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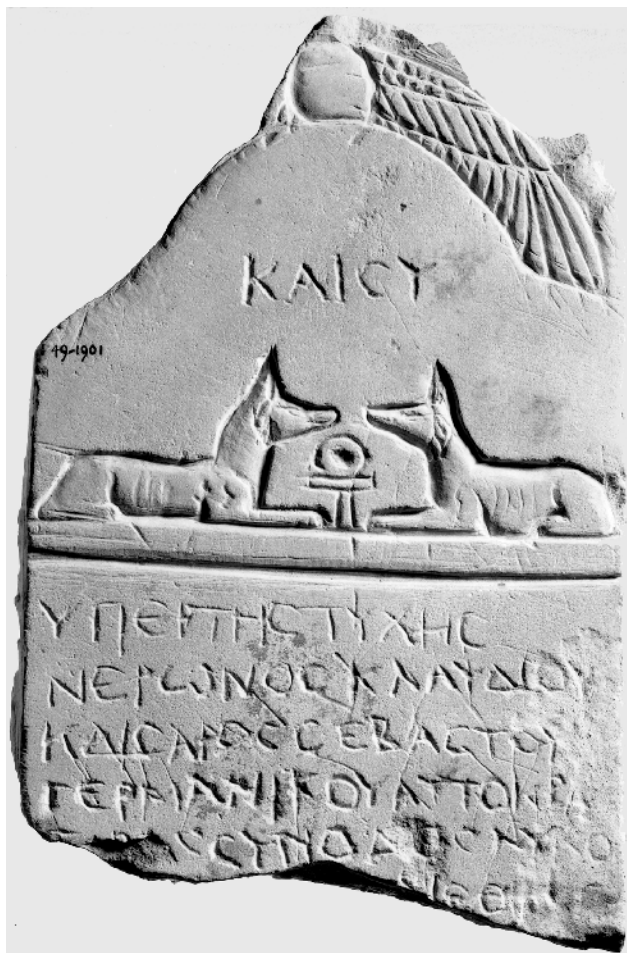
THE ΚΑΙ ΣΥ STELE IN THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM, CAMBRIDGE

aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 126 (1999) 169–174

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For Joyce Reynolds



In the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, one can now find on display a stele with a dedication to the good fortune of Nero. The object, which in a certain sense is unique, sheds light on the interaction of Greek and Egyptian iconography and culture in the Early Empire. The stele is listed as no. E.49.1901, provenance Egypt, sandstone; height 24.9 cm., width 14.7 cm., thickness 3.6 cm.; acquired 1901. In most respects it is a typical Graeco-Roman type for this genre. The top consists of a shallow rounded tympanum framed at the top with a winged solar disk. The material, the carved figures, and the inscription itself are somewhat crudely done. The words KAI ΣΥ, though, are a startling innovation. They are written without a break under a winged solar disk of which the left half has broken off. Under the phrase, two jackals recline, flanking an *ankh* and sitting on a thin base line. The jackals occupy a place usually reserved for the uraei, the serpents with which the Sun God strikes his enemies. Below the base line is the dedication to the Emperor's *tyche*. The mysterious words KAI ΣΥ (“and you”) seem to be unparalleled in this position or anywhere on a stele of this type.¹

The KAI ΣΥ is startling on many accounts. The space the words occupy in similar stelae is almost invariably left free of writing, either when in hieroglyphs or Greek.² The Greek formula of the Fitzwilliam stele, then, appears in the company of some of the most venerable religious symbols of

¹ Great thanks are due to Joyce Reynolds of Newnham College, Cambridge, for painstakingly going over the stele and offering numerous suggestions and corrections to two drafts of this article. The editor, Professor Werner Eck, also offered extremely valuable suggestions and corrections.

Much of the material without the Reynolds corrections, appeared in my article, Caesar and the Evil Eye or What to Do with ‘καὶ σύ, τέκνον’, in G. Schmeling and J. D. Mikalson, eds., *Qui Miscuit Vitale Dulci. Festschrift Essays for Paul Lachlan MacKendrick* (Chicago 1998) 31–49 – now reprinted in F. E. Brenk, *Clothed in Purple Light. Studies in Vergil and in Latin Literature. Including Aspects of Philosophy, Religion, Magic, Judaism, and the New Testament Background* (Stuttgart 1999) 197–210. Professors James Russell of the University of British Columbia, Matthew Dickie of the University of Illinois, Chicago, Maria Letizia Lazzarini of the Università di Roma “La Sapienza”, and Professor Loredana Sist, of the Università di Roma “La Sapienza”, offered extremely valuable help for that article. Thanks are due to Doctor Eleni Vassilika, Keeper of Antiquities, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, for providing the Museum’s information for the first article and for allowing the photo of the stele to be used again.

² For the typology, see A. B. Kamal, *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire. Stèles ptolémaïques et romaines I–II* (Cairo 1905) nos. 22128, 22152, 22161, 22181–3, 22189; pp. 111, 146–147, 168–177, 187–188; pls. XXXVIII, XLIX, LIV, LVI–LVII, LXIV.

Egypt—the winged solar disk, the *ankh*, and the Anubis jackals. The formula seems to exercise a powerful “prophylactic” function equal to that of the more ancient Egyptian symbols.³ The lunette of this type of stele is usually occupied by a sun disk (symbol of Horos of Behedt), either winged or not, and with or without flanking uraei. The two jackals in animal form, indicating the power of Anubis over the dead, are very common, while the empty space between the pendent uraei on some stelae is occasionally occupied by a vertical hieroglyphic text, an *ankh* sign, or by one to three sun-rays. In one case, between the two jackals there seems to be a crudely carved offering table.⁴ Usually the lower register has the principal scene of the deceased in “presentation” – frequently with Anubis-libation and offering, adoration, etc.⁵ The part below this was usually left undecorated, perhaps for a painted inscription, now usually lost. The prominent base line is almost universal. A very small number of the hieroglyphic stelae have hieroglyphs under the solar disk and above the heads of figures on the principal scene immediately below. If so, a baseline does not separate the scene from the solar disk.⁶ In the Fitzwilliam stele, the inscription appears directly under the base line, an adaptation for its use as a dedication.⁷

F. M. Heichelheim in his 1942 publication of this inscription, along with others in the Fitzwilliam Museum, missed the import of ΚΑΙ ΣΥ.⁸ He listed it as “X.d: Lycopolites. Dedication to Nero’s Tyche. Unpublished.” Most astonishingly, he then took the opening words ΚΑΙ ΣΥ as Καί[σαρι] σύ[νοδος] (“the Synod to the Emperor”). The following is his reading of the inscription:

Καί(σαρι) σύ(νοδος).
 Ὑπὲρ τῆς τύχης
 Νέρωνος Κλαυδίου
 Καίσαρος Σεβαστοῦ
 Γερμανικοῦ Αὐτοκρά-
 [τορ]ος σύνοδος Λυκο-
 [πολιτῶν καὶ οἱ] γέοι ἐφ-
 [ηβεικότες(?)]].

Heichelheim did not translate the text. The opening of the inscription of stele no. 9293 (Abdalla) is very similar:

Ὑπὲρ Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος [Δο]μιτ[ιανου] Σεβαστοῦ Γερμανικοῦ τύχης
 For the good fortune of the Emperor Caesar Domitian Augustus

There follows “and his entire house to Hera the Greatest Goddess”, after which come the names of the dedicators, as on the Fitzwilliam stele. Next, the inscription mentions the edifice the dedicators have constructed and the date (here the 7th year of Domitian). The names employed for the emperor in the beginning of the inscription are repeated at the end.

In explanation of his reconstruction of the last lines, Heichelheim referred to von Premerstein’s commentary on an inscription from Arsinoe in the Fayum (*JGR* I 1124).⁹ In von Premerstein’s

³ For the iconography, see A. Abdalla, *Graeco-Roman Funerary Stelae from Upper Egypt (LMAOS)* (Liverpool 1992) 99–115, esp. 99. Professor Sist suggests that the two jackals may have been intended to represent Anubis and Upuaut, both worshipped at Lykopolis.

⁴ Ankh sign, Abdalla, no. 130, p. 56, pl. 49; offering table, J. G. Milne, *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire. Greek Inscriptions* (Oxford 1905) no. 9226, pp. 55–56, pl. VIII.

⁵ Abdalla (n. 3), 101–110.

⁶ E.g., Kamal (n. 2), no. 22182.

⁷ Cf. Abdalla, stele no. 9293 (Milne, p. 29, pl. III).

⁸ F. M. Heichelheim, *The Greek Inscriptions in the Fitzwilliam Museum*, *JHS* 62 (1942) 14–20 (17).

⁹ A. von Premerstein, *Alexandrinische Geronten vor Kaiser Gaius*, *Mitteilungen aus der Papyrussammlung der Gießener Universitätsbibliothek* V (1939) 43–45. For *synodos* he referred to F. Poland, *Synodos*, *RE* IVA (1932) 1415–1434 (1420–1434), which treats groups resident in other cities, and *synodoi* in Egypt. For the normal uses of *synodos*, see W. Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum* IV.1 (Leipzig³ 1924) (“Exempla Sermonis Graeci”) s.v. “σύνοδος” (576)

interpretation of the dedication, dated to 60/61 of Nero's reign, the *polis* here was equivalent to what was called a *politeuma* at Kyrene, and was composed at Arsinoe of 6475 special citizens called "Hellenes" (ἄνδρες Ἑλληνες) with full political rights. The "ephebes", or former ephebes (ἐφηβευκότες), mentioned along with them, would have been waiting in line to obtain the full citizenship among the other "Hellenes". The *synodos* in the Fitzwilliam stele, in Heichelheim's view, would correspond to the *polis* (= *politeuma*) of Arsinoe. In fact, though, as we have seen, the Arsinoite dedication mentions neither *synodos* nor *politeuma* expressly.

Recently Joyce Reynolds has re-examined the Fitzwilliam stele very carefully and come to somewhat different conclusions regarding the last lines. In her reading we would have the following:

ΥΠΕΡΤΗCTYXHC
 ΝΕΡΩΝΟCΚΛΑΥΔΙΟΥ
 ΚΑΙCΑΡΟCCEΒΑCΤΟΥ
 ΓΕΡΜΑΝΙΚΟΥΑΥΤΟΚΡΑ
 ΤΟΡΟCΣΥΝΟΔΟCΛΥΚΟ
 [. . . c. 9 . . .]ΝΕΟΙ[. . .]
 Ὑπὲρ τῆς τύχης
 Νέρωνος Κλαυδίου
 Καίσαρος Σεβαστοῦ
 Γερμανικοῦ Αὐτοκρά-
 τороς σύνοδος λυκο
 [. . . c. 9 . . .] νέοι [. . .]

She sees space in the last line for about 9 letters. Only the tops of letters 1-4 can be seen. She thinks we cannot guarantee that the N of νέοι is the beginning of a word but thinks it likely, and that after the I, the last letter of νέοι, the letters might possibly be interpreted as κῶι (κοί). Reynolds' reading, then, represents quite a change in the last two lines from Heichelheim's version. This would leave us with the following translation for the first part of the inscription:

For the Tyche of
 Nero Claudius
 Caesar Augustus
 Germanicus Imper-
 ator, the Synod [of the] . . .

Presumably in the last lines we have something like "the *synodos* of the (village of) Lykopolitans". They could be a synod of persons from Lykopolis, resident in another place, such as the σύνοδος Σμυρναειτῶν – noted by Waltzing – which refers to a group of Smyrneans resident in Magnesia-by-Sipylos.¹⁰ The restoration of ΛΥΚΟ strongly suggests completion with πολίτων, which in Reynolds' analysis of the stone would take 7 spaces of the approximately 9 spaces of the beginning of the line. The K looks like X in the photo but close examination showed that it clearly was K. Lykopolis (Assiut) is not far from Abydos, where many similar stelae were found. A second century funerary stele from Abydos actually mentions "Theon, son of Apollonides Λυκοπολείτης . . ." ¹¹ Assiut as provenance would give special significance to the jackals. The city, whose name meant "guardian," "guard", had as its principal

and H. J. Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions* (Toronto 1974) 203. Presumably the *synodos* members were residents of Magnesia.

¹⁰ J.-P. Waltzing, *Étude historique sur les corporations professionnelles chez les Romains* III (Louvain 1899) p. 50 (#145, *C.I.G.* 3408, *IGSK* 8, 18), gives the full inscription, from "Magnesia ad Sipyllum" (modern Manisa). It begins Ἀγαθῆι τύχηι | συνόδου Σμυρναειτῶν ("To the good fortune of the college of the Smyrnaeans").

¹¹ Milne, no. 21129, p. 69. For Assiut, see H. Beinlich., s.v. "Assiut" in W. Helck and E. Otto, eds., *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* I (Wiesbaden 1975) 490–495.

divinity the jackal god Upuaut (“he who proceeds”, “opens the procession”), the “Lord of Assiut”.¹² The Greek name, Λύκων πόλις, then, is something of a calque on the Egyptian.

Though reading the last lines in some respects like Heichelheim, Reynolds goes a bit farther. As recognized by Heichelheim, νέοι apparently in the nominative plural, implies a second dedicator acting together with the synod. Official organizations of young men were very common in the Greek world and often very active in the cities. She also suggests that something could have been named as an offering to a god for the Emperor’s good fortune. In this case the object dedicated could have been something a little better than, and additional to, the stele. Presumably the stele would have been erected in a sanctuary.¹³ The wretched lettering and carving, in spite of the expressive characteristics of the jackals, would, however, seem to rule out any really impressive monument.¹⁴ In the context of a dedication to Nero’s *tyche*, Reynolds would suggest a positive meaning for καὶ σὺ, “May you, too, share in the protection given by the god we invoke to protect the Emperor’s *tyche*.”

The inscription καὶ σὺ on the Fitzwilliam stele immediately brings to mind the same formula on the “Lucky Hunchback” and “Evil Eye” mosaics at Antioch.¹⁵ These mosaics, dated by the excavators to before the earthquake in 115 A.D., were placed in what apparently was the vestibule of the house. Before the earthquake of 115, the two original mosaics, the Lucky Hunchback and Baby Herakles Strangling Snakes – apparently also with an apotropaic function – were later covered over by the Evil Eye mosaic. Presumably this replaced the earlier two with a bigger and better model. The Hunchback exactly occupied the space of the two underlying panels. Ithyphallic and nude except for a loincloth, he holds two sticks in each hand. His head divides the words KAI CY. The more potent looking Evil Eye mosaic, which replaced it, has another “gnome” (in Levi’s description), also holding sticks in both hands. He is older looking than the Hunchback, with an immense phallus, half his size, protruding between his legs in the direction of the eye. In clockwise order, a trident, sword, snake, dog, centipede, panther, and crow attack the eye. Above the head of the “gnome” appear the words KAI CY.¹⁶ Quite a number of other mosaics employing the formula have been found.¹⁷

There is some divergence of opinion on the meaning of the words. J. Russell translates as “To hell with you!”, but some scholars render the phrase more mildly and literally as “the same to you”, or “may

¹² This is a suggestion of Professor Sist, who offered great help on the Egyptian background.

¹³ Reynolds thought the stele might have been erected over the entry of some larger monument. Professor Eck, however, rules out such a position for the stele.

¹⁴ This section follows very closely the comments of Miss Reynolds in her letter to me.

¹⁵ The major works on the subject for the purposes of this article are D. Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements I* (Princeton 1947) (32–34, pl. XL); D. Levi, The Evil Eye and the Lucky Hunchback, in R. Stillwell, ed., *Antioch-on-the-Orontes III. The Excavations 1937–39* (Princeton 1941) 220–232; J. Russell, Julius Caesar’s Last Words, in B. Marshall, ed., *Vindex Humanitatis. Essays in Honour of John Huntly Bishop* (Armidale, Australia 1980) 123–128; *The Mosaic Inscriptions of Anemurium (ÖAW Phil.-Hist. Kl. Denkschr. 190)* (Vienna 1987); M. W. Dickie, Talos Bewitched: Magic, Atomic Theory and Paradoxography in Apollonius, *Argonautica* 4.1638–1688, in F. Cairns and H. Malcolm, eds., *Roman Poetry and Drama. Greek Epic, Comedy, Rhetoric* (Leeds 1990) 267–296; Heliodorus and Plutarch on the Evil Eye, *CP* 86 (1991) 17–29; and K. W. Slane and M. W. Dickie, A Knidian Phallic Vase from Corinth, *Hesperia* 62 (1993) 483–505.

¹⁶ Levi, *Antioch Mosaics II*, pl. IV a and c.; Stillwell, 181–182, nos. 120–121. The καὶ σὺ also appears in a fragmentary mosaic in sector 23/24-M/N at Daphne-Harbie, where an ithyphallic dwarf is represented with a satyr tail (Levi, in Stillwell, 225).

¹⁷ See Russell, Julius Caesar’s Last Words, 125–126. F. Waagé, Hellenistic and Roman Tableware of North Syria, *AO* 4 (1948) 32–38, notes the existence of the formula on some Roman “Pergamene” pottery, which he dated from c. the end of the 1st cent. B.C. to c. the beginning of the 2nd A.D. In his appended note to the offprint sent me, Russell offers two further cases of the καὶ σὺ inscription: a medieval graffito on the Parthenon – citing L. Robert, *Des Carpathes à la Propontide, Dacia* 22 (1978) 325–329; and to the entrance of a building excavated at Magdala in Palestine – citing V. Corbo, *Piazza e villa urbana a Magdala, Liber Annuus* 28 (1978) 232–240. Color plates of the “Lucky Hunchback” (Hall III, no. 3; inv. no. 1026b [85 x 85 cm]); and the “Evil Eye” (Hall III, no. 6, inv. no. 1024 [170 x 150 cm.]) can now be found in F. Cimok, ed., *Antioch Mosaics* (Istanbul 1995), p. 54, pl. 3 and 55, pl. 6. M. Guarducci, *Epigrafia greca III. Epigrafi di carattere privato* (Roma 1974/1993), offers 3 examples, (153, augural form: χαίρει καὶ σὺ or καὶ σὺ; 324, 325, Antioch mosaics; 325, note 1, “sepulchral form”). She interprets all these as benevolent, provided the viewer is not casting the evil eye on the object.

you also suffer ill”, that is, the evil influence is turned back on the eye, or on its malicious owner.¹⁸ Illuminating for the interpretation of the Fitzwilliam stele is the prophylactic use of the phrase in colonnades, over lintels, and on tombs.¹⁹ The formula recalls other prohibitions and invocations with supernatural sanction, inscribed throughout antiquity against potential profanators and tomb-robbers. In most contexts, the words are directed against the possibility that the evil eye or “Envy” might destroy the “excellence” of the mosaic.²⁰ Presumably the formula acted more as good insurance against future harm than revenge for wrongs inflicted.

Also relevant for the Fitzwilliam stele is D. Levi’s observation that the formula was not necessarily malignant but could be benevolent. He notes the frequent greeting to the wayfarer, on Greek and Roman tombs:

χαίρει καὶ σύ (best wishes to you too)

or:

καὶ σύγε (and . . . especially to you).

along with Latin equivalents like *uale et tu* (best wishes to you). Sometimes a benevolent inscription, as on a rock relief from Thera (τοῖς φίλοις, “to friends”) offers a key to the interpretation of the formula. Levi thought the same meaning could apply to the καὶ σύ written on the threshold of a house in Palermo, as well as on the lintel of Syrian houses, where one finds the expression:

ὅσα λέγεις, φίλε καὶ σοὶ τὰ δίπλα (or καὶ σοὶ ταῦτα)

(whatever you say, friend, twofold to you, too [{or} the same to you]).²¹

As he also notes, the words can work both ways, bringing a blessing to a friend and to a benevolent passerby, a curse to the malevolent, while also averting curses. Thus, the καὶ σύ remains ambiguous, a “best wishes” greeting from the dead to the living or an imprecation on malfactors. On the funeral monument of Flavius Iulianus at Katûrâ, for example, the formula ominously follows a warning not to disturb the tomb in any way.²²

Material from Egypt is especially relevant for how the evil eye and our formula could be interpreted.²³ Cosmic calamity could result from the Sun encountering the evil eye of Apopis, the primeval serpent. The countermeasure was the eye of the Sun-god or the powerful eye of Seth. The prominence of snakes in some of the evil eye representations may have something to do with this ancient iconographic association. Puzzling, too, have been the sticks in the Lucky Hunchback and Evil Eye mosaics at Antioch. In Egypt one rite apparently involved hitting a ball which symbolized the eye of Apopis. Nineteen examples of this iconography have been found. The depictions are on various

¹⁸ Russell, “Julius Caesar’s Last Words,” 125–126; Slane and Dickie, 490 with note 44.

¹⁹ See Russell, 126, and note 16; Slane and Dickie, 489–491, esp. note 43. Russell, citing Levi (126), notes that a mosaic in Rome gives the fuller expression καὶ σὺ ἔρπει (“to hell with you, too!”). Slane and Dickie give the variation καὶ σοί, and the grammatically acceptable Latin versions (*et tibi, et tibi sit*) (490 with note 44).

²⁰ M. W. Dickie, Βασκάνια, προβασκάνια and προσβασκάνια *Glotta* 71 (1993) 174–177, discusses the Greek terms used for the evil eye (βασκανία, φθόνος) and the apotropaic devices (βασκάνιον, προσβασκάνιον, and προβασκάνια). Regarding the second set of terms, there may be a problem of textual corruption.

²¹ Levi, *The Evil Eye*, 226, writes ταῦτα but ταῦτά seems more likely.

²² Levi notes another formula, καὶ τί found at Resâs, which was placed in a *tabula ansata* on a doorpost of a home, opposite a facing doorpost with a καὶ σύ inscription in an identical frame. M. Dunand, *Nouvelles inscriptions du Djebel Druze et du Hauran (Suite)*, *Revue Biblique* 42 (1933) 235–254, translated: “You and everyone [will die]” (237 and pl. XVI, 16 and 17). But Levi takes them rather as apotropaic protection, at the entrance, against the “evil-minded” (226, with notes 76 and 77). C. Kondoleon, *Domestic and Divine. Roman Mosaics in the House of Dionysos* (Ithaca and London 1994) 90, 106–107; figs. 47, 62–63, mentions a pavement at Paphos, where the Seasons mosaic had the welcoming inscription XAIPE along with a KAICY inscription.

²³ See J. F. Borghouts, *The Evil Eye of Apopis*, *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 59 (1973) 114–150.

temples, where a royal figure holds a ball and stick, or thin club.²⁴ The evil eye is also attested for beings in the nether world. Against them, Thoth, Amun, Khons, and the eye of Re are very powerful.²⁵

The extent and importance of the belief in the evil eye remains a puzzle. The Egyptian papyri refer to spells against this superstition, as do several temple inscriptions, but, surprisingly, so far only one example of a spell has actually come to light.²⁶ Frequently schematized eyes in profile (*wd₃t*-eyes) appear on magical papyri, amulets, sarcophagi, doors, false doors, stelae, tomb walls, and model boats. On the Fitzwilliam stele, the winged solar disk, which is typical for these stelae, originally served to represent the divine power protecting the kingdom, and by extension, the pharaoh's protective power over Egypt.²⁷ The Egyptians considered the Anubis-type jackals to be protective deities and might have thought that, like some other gods, they could protect against the evil eye. Naturally, the *ankh* is a powerful protective force. In any case the *καὶ σὺ* invocation has been ennobled through its association with awesome, auspicious symbols of Egyptian religious tradition known from time immemorial.

Recently some scholars have seriously questioned the very idea that the superstition of the evil eye was widely diffused in the ancient Near East. Apparently, early Assyriologists greatly exaggerated its importance and diffusion, calling it a "wide-spread belief."²⁸ The rarity of references to the evil eye and the absence of the *καὶ σὺ* formula in some recent books on Graeco-Roman magical papyri and amulets also suggests that the belief was not so important in that world as sometimes presumed.²⁹ Oddly enough, only one ancient Greek or Latin text describes someone putting the evil eye on another – if this is the best term for it – the mythical Medeia bewitching Talos!³⁰

In conclusion, the *καὶ σὺ* phrase has a very complicated history, was used apparently only in certain precise contexts, and draws on complex traditions. The Fitzwilliam stele is remarkable for offering a new context for the phrase, and that perhaps through a misunderstanding of its traditional, more restrictive usage in iconography. Thus, the rather humble formula was elevated to the rank of the ancient symbols of Egyptian religion closely linked with the pharaonic kingdom. However, the formula evidently was not very effective for Nero or his *tyche*. In spite of the good intentions of the dedicators, a "great artist" left this world rather prematurely, unless they meant to speed him to his heavenly reward.

Rome

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²⁴ Borghouts, esp. 122, 128; fig. 2, 3, pl. XXXIX. Perhaps the sticks are antecedents of the "Lucky Hunchback's" sticks.

²⁵ Borghouts, 143, 147–148.

²⁶ Berlin wooden tablet 23308; see Borghouts, 148.

²⁷ So D. Wildung, s.v. Flügelsonne, *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* II (Wiesbaden 1977) 277–279.

²⁸ See M.-L. Thomsen, The Evil Eye in Mesopotamia, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 51 (1992) 19–32.

²⁹ See the cautious assessment of Slane and Dickie, 502. The formula seems to be missing in R. Kotansky, *Greek Magical Amulets. I The Inscribed Gold, Silver, Copper, and Bronze Lamellae. Part I Published Texts of Known Provenance* (Opladen 1994); H. D. Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation* (Chicago 1986); R. Kotansky, Incantations and Prayers for Salvation on Inscribed Greek Amulets, in C. A. Faraone and D. Obbink, eds., *Magika Hiera. Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (New York/Oxford 1991) 107–138; and J. Strubbe, *ΑΠΑΙ ΕΠΙΤΥΜΒΙΟΙ. Imprecations against Desecrators of the Grave in the Greek Epitaphs of Asia Minor. A Catalogue (IGSK 52)* (Bonn 1997).

³⁰ Apollonios of Rhodes, *Argonautika* 4. 1669–1670; see K. M. C. Dunbabin and M. W. Dickie, Invidia rumpantur pectora. The Iconography of Phthonos/Invidia in Graeco-Roman Art, *JAC* 26 (1983) 7–37 (11); and Dickie, Talos Bewitched".