CHAPTER XV

PALESTINIAN, SYRIAN, AND CHRISTIAN AMULETS

In Chapter II, "National Elements and Influences," mention was made of two amulets, apparently of Jewish origin, on one of which the seven-branched candlestick was engraved, on the other the ark of the covenant with its cherubim. They might have been made and worn by Jews; and archaeologists working in Semitic areas have found and published other purely Jewish amulets with characteristic forms and Hebrew or Aramaic inscriptions. Only a few such objects will be treated in this chapter, and those only because they are unpublished. Here we are to be concerned chiefly with some designs that were developed under Jewish inspiration, but represent a Judaism touched by Hellenistic influences and ready to use a magic which was not free from pagan elements. Amulets that had such origins were taken over by Christians, who eliminated their pagan and Jewish characteristics, or else gave them a Christian interpretation.

The first group that claims attention consists of seven unpublished stones, which I have examined minutely; 2 a few previously published specimens; 3 and a few in the British Museum, which I inspected cursorily. The type represented by these stones may be described as follows. A youthful rider galloping to the right is about to pierce with his spear a prostrate female figure which lifts its hands in a vain attempt at supplication or defense. The rider's head is bare, his hair confined by a band. He wears a chlamys fastened on his right shoulder, with a loose end flowing out behind him; a kilt, riding boots, and, apparently, close-fitting trousers — this detail remains uncertain because of the imperfect workmanship which, in varying degrees, characterizes the whole series. Round the chest and the haunches of the horse are two parallel straps, which are intended to hold the saddlecloth or pad in place; 4 the parallel incisions may, of course, represent a single broad

1 I trust that no offense will be taken at the use of the words "Christian amulets" in this chapter and elsewhere. Christians and pagans alike often wore upon their bodies objects made in similar forms and of the same materials, though adorned with different images and symbols. Among the spiritual-minded of both camps there was no thought of magic. But the idea of a protection derived from a superhuman source is associated with many ring stones and pendants, whether pagan or Christian. It was not to be expected that all wearers of such objects would keep their minds clear of the feeling that power proceeded from the thing itself, regardless of the wearer's religious attitude. The term "Christian amulets" is freely used by Dom H. Leclercq, who has given the best survey of them in his article "Amulettes" in the Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne.
2 These stones are Mich. 26994, 26135, 26140; Newell 10, 371; one in the collection of D. M. Robinson; and one in mine; see D. 291–297.
3 See Schlämbert, REG 5 (1892), 84, No. 13; De Ridder 3494; Motterde, "Le Gloire de Dardanus," p. 96, No. 24; Moreau, PI. 4, 10–11. No. 10 is apparently identical with Chabouillet 2219.
4 This detail of a horse's equipment seems to have originated in the Orient; it appears in the West in the Roman imperial period. See Daremberg-Saglio, article "ephippium," figs. 2690, 2691; Pauly-Wissowa, V, 2857.
band. Amulets of this type are made of haematite, have the inscription Σωλομων round the rider, and εφραηες θεος, “seal of God,” on the reverse. It is to be noted that no nimbus surrounds the rider’s head, and the weapon is always an ordinary spear, the barbed head of which is clearly indicated on the better specimens. These last two points distinguish the type from later types descended from it, in which a haloed rider strikes the enemy with the butt of a tall cross; thus the earlier design is Christianized.

Variations from this type are so trivial as in no way to affect the integrity of the group. On a Michigan stone, one of the largest and best of them (D. 294), and also on two other examples, the spear is short and the rider’s hand is held no higher than his hips; on the others the weapon is a long lance, and the thrusting hand is above the level of the shoulders. A fine specimen in the Newell collection (D. 295) omits the breast and breech bands from the horse’s accoutrements. The Michigan stone that heads this group has under the reverse inscription a large key with three wards and a square bow — a symbol which emphasizes the power given to Solomon by the seal of God to bind and loose the demons. The excellent specimen belonging to D. M. Robinson (D. 296) has an ouroboros round the obverse design, and the sign ☼, usually associated with Chnoubis, under the reverse inscription, εφραηες θεος. On the reverse of D. 297 there are four magical characters, and the obverse design is surrounded by an ouroboros. This specimen and Mich. 25140 are tall oblongs with the corners rounded, a shape that became common in late Roman and Byzantine times. The others are oval, like most nonmagical gems of Roman times. A stone in the De Clercq collection (3491), otherwise of the normal type, is engraved on serpentine, not haematite.

Before taking up the interpretation of these “Solomon” gems attention should be called to one that represents Solomon not as a horseman, but apparently as an orator. It is a green jasper from Tyre in the De Clercq collection. Solomon, identified by his name in the field, stands dressed in tunic and himation thrown over the left shoulder, thus freeing the right arm, which is raised in a gesture. The left hand holds an uncertain object, possibly a roll of manuscript. On the reverse, Gabriel Michael Ouriel Sabaot.

Since Solomon was the richest and most splendid of the Jewish kings, endowed with exceptional wisdom and believed to exercise control over spirits and demons, it was natural that he should play a prominent part in Jewish magic. That he did so is proved by an interesting passage in Josephus and by the Testament of Solomon, the greater part of which describes the king’s interview with a long series of demons, whom he compels to disclose

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6 Schlumberger, Moutarde as cited in note 31, Matter, Pt. 8, 10.
6 De Rudder 3490. The editor uses right and left of the figure as seen on an impression, not on the original. This is unfortunate since the inscriptions show that the figure was meant to be looked at directly.
8 C. C. McCown, The Testament of Solomon, especially Chapters 3-18.
their names, their evil practices, and the means whereby they can be defeated. It is a little surprising that the amulets show him as an armed horseman, but the explanation is simple. Solomon was a mighty king, and for some centuries the people of Egypt and the Levant had occasionally seen their Macedonian and Roman sovereigns represented as conquering warriors in the act of striking down a foe. On a trilingual stele of Ptolemy IV the king is striking at an enemy with a long lance. Much nearer to the pattern of the amulets are certain coins of Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, and Commodus, with the emperor spearing an enemy lying on the ground under the horse's feet. There is little need to search further to explain the design; a mounted warrior striking down an enemy is a natural symbol of victory. However, the occasional representation of gods on horseback may also have contributed something to the popularity of the type. The choice of a female figure for the conquered enemy points to a belief in some dangerous female demon, at first probably the Lilith of Jewish legend; but it is perhaps worth noting that the Druj, the spirit of falsehood and wickedness in Persian mythology, is also female. The name naturally changed according to the locality and the period. In Coptic Egypt the demon was Alabasdris, as we know from the fresco found in the chapel at Bawit, where St. Sisinnius takes the place of Solomon; in Byzantine times the evil creature is Gylou, or Gyllo, the destroyer of little children, and Sisinnius is the deliverer. It is possible that all amulets of this class were intended primarily for the protection of the young.

Thus far it seems likely that amulets of the type described owe their origin to Hellenized Jews. The stones show no certain trace of Christian influence, for, although “seal of God” is an expression used in the Apocalypse, it may have arisen in Jewish usage. On the other hand, there was no reason why a Solomon amulet should not be accepted and used by a Christian, even though it bore no exclusively Christian sign or symbol. Perdrizet has shown that Solomon was sometimes a figure or symbol of Christ; a passage that he cites from the Ethiopic Kebræ Nagoæ (“Splendor of Kings”), Chap. 66, says that “in the secret language, in the exposition of prophecy,” Solomon means Christ; and other medieval sources point in the same direction. We may add that the rabbinical interpretation of the Song of Solomon is based upon the idea that Solomon represents God and the bride represents
the house of Israel, a notion adapted by the Christian fathers, who explained the poem as an allegory of the love of Christ for his church.

Whether the simpler Solomon type was used by Christians or not, there is no doubt that a great number of Christian amulets were derived from it. They are bronze pendants and medals. The pendants begin in Roman times, probably as early as the third century, and continue into the Byzantine period; the medals seem to be all of Byzantine date. Common to almost all is the chief feature of the obverse, the Rider Saint spearing the Evil Spirit. Some specimens add below this design a roaring lion walking to right. The pendants are mostly oblong with rounded corners, but the dimensions vary considerably; some are broad and shovel-like, others narrower in proportion to their height, others are tall ovals. A suspension loop is made in one piece with the plaque but set at right angles to it, an arrangement that helps to keep the plate from turning the reverse face outward.

Certain types may be set apart on the basis of the reverse design that accompanies the rider of the obverse. The largest group uses for its reverse type the πολυπάθης δρακάνης, as it is called by the author of the Testament of Solomon. This design shows the evil eye pierced by various sharp weapons and attacked by several fierce or noxious animals (D. 298–303). It probably originated in the east and was widely used in the Roman period as an apotropaic device. The most elaborate example of the kind is a mosaic which lay in the vestibule of a chapel (called basilica in the accompanying inscription) used by a guild of pearl dealers (margaritarii) in Rome. It has been discussed by several archaeologists and has often been reproduced. A gem with a similar design was published by King and is now in the Metropolitan Museum. As used on the bronze pendants the design is simplified and standardized. Directly above the eye is the head of a trident with its three points resting on the eyelid. On each side the eye is threatened or actually pierced by a sharp instrument, sometimes a dagger, sometimes a nail, in one example apparently a short curved blade with neither hilt nor guard. Below this are five animals—at the left, a lion rearing up and pawing at the hated eye, next, an ibis pecking at it, a snake, a scorpion, and at the right a quadruped which seems to be a dog, or perhaps a hunting leopard (cheetah), since in most of the specimens the animal is spotted. Variations are of little importance. An amulet from Beisan has only four animals under the eye, omitting the snake (D. 302). One in Mr. Seyrig’s possession (D. 302) has in place of the trident what looks like a dagger with a rectangular guard; but this is probably

17 Midrash Rabhak, Song of Songs, passim; cf. M. Simon’s introduction to his English translation, and Wünsche, p. vii of his German version; Ginzb. Legends of the Jews, VI, 277, n. 2.
18 Test. Sod. 18, 39 (ed. McCown).
19 Bull. della Comm. arch. comun. di Roma, Ser. 3, 1890, Pl. 1–2: a good cut in Haas-Leipoldt, Bilderdas zur Religionsgesch., Liep. 1–11, No. 156. Compare also the wall painting at Dura (Carm. Fossiles de Douro-Europa, Texte, p. 139, fig. 31); other examples, Chabos, Chois d’Ins. de Palmyre, p. 109, Pl. 16, 3; Reinsch, Rep. der Reliefs, II, 151, 5. An interesting variation of the design is used in the Bouwett fresco; see note 12 above.
owing to the maker's misunderstanding his pattern. The same pendant interchanges the position of the lion and the dog. We have seen that there is a variation in the obverse design — the addition of a lion under the rider and the transfixed spirit of evil (so five out of eight examples); but in spite of these trivial differences the group is a fairly coherent one. The larger specimens bear on the reverse, above the evil eye, the inscription ΙΑΩ σαβαωθ Μωυσηι βοηθ. A smaller one has an indistinct έφ θεός (D. 302).

An entirely different reverse design is best represented by a pendant in my collection, a broad, spadelike amulet, the bottom almost straight (D. 304). The rider design on the obverse is sketchily incised; the female figure is little more than a mishapen roll of flesh. The reverse is mainly occupied by a large bird with long legs and neck but a short bill, almost certainly intended for an ostrich. It stands to right, its open bill just over a large open-mouthed snake with a row of spots indicated by punctures in the metal. The snake is apparently raising itself (in a manner impossible in fact) to attack the bird. Two much smaller snakes or worms rear up from the ground in the same way, and in the field is an uncertain object, approximately cylindrical with some transverse ridges, which may be intended for a larva of some sort. Behind the ostrich is a small structure like an altar made of three pillars with a table across them, and with an upper piece resembling a flowerpot with wide rim.

A curious feature of this design is a line which curves upward from the upper part of the altar and then descends slightly to the back of the bird's head. If it is meant for a cord, like that which fastens an ibis to an altar on a well-known type of stomach amulets, the artist has ignored the laws of gravity and so avoided bringing the cord into contact with the bird's wing, which is just below. The cord cannot be merely an exaggerated crest; the head of the ostrich has no such plume. Above the whole reverse design stands the word πιέζο.

Two other pendants in my possession show variations from this type. On one the bird has a fairly long bill, and might be an ibis or even a crane. Behind is a tree (cypress?), but the bird is not tied to it. Above there is a curiously looped line, perhaps a suggestion of a magical knot. The usual πιέζο is wanting (D. 305). The other has on the obverse two unusual though unimportant variations, a six-pointed star under the horse's belly and a triple loop at the bottom. The suspension loop and part of the plaque have been broken off, leaving it uncertain whether the word πιέζω was present or not. The bird has a backward-projecting crest — it is certainly not a cord in this instance — and there is an altar behind. In the lower field at right, between the bird and the snake, there is a large eight-rayed ring sign and in the corresponding position at the left, a looped curve. Below, έφ θεός, indistinct and not quite certain (D. 306).

A specimen published by Schlumberger, which seems to have been rather crudely executed, throws no further light on the design. Schlumberger, REG 5, 81.

21 Schlumberger, REG 5, 81.
the bird and the altar is not present. The inscription is Ιω σαβαωθ πινω. Nothing new is to be learned from the descriptions of two similar pendants given, without illustrations, by Beaudouin-Pottier and Le Blant. In the one the inscription is Ιω σαβαω πινω, in the other only the last word. An unpublished pendant in the British Museum (56323) contributes little; here the ostrich is tied to a peg driven into the side of the altar, which is indistinct. The inscription is πινω.

Mr. H. Seyrig has published a variant of this type, which is in the museum of the American University at Beirut. The ostrich design takes the place of the rider on the obverse, while the reverse is occupied by an inscription. The altar is here a mere pillar to which the ostrich is tied; but the cord is bowed upward as in my pendant, apparently for no other reason than because the engraver wished to make the line correspond to the curve of the bird's lifted wing. The usual πινω is at the top. The reverse inscription, κερια βοήθεσα λαλεῖν ἵνα ητεκε πράγμα, ends with the Hebrew letters וַשעַות, probably, as Seyrig suggests, a repetition of the name Salome rather than the word ἱλαρον, “peace.”

As for the word πινω, which usually accompanies this ostrich and snake design, and never varies in spelling, one would naturally take it for the verb πινω; but since the meaning “I drink” seemed inappropriate, Eitrem proposed to take it as equivalent here to καταπίνω, “devour.” To this view I also inclined, thinking that such a use of the word might be a peculiarity of Graeco-Syrian speech. Seyrig, however, is right in saying that there is no evidence to support this equation of πινω with καταπίνω, and it may be, as he holds, that the word is meant for πεινω, “I am hungry.” But if πεινω was meant, it is hard to see why the itacism should be so consistent. Perhaps the error occurred on the first specimen manufactured in some important workshop and was slavishly copied.

Seyrig correctly observed that the bird tied to a pillar or an altar is a motif akin to, and probably derived from, a common Egyptian type of stomach amulet which shows an ibis tied to an altar (D. 77–82). The voracious bird, with his extraordinary powers of digestion, was doubtless supposed to be a good exemplar, according to a principle of homoeopathic magic, for a weak stomach. The imperatives πέσε, τέπε, and ἐπέπετε, one of which is usually inscribed on the back of such stones, are addressed to the ailing stomach rather than to the bird — here I disagree with Seyrig — for πέσε is found on another kind of stomach amulet (the Chnoubis stones), in which the ibis has no part. As for the Syrian pendants, comparison of the accessible specimens and illustrations makes it clear that the bird is almost always an ostrich, not an ibis. The reverse side of a Byzantine medal in my possession

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26 There is no amulet of this type in the Newell collection, as an error of memory led me to say in Proc. Am. Phils. Soc. 85 (1943), 471, n. 15.
27 Brynai, 1 (1934), 1–5.
28 Forhandl. i Videnskapsretsh. i Kristiania, 1921, 18.
shows an unmistakable ostrich treading on a snake and about to devour a large scorpion; behind him is an ibis attacking a small snake.\textsuperscript{25}

There is little doubt that representations of large birds, especially waders, attacking snakes and other reptiles, were widely accepted as symbols of the victory of good over evil of every kind. As the legend accompanying the rider acclaims the One God who conquers all ills, so the snake-eating bird on the reverse sets forth the same idea in a symbolic form. In the \textit{Cyranides} I, H8, it is said that, if you carve on pyrites a flamingo with a scorpion at his feet and lay under the gem a bit of a certain plant, you will have protection against all poisonous animals, and also against bad dreams, the evil eye, and the stone. The beautiful mosaics found in the church at Ain-et-\textit{T"abga} represent various wading birds devouring worms and small snakes among the vegetation of a marshy spot.\textsuperscript{27} A crude haematite in Mr. Seyrig’s collection (D. 106) represents a long-legged bird, here probably a phoenix, standing on what seems to be a large scorpion with its tail unnaturally prolonged. This is inscribed on the reverse \textit{πιμπε}, which shows that in this case the design was applied to a stomach amulet. A specimen in the Royal Ontario Museum (D. 308) shows a snake attacked and about to be devoured by a bird resembling an ibis in build, but with a strange crest which springs from a single base and divides into several branches, like the antlers of a stag. Perhaps it was meant to represent the phoenix. A jasper in my possession, unfortunately damaged, has on the obverse a stork with a lizard in his bill, on the other side a few common magical words.\textsuperscript{28}

In another group of these pendants an inscription occupies the entire reverse or else leaves room only for a roaring lion under it. In the simplest specimens the inscription consists only of divine or angelic names, as on a well-executed piece in the Michigan collection (D. 309) with the neatly engraved words \textit{Ἰωάννης Απολλωνίας Μιχαήλ}; beneath, a lion, in front of him a snake, over his back a crescent. A much-corroded pendant of mine has \textit{Ἰωάννης Σαββαών Μιχαήλ Γαβριήλ}, and the same words appear on a similar one in Mr. Seyrig’s collection (D. 310). A more interesting and better-executed pendant, also belonging to Mr. Seyrig (D. 311), is inscribed \textit{Ἰωάννης Σαββαών Μιχαήλ Γαβριήλ Ουρανίας Ξερωμίτις Σεφατ}, followed by a six-pointed star; lion below. \textit{Σεφατ} is, of course, for \textit{Σεφαρι}. The ending —\textit{in} is the Aramaic plural sign, which would be expected at this period instead of the Hebrew —\textit{im}.

Unintelligible words are sometimes added after the familiar angel names, as in D. 313, \textit{Ἰωάννης Σαββαών Γαβριήλ Ουρανίας Ουαδω Γαβριήλ} (lion below), and Seyrig 52, \textit{Ἰωάννης Μιχαήλ Σχασιχαί Λιχαίνα Γαβριήλ} (lion below, turning his head back towards an eye — the evil eye — over his back). Another specimen in the Seyrig collection (D. 312) goes a step farther in this magical mystification. The obverse shows the rider as usual, the reverse contains only the legend \textit{ἔγω ἐλπὶ σακαμαράστεραν}, of which only \textit{ἔγω ἐλπὶ} is intelligible.

\textsuperscript{25} The medal will be more fully described later in this chapter.

\textsuperscript{27} See A. M. Schneider, \textit{Die Brotsternzweigkunde von el-Tägga am Gesenkrechte und ihre Mosaiken (Collectanea Hierosolymitana, IV)}. \textsuperscript{28} D. 307.
Next to be considered are certain pendant amulets which have a charm or an incantation on the reverse or on both sides. One of these, first published by Beaudouin and Pottier, later by Schlumberger, who acquired it after the first publication, and most recently by Perdrizet, is inscribed with a series of words which are the names of things hostile to the evil eye, some of them well known as apotropaic symbols. Schlumberger's reading, which seems to be confirmed by other examples, is as follows: ἔπεις μύλος εἴβας εὐθεία κολάς ἀνόδος (σ)τρουθοκάմηλος Ἀπόλλων; with correct spelling, μύλος, ἔβας, εὐθεία κολάς, Ἀπόλλων (?). Under the inscription is a lion. Perdrizet's proposal to read Νεῖλωσιβίς is not acceptable; the μυ is supported by the evidence of other pendants with the same inscription.

The ibis and the ostrich, as destroyers of noxious reptiles, are appropriate symbols for a protective amulet, and the apotropaic power of the phallus (εὐθεία κολάς ἀνόδος) is well known. Apollo, who is evidently meant in the last word, is an averter of ills. Evidence for an apotropaic power in horses and mules is not at hand, but in connection with the other words there can be little doubt of the fact.

The same inscription is found with slight variations on three other pendants, one each in the Newell and Seyrig collections and one in the British Museum. The last has on its obverse an even more elaborate inscription, not entirely legible, which will be dealt with later.

Among the minor finds in the excavation of Beisan was a large bronze pendant, unfortunately very badly corroded. The better-preserved side is partly occupied by an inscription of eleven lines, six of which are fairly legible. In the remainder, although several groups of letters are clear, I have failed, after repeated efforts, to find a connected sense. The legend begins thus: ἄγαν ὑψίστατα κ(α)ὶ αὐτῷ βολα κ(α)ὶ φοβεροὶ [χαρακτήρες] φέλαξαν τὰν φοροῦν ἡ τῆς φώροις σας τὰς τὰς τῆς δ[ί]ων δυνάμεις [ε]πό πάνι- των κυρ[ίων]; “Holy names and symbols and dread characters, protect from all dangers the man or woman who carries your august ([σε]τας?) divine powers.”

It is worth noting that the names, symbols, and characters invoked are addressed as divine beings in their own right, as on the gold petalon (bought in Damascus) which Perdrizet published, and in several curse tablets. One might expect to find the names and characters in the lower part of the Beisan

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9 BCH 3 (1875), 567; REG 5, 80; Perdrizet, Necropole premiere, 31-32.
10 The spelling μύλος for μύλος is strange. While μυ was often written for ν in both Ptolemaic and Roman times, it seems not to be attested in the papyri as a substitute for ν. Apparently there was first a confusion of sound which led to the writing of ν for μυ (the form μύλος actually occurs on B.M. 5634); then μυ was written because the engraver was accustomed to treat κτ and ν as graphic equivalents.
11 Newell 46 (D. 314); Seyrig 54; B. M. 56344.
12 D. 317. With the opening words cf. II. 47-50 of the gold lamina from Thessaly (IG IX, 2, 252), διὰμιμα (better, διαιμα) τὸν ἄγιλλον κ’ χαρακτήρα δότε χαράν χάριν ιωάν κ’ θυγηιας κ’ τοῦ ὀλίου τοῦτον (perhaps τοῦ τούτου; see the publication).
13 For the neglect of nasal sounds see Mayer, I, 190; for parasitic ν in the acc. sing. participle, pp. 198 ff, and Crümmert, p. 169, 4.
14 Perdrizet, REG 40 (1928), 75 ff; Audollent, Défs. Tah., Nos. 155, 19-20; 159, 31; 165, 22-23.
amulet under the inscription; but, although there are numerous scratches
and a few poorly cut letters, they were evidently made later than the carefully
formed letters of the inscription above. It is more likely that the symbols
and names were on the other side of the amulet; that, however, cannot be
proved, for the corrosion has been even more destructive there. A few letters
survive, but the combinations are unpronounceable as well as unintelligible;
for example, $\beta\chi\xi\alpha\kappa$ is clearly legible in one line of an inscription in a less
damaged spot. Those letters can scarcely have had any meaning unless,
with the rest of the inscription, they were in some kind of cipher. There are
also some traces that look like the lower part (kilt and legs) of a demonic
figure outlined in points, a technique that has been observed on another
bronze amulet.

A charm of a peculiar kind is engraved on a pendant with unusual features
which call for description in detail.38 Both sides of the plaque, a rather narrow
ellipse, are divided into two registers by a horizontal line. On the obverse,
above, an ass-headed god who has an uncertain object projecting over his
shoulder — perhaps a crudely drawn whip — leans forward towards a lion,
holding his right hand before his own head, almost touching the lion. It
may be meant for the gesture of proskynesis, in which the finger tips touch
the lips. Between the god and the animal stands a short, pointed pillar with
a slight horizontal projection at each side. The god can only be meant for
Set or — if the head is not that of an ass but of a dog or jackal — for Anubis.
In either case the scene may represent homage to the lion as a symbol of the
sun. Certainly there is a relic of paganism in this part of the design, although
in the lower register we see the familiar figure of the rider with nimbus trans-
fixing the evil spirit, and a few letters of the usual inscription, “One God
who overcomes all ills.” One might think of the Sethian Gnostics as possible
authors of such a combination, but it is probably merely a product of crude
syncretism in which Christian and pagan elements were blended, with no
informing doctrinal principle.

In the upper compartment of the reverse is a curiously looped curve, per-
haps a symbol of binding, the idea from which the common ring signs were
derived. Round it are signs that may be meant for the letters theta and
omicron, and a circle with crossed diameters.

In the lower register is an inscription, under which stands a lion facing to
right. The text belongs to that curious class of incantations in which a frag-
ment of a story is told, either an allusion to a myth or sacred legend, or else
a simple childish tale.39 Inscriptions belonging, as this text does, to the last
group, are often little more than nonsense, and it is wasted labor to try to
extract a connected and logical meaning from them. In the present instance
the indistinctness of some letters makes matters worse. I read it as follows:

$$\lambda\upsilon\nu\pi\omicron|\nu\nu\nu\nu\nu\nu e\beta\omega|\kappa\epsilon\omega\rho\pi\nu\omega|\upsilon\delta\upsilon\omicron|\alpha\tau\omicron\pi\omicron|\phi\omega.$$ 

38 D. 315.
39 For several examples of these curious fragmentary narratives see Heim, Incantamenta magica, pp.
495-507 (Jahrh. Suppl. 11).
There is a dittoography of ω, and the form intended was πινόω, i.e. πείνων, “hungry.” For ἐδώσετο read ἐδώσετο. After ἄρτον there are two, perhaps three, indistinct crowded letters: φῶ for φάγω, “I eat,” makes the best sense and fits the traces best; it is an early example of a form well known in Modern Greek. At the end of the third line it is possible that πινόω was intended, for there is a short stroke over ω which may be the sign of final ν. However, reading πίνω, one may render the words as “A wolf, hungry, was fed. I drink water, I am thirsty; I eat bread.”

Like this in its childish tone, but without the narrative aspect of the previous example, is a long inscription on a previously mentioned pendant in the British Museum, which has the ὑπὸς μοῦλος ἵδις formula on its reverse.97 The obverse has ten lines of writing, much of which is indistinct and very hard to read; below are indistinct cuttings that may belong to the outlines of three animals.

The clue to the character of this inscription, though not to an exact deciphering of it, is found in a Byzantine incantation of which several variants are known.98 It is a charm to cure ailments of the womb. One of them reads ὁς τέρα μελανή μελανομάθη ως δόρσα επιλέουσα καὶ ως λέων βρυχάωσαι καὶ ως ἄρτιν κομπὸν: “Worm, black, blackening, as a snake thou wrigglest, and as a lion thou roardest, and as a lamb — go to sleep.” Another version inserts the clause καὶ ως δράκων αὐρίζῃς (sic), “and as a dragon thou hissetest.”

In the British Museum pendant I can make nothing of the first line and the beginning of the second; then follow the words ἐθέρασε παθεῖε κατέφογεν. The second word may be a blunder for ἀπείρα (ἐν > ἐφ, ἐφα > ἐφ) or for ἀφεῖα (ἀφήσε); so “he reaped, he roasted (or boiled), he ate.” Then follows an enlarged version of the Byzantine incantation, but without the address to the ὁμέρα. The endings of the verbs are partly so indistinct, partly so incredibly irregular, that I can only indicate the sense in a general way by a tentative translation: “as a wolf thou tearest, as a crocodile thou devourest, as a lion thou roarest, as a bull thou gorest (κερατίζω), as a dragoon thou wrigglest . . . as a pet sheep (κτήλος).” Some word meaning “to lie down,” “be quiet,” must have stood in the damaged passage indicated by the dots, or else below, where indistinct cuttings are visible but nothing is legible.99

Mouterde has published a specimen which seems to be unique in one respect, namely, that the design of the evil eye attacked by five animals is placed on the obverse under the usual figure of the rider piercing the Evil One.100 The reverse is thus left free for an inscription, below which is a clumsy representation of the cock-headed solar anquapede. The legend is (στομαχε) αὐτιστομαχε ως εμα φαγε ως εμα επιωκεν οὐτη κατώδωκεν. I make nothing of the last twelve letters, but if επιωκεν can be a mongrel form for ἐτεν or

97 No. 56124.
98 Heim, Incantamenta magica, p. 512; King, Gnostics, p. 160; Schlumberger, REG 5 (1892), 89-92.
99 This inscription should be reexamined. I read what I could ten years ago, but comparison with related texts would probably make further progress possible if the object were now accessible.
100 Milanges Univ. S. Joseph, 15, 124 (No. 98), Pl. 9. This pendant belonged to the Ayvaz collection, but was not acquired by the University of Michigan.
πέπωκεν⁴⁴ or else a mere blunder concealing ἐπείς, the first part of the legend sounds like one of the childish incantations that have been previously noted: (στόμαχε, ἀντιστόμαχε, ὄς ἀλμα ἔφαγε, ὄς ἀλμα ἐπει; "Stomach, antistomach (Mouterde suggests that the pylorus is meant), which ate blood, which drank blood." The explanation proposed by Mouterde seems to me less satisfactory. In any case the charm was intended to cure digestive ailments.

A fragment in the Newell collection (D. 316), the lower half of the original plaque, presents certain peculiarities. Of the obverse design, which was placed high in the field, nothing remains but some cuttings which apparently represent the belly, tail, and clawed feet of some animal; but the inscription βοηθεῖ below suggests that there was the usual horsemanship attacking the animal or monster, which took the place of the human female as the symbol of evil. The oblong pendants offer no parallel for that; but on a large Byzantine medal in the Michigan collection ⁴⁵ the evil one is a sphinx-like creature with human head and the body of a lioness. On the reverse of the Newell fragment there is an inscription of which only the following words are legible: . . . ε尔斯 κληρν βοηθεῖ Θεόδοντον. The genitive after βοηθεῖν is not uncommon in late inscriptions. Set between the last two letters of the legend is a loop design like that on the previously described pendant (D. 315) of the Newell collection (p. 216).

The series of oblong pendants may be closed with a Christian example showing no trace of pagan symbolism. This is another Newell pendant (D. 318). The obverse is the usual rider transfixed the prostrate woman, and there is a lion below. The reverse shows a large cross, the arms and the support of which broaden from their junction to the extremities. The place of the upper part of the cross is taken by a rudely sketched bust of Christ which occupies the upper part of the surface. The face is turned to the observer's left, and the clawlike right hand is raised. Under the arms of the cross are the letters Α and Ω; at the upper right is a small cross potent. The custom of placing a bust of Christ on the top of the cross seems to have begun in the fifth century, which may well be the period of this pendant.⁴⁶ Another, resembling this in every respect except the dimensions of the plaque, which is narrower and slightly taller, belongs to the Berlin Museum and was published by Volbach.⁴⁷

The type of the rider continued to be used on many less interesting trinkets — smaller pendants, rings, bracelets, and medals. Only a few examples can be described. Apparently later than the large oblong pendants are some that are made in the shape of an eye, a form which probably seemed an appropriate foil for the evil eye. The best available specimen, belonging to the Newell collection (D. 319), is crudely done, both rider and recumbent

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⁴⁴ For examples of equally strange hybrid forms, occurring even in Ptolemaic times, see Mayer, I, 383, κεφαργαθέντα, προωδής.
⁴⁵ To be discussed later in this chapter. A similar monster is engraved on two bracelet amulets published by J. Maspero (Ann. du corr., 9, 243, fig. 1, extreme right; 251, fig. 5, and plate facing 258, fig. 2).
⁴⁶ Helene, Kostümgesch., III, 340, p. 3; cited by Maspero, op. cit., 254.
⁴⁷ Amtliche Berichte aus den königl. Kunstanstaltungen, 39, 123.
figure being executed with a few rough strokes. One in my possession is even cruder; the enemy resembles a log, and the rider’s head is a mere knob enclosed in an oval nimbus. The Newell bronze has at the very bottom of the obverse what seems to be another reminder of the evil eye, an almond shape crossed by three diagonal lines — to blind it? Christian influence is more definitely indicated in these eye-shaped pendants than in the earlier forms. On mine the weapon used by the rider has a cross at the upper end, and on the reverse of both a cross precedes the inscription ὅ λατοι (ὅ κατουκ). These are the first words (ὁ κατουκ) of Psalm 91, 1, which was widely used as a protective motto. There are still other cheap pendants of circular form with the same design and inscription, also bronze rings and bracelets showing the rider, with or without a legend. Evidently a mass manufacture of such amulets was carried on for a long period, possibly for several centuries. It centered in Syria and Palestine and may have been imitated in neighboring countries.

Also later than the oblong plaque pendants are the bronze medals, of which a dozen or so have come to light, all bearing marks of Christian origin. Attention was first called to them by A. Sorlin Dorigny and especially by Schlumberger, who published six of them. They are all of Byzantine date, and since they belong to a later period than most of the amulets investigated in these studies, they will not be treated at length here. Because of their intrinsic interest I give brief descriptions of two bronze medals and a lead pendant, all of which have been previously published.

In 1941 the University of Michigan acquired one of the largest and best preserved of these Byzantine bronze medals. It is a thin plate, 5.4 cm. in diameter, with a suspension hole that was apparently drilled by the maker. On the obverse the rider is striking a sphinxlike female monster with a spear, at the top of which are a cross and a pennon. Before him stands an angel with one wing uplifted, exactly as on the medal illustrated in Sorlin Dorigny’s article. In the field is the common inscription “One God who overcomes evils,” and round the margin runs the protective first verse of Psalm 91 and the first three words of the second (ἦρει λέγει κατολού). In the upper part of the reverse Christ sits enthroned in an oval frame with the symbols of the evangelists, two on each side, the angel of Matthew and the ox of Luke at the left, the eagle of John and the lion of Mark at the right. Under this design the Trisagion, in a single line, runs across the field — ἄγιος ἄγιος ἄγιος κύριος σαβαὼθ. Though this upper part is entirely Christian, the symbols of the lower half are just such as are found on pagan amulets: first, six large ring signs, then a row of smaller characters, a few of which slightly resemble Hebrew letters, and at the bottom a lion running

46 See E. Peterson, Hei Theos, 91-92.
47 Dorigny, REG 4, 287-296; Schlumberger, REG 5, 74-80.
49 The common abbreviations and orthographical errors are disregarded in the report of these inscriptions. ζεικλεῖ agrees with Codex Alexandrinus and the Massoretic text against ζεικλεῖ of Vaticanus and Sinaitica.
to right over a snake, and a scorpion in front of the lion. A long inscription round the margin reads (ignoring abbreviations and minor errors): σφαγίς δευ τζάντος φιλαξον ἐπ’ παντὸς κακον τὸν φοιδοῦτα τὸ φυλακήρινην τοῦ(το). The last syllable was omitted to leave room for the perforation.

A Byzantine medal in my possession, probably of a rather late date, has the usual obverse design of the rider spearing the female spirit of evil. Scattered in the field are an eye (a suggestion of the purpose of the amulet, to ward off the glance of envy), a bow, a sword, a circle with crossed diameters, and perhaps a dart. To the usual inscription, “One God,” etc., which is very badly spelled, the engraver has added ἄγινε Σισίναι, an invocation of St. Sisinnius. He is also invoked on one of the medals published by Schlumberger; oddly enough, the name is simply added as a tag to the words Σωλομον σε οἰκοι, “Solomon is pursuing you.”

The reverse shows an ostrich treading on a snake and apparently about to devour a large scorpion in front of him; the word πυρα is engraved just over the bird’s head. Behind the ostrich, but set on an axis at right angles to the main design, is an ibis devouring a small snake, while a crab or a small scorpion seems to threaten him.

A pendant with suspension loop, now in the Museum of the University of Michigan, formerly belonged to the Ayvaz collection and was described by Mouterde, with one or two slight inaccuracies. The object is of lead, not bronze. The obverse represents a rider with nimbus galloping to left and striking at a wriggling serpent under his horse’s feet; he is probably St. George. The top of his lance is a cross, and there is a small cross in the field, over the horse’s head. The indistinct object which Mouterde saw at the right is confined to the upper sector and can scarcely be an angel; probably it is only the loose end of the horseman’s chlamys, blown back by the wind. On the reverse above, a crux quadrata in a circle rests on an object of uncertain form and purpose; at the left, a bust of the Sun, at the right, one of the Moon. Below, a lion running to left over a snake. This side of the pendant belongs to the same type as Schlumberger’s No. 2 and that published by Sortin Dorigny.

Another and probably earlier representation of a horseman spearing a snake is engraved on a red jasper in the collection of Professor A. B. Cook; the stone is cut seal-fashion, the design being intended for inspection in an impression (D. 327). This seems to be indicated by the circumstance that, as seen on the stone itself, the spear is held in the rider’s left hand. So viewed the horseman is moving to the right. There is no nimbus, but the man’s head seems to have two or three rays projecting upward. Round the upper part of the stone are several carelessly cut signs which approximate the forms of certain Greek letters; but I cannot read them as Greek, and they may be meaningless.

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41 See notes 12 and 13 above.
42 REG 5, 74 f.
43 D. 326; Mouterde, Mélanger Univ. St.-Joseph 25, 121 (Pl. 8, 51).
The ancient habit of using gibberish in magical inscriptions has already appeared in some of the pendant amulets discussed in this chapter, and there is a striking example of it in a bronze ring bezel, probably of early Byzantine times. Round the rider saint runs the meaningless legend χυροκεαιμωνυξησουζςε.\textsuperscript{83}

The last few pages have made it clear that amulets resembling the rider saint type must have been produced in great numbers. An interesting bit of evidence bearing upon this wholesale manufacture of metal amulets is to be found in a steatite mould, or rather one side of a mould, acquired in Stambul by Mr. Henri Seyrig (D. 328). It was designed to cast small, thin amulets of lead, two at a time, each with two suspension loops above, and each bearing in four lines the legend ο κατάκον εν βοσβία τού ψυφτού (to be read ό κα-
τοκόν εν βοσβία τού ψυφτού), the first six words of Psalm 91. It is curious that these two matrices, side by side, are not duplicates, but differ in the arrangement of the letters in the four-line panels, and in other details which may be examined in the illustration.

It is unfortunate that the objects treated in this chapter cannot be dated even within fairly wide limits. There is little doubt that the "Solomon" haematites represent the oldest type, yet the individuals belonging to that group can scarcely be placed earlier than the third century. The bronze pendants with the rider seem to be derived from the Solomon type, yet some of them may also be as early as the third century. The smaller of the two found in the excavation of Beisan (D. 305) was taken from a stratum that could not be dated later than 325. Those specimens that show clear marks of Christian origin might naturally be placed later; yet it is well known that the old religions held out for a long time after Christianity dominated the empire and, furthermore, professed Christians often clung to magic and had no scruples about using pagan figures and symbols. When one considers the evolution of the types, it seems certain that such medals as those published by Schumacher, or that in the Michigan collection, are later than most of the oblong plaque pendants; and the medals, with various rings and bracelets showing developed Christian imagery, are certainly Byzantine. It would take a more expert knowledge of Byzantine art and epigraphy than I command to arrange these objects chronologically within that period.

We may now turn to a group of Christian amulets in which there are few or no traces of pagan influence. The common Egyptian group of Isis holding the infant Horus on her lap probably had some effect upon Christian representations of the Virgin and the infant Jesus, such as an oval black paste in my possession (D. 330). The Virgin is seated facing left on a low-backed chair, holding the child, not on her knees, but slightly forward as if to show him to worshipers. Over her head is a so-called Greek cross (crux quadrata), in the field in front, Π, behind, Ξ. Neither mother nor child has the nimbus. A mottled green and yellow jasper in the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology (D. 329), an oblong with arched top, shows the Virgin standing, holding D. 323.
the child on her left arm. Both wear the nimbus, and there is a star at each
side. Lower in the field are the letters MP at the right and ΘΩ at the left.
These letters are reversed, and MP usually precedes in the phrase μὴ τηρ
θεοῷ; hence the stone seems to have been intended for use as a seal, even
though an impression from it would show the child held on the right arm
of his mother, which is not the usual position.

Byzantine also, and probably quite late, is a small bronze plaque which
has at each side two projections, from which longer pieces of metal were
broken away. They lie in the same plane as that of the disk, which seems
to show that they are not the remains of the hoop of a ring; and the plaque
itself is perhaps a little too large to have been the bezel. It may have been
one of several linked together to form a bracelet. It is engraved on one
side with a bust of Christ, on the other with a bust of the Virgin, both in full
face and poorly executed in a stiff ecclesiastical style. The bearded Christ
has a nimbus with inscribed cross; the edges of his mantle show an em-
broidered pattern. The right hand is held before the breast, and some
object drawn in straight lines (a book?) is apparently held by the unseen
left hand. In the field are the letters ΠΧ. The bust of the Virgin, who
has a simple nimbus, is in the attitude of an orans, hands raised, palms
outward.

One of the strangest Christian amulets is a rudely carved pendant, a red
stone with orange inclusions, belonging to the Royal Ontario Museum of
Archaeology (D. 332). It is of Egyptian origin and of the Coptic period.
The stone is almost circular, but there is a slight projection at the top to
provide for a suspension hole. On the obverse is a small neckless orans,
of childish proportions and entirely nude. Under the raised arms, on each
side, is a quadruped, which has its head turned round over its back, the pair
being in a kind of heraldic arrangement with the human figure. The subject
is Daniel in the lions' den; the same stiff, symmetrical arrangement of the
animals with reference to the man is to be seen on other examples of the type
(see D. 332 for references).

The work is not intaglio in the proper sense, since the surface of the figures,
human and animal alike, is in the same plane as the unworked part of the
stone. It is, in fact, a kind of sunken relief, an effect obtained by cutting a
deep groove round the subjects and leaving the rest of the surface untouched
except where necessary to indicate internal details, the features, the navel,
and the junction of trunk and thighs. This technique, which began in dynastic
times, seems to have been much used in late Egyptian sculptures, like many
of the grave stelae found by an expedition of the University of Michigan at
Terenuthis. An even cruder example of the Daniel type has been recently
added to the Michigan collection (D. 333).

The reverse has a crux ansata cut in the same way as the figure on the

66 D. 333.
65 Several of these monuments are illustrated in my article “The Ship of the Soul,” Proc. Am. Philos.
Soc., 85, 84-87.
obverse. The upper part is not oval but an inexact circle which does not actually touch the cross below it. There is an inscription, εἶς θεὸς ὅς, the first five letters running downwards from the upper right, the remainder downwards from the upper left.

A few stones illustrate the cult of saints. Those to be described here are all cut on haematites of a tall, narrow oblong form rounded at the corners, a shape that became common in early Byzantine times and corresponds to the elongation of human figures which is characteristic of many works of Byzantine art. An example in the British Museum (D. 334) shows a beardless saint standing to front, hands raised, his head, which is encircled with a nimbus, turned to right; the hair is confined within a band. The arrangement of the garment resembles that shown on certain ivory carvings of the early sixth century. In the field on each side is a cross potent. The reverse is inscribed ἐγις Προκόπη (for Προκόπης).

St. Procopius is the subject of an interesting chapter in Delehaye’s Les Légendes hagiographiques, where the evidence for his cult is presented in full. He was born at Scythopolis and martyred at Caesarea in Palestine on June 7, 303. His tomb was restored by the emperor Zenon in 484 and received the veneration of pilgrims.

A similar haematite in the Newell collection (D. 335) represents a saint standing with hands raised and head turned to left; there is a cross potent at each side in the lower field. The saint seems to be rising from a tomb or a sarcophagus, the end of which is done in crosshatching. His head is youthful and beardless, the hair confined by a band. The texture of the garment is indicated by a herringbone pattern. Its arrangement is not clear, but a vertical panel from neck to waist seems to represent a material or a pattern different from the rest. On the reverse is ἐγις Λεόντης.

Leontius, with two companions, is said to have suffered martyrdom under Vespasian at Tripoli in Phoenicia. In his account of Justinian’s buildings Procopius says that the emperor built, or restored, a house of St. Leontius in Damasci, and Theodoret mentions a festival of the saint. The cult seems to have been popular. Dalton lists two silver rings, the bezels of which show the saint standing, holding a long cross in his left hand and supporting a shield with his right. Inscriptions identify the figure as Leontius. The name occurs on two other objects listed by the same editor, but it is not certain that St. Leontius is meant.

A smaller haematite of the same shape belonging to the Michigan collection (D. 336) shows a robed figure with face turned to the right, the hair bound with a fillet. The poor carving and an abrasion of the surface make the action of the hands uncertain; apparently they were held forward supporting

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66 Dalton, Bys. Art and Arch., pp. 196 f., figs. 119-120.
67 Third ed., pp. 119-139.
69 Procop. De aedif. Yas. 5, 9, 26; Theod. Grac. offic. cur. 9 ad fin. (PC 83, 1035 B).
70 Dalton, Cat. of Early Christian Antiquities, 124-125; cf. 154, 487.
the cross potent, which occupies the field at the upper right. A wing seems to be awkwardly attached to the shoulder, but the crude execution leaves it uncertain whether it may not be a palm frond in the field immediately behind the figure. The reverse bears the inscription δ Ἁγιος Μιχαηλ.

Further evidence of the popularity of this type is given by a fragment, a mere splinter, from the left side of a tall oblong haematite (D. 337). The design was framed by a column on each side, from the top of which a palm leaf curved towards the top, forming an arch. Of the figure there remain only the raised right hand and a small portion of the head, the right side of the body and the right foot. On the reverse nothing is left but a star.

Mention should be made here of a green jasper in the Seyrig collection which presents some unusual features (D. 338). It is highly polished and thinner than most gem stones, details which caused the owner to view it with some slight suspicion. However, perfect preservation of a polished surface is not unknown, and one occasionally finds stones even thinner in proportion to their other measurements. On the whole, I incline to accept the stone as genuine, but later and affected by the Byzantine style as seen in coins and medals. The subject is a youthful male figure standing to front, the head turned to left, his right hand raised as if in benediction, the left holding an orb with crossed circles. He wears a kilt and a chlamys, the narrow end of which falls over the left arm. A nimbus round the head has seven double rays. In the lower field at left are a crescent and an eight-pointed star; at right, a six-pointed star. An inscription between incised lines round the margin reads Όυρηλ Σουρηλ Γαβρηλ εω; the last two letters are unexplained. On the reverse, Μιχαηλ between stars, two above, two below. Whether in view of the special position given to the name Michael one should identify the obverse figure with that archangel is not certain. It may be a late survival of a youthful type of Christ — here dressed as a warrior like the rider saint — to whom, rather than to any angel, the orb of sovereignty would seem appropriate.

There remains a small group of stones with obscure designs which for one reason or another might be considered monuments of a kind of Christianity. Yet it is doubtful whether, if Christian at all, they proceed from an orthodox group which, for reasons of security, chose to disguise itself by using ambiguous symbols, or from some heretical sect.

Attention has been called, in the chapter on Aggressive Magic (p. 112), to a Metropolitan amulet which may represent a kind of dejixo, or else may be interpreted as crypto-Christian, referring to the sufferings of Christ at the hands of the Roman soldiers. The latter interpretation finds some support in the letters XP on the reverse, an early abbreviation for Χριστός. In its general plan the design somewhat resembles that of a stone in the Cabinet des Médailles, which is also discussed in the passage mentioned.

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61 The Seyrig jasper measures 23 × 18.5 × 2 mm.; De Ridder's No. 3490 measures 36 × 25.5
× 2.4 mm.
63 D. 154.
64 Chaboulet 2169; Matter, Pl. 4, 3.
On an ironstone pendant in the Newell collection a male figure stands clad in a long tunic and a mantle, which is wound round his body and shows its free end at the left (D. 339). The head of this man is encircled with a nimbus; his right hand is raised, holding a circlet from which two slender pointed objects project upward, his left holds a roll or a thick baton. Opposite him is a snake, its head on a level with the man’s, its mouth open; there is a star just above it. Behind the snake is the word βονθε, behind the man, τωξε. The human figure might be a Christian saint; yet the nimbus is given to some pagan deities, notably Harpocrates and Cinoubis, and βονθει, though a common Christian prayer, is also found with representations of heathen gods. The word τωξε has no known meaning. The reverse is divided into two registers. Above are three lines of what seems to be a Semitic inscription, as yet unread; below, Ουριβα Σαβασ βονθει, and a character like an elongated figure 8 lying on its side, possibly a suggestion of a magical knot. Is the obverse design purely pagan, or does it reflect the ideas of a heretical Christian sect to whom the serpent was a sacred symbol?

The same question suggests itself in connection with a pendant in the Michigan collection which came from Syria (D. 340). Here again at the right is a long-robed person with nimbus, holding out in both hands an uncertain object of elliptical form towards a large snake which faces him. On the head of this snake is an ornament like an equilateral triangle standing on its apex; behind it, a star. Between the man and the snake is a small altar; below, in the exergue, a winged disk. Three lines of writing, apparently in a cryptographic alphabet, are inscribed on the reverse.

A once highly polished serpentine in the Michigan collection is also enigmatic (D. 341). A man, nude except for kilt and boots, stands to front with his head to left. His left hand holds a small pail, his right upholds a tall cross, the horizontal of which is not set exactly at right angles to the upright. On his head there seems to be a short upright ornament. The field is full of minute letters, and there are also a crescent and, perhaps, some stars; the shallow cutting and worn condition of the surface render such details uncertain. The letters that can be read make no sense and are probably parts of magical words. The reverse has the common legend Ιαο Σαμαο Αμοαςι. Nothing but the cross suggests Christian influence. The symbol may have been simply appropriated and applied to pagan magic; such a procedure is not incredible in this syncretistic age.

Before leaving the subject of Christian amulets, some attention is due to an important group belonging to the British Museum, which, unfortunately, cannot be shown in illustrations under present conditions, though all are interesting enough to deserve it. One (56473) is a bronze pendant which might be classed as Jewish except for the free use of crosses, since the inscriptions are of Hebrew origin. Obverse, Ιαο ΣαβαΘ Αμοααςι, with a cross above and three below; reverse, δ ωυ (Exodus 3, 14), with cross above and below.

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“Compare τωξε under the design of the sun-god in his chariot, on a gem of the Metropolettae collection (D. 71); King, Geistes, p. 157.”
A small mottled stone, reddish and dark green, probably heliotrope, is an unusually interesting monument of the cult of saints (56469). A man with nimbus round his head holds over his head with his left hand a fish (the Christian emblem), while the right is raised as in prayer or blessing. The figure stands on a crocodile, a mark of Egyptian origin.

The most interesting of the group (56469) is a roughly executed brown stone; I was not sure of the material. At the foot of a tree a woman is shown in the act of giving birth to a child while she holds an ankh, or crux ansata, the symbol of life, in her hand. A man and an uncertain animal stand near by. On the reverse are a large ankh and the inscription εἰς θεόν ἐν οὐρανῷ.

The last of the four (56231) is an extremely crude representation of the crucifixion, done on a red jasper with a vertical band of yellow. The central figure stands with arms extended, but no part of the cross is actually visible. On each side, at a lower level, is a mourner. Unknown characters are cut in the upper field, and the whole reverse side and the edge are inscribed with similar signs. This stone and the preceding one are illustrated in Budge, The Mummy, Pl. 24.

Only two objects that seem to be Jewish need be considered here. The first, a small lead phylactery in the form of a horizontal oblong with two suspension loops, has been previously published and needs only a brief comment.66 The piece came from Syria. One side is inscribed Πεφανή, the other Σαβαω. Mouterde, who first published it, rightly remarked that on this object Sabaoth is conceived to be an angel no less than Raphael. The inscriptions on both sides run from right to left, and since it does not seem likely that a thin lead plate would be used as a seal, one wonders whether the Jewish custom of writing from right to left suggested to the maker a similar practice with Greek letters.

Much more interesting is a limonite pendant in the Newell collection (D. 343), which represents the sacrifice of Isaac. At the extreme right, on a higher level than the human figures, stands an altar with three horns. Approaching it is the child Isaac, behind whom Abraham walks, grasping a sword, point upward, in his right hand, which is held across his body. He has turned his head to look behind him at a ram standing under a small tree, which bends over sharply, and at a hand which points downward at the ram from a line representing the vault of heaven. At the upper right is a star. The reverse has four lines of a Hebrew or a Samaritan script, of which the first line is almost entirely obliterated and the second considerably damaged by abrasion.

Among the scenes that artists took from the Old Testament Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac is one of the most popular. It was painted on the wall of the synagogue at Dura,67 and rendered in mosaic in that at Beth Alpha;68 and, doubtless because it came to be regarded as a type of the Passion of Christ, it

66 D. 342: see Mouterde, Milandes Univ. St.-Joseph 15, 966.
67 Excavations at Dura-Europos, Sixth Season, p. 343, Pl. 48.
was a favorite subject in Christian art (Pl. XXV, Fig. 7). Dalton mentions ten instances of its occurrence in the Byzantine period, and there are probably more. The beautiful ivory pyxis in Berlin, a work of the fourth century, presents the subject in a manner which is in some ways akin to the much cruder Newell amulet, notably in the composition, in the form of the altar and the placing of it on a higher level, and in the nudity of the young Isaac. These are all marks of the Syro-Egyptian type which Strzygowski distinguishes from western representations of the sacrifice. Yet there is an important difference. The pyxis shows not only the hand pointing downward from heaven, but also an angel touching Abraham to hold back the fatal blow and show him the ram. This angel is absent from the Newell amulet, as also from the Dura fresco. It is worth noting that the Abraham of the Newell stone seems to be beardless. This is true also of the Abraham on a stone in the Gotha Museum, and one belonging to the Cabinet des Médailles. The accompanying descriptions make any discussion of them here superfluous (D. 344–345).

Early in my acquaintance with the Newell collection I saw, among more conspicuous and, at the moment, more interesting pieces, a large oval plaque, weathered and chipped, on one side of which one could make out a representation of the snake-footed god, on the other a boat with some human figures on board. At the time I probably connected the latter design with the common Egyptian subjects of Osiris or Harpocrates in the sun boat with attendant deities. Mr. Newell could not identify the unusual, cheap-looking material, but said he would submit the piece to expert judgment, meanwhile giving me plasticine impressions of both sides.

When I next saw him, he told me that he had taken the piece to a well-known authority on gems, who described the stone as argillaceous schist. Unfortunately, as the expert handed the amulet back to its owner, it slipped between their fingers, and falling on the stone floor was broken to bits. Two or three pieces were saved, but the greater part, Mr. Newell reported, was reduced to dustlike fragments, impossible to put together, a misfortune for which the clayey character of the material accounts. He made light of the mishap; and since the piece had seemed at first inspection to be one of the least interesting of the lot, I scarcely thought of the impressions again until the time came, in the course of these studies, to review my notes on the collection once more.

In the meantime experience had sharpened my understanding of damaged and unfamiliar designs, and I had no difficulty in recognizing in the lower half of the reverse face a representation of two episodes in the story of Jonah. For a detailed account of the design it suffices to refer to D. 346.

A few points which may be of importance for the iconography of Jonah must be mentioned, though the subject cannot be pursued here; I hope to develop them at greater length elsewhere. In the first place, this design

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60 Byz. Art and Arch., Index II, s.v. Isaac.
61 Aegypt., 5, Pl. 5.
62 Bull. Soc. arch. Alex., No. 5, p. 10.
differs from most others dealing with Jonah in representing him standing and praying with upraised hands before he is thrown, or leaps, into the sea; for I do not think that the tall haloed figure amidships can be any other than the prophet. One might, but for the halo, think that this figure represented the captain of the vessel, raising his hands in astonishment or even in prayer; but the prayers that the crew addressed to Jehovah (Jonah 1, 14) could hardly win for their captain the nimbus of a saint. The dim figure in the prow of the boat also has his hands raised, but he is without the nimbus.

Another curious feature is that in the lower scene, showing Jonah in the jaws of the sea monster, he is swathed in grave bandages, just as Lazarus is shown in several works of early Christian art depicting his resurrection. This is perhaps to be explained by the use of Jonah’s adventure as a type, not only of the resurrection of Christ, but also of the resurrection in general, the monster representing the grave. In such an allegory it is not unnatural that a body given over to the monster should wear grave clothes.

It is also odd that the monster is taking Jonah feet first. In most other representations of the story, Jonah enters the creature head first and is disgorged head first. Yet the scene on the Newell amulet must represent the swallowing of Jonah, for an engraver would hardly show first the scene on shipboard, then the disgorging, and altogether omit a picture of the monster engulfing the prophet. If this were the only scene in which Jonah is shown entering the sea monster feet first, his nimbus and grave bandages might be thought to offer an explanation. An artist who depicted him as a haloed saint in grave clothes might dislike to hide the prophet’s head and shoulders in the bulk of the monster while only his bandaged feet protruded. But there are other representations of the story, notably a small damaged sculpture in the Metropolitan Museum, on which the sailors are lowering Jonah feet first into the water, where the monster has already engulfed his legs.72

This conception of the story may show the influence of a rabbinical tradition. According to certain Jewish legends, the sailors were reluctant to throw Jonah overboard, and first tried dipping him into the sea up to his knees. The storm abated for the moment but resumed its fury when the crew drew Jonah back on board. They then dipped him as far as his waist; but when they lifted him on board again, the winds raged as before. When they immersed him to the neck, the result was the same; and since it was evident that there would be no relief while the prophet remained in the ship, they threw him over.73

While the story of Jonah is undoubtedly a Christian subject, the presence of the anguipede on the Newell amulet is another of the many proofs that pagan magic retained its hold on some Christians long after the establishment of the new faith. The amulet can scarcely be dated earlier than the fifth century.

72 The sculpture was published by Walter Lowrie, A/JA 5, 1901, pp. 51–7, with two figures.
73 Ziker, 121a (M. Simon’s translation, II, 53); Ginsberg, Legends of the Jews, IV, 248, VI, 349, n. 29 (with references to rabbinical sources not accessible to me).