Magical Techniques and Implements present in Graeco-Egyptian Magical Papyri, Byzantine Greek Solomonic Manuscripts and European Grimoires: Transmission, Continuity and Commonality

(The Technology of Solomonic Magic)

Stephen Skinner

2013

Submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Classics)
Statement of Originality

The thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

………………………………………
Stephen Skinner

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“Magic is not, as the followers of Epicurus and Aristotle think, utterly incoherent, but, as the experts in these things prove, is a consistent system, which has principles known to very few.”

- Origen, Contra Celsus 1.24. (transl. Henry Chadwick, 1953)

“Magica est scientia arctandi spiritus malignos et benignos per nomen dei et per nomina sua.”

- Berengarii Ganelli, Summa Sacre Magice.
  Kassel MS 4º Astron. 3, f. 2.
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Abstract

This thesis sets out to research and identify the transmission, continuity and common elements of magical techniques and implements present in magicians’ handbooks, from the Graeco-Egyptian magical papyri (2nd century BCE – 5th century CE) via the Byzantine Greek Solomonic manuscripts (6th century – 16th century), to European Latin and English Solomonic grimoires (13th century – 19th century).

The evolution of magical techniques is traced from one period to another, using the papyri, manuscripts and printed editions of handbooks actually written, used or owned by magicians, rather than the literature about them. In this way magic is treated like any evolving technology, where a surprising degree of continuity and commonality has been found, stretching over periods up to two thousand years.

There is no intention to examine social, political, economic or religious issues, or the reaction to magicians of their surrounding lay community, or to assess the effectiveness of these techniques, purely an intention to identify the commonality, continuity and transmission of their techniques and equipment.

The nature of the blending of Egyptian, Greek and Jewish magical techniques, equipment and *nomina magica* in Alexandria in the first five centuries of the Common Era is discussed, and the Graeco-Egyptian magical papyri are analysed from the point of view of methods, *materia* and intended outcome, with a detailed breakdown of sources and rite types.

The commonality between these methods and ingredients so established, and their reappearance in the Byzantine Greek *Hygromanteia* and related texts is demonstrated, with an analysis of why some methods persisted and others faded away.

The migration of these methods and *nomina magica* from the Greek *Solomōnikē* to the Latin grimoires, particularly the *Clavicula Salomonis*, is analysed on a technique by technique basis, with illustrative passages drawn from vernacular Solomonic manuscripts like the *Lemegeton*. Areas of discontinuity are evaluated, and the sources of material from other sources, such as the pentacles of the *Key of Solomon*, ascertained and identified.
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Abbreviations

Printed Sources

ANRW Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
BZ Byzantinische Zeitschrift
CCAG Catalogus Codicum Astrologorum Graecorum
DOP Dumbarton Oaks Papers
Goetia Goetia (volume 1 of the Lemegeton)
HTR Harvard Theological Review
Juratus Liber Iuratus Honorii (ed. Gösta Hedegård)
JWCI Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes
PDM Papyri Demoticae Magicae
PGM Papyri Graecae Magicae: The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation (ed. Betz)
Raziel Sepher Raziel [the Latin text]
SWCM Source Works of Ceremonial Magic
TLG Thesaurus Linguae Graecae
ZFPE Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik

Manuscripts:

GV Grimorium Verum
Hygromanteia The Magical Treatise of Solomon or Hygromanteia
KoS Key of Solomon
Otot Sepher ha-Otot
SMS Sepher Maphteah Shelomoh
SSM Summa Sacre Magice – Berengarii Ganelli

Manuscripts of the Hygromanteia:

A Atheniensis 1265, National Library of Greece.
B Atheniensis 115, Historical and Ethnological Society of Greece.
B2 Bononiensis 3632, University Library of Bologna.
B3 Bernardaceus, private library of the Bernardakē des.
D Athonicus Dion. 282, Dionysius Monastery of Mount Athos.
G Gennadianus 45, Gennadius Library of Athens.
H Harleianus 5596, British Library.
M Monacensis Gr. 70, Bavarian Regional Library of Munich.
M2 Mediolanensis H 2 infer., Ambrosian Library of Milan.
M3 Mediolanensis E 37 sup., Ambrosian Library of Milan.
M4 Metamorphōseōs 67, Metamorphōseōs Monastery of Meteōra.
N Neapolitanus II C 33, National Library of Naples.
P Parisinus Gr. 2419, National Library of France.
P3 Petropolitanus 575, National Library of Saint Petersburg.
P4 Petropolitanus 646, National Library of Saint Petersburg.
T Taurinensis C VII, National University Library of Turin.
Manuscripts of the Clavicula Salomonis: Text-Groups

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<tr>
<td>Arm</td>
<td>Armadel Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMC</td>
<td>Clavicule Magique et Cabalistique Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp</td>
<td>Expurgated Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GN</td>
<td>Gregorius Niger Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GO</td>
<td>Greek Originals Group (i.e. <em>Hygromanteia</em>)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Zekorbeni Group</td>
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1 These are not specific manuscripts but groups of manuscripts as per Mathiesen (2007), pp. 3-9, amended in Skinner and Rankine (2008), pp. 28-31, 412-414. Each group represents between one and 15 manuscripts, a total of 146 manuscripts in all. References made to these groups are valid for every manuscript in the group.