

## CHAPTER II

### NATIONAL ELEMENTS AND INFLUENCES

#### I. EGYPTIAN

IN THE previous chapter it was asserted that Egyptian ideas and practices exercised the strongest influence upon the making and the use of the amulets that are commonly called Gnostic, and the arguments supporting that statement may now be set forth briefly. The very great number of magical amulets that have come down to us from the first few centuries of the Christian era suggests that in some way magic had got a stronger hold upon the people of those times than ever before. Even after proper allowance is made for a certain shift of popular interest in religion, and for a growing demand, on the part of simpler folk, for new religious cults and for practices, religious or magical, that would answer their personal needs, it still seems that the upward surge of faith in charms and amulets must be explained in part by a thrust from without. That impulse is most likely to have come from Egypt. The Greeks and Romans themselves thought of Egypt as a fount of magical literature and magical practice,<sup>1</sup> and modern Egyptology has shown that Egypt, more than other regions of the ancient world, gave magic a regular, generally recognized place in human life. As Professor A. H. Gardiner puts it, "There cannot be the slightest doubt that *hike'* (magic) was part and parcel of the same Weltanschauung as created the religion which it deeply interpenetrated."<sup>2</sup> That statement was based upon a profound knowledge of Egyptian texts and monuments dating from the dynastic period, and it remains true to the end. The magic of the Greek papyri is predominantly Egyptian, and the numerous agreements between the formulas and designs prescribed in the papyri and those actually found on the amulets show clearly enough from what source many of the latter were drawn.

The influence of Egypt manifests itself in certain general tendencies, which may be noted before considering details. First, there is the custom of making amulets from durable materials and with a specialized, immediately recognizable character, a custom that was undoubtedly more widespread in Egypt than in Greece. Secondly, it was customary to combine more or less elaborate charms or incantations with figures of gods or other superhuman beings believed to carry magical power. As we have seen, the stelae of Horus illustrate this tendency in late dynastic times, and they

<sup>1</sup> Lucian *Philops.* 31, 34. See also Joan. Chrys. *Hom. in Matt.* 8, 4 (PG 57, 87), where Egypt is called "the mother of magicians, who discovered and passed on to others every kind of witchcraft."

<sup>2</sup> In the article "Magic," *ERE* VIII, 262 b.

furnish the model for some Graeco-Egyptian amulets.<sup>3</sup> Thirdly, like the magical papyri, though necessarily in briefer form, the amulets exhibit certain attitudes towards the gods and demons that are more Egyptian than Greek. Thus the Egyptian practice of threatening the gods, which was censured by Porphyry,<sup>4</sup> is common in the papyri,<sup>5</sup> and is represented on the amulets by such commands as (τοῦτο ποίησον) ἐπιτάσσει γὰρ (ὁ δέινα, i.e., the name of some god or demon), "Do this, for (such and such a god) commands"; or by the threat implicit in such phrases as δός μοι χάριν ὅτι εἴρηκά σου τὸ κρυπτόν . . . ὄνομα,<sup>6</sup> "Grant me favor, for I have spoken thy secret name"; for possession of the secret name gives the magical operator power even over superhuman beings. Similarly, when the operator actually claims to be the god whose power he wishes to exert for his own purposes, he is acting in a manner which was repellent to Greek feelings about the divine. The myth of Salmoneus destroyed for imitating Zeus shows what the ordinary Greek would think of such acts,<sup>7</sup> and in the sophisticated fourth century before Christ the paranoiac Menekrates-Zeus was simply ridiculed.<sup>8</sup> On the amulets, it is true, such phrases as "I am such and such (god or demon)" may be taken as a naïve means to identify the being represented in the design of the stone; but the analogy of charms on papyrus, which leave no doubt about this point, shows that the "I am" formulas were sometimes supposed to be spoken by the wearer of the amulet.

There is a fourth point that emphasizes the strength of Egyptian influence in the magical amulets. From the time of the earliest contacts between the two cultures the Greeks were struck by the unfamiliar combination of human and animal parts in the forms of the greatest Egyptian divinities. So numerous and varied are these monstrous combinations in Egyptian religious art that definite names cannot be assigned to all of them, and syncretism, which was a strong force in Egypt from early times, makes it still harder to identify some of these divine or demonic forms. Many strangely compounded shapes appear on our amulets, and often they cannot be referred to a known deity (D. 251-267).

Among the Egyptian divinities, the amulets most frequently represent gods and goddesses of the group in which Osiris is the central figure. He usually appears as a mummy, often flanked by Isis and Nephthys, who in this combination generally appear in their traditional Egyptian forms (D. 1-6).

<sup>3</sup> There are good illustrations in Daressy, *Textes*; see also Lacau, in Fondation Piot, *Monuments et mémoires*, 25, 189-210, Pls. 15-16. The famous Metternich stele, originally published by Golenishchev, is illustrated in Budge, *Gods*, II, 271, 273.

<sup>4</sup> *Epist. ad Anebonem* 30 f.

<sup>5</sup> For examples see *PGM* IV, 239, 2245. On a haematite in the British Museum (56505) the words ἐπιτάσσει γὰρ ο can be read; what follows is abraded but seems to be a magical name.

<sup>6</sup> Capello published a gem (No. 14) bearing an inscription part of which reads as above; there is a corrupt passage where I have set dots, perhaps καὶ ἀληθινόν in the engraver's copy. Capello's work is very rare; his illustration is reproduced in Montfaucon, II, 2, Pl. 147, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Apollod. *Bibl.* 1, 89 (ed. Wagner).

<sup>8</sup> See O. Weinreich, *Menekrates Zeus und Salmoneus* (*Tübinger Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft*, 1933). The principal sources are Athen. 7, 289 A-C, and Ael. *V. H.* 12, 51.

When Osiris is replaced by Sarapis (Oser-Hap, Osiris-Apis), the attendant goddesses are Hellenized in dress and attributes; the three might be taken to represent Hades with Demeter and Kore (D. 19-20). The youthful Horus appears on many amulets, Horus as a child (Harpocrates) on still more, sometimes with Isis, often alone, seated on a lotus flower and adored by baboons or by triads of various animals — hawks, goats, crocodiles, snakes, scarab beetles (D. 189-210). Both before and after the beginning of Greek influence Isis absorbed other goddesses into herself, and her form in art is modified correspondingly. The cow-headed goddess that appears on some of our amulets represents a fusion of Hathor with Isis (D. 27-28). Much more common are examples of Isis as Aphrodite or as Tyche (D. 23-24). Anubis appears not infrequently, sometimes supporting the mummy of Osiris, sometimes standing alone (D. 7, 36-41).

Whether Set, the enemy of Osiris, is to be recognized upon any magical amulets is a disputed point. Certainly there are stones showing a male figure with what looks like an ass's head, and the ass was undoubtedly associated with Set in the later periods of Egyptian religion. Some amulets showing an ass-headed figure have been suspected as forgeries, in others the supposed representations of Set may actually be meant for Anubis; for the lapidaries were not always skilful enough to discriminate clearly, in a minute design, between the muzzle and the ears of an ass and those of a jackal. There are even some stones on which the common snake-footed demon has been thought to have the head of an ass, because the stonemason's attempt at the head of a cock was so clumsy. But in spite of these doubts there seems to be a residue of ass-headed figures that cannot be explained away.<sup>9</sup> Some of them may be monuments of the Gnostic Ophites or Sethians.

The ibis-headed Thoth appears occasionally; a crowned ibis replaces him on other specimens, and the Greek Hermes with kerykeion and purse on still others (D. 45-49, 177). The ancient deity Min is seen on very few magical amulets (D. 50), and he may owe his survival to a tendency to identify him with Horus or with Osiris.<sup>10</sup> Rare also are examples of Thueris (D. 51), the hippopotamus goddess,<sup>11</sup> and the ram-headed Chnum-Amon (D. 52). The former is probably to be recognized on a chalcedony at one time in the Wyndham Cook collection (now in that of Professor A. B. Cook); in the original publication the figure was described as the frog-headed goddess Hekt.<sup>12</sup> The comical dwarf god Bes, believed to bring good luck and protect children,<sup>13</sup> is sometimes found in a group of three or four divinities associated with a symbol, to be discussed later (Chap. VI), which appears to represent the uterus; he is also commonly engraved on the reverse of some stones

<sup>9</sup> A. Blanchet has published two similar stones which, he thinks, may have served as secret means of mutual recognition among the members of an Ophite or a Sethian sect. They show on the obverse a snake-legged demon with the head of an ass, on the reverse a serpent (*CRAI* 1920, 147 ff.).

<sup>10</sup> For Min cf. Müller, pp. 138 ff. There is an exhaustive account of this god in *PW* Suppl. VI, 432-461.

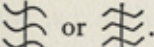
<sup>11</sup> Thueris, De Ridder 3467, Pl. 29; Chnum, *Wyndham Cook*, 246, Pl. 9.

<sup>12</sup> *Wyndham Cook*, 251, Pl. 9.

<sup>13</sup> Müller, pp. 61 ff. See also H. R. Hall's note, "An Egyptian St. Christopher" (*JEA* 15 [1929], 1, with Pl. 1), describing a bronze figure of Bes with the child Horus astride his shoulder, holding on to his feathered headdress.

that show Isis with the infant Horus on the obverse (D. 30-32). More common than any of these are designs using for their principal figure a pantheistic demon of monstrous form, who combines certain attributes of several gods.<sup>14</sup> The name "pantheistic Bes" has been applied to this figure, because it is sometimes, though by no means always, given the head of Bes; but it is better to treat it as nameless (D. 251-261).

A large number of amulets present as their principal design a serpent with the head of a lion adorned with single or double rays, usually seven or twelve in number, sometimes with a nimbus in addition; less often the head is human (D. 83-92; cf. 95-96). With this type there is regularly the legend *Χνοῦβις* (variants *Χνοῦμις*, *Χνοῦφίς*). This serpent god seems to represent a fusion of the Greek Agathos Daimon (later Agathodaimon)<sup>15</sup> with Chnum, the ram-headed god of Elephantine, whose name the Greeks sometimes wrote as *Κνήφ*.<sup>16</sup> Agathos Daimon came to be represented in the form of a snake, and one is tempted to regard the serpentine form as the Greek contribution to the compound divinity; but the Egyptians at times represented various gods and many goddesses in the form of snakes, and this characteristic of Chnoubis cannot safely be ascribed exclusively to either influence. The radiate lion's head seems to be a solar attribute developed in Egypt.

Drexler, whose exhaustive article on Chnoubis<sup>17</sup> leaves later students little to do but provide further illustrations of his statements, says the Chnoubis of the magical amulets is not the old cosmogonic god Chnum, but one of the thirty-six decan gods, each of whom presided over one third of a zodiacal sign, or ten degrees of the circle. It is true, as he shows, that the name *Χνοῦμις* appears as one of the decans of the sign Cancer, and that one of the astrological texts that give us the name also describes an amulet, identical with the well-known Chnoubis type, to be worn by those whose birthday falls under the decan Chnoumis. Such people are peculiarly liable to digestive ailments, for which the Chnoubis amulet is a remedy. But the name is almost certainly connected with the ancient Chnum, and it may be doubted whether all Chnoubis amulets were produced under astrological influence. The adoption of the name Chnoumis for a decan may be a secondary development. However, a sign which almost always appears on Chnoubis amulets is certainly associated with Chnum as a decan. In the Egyptian monuments it is an upright snake crossed by three other snakes lying horizontally; on the amulets it is .

The strength of Egyptian tradition is less striking in the case of single

<sup>14</sup> This deity is to be seen on two small Ptolemaic stelae reproduced by Daressy, *Textes*, Pl. 10, Nos. 9428-9429, and on the top of the reverse side of the Metternich stele (see Pl. XXII, Fig. 6). See also Erman, p. 310; Müller, pp. 222 ff.; Budge, *Gods*, I, 492.

<sup>15</sup> The principal authority on Agathodaimon is R. Ganszyniec, *De Agathodaemone* (Warsaw, 1919) in *Praze Towarzystwa Naukowego*, No. 19. For convenience I cite instead his article in *PW* Suppl. III; see especially pp. 51, 53, 57. Psois or Psai, the deification of good luck, seems to have been identified with Agathodaimon in early Hellenistic times; see Tarn, *JHS* 48 (1928), 218, and the authorities cited by him.

<sup>16</sup> This, however, seems to be a confusion, since Kneph had originally nothing to do with Chnum or Chnoubis; see Ahmad Mohammad Badawi, *Der Gott Chnum*, p. 13 (Hamburg, 1937).

<sup>17</sup> Article "Knuphis," in Roscher, II, 1, 1250 ff., especially 1260, 1264.

deities than when a scene from Egyptian mythology involving several figures is reproduced upon the amulets. One of the best illustrations of this is the funeral of Osiris, which is represented on a green basalt intaglio of the Museo Borgiano, where we have Zoega's minute description.<sup>18</sup> The mummy of Osiris lies upon the back of a lion which appears to be walking; but only the foreleg and hindleg nearest the observer are shown, and as Zoega rightly saw, the lion is only the lion couch so well known from dynastic monuments.<sup>19</sup> Behind it stands the jackal-headed Anubis with his hands extended over the body of Osiris. At right and left of the couch stand two goddesses, doubtless Isis and Nephthys. Details differ slightly in various specimens, several of which show the lion as a real animal; but a glance at illustrations of dynastic paintings and reliefs indicates that the late gem cutters were following the ancient tradition as closely as their skill and the nature of their material allowed (D. 8-11).

A similar fidelity, limited in the same manner, is shown in regard to the attributes of the Egyptian deities. Osiris carries the crook and the flail whip, other gods carry the *was* scepter and the ankh or a situla (pail-like vessel), and the various types of crown are fairly well shown, though the minute character of the work makes it hard to distinguish all details. Characteristic animals of the Nile valley are frequent on the amulets, and play the same parts as on the monuments of later dynastic times — baboons, Pharaonic hawks, crocodiles, cobras, etc.

A matter which deserves further study is the connection between the designs cut on magical stones and the coin types of Alexandria and the nomes; some examples will be discussed later.

Although almost all the inscriptions on our amulets are Greek, some Egyptian (Coptic) words in Greek letters have been recognized. *ανοχ* in the legend *ανοχ Χνοὺβις* is the Coptic pronoun "I"; the word *Βαιχχωωωχ* probably represents the Coptic words for "soul of darkness." An amulet in the Borgia collection deserves special mention here;<sup>20</sup> as Zoega describes the strange design, it represents a monster with the torso and arms of a man, but in place of the head there are seven snakes, while in place of legs there are scorpion pincers. In the field there are three objects; the head of a ram over which the lapidary has cut *σρω*, evidently for the Coptic *CPPO*, "ram"; a lotus flower with the legend *ερωωτ*, almost certainly an error for *σερωωτ* (*CAPIOT*), "lotus"; and the head of an ox, with a mane (*testa di bove giubato*). The mane and the legend *μουι* (Coptic for "lion") suggest that the animal was mistakenly interpreted, as it is easy to do with these small and often crudely executed designs.

## II. JEWISH

Any alien group living next to a larger, dominant, population, or as an enclave in the midst of it, is liable to charges of antisocial behavior. Its

<sup>18</sup> *Museo Borgiano*, p. 428, 24.

<sup>19</sup> See Lanzone, Pls. 261, 29; 269; 271; 280; Budge, *Gods*, II, 132.    <sup>20</sup> *Museo Borgiano*, p. 454, 19.

religion, being different from that of the majority, may be regarded as magic, and its magical practices, because unfamiliar, may be represented as carrying unusual power. It is likely enough that for some time the Jews of Alexandria were credited by native Egyptians with special knowledge of magic; and even if they were feared for that reason, the Egyptians would not be the less disposed to avail themselves of Jewish magical skill.

There are, in fact, some sections of the Graeco-Egyptian magical books that purport to be of Jewish origin. A formula designed to throw a medium into a trance is called "Solomon's Trance Spell" (Σολομῶνος κατάπτωσης);<sup>21</sup> but it contains nothing Jewish except the word "Amen" in a series of *voces magicae*, where, as Preisendanz suggests, it may have been introduced in the belief that it was an angel name. Actually the spell contains much that is Egyptian, and the invocation seems to be directed primarily to Osiris. Conversely, the recipe of Pibeches for the treatment of demoniac patients goes under an Egyptian name, yet some of its phrases are reminiscent of Hebrew poetry and prophecy.<sup>22</sup> It alludes to incidents in the Old Testament, the plagues sent upon Pharaoh, the passing of the Red Sea, the manifestation of God in the pillar of light; moreover, the demon is to be adjured by the God of the Hebrews, Jesus. In spite of this name, some scholars have accepted the spell as genuinely Jewish. To me it seems equally possible that a non-Jewish practitioner who had learned something of Jewish religious history, and who had heard from Christians that wonders were worked in the name of Jesus, simply borrowed from this alien lore in order to enhance the authority of his recipe with new and strange elements.<sup>23</sup>

There is a somewhat similar situation in a famous curse tablet from Hadrumentum, where the spirit of a dead man is adjured by the God of Abraham to aid a lovesick woman.<sup>24</sup> The powers and attributes of God, as recited in the long invocation, clearly show the influence of the Old Testament, although there are no direct quotations. But there are so many errors in names that must have been on the lips of every Israelite from childhood that it is hard to believe that a Jew actually wrote the charm. Yet it seems to go back to a Jewish source; the fact that the text contains no names of pagan deities and demons points definitely to such an origin. The actual inscriber of the charm and the person who used it (if she was not the writer) were willing enough to use Jewish formulas, doubtless believing that they would make the spell work better.

The "Ogdoad or Eighth Book of Moses," which appears in two recensions in one of the Leyden papyri, has been analyzed by several scholars, with little agreement about its origin;<sup>25</sup> but it is at least certain that it is not a piece of pure Jewish magical literature, and that the title was devised merely to give the work the prestige of an ancient and revered name.

<sup>21</sup> PGM IV, 850-929.

<sup>22</sup> PGM IV, 3007-3085.

<sup>23</sup> See HTR 36, 42.

<sup>24</sup> The text may be conveniently consulted in Audollent, *Defix. Tab.*, pp. 374-375, or in Wünsch, *Antike Fluchtafeln (Kleine Texte, 20)*, pp. 21-25. See also Blau, *Das altjüdische Zauberwesen*, p. 101.

<sup>25</sup> PGM XIII.

Yet there are magical documents in which Jewish influence is unmistakable. A Florentine papyrus of the fifth century might have been written by a Jew whom an interest in magic had drawn away from strict doctrine and practice.<sup>26</sup> Almost every magical papyrus bears some marks of Judaism here and there, in its ideas or in the sacred names invoked, and so do scores of magical gems; but there is no reason to follow certain writers who prefer to call the magic of the Graeco-Egyptian papyri and amulets "Judaeo-Alexandrian," for the Egyptian influence is paramount, and we have to reckon with other elements besides the Jewish and Egyptian.

On our amulets Jewish influence is mainly confined to the inscriptions, because monotheism and the prohibition of images restrained the Jews from developing figure designs comparable to the divine and demonic types carved on Graeco-Egyptian gems (D. 275-276, 342). It is true that the Second Commandment was not strictly observed by all Jewish communities, as the paintings of the Dura synagogue and the mosaics of Beth Alpha show.<sup>27</sup> The temptation to break the commandment would be particularly strong when circumstances reminded the Jews of the benefits which their Gentile neighbors claimed to draw from their idols, and there were probably a good many Jews who wore images of heathen gods as amulets. There is an interesting example of this custom in 2 Maccabees 12, 39-40. After a successful campaign against the Idumaeen general Gorgias, Judas and his men, on taking up the bodies of their dead for burial, found that every one of the slain warriors wore under his tunic *ιερώματα τῶν ἀπὸ Ἰαμυίας εἰδώλων*, evidently small figures of heathen deities.<sup>28</sup> The discovery convinced Judas that the fallen soldiers had forfeited their lives because of this concession to idolatry.

The need for seals and seal rings in ordinary business seems to have compelled their tacit exemption from the general prohibition, for Jewish seals with figure designs have been known from ancient times; and the line between a seal and an intaglio cut for an amulet is ill defined.<sup>29</sup> In the col-

<sup>26</sup> PGM XXXV.

<sup>27</sup> See Rostovtzeff, *Dura-Europos and Its Art*, p. 102, and E. L. Sukenik, *The Ancient Synagogue of Beth Alpha*. The following sentence throws an interesting sidelight upon these discoveries: "Au temps de R. Yohanan [third century] on commença à avoir des peintures sur les murs, et les rabbins ne les défendirent pas" (*Jerusalem Talmud*, tr. M. Schwab, XI, 211, Aboda Zara, III, 3).

<sup>28</sup> Blau (*op. cit.*, p. 87, n. 3) suggests that *ιερώματα* may be a translation of Aramaic q\*dāshin, to which he assigns the meaning "amulet." Whether the word is well attested in this sense I do not know; it ordinarily means "earring," "nosering," or some similar ornament.

<sup>29</sup> See the article "Seal" in *Jewish Encyclopedia*. The use of seals to protect food from ritual pollution is assumed as a matter of course in Aboda Zara, II, 3, 5, fol. 31 a (*Babylonian Talmud*, tr. Goldschmidt, IX, 530). The Jewish teachers discussed the question whether the faithful could use objects bearing various designs that are common on Graeco-Egyptian amulets — the sun, the moon, the nurse (probably Isis with the infant Horus), Sarapis (Aboda Zara, III, 3, 1, fol. 42 b, 43 a; Goldschmidt, IX, 566-567). In a neighboring passage (fol. 43 b, 569-570) there is this sentence: "Es wird nämlich gelehrt: einen Siegelring mit einer gehöhten Figur darf man nicht anlegen, wohl aber darf man mit ihm siegeln, einen mit vertiefter Figur darf man anlegen, nicht aber mit ihm siegeln." It is doubtful whether this distinction was observed. Most Graeco-Egyptian amulets are intaglios and were not intended for use as seals. They would be permitted under the rule cited unless exception were taken to the pagan origin of their figures and symbols.

lection of the late Edward T. Newell there is a stone with an obverse design representing Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac, while the reverse bears a Hebrew or an Aramaic inscription as yet undeciphered.<sup>30</sup> It seems to be a genuine Jewish or Samaritan work. A red jasper in the British Museum shows on the obverse the seven-branched candlestick, on the reverse a Hebrew inscription.<sup>31</sup> Here also the work may be purely Jewish, though it must be borne in mind that the inscription, which, as far as I know, has not been read, may contain foreign elements. This possibility must also be allowed in the case of the Newell stone.

Another gem belonging to the British Museum, a green jasper, has a rather rude representation of the ark of the covenant,<sup>32</sup> with the two cherubim and an inscription (misspelled) meant for *τετραγράμματος*, that is, the sacred and ineffable name of God, written with the four consonants JHVH; but there is nothing to prove beyond doubt that the amulet was made by or for a Jew. One might even suggest that a Jew would have cut the Hebrew letters of the Name, or the Greek ΙΙΙΙΙ, which was sometimes used as its equivalent.<sup>33</sup> However, from Philo's time on the word tetragrammaton was applied to the sacred name, and a Hellenized Jew might have used it readily enough.<sup>34</sup>

There seems to be an instance of deliberate Hebraizing in a stone in the De Clercq collection.<sup>35</sup> According to De Ridder's description, the design is framed by two serpents erect, united at their tails, which form the base line. Within this frame are two hermlike figures with indistinct heads; between them is the inscription *χερουβιν*, and above is a star. The form of these "cherubim," departing as it does from tradition, together with an inscription on the reverse which a competent Orientalist pronounced an imitation of Hebrew, seems to mark the stone as pseudo-Jewish.

The circumstance which, more than anything else, gives the so-called Gnostic amulets the appearance of Jewish origin is that the word *Iaw* occurs on numerous specimens. It is oftenest seen on the designs showing a cock-headed demon with human arms and trunk, but with serpents as legs (D. 162-176). *Iao* is usually engraved on the inside of the shield carried by the monster, but appears sometimes in the field or on the reverse of the stone. The origin of this type, which is one of the most puzzling despite its commonness, will be discussed later. For the present it is enough to say that the use of this name does not give us a right to call the demon the *Iao* god, as some have done, any more than *Abrasax*, which is equally common on these stones, can be regarded as his name. Both *Iao* and *Abrasax* oc-

<sup>30</sup> D. 343.

<sup>31</sup> 24335. The candlestick appears on No. 56318 also with a chalice in which a palm leaf rests; but there is no inscription.

<sup>32</sup> 56133.

<sup>33</sup> Lagarde, *Onomastica Sacra* 2, pp. 228 ff.; Traube, *Nomina Sacra*, p. 28, citing Hieron. *Epist.* 25 *ad Marcellam* (CSEL 54, 219). It actually appears as a marginal reading of Q; see Swete's critical note on Isaiah 1, 2.

<sup>34</sup> Philo, *Vita Mosis* 2, 115.

<sup>35</sup> De Ridder 3472, Pl. 29.



cur in connection with other figures, and are simply to be reckoned among the many "names of power" that are engraved upon amulets of the Graeco-Roman period.

As to the meaning of Iao there can be no doubt, especially since the subject was thoroughly investigated by Graf von Baudissin;<sup>36</sup> and, in fact, the combination *Iaw Sabawθ Adwnai*, "JHVH of hosts, Lord," which is common on both amulets and papyri, is convincing in itself. Greeks of the Hellenistic period evidently believed that the name of the Hebrews' God was to be pronounced Iao. This belief must have been based upon a tradition going back to a time before the Name was carefully avoided; the question of its phonetic correctness belongs to the field of Semitic philology.

To us it may seem surprising, if not almost incredible, that an orthodox Jew, or even an indifferent one who retained a decent respect for the customs of his people, should carve this name, in letters that any Greek could read and pronounce, upon amulets bearing the forms of pagan gods and demons. But this is to forget the strange mental attitude of those who are attracted by magic. Such people may follow the religious tradition of their group and yet be led by their superstitions to relax all the inhibitions of their religion. Anything that is of the heathen, whether an image or a name or a formula, may be regarded as Judaized for magical purposes, particularly where Jews had been exposed to strong alien influences. How far Hellenization led to compromises with Jewish belief and practice is well illustrated by a phrase in one of the Zenon papyri, a letter of a Jew Toubias (Tobias) to Apollonios (257 B.C.); the words are *πολλή χάρις τοῖς θεοῖς*,<sup>37</sup> "many thanks to the gods." There is little doubt, then, that while a strict follower of the Law would have eschewed the use of amulets bearing the word Iao, others would have made and used such objects.

But the users of such amulets might also be Gentiles, who borrowed the name because of its supposed magical power, just as they borrowed from Babylonian religion the name of the goddess Ereshkigal and, perhaps, a magical word that seems to be built upon the name Nebo (Neboutosoualeth). They might be members of some Gnostic sect, for there is evidence that the name Iao occurred in the mythology of the Ophites and the Valentinians.<sup>38</sup> But this last possibility seems to me to be the least probable of all, because the Gnostics did not assign to their Iao such paramount importance in their system as would account for the very wide use of the name on amulets. On the whole, it is most likely that wherever it occurs on amulets, Iao has magical, not religious, significance; and it is curious that even in the Valentinian system Iao is once used as a name of power that blocks the return of Sophia to the light.<sup>39</sup> The syncretism of the times brought together the most incongruous elements, in magic even more than in religion. In one

<sup>36</sup> W. W. Graf von Baudissin, *Studien zur semitischen Religionsgeschichte*, I, 181-254.

<sup>37</sup> P. Cairo Zen. 59076, 2.

<sup>38</sup> Iren. *Adv. haer.* 1, 1, 7; 1, 28, 3; Tert. *Adv. omnes haer.* 4 (p. 220, 13, ed. Kroymann).

<sup>39</sup> Iren. *Adv. haer.* 1, 1, 7; Tert. *Adv. Valent.* 14.

of the Berlin magical texts we find the following names thrown together in an invocation: Apollo, Iao, Michael, Gabriel, Abrasax, Adonai, Pakerbeth, a name often associated with Set ( $\Sigma\eta\theta$ ), Aion, Eloaios (cf. Hebrew Elohim).<sup>40</sup>

What has been said of Iao applies also to another expression of Hebrew origin which is occasionally found both in magical papyri and on gem amulets, namely, the words  $\acute{o}\ \acute{\omega}\nu$ . This is, of course, derived from the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew *ehyeh asher ehyeh*, "I am that I am" (Exodus 3, 14), which in the Greek appears as  $\acute{o}\ \acute{\omega}\nu$ . This, even more than Iao, might be claimed as evidence for Jewish work; but it is associated with pagan designs and inscriptions (D. 151) and was certainly borrowed in most of the places where it occurs, if not in all.

There is another legacy from Jewish tradition in the occasional invocation of the patriarchs of Israel, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and, less commonly, Moses, and the very frequent angel names that appear on amulets.<sup>41</sup> Not only do the names of the archangels appear as they are known to us from biblical and rabbinical writings, but lesser angels, some of whose names are not attested elsewhere, are included in the invocations engraved on talismanic stones; some of them may well have been invented by the magicians just as they invented other magical words. There is little doubt, however, that the Palestinian tradition about the angels was largely Egyptianized, perhaps to a point that would have surprised a Palestinian Jew. Arnobius, writing early in the fourth century, imagines an unbeliever saying of Christ, "Magus fuit, clandestinis artibus omnia illa perfecit, Aegyptiorum ex adytis angelorum potentium nomina et remotas furatus est disciplinas."<sup>42</sup> It is noteworthy that he mentions Egypt, not Palestine or Syria, as the place where the magical use of angel names was especially common. Later in the same century Didymus the Blind makes it clear that a cult of the archangels Michael and Gabriel was well established among the Christians of Egypt; he speaks of churches and richly adorned houses of prayer called by their names and says that the oratories are to be found in poor streets, in private houses, and even in the country.<sup>43</sup>

Egyptian amulet makers of about the same period seem to have used angelic names in connection with Egyptian gods and with demonic figures that are not readily identifiable; and they may have actually invoked some of these non-Jewish deities by the names of angels. On a small chalcedony in my possession (formerly in the Wyndham Cook collection) there is a nude figure with the head of a dog or a jackal, perhaps Anubis, holding a situla in the right hand and in the left an uncertain object, which may be a short, thick baton or perhaps a roll of papyrus.<sup>44</sup> An inscription below the figure reads  $\text{Μιχαηλ}$ , and the absence of any other words seems to show that the name belonged to the figure depicted and is not to be taken as a mere exclamatory invocation. A Berlin amulet shows on one side Anubis in Roman dress holding a palm leaf and a purse, while the reverse is a soldierly figure holding

<sup>40</sup> PGM I, 297 ff.

<sup>42</sup> PG 39, 589 B.

<sup>41</sup> PGM I, 159, 219-220.

<sup>44</sup> D. 41.

<sup>43</sup> *Adv. gent.* 1, 43.

upright a spear around which a serpent coils; an inscription in the field reads Γαβρηηρ σαβαω (Γαβρηηλ σαβαωθ).<sup>45</sup>

Here and there in the long strings of magical words that appear in the papyri some Hebrew words have been recognized, though disguised by transliteration into Greek form, and even on the amulets a few have been detected; but most of the attempts to read the unknown magical words as Hebrew fail to convince. It is likely that magicians tried to give some words a Semitic appearance by adding endings in *-ath*, *-oth*.<sup>46</sup> A curious example occurs in the first line of a Florentine papyrus (PGM XXXV), ἐπικαλοῦμαί σε, ὁ καθήμενος ἐπὶ τῆς ἀβύσσου, Βυθαθ, where Preisendanz remarks that Βυθαθ is a Semitizing of Βύθος (ἄβυσσος). It should be noted in passing that Βύθος is one of the primitive entities in the Valentinian gnosis.<sup>47</sup>

Considerable numbers of magical amulets have been found in Palestine and Syria. Some of them correspond to well-known Egyptian types, as was to be expected in view of the constant intercourse between Palestine and Egypt, to say nothing of the probability that some Egyptian amulets may have been made for sale abroad. Others show designs that cannot be so explained, and these need further investigation. It is to be hoped that further researches in Syrian antiquities will extend our understanding of those types.

### III. PERSIAN

In its pure form the religion of Persia was little touched by magic, which, in fact, it condemned. Naturally its ceremonies might come to be accepted by some worshipers as virtually magical in their effects, but that is true in some measure of all religions. Yet actual magic undoubtedly existed among the Persians, as among all other ancient nations. The Greeks came to believe that the μάγοι were largely concerned with magic, and that belief has given the word magic its present meaning. During the period of the Roman Empire it was commonly supposed that various Persian prophets and sages were great magicians. Even Zoroaster was thought to have written magical books.<sup>48</sup> The Greek magical papyri, which are in the main anthologies of magical recipes, attribute a few spells to Ostanēs, but it is not easy to find in these apocrypha anything that is clearly of Persian origin.<sup>49</sup>

The question is more complex in those parts of the magical books which are cosmogonic and liturgical or quasi-liturgical in content. Albrecht Dieterich put forward as a "Mithrasliturgie" a certain section of the great magical papyrus of Paris, which purports to consist of mysteries revealed

<sup>45</sup> Fig. 79 in J. Leipoldt, *Die Religionen in der Umwelt des Urchristentums* (Fasc. 9-11 of H. Haas, *Bilderatlas zur Religionsgeschichte*).

<sup>46</sup> See Von Baudissin, *op. cit.* (note 36 above), I, 194. Even Iao sometimes appears as Iaoth, perhaps under the influence of Sabaoth; so in the manuscripts of Irenaeus I, 1, 7; cf. 2, 58, 1.

<sup>47</sup> Iren. I, 1, 1.

<sup>48</sup> For the most authoritative treatment of Persia in astrology, alchemy, and magic see Bidez and Cumont, *Les Magies hellénisées* (1938); for the matter of the paragraph above see I, 143-150.

<sup>49</sup> Bidez and Cumont, *op. cit.*, II, 307 f.

to the adept through power given by "the great god Helios Mithras."<sup>50</sup> But the liturgy has undoubtedly been Egyptianized to some extent, and opinions differ as to the amount of genuine Mithraic matter that the document contains. It is safe to say that some scholars have exaggerated the influence exerted by Persian religious concepts, modified by transmission through Babylon, upon the mystery religions of the Hellenistic and Roman periods. For the study of magical amulets discussion of the problem is scarcely profitable, for contrary to the claims made by some earlier students of "Gnostic" amulets, few of these objects show anything that is even reminiscent of Mithraism; yet that is the principal channel through which Persian religious ideas made any impression upon the west until the system of Mani established itself in various parts of the empire.

The conditions under which Mithraic elements are found can best be illustrated by some of the objects believed to exhibit them. A black stone (jasper or perhaps obsidian) in the British Museum,<sup>51</sup> bearing no figure design, has an inscription in which the name Mithra is inserted into a formula of *voces magicæ* which is found many times, but never, so far as I have observed, associated with a Mithraic design, *σαλαμαζαξα μειθρας βαμ[αιαζα]*; the common form is *σαλαμαζα βαμιαζα*.<sup>52</sup> Here, *μειθρας* is simply inserted as *par inter paria* in a group of magical words.<sup>53</sup> The tendency to use the name so would be all the stronger because it had been observed that, when spelled with the diphthong *ει*, it is isopsephic with Abrasax (=365).<sup>54</sup>

A different situation presents itself in a stone axe (a celt or thunderstone) in the National Museum at Athens, which is inscribed with the scene of Mithra sacrificing the bull; the design conforms fairly closely to the normal type, but is encircled by an inscription consisting only of unintelligible words. Below the scene of the sacrifice there is a group that has not been satisfactorily interpreted. Some important details are reported differently by different persons who have examined the stone, and since I have not done so, I can only describe cautiously what is visible in the best available illustration, namely, that given by A. B. Cook.<sup>55</sup> In the middle on the base line there is an indistinct representation of a being with serpent legs, and apparently a human head — not therefore the anguipede as commonly represented with the head of a cock, but something more like the snake-legged giants of the Pergamene altar. On either side, in much greater dimensions,

<sup>50</sup> A. Dieterich, *Eine Mithrasliturgie*?, 1923. The controversy about the book is summarized in a supplementary note added by Weinreich, the last editor, pp. 234-240.

<sup>51</sup> B. M. 56485.

<sup>52</sup> For other examples of these words see Mouterde, "Le Glaive de Dardanos," pp. 64-66.

<sup>53</sup> If *Μειθρας* was understood as the name of a god, as it evidently was in *PGM* V, 4 f. (where it stands with Zeus, Helios, Sarapis), one may argue that *σαλαμαζα* and the accompanying words are also cryptic names of deities.

<sup>54</sup> Hier. *Comm. ad Amos* 3 (*PL* 25, 1018 D).

<sup>55</sup> *Zeus*, II, 512, fig. 390; at left, a cut from a good impression, at right, a drawing from the stone itself. The inventory number is 10082. There are less satisfactory illustrations in *Musée Belge*, 18 (1914), 6, and in J. Harrison, *Themis*, p. 57. Miss Harrison thought that the lower scene represented the ceremony of making a candidate an "eagle" in the Mithraic ranks.

there is a human figure. That on the right is a beardless, youthful figure (perhaps female) in short tunic, apparently wearing a helmet, and carrying in the right hand a tall staff topped by a bird (an eagle standard?), in the left a crux ansata (?). The figure on the left is a very tall female in a long, close-clinging tunic, pointing a spear downwards toward the snake-footed demon. In her left she holds a tall scepter (unless this is meant to be a slender pillar in the background) and an indistinct object (again, perhaps, the crux ansata).

This lower scene has been called Mithraic, but its place in Mithraic mythology is far from clear. In the late Mithraeum at Dura, round the usual cult relief of Mithra killing the bull, there is a group of small pictures illustrating on one side the Mithraic cosmogony, on the other the life and deeds of Mithra. Two pictures of the former series show snake-legged giants overthrown by a divine figure which may represent Zeus (*Excavations at Dura, Seventh and Eighth Seasons*, p. 105, Pl. 18, 1). This seems to be a Hellenized version of the destruction of evil spirits by Ahura Mazda; the Greek tradition of the snake-footed giants who fought the gods decided the physical form of the evil powers. On the Athenian celt we have a snake-legged creature threatened by a divinity (Athena?). The fact that these snaky monsters are obviously evil, being hostile to the gods, is hard to reconcile with any theory that would make the cock-headed god a genuine Mithraic divinity. To return to the celt, a Mithraic tradition shows itself in the fact that the anguipede, usually a dominant figure on objects of this sort, is here menaced by a superior being; this is perhaps enough to mark the stone as Mithraic. Yet the use of a celt as material and the presence of a meaningless inscription show the amuletic character of the piece, and its religious connotation is secondary.

In a Cairo jasper published by Barry we have an example of another kind.<sup>56</sup> Here the principal design of the obverse is the well-known scene of Mithra killing the bull, while the reverse has the common magical word *νεικαροπληξ* (*νιχαροπληξ*) followed by *Ιαω*, with *ασωνηηλ* (simulating an angel name?) on the bevel. Here a Mithraic amulet has been supplemented with magical words by some maker or owner who offered, or desired, both religious and magical protection. The same thing is true of a stone that belonged to the collection of Cardinal Borgia, where a typical tauroktonia has on the reverse a single magical word, *κηναοσαγα*.<sup>57</sup> Another specimen in which Mithraism is primary and magic secondary is a gem formerly belonging to the Marlborough collection and now in the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore.<sup>58</sup> This has on the obverse a good representation of the tauroktonia, while the reverse shows, without inscription, the cock-headed demon with serpent legs. The anguipede, it is true, may mean more than a mere leaning toward magic. There are many circumstances that point to a solar significance in the cock-headed god, and it is possible that worshipers of Mithra found a certain affinity in this symbol, in view of the close alliance

<sup>56</sup> *Ann. du serv.*, 7, 247-248.

<sup>57</sup> *Museo Borgiano*, p. 473, 13.

<sup>58</sup> D. 68.

between Helios and Mithra. That combination is suggested by a gem in the Metropolitan Museum which shows on one side the sun-god in his chariot, with magical words above and below, on the other a tauroktonia.<sup>59</sup> The latter, however, is not the typical Mithraic group. There is only one figure, which may be female, slaughtering a bull; though wingless, it could be taken for a Victory. But the Persian hood which the figure wears is reminiscent of Mithra, and at the time when the design was cut, it would suggest the Mithraic pattern more readily than the sacrificing Victory of Hellenic art.

A combination which provokes conjecture appears on another gem of the Borgia collection, unfortunately a fragment, though the main designs are unmistakable.<sup>60</sup> On the reverse of a normal tauroktonia Eros and Psyche are shown embracing. The word *νειχαροπληξ* encircles the surviving part of the design, and on the bevel is part of the long palindrome *ιαεωβαφρνεμουν κτλ.*, which occurs on many amulets and in the magical papyri.

Reitzenstein's investigations have shown that the prominence of Psyche in the minor works of Hellenistic art is not due merely to a strengthening of the element of sportive fantasy or a growing interest in a popular folk tale.<sup>61</sup> Although the combinations that he has made are rather fragile, he has at least shown that a goddess Soul played a part in an Iranian creation myth; and *Ψυχή* appears in the cosmogony of the Leyden papyrus J 395, the source of which he believed to be Iranian.<sup>62</sup> There is even a Manichaean fragment connecting Mithra with Soul;<sup>63</sup> and although the tenuous character of the evidence warns against drawing any positive conclusion from it, the point is worth recording in connection with the Borgia amulet. Eros also is something more than a figure of allegory or of folk tales. Though he plays no part in the Iranian mythology, he is a god in the solemn invocation on the "Sword of Dardanus," one of the spells of the great Paris papyrus, and also in the "Paredros Eros" of the Leyden papyrus J 384 (W).<sup>64</sup> In both passages he is associated with Psyche, and in the latter he is identified with Harpocrates. Has Eros-Harpocrates a parallel in Eros-Mithra? It is a question to consider, but at present hardly more than that.

Several gems engraved with the figure of a lion have been called Mithraic, particularly when a star or a crescent or both are set in the field over the animal;<sup>65</sup> it is also remembered that "lion" was one of the grades in the Mithraic hierarchy (cf. D. 73, 237-240). Others have taken the lion to represent a sign of the zodiac, with merely astrological significance, and there are a good many stones engraved with one or another of a few zodiacal creatures. Capricorn, for example, can scarcely have any other than an astrological

<sup>59</sup> D. 71; formerly in the King collection. There is a figure in King, *Gnostics*, p. 157, but on p. 433 he misinterprets the reverse design.

<sup>60</sup> *Museo Borgiano*, p. 473, 14; Cumont, *Monuments*, II, 450.

<sup>61</sup> *Das Märchen von Amor und Psyche*, pp. 79 ff.; *Die Göttin Psyche*, *Ber. Heidelb. Akad.*, 8 (1917), 100

<sup>62</sup> PGM XIII, 192, 522.

<sup>63</sup> Manichaean fragment M 10, cited by Reitzenstein, *Die Göttin Psyche*, p. 100.

<sup>64</sup> PGM IV, 1716-1870; XII, 15-95, especially 87 f.

<sup>65</sup> E.g. by Matter, III, 65, Pl. 4, 7.

meaning; but a scorpion or a crab might be engraved for artistic reasons also, or for a magical purpose. But since the lion appears as a solar animal in Egyptian art,<sup>66</sup> and is clearly identified with solar deities in the magical papyri, it must remain doubtful whether any trace of Mithraism is to be found in the lion amulets.

Certain archaeological discoveries throw light upon an amulet design of a lion resting his forepaw on the head or skull of an ox (e.g. D. 75), which has also been called Mithraic.<sup>67</sup> In the neighborhood of the ancient Iconium there were found several large sculptured lions, evidently intended for grave monuments; six are reported to stand in the garden of the Konia Museum.<sup>68</sup> Four of the six shelter between their forepaws an effigy, male or female, probably representing the occupant of the tomb; this would seem to show that the lions were supposed to be the guardians of the dead. Two of the six have a forepaw resting on a bull's head; the writers who describe them say that the bull's head is often depicted in connection with lions on Phrygian tombs and suggest that it serves to emphasize the lion's strength and ferocity.<sup>69</sup> The gem design of a lion with an ox skull may be viewed as a charm to give the wearer power over his enemies; this interpretation is supported by such a gem in the collection of Mr. Henri Seyrig (D. 74), which has on the reverse the words *κρατῶ σε ἔχω σε*, "I have you, I hold you." On this stone the object held down by the lion's paw is roundish and more like a human than a bovine cranium; it is possible that, having human enemies in mind, the maker deliberately substituted the one for the other.<sup>70</sup> But the small size and mediocre workmanship of such amulets may easily account for the indistinctness of the object.

The ox skull is more plainly cut on several other gems — one in the Southesk collection, one at the University of Michigan, others in the Thorvaldsen Museum at Copenhagen and the British Museum.<sup>71</sup> The last-named collection also possesses a stone showing a lion with his paw on the head of a goat; on another he holds down a serpent.<sup>72</sup> These themes, originally suggested by actual observation, were adopted as typical of the savage strength of the lion. The use of the design for funeral sculptures is a secondary development, and still later it was used for amulets meant to give the owners power among men like that of the lion among beasts. There is no satisfactory proof of any religious meaning; but when stars and moon were added it is likely that the lion was interpreted as a solar animal.

<sup>66</sup> Budge, *Gods*, II, 360; *PGM* I, 142-144.

<sup>67</sup> Cumont, *Monuments*, II, 499, fig. 438; but see his remarks at II, 440.

<sup>68</sup> Buckler, Calder and Cox, "Monuments from Iconium," *JRS* 14, 31 ff.

<sup>69</sup> Mouterde ("Le Glaive de Dardanos," p. 101, fig. 29) shows a gold ring with the design of a sphinx holding in her paws an object probably meant for a skull. He remarks that the design is often used on Syrian sarcophagi.

<sup>70</sup> Fossing describes an impression in the Cades collection which represents a hare fighting with a hammer against a dog; it is inscribed *ἔχω σε* (*Thorvaldsen Museum*, p. 209, No. 1530).

<sup>71</sup> *Southesk* N 69; D. 75; *Thorvaldsen Museum*, 1797-1799; *B. M. Cat. Gems*, 2312. See also Middleton, *Lewis Collection*, p. 73 (Class B, 145).

<sup>72</sup> *B. M. Cat. Gems*, 2313, 2321.

C. W. King and, following him, Lord Southesk, have characterized as Mithraic another design, a very strange one, of which I know only four examples, differing from one another in several details. One is in the British Museum, another in the Southesk collection, a third, the largest and clearest of the four, is in the Walters Art Gallery (D. 72), a fourth, crudely figured by King (Pl. K 2) may be in the British Museum, though I missed it in my study of the amulets there.<sup>73</sup> The center of the design is a table, or possibly a couch; but in the British Museum specimen it seems to be a throne. King called the object on his stone a Mithraic sacramental table. In all four examples this object is flanked on each side by a monster in which a snake takes the place of trunk and neck, while the head is that of an ox or a ram. On the Southesk stone the two monsters seem to have the hindquarters of a dog or a fox; in the Walters specimen one of them is similar, but in the other the tail as well as the main part of the body is that of a snake. On the stone in the British Museum one of the serpents is double, the two bodies being joined at the tail, while a ram's head appears at one extremity, a goat's head at the other. The other serpent, unless the illustration is very imperfect, is not double, as the editor describes it; the head is that of an ox, the body and tail are those of a snake. On the stone published by King (Pl. K 2) the monsters are birds except for snake necks and the head of a ram in one instance, that of an ox in the other.

There seems to be nothing in Mithraic mythology to explain such creatures, nor would an admixture of Babylonian elements adequately account for them. Monsters of this sort suggest an Egyptian rather than an Iranian or a Babylonian origin,<sup>74</sup> and on some of the amulets they are accompanied by other marks of Egyptian style. Some hieroglyphics are visible on the back of the throne on the London stone, and a sphinx sits underneath. A lion holds that position on the Southesk gem, and that also is an Egyptian motif. Horapollo (I, 17) says of the Egyptians, *ὑπὸ τὸν θρόνον τοῦ Ὄρου λέοντας ὑποτιθέασι*, words which probably refer to the custom of making royal couches and chairs with supports in the form of lions.<sup>75</sup>

The stone belonging to the Walters Art Gallery presents a strange feature which may point the way to an understanding of the whole group. On the couch or throne, occupying its whole width, rests a kind of bundle, the left end of which projects upward, resting against the low back of the throne. It strikingly resembles the aniconic form of Amon, which was first brought to the attention of Egyptologists by Daressy.<sup>76</sup> According to his description and illustrations (Pls. I-II), it is a rounded mass like a wineskin, the left side of which is elevated into a protuberance. Three small monuments

<sup>73</sup> *B. M. Cat. Gems*, 2630; *Southesk* N 65, Pl. 14; Walters Art Gallery 42.870. King, *Gnostics*, Pl. K 2.

<sup>74</sup> Lanzone, Pls. 159, 9; 172; 173, 4; Daressy, *Statues*, 38837, Pl. 43.

<sup>75</sup> See Sbordone's note on Horapollo I, 17.

<sup>76</sup> Daressy's article, "Une nouvelle forme d'Amon," appeared in *Ann. du serv.*, 9 (1908), 64-69. The same journal, twenty years later, contains Wainwright's "The Aniconic Form of Amon in the New Kingdom" (28, 175-189), with useful references to notices of similar objects that have become known in the interval since Daressy's work.



representing this object were found in excavations at Karnak. On the largest and most elaborate of these the object rests upon an ornate throne flanked by lions, with a pair of sphinxes taking the place of arms. Between the sides of the throne under the strange emblem is a small temple. The numerous minor decorations need not be described in detail. All three are miniature reproductions of a cult object; the height of the largest is 115 mm., of the smallest, 65 mm. All three have at the middle of the sack or bundle a socket in which a head of Amon was fixed.

These three monuments are thought to be of the late Persian or the early Ptolemaic period. A relief at Medinet Habu represents an unidentified Roman emperor (later than Nero) burning incense before the aniconic Amon, which in this instance also has the head of Amon fixed in its middle. This shows that knowledge of the strange cult object persisted to a time when it could be used by makers of amulets in the Graeco-Egyptian style. A much older conception of it appears on a New Kingdom stele from Asyut published by Wainwright in 1928. Here the object is rounder, less elongated, and only an upright feather marks it as representing a god. Wainwright shows good reasons for his belief that the sacred object was really a stone, probably meteoric, wrapped in a covering. The feather on the Asyut stele and the head on the other objects may then be different stages in an anthropomorphizing process. It may be suggested that that process was confined to models and pictures of the cult object and was motivated by a desire to make the sacred character of the thing represented quite unmistakable; the original object may have had no mark of divinity fixed to it. In any event, the shapeless object on the Walters gem probably represents the aniconic Amon. The obvious differences in other parts of the design, in particular the introduction of outlandish monsters instead of lions and sphinxes, offer no fatal objections to this view, for minor variations occur among the specimens examined by Daressy and Wainwright. The amulet makers were content to indicate the supporting structure schematically, and to compensate for its simplicity by the bizarre creatures on each side.

It remains uncertain whether there is any connection between the aniconic Amon and the other three stones, which show a throne or table with nothing but signs and symbols on it. The makers may have depended upon poor representations of the original, and taken the throne to be the important element, neglecting the strange lump that rested upon it. Certainly the monsters that accompany the throne seem to link all four stones together.

One of the most acute and learned writers on Graeco-Egyptian amulets, Delatte, said of the stone axe mentioned above; "Notre amulette nous permet de constater un phénomène beaucoup plus curieux: celui de la pénétration des mystères de Mithra par la religion égyptienne."<sup>77</sup> This observation does not represent the situation quite accurately. Some objects that are primarily Mithraic have had added to them elements that are derived from the religion and magic of Egypt and countries influenced by it; and magical papyri and

<sup>77</sup> *Musée Belge*, 18, 10.

amulets alike borrow the name of Mithra to conjure with, just as they borrowed Ereshkigal and Iao. Yet among the published amulets I find no convincing evidence that the mysteries of Mithra were penetrated by Egyptian religion.

There is no doubt, however, that Mithraism was affected, at least superficially, by the syncretism that was at work among other religions of the time. The point is well illustrated by a Mithraic tessera, which was ably interpreted by H. Mattingly in the *Numismatic Chronicle* (1932, pp. 54-57). The piece was originally a silver denarius of Augustus with the emperor's head on the obverse, and on the reverse, Tarpeia half buried under the shields that were thrown upon her. The whole obverse design was purposely obliterated, and also the inscription on the reverse. Thus nothing remained of the original work but the figure of Tarpeia, which was evidently left to serve as an approximate representation of the Mithraic nativity, the god born of the rock. On the erased obverse was inscribed, in letters of about the year 200, the legend *Mίθρας Ὀρομάσδης Φρην*, which combines Mithra's name with that of the Persian supreme deity and of the Egyptian sun-god, P-Re. In like manner such Mithraists as had a leaning towards magic sometimes added to their own highly characteristic subjects certain alien motifs which seemed to have an affinity to their system. Among them the most conspicuous is the cock-headed anguipede, which may be a symbol of a solar monotheism.

## IV. GREEK

The language and the artistic tradition of Greece cement together the other elements that enter into the amulets examined here. Genuine Egyptian hieroglyphs rarely appear upon them, and Hebrew or Aramaic inscriptions are very few; even when non-Greek subjects are depicted, the accompanying legends are Greek. It is also uncommon to find any shape that is certainly of Egyptian origin; it is not easy to parallel such specimens as the inscribed scarab with extended wings in the British Museum.<sup>78</sup> There are a very few triangular amulets,<sup>79</sup> a good many of square or rectangular outline, some rectangular prisms, a few bead-shaped and fusiform specimens; but against these there are hundreds of the ordinary oval, or, less commonly, circular forms preferred by the Greek gem cutters.<sup>80</sup>

Two different tendencies may be observed in the designs. Certain deities retain much of their Egyptian appearance, as Osiris and the "pantheos," which is derived from such prototypes as are illustrated in the Metternich stele;<sup>81</sup> representations of Osiris in mummy form attended by Isis and

<sup>78</sup> B. M. 56277.

<sup>79</sup> B. M. 56001, most recently discussed by H. Gressmann, *Die orientalischen Religionen im hellenistisch-römischen Zeitalter*, 1930, pp. 51 f., B. M. 56024; and an amulet that belonged to the late Professor C. Schmidt. For the last see *Phil. Woch.*, 1932, Nos. 35-38, pp. 101-108 (Preisendanz), and *Byz.-neugriech. Jahrb.*, 9 (1932), 375-378 (Bonner).

<sup>80</sup> It may be true, however, that the elliptical form in general use among the Greeks was derived, long before the time of the magical amulets, from Egyptian scarabs of the dynastic period.

<sup>81</sup> Budge, *Gods*, II, 273, top.

Nephthys often adhere closely to the old tradition. Amon, Min, and Thueris, who occasionally appear on Graeco-Egyptian amulets, differ from the dynastic types in little but the crudity of the work that represents them. Anubis and Thoth retain their animal heads — jackal and ibis — but their dress is often of the Roman type; in fact, it became common, not only in gems but also in larger works of art, to give the male divinities the costume of a Roman soldier.<sup>82</sup> In other cases the Egyptian type has been more or less Hellenized. Harpocrates, for example, is usually not the obviously Egyptian child wearing a conspicuous scalp lock, but an infant god after the Greek idea, often closely assimilated to Eros.<sup>83</sup> In place of the hawk-headed Horus, who rarely appears, we find two types: first, a lion-headed god, who seems to be derived from one of the less common dynastic forms of Horus,<sup>84</sup> and second, a youthful sun-god with radiate head, in the physical type of Apollo.

Isis has her traditional form chiefly when she appears in a group with Osiris and Nephthys; otherwise the type is modified in certain directions. It is well known that the great expansion of the cult of Isis in Hellenistic and Roman times led her devout worshipers to treat many other goddesses as mere phases of Isis,<sup>85</sup> and her overwhelming popularity is strikingly illustrated in the magical amulets. On them, despite the strength of Greek influence, several Greek goddesses are almost unrepresented. Hera, Demeter, and Kore seem to be absorbed by Isis, although when they appear with Sarapis-Hades, Demeter and Kore are not so overlaid with Isiac attributes as to be unrecognizable. Artemis scarcely appears except on a few stones that are thought to represent the Artemis of Ephesus (see, however, D. 56). Whether Athena is to be found as a principal figure on any magical amulet is doubtful (cf. D. 53); it is possible that some of the aspects of the goddess were adequately represented in Egypt by Thoth. An interesting lapis lazuli in the Southesk collection (N 24) shows on one side Isis-Hathor as Aphrodite arranging her hair (the Anadyomene type), on the other seven deities, chiefly Egyptian; among them is a helmeted goddess resembling Athena, but she is wielding a double axe — not a spear, her usual weapon — and attacking a serpent.<sup>86</sup> The editor thought that these deities represented the seven planets,

<sup>82</sup> Perhaps because statues of the divine emperors often showed them in military dress; so Von Bissing, *Ägyptische Kultbilder der Ptolemäer- und Römerzeit (Der alte Orient, 34)*, pp. 19-23. In another work the same writer thinks that the military costume may be connected with the idea of the *sancta militia* (Apul. Met. 11, 15). He who feels himself a soldier in the service of a god naturally gives the deity a military habit (Von Bissing, *Denkmäler der ägyptischen Kunst*, note 13 on Pl. 121 in the text; Reitzenstein on "soldiers of God," *Hellenistische Mysterienreligion*, pp. 66-70).

<sup>83</sup> There are a good many exceptions, notably in the *Museo Borgiano*, where Zoega describes several gems that show Harpocrates with the scalp lock, as p. 439, 33, 38, and a few others. See also D. 203, 211.

<sup>84</sup> Lanzone, Pl. 244, 1-3; Daressy, *Statues*, 38574, 38575, Pl. 32; Mercer, *Horus: Royal God of Egypt*, pp. 179-180.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Apul. Met. 11, 5, and P. Oxy. 1380.

<sup>86</sup> This stone must be the same as one that formerly belonged to the library of Sainte Geneviève in Paris; see Du Molinet, *Le Cabinet de la bibliothèque de Sainte Geneviève (1692)*, p. 130 and figs. 1 and 2 opposite. Lord Southesk observed the similarity of his gem to the cuts of the other, but hesitated to assert their identity because he did not know the material used for the Paris gem. He had apparently not seen the original publication by Du Molinet, which says that the stone is lapis lazuli, and had probably known of it through the publications of Montfaucon and Matter, which do not mention the material.

with Athena as Mars. This is certainly not a common equation, though Athena is one of seven *ἔφοροι* in an astrological text attributed to Ostanēs.<sup>87</sup>

Perhaps the most noteworthy of Isis' transformations under Greek influence are, first, her identification with the nude Aphrodite, and, second, her appearance as Tyche, a personification that enjoyed great favor during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. In this aspect she wears Greek dress and holds a cornucopia and a steering paddle. A curious amulet in the Archaeological Museum at the University of Michigan (D. 27) shows a cow-headed goddess in Greek dress, holding a torch. This seems to be a fusion of Isis-Hathor with Hecate; but the triple Hecate known to us from late Greek sculpture is also several times represented with no Egyptian attributes (D. 63-66).

It is doubtless true, as Milne contended, that Sarapis never became a national god in Egypt;<sup>88</sup> nonetheless, just as Isis overshadowed the other goddesses, so did Sarapis absorb the functions and characteristics of some Greek male deities. The official art type of Sarapis was founded primarily on that of Zeus, with Helios and Hades as additional contributors. Sarapis was therefore the natural equivalent of those gods in Egypt, though it must be remembered that Horus was also a solar divinity. The acclamation *εἰς Ζεὺς Σάραπισ*, found on several gems, shows how completely Sarapis compensated for Zeus.

Except in that formula the name Zeus scarcely appears on magical amulets; *Ζεὺ ἅγιε ἀποστρεψίκακε* ("Holy Zeus, averter of evil"), on a prism in the Seyrig collection, is a rarity, and in this example there is no design to accompany the inscription.<sup>89</sup> Allusions to Dionysos, whether verbal or artistic, seem to be completely absent from the amulets. Hermes, a youthful figure holding kerykeion (caduceus) and purse, is engraved on a goodly number of amulets, sometimes, perhaps, as the equivalent of Thoth, though the true ibis-headed form of this god is seen about as often. Certain attributes of Hermes were also transferred to Anubis. Just as the ibis of Thoth is shown holding a kerykeion thrust under its wing, so the jackal-headed Anubis holds the kerykeion in his hand (D. 39-40). The Egyptian Greeks indicated the fusion of the two gods by the name Hermanubis.

It has been suggested above that Apollo, or an Apollo-like sun-god, sometimes took the place of Horus; apart from that aspect of Apollo the amulets, so far as I have observed, make use of him only in some symbolic groups with other deities (D. 158?); but he is not forgotten in practical magic, as the "Apolline Invocation" in one of the Berlin papyri shows.<sup>90</sup>

The well-known type of Poseidon does not seem to have been used on any stone proved by an inscription or "characters" to be magical. Sarapis, it would appear, has been endowed with powers and attributes like those of Poseidon without taking over any of his visible marks. The orator Aristides says of him, "This god is mighty on the sea also,"<sup>91</sup> and there are epigraphic

<sup>87</sup> Bidez and Cumont, *Les Magies hellénisées*, II, 272, 13.

<sup>88</sup> D. 360.

<sup>89</sup> PGM I, 263 ff.

<sup>90</sup> *JEA* 14 (1928), 229.

<sup>91</sup> Aristides *Or.* 45, 23.

dedications *Sarapidi Neptuno*.<sup>92</sup> The accepted type of Asklepios is not far removed from that of Sarapis, and the latter divinity is sometimes represented with the Asklepiian attribute of a serpent coiled round a staff. A green plasma in the Ruthven collection,<sup>93</sup> showing a bearded god standing and holding out a patera, while a serpent coils round his scepter, would usually be taken for Asklepios; but the stone came from Egypt, and there is an inscription with the word Iao and some of the magical vowels. It may be a fusion of Sarapis with Asklepios.

The figure of Pan is occasionally seen on stones of undoubted magical character (D. 59-60), and a Greek might seek his help for various reasons. He was believed to give fecundity to animals, especially to domestic flocks and herds; he was also supposed to cause sudden fright and stampedes among cattle, and panic terror, epilepsy, and delirium in human beings. Either the benevolent or the sinister side of his nature might prompt a dabbler in magic to invoke his aid or propitiate his anger. But since so many magical amulets are of Egyptian origin or affected by Egyptian ideas, it is possible that the goat-legged figure may not represent the Greek Pan, but a Hellenized Egyptian god whom the Greeks identified with their Arcadian deity. Min, the ancient ithyphallic god of Chemmis, is best attested as the Egyptian equivalent of Pan, but there was some confusion about the matter. Herodotus (2, 46) seems to have regarded the sacred goat of Mendes as an Egyptian Pan, while ram-headed deities such as Chnum were sometimes identified with him. In any case the connecting link must have been the idea of a god who could give sexual power and fertility, and the few amulets that represent Pan are perhaps to be interpreted in that light.

Ares was little worshiped in Greece, and a leading authority suggests that he was at first hardly more than a personification of warfare, or at most a *daimon* of war, placed among the gods by the influence of Homer.<sup>94</sup> His connection with Aphrodite is due largely to the memory of *Odyssey* 8, and this literary association of the two deities is perpetuated on many gems, some of them possibly magical.<sup>95</sup> Certainly magical are some designs in which Ares is present merely as a symbol and vehicle of power, as in the now well-known stone in the British Museum which has on the obverse Ares, on the reverse the words "Ἄρης ἔτεμεν τοῦ ἥπατος τὸν πόνο[ν], "Ares has cut the liver pain."<sup>96</sup>

The sort of magic exemplified by this amulet carries no suggestion of Egyptian or Oriental influence; its method might be illustrated by similar charms from various countries, but the divine name marks it as Greek.

<sup>92</sup> *CIL* III, 3637; VIII, 1002. I take these references from the article on Sarapis in *PW* Ser. 2, II, 2421.

<sup>93</sup> D. 58.

<sup>94</sup> M. P. Nilsson, *Griechische Religionsgeschichte*, p. 488.

<sup>95</sup> See A. Blanchet, "Venus et Mars sur les intailles," *CRAI* 1923, pp. 220-234, and compare the love charm in *PGM* IV, 296 ff., where two figures are to be made of wax or clay, one a bound and kneeling woman, the other, Ares threatening to stab her. See also D. 159.

<sup>96</sup> B. M. 56112; a poor cut in King, *Gnostics*, Pl. M 7; cf. D. 54, 144.

There are no strange demonic names, no identification of the wearer with a god, no harsh commands to gods or demons. This is true also of the stone published by Köhler in 1836, which shows Perseus armed with his *harpe*, and a legend on the reverse, *φεύγε, πόδαγγρα, Περσεύς σε διώκει*, "Flee, gout, Perseus is chasing you";<sup>97</sup> and again of the very numerous representations of Herakles throttling the lion, the magical use of which is attested by ancient authority (D. 108-110). It may be remarked that the names of Ares and Perseus, belonging in the main to a literary tradition, could scarcely have been chosen anywhere except in a center, however small, of genuine Greek culture.

Nemesis, conceived as the guardian of the golden mean, seems to have gained a more and more important place in Greek thought during the Hellenistic age; and in the Roman period particularly, numerous works of art represent this goddess in a type that allowed minor variations, yet remained on the whole fairly regular.<sup>98</sup> The cult was introduced into Egypt, but remained distinctly Greek. A few amulets that are engraved with figures of Nemesis, or invocations addressed to her, may be counted among the Greek elements that preserved their character in the syncretism of the time (D. 57).

In any lot of Graeco-Egyptian gems there will be found some that resemble amulets in material and style, and yet, because of the absence of magical inscriptions, leave the student in some doubt how to class them. Some of them, especially inexpensive stones with no carving except the head or figure of some deity, are amulets only in the sense that the representation of a god on a ring stone or pendant seems to invoke his protection for the owner. On others, divinities appear in symbolic relations to one another which may have some magical import bearing upon the situation of the wearer. A stone showing Ares binding Aphrodite might be appropriate for a soldier who wished to withdraw from an embarrassing love affair; and the well-known design of Eros bound and tormented by Psyche (D. 161) might be fitly worn by any lover who sought to escape from the storm of his passion and leave the inspirer of it to suffer.<sup>99</sup> But it would be bold indeed to seek a magical meaning to all such *jeux d'esprit* of the glyptic art.

Finally, we must count certain literary allusions as Greek contributions to the make-up of magical amulets. When the lovesick Simaitha of Theocritus' *Sorceresses* prays that her recreant lover may forget his new love even as Theseus forgot Ariadne, she is not departing as far from the language of practical magic as some commentators have supposed.<sup>100</sup> The masters of the art were not altogether unlettered, and sometimes they reinforced their charms

<sup>97</sup> H. Köhler, "Über ein Schreiben Rubens' an Peiresc," *Mém. Acad. St.-Petersbourg*, Ser. 6, III (1836), 21 f. and Pl. I, 27.

<sup>98</sup> See the monograph of H. Posnansky, *Nemesis und Adrasteia* (*Breslauer philol. Abhandlungen* 5, 2), 1890.

<sup>99</sup> See the classic essay of Jahn, "Über einige auf Eros und Psyche bezügliche Kunstwerke" (*Ber. sächs. Akad.*, 1851, pp. 153-179, especially pp. 162-165. For literary sources, *Anth. Pal.* 16 (App. Plan.), 195-199. Good illustrations of gems of this type in De Ridder 3107, 3110, Pl. 24.

<sup>100</sup> Theoc. 2, 43-45.

by examples drawn from mythology and poetry. In the important magical papyrus at Oslo there is a charm to be used by jealous lovers or husbands in which we read *μεινάτω μοι ἀγνή ὡς ἡ Πηνελόπη Ὀδυσσεύϊ*, "Let her keep chaste for me as did Penelope for Odysseus."<sup>101</sup> A stranger use of literary allusion is to be found on a stone in the British Museum which I interpret as a kind of *defixio* intended to bring about the death of an enemy. It is a rather well cut banded jasper with the same design on both sides, a body in the wrappings of a mummy.<sup>102</sup> An inscription on the obverse reads *Ἡμέρας γόνος Μέμνων κοιμάται*, on the reverse it is *Φιλίππας γόνος Ἀντίπατρος κοιμάται*. Allowing for the not unnatural substitution of *Ἡμέρας* for *Ἔω*,<sup>103</sup> it is clear that the maker of the amulet is virtually saying, "As Memnon, son of Dawn, lies dead, so may Antipater, son of Philippa, lie dead." The mention of the victim's mother, rather than his father, is regular in all magical practice.

<sup>101</sup> P. Oslo I, 289, with Eitrem's note. Since in some passages of the magical papyri (e.g. *PGM* XII, 372-374, cited by Eitrem) Egyptian deities are thus alluded to, it may be that the use of mythological parallels is as much Egyptian as Greek. We know that certain myths were used as magical charms, such as the story of Isis and the scorpion (Müller, 210 f.).

<sup>102</sup> D. 151.

<sup>103</sup> Preller-Robert, *Griechische Mythologie*, I, 440, 2.