresponding chapter 47 reflects the accusers' opinion and takes it *ad absurdum*.

22. Liebs, 'Die Rechtslage bei Apuleius', p. 31.

23. D. Liebs, *Römisches Recht* (UTB, 465; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 4th edn, 1993), p. 217.

prophecy of the emperor's forthcoming death, for example, would undermine his authority massively (*Coll. Mos.* 15.2.3). Modestin mentions a *senatus consultum* supplying the *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficis*: it makes those sacrifices which are done with the object of hurting someone (*mala sacrificia*) liable to capital punishment (*Dig.* 48.8.13 from Pandectae 12).[24] Unfortunately Modestin does not date this *senatus consultum* so we do not know if it had already been promulgated before Apuleius.[25] According to Pseudo-Paulus someone providng abortion or love-potions is – also additional to the *Lex Cornelia* – threatened with hard punishment – and it is unimportant whether he did so with good or bad intentions. If those potions lead to death then the person will be sentenced to death (*Pauli Sententiae* 5.23.14). Crucifixion or being torn to pieces by beasts is the punishment for someone who practises or has somebody practise nocturnal sorcery in order to bewitch a person (*Pauli Sententiae* 5.23.15; in this passage the extremely rare verb *obcantare* can be found indicating an action of which Apuleius has also been accused; *Ap.* 84. 1). Finally even possessing magical literature is criminal and could be punished with deportation and confiscation of property, or, for ordinary people, with the death penalty (*Pauli Sententiae* 5.23.18).

However, it is unclear if these sentences were already in effect at the time of Apuleius. It is tempting to take the allegations he mentions – nocturnal sacrifices, bewitchment of at least two persons, winning a wife with the help of magic – as crimes Pseudo-Paulus claims as deserving death. But first, the accusation of murder had been dropped before the trial started, and second, Apuleius' twinkling comment in this context on the lucky circumstance that the accusers are not informed about his knowledge of certain literature, otherwise they would have also accused him of poisoning (*ceterum me etiam veneficii reum postularent*; *Ap.* 41.6), tells against an offical accusation of poisoning. Moreover, the sentences of Paulus possibly date from 298 CE and apparently represent increasingly rigorous legislation in late antiquity.[26] But they definitely are not to be used as proof that Apuleius was threatened with death because of the physical element of sorcery.

24. Cf. R.J.A. Talbert, *The Senate of Imperial Rome* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 456, No. 198.

25. In my opinion F. Lamberti's argument in, *De magia als rechtsgeschichtliches Dokument*, in J. Hammerstaedt (u.a.), *Apuleius: Über die Magie*, pp. 347–48 moves in a circle: She wants to date the *senatus consultum* in the age of Apuleius because of Apuleius' information, then she uses this date to prove 'einen autonomen Zauberei-Tatbestand' sustaining the accusation against Apuleius.

26. For the date see D. Liebs, *Römische Jurisprudenz in Africa: Mit Studien zu den pseudopaulinischen Sentenzen* (Antike in der Moderne; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1993), pp. 33–38.

According to Concetto Marchesi magic was punishable in two cases: if it concerned the emperor, it was punishable under the *Lex Iulia maiestatis*. 'In tutti gli altri casi', says Marchesi, judgement took place under the *Lex Cornelia*.[27] In the case of Apuleius at least the second statement is doubtful. In accordance with the *Lex Cornelia* the allegations he enumerates might have sufficed for a conviction;[28] however, this assumption is not imperative. Whether the accusers really speculated on a sentence of death in order to force the twice-widowed woman into the arms of her brother-in-law,[29] we may never know. Besides, this version does not corrrespond with Apuleius' statement, that he was the one who had requested the trial (*Ap.* 1.6s).

It still remains to state that the argument for a link between the *Lex Cornelia* and the trial of Apuleius has some holes: nor can it be proved that the trial was held under the *Lex Cornelia* nor if the *Lex Cornelia* in fact applied to magic practices in the time of Apuleius.

6

That there had been a trial against Apuleius and that this speech – maybe in a shorter form – had been made there, can be neither totally proved nor disproved. In my opinion, there are good reasons to understand the speech as a fiction.[30]

As regards our question, the speech of Apuleius shows two aspects: although on the part of the Roman state efforts had obviously been made again and again to stop magic, it flourished among the people. Magic in itself had hardly been punishable with the death penalty. When magical practices aimed at or led to the death or injury of the bewitched person, the sentence was applied to the consequences of magic, not to its forms.[31]

27. C. Marchesi, 'I pocula amatoria e il crimen magiae nella legislazione penale romana', *RIGI* 7 (1923): 163–68.

28. Liebs, 'Die Rechtslage bei Apuleius', p. 35. Ebenso A. Abt, *Die Apologie des Apuleius von Madaura und die antike Zauberei* (Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten, 4,2; Gießen: Toepelmann, 1908; Neudruck, 1967), p. 88.

29. Liebs, 'Die Rechtslage bei Apuleius', p. 35.

30. See U. Riemer, 'Apuleius, de magia: Zur Historizität der Rede', *Historia* 55 (2006): 178–90.

31. Cf. the statement of Dickie, *Magic and Magicians*, p. 149, that not all kinds of magic had been prosecuted, necromancy being one of them. This sounds reasonable, because in this case the bewitched person, that is the dead, cannot be hurt.

THE GREAT MAGICAL PAPYRUS OF PARIS (PGM IV) AND THE BIBLE

Pieter W. van der Horst

The so-called 'Great Magical Papyrus of Paris' or *PGM* IV is a Greek manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, where it is catalogued as *Supplément grec* 574 (or Anastasi 1073). It is a large manuscript, containing 36 leaves from a codex, and its text runs to 3274 lines in total.[1] It was acquired in Egypt in the early nineteenth century by the famous collector of antiquities, Giovanni Anastasi, and bought by the Bibliothèque Nationale at an auction in Paris in 1857.[2] This and the other Anastasi papyri probably came from Thebes where they were discovered in a grave sometime around 1825, as Anastasi was told, although we cannot be completely certain about this. Be that as it may, it was certainly written in Egypt in the Roman period. The papyrus contains a handbook for a practising magician that was 'compiled from many sources'.[3] As Hans-Dieter Betz has suggested, the compiler probably travelled around Egypt to visit temple libraries which often served as depositories of magico-religious literature,[4] and to exchange materials with other magicians; he assembled documents over a period of time and successively or finally copied them all into a handbook.[5] With its more than 50 documents *PGM* IV is the single most comprehensive handbook for magical practices known from the ancient world.[6] Papyrologists agree that the manuscript was written in the early fourth century CE, but the documents contained in it may of course be older, and some of them much

1. In Preisendanz's edition the Greek text covers 57 pages; see *PGM*, vol. 1 , pp. 66–180. The present author examined the manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale on 12–13 April, 2000.

2. Almost 30 years earlier, Anastasi had sold a larger lot of these papyri to the Dutch archaeologist C.J.C. Reuvens, the founder and first director of the Oudheidkundig Museum in Leiden.

3. H.D. Betz, *The 'Mithras Liturgy'* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), p. 7.

4. G. Fowden, *The Egyptian Hermes: A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 57–58.

5. Betz, *The 'Mithras Liturgy'*, pp. 7–8.

6. For the wide variety of practices dealt with in *PGM* IV see W. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri: An Introduction and Survey; Annotated Bibliography (1928–1994)', in *ANRW* II. 18.5, pp. 3380–3684 (3497–98).

older. It is clear that each and every document or tradition found in this compilation has a prehistory of its own, and it is now generally agreed that *PGM* IV contains material that has a chronological range from the first to the third centuries CE. The scribe is certainly not the author but he is not just a mechanical compiler either. He makes it clear that he has sometimes examined more than one copy of his documents and hence notes textual variants, and he also inserts marginal comments and cross-references,[7] but he makes no effort to edit or rewrite the procedures collected, on the contrary, he was concerned about accuracy. *PGM* IV is the best possible illustration of the kind of books that, according to Acts 19:19, were publicly burned in Ephesus after the apostle Paul had unmasked the Jewish magicians in that city.

After the *editio princeps* by Carl Wessely in 1888,[8] the whole document was reprinted with several necessary corrections and emendations by Preisendanz in 1928 as number IV in his *PGM*,[9] accompanied by a German translation. The first English translation, by a team of American scholars, was published in 1986 in *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, edited by Hans-Dieter Betz.[10] In 1987 a Spanish translation appeared.[11] An anonymous French translation was published in 1995.[12] And I myself published parts of the papyrus text in a Dutch translation in 1997.[13] The secondary literature on this papyrus is enormous. In a book-length article of more than 300 pages published in 1995, the late William Brashear lists hundreds of publications (between 1928 and 1994) dealing either with *PGM* IV as a whole or with documents contained in it or with individual passages.[14] A century ago the study of the Greek magical papyri still had to be justified and defended against the scorn of worthies such as Wilamowitz-Moellendorff,[15] but in the meantime the climate has changed drastically: the study of ancient magic is now not only a respected

7. Betz, *The 'Mithras Liturgy'*, p. 8, for examples. See, e.g., lines 500 and 2427. Many more examples in A.D. Nock, 'Greek Magical Papyri', in Nock, *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, vol. I (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 178–79.

8. C. Wessely, 'Griechische Zauberpapyri von Paris und London', *Denkschrift der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien*, Phil.-hist. Klasse 36 (1888), pp. 44–126. It is a rather sloppy edition with many errors.

9. See note 1.

10. *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation including the Demotic spells* (ed. H.D. Betz; Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1986), pp. 36–101.

11. J.L.C. Martínez, M.D.S. Romero, *Textos de magia en papiros griegos: Introducción, traducción y notas* (Biblioteca clásica Gredos, 105; Madrid: Gredos, 1987) (*non vidi*).

12. *Manuel de magie égyptienne: Le papyrus magique de Paris* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1995).

13. P.W. van der Horst, *Bronnen voor de studie van de wereld van het vroege christendom* (2 vols.; Kampen: Kok, 1997), 2, pp. 100–12.

14. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', pp. 3516–27 on *PGM* IV.

15. See Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', p. 3410.

scholarly enterprise, it has even become part and parcel of the study of ancient religions.

Most of the compilations or anthologies of Graeco-Roman magical formularies were produced in the first three centuries CE, although the papyri which preserved them mostly date from the third to sixth centuries. Their disparate contents betray their chequered development every few lines, as Brashear has noticed:

> Recipes and instructions for making gems, charms, amulets, figurines, and potions are intermingled with divination by numbers, dice or Homeric verses. Amatory magic follows hard on execration, exorcism or magico-medical recipe. Hecate, Kore, Apollo, Aphrodite, and Athena are invoked along with Ereschigal, Adonai, Jehovah and Jesus. Suddenly there appears a snatch of classical Greek poetry, but it is interlarded with *voces magicae*. A Coptic section succeeds a Greek one. It is sometimes difficult to find any unifying principle whatsoever.[16]

Although this is meant as a description of Greek magical formularies in general, it applies perfectly to *PGM* IV.

That the recipes and prescriptions of *PGM* IV were indeed put into practice is shown by several recent finds. For instance, a find in Egypt of a jar containing a lead foil inscribed with a charm and a clay figurine of a kneeling woman with her hands bound behind her back and her body pierced by 13 nails corresponds rather closely to the procedures prescribed in *PGM* IV 296–434, in spite of a number of deviations in both the *praxis* and the *logos*. Also other love charms on lead *lamellae* follow parts of this text.[17] The fact that of some formularies we have parallel versions in two or three different languages (e.g., Greek, Coptic and Aramaic)[18] is also an indication that they were meant for practical purposes and that a diversified clientele was served with them.[19]

An interesting feature of *PGM* IV (and of other magical papyri) is the insertion of metrical hymnic passages into the formularies. So we find a hymn to the Moon (2241–2347), to the Sun (436–461 and 1957–1981), to Aphrodite (2902–2939) and several more (in total 15 hymns).[20] The sometimes poor linguistic and metrical qualities of these hymns are

16. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', p. 3414.

17. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', pp. 3416–17 with notes, and cf. p. 3446. Also Nock, 'Greek Magical Papyri', pp. 179–80.

18. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', pp. 3405, 3419. Cf. also the almost identical text on the lead tablet *SB* IV 7452 and the formulae prescribed in *PGM* IV.341ff.

19. On the magical papyri as 'the actual working copies of practical magicians' see Nock, 'Greek Magical Papyri', p. 177.

20. For a complete survey see A. Henrichs (following E. Heitsch, *Die griechischen Dichterfragmente der römischen Kaiserzeit* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963]) in *PGM*, vol. 2, p. 266.

indicative of a non-classical provenance and nowadays most scholars assume that they originated in the early imperial period, i.e., in the first two centuries CE, maybe some of them somewhat earlier. Although much in the magical papyri has an Egyptian or otherwise oriental background, these hymns are certainly of Greek provenance. As Brashear says: 'They hearken back to the days when the Olympian and chthonian deities reigned supreme, when Iao, Baal, Ereschigal, Nebutosualeth and their likes were hundreds of miles away and still unheard of.'[21] In earlier scholarship it was often assumed that the magical papyri were, apart from some Greek influence, 'a hodge-podge of oriental, Gnostic, Mithraic and Babylonian elements'.[22] But in our days it is only Greek, Egyptian, and Jewish (with perhaps some Christian) elements that are seen as the main components.[23]

As is well known, the importance of Jewish elements in the Greek magical papyri should not be underrated; in approximately one-third of the rites and charms Jewish elements are detectable.[24] Not only are Iao and Adonai and Sabaoth invoked more frequently than most other deities except Helios, but also Moses, Solomon and the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob figure in several passages in the papyri, and 'angels, archangels, cherubim and seraphim abound'.[25] All these biblical names seem to have become elements of a 'transcultural magical lingo', as Morton Smith has dubbed it.[26] Also many of the strange-sounding *voces magicae* or *nomina barbara*,[27] may have a Hebrew or Aramaic background.[28] Even if that is not the case, sometimes alliterative hocus-pocus of several hundred words long is simply called Hebrew by the magicians themselves.[29] This has to do with the great reputation of Jewish magicians

21. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', p. 3421.

22. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', p. 3422.

23. On the paucity of Latin and Roman elements see Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', pp. 3425–26.

24. See M. Smith, 'The Jewish Elements in the Magical Papyri', in Smith, *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh* vol. 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 246–47. Note that this implies that in two-thirds of the material no Jewish influence at all is to be detected. See on the importance of Jewish elements also T. Hopfner, *Griechisch-ägyptischer Offenbarungszauber* (2 vols.; corrected reprint; Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1974–1983), 2. pp. 31–33.

25. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', p. 3427. On the patriarchs also M. Rist, 'The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: A Liturgical and Magical Formula', *JBL* 57 (1938): 289–303.

26. Smith, 'The Jewish Elements', p. 245.

27. For an extensive list see Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', pp. 3576–603.

28. For instances see C. Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets, Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1950), p. 187.

29. In *PGM* V, 115–16 even the Egyptian name Osoronnophris (= Osiris Wennefer) is said to be 'the true name which has been transmitted to the prophets of Israel'! For Hebrew in Coptic magical papyri see M. Kropp, *Ausgewählte Koptische Zaubertexte*, vol. 3 (Brussels: Fondation Egyptologique Reine Elisabeth, 1930), p. 218.

and magic in late antiquity.[30] Jewish and biblical elements, names, motifs and formulae were borrowed freely because they were believed to be exceptionally potent and effective. It is, therefore, not strange that, if one moves from pagan magical texts to Jewish ones, one often does not have the feeling of moving to a different world. If syncretism is to be found anywhere, it is in the world of ancient magic.[31]

In this framework it is worthwile to take a closer look at a famous passage in *PGM* IV, the so-called 'Hebrew formula' (λόγος Ἑβραϊκός, 3007–86).[32] It is a charm of 80 lines in which a spell to be used in case of demonic possession is presented. Although the recipe is attributed to the legendary Egyptian magician Pibechis, it teems with Jewish elements. After having listed the ingredients of a magic potion, the text states it should be prepared while saying a formula that begins with the word Joel, a composite of the Hebrew Jeho- (= YHWH) and -El (God), that we find elsewhere in the form Jael and Jaoel.[33] In the same formula also the variant forms Jaba, Jôê and Jaêô occur (elsewhere we find Jabe, Jaoue, Jao, Jaou, Ja etc.).[34] This indicates how important the invocation of the name of the God of Israel was considered,[35] even though it is here part of a string of *nomina barbara* that concludes with the name of the Egyptian creator-god Ptah. It should also be noted that in the next line we find the well-known string of the seven vowels of the Greek alphabet (a, e, ê, i, o,

30. See for literature Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', p. 3426 n. 222. M. Simon, *Verus Israel: A Study of the Relations Between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire (AD 135–425)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 339–68. J. Gager, *Moses in Greco-Roman Paganism* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1972), pp. 134–61.

31. Sometimes it is impossible to decide whether a magical papyrus is of Christian or Jewish provenance; e.g., P.IFAO iii 50 in *Suppl. Mag.* I, pp. 49–52 (no. 19).

32. For bibliography see Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', pp. 3526–27. I single out for mention A. Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten* (Tübingen: Mohr, 4th edn, 1923), pp. 214–28; W.L. Knox, 'Jewish Liturgical Exorcism', *HTR* 31 (1938): 191–203; S. Eitrem, *Some Notes on the Demonology in the New Testament* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1966), pp. 15–30; for parallels in Jewish mystical texts see J.-H. Niggemeyer, *Beschwörungsformel aus dem 'Buch der Geheimnisse'* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1975), *passim*; P.S. Alexander, 'Jewish Elements in Gnosticism and Magic c. CE 70 – c. CE 270', in W. Horbury, *et al.* (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 1073–74. Further the publications mentioned in notes 10 to 13 are relevant.

33. See, e.g., *LAE* (Greek version) 29.4; 33.5; *Apoc. Abr.* 10.3; 13.1 etc. with the comments in R. Rubinkiewicz, *L'Apocalypse d'Abraham en vieux slave* (Lublin: Société des Lettres et des Sciences de l'Université Catholique de Lublin, 1987), pp. 127–29.

34. See on these and other transcriptions of the Tetragrammaton A. Deissmann, *Bibelstudien* (reprint; Hildesheim and New York: Olms, 1977), pp. 1–20 ('Griechische Transskriptionen des Tetragrammaton'). Note that sometimes Iao is equated with Aion; see H. Lewy, *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy* (ed. M. Tardieu; Paris: Etudes Augustiniennes, 1978), p. 409 n. 32. The palindrome *iaôai* is quite popular.

35. See D. Aune, 'Iao', *RAC* 17 (1996), pp. 1–12 (5–6).

u, ô),[36] of which Eusebius, a contemporary of the scribe of the papyrus, says that its power is thought to be equivalent to that of the Tetragrammaton YHWH (*PE* 11.6.36); and he is right, as is testified by several passages in other magical papyri and in the Nag Hammadi codices as well.[37] The formula ends with the imperative 'come out of NN' (3013: ἔξελθε ἀπὸ τοῦ δεῖνος), using the same terminology as in the story of Jesus' exorcism in Luke 4.35 (ἔξελθε ἀπ' αὐτοῦ). And after having spelled out the *nomina barbara* to be written on the amulet, the author adds that it is a formula 'terrifying every demon' (3017: παντὸς δαίμονος φρικτόν), which is of course strongly reminiscent of James 2.19, 'The demons too believe this and they are terrified' (φρίσσουσιν).

The conjuration itself begins with the striking opening, 'I conjure you by the God of the Hebrews, Jesus!' (3019–20). The fact that the God of the Hebrews[38] is invoked is not in itself something extraordinary, as we have already seen. A deity who liberates his people from bondage, who splits the sea for that very reason and destroys their enemies by that very measure, is without doubt a god who is able to chase out a demon from a possessed person. But why is that god called Jesus, of all names? This sounds as un-Jewish as it could be. And, of course, several scholars, among which even Preisendanz, have suggested that the word 'Jesus' is an interpolation.[39] But that is a futile observation, for even if that were true, it still should be said that the scribe of the papyrus – if he was the interpolator, otherwise it was his predecessor – found it suitable to give the god of the Hebrews the name of Jesus. This is remarkably reminiscent of the passage in the book of Acts (19.13) where it is Jews in Ephesus, the sons of the high-priest Sceva, who adjure evil spirits in the name of Jesus: and they are not Christians! In that story, however, the evil spirit says: 'Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?', and he does not leave his victim (Acts 19.16). But one could also refer to the freelance Jewish exorcists who drive out demons in the name of Jesus in Mark 9.38 and Lk. 9.49, who were apparently more successful.[40] Be that as it may,

36. See H. Leclercq, 'Amulettes', *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* I 2 (1907), pp. 1784–1860 (1794–95); F. Dornseiff, *Das Alphabet in Mystik und Magie* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1925), pp. 35–60 (Die Vokalreihen im Zauber).

37. See for the evidence P. Cox Miller, 'In Praise of Nonsense', in A.H. Armstrong (ed.), *Classical Mediterranean Spirituality: Egyptian, Greek, Roman* (London: SCM Press, 1986), pp. 481–505 (482–84). Also R. Kotansky, *Greek Magical Amulets* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1993), pp. 41–53, no. 9.

38. For this biblical expression see Exod. 3.18; 7.16; 9.1.

39. For a discussion of this issue see J.M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic and the Synoptic Tradition* (London: SCM Press, 1974), p. 71. Hull compares a passage earlier in the same papyrus where we find, 'Hail, God of Abraham, hail, God of Isaac, hail, God of Jacob, Jesus Chrestus [sic] etc.' (*PGM* IV, 1228–29).

40. See D.E. Aune, 'Magic in Early Christianity', in *ANRW* II. 23.2, pp. 1545–49 (The Magical Use of the Name of Jesus).

Irenaeus informs us that by the end of the second century CE Jews were still using the name of Jesus in exorcisms (*Adv. Haer.* 2.6.2).

The text goes on by saying about this God that he 'appears in fire' (3023), which seems to be a reference to the role of fire in theophanies as they are depicted in Old Testament texts such as Exod. 3.2; 13.21; 19.18 etc. This deity is told to send down an implacable angel 'to bind [lit. 'cause to enter into its proper place'] the demon flying around this creature that God formed in his holy paradise' (3026–27). It is interesting to see that the demon that was first ordered to go out of the possessed is now said to be flying around him. According to Luke 11.24-26, Jesus said that when an unclean spirit (a demon) has gone out of a man, he passes through waterless areas (no doubt flying around there) but finds no rest so that finally it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came', and then things get even worse. Such a demon has to be bound in order to prevent it from causing greater damage to the human creature.[41] This creature 'God formed in his holy paradise', an unmistakable reference to Genesis 2 of which we find another one later on in the phrase 'who formed from dust the race of humans' (3047). The function of this element is that of a *historiola*, a reference to a piece of (usually foreign) mythology that serves to underline the invincible power of the deity invoked and hence to frighten the demon.[42] We find such a reference again some lines further when the spell goes on: 'I conjure you by the one who appeared to Israel[43] in a shining pillar and a cloud by day, who saved his people from the Pharaoh and brought upon Pharaoh the ten plagues because of his disobedience' (3033–38). In this *historiola* the most powerful scenes from Israel's history are evoked and the idea behind it is that such archetypal events 'retain their supernatural force and can be reactivated at any given time by the simple act of recounting them'.[44] It is interesting to notice that in the middle of the third century CE the great Christian scholar Origen remarks that '"the God of Israel," and "the God of the Hebrews," and "the God who drowned the king of Egypt and the Egyptians in the Red Sea" are formulae which are often used [by non-Jews] to overcome demons or certain evil powers' (*Contra Celsum* 4.34).

The spell continues by ordering the demon to reveal its identity and to tell whether it is 'heavenly or aerial, terrestrial or subterranean, or

41. P.S. Alexander in E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* III/1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), p. 357, compares this passage to Tob. 8.2-3: when Tobias had smoked the demon out of his bridal chamber, the angel Raphael pursued it to Upper Egypt and bound it to stop it from returning. Cf. *Jub.* 10.5.

42. On *historiolae* see Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', pp. 3438–40. Aune, 'Magic in Early Christianity', p. 1547, coined the term 'magical *Heilsgeschichte*' in this connection.

43. The papyrus has 'Osrael' but the context leaves no doubt about the correct reading.

44. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri', p. 3439. Cf. Knox, 'Jewish Liturgical Exorcism', p. 195. Aune, 'Magic in Early Christianity', p. 1547.

netherworldly or Ebousaeus or Chersaeus or Pharisaeus' (3043–44). This firstly reminds us of the story of the Gerasene demoniac in which Jesus' question, 'What is your name?' (Mk 5.9; Lk. 8.30) is answered with the name *Legion*. Knowledge of the nature or name of the demon is a prerequisite for its expulsion. But probably a better interpretation is to take λαλῆσαι (3038) and λάλησον (3042, 3044) as used absolutely, without combining it with the following ὁποῖον κτλ. The sense then is that the demon has made its victim dumb and we should translate as, 'speak, of whatever nature you may be'.[45] This would constitute a striking parallel to the story of the πνεῦμα ἄλαλον, the mute spirit who robs persons of their speech, in Mark 9.17. The demon must be made to speak, and its victim will follow suit.[46] Secondly, the 'heavenly or aerial' demon suggests comparison with what Pseudo-Paul writes on the evil spirits which he calls 'the prince of the power of the air' and 'powers in the heavenly places' (Eph. 2.2; 3.10). The most interesting feature here, however, is the three names or categories at the end. There is no doubt that these are borrowed from Gen. 15.20-21, where the ten nations living in Canaan in Abraham's days are mentioned, among which are the Jebusites, the Girgashites, and the Perizzites. In the LXX version these have become *Iebousaioi*, *Gergesaioi* and *Pherezaioi*. These have here been garbled into *Ebousaios* (well recognizable), *Chersaios* (possibly an amalgam of *Gergesaios* and *Chettaios*, Hittite, also in the list), and *Pharisaios*, 'Pharisee' thus becoming the name of a demon class! The latter designation of course also suggests familiarity with New Testament stories about inimical Pharisees.[47]

Another interesting feature is that the magician tries to force the demon to reveal its identity by conjuring it 'by the seal which Solomon placed on the tongue of Jeremiah' (3039–40). The *Seal of Solomon* was the name of a famous amulet in antiquity, often in the form of a signet ring.[48] Of course Solomon's reputation as a magician was widespread in antiquity, as the stories about him in Josephus (*Ant.* 8.44–49) and the *Testament of Solomon* demonstrate,[49] but the story of the seal or ring being placed on

45. Eitrem, *Some Notes*, pp. 18–19.

46. See Hull, *Hellenistic Magic*, pp. 68–69.

47. Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten*, p. 223 n. 12. Cf. Knox, 'Jewish Liturgical Exorcism', p. 196: 'The change of Perizzites to Pharisees suggests that the papyrus has been edited by someone who knew that the Pharisees figure as the villains of the N.T.'. Eitrem, *Some Notes*, p. 23, suggests that Jn 8.48 ('are you a Samaritan and do you have a demon?') implies that 'Samaritan' may also have become a designation of a class of demons.

48. Many ancient amulets are inscribed with σφραγὶς Σολομῶνος. See K. Preisendanz, 'Salomo', *PW* 8 (1965), pp. 660–704 (on the *Seal*, pp. 670–76). Also A. Jacoby, 'Clavicula Salomonis', *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* 2 (1930), pp. 88–93.

49. See, apart from Preisendanz's article in Pauly-Wissowa, A.B. Kolenkow, 'Relationships Between Miracle and Prophecy in the Greco-Roman World and Early Christianity', in *ANRW* II.23.2, pp. 1471–1506 (1489–91).

Jeremiah's tongue is an otherwise unknown haggadic motif. Deissmann[50] surmises that it derives from Jer. 1.6-10 (LXX) where the prophet protests to the Lord that he is too young for his task and that he cannot speak, whereupon the Lord stretches out his hand, touches Jeremiah's mouth, and says, 'Look, I have put my words into your mouth' (1.9). This passage certainly has some connection with the remark in our papyrus, but there is still a long way between the Lord touching the prophet's mouth and Solomon putting his seal on the prophet's tongue. *Non liquet*, but again we can observe how biblical or post-biblical Jewish motifs are here taken into service by a non-Jewish magician.

The magician continues conjuring the demon by the one 'whom every heavenly power of angels and archangels praises' (3050–52), which may be a vague echo of Isaiah 6 or rather a motif taken over from Jewish mystical traditions as we find them in the earliest strata of *Hekhalot* literature. He also calls the divinity 'the great god Sabaoth' (3052), taking the second element in *YHWH Tseva'oth* to be a divine name, as was (and still is) so often done. Then follows another *historiola* when he calls this god the one 'through whom the Jordan river drew back and the Red Sea, which Israel crossed, became impassable' (3053–55), with clear references to Joshua 3 and Exodus 14, although perhaps Ps. 114.3 ('The sea looked and fled, the Jordan turned back') is a more likely candidate because of the collocation of the two events. These impressive miracles testify to such a great power in the divinity that the demon cannot but surrender. God is then called 'the one who revealed the 140 languages and distributed them by his own command' (3056–58). This is a nice example of magical bluffing out a demon. The Jewish tradition recognizes 70 languages (on the basis of the table of 70 nations in Gen. 10), but the magician doubles the number in order to impress the evil spirit. Or – another intriguing possibility – did the author know about another Jewish tradition, that one finds only occasionally in rabbinic literature (e.g., *Sifre Deut.* 311), to the effect that there were 140 nations in the world?[51] That would imply an even more intimate knowledge of Jewish traditions than we have seen hitherto.

The remark that God is the one 'whom the wings of the cherubim praise' (3061) betrays knowledge of Ezek. 10.5 or, more probably, of a *Hekhalot* tradition,[52] but the unexpected combination τοῦ χερουβίν (singular article with the noun in a Hebrew or Aramaic plural) suggests that it is a distant acquaintance. The text goes on: 'I conjure you by the one who put the mountains around the sea [or] a wall of sand and commanded the sea not to overflow; and the abyss obeyed' (3062–64).

50. Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten*, p. 223 n. 11.

51. See L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 5 (Philadelphia, PA: JPS, 1925), p. 195, for further references.

52. See Alexander in Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People* III/1, p. 357 n. 27.

Here we see clear echoes of Jer. 5.22 and Job 38.10-11, and it should be noticed that 'the power of God to set bounds to the sea is again suitable to overawe demons who are afraid of water'.[53] In the following lines we read about 'the one in holy Jerusalem before whom the unquenchable fire burns for all time, with his holy name' (3069–70). The fact that the name of Jerusalem is in the unusual spelling of Ἱεροσόλυμος (instead of Ἱεροσόλυμα) suggests again that the author of the spell is not a Jew himself, and the mention of the *ner tamid* in the Jerusalem temple[54] does not contradict that suggestion since that undying light 'was legendary in antiquity',[55] and we find it mentioned several times by pagan authors (in *PGM* IV it is also mentioned in line 1219).[56] At the end the author urges the magicians who want to put this spell into practice not to eat pork and to keep themselves pure, 'for this charm is Hebraic (ὁ λόγος ἐστιν Ἑβραϊκος) and is preserved among pure men' (3084–86). Here one of the most important dietary rules of the Jewish people is inculcated because the spell is Jewish, says the author. Is that really true?[57]

It is tempting to say yes because of the abundance of biblical and post-biblical Jewish motifs in this document. But we should not lose sight of the fact that the document also contains indications of a relatively distant acquaintance with these traditions, as we have seen. Even though the name of Jesus could be used by Jews for exorcistic purposes, that is still a far cry from calling Jesus the God of the Hebrews. That seems to be too much against the very nature of Judaism for us to be able to maintain a Jewish authorship. But what, then, of the Jews in Elephantine, who worshipped several gods alongside YHWH? One could also say that making Pharisees into a class of demons is too much of an anti-Jewish statement to make Jewish authorship of the spell possible. But then, could we expect a Jewish magician of the Egyptian countryside in the second or third century CE to know what a Pharisee is? He would certainly have never met one! Even so, I am inclined to think that we have here a rather extreme case of pagan borrowing of Jewish motifs. Perhaps we have here the product of a close co-operation between a pagan and a Jewish magician. The reputation of Jewish magicians was so great, as we know from several sources,[58] that one can imagine very well that a pagan magician would try to incorporate as many Jewish elements into his own spells as possible, possibly with the help of a Jewish colleague. But it

53. Knox, 'Jewish Liturgical Exorcism', p. 199.

54. Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten*, p. 224 n. 11, thinks the reference is to the never ending burnt offering mentioned in Lev. 6.8-13, which is less likely.

55. W.C. Grese in Betz (ed.), *Greek Magical Papyri*, p. 97 n. 407.

56. E. Schürer, *History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* II (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979), p. 297 n. 18.

57. See for the following Smith, 'The Jewish Elements', pp. 242–56.

58. The same applies to Samaritans.

cannot be ruled out entirely that, after all, the spell was written indeed by a syncretistic Jew who had no qualms about calling Jesus the god of the Jews.[59] The only thing that mattered to him was that his spell worked. It is fitting to conclude with two characteristic quotes from the late and unforgettable Morton Smith's study of the Jewish elements in the magical papyri:

> To speak of the Jewish elements in the magical papyri is to beg the question, what was Judaism in the times and places where the papyri were written? This question cannot be answered precisely. We know from preserved evidence that Judaism took many different forms, some of them surprising (primitive Christianity, for instance), but we don't know what more surprising forms may have been represented by the great majority of the evidence – that [is] now lost.[60]

And on our spell (3007–86) Morton Smith says:

> The conjuration is probably the work of a pagan who uses a Jewish text – carelessly. 'The god of the Hebrews, Jesus, seems unlikely for either a Jew or a Christian, and the many historical mistakes also favor pagan authorship, though only slightly; the biblical ignorance of both Jews and Christians should not be underestimated. Again the unquenched fire in Jerusalem suggests a date prior to 70 for the text the pagan used.[61] So does the description of Jesus, reflecting a pagan's impression of Christianity in its first appearance, and so does the favorable attitude of an Egyptian towards Jews, unlikely after 115–117.[62]

It is not difficult to agree. Much more could and should be said of this charm and its relation to biblical materials, but time and space forbid. Hopefully the few data presented suffice to give an adequate impression of the problems involved.[63]

59. That he composed the charm originally in Hebrew is untenable; *contra* M. Gaster, 'The Logos Ebraikos in the Magical Papyrus of Paris and the Book of Enoch', in M. Gaster, *Studies and Texts*, vol. I (reprint; New York: KTAV, 1971), pp. 356–64. It must be conceded, however, that 'knowledge of Hebrew was surely behind this stuff, though far behind' (Smith, 'The Jewish Elements', p. 249). For a comparable case from Hadrumetum (near Carthage) see A. Bernand, *Sorciers grecs* (Paris: Fayard, 1991), pp. 299–302.

60. Smith, 'The Jewish Elements', p. 242.

61. Further on the same page Smith suggests that 'its extinction would have been a considerable embarrassment and would have discouraged reference to it after it had been so conspicuously discredited.' Nock, 'Greek Magical Papyri', p. 183, says, 'the writer's Jerusalem may well be a Jerusalem of the imagination', which I find less convincing.

62. Smith, 'The Jewish Elements', p. 250. Cf. also R. Kotansky, 'Greek Exorcistic Amulets', in M. Meyer and P. Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (RGRW, 141; Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 262–66.

63. I owe many thanks to Dr James N. Pankhurst for correcting my English.

THE *EIGHTH BOOK OF MOSES* (PLeid. J 395): HELLENISTIC JEWISH INFLUENCE IN A PAGAN MAGICAL PAPYRUS

Bert Jan Lietaert Peerbolte

In her brief but excellent introduction to magic in the Roman world Naomi Janowitz treats magic not as a precursor to religion, but as a specific type of religious behaviour in which a human being tries to influence the supernatural world by means of manipulation.[1] This manipulation can take the form of a charm, a potion, a spell, but also amulets and voodoo-like dolls were used. Janowitz treats magic as a subtype of religion, and studies the interaction between pagans, Jews and Christians from this perspective.[2] With her view, Janowitz corrects the nineteenth-century paradigm of which James Frazer's *Golden Bough* forms the most influential example.[3] According to Frazer, 'magic' was a type of primitive behaviour that was followed by 'religion', and the latter was the more cultured form of human interaction with the divine world. Magic was considered as primitive and unworthy behaviour.

Frazer's view was soon rejected by many, but did influence, for example, Otto Kern's depiction of magic in his 1938 three-volume treatment of Greek religion. Kern distinguishes between '*Aberglaube*' and

1. N. Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World. Pagans, Jews and Christians* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

2. On the origin of the term 'magic', see J.N. Bremmer, 'The Birth of the Term "Magic"', in J.N. Bremmer and J.R. Veenstra (eds.), *The Metamorphosis of Magic from Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period* (Groningen Studies in Cultural Exchange 1; Leuven, Paris and Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2002), pp. 1–11; see also Bremmer's 'Appendix: Magic *and* Religion', pp. 267–71, on the relation between the two concepts. A.D. Nock's reconstruction of magic to which Bremmer responds in his first article is still valuable: A.D. Nock, 'Paul and the Magus', in F.J. Foakes Jackson and K. Lake (eds.), *The Beginnings of Christianity* Part I: *The Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1979; London: MacMillan & Co., 1922), pp. 164–88.

3. J. Frazer, *The Golden Bough. A Study in Magic and Religion*, Part I, vol. 1: *The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings* (London: MacMillan, 3rd edn, 1911), pp. 220–43. Cf. on p. 233: 'Yet though magic is thus found to fuse and amalgamate with religion in many ages and in many lands, there are some grounds for thinking that this fusion is not primitive, and that there was a time when man trusted to magic alone for the satisfaction of such wants as transcended his immediate animal cravings.'

'Religion', and considers '*Aberglaube*' (= magic) a type of popular belief. Kern uses the definition 'Religion' for the official cults of the Greeks.[4] Kern did not take over Frazer's view on magic as a precursor to religion, but he did separate the two phenomena.

Gerardus van der Leeuw, who was professor at Groningen University from 1918 until his death at age sixty in 1950,[5] was more careful in his approach.[6] In his *Phänomenologie der Religion* (1933) Van der Leeuw defended the same view Janowitz presented recently. According to Van der Leeuw magic and religion are closely intertwined:

> Es ist ... nicht zulässig, 'Religion' und 'Magie' in ein gewisses gegensätzliches Verhältnis zu stellen, als wäre die Religion die Nachfolgerin der Magie, die letztere areligiös, die erstere nie magisch ... Wo Religion ist, da ist Magie, wenn auch nicht immer in der jeweiligen Haupteinstellung; und wo Magie ist, da ist Religion, wenn auch eine bestimmte Art der Religion.'[7]

Van der Leeuw did, however, carefully characterize 'magic' in relation to 'other types of religion':

> Die Magie unterscheidet sich aber darin von anderer Religion, daß sie die Welt grundsätzlich beherrschen will.[8]

Van der Leeuw's view on magic not as a precursor to, but as a specific type of religion is important. Indeed, as Janowitz argues in her treatment of the subject, it is not always possible to draw a clear line between magic and religion. Two elements in what is usually termed 'magic' should be mentioned in particular, because they indicate that certain types of magic (*mageia*) should indeed be considered as a special kind of religious behaviour that was taken very seriously by the religious establishment. In the first place, magic functioned as an attempt to manipulate events by forcing a deity or spirit to act according to the intention of the sorcerer. This characteristic did separate the practice of what is now labelled as magic from the more official cults while it also indicates a certain closeness of the two phenomena.[9] In the official cults a worshipper hopes and prays

4. O. Kern, *Die Religion der Griechen*, vol. 3, (Berlin: Weidmann, 1938), pp. 212–30.

5. The seminar in which these papers were presented was held at Groningen University, 27–29 July 2004.

6. Van der Leeuw only interrupted his work as professor for comparative religious studies for a term as minister of education for the Dutch Labour Party (Partij van de Arbeid) in the first post-World War II government in the Netherlands (from 24 June 1945 until 3 July 1946).

7. G. van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2nd edn, 1956), pp. 618–19.

8. Van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie*, p. 619.

9. See also S.I. Johnston, 'Magic', in S.I. Johnston (ed.), *Religions of the Ancient World. A Guide* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), pp. 139–52.

for divine intervention, whereas the sorcerer tries to evoke such an intervention by his actions. In the second place, the practice of magic was apparently widespread on the one hand, and fiercely opposed on the other. In his discussion of magicians as 'enemies of the Roman order', Ramsay MacMullen mentions Apuleius' defence as crown-witness to the fact that the charge of magic could indeed lead to death: 'It was a capital crime to "commit" magic, if that is the right way to put it.'[10] To substantiate this remark, MacMullen points at the famous Law of the Twelve Tables, drawn up under the Roman Republic, in which the practice of magic was condemned.[11] Thus, the practice of magic was rejected by the Roman establishment, as it also was by Jewish and Christian authorities.[12]

Having seen this, we are facing a dilemma. On the one hand, we find the practice of magic rejected in Roman documents as well as in Jewish and Christian sources. On the other hand, evidence shows that magic was widely practised. This is clear from an abundance of literary evidence: instructions against the practice of magic are found in many sources. Two examples of warnings like these are found in an early Jewish and an early Christian source: the Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides and the *Didache*. Pseudo-Phocylides line 149 states clearly:

> Make no potions, keep away from magical books.[13]

And the *Didache*, an instruction of the Jewish-Christian movement to be dated to the early second century CE, contains similar instructions. In 2.2 the instruction reads οὐ μαγεύσεις, οὐ φαρμακεύσεις ('you will not practise magic, you will not make potions'),[14] and in 5.1 magic and

10. R. MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), p. 124; see also the rest of his chapter on magic: pp. 95–127.

11. See esp. MacMullen, *Enemies*, pp. 323–24, n. 25; MacMullen's description leads him to conclude: 'If the Church thundered against magic beliefs, that was because they were wicked, not untrue.'

12. The Christian polemic against magic starts with the portrayal of magicians and exorcists in the book of Acts; on this see H.J. Klauck, *Magic and Paganism in Early Christianity. The World of the Acts of the Apostles* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000). According to Dale Martin the rise of Christianity itself should be explained from this perspective: it gave an answer to the threats and fears of ancient society by taking the *daimons* (central to magic) seriously instead of denying their existence; cf. D.B. Martin, *Inventing Superstition. From the Hippocratics to the Christians* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 243.

13. Translation P.W. van der Horst, in *OTP* 2, pp. 565–82. On the backgrounds and context of these words, see P.W. van der Horst, *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides. With Introduction and Commentary* (SVTP, 4; Leiden: Brill, 1978), pp. 212–13. Van der Horst mentions a large number of parallels and concludes: 'In spite of the O.T. rules, there was much Jewish magic in antiquity' (213).

14. Probably quoted by Clement, *Protr.* X.108.2; cf. K. Niederwimmer, *Die Didache* (Kommentar zu den Apostolischen Vätern 1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), p.

potions are mentioned in a list of things to be avoided since they belong to the Way of Death. Instructions like those found in Ps.-Phocylides and the *Didache* are pointless unless the practice of magic actually appealed to people.

Now if the type of magic that invokes deities should be seen as a specific form of, probably popular, religion and evidence shows that magic was practised throughout antiquity, what does this practice of magic tell us about Hellenistic Judaism?

It is a well-known fact that many of the magical papyri, commonly regarded as pagan texts, contain Jewish elements.[15] One of the points in which Jewish traditions influenced pagan magical texts, is the figure of Moses. In 1972 John Gager published an adapted version of his dissertation on Moses in Graeco-Roman paganism.[16] Gager concluded that the realm of magic was one of the most important domains in which Moses became influential.[17] Together with Hermes and Orpheus, Moses was considered as an archetypical sorcerer.[18] Gager correctly explains this high status Moses came to enjoy within pagan magical texts on the basis of the fact that Judaism regarded Moses as the only person to whom the divine name of the God of Israel had been revealed. In the practice of magic, power over divine names is of the utmost importance, and the sorcerer who holds power over the name of the highest deity, has the means to achieve his goals.

Together with the figure of Moses, various Hebrew words and Jewish concepts entered into the realm of pagan magical texts. The divine names *Iao*, *Sabaoth*, and *Adonai*, for instance, often occur in magical papyri, as do the figures of cherubim, archangels and angels.[19] This observation calls for an explanation: what type of religious interaction must we suppose to

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20. Niederwimmer's view on the commands against the practise of magic is that they are directed against pagan practices, although he makes a restriction: 'Daß es freilich auch ein reiches jüdisches Zauberwesen gegeben hat, steht dabei auf einem anderen Blatt.' (p. 118, n. 11). See also A. Milavec, *The Didache. Faith, Hope & Life of the Earliest Christian Communities, 50-70 C.E.* (New York and Mahwah: Newman Press, 2003), pp. 117–18.

15. For an introduction to the Greek Magical Papyri, see esp. W.M. Brashear, 'The Greek Magical Papyri: An Introduction and Survey; Annotated Bibliography (1928-1994)', *ANRW* II.18.5, pp. 3380–684; and H.D. Betz (ed.), *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago, IL and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

16. J. Gager, *Moses in Greco-Roman Paganism* (Nashville, TN and New York: Abingdon, 1972).

17. Gager, *Moses*, pp. 134–61.

18. Gager, *Moses*, p. 148, remarks that '*Monas* is the first of three titles shared by Moses and Hermes'.

19. See the description given by M.P. Nilsson, 'Die Religion der griechischen Zauberpapyri', in M.P. Nilsson, *Opuscula Selecta*, vol. 3 (Lund: Gleerup, 1960), pp. 129–66. Also: M. Smith, 'The Jewish Elements in the Magical Papyri', *SBLSP* (1986), pp. 455–62.

have resulted in the intrusion of this Jewish vocabulary into pagan magical texts?

The first part of the answer must take the date of the material into consideration. The papyri, in which these elements are found, usually date to the third and fourth centuries CE. For many scholars in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries this was reason to regard the practice of magic as a corruption of pagan religiosity and an example of the decline of Graeco-Roman culture. Nevertheless, there are clues that this picture is incorrect, and that it is the literary evidence in the form of the papyri that dates to this relatively late period, not the phenomenon of magic itself. One indication for this is, that objects like curse tablets, binding spells, amulets and 'voodoo-dolls' have been found to predate the magical papyri by a number of centuries.[20] The legislation against the practice of magic in the Roman republic,[21] and literary evidence from early Jewish sources points to the fact that the practice of magic was not confined to late antiquity, but did indeed pervade ancient history.[22] The fact that both the practice of magic as such and the important status accorded to Jews in regard to magic is attested early in the Graeco-Roman period, has brought scholars like Marcel Simon and, more recently, Louis H. Feldman to a re-assessment of Judaism in antiquity. To quote Simon:

> Si l'on définit le judaïsme par sa foi monothéiste et sa Loi morale, la magie n'est qu'une déformation et une caricature, tout comme elle l'est par rapport du vrai christianisme. Mais le point de vue de l'histoire n'est pas celui de la théologie.[23]

The Jewish elements in Greek magical papyri have to be taken as evidence of the mutual interest pagans and Jews took in the other group's magical traditions. Basically, John Gager is correct in stating that 'we must

20. The collection discussed in J. Gager (ed.), *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), gives an abundance of evidence also from the pre-Christian era.

21. See F. Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* (Revealing Antiquity, 10; Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1997).

22. *1 Enoch* 65.6-8 describes the fall of the Watchers as mankind's introduction into the art of magic; cf. also 7.1-2; 94.1-5. The connection with Egypt is found in e.g. *Jubilees*: *Jub.* 48.9-12 describes how Moses had to contend with Egyptian magicians at the court of Pharaoh. These magicians were rendered powerless by the great force of YHWH, whereas Moses was enabled to perform his signs. See also the book of *Iannes and Iambres*. M. Simon considers Jewish magic to originate in pre-Mosaic traditions: 'C'est dans la Bible, aux origins de la religion pré-mosaïque, qu'il faut chercher les racines de cette magie juive qui, au début de l'ère chrétienne, se manifeste dans tout l'Empire avec une si étonnante vitalité.' M. Simon, *Verus Israel. Étude sur les relations entre chrétiens et juifs dans l'empire romain (135-425)* (Paris: De Boccard, 1948), p. 399.

23. Simon, *Verus Israel*, 398. See also L.H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 379–81.

presuppose, as Goodenough, Nock, and others have suggested, the direct and active participation of Jews in the syncretistic milieu which produced the magical documents'.[24]

In this respect the so-called *Eighth Book of Moses* (*Moses VIII*) is of great value.[25] This writing is preserved in papyrus J 395 of the Leiden National Museum of Antiquities (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden).[26] Albrecht Dieterich was the first to discuss it in his *Abraxas*, in which he published the *editio princeps* of the text (1891).[27] In 1910 Richard Reitzenstein criticized Dieterich's discussion in his treatment of Greek mystery religions.[28] And in 1928 Karl Preisendanz included PLeid. J 395 in his edition of the magical papyri as *PGM* XIII.[29] The text, which consists of 1075 lines, does not form a homogeneous unity. In 1984 Morton Smith reconstructed the textual prehistory of *Moses VIII*.[30] According to Smith, *PGM* XIII contains three different recensions of the so-called *Eighth* or *Hidden Book of Moses*. Recension A covers the lines 1–230, recension B lines 343–618, and recension C lines 646–734.[31] A magician combined these three recensions in the fourth century, and added some more Mosaic material. After a thorough reconstruction Smith summarizes his conclusion:

> '*PLeid.* J 395 is *at least* the fifth generation of a literary family. The first generation was a simple invocation of the creator god. In the second generation this was doubled, connected by the write-and-consume ritual, and otherwise expanded to produce the common source of the three versions of *VIII Moses*. In the third generation this common

24. Gager, *Moses*, p. 160.

25. For an extensive bibliography, see Brashear, 'Greek Magical Papyri', pp. 3539–44. See also the discussion in Gager, *Moses*, pp. 146–52.

26. Photographs and a transcription are offered by R.W. Daniel, *Two Greek Magical Papyri in the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden. A Photographic Edition of J 384 and J 395 (= PGM XII and XIII)* (Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Sonderreihe Papyrologica Coloniensa, 19; Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1991).

27. A. Dieterich, *Abraxas. Studien zur Religionsgeschichte des spätern Altertums* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1891).

28. R. Reitzenstein, *Die Hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen, nach ihren Grundgedanken und Wirkungen. Vortrag ursprünglich gehalten in dem wissenschaftlichen Predigerverein für Elsass-Lothringen den 11. November 1909* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1910).

29. The edition: K. Preisendanz (ed.), *Papyri Graecae Magicae. Die griechischen Zauberpapyri* (Leipzig, Berlin: Teubner, 1928), vol. 2, pp. 86–131. Translation by M. Smith, in Betz (ed.), *Greek Magical Papyri*, pp. 172–95.

30. M. Smith, 'The *Eighth Book of Moses* and How It Grew (*PLEID.J* 395)', in *Atti del XVII congresso internazionale di papirologia* (Naples: Centro Internazionale per lo studio di papiri ercolanesi, 1984), pp. 683–93.

31. Smith disagrees here with Gager, *Moses*, 146, who speaks of two recensions (A: lines 1–233, and B: 343–565). The present author is inclined to follow Smith's reconstruction.

> source was altered to produce the three versions ... In the fourth (by minimal reckoning) generation, the three versions were collected with other material to produce the archetype of the present manuscript. In the final generation this archetype was copied to produce the text we now have.' [32]

Smith finally asks: 'How many years should be allowed for five generations?' He doesn't answer the question, but it would seem that the development of this literary tradition must have taken at least a couple of decades if not longer than that. Since the Leiden papyrus is dated to the fourth century, the assumption lies at hand that the first stages of the development that led to the present text must be sought in the second or third centuries CE *at the latest*.

PLeid. J 395 contains evidence for a number of magical writings related to Moses. It not only offers the three recensions of *Moses VIII*, but also contains passages from the so-called *Key of Moses* (lines 21 and 229), and refers to a writing called *The Archangelic Teaching of Moses* (line 971) and the *Secret Prayer of Moses to the Moon* (line 1059).[33] The final line of the document even speaks of a *Hidden Tenth Book of Moses*, a title that probably refers to the final passage of PLeid. J 395.[34] The number 'eight' of this Mosaic book probably originates in the fact that the *ogdoad*, a grouping of eight deities in four *syzygies*, plays such an important part in the writing. Hence the number eight does not imply that there have also been a sixth and seventh book of Moses.

There are several passages in which *Moses VIII* appears to reflect Jewish traditions rather than pagan material. In lines 13–16, for instance, Hermes is mentioned as a plagiarist who stole material from Moses – a motif that fits Jewish apologetics better than pagan speculations on Moses. The magical phonemes ADONAIE BASEMMIAO (line 147) apparently reflect the Hebrew words *adonai bashem Yahweh*.[35] These words may not have been translated directly from Hebrew, but instead form a petrified tradition, as the use of *Iao* and other divine names in general does. It would be a mistake, however, to regard all Jewish elements in this writing in similar fashion. An important but often overlooked detail is mentioned

32. Smith, 'The *Eighth Book of Moses*', p. 688 n. 1.

33. A writing called *Archangelic Teaching of Moses* is also mentioned in Nag Hammadi (II.5.102).

34. On the exact words of the final line, see the discussion between Gager, *Moses*, p. 148, and Smith, in Betz (ed.), *Greek Magical Papyri*, p. 195 n. 146. The Greek reads Μουσέως ἀπόκρυφος ἡ Δεκάτη, and the writing of these words on the papyrus indicates that the words point back to the preceding text rather than introducing a new and supposedly lost part of the writings: these words form the last line of the manuscript as a whole; cf. the picture of the papyrus in Daniel, *Two Greek Magical Papyri*, p. 81.

35. The words ADONAIE BASEM IAO follow another magical word, the meaning of which is uncertain: ARATH.

immediately after the initiation ritual for the magician. There the author gives an instruction in which he mentions the temple of Jerusalem (lines 229–34):

> πλήρης ἡ τελετὴ τῆς Μονάδος προσεφωνήθη σοι, τέκνον. ὑποτάξω δέ σοι, τέκνον, καὶ τὰς χρείας τῆς ἱερᾶς βίβλου, ἃς πάντες οἱ σοφισταὶ ἐτέλησαν ἀπὸ ταύτης τῆς ἱερᾶς καὶ μακαρίδος βίβλου. ὡς ἐξώρκισά σε, τέκνον, ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ τῷ ἐν Ἱερωσολύμῳ· πλησθεὶς τῆς θεοσοφίας ἀνεύρετον ποίησον τὴν βίβλον.[36]

> The initiation called *The Monad* has been fully declared to you, child. Now I subjoin for you, child, also the practical uses of this sacred book, the things which all the experts accomplished with this sacred and blessed book. As I made you swear, child, in the temple of Jerusalem, when you have been filled with the divine wisdom, dispose of the book so that it will not be found.[37]

Morton Smith simply dismisses this remark as 'pretentious hokum',[38] but even if it is, the reference to the temple in Jerusalem is an important indication of the milieu in which *Moses VIII* originated and was passed on. Since lines 229–230 are the last lines of recension A of *Moses VIII*, the remark on the temple must be ascribed to the compiler of the text in its present form. This is probably the reason why Smith so easily dismissed the mention of the temple. Still this particular line is of interest to reconstruct the cultural provenance of the *Eighth Book of Moses*. Although it is certainly possible that this reference to the temple was written in a situation in which the Jerusalem temple was no longer standing, it would seem that a reference like this would hardly make sense if that temple did not matter at all in the spiritual milieu in which this text originated. Such a reference would not presuppose a temporal synchronicity with the Jerusalem temple, but it would point to a group that held this temple in high esteem. In either case it is difficult not to think of a Jewish context for this specific instruction and these specific lines.

It is obviously a tiny detail in the complex literary construction of PLeid. J 395, but it could be worthwhile to be a little more careful than Morton Smith was in his fast judgement of 'pretentious hokum'. Instead, the remark on the temple of Jerusalem may be taken as an indication that the magician's manuals we find in this papyrus are part of a tradition of magic, which was somehow connected to Judaism, perhaps even to the period of the Second Temple. Brief as the reference to the temple may be, it does indicate that Jewish elements in pagan magical papyri cannot be dealt with as pagan traditions entirely independent from Judaism. They

36. Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, vol. 2, pp. 98–99.
37. Translation Smith, in Betz (ed.), *Greek Magical Papyri*, p. 179.
38. In Betz (ed.), *Greek Magical Papyri*, p. 179 n. 56.

do not merely reflect the views of pagan outsiders who were attracted to old and esoteric Mosaic traditions, but must be explained against the background of some kind of interaction between Hellenistic Judaism and its pagan context.

On the Jewish side of this interaction not just incantations and bowls in Aramaic, but also manuals like the *Sefer ha-Razim* indicate that magic was indeed practised by Jews.[39] There is ample evidence of the practice, and it now appears that magic was widespread in Palestine just as it was in Babylonia. In the introduction to their study on Aramaic magical incantations of late antiquity, Joseph Naveh and Shaul Shaked notice that this material is not restricted to Babylonian Judaism, as had been thought before: 'The factual statement that magic was less prominently present in Palestine than in Babylonia (...) proves to be wrong.'[40] Naveh and Shaked also indicate the probability that the use of divine names in Jewish magic is related to the esoteric mysticism of *Hekhalot* literature. This literature should be dated to a period later than the fall of the temple in Jerusalem, but there is a certain amount of continuity with apocalyptic literature of the Second Temple period.[41]

Next to the mention of the temple in Jerusalem, there are more Jewish elements in *Moses VIII* that are difficult to account for if not by postulating some kind of interaction between Jewish and pagan sorcerers. The magical formulae contain a large number of Hebrew words,[42] and some of the spells described obviously have a Jewish background. One of

39. See esp. P.S. Alexander, '*Sefer ha-Razim* and the Problem of Black Magic in Early Judaism', in T.E. Klutz (ed.), *Magic in the Biblical World. From the Rod of Aaron to the Ring of Solomon* (JSNTSup, 245; London and New York: T&T Clark, 2003), pp. 170–90. The date of this *Sefer ha-Razim* is, however, uncertain. Alexander: 'I have no doubt that, whatever the problems of Margalioth's text, his *Sefer ha-Razim* contains a genuine Jewish magical text which goes back in some shape or form to the Talmudic era' (172). The edition referred to is Mordecai Margalioth, *Sepher ha-Razim. A Newly Discovered Book of Magic from the Talmudic Period* (Jerusalem: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1966).

40. J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Magic Spells and Formulae. Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1992), p. 20. The introduction discusses the relation of Jewish magic with Hekhalot literature, liturgy, and medicine: pp. 17–39.

41. Many Jewish magic bowls and amulets in Aramaic should be dated to the same period as *Moses VIII* or later: see e.g. J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls. Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1998), and D. Levene, *A Corpus of Magic Bowls. Incantation Texts in Jewish Aramaic from Late Antiquity* (London, New York and Bahrain: Kegan Paul, 2003). Levene, too, stresses the influence of Hekhalot literature in magic texts: *Magic Bowls*, pp. 14–17.

42. On Semitic influence in the Greek Magical Papyri, see Brashear, 'Greek Magical Papyri', pp. 3426–28: 'Except for Helios no other deities appear so frequently and are invoked so often as Iao (for Jaweh), Sabaoth and Adonai ... Moses is highly regarded as an author of magical literature and to him are ascribed several portions of the long magical formularies' (3427).

these spells is contained in the invocation of Helios (lines 255–63) that Morton Smith judged as a Jewish insert into the pagan text:

> Ἡλίου δεῖξις. λέγε πρὸς ἀνατολάς· ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν δύω χερουβείν ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν δύο φύσεων, οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς, ἡλίου τε καὶ σελήνης, φωτὸς καὶ σκότους, νυκτὸς καί ἡμέρας, ποταμῶν καὶ θαλάσσης· φάνηθι μοι, ὁ ἀρχάγγελος τῶν ὑπὸ τὸν κόσμον, αὐθέντα Ἥλιε, ὁ ὑπ' αὐτὸν τὸν ἕνα καὶ μόνον τεταγμένος· προστάσσει σοι ὁ ἀεὶ καὶ μόνος. λέγε τὸ ὄνομα. ἐὰν δὲ σκυθρωπὸς φανῇ, λεγε· δὸς ἡμέραν, δὸς ὥραν, δὸς μῆνα, δὸς ἐνιαυτόν, κύριε τμς ωῆς. λέγε τὸ ὄνομα.[43]
>
> *To make Helios appear:* Say toward the east, 'I am he on the two cherubim, between the two natures, heaven and earth, sun and moon, light and darkness, night and day, rivers and sea. Appear to me, O archangel of those subject to the cosmos, ruler Helios, set in authority under the One and Only Himself. The Eternal and Only orders you.' Say the Name. And if he appears glowering say 'Give me a day; give an hour; give a month; give a year, lord of life.' Say the Name.[44]

Furthermore, *PGM* XIII also contains the word ιεωη in one of the spells, which was no doubt pronounced as *Yahweh*.[45] The line in which this word is found is part of another reference to Jerusalem (lines 997–98), which describes some ritual concerning bowls of water in the temple. The exact shape and meaning of this ritual are unclear, but its description should probably be understood against the background of Exod. 17.1-7 and Num. 20.1-13.[46]

Other Jewish elements in *Moses VIII* point in the same direction: what we have here are not the petrified relics of Jewish traditions or pseudo-references to Jewish knowledge, but Jewish elements in an otherwise pagan writing. The best explanation for this intrusion of elements of the Jewish religious tradition in a pagan magical writing is the social and religious interaction assumed above. Hence, the Jewish elements in pagan magical papyri such as PLeid. J 395 do testify that there were other forms of interaction between pagans and Jews than the sympathizer–proselyte scheme that is so often used as the ultimate paradigm for Jewish–pagan

43. Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, vol. 2, p. 100.

44. Translation by Smith, in Betz (ed.), *Greek Magical Papyri*, pp. 179–80.

45. See line 997: αχμη ιεωη ιεηω ιαραββαο υχραβαωα; Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, vol. 2, p. 129.

46. R. Merkelbach and M. Totti (eds.), *Abraxs. Ausgewählte Papyri religiösen und magischen Inhalts* (Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Sonderreihe Papyrologica Coloniensa, 17/1; Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990), p. 220, also refer to 2 Esdras 19.15. Merkelbach and Totti point at a large number of Hebrew words and influences in the text of the Eighth Book of Moses; cf. *Abraxs*, pp. 179–222.

relations.[47] The type of references found in PLeid. J 395 attests to the fact that this type of magic cannot be excluded from the study of religion. Rather, the study of this material is extremely relevant for our understanding of the cultural and religious context of two ancient religions in their formative period: Judaism and Christianity.

47. Among the many other passages in e.g. the PGM that reflect Jewish influence especially PGM IV 3053–70 can be mentioned. Cf. esp. the lines 'I conjure you by the great god SABAOTH, through whom the Jordan River drew back and the Red Sea, which Israel crossed, became impassable, because I conjure you by the one who introduced the one hundred forty languages and distributed them by his own command. I conjure you by the one who burned up the stubborn giants with lightning, whom the heaven of heavens praises, whom the wings of the cherubim praise ... I conjure [you] by the one in holy Jerusalem, before whom the unquenchable fire burns for all time, with his holy name, IAEOBAPHRENEMOUN (formula)' Betz, *Greek Magical Papyri*, p. 97.

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