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IT STARTED WITH EVE

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In Volume 19 (1975) 249-255 of this journal I published the love charm P.Köln inv. 5514, and the text is now republished in *Sammelbuch XIV* 11534. My transcription ran as follows:

Θωβαραβαυ τευθραιαιαιαω βακαω ¹ φλεν νοφ εφοφθε αμου αμιμ ¹ βαιν·
 βααρα ααλω β . νααρα ⁴ αααααα εεεεεε ηηηηηη ⁵ ιιιι οοοοοο
 υυυυυυ ωωωωωω ⁶ ἀεροπέτησον τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ τὴν ⁷ καρδίαν Λεοντίας
 ἢ ν' ἔτεκεν μήτρα ⁸ Ἑλία (γ. Αἰλία) καὶ μὴ ἐάχησ αὐτὴν φαγῖν ⁹ μήτε πῖν
 μήτε ὑπνου τυχῖν ¹⁰ ἕως δὲ ἔλθῃ πρὸς ἐμὲ Διόσ-¹¹ κ[ο]υρον ὃν' ἔτεκεν
 Θέκλα. ἤδη ἤδη, ¹² τ[α]χὺ ταχύ (3 magical signs).

Translation of lines 6-12: "Make fly through the air the soul and the heart of Leontia, whom Ailia bore in her womb, and do not let her eat or drink or get sleep until she comes to me Dioskouros, whom Thekla bore. Now now, quickly quickly."

When I studied this text I was green as a papyrologist and knew next to nothing about onomastics. When it came to the reading of the personal names, I now see that I followed one principle somewhat too rigidly: try to recover something that can be paralleled in the papyrological onomastica. Yet I was never confident of the reading Ἑλία (= Αἰλία) in line 8. Franco Maltomini and I have recently controlled the original document again, and we now read with complete certainty not Ἑλία, but Εὔα. This new reading led me to undertake the following short study of the name Eva in antiquity and of the other names in the Cologne charm.

Εὔα is not listed in the papyrological onomastica, and it is rare in antiquity in general. We know of only a few other examples aside from the present one:

- (A) St.Eva, who suffered martyrdom in Africa in 304; cf.Th.Ruinart, *Acta Martyrum Sincera et Selecta* (Regensburg 1859), p.4.15; *Kalendarium Antiquissimum Ecclesiae Carthaginensis*, PL XIII 1224.
- (B) Eva, mother of Valentia, mentioned in lines 4 and 22 of fr.1 of the fourth century Palestinian curse tablet edited by C.Bonner - H.C.Youtie, *TAPA* 68 (1937) 43ff. = H.C.Youtie, *Scriptiunculae Posteriores* II, p.609ff.
- (C) Heva, inscribed on a gold ring found at Pouan (Aube); cf. E.Diehl, *Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres* I (Berlin 1961²), no. 936k.

When Bonner and Youtie, *loc.cit.*(Eva B), discussed the evidence of these three attestations, they suggested that the name was generally avoided because of the Biblical

Eve's being responsible for the fall. They write on p.49: "The name Eua is puzzling. One is naturally inclined to recognize in it the name of Eve, the mother of the human race; but there is a serious, and, we think, an insuperable objection to this. Christian as well as Jewish thought about the beginnings of human kind saw in Eve the source of sin and evil; hence the unhappy associations that went with the name seem to have prevented its use for Jewish and Christian girls." Cf. p.59: "We may say, on the whole, that Eva, wherever it occurs as a personal name, is more likely to owe its use to some local influence than to go back to the woman who sinned in the garden of Eden." They pointed out that Heva (C) might owe her name to an old Germanic goddess and not to the Biblical Eve (see below with footnote 8). For Eva (B) in Palastine they proposed that the name might come from the Bacchic cries εὐοί, εὐάι, εὐάν, because a cult of Dionysos existed in Beth-Shan, where the tablets were found.

Now that yet another Eve is attested, the matter may be reconsidered. To do this, however, it is first necessary to have a look at the other personal names in the Cologne lovecharm: Leontia, Thekla and Dioskouros. When the name Leontia occurs in the papyri, it is in texts of the Byzantine period, usually in a context which shows that the woman was a Christian, at any rate never in one that suggests otherwise. Each of the four women named Leontia listed in *RE Suppl.* VIII, col.934f. was also a Christian. The popularity of the names Leontios and Leontia among Christians in the East was due to the fact that a Leontios was one of the forty martyrs of Sebaste.¹ Because of the legendary martyr known from the *Acts of Paul and Thekla*, the name Thekla became characteristically Christian.² Dioskouros is a name which can equally well be Christian or pagan; however, because the Dioskouros of the Cologne papyrus had a mother named Thekla, he was probably a member of a Christian community.³ Since the Eva of the papyrus gave her daughter the Christian name Leontia and since Leontia was desired by a man who was probably also a Christian, it would seem that also this Eva was a Christian.

Let us now return to the women named Eve known previously. Eva (A) was obviously a Christian. As to Eva (B), Bonner and Youtie pointed out that she and her daughter may have belonged to the Christian community of Beth-Shan, because the names of a number of the other parties cursed in the tablet were characteristically born by Christians and others could be born by Christians. Eva (C) was also a Christian, although the origin of her name may be an exception to the rule that is proposed below.

¹ For literature on the forty martyrs of Sebaste, see D.Hagedorn, *ZPE* 55 (1984) 148f. In Christian Egypt, Leontios became the patron saint of pregnant women; see Kropp, *Ausgewählte Koptische Zaubertexte* III §§183, 341.

² See Bonner - Youtie, *loc.cit.*, p.48

³ That we have a case of a Christian man (Dioskouros) attempting to win a Christian woman (Leontia) by means of a purely pagan magical formula is now perhaps the most interesting aspect of the Cologne text.

In all these texts where Eve is a personal name, there is only one other common denominator: Christian context. Perhaps it was really not unthinkable for Christian parents to name their daughters after the Biblical Eve, at least now and then, just as they occasionally called their sons Adam.⁴ The Biblical Eve, after all, had several important aspects. She was not regarded *exclusively* as the woman who first sinned and as the source of all our woe. She was also the prototype of woman and the mother of mankind. Apparently syncretistic Jews of the second century identified Eve, as the mother of mankind, with Isis lactans.⁵ Already in the second century Christians equated Mary with Eve on the analogy of the equation of Christ and Adam; cf. Irenaeus, *Haer.*3.22.4; Just.Mart., *Dial.Tryph.* 100.5; *Protev.Jacobi* 13.⁶ This was not merely a matter of learned theological speculation as we learn from the Christian letter of condolence P.Oxy.XVI 1874,12 (= Select Papyri I, no. 168) ὅτι ἔπαθεσ ὁμοίος (r. ὁμοίως) ἄμμα Εὐ(α), ὁμοίος (r. ὁμοίως) Μαρία κτλ. On the occasional sanctification of Adam and Eve, see *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst* I, col.42. One may also note that the concept of the 'heavenly Eve' was wide-spread in Gnostic thought.⁷

In short, meagre as our evidence is, it seems that at least in the Greek East⁸ Eve was a Christian name. One naturally expects, then, that this will have been inspired by the Biblical Eve. Her dubious nature might explain why the name is so rare,⁹ but her positive aspects can account for its occasional occurrence.

Cologne

Robert W. Daniel

⁴ When the name Adam occurs in Egypt, it is only in texts of Byzantine date, and all the bearers are probably or definitely Christian; cf. SPP X 297 ii 15; P.Lond.IV 1553,41; P.Oxy.XIX 2244,78; P.Mich. XV 745,6; Lefebvre, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques-chrétiennes d'Égypte*, no.417; Crum, *Coptic Monuments* IV, no. XX; possibly MPER, N.S. XV 32,1 (Αδαμ[Pap.).

⁵ Cf. Babylonian Talmud, *Abodah Zarah*, 43a (Vol. 7, p.945 Goldschmidt) "Rabbi Jehuda fügte noch hinzu die Figur der Amme und des Serapis. Die Amme symbolisiert Hava, die die ganze Welt säugt, und der Serapis deutet auf Joseph, der die ganze Welt beherrschte und befriedigte." On this passage, see E.R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* 11(1953), pp.282-284.

⁶ See C.Schneider, *Geistesgeschichte des antiken Christentums* I (Munich 1954), p.241; G.A.Wellen, *Theotokos. Eine ikonographische Abhandlung über das Gottesmutterbild in frühchristlicher Zeit* (Utrecht 1960), p. 19f.

⁷ See K.Rudolph, *Die Gnosis* (Göttingen 1977), pp. 102, 113ff., 141, 147f.

⁸ The situation might have been different in the West. True, Heva (C) is a Christian, but Diehl preferred to see the name on the ring as reflecting that of the Germanic goddess Hæva (on whom see Roscher, *Reallexikon der Mythologie* I.2, col. 1813), and it is noteworthy that Diehl records no single occurrence of an Adam in his corpus of early Latin Christian inscriptions. Possibly St.Eve (A) was not originally African: the index of personal names in CIL VIII lists no Eve and no Adam.

⁹ The name Adam, for that matter, is not particularly well-attested in the papyri (see footnote 4).