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NOTES ON THREE GREEK MAGICAL TEXTS

aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 100 (1994) 81–85

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In Memory of Morton Smith

Notes on Three Greek Magical Texts¹

1) Phoebe, who delights in arrows (*Suppl. Mag.* 49.72-73)

D. Jordan, "A Love Charm with Verses" *ZPE* 72 (1988) 245-59, greatly advanced the interpretation of this third-century A.D. erotic *defixio* when he pointed out that lines 64-73 are hexameters containing a mixture of divine names or epithets and a few magical words. The last two verses are as follows (Jordan's reconstructed text, followed by the editors of *Suppl. Mag.* pp. 203-204):

κετῶ ἀγαλλομένη Ἄφροδίτη, Περσεφονεία,
ΦΟΡΒΗ ἰ⁷² ἰοχέαιρα ΟΙΩΑΙΑΙΩ πρόσκοπε ΙΩΔΑΜΑCΕΑ

Emending ΦΟΡΒΗ to ΦΟΙΒΗ at the beginning of the second hexameter,² we get another goddess with an appropriate epithet: Φοίβη ἰοχέαιρα, "Phoebe, who delights in arrows." Although there is a minor goddess Phoebe known to Hesiod (*Th.* 136 and 404, where the name appears in both instances at the beginning of the hexameter, as it does here) and Aeschylus (*Eum.* 7), it seems more likely that this Phoebe is the alternate, poetic name for Artemis/Diana popular among later Greek and Latin poets (e.g. Verg. *G.* 1.431, Oppian *Cyn.* 2.1, and *Anth. Pal.* 5.255.10). R. Merkelbach suggests (apud *Suppl. Mag.* p. 204) that ΙΩΔΑΜΑCΕΑ at the end of the same line conceals another epithet ἰοδάμαcα ("sagittis domans"). Such a reading would continue the image of archery, and, when combined with the emendation offered here, yield the following full hexameter (ignoring, of course, the *extra metrum* string of vowels that occurs at midline): Φοίβη ἰοχέαιρα ΟΙΩΑΙΑΙΩ πρόσκοπε ἰοδάμαcα.

2) The Ιαλδα-Logos: Some Emendations of Preisendanz by Preisendanz (*PGM* I 203-207; IV 1196-99 and XIII 971-74)

In the ill-fated³ third volume of his *Papyri Graecae Magicae* Preisendanz identified a magical formula which he called the ιαλδα-*logos* and listed in his index XI on page 240,

¹ The following abbreviations for corpora and surveys of ancient Greek magical texts will be used :

PGM K. Preisendanz and A. Henrichs, *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die Griechischen Zauberpapyri*² (Stuttgart 1973-1974).

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

SGD D. Jordan, "A Survey of Greek Defixiones not Included in the Special Corpora" *GRBS* 26 (1985) 151-97.

Suppl. Mag. R. Daniel and F. Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum*, vol. 1, *Papyrologica Coloniensia* 16.1

The numbers following these abbreviations indicate the number of the text in the corpus, unless otherwise specified. I should like to thank W. Brashear, D. Delia, J. Johnson, D.R. Jordan and R. Kotansky for their comments on earlier drafts of these notes.

² The mistake may have arisen from confusion with the syllable φορβ- repeated thrice in a *logos* at line 53 and seven times in lines 75-76, i.e. just two lines below the corrupted line.

³ The entire printing of it was apparently destroyed in a Leipzig warehouse during an Allied bombardment; fortunately xeroxed copies of the uncorrected page-proofs still remain and have circulated for years among the devotees of *PGM*. I owe my personal copy to the late J. Winkler.

quoting the full texts of three examples: *PGM* I 203-207; IV 1196-99 and XIII 971-74. Although the realization of these parallels is often manifested in his *apparatus criticus*,⁴ Preisendanz failed to revise the texts themselves in volumes 1 and 2 of *PGM* to reflect his later understanding. The discrepancies primarily involve word division,⁵ and in one case, a restoration (*PGM* I 203: φριξα ηκε[.]φνηι to φριξαη κε[ω]φ νηι). Since the third volume of *PGM* is not widely available, I give here in parallel form the following texts: A^t, B^t and C^t are the texts of *PGM* I 203-207; IV 1196-99 and XIII 971-74 as they now appear in Preisendanz/Henrichs, *PGM*², while Aⁱ, Bⁱ and Cⁱ are the superior versions of the same texts which Preisendanz printed in index XI in volume 3:⁶

A ^t	ἰ ἄλδα ζαω	βλαθαμμαχωθ		φριξα	ηκε[.]φνηι-
A ⁱ	ιαλδαζαω	βλαθαμ	μαχωθ	φριξαη	κε[ω]φ νηι
B ^t	ἰαλδαζαω	βλαθαμ ¹¹⁹⁷	μαχωρ·	φριξαη	κεωφ· εηα·
B ⁱ	ιαλδαζαω	βλαθαμ	μαχωρ	φριξαη ⁷	κεωφ εηα
C ^t	αλδαζαω ⁹⁷¹	βαθαμ	μαχωρ ⁸	ριζξαη	ωκεων πνεδ
C ⁱ	αλδαζαω	βαθαμ	μαχωρ	ριζξαη	ωκεων πνε

⁴ For example, he used the text of *PGM* IV as a guide to the restoration of [ρ]ωερωθ and his emendation of ἰαλθε to ἰχθω (both in line 205 of *PGM* I, see his *app. crit.*). Similarly, in his *app. crit.* to *PGM* IV 1196 he says generally "Zu den Zauberworten s. P. I 203ff."

⁵ Word division of logoi of these type is a particularly tricky business. In the case of the ιαλδα-logos, P. seems to have been guided by the indications in *PGM* IV. We have independent confirmation of P's ideas about word-division in the fact that he listed each of the sixteen words of the ιαλδα-logos as individual magical words in his index XII. In two cases, there are discrepancies between the text in index XI (logoi) and the individual citations in index XII (magic words): 1) φρξαηι in index XI (see below n. 7); and 2) the words πνε δμεω (*PGM* XIII) are separated in index XII (p. 128), but written as one word in index XI (p. 240). In both cases I have assumed that there are typesetting errors in index XI and I have written φριξαη and πνε δμεω, even though in the latter case (see the next note) the words are separated on the papyrus. I would question only one of Preisendanz' word-divisions, ῥωε Ἐρωθ, which is not indicated on any of the papyri and is independently based on his (in my view misguided) suspicion that Ἐρωθ is an alternate form of Ἄρωθ, an angel who appears frequently in magical texts. Preisendanz addressed the problem of word-division in his preface for the third volume, printed by Henrichs as second preface of the second volume (p. xvi): "Wenn im Register der Zauberworte (XII) manche Abtrennung der Voces nicht mit der des Textes übereinstimmt, so ergibt sich das aus unserem im Lauf der Jahre immerhin gewachsenen Verständnis für die Bildung vieler dieser Wort-Monstra, das den Schreibern und Redaktoren selbst fehlte; auf ihre, durch Interpunktion vollzogenen Worttrennungen kann kein Verlaß sein, da sie sich oft genug als willkürlich erweisen durch Vergleich der verschiedenen Niederschriften des gleichen Wortes oder Logos da und dort in den Papyri."

⁶ R. Daniel, *Two Greek Magical Papyri in the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden*, *Papyrologica Coloniensia* 19 (Cologne 1990) — a superb new photographic edition (with diplomatic transcription) of *PGM* XII and XIII — confirms (pp. 74-75) Preisendanz's revised word division (my version Cⁱ) for the ιαλδα-logos in *PGM* XIII 971-74 (the most corrupt version), with one small exception: at the end of line 973, the scribe clearly divides the final two words as πνεδ μεωυψ whereas Preisendanz has corrected it (in index XII; see previous note) to πνε δμεω υψ- in order to isolate δμεω, apparently using as his guide the isolated words δρωμηω and δυμεω in the two other versions.

⁷ Index XI actually reads φρξαηι at this point, but the misplaced *iota* has all the markings of a typesetting error and has thus been ignored, especially since it does not appear in index XII (see above n. 5).

⁸ A variant for βαθαμ μαχωρ is recorded parenthetically in the text of *PGM* XIII at this point: ἦ βαα-δαμμαχωρ.

A ^t	δρυ ²⁰⁵ μηω	φερφριθω	ιαχθω	ψυχεω	φριθμεω
A ⁱ	δρυμηω	φερφριθω	ιαχθω	ψυχεω	φριθμεω
B ^t	δυμεω· ¹¹⁹⁸	φερφριθω·	ιαχθω·	ψυχεω·	φριθ ¹¹⁹⁸ μεω·
B ⁱ	δυμεω	φερφριθω	ιαχθω	ψυχεω	φριθμεω
C ^t	μεωψ ⁹⁷²	ψυχ	φρωχ	φερ· φρω	ιαοθχω
C ⁱ	δμεω	φερφρω	ιαοθχω	υψψυχ	φρωχ. ⁹
A ^t	[ρ]ωκερωθ (see n. 5) ²⁰⁶	θαμαστρα φατιρι	ταωχ	ιαλθεμεαχε	
A ⁱ	[ρ]ωκ 'Ερωθ	θαμαστραφατι	ριταωχ	ιαλθεμεαχε	
B ^t	ρωκερωθ·	θαμαστραφατι ¹¹⁹⁹	ριμψαωχ	ιαλθε· μεαχι	
B ⁱ	ρωκ 'Ερωθ	θαμαστραφατι ¹¹⁹⁹	ριμψαωχ	ιαλθεμεαχι	
C ^t	[(the <i>logos</i> breaks off at this point)]
C ⁱ	[]

The ιαλδα-*logos* seems to be especially associated with the sun. In *PGM I* it appears in a prayer to "the eternal ruler of the sun's rays" and at the end of the prayer [line 223] we are instructed to say it ἡλίω, either "to the sun" (so Preisendanz, i.e. facing the sun) or "to Helios" (Betz). At *PGM IV* 1195-99 the entire *logos* seems to be the magical name of Helios (see line 1180: "... Listen Helios ..., I call you by your name"). Delatte, in his discussion of the magical name φραινφρι, suggested long ago that the syllable φρι found in the phrase φριξ αη κεωφ, and elsewhere was a variant of φρη, the familiar Greek rendition of the name for the Egyptian sun-god Re,¹⁰ an insight that has been corroborated by a recent find from Nemea.¹¹

3) Osiris Nophrioth (*Supp. Mag.* 45.12-15)

In a fifth-century A.D. erotic *agogê*-spell on a papyrus from Assiut "the *daimones* who lie here" (i.e. in or near the grave in which the papyrus was deposited) are threatened and cajoled in a number of ways to perform the operation, including the following (lines 12-15):

ἐὼν δὲ ἄζηταί (read ἄζητέ) μοι Εὐφημίαν --- δώσω ὑμῖν Ὁσίριν Νοφριωθ, τὸν ἀδελφὸν τῆς Ἰσιδος, καὶ ἔρι (read αἶρει) τὸ ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ καὶ ἀναπαύεται ὑμῶν τὰ ψυχά. ἐ[ὰ]ν δέ μοι μὴ τελέσητε ἃ λέγω ὑμῖν, κατακαύσει ὑμᾶς ὁ Εὐωνεβρωθ.

⁹ I have tampered with the word order here by moving υψψυχ φρωχ to the place after φερφρω ιαοθω in order to create a closer parallel. Here too, I follow Preisendanz' lead, as he lists υψψυχ as a possible variant of ψυχεω (see *PGM* vol. 3 Index XII s.v. ψυχεω [p.277]).

¹⁰ A. Delatte, "Études sur la magie grecque: Un bas-relief gnostique" *Musée Belge: Revue de philologie classiq* 4 (1913) 332-333.

¹¹ A lead disk from Nemea (soon to be published by J. Gager and R. Lambertson) appears to be inscribed with a solar orb (rendered as a circle) with spokes of light radiating from it (the individual rays being magical words). The three-line inscription in the center of the orb (ιοσιω | φριξ | αηωι) lends further weight to Delatte's suggestion that φριξ αη is connected with the sun.

If you lead Euphemia to me... I will give to you Osiris *Nophriôth*, the brother of Isis, and he draws cold water for you and will relieve your souls. If you do not fulfill for me what I tell you, *Eônebyôth* will burn you up.

(trans. Daniel/Maltomini)

The basic purpose of the passage is not difficult to understand, as it employs a "votive formula" used occasionally in magical texts, e.g. the similarly phrased promise given to a daimon in another erotic spell (*PGM* IV 2094: τέλεσον, δαίμον, τὰ ἐνθάδε γεγραμμένα· τελέσαντι δέ σοι θυσίαν ἀποδώσω).¹² As both the editors of *Suppl. Mag.* and the original editor Wortmann¹³ note, the soteriological role of Osiris in the underworld can also be paralleled in the so-called "Cool-Water" funerary inscriptions from late imperial Rome and Roman Egypt that contain a very similar plea on behalf of the dead: δοίη σοι ὁ Ὀσίρις τὸ ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ.¹⁴

I suggest, however, that the precise nuance of δώσω ὑμῖν Ὀσίριν Νοφριῶθ has escaped previous commentators. How are we to imagine that the magician will "give" or "grant" a god to the *daimones*? In the other extant "votive formulae" some material object (e.g. a sacrifice or some other offering of value) is promised. Indeed, the "Cool-Water" inscriptions strongly suggest that Osiris himself is not the promised gift, but rather the water that he provides. I suspect that the author of the spell has combined two different types of Greek formula, the "votive formula" discussed above and another traditional wish that a god be well disposed to someone. The epithet Νοφριῶθ apparently means "benevolent",¹⁵ and I suggest that the full meaning of the passage emerges if we emphasize the epithet Νοφριῶθ almost as if it were a predicate adjective (with the infinitive εἶναι) and translate it as if the author of the spell knew the meaning of the Egyptian epithet: "I will grant that Osiris be benevolent to you."¹⁶

Obtaining a positive or negative attitude from the gods is, in fact, a frequent concern in Greek and Roman blessings and curses of the Roman and late-antique periods. H.S. Versnel,

¹² Other examples include *DTA* 109 (Μένο[υς] κακῶς πράξαντος εὐαγγελία θύσω) and *SGD* 115 (ἂν ἐ(κ)δεικίης με, ποίω ἀργύρε[ο]ν σπάδικα); and an Olbian *defixio* published by B. Bravo, "Une tablette magique d'Olbia pontique: les morts, les héros et les démons" in *Poikilia: Études offertes à Jean-Pierre Vernant*, *Recherches d'histoire et de sciences sociales* 26 (Paris 1987) 189, lines 10-13: ἦ[ν] δέ μοι αὐτοῦς κατὰ χηρῶν ἐ(γ)ὼ δέ σε τεμῆσω καὶ σο[ι] ἄριστον δ[ῶ]ρον παρακε[υῶ]. For a general discussion of this phenomenon see B. Olsson, "Drohungen an die Götter: Religionsgeschichtliche Streifzüge" in *ΔΡΑΓΜΑ Martino P. Nilsson A.D. IV Id. Iul. Anno MCMXXXIX Dedicatum*, *Acta Instituti Romani Regni Sueciae* 1 (Lund 1939) 374-78, esp. 377, and H.S. Versnel, "Beyond Cursing: The Appeal to Justice in Judicial Prayers" in C.A. Faraone and D. Obbink (edd.) *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (Oxford 1991) 64 with note 19.

¹³ D. Wortmann, "Neue magische Texte 4: Liebeszauber eines Theon gegen eine Euphemia" *BJ* 168 (1968) 93-95.

¹⁴ See R.A. Wild, *Water in the Cultic Worship of Isis and Sarapis*, *EPRO* 87 (Leiden 1981) 101-128; A. Lukaszewicz, "An Osiris 'Cool Water' Inscription from Alexandria" *ZPE* 77 (1989) 195-196; W. Brashear, "Zauberensemble" *Studien z. altägyptischer Kultur* 18 (1991) 16-17, and D. Delia, "The Refreshing Water of Osiris" *JARCE* 29 (1992) 181-90 for discussion and bibliography.

¹⁵ See Thissen apud *Suppl. Mag.* ad loc. J.G. Griffiths, *Plutarch: De Iside et Osiride* (Cambridge 1970) 460-61, discusses the epithet in detail and Plutarch's apparent rendering of it as εὐεργέτης.

¹⁶ On the bilingual skills of the various scribes who composed most of the extant Greco-Egyptian magical handbooks, see G. Fowden, *The Egyptian Hermes: A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind* (Cambridge 1986) 169-70.

"May he not be able to sacrifice ...: Concerning a Curious Formula in Greek and Latin Curses", *ZPE* 58 (1985) 258-62, collects numerous examples, e.g.: *Iuppiter tibi sit iratus; habeat Isidem iratum; habeat propiteos deos*; ἔχη τὴν Cελήνην κεχολωμένην; εὐίλατον τὸν θεὸν ἔχειν; and μηδὲ ἰλάονος τυχάνοι Ὁσεράπιδος. On gemstones we find similar expressions in the nominative, e.g. an invocation of "Fearless Zeth" (= Seth) followed by ἴλεως τῆ ἐμῆ ψυχῆ καὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς τέκνοις or expressions like Ἄρποκράτης εὐίλατος τῷ φοροῦντι, εἷς Ζεὺς Σάραπις ἴλεως τῷ φοροῦντι,¹⁷ or εἴλεως ἔσται τῷ φορο[ῦντ]ι καὶ τῆ φοροῦσῃ.¹⁸ Thus, in the case of *Supp. Mag.* 45.12-15, two common types of blessings (e.g. "May Osiris be benevolent to you" and "May Osiris grant you cool water") seem to have been collapsed into a votive formula: "If you lead Euphemia ... I will grant (that) Osiris (be) benevolent to you ... and he (will) draw cool water."

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¹⁷ All three are discussed C. Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets, Chiefly Greco-Egyptian* (Ann Arbor 1950) 168 and 175.

¹⁸ P.J. Sijpesteijn, "A Syrian Phylactery on Silver Plate" *OMRO* 59-60 (1978-79) 189-92, lines 14-15. See also the request ἴλεως μοι γενοῦ in a prayer to Hermes (*PGM* V 421).