CHAPTER XIV

INSCRIPTIONS II—CRYPTIC

WE SHALL consider here only those inscriptions which yield no obvious meaning to the reader, and which for that reason are naturally suspected of magical origin and purpose.

Some of the early writers on amuletic stones have made the study of the unintelligible inscriptions all the harder by transcribing them carelessly. Their inaccuracy, in turn, was a natural consequence of the obscurity that perplexed them; for knowledge of the language is the surest safeguard against error in taking down a difficult text, and the most valuable resource for restoring a damaged one. Further confusion was caused by the failure to observe certain peculiarities of late Greek epigraphy and the effects that the pronunciation current in post-Christian times produced upon the traditional spelling. As a result of all this, many of the “Gnostic” inscriptions recorded by Chiflet, Capello, and Montfaucon are in need of correction, sometimes even when the language is ordinary Greek. Errors of the same kind are to be found occasionally in recent publications.

In a rough way the unintelligible inscriptions may be divided into two groups, those which depended for their effect upon their sound when uttered aloud, and those which exerted their power upon the eye of the beholder, or, it may be, were believed to be charged with magical force from the moment when the adept traced a character or a group of letters. As usually happens with such makeshift divisions, a few examples may be placed in either group.

The first group may be subdivided into, first, inscriptions in which vowels and consonants are so distributed as to form easily pronounceable units of ordinary length, which seem to be words or short phrases. Such voces magicae make up a large part of the unintelligible portions of the magical papyri, and are very common on gem amulets. Secondly, there are much longer but still pronounceable sequences, some of which recur many times on both stones and papyri. Instructions to the operators in the magical books often call for the writing or recitation of one or more of these sequences, to which the papyri refer as logoi.

Along with these formulas and the magical words there are often groups of vowels, without consonants, which would not occur naturally as part of a word. These were undoubtedly sung, and in fact all the magical formulas were probably intoned rather than delivered in a normal speaking voice.

The part played in incantations by the vowels, especially the complete sequence of seven, αεινοων, may be dismissed briefly, since it has been thoroughly investigated by Dörnseiff in his monograph, Das Alphabet in
Mystik und Magie. From ancient times, according to a statement in Demetrius’ essay On Style (71), it was customary to incite the vowels in the worship of the Egyptian gods, and other evidence indicates that this was equally true in the recitation of magical spells. It is therefore enough to say that in many gem amulets the presence of the seven vowels, or some of them, whether in alphabetic sequence or in varied arrangement, was simply a part of a vocal incantation, powerful, like so many magical words, in itself, and without meaning. On the other hand, when we find a star placed under each vowel, as occasionally happens (see D. 228), it is clear that we have to do with the theory, first attested by the mathematician Nicomachus of Gerasa, that the seven vowels are the tones given forth by the planetary spheres. It is likely that this idea also explains the placing of a vowel at the end of each ray that surrounds the head of Chnoubis, whose solar aspect connects him with the planetary symbols.

Certain Hebrew words written in Greek letters are often found in these magical utterances, such as Ιαω, σαβαωθ, ελω or ελωα, αδωνε, the names of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of the angels Gabriel, Michael, Raphael, Suriel, and occasionally others. Iαβε τζςβυθ is probably another way of writing the names usually represented by Ιαω σαβαωθ, and βασμαδωναι may represent νιε νοος, “in the name of the Lord.” There are indications that an effort was made to give various mysterious words a Semitic appearance by ending them with a theta, imitating Hebrew endings in -oth, -oth.

Acting on these hints, various scholars have sought Hebrew or Aramaic words in papyri and amulets, but the search cannot be called fruitful. The proposed interpretations based upon Hebrew are often farfetched and improbable. A conservative judge of these attempts finds an exception in σμετελαιαμ, which may represent ςτως ςτες, “eternal sun,” a conjecture that is supported by the fact that the word is often found on amulets bearing solar types, such as Helios in his chariot, the cock-headed god with serpent legs, or the lion-headed Chnoubis serpent. If the interpretation is correct, λαλεμα may bo ςτες, “forever.” Another word with definite solar associations is μαρμαροναθ (or -ωναθ), which may mean “lord of lights” or “lord of lords.” Ganschinietz has derived ελαμαμ from Assyrian ηλαμαμ, “eternal.” The word occurs on several curse tablets, especially in anagrammatic form, but on gem amulets it is usually found with solar figures or symbols.

Such brief words of praise, liturgical fragments, are to be expected in magical chants, and it is disappointing to find that so few can be safely identified.

Egyptologists have had no greater success than Hebraists in explaining

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1 Jan, Murciæ scriptores, p. 276.
2 Wiedemann, in Bonner Jahrb., 79, 236.
4 ARE 17, 343.
5 See the indices to Aedolent, Defzs. Tab.
the magical words, although they had equal or greater reason to expect it. The papyri that record the magical language are of Egyptian origin, and so are a great majority of the amulets. Further, there are Old Coptic passages in some of the Greek magical papyri, and certain sacred names, such as Osoronnophia, Phre, Eises (the Good Osiris, the Sun, the Drowned One) indicate a knowledge of some Egyptian words. Yet the Egyptian elements that can be certainly identified are very few. **Ba’rrχωσωχι, b3 n kkw, “soul of darkness,” is an equation accepted by competent authority.**

Jacoby's **ETON ΦΒΑΙ ΦΗ, “who art the soul of the sun,” seems to be a sound interpretation.**

**NTΟΚΟΝΒΑΙ, “thou art the lord of souls (neb bai),”** is no more than a guess which assumes some phonetic changes that authorities on Coptic might question.

Encouraged by the slight progress that has been made, some of the more hopeful writers on the subject have looked forward to a time when many more magical words and formulas will be interpreted through the collaboration of experts in Greek, Egyptian, and the Semitic languages. A skeptical attitude towards this hope may look like a confession of linguistic incompetence; nevertheless, I doubt that such efforts can illuminate any large area of this dark region, because a great part of the magical language was neither expected nor intended to be understood.

Some magical words, it is true, were definitely associated with certain ideas in the minds of those who spoke or wrote them, and they would call up the same ideas in the minds of an initiated group. They seem to have been secret names, code names as it were, for certain divinities. More than once in magical literature an operator claims to have the secret name (σχοπτόν δούα) of the being whom he invokes, and it was evidently assumed that the knowledge of such names assured the magician's control of the gods and demons that must respond to them. Gem amulets seem to give more help than papyri in picking out such names, because a single magical word, presumably of special significance, is often engraved on a stone representing a single figure; whereas the writers of magical books generally construct long invocations with such an accumulation of magical vocables that the relation of the individual words to the deities invoked is quite obscured. Examples of these secret names will be listed and briefly discussed later on (pp. 196-200).

Other units of magical language have as good a claim, so far as their formation is concerned, to be considered names, or at least significant words, as those mentioned in the last paragraph; but since they have not been observed to occur repeatedly in significant associations, and have not been identified as belonging to any known language, we are forced to one of two assumptions. It may be that mere charlatanism is at work, and the meaningless words are intended only to impress the ignorant and credulous; yet in view of the

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7 Erman, p. 405.  
8 *ARW* 23, 273, n. 9.  
9 Bonner, *Byz.-mngreich. Jahrh.* 9, 376. I now think that the Michigan stone mentioned there is a forgery based on an early illustration, such as Chiflet, Pl. 3, 14. But the inscription is attested not only by Chiflet, but also by B. M. 56024; cf. also *JG* IV, 2755, IX, 14.
important part that self-deception plays in the work of magicians, this hypo-
thesis should be applied with caution. It is more likely that the significance
of these words was real, but consisted entirely in their impact upon the emo-
tions and in their emotional associations. This is a situation well known to
students of religious psychology. Instances of related phenomena range from
the Sanskrit om to “that blessed word, Mesopotamia,” in which, according
to the well-known story, an old lady “found great support.”

The effect of sonorous nonsense upon the mind is indeed a curious thing.
Children delight in counting-out rhymes made up largely or wholly of mean-
ingless words. Poets have been known to take an intense pleasure in reciting or
hearing meaningless verses—not humorous, fanciful “nonsense verses” like
Edward Lear’s, but stanzas of stirring rhythm composed of utterly meaning-
less syllables or words.

In religion and magic, obscure or even unintelligible language has some-
times played an important and well-recognized part. An extreme illustration
is to be found in the special languages of the Toba Batak in Sumatra. One
of these is used for a very practical purpose, namely, to make the cam-
phor hunters successful in their quest. During their search in the jungle the
camphor men are forbidden the use of their ordinary language, and must
speak a special language which seems to contain words of alien origin, perhaps
remnants of the speech of older tribes who had preceded the Batak. Yet
since this language is used by all the hunters, it is certainly intelligible, though
perhaps not to those outside the social group. Soothsayers also use a special
language, and still another is employed by the datu (chief, also medicine man,
tribal priest) when he invokes the spirits on festal occasions. From the brief
reports about these special languages it is not to be inferred that they are
completely unintelligible to the hearers, though many expressions would need
to be explained. The case is apparently different with the hata tabas, the
language of murmured formulas, said to consist of obsolete and unintelligible
words, which are supposed to be all the more powerful because they are
beyond the hearer’s comprehension.

It is only the last example that affords a close analogy to the magical
language of amulets and papyri, and its value as an analogy is lessened by
the possibility that the murmured formulas of Sumatran magic go back to
the same tradition as the Greek ones. Arabic magic, which was strongly
affected by Graeco-Egyptian practice, followed the religion of Islam to south-
eastern Asia and may have found its way even to the Toba Batak. Though
the formulas were different, the feeling that their secrecy and their unintelli-
gibility carried a special power seems to have been much the same.

Thus we come back to the psychological aspect of the phenomenon. One
must allow for some pretense and even knavery, particularly with hardened

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20 H. N. van der Tuuk, Tobasch Spraakbund, I, Iseleld., p. vi (Amsterdam, 1864); W. W. Skeat, 
Malay Magic, pp. 212–214; cf. p. 139. I owe these references to Professor H. H. Bartlett.

21 For related matters in Indic religion see B. Paddison, “Ritualistic Dadaism,” Asia Orientalis, 5, 
177–196, especially 182.
practitioners trafficking upon the credulity of ignorant people; yet it is probable that the chanting repetition of sonorous, mouth-filling vocables may have produced a genuine emotional impact upon the magician as well as upon those who listened to him. Here one sees a possible relationship between voces magicae and glossolalia, the "speaking with tongues" that played so important a part in the primitive Christian congregations. The resemblance has been noted both by theologians and by students of ancient magic, and is certainly not without significance. 12 But there is an important difference. In the speaking with tongues it was the appearance of spontaneous, unmediated utterance, as if the speaker were possessed and inspired, that caused the leaders of the Christian communities to accept it as a divine manifestation. Yet the prophet of a pagan cult or a magician might utter similar sounds in his frenzy. Perhaps it was partly because Paul knew this that he insisted upon the presence of an interpreter when the inspired were moved to speak with tongues in the Christian congregations. 13 He seems, however, to take no account of the possibility that the interpretation, as a conscious, purposeful act, might be more open to the suspicion of insincerity than the spontaneous, half-voluntary glossolalia.

It is conceivable that a literate hearer might take down some "words" of the inspired speech, if they were such as lent themselves to reproduction in the kind of writing that he used. They might be thought to retain something of their power even in a written form, and so come to be used as words of power in prayers or in magical incantations. But the freshness of inspiration would be gone, and it is hard to dissociate the idea of charlatanry from unmeaning sequences of sound after they are written down and passed from hand to hand as sacred and powerful names. At best it may be allowed that certain sonorous words might by mere repetition induce in the speaker a mood of religious exaltation. The Sanskrit om has been written for many centuries, and there is no reason to think that it has lost its power over the emotions of the devout. It is possible that some of the strange words engraved on amulets were sometimes used in religious ceremonies; but for our purpose it is enough to bear in mind that the repetition of them probably induced a sense of power in the magical operator and of credulous awe in his hearers. A gem in the Southesk collection, the design of which indicates that it was a fertility charm, has on the back the two words αἰγας ἀδαρμα, the former written seven times, the latter six — probably there would have been seven of each but for the limitations of the space. 14 The repetition of these strange sounds might, as it were, hypnotize both chanter and hearer into a state in which a conviction of the spell's potency would sink irresistibly into the mind. All experience, however, shows that the operator's part in such ceremonies was only too likely to degenerate into mere fraud.

12 G. Kittel, Theol. Wörterbuch zum N. T., 1, 722; F. Domke, Das Alphabet in Mystik und Magie, P. 54.
13 1 Corinthians 14, 28.
14 Southesk N 48.
On a still lower level are what may be called babbling inscriptions, consisting of units of one or two syllables varied by using different vowels or different consonants, and often progressively increased by the addition of new syllables. Adolf Jacoby collected examples from the papyri, such as ξηχα, μαρια καρδα, τουχαρ σουχαρ σαμαχαρ, and cited Erman for an example of similar nonsense (moke ι pokel) actually dating from the Old Kingdom. Certain inscriptions on stone amulets are similar in every respect. A fever amulet in Hildesheim has ιβι αβι βι οβι, and a haematite hawk in the Louvre is inscribed with a long Horus charm consisting largely of similar words, ιβι αβι ελει βελει and so on. The sequence σημεα καντε κεντε κοντε, etc., which sounds much like a counting-out rhyme, is found on both papyri and gems, and has been wrongly supposed to be Mithraic. The demiurgic papyrus of London and Leiden has the sequence barzan bounaouran narsaozn barzaouazath in an address to the sun-god; and another, common on gems, χιχ βακχι βακχι βακαδιπχι, so obviously belongs to the same class that we may disregard the suggestion that the first two syllables are derived from the Hebrew נֵפֶשׁ, “star.”

Besides the units that simulate words of normal length there are much longer sequences that also depended upon their sound for their effect, yet seem to be quite meaningless. Some of them show affinities for certain gods, or at least certain symbols, that are commonly encountered; others seem to be “names of power” that are applicable to any need. The magicians seem to have treated them as divine in themselves; it is not necessary to suppose that they are merely cryptic designations of familiar deities. Here a mummy amulet published by Preisendanz is instructive. It consists of two fragments of papyrus in which the beings named are called upon to protect the body and the tomb of the dead from desecration. If the gaps at the end of the amulet are correctly supplied, the operator threatens them with punishment discards his adoration is disobeyed. These beings are as follows:

1. “The slave of the glorious god Ablanathanalba” (a very common palindrome found mostly in connection with solar deities).
2. “The servant of the beautiful god Akrammachanarei” (a common magical word usually associated with solar deities).
3. “The slave of Iao Sabao Abrasax Adonai.” Here the Hebrew origin of the first two words and the fourth is obvious, and here also a solar relation seems to be established; although Iao becomes merely a name of power that may be used more widely, and in all probability Abrasax derives its supposed power only from the fact that its numerical equivalent is 365, the number of days in the year.
4. “The servant of the four beautiful and glorious gods.” Here follow four long sequences in the form of palindromes, all of which are found in the magical papyri, and all but the third occur on gem amulets. They will be listed later among the magical palindromes.

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18 A. Jacoby, ARW 29, 204 f.
19 Erman, p. 302.
17 Described above, pp. 65–68.
18 A. Dain, Inscr. grecques du Musée du Louvre, p. 178, 204.
19 As will be seen later, it was sometimes, if not always, given an astral meaning; the seven words of the formula were secret names of the seven planets.
20 DMP 4, 12; PGM XIV, 4.
The most significant fact revealed by this amulet is that certain magical words and phrases were thought of as possessing in themselves the character and status of supernatural beings. Since this is true, inquiry into their meaning becomes a matter of minor interest. Even the glyptic designs with which they occur do not prove conclusively that they belonged to this god or that, or that their supposed power lay in any particular field of human activity. Contradictory conclusions are likely to be reached if one argues strictly from either the designs or the divine names with which given magical words or sequences happen to be associated. One must remember that power may be imputed to them regardless of the connection in which they are used.

The generally recognized numerical significance of Abrasax (365) prepares us for the possibility that other number words are to be found among the voces magicae, and Mithras, spelled Meithras, was recognized in antiquity as isosephic with Abrasax; A. D. Nock, however, tells me that the spelling with ei seems not to be found in Mithraic inscriptions. The most striking example of numerical significance in magical words is the sequence χαβραχ φενοχρφο φενο φενω χω φω χω, which occurs on several Harpocrates amulets, as well as on a few other, but still solar, types. It was discovered, by a chance trial, that the numerical equivalent of these five words is 9999, and that an inaccurate version of them occurs in a magical papyrus, where it is said of a sacred name that its number is 9999. The attention that was given in early Christian times to tricks with letter numerals is well known; the number of the Beast in the Apocalypse, 666, a disguise for some name abominated by the Christians, is the most widely known illustration of it. There may be other examples among magical words.

Occasionally the extreme secretiveness of the experts who directed the making of amulets led them to disguise even a frequently written magical word by constructing another with the same numerical value as the original. Two quite similar gems represent Harpocrates seated on his lotus flower in a papyrus boat, under which is the word αβιμωχωσως; one is in my possession, the other in the Museo Borgiano. Both have on the reverse face and bevel the long palindromic beginning αβερεμενθο. The only difference of importance is that the Borgia stone has on the reverse face a representation of the cock-headed god. In mine, which is probably smaller, the reverse side is completely occupied by the inscription. The word αβιμωχωσως proved upon examination to be only an isosephic equivalent of the very common βαιχωσως; the number is 3663. A simpler disguise is the anagram ακωχω-νως. Even more elementary mystifications by transposition are μχαιαλ (Μχαιαλ), which has been mentioned before (p. 12), νοθοροοθει (ορωνινθ), and ἀμασαρησβοταμειατει (Ἰαυ σαβαίων αβρασα). These last manipulations of magical names depend for their effect, not

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2 JEA 16, 6-9. Another formula with the same numerical value is mentioned on page 9.
4 De Ridder 3501; B. M. 56054, and a hemmatite in Boston (D. 73).
5 E. M. 56459, 56223 (rev.); Chifflet, Pl. 16, 67 = Montfaucon, II, 2, Pl. 164.
upon the sound of the original word, but upon its appearance, for transposition momentarily deceives the eye, and number values are worked out in writing. Thus they form a transition to the second division of these magical inscriptions.

Here first to be considered are the palindromes, most of which can be pronounced, and so might seem to belong to the preceding division. But it is only a very short palindrome that immediately reveals itself to the ear as such, and it can do so only if the vowels are clearly uttered and if each has a single quality, or at least a narrow range of quality. We scarcely think of "refer" as a palindrome when we hear it, and "Able was I ere I saw Elba" is not to be recognized as one unless we see it written. Greek, even Egyptian Greek, is more phonetic than English, but palindromes of 30, 40, or 60 letters cannot be recognized without writing them out. They lent themselves particularly to the making of charms in ring form like that figured in a magical papyrus of the British Museum (PGM I, Pl. 3, 6).

It seems to follow from the very nature of palindromes that whatever value the imagination attributed to them came solely from the fact that they are the same whether read forwards or backwards. Consequently it is futile to examine them for meanings that can be expressed in ordinary language, and no trustworthy inferences can be drawn from their occurrence in invocations of known divinities in papyrus books, or with representations of gods on gem amulets. They were simply powerful charms applicable wherever the magician chose to use them. The inconsistencies that result from any other view of them will be illustrated in connection with the Aberammentho formula in the list that is to follow.

Combinations of the vowels were sometimes so used in magic as to appeal to the eye as much as to the ear. This was done by arranging them in certain figures, among which the commonest was the ordinary pyramid, made with a single alpha at the apex, two epsilon below it, and so on to seven omegas at the base. An example of a pyramid with omega at the apex may be seen in Preisendanz's Papyri Graecae Magicae, and just above it there is a progressive sequence from a single alpha to seven omegas, not, however, in pyramid form but set down on two lines of the text. Other schemes are illustrated and discussed by Dornseif, among them various permutations of the order of the seven vowels or a smaller group of them. On gem amulets the pyramidal arrangement is occasionally found, but oftener the scanty space makes it necessary to write a progressive sequence in one line, sometimes round the edge of the stone.

To a person entirely ignorant of the art, the very act of writing may seem like magic. An unscrupulous maker of amulets could cover a piece of haematite stone or a scrap of papyrus with letters chosen at random, and pass it off as a powerful charm made to suit the buyer's purpose. Some such knavery may account for a curious haematite in the Michigan collection. The obverse, which has an area of less than one half of a square inch, is covered with

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an inscription of over 240 tiny letters, with a row of four larger ones at the bottom. At the beginning and the end there are groups of the vowels. The rest of the inscription contains no other element that is recognizable, not one sacred name or magical word that has been noted elsewhere. The greater part of the writing can be pronounced, though there are some impossible combinations of consonants; but it gives the impression of complete nonsense improvised by the engraver or the maker of his copy. On the reverse are several larger letters scattered among characters or magical signs. On the whole, one is led to think that the maker deliberately gave the stone the false appearance of a very elaborate charm, or else the inscription is in cipher. The latter alternative seems to me very unlikely in view of the trouble it would take to transfer so long a text into cipher form.

Among the other unpronounceable sequences that have been noted one is worthy of mention. It is enclosed by an ouroboros on a gem in the Southesk collection, but there is no other design. The letters are ἸΑΘΥΠΑΡΚΑΙΣΤΗΕΩΙΧΙΧΑΣΟΧΧΟΣΧ. Those who are expert in ancient ciphers may find it worth while to attempt a solution. To me it seems more likely that there is no meaning whatever. There is nothing surprising in this, considering the history of magic in Egypt. Daressy found meaningless hieroglyphs among the texts inscribed on late magical stelae of Horus.

The term “characters” (χαρακτήρες) is used in Greek magical papyri to designate certain signs that occur often in the papyri themselves and still more frequently on gem amulets. They are for the most part rather simple, being made up of straight lines with small circles at the ends of every line. An eight-pointed star, made of four crossing lines with little circles at the ends, is one of the most common. Others look like modifications of Greek letters, especially the rectilinear ones, such as ΔΕΣΤΩΤ, with extra strokes and loops, and little circles at the ends of the lines. These circles, which are so constant that the characters are sometimes called ring signs, give a clue to the origin of these strange designs. According to W. Max Müller, the hieroglyph for talisman, σα, is thought to represent a cord with numerous magical loops, and is thus connected with the common practice of tying numerous knots in a string for magical purposes. The characters drawn in magical books employ more curved lines than those on the stones, doubtless merely because curves could be more easily traced with a pen than with a graver’s tool. Only a few characters show any special affinity for any design or any intelligible incantation. The rather common colic amulets with the design of Herakles struggling with the lion usually have on the reverse KKK and three characters somewhat resembling the era in modern lower-case type, but with sharp angles and the third stroke prolonged farther

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9 Southesk N87.
10 Daressy, Tenters, 9419-9423.
11 Mythology, p. 421. In the Second Book of Ἱερ special characters serve as seals to guard the soul, especially as it passes the archens of the Aeon on its way to salvation (Koptisch-griechische Schriften, ed. Schmidt, pp. 388-313, 322-329).
downward. Occasionally we find T instead of the characters just described.\textsuperscript{29} The eta-like characters are sometimes found on other medical amulets, such as the stomach amulets that bear the design of the lion-headed serpent (Chnoubis), and the uterine amulets with the symbol that was recognized and fully explained by Delatte.

Like the sacred names, the characters were felt to be divine in themselves, and they might be addressed as divine beings. An expedition of the University of Pennsylvania unearthed a bronze spade-shaped amulet, of a kind commonly found in Palestine and Syria, so badly corroded that the inscription is almost destroyed; but the words φεσερός χαρακτηρεσ show that the characters, along with other divine or angelic powers, were invoked to protect the wearer of the charm.

The characters seem to bear no relation to the simpler, more methodically contrived signs used in cryptographic papyri, though these, like some of the characters, are derived from ordinary Greek letters. Nothing that we now know encourages the hope that a meaning can be extracted from the groups of characters in papyri and on gem amulets. Their power proceeded \textit{ex operere operato}, from the time they were written or engraved.

The purpose of this section is primarily to set what is known, and what may, in time, be within the reach of patient investigation, apart from that which cannot be understood because it was without meaning from the beginning. That is to say, without meaning that can be expressed in ordinary language; for much that is unintelligible was still significant in the emotions of those who practiced and believed in magic. Nothing is more important in these studies than to recognize the limits of our knowledge. The remark attributed to Champollion, about the scent of “le fromage gnostique,” is still worth remembering. The enticing savor of the occult has led many inquisitive explorers into labyrinths and traps, and its attraction is not yet exhausted, if one may judge by the desperate attempts at interpretation that have been put forward even in recent times. Such further progress as may be made will come chiefly, I think, by noting the types with which the various magical words are associated, and by applying a sound knowledge of Hebrew, Aramaic, demotic, and Coptic to those inscriptions which seem to fall into pronounceable sound groups that may be words or short phrases. Of the longer sequences, some were intended to impress the hearer merely by their sound; others, the palindromes for example, by their effect when written out. In all that were unintelligible to the ear or the eye and were not invented merely to impress and deceive, one must allow for a genuine belief that they were charged in themselves with power which was exerted by the very act of inscribing or reciting them.

Some of the subdivisions suggested above have been adequately illustrated by examples, especially the magical words that seem to be derived from the Egyptian and the Semitic languages and the babbling sequences. In the following lists other groups are illustrated and a sufficient number of examples

\textsuperscript{29} Metropolitan Museum, \textit{Cat. Gems}, p. 183, No. 386.
cited to attest the statements made about the inscriptions. When the specimens have been published, references are given to the place of publication; otherwise the amulets are cited by their catalogue or inventory numbers.

MAGICAL NAMES OF GODS, AND WORDS ASSOCIATED WITH SPECIAL DESIGNS

Here are included words that are chiefly, or at least often, associated with particular divinities or groups of divinities, or else with certain symbols. Minor variations in spelling are usually disregarded.

Ἀθήνα βασίλισσα, which sounds like one of the babbling phrases, is inscribed round several representations of Isis with the infant Horus. It occurs also under a group consisting of Sarapis seated, with a female figure, probably Isis, standing before him; the reverse shows Harpocrates seated on a sphinx. The stone is unfortunately only a fragment. The connection of ἀθήνα βασίλισσα with Isis and Horus is confirmed by a charm in the Paris papyrus, ἱγῷ ἐμὲ ἱππος . . . νῦν Ἐσόδις ἄθηνα Βασίλισσα καὶ Ὀσύριους.

Ἀκτιώφι: see Ὄσφορος.

Ἄρσενοφρή is cut on the back of a stone in the British Museum (Harpocrates seated on the lotus), and Ιεω Ἄρσενοφρή occurs on the reverse of a similar design in Montfaucon, which is evidently inaccurately drawn. As the first syllable indicates, it is a Horus name, perhaps “Horus, son of the Good One” (i.e. Osiris), or “Horus, son of the Good Sun.” It is used in two invocations to the sun, and in the other places where it occurs nothing speaks against interpreting it as a solar epithet.

Ἀρωφράσις, like Νέφερηρις, is a secret name of Aphrodite, or Hathor-Aphrodite, who is often represented on amulets standing nude and drying her hair. Ares is sometimes present, sometimes Harpocrates is in the group or on the reverse of the stone. The name appears twice on Harpocrates amulets without Aphrodite. It is used in love charms in the papyri. Aphrodite seems to be fused with Brimo (Hecate-Persephone) in an inscription on an amulet originally published by Rossi, where the words φοβερόμιματε Βριμῷ Ἀρωφράσις encircle the familiar design.

Δαρμύς is engraved on gem amulets whose chief design is an ibis wearing the atef or the hemhem crown and usually holding a caduceus under its wing. A combination of evidence indicates that the word is a secret name of Hermes-Thoth. It occurs in the sixth place of the seven-word sequence σήμα καρτεν

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21. Museo Borgiano, p. 423, 5; Chabouillet 2211; D. 30-32.
23. PGM IV, 1075 ff.
24. B. M. 56488.
26. PGM II, 1181; IV, 1629.
27. PGM IV, 1165.
28. D. 55; Southern N22, 23, 26; B. M. 50139 (King, Gnostics, Pl. E2); B. M. 56944; De Rudder 3473 (other specimens cited in his note), Pl. 29.
30. PGM IV, 2334, 2928.
32. D. 47-49; Museo Borgiano, p. 456, 12.
keventh kontevo krapio debruvgo luswes, which is found in magical papyri and on a gem (Mich. 26054) of which the cock-headed god is the obverse type. The same words were engraved on a gem of now unknown location over the heads of the seven planetary deities arranged in their traditional order; evidently the seven words are the secret names of the gods. Here Hermes is sixth, and the name Δερνυγανω must belong to him.

Ερσμορό, λεμορό, and other variants appear on several stones, chiefly yellow jasper, which have as their obverse design a cynocephalus ap in the attitude of prayer. It also occurs on some amulets which, if the reports of their editors are correct, have the jackal-headed Anubis on their faces. But the faulty execution of these objects often leaves one in doubt about the engraver's intention, especially when he attempts the head of an animal, and some of them may be wrongly described. The first element of the accompanying word may be Old Coptic an, Sahidic ēn, "ape." One may venture a tentative suggestion that the whole word is a version in Greek letters of 'en ἄφρο, "ape of the gate." Apes open the gates of Hades for the bark of the Sun, and allow the soul of the dead to pass the gates of Amunet.

Ερεςχηγαλ was easily recognized as the Babylonian underworld goddess Ereshkigal, corresponding to Persephone or Hecate. In the magical papyri the Babylonian name is applied to either Greek goddess or to the fusion of the two, and it clearly belongs to Hecate on an amulet in the British Museum. But it also appears with Ακτωφι and Νηβουτουσουαλθ (a common combination) in an invocation to Aphrodite, and on the planetary gem mentioned above; and on an amulet in my possession it is engraved round the uterine symbol, on which Harpocrates is seated (D. 141). Neboutosoualeth is the moon-goddess in the London demotic papyrus and in a δελθιοτη in the great Paris papyrus, where Aktiophi appears in the same address; and in a protective charm addressed to the moon all three names are used. But Aktwof thrice repeated is inscribed in the field of a stone representing Eros with torch, bow, and arrow, an example which illustrates the irregular use of such magical words. The common association of Neboutosoualeth with Ereschigal naturally suggested that the former name was in some way related

40 DMP 7, 28; PGM V, 428; D. 172. Cf. Meinekeon II, 2, pl. 161, 5, from Capella; sun-god in chariot, the formula on the reverse. It occurs also on a heliophrone first published by Maffei (Gemme Antiche, II, fig. 10, p. 12), which is usually regarded as Mithraic. Over a lion holding a bee in his mouth are seven stars, round each of which is placed one of the seven words of the sequence. See Delatte, Musée Belge 18, p. 17.

41 It was published from a case belonging to the University of Dorpat; see Arch. Zeitung, 14 (No. 96, Dec., 1853), 260-263, Pl. 96, 2.
42 B. M. 56074; Museo Borjiana, p. 455, 4; D. 245.
43 Southon 69, Chabouillet 213, 2215.
44 Jéquier, Le Livre de ce qu'il y a dans Hades, pp. 20, 40 (Bibl. de l'Ecole des hautes études, 57); Budge, Book of the Dead, Chap. 125.
45 PGM IV, 377, 1417; B. M. 56028.
46 PGM IV, 561 ff.; for the planetary amulet see n. 46.
47 DMP 4, 11; PGM IV, 5655.
48 PGM VII, 317 ff.
49 B. M. 56299.
to the Babylonian god Nebo. Others have taken it to be of Egyptian origin and recognized "lady of Uto" in the first half of the word.

Zagourē is placed round the head of Harpocrates, each letter at the end of a ray, on an interesting gem of the Newell collection, and also after Iao Sabaath Arbathiaos on the planetary stone. These examples are of importance because they contradict Hopfner's statement that Zagoure is a name of Seth. The word is more than once used in the papyri in association with solar names.

Iao occurs in invocations of Set-Typhon, as in Iao Στρ round the figure of an ass-headed god, and in the formula Iao ἔρηθι ὁ παρέρηθι ὁ βολχοςθ. If it is not a mere exclamation, it may represent the Coptic eio, "ass," the Typhonic animal. The possibility that it was sometimes confused with Iao is not to be excluded. In the Demotic Magical Papyrus the formula Iao erbeth, etc., begins an invocation of Set which, as the operator boasts, the god cannot refuse to hear. Though it is common in curse tablets, I have not seen it on gem amulets except in one instance, a stone in the British Museum representing an uncouth demon with three animal heads. In spite of the Typhonic character of the words, Ιο erbeth occurs in an invocation of Apollo-Horus — another instance of the inconsistent use of many long magical sequences.

K爱好者 seems to occur only on certain amulets intended to cure diseases of the eye, which bear the device of a lizard. Illustrations have been published by Panofka and by Delatte. I have not seen the word爱好者 in the papyri, but in default of an index it could easily be overlooked.

Κρασουθ (variants show initial χ, final τ) is almost certainly a name of Harpocrates. It is cut on the reverse of designs showing the young god riding a goose, or seated on a lotus flower or in a boat, or holding up the mummy of Osiris. The word may represent ἱρδ χαττη, "the unique child." However,

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86 In EMP 21, 16, the words Nebooucosoualeth Aktephi Ereschigal immediately follow the Ιο erbeth sequence, which the operator introduces with the words (addressed to Typhon Seth): "I invoke thee by thy powerful name in words which thou canst not refuse to hear." But the N. A. E. logos is not therefore to be taken as a name of Seth; it is only used as a formula of power, like the palindromic which immediately follows it.

87 D. 265.

88 Archiv Orientalni, 3, 343.

89 PGM XIII, 146; IV, 155; V, 479. It also appears as a name of God in the prayer of Jesus in the Piri Sophia (Chap. 136, p. 235, Schmidt). In P. Oeslo 1 the name is placed over a cock-headed demon with human legs ending in snake heads instead of feet; it is not Set, as Ettmorn thought, but a form of the common angoztede that is represented on amulets (see Pocap-Walter: in ARV 50, 41). Zagourē is also written under a stethoplastic demon with Iao above. The identity of this demon is unknown; the names may be used as mere words of magical power, not as belonging to the figure. See P. Oslo 1, pp. 5-6, 38, and Pls. 1 and 2.

90 Petrie, Amulets, 135-6.

91 See Gansemierz in PPI IX, 703, 716.

92 EMP 21, 4 f.; PGM XIV, 41 f.

93 D. 265, discussed in Chapter XII.

94 PGM II, 114.

95 Abb. Berl. Akad., 1851, Pl. 3, 11; Muster Belge, 18, Pl. 5, 52; D. 111.

96 B. M. 56209, 56309, 56349, 56350, 56351; De Ridder 5449; D. 214; Montfaucon, II, 2, Pl. 125, 5 (from Spon).
attention must be called to a curious passage (PGM XII, 229 f.), ἐγὼ ἐλπὶ στράτης ὑπὸ τοῦ ἄργιλον. The text is slightly emended, but is almost certainly right.68 ὑπὸ ἄργιλον seems to be ὕπαξ, "eye of Horus" or "eye of Re." But is there anything in Egyptian mythology that will account for such an idea? Is the lotus, on which Harpocrates sits, imagined to be the eye of the sun, which has given birth to the infant god?

Mou: see ζευγαρωθ below.

The words νεβίς (or νεβαὶς) βεβατοῦθ are found, apparently, only on Chnoubis amulets, where several examples have been noted.67 A plausible explanation derives this phrase from the Hebrew נраб נ臬ת, "bound with incantations."68 The idea of binding a god to do the will of the operator is entirely natural in magic.

Ὅρομενοθ is almost always engraved on urethane amulets, usually on the reverse of the stone. I have seen it apart from the symbol of the uterus only in a somewhat doubtful example, where ὅρομοενε, on the reverse of a pantheos gem, seems to be a disguised ὅρομενοθ.69 Delarte called attention to a stone in the Fouquet collection which bears the phrase μήπος γυναικῶν κόπος ὅρομενοθ Ἀπειδα along with other demonic names, not elsewhere attested, that control the female organ.70 The language marks these protectors as masculine, and one is reminded of the gem mentioned above (under "Ereschigal") which shows Harpocrates seated on the conventional symbol of the womb with his hand on the key that controls it. More commonly both male and female deities stand over the symbol. The inscription Aktiophi Ereschigal Neboutousouleth encircling the central design of this same stone points to Selene or Hecate-Selene. The traditional connection of moon deities with the functions of women is well known, and it is possible that Oretiouth is a secret name for Artemis-Selene-Hecate. Aphrodite also seems to have been drawn into this group, to judge by the inscription ὅρομενοθ (for ὅρομενοθ) ὅρομενοθ on a stone in the British Museum which is best interpreted as a birth amulet.71

Σαλβαμαχαιμβρη is a name that is inscribed on the reverse of several amulets with a cynocephalus ape as the obverse type;72 also with other designs, as Harpocrates riding a bird, Horus (or a priest), Osis.73 The last syllable of the word is probably Re, the sun; the remainder is uncertain. Possible interpretations are mentioned by Thompson.74

66 Cf. PGM V, 75 and 91, also emended.
67 D. 36, 99, 100.
68 See Kopp, 51, p. 158, and HTR 25, 345.
69 B. M. 50519.
70 Muniti Belis, 18, 80.
71 D. 145.
72 B. M. 56512; D. 245 A. 247.
73 Muniti Belis, p. 46, 46; Kopp, 571; B. M. 15284.
74 Bell, Nock, and Thompson, Magical Texts from a Bilingual Papyrus, p. 15. This name should probably be read instead of Σαλβαμαχαιμβρη in Wünsch, Antike Fluchstiftungen, 4, 9 (Audollent, Defix. Tab., 242, 9), where it is given to τὸν χῆθων, "who is lord of all that lives." The adjective χῆθων is strange, since the name Salvanachambr is given to solar deities; but χῆθων would be appropriate for Osiris.
Σερπωτ. A very strange amulet described in the catalogue of the Museo Borgiano represents a monster with human trunk and arms, scorpion pincers in place of legs, and seven snakes in place of a human head.26 In the field are a lotus flower, a ram’s head, and a lion’s head (this must have been the engraver’s intention, though Zaega says “head of an ox with a mane”). Over these objects are the words ερφωτ, μου, σρω, meant for the Coptic σερπωτ (sarpot), μου, σρω, “lotus,” “lion,” “ram.” This is the name of the god with whom the operator identifies himself in certain passages of the magical books, and it is attested some centuries earlier, according to Griffith and Thompson, who think that lotus, lion, and ram all represent solar attributes.27 Matter published an equally strange figure from an oblong plaque of lapis lazuli in the Cabinet des Médailles. This is a monster with human trunk, arms, and thighs, but with the lower part of the legs and the feet like those of some animal. The knees are bent as if in dancing. From the shoulders rise seven snakes, so crowded and so stiffly rendered as to resemble a grating with upright bars. Over them projects a large, crudely stylized lotus, with a lion’s head projecting from one side of its stem, a ram’s head from the other.28 The words σερφωτ μου σρω are in the upper field. In PGM VII, 498, the operator calls himself “the god whose seat is in Pelusium, σερφωτ μου σρω”—in this case probably Harpocrates. Μου σρω is one of a list of names with solar associations in PGM XXXVI, 351. The same two words are inscribed on the reverse of a strange design in which Eros figures, a Graeco-Roman gem in the British Museum.29

Τασπρερνερας usually encircles the figure of Bes, the guardian of infancy, which is the reverse of the amulets showing Isis holding the child Harpocrates, described above in connection with the αθα βαθα formula. It sometimes occurs without an accompanying design, as a charm powerful in itself.30

Ορθονυχιαμβων is engraved on the reverse of several amulets of yellow jasper with the obverse design of a scorpion.31 They were probably intended to protect from the sting of the creature or to cure it. The word offers no hold for linguistic interpretation and, as in other cases discussed above, its application to this particular design is merely arbitrary (see pp. 77–78).

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26 Museo Borgiano, p. 454, 19.
27 DMP i, 12; PGM III, 659.
28 Matter, Pl. 1 F, 1; described by Chabouillet 2170, not quite accurately. A greatly enlarged illustration, which appeared in the short-lived periodical Documents, II, 5 (Paris, 1930), shows the seven snakes more plainly, but is otherwise no better than the drawing in Matter.
29 B. M. Cat. Grns, 1515, Pl. 20. Walters describes the design as “Eros carrying bow, walking behind a boar to r.; the boar has a goat’s head in its mouth.” Lions are often shown on gems holding in their jaws the head of a goat or an ox. But this seems to be “lion-boat” rather than “lion-ram,” as the inscription on the back would lead one to expect; for poor as the work is, it is scarcely possible that a ram was intended.
30 Here we may mention another stone in the same museum (56155), a green jasper representing a winged child holding a whip and riding a lion; two stars in the field. The deity is Harpocrates assimilated to Eros. The back is inscribed πρεξετα Ιαπο μου σρω. The first word may be a corruption of προξετα, thus giving the combination μου σρω, lion-ram.
WORDS WITH PROBABLE SOLAR RELATIONS

Δαμαμενεις is typical of a group of magical names that are more often used in connection with the sun than elsewhere, but also appear in various other associations. Damnameneus is one of the Idaean Dactyloi,81 and his name is one of the Ἐφεσία γραμματα.82 The little-known Pythagorean Androkydes referred the name to Ἰλιος ὁ δαμάξων, and some modern writers treat it without question as a solar epithet. The variety of the amuletic designs with which the word is found give reason to think that in the period with which we are concerned the name was not confined to a particular god or to a special purpose, but was merely a word of power applicable to any situation. It is cut on the reverse of an Aphrodite drying her hair, of an Eros with bow, arrow, and torch, of an Osiris mummy guarded by a serpent, and (along with the other words of the original Ἐφεσία γραμματα) on the reverse of a solar anguiped with the head of a cock.83 It is also written beside a figure of the Headless Demon which is used in a praxis to obtain a prophecy.84

Νάρκησσαλάς has even more pronounced solar affinities. It occurs in an invocation of Helios given in the great Paris papyrus, on Mithraic amulets, and with the solar anguiped.85 But it is also found on the reverse of an Anubis amulet, similarly placed on a stone representing a trophy over a thunderbolt, under a human-headed cross, perhaps a Gnostic design, and once with no accompanying figure.86 Even if the word could be proved to have originated in the sun religion, it is clear that it developed into a generalized word of power.

The same judgment seems to hold for the very common words οἰκραμαχαμαρι and σεσεγενεβαθραραγγης. Papyrus Mimaur gives the former as the name of the sun in the third hour,87 and, in view of the constantly encroaching solar syncretism of the time, it is likely enough that many amulets inscribed with this word may be interpreted as solar. Yet it is strange to find it cut on the bevel of a stone that has Hecate as the obverse type.88 It is true that the reverse shows a beetle-bodied demon, and the scarab beetle is a solar emblem.

Σεσεγενεβαθραραγγης (one or more of the middle syllables often omitted) occurs in two definitely solar passages, invocations of Horus-Apollo, and under a lion-headed god whom there is reason to interpret as a sun-god.89

81 Clem. Alex. Strom. 1, 75, 4.
82 Ibd., 5, 45, 2; Hesych. e.v. Ἐφεσία γραμματα.
83 B. M. 56182, 5693, 56412; Southc N 5; cf. Muro Borgina, p. 453, 16.
84 PGM II, 168.
85 PGM IV, 1280; Canova, Monuments, II, 450, 9 (fg. 401); Batsy, in Ann. du serv., 7, 248, 9; Thomaidien Museum, 1852; B. M. 56404.
86 Thomaidien Museum, 1870; Chabouiller 2222; B. M. 56192 (cut in King, Gnostics, Pl. C 1); B. M. 56349. In Wünsch, Anh. Flachstein, 4, 2, 3, Nechropolis is invoked as the god who holds power over the regions of the earth (or, under the earth, χελώνας τόρων).
87 PGM III, 508. The curse tablet cited in the preceding note invokes him as “lord of the heavenly firmaments.”
88 D. 66.
89 FGM II, 108, IV, 1025; D. 233.
It is also among the magical words inscribed on the Toronto celt, where the principal design is the four-winged pantheos; 90 on the reverse of an amulet which on the other side represents a mummy with a curious headdress and indistinct face; 91 and (usually with other magical words) on several stones that have no figure design.

The preponderance of examples that connect the words of this group with the sun loses something of its significance when one remembers that the solar religion was drawing more and more deities into its circle and identifying them with the Divine Sun. The further this syncretism went, the more would inscribed words of unremembered origin be liable to a solar interpretation. The tradition of their inherent power may well be older than their connection with any particular deity.

MAGICAL HAFAX EIREMENA

A few examples must serve to illustrate a group that may be large in the aggregate, namely, words hitherto recorded only once. In the absence of parallel examples, the accompanying designs give no sure clue to the affiliations of the words, and they present no recognized language elements. Such are the words ἄσασαμ ἀδούμαμ, one on each side of a hawk-headed god with wings at both the shoulders and the hips and with a bird’s tail. 92 Round a cow-headed goddess holding torches, an Isis-Hathor-Hecate, is the inscription θαρουχνοβ βαλβάνε ελεύοιρα. 93 On the reverse of a Harpocrates seated on a lotus is the word ὁμόφασαχθεκα. 94 Common to these and others like them is the frequency of heavy sounds, in the last example made more noticeable by harsh combinations of consonants. The papyri would doubtless supply a much larger number of these magical ἄπαξ εἰρημένα.

PALINDROMES

The palindromes make a class in themselves. Since they were constructed solely to run backwards and forwards alike, it would seem futile to look for a meaning in any of them. Hence it is only proper to take a skeptical position toward such attempts as “Thou art our father,” or “Father come to us,” for ἀβλαναλαβλα, the commonest palindrome of all. 95 On gem amulets the word seems to belong to solar deities, especially to Harpocrates and the cock-headed anguipede, but it is often found, with other magical words, on stones that bear no figure design.

Among the magical palindromes that have been recorded there is one that is especially important, because it exemplifies the errors into which scholars have fallen in the effort to find a definite meaning, or at least a definite relationship, for all magical formulas. This is the rather common ἄβεραμενθοῳ-ἀρθεξαν κτλ., in which the last ν is the central letter, the others following it in reverse order. Of this Preisendanz says that it is to be found mostly in connection with Seth-Typhon, and it does so occur in PGM IV, 181, 3272,
in both of which passages it is treated as a name of Seth; so also in PGM XIV, 24, a Greek portion of the London-Leiden magical papyrus. On the other hand, it appears also in invocations of Apollo (PGM I, 294, II, 125), who, as identified with Horus, is hostile to Seth. A small green jasper in my possession has the formula on the back and bevel while the obverse shows Harpocrates on the lotus in a boat (D. 201). A somewhat similar stone is described in Zoega’s catalogue of the Borgia collection; but in that specimen there is a reverse design of the cock-headed god with serpent legs, and the palindrome encircles it.  

Here, then, are four instances in which the αβεραμενθων palindrome is associated with solar deities. Furthermore, a haematite published by Barry, with this formula on the reverse, has on the other side a design of a deity with a crowned serpent rising from his shoulders instead of a human head; the figure was probably intended for Agathodaimon, who, as noted above, is often identified with Harpocrates. The obvious conclusion is that the palindrome was not confined to any particular magical context, but was a name of power to be used wherever and whenever the operator pleased.

This explains why part of the formula, Aberameneth, was actually used by certain Gnostics as a name of Jesus; it appears thus in Pistis Sophia three times. The borrowing, I am convinced, was from the magicians by the Gnostics, not vice versa. The Gnostic borrowers show no knowledge of the whole formula; but since long sequences were often mentioned in the magical books by the opening syllables (usually the first four), it is not quite safe to infer that they did not know it. However, the Gnostic use of Aberameneth without the rest of the palindrome has led to futile speculation about the meaning of those syllables. Even so keen a scholar as Burkitt fell into the trap, actually suggesting a connection between Aberamenthou and Rhadamanthys.

Αναβαθαμενθωθ πεθαι κτλ. Preisendanz couples this with the foregoing palindrome as Typhonic, and it is used in such a connection in PGM IV, 156. But it find it also on the reverse of a uterine amulet in my collection which shows no obvious Typhonic influence (D. 141). The obverse represents Harpocrates seated on the uterine symbol; no other deities are present. I have not found the formula on other amulets. It could perhaps be argued that, if the palindrome is Typhonic, its presence in this place might be a covert threat to the afflicted organ. In the chapter dealing with uterine amulets two specimens were described (p. 84) on which threats of danger from Typhon were clearly intended to control the womb and restore it to its normal state.

Αναβαθαμενθωθ πεθαι κτλ. This appears with other magical words, mostly
unfamiliar, on the reverse of a London amulet; the obverse represents a
four-winged pantheos. Not noted elsewhere.

Θωθαραβαβ. On the reverse of a scarab described by Barry.

Θωσαεζωθ. This is the end of a long inscription cut in spiral form on
an amulet in the Walters Art Gallery (D. 251). The other side shows the
infant Harpocrates standing on the heads of two crocodiles, as on the numer-
ous "stelae of Horus." It is also cut on the reverse of a pantheos gem in the
Michigan collection (D. 258). In PGM XIII, 177, it is ζωονναθαως; cf. 493,
ζωονναθαως, where the last letter is superfluous.

Ιανερεβαεναιαναωαν. This palindrome precedes the εθοτμπαοη formula
on the reverse of a green jasper representing Sarapis enthroned. Not noted
elsewhere.

Ιαεοβαενονυνυνυλαρικριμαιευ-εαιφιν κτλ. This is treated as a formula
appropriate for addresses to the sun, and, in fact, it is associated with solar
figures on the gem amulets. It is found on the reverse of Harpocrates, with
the radiate lion-headed serpent (Chnoubis), with the pantheos, and with
Sarapis. An interesting stone published by Blanchet, with a design of
Ares holding Aphrodite bound, has the Iaeo formula on the reverse; but
Blanchet's attempt to show that "the formula was an essential part of love
charms" is not convincing. The Cabinet des Médailles has two stones,
without figure designs, inscribed with this palindrome (in one instance along
with other words); but it was not recognized as such, and it seems in both
examples to have been misread or else badly copied by the lapidary.

LONGER FORMULAS WITH SPECIAL AFFINITIES

Some long formulas with few or no recognizable parts show an affinity
for certain gods, though not exclusively associated with any one of them.
In the magical books they appear in invocations of the preferred deities;
they are also inscribed on amulets that represent these gods or mixed forms
in which the preferred deities are fused.

Αρσινονοηθ Βροταπτημοθριβτσκλ. The first word contains the
names of Horus (Har) and Chnum; the second, which belongs particularly
to the latter divinity, may conceal the Egyptian nejer, "good." In a
passage of a Berlin papyrus (PGM I, 26 ff.) the Harpwnbouphi formula is
connected with Agathos Daimon, but the allusions in some following lines
(32 ff.) show that Agathos Daimon and Harpocrates-Chnoubis are joined in
a solar complex. A stone in the British Museum has on the obverse Harpoc-
rates seated on the lotus, on the reverse the Harpwnbouphi formula and

108 B. M. 56598.
104 D. 17.
105 PGM I, 140, 195 f.
106 B. M. 56211, 56458, 56012, 56256.
107 CRAT 1923, p. 227.
108 Ibid., p. 232.
109 Chabouillet 2224, 2227.
110 Perdrizet, Mélanges Margero, II, 137-144.
two other solar words, *lalum* and *semelamps*.

Another in the same collection, bearing the cock-headed god on its obverse, has in the field the words Marmarouoth Abrasax and the Harponchouphhi formula (incomplete); on the reverse is the χαβραχ formula, with the number value 9999, which is rarely found except on Harpocrates amulets. Here, then, as in the previous example, the formula is assigned to solar deities.

Its special connection with Agathos Daimon is clearer in two other examples. A chrysolite in the Ruthven collection has on its reverse side a crowned snake, evidently an Agathodaimon serpent, surrounded with a long inscription of which the Iaeo palindrome and the Harponchouphhi formula make up the greater part. The obverse of this stone shows Isis standing in a shrine, which suggests that the serpent of the reverse side might better be called Agathe Tyche or Thermuthis, the female counterpart of Agathos Daimon. A haematite in the University Museum shows the formula, in part, round a deity who has, in place of a human head, the head and neck of an ibis and a crowned serpent; reverse, the Iaeo palindrome, the name Chnoubis, and the words πες πος (l. πές πος), “digest”—proof that the stone was used as an amulet for ailments of the stomach. The obverse may be interpreted as a fusion of Thoth with Agathos Daimon, a combination that occurs also in the inscription Θαυ Ψα on the reverse of an amulet in the Borgia collection, which has on the obverse an ibis (emblem of Thoth) holding a caduceus under its wing and bearing on its head a tiny figure of Harpocrates. Θαυ Ψα reproduces a dialectal form of Coptic *ΘΟΥΤ ΤΡΙΑΛ*, “Thoth Fortune” or “Thoth Agathodaimon.”

Ιαρβαθαρχαουςοιβαξημεω. Passages in a Berlin papyrus prove that this formula is especially proper for invocations of the sun, and on a Michigan amulet it enircles a solar design, a scarab between two Horus hawks. This suggests that there must be a solar element in a strange design repeated with trivial variations on four specimens, three of which belong to the Southesk collection, the fourth to the British Museum, all inscribed with the Iarbathe formula. It represents a winged frog on the back of a monster made up of the body and legs of a crocodile and other parts belonging to serpent and eagle. The frog, as Lord Southesk remarks in his description of the type, is a symbol of renewed life or resurrection; as such it was sometimes used by Christians of Egypt. The fact that in one of the four specimens

111 B. M. 56257.
112 B. M. 50449.
113 D. 23.
114 D. 364.
115 Musco Borgiuno, p. 256, 11.
116 See Cram, Coptic Dictionary, p. 262 a, p. 54 a-b.
117 PGM I, 111, 154–155.
118 D. 310. The formula is recorded by Capello, *Prodromus Iconum*, No. 130, on the reverse of a pantheon, which is probably to be classed with the solar designs.
119 Southesk N 78–80, B. M. 4036. This design may also be represented by an example in the Cabinet des Médailles, where I suspect that Chackoulet’s description of his N. 2173 needs correction.
the frog sits on a lotus suggests a connection with Harpocrates and the sun. 121

Σομοκρεβεργαρμαφοριουρες. With numerous minor variants, this formula appears on a large number of uterine amulets which show as the central feature of the design the so-called “mystic vase,” really a conventionalized representation of the womb. The legend is normally cut round the margin of the stone, outside the ouroboros, which usually encloses the design. 122 Because of this position the lettering is often abraded, and hence the formula is inaccurately reported. The same formula is cut on a few Chnoubis amulets which, as is well known, were mostly intended to prevent or cure stomach diseases. 123 Its use on such amulets as these would seem to mark it as a medical charm; yet in the rare cases where it is found in the magical books it seems to be treated merely as a “general purpose” formula. It occurs in an invocation of Iao, which shows a rather marked Jewish character, and in a charm that is apparently addressed to the sun-god. 124

Σομμασομαβαλομαβαλακαμοβομπλη. The text of this outlandish legend is established by collating three carefully lettered amulets that bear it. One has an obverse design of Helios driving his four-horse chariot, another has the common type of Harpocrates surrounded with animals grouped in threes, the third is on the reverse of an enthroned Sarapis. 125 All three are solar deities, for Sarapis took on solar attributes, and in the period of our amulets was identified with Sol Invictus. The inscription is found, in somewhat corrupt form and with no accompanying design, on two amulets in the British Museum, and is also reported by Gori. 126 I do not think that it occurs in the magical papyri; but on the previously cited curse tablet (Wünsch, 4, 34), the operator calls upon θομμαβονν as lord of sleep. It may be an abbreviation of the long formula.

At this point a comment upon these four long formulas is in order. The first of the group has recognizable parts; but after Har, Chnoubis, and nefer have been eliminated, the residue resists linguistic analysis. In the other three no elements of known languages are recognized unless, in the second, αρβαθ is to be connected with αρβηνθ, which, Thompson thinks, may be “Horus the Falcon.” 127 The sound of all these formulas, with their heavy, mouth-filling syllables, may indicate that they were deliberately invented for their impressive sonority.

On the other side it may be suggested that the unintelligible magical formulas are fragments of ancient liturgies, whether Egyptian or Semitic, piously repeated through many generations, during which knowledge of the old sacred language was gradually lost, and becoming more and more corrupted

121 Southerk N 78.
122 Cf. Southerk N 38, 40, 41.
123 B. M. 36020; Southerk N 14, 16; Chabouillet 2185; and a specimen belonging to Mr. Seyrig (D. 85).
124 PGM IV, 1567, XII, 172 f.
125 D. 228, 205, 17. A broken hieratic in my collection has the latter part of the formula with a figure of Harpocrates on the lous (D. 551).
126 B. M. 36077, 56175; Gori, Inscr. Itinerae, i, 456.
127 Sir H. Thompson in Magical Texts from a Bilingual Papyrus, ed. Bell, Nock, Thompson, p. 35.
in the process. Such a view is not easy to disprove; but one circumstance argues against it. In the commoner magical formulas the differences that appear upon collating one text with another are on the whole rather slight. They are of a kind that can easily be explained by errors in copying, or else by different ways of representing a sound in which previously distinct sounds have been fused together, as in itacism and the loss of distinction between omicron and omega. If these often recurring formulas were corrupt versions of ancient hymns or prayers, we should expect other differences — variations in the choice of words and in their order; the establishment of a norm for a given formula would not be merely a matter of orthography and palaeography. I incline to think, therefore, that, where no elements drawn from known languages can be detected in magical names or formulas, we must believe them to have been invented by master magicians, of whose stock in trade secrecy and mystery formed no small part.

The conclusion that has just been put forward on the basis of a few striking and curious examples may, if correct, apply to a great number of magical names and sound sequences. It may not seem to fit the babbling inscriptions, nor would it apply so aptly if we could imagine that the long formulas made up of meaningless syllables had once been uttered in frenzy by a prophet or a magician and piously noted down by a disciple. Yet even in such a case as that, the deliberate, methodical perpetuation of this jargon in writing is the important point. Whatever its origin — various possible sources have been indicated above — there can be little doubt that masters or schools of magic continued to use words and formulas most of which they themselves did not understand, but which, none the less, they represented as sacred or magically powerful. How far their procedure is to be charged to deliberate deception and how far to blind following of an older tradition is a question about which opinions will probably differ.

128 Compare Kipling’s amusing fancy in the story “Namgay Doola.” An Irish soldier marries an Indian hill woman and ends his days in isolation from his own kind. His descendants make a ritual of chanting a strangely garbled version of “The Wearing of the Green,” which the old soldier used to sing.