

□ ἐάν μοι τοῦτο τελέσης, ἀναπαύσω σε ταχέως □

□ □ □ □ □

The Implications of the Coercion of Νεκυδαίμονες
on the Language of *Agogē* Spells

Νεκυδαίμονες

The explicitly violent and sexual language employed by the ‘authors’ of Greco-Egyptian ἀγωγῆ spells raises several important questions about the relationships between the people implicated in and by these spells. Does the author/spell-caster/client genuinely desire the extreme physical, mental, emotional, and erotic subjugation of the target individual, or does this exaggerated language reflect a generic tendency somehow related to the perceived operation of Greek love-magic? If the former, then what cultural attitude(s) permit(s) the expression of sexual desire in the form of such aggressive discourse? If the latter, then what specific aspect of an ἀγωγῆ spell demands the use of this language? Finally, can discussion of this problem shed any light on the agency or pragmatic operation of the magical procedures involved in an ἀγωγῆ spell? I contend that a close examination of PGM IV.297-434¹ and the activated spells in the *Supplementum Magicum*² based on this or a similar model, understood within the context of other spells which employ a νεκυδαίμων (or multiple νεκυδαίμονες) as the vehicle and/or agent for the magical action, reveals that the violent language of ἀγωγῆ spells derives from the relationship between the spell-writer/caster and that targeted spirit.

Before an examination of these relationships can be assayed, it is necessary to examine the individuals involved in a given ἀγωγῆ spell. In the case of activated spells derived from a handbook, at an absolute minimum, three individuals must have been involved in the casting of a spell – the *author* of the model, the *spell-caster* who adapted the spell,³ and the specific *client* who purchased the spell – in addition to the *target* individual. This classification of the human agents in an *agogē* spell was motivated by Versnel’s discussion of the individuals involved in healing charms: “the basic rôles or participants are the practitioner/magician, the patient/client

¹ K. Preisendanz and A. Henrichs, *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart 1973-74).

² R. W. Daniel and F. Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum*. 2 vols. Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Sonderreihe Papyrologica Coloniensia 16.1-2 (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990-92).

³ Given the high probability of the illiteracy of a majority of Greco-Roman Egyptians, it seems very unlikely that these activated spells were created directly by the client, bypassing the need for a local magical “expert.” It is possible, in the case of an illiterate magical expert, that another literate individual (i.e., a scribe) would have been required to write the ‘literary’ portion of the spell. However, it seems more probable, given the evidence of written magical handbooks, that the *spell-caster* had attained sufficient functional literacy to accomplish the written components of spells, especially if the practitioner were situated in the context of an Egyptian temple community, as Frankfurter asserts (see note 9 below).

Νεκυδαίμονες

and the object (the disease)."⁴ Although Frankfurter locates the Greek magical papyri "among innovative members of the Egyptian priesthood during the third-/fourth-century decline of the Egyptian temple infrastructure,"⁵ speculation about the specific identities of the *author* and *spell-caster* lies beyond the scope of this paper.⁶ For the activated spells in the *Supplementum Magicum*, the names of the *client* and *target* individuals are expressed; however, this limited information does not reveal important details such as their occupations or status within their family and community. Despite speculation that the *target* was frequently a prostitute,⁷ there is little direct evidence that such low-status individuals were the sole appropriate target of *agogē* spells in the context of Roman Egypt. These factors limit the potential for defining the relationship between the human actors involved in an *agogē* spell in terms of normal social hierarchies.

Although the magical language of Greek spells obfuscates the 'real' social status of their human agents, several factors may indicate the existence of a hierarchical relationship between *author*, *spell-caster*, and *client* that was defined in terms of competency in the magical arts.⁸ Frankfurter affirms that literate experts attained "a unique prestige in the community" as a result of their magical expertise and connection to established religion.⁹ He locates this proficiency in their ability to "transform the rational or 'informative' sense of sacred texts into a 'performative' sense, producing the numinous, empowered letter, amulet, or edible verse out of the official words, prayers, and pages of scripture."¹⁰ Frankfurter's "craftsmen of the written word" clearly occupied a position of magical authority in reference to the layman *client* of the spell, regardless of their respective status in normal society.

⁴ H.S. Versnel, "The Poetics of the Magical Charm," in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, ed. P. Mirecki and M. Meyer (Leiden: Brill, 2002): 142.

⁵ D. Frankfurter, "Dynamics of Ritual Expertise in Antiquity and Beyond: Towards a New Taxonomy of "Magicians," in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, ed. P. Mirecki and M. Meyer, (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 159.

⁶ However, it is worth mentioning that likely candidates include Egyptian priests, (itinerant) Greek γόητες, possibly connected to the so-called mystery cults, and perhaps even off-duty professional scribes.

⁷ E.g., M. W. Dickie, "Who Practiced Love-Magic in Classical Antiquity and in the Late Roman World?" *CQ* 50.2 (2000), 563-583.

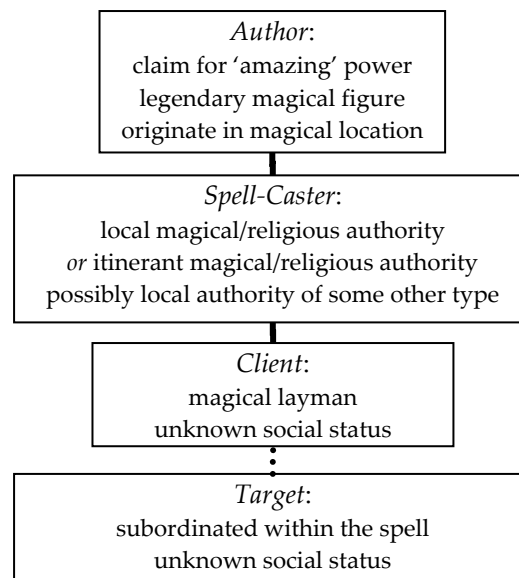
⁸ Cf. Versnel, 142: "The relations between these rôles [in healing charms] are of an authoritative nature."

⁹ Frankfurter, 169. He is predominantly analyzing magical practitioners working within the context of Egyptian temples; however, this assertion applies equally to itinerant mages who invoked the authority of various Greek mystery cults, especially those of Dionysius and Orpheus, as the source of their power. Cf. Versnel, 142: "through the act of addressing the disease the practitioner actually addresses the patient, likewise convincing him of his authority, which is established by his command of specific, effective knowledge."

¹⁰ Loc. cit.

Νεκυδαίμονες

The relationship between the *spell-caster* and the original *author* of the *agogē* spells contained in the magical handbooks is more speculative. If Frankfurter's assertion that the *PGM* spells were the product of Egyptian temple priests versed in both Egyptian and Greek magical traditions, then there is no apparent class-differentiation in magical proficiency between the original *authors* and the *spell-casters* who activated the spells. However, many of the *PGM* spells are introduced by claims of their spectacular efficacy,¹¹ and in some cases, attribution to a named magical figure, sometimes linked to Thessaly, Syria, or Egypt, areas frequently associated with legendary magical power and expertise.¹² While these claims are clearly a type of advertisement for the spell designed to encourage its use, they base their claim to authority on an implied *universal*¹³ history of magic and a genealogy of its legendary practitioners. Regardless of the actual source for the *PGM* spells, their assertion of mythical origin implies a status for the *author*, the creative force behind a spell, higher than that of the *spell-caster*, the technician responsible for their activation.



¹¹ E.g.: *PGM* IV.154-285 “ὅς τῳδε αὐτῷ λόγῳ χρώμενος θαυμάσεις” (233-4); *PGM* IV.154-285 introduction; *PGM* IV.296-466 “φίλτροκατάδεσμος θαυμαστός”; the introduction to *PGM* IV.2006-2125, “ὡς οὖσαν ἀξιέραστον καὶ δυναμένην σοι ὑπεραρέσκειν”; *PGM* LXI.1-38 “φίλτρον ἐπαινετὸν”. Cf. the cautionary introductions to the Selene ‘slander’ spells *PGM* IV.2441-2621 and 2622-2707 and the miraculous claims of *PGM* IV.2145-2240.

¹² E.g.: *PGM* I.42-195 attributed to Pnouthis, the “ἱερογγραμματοεὺς”; *PGM* IV.154-285 attributed to Nephotes; *PGM* IV.1928-2005 and 2006-2125 attributed to King (Βασιλεύς) Pitys, called Θεσσαλοῦ in *PGM* IV.2140-44; *PGM* LXX.5-25 which is attributed to “Ἐκάτη Ἐρεσχιγὰλ”. Cf. the ‘Philinna’ papyrus *PGM*.XX.

¹³ I.e., within the context of the eastern Mediterranean. It may be significant that the geographical areas associated with magical expertise in Greek thought lie on the boundaries of the Greek world (Egypt, Thessaly, Syria) in areas of liminal yet nonetheless ancient civilization, and, in the case of Egypt and Syria, also associated with religious fervor and expertise.

Νεκυδαίμονες

The human actors implicated in these *agogē* spells form a hierarchical chain of magical authority, ultimately derived from the realm of the mythical and/or legendary mages of a more ancient time or exotic location, and, to a certain degree, separate from the normal hierarchical relationships of these actors within the social structures of Greco-Roman Egypt. Namely, the *client* and/or *target* of any given activated spell may have occupied a higher social status than the *spell-caster* in everyday activities, especially if the *spell-caster* was an itinerant practitioner; however, within the context of magical activities, the *spell-caster* always operated as the more prominent individual, although subordinated to the absent *author* of the spell. This authoritative model for the participants in *agogē* spells provides a focus for the analysis of the of the language directed at the *target* and the νεκυδαίμων in the *logoi* of these spells.

Violence Directed at the Target of the Spell

The language employed by the *authors* of many of the *agogē* or erotic spells in PGM and the *Supplementum Magicum* involves extreme violence and/or explicit sexual actions directed towards the *target* of the spell: “incantations that are... dense with imagery connected with torture and cruelty.”¹⁴ In addition to the sexual component, generally a demand for exclusivity in the desired relationship between the *client* and *target*, Faraone asserts that “there are a large number of erotic spells that generally aim at torturing the victim with fire, itching, hunger, thirst, and insomnia.”¹⁵ The *logos*, the incantation addressed to a νεκυδαίμων, of PGM IV.296-466 provides an example of this type of expression:

“ἄξον τὴν δεῖνα, ἦν δεῖνα, ἥς ἔχεις τὴν οὐσίαν, φιλοῦσάν με τὸν δεῖνα, ὃν ἔτεκεν ἡ δεῖνα: μὴ βινηθήτω, μὴ πυγισθήτω μηδὲ πρὸς ἡδονὴν ποιήσῃ μετ’ ἄλλου ἀνδρός, εἰ μὴ μετ’ ἐμοῦ μόνου, τοῦ δεῖνα, ἵνα μὴ δυνηθῇ ἡ δεῖνα μήτε πεῖν μήτε φαγεῖν, μὴ στέργειν, μὴ καρτερεῖν, μὴ εὐσταθῆσαι, μὴ ὕπνου τυχεῖν ἡ δεῖνα ἐκτὸς ἐμοῦ, τοῦ δεῖνα” (350-356).

Similar terminology is repeated in lines 372-383 and 395-6, where the *spell-caster* is instructed to “add the usual” (κοινόν), presumably a text similar to lines 350-356 and 372-383. Moreover,

¹⁴ C. A. Faraone, “The Wheel, the Whip and Other Implements of Torture: Erotic Magic in Pindar Pythian 4.213-19.” *CJ* 89.1 (1993): 5.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

Νεκυδαίμονες

the desired result of the spell is also expressed to the νεκυδαίμων in dominating sexual language at the conclusion of the *logos*:

“ἵνα μοι ἄξης τὴν δεῖνα καὶ κεφαλὴν κεφαλῇ κολλήσῃ καὶ χεῖλεσι συνάψῃ καὶ γαστέρα γαστρὶ κολλήσῃ καὶ μηρὸν μηρῷ πελάσῃ καὶ τὸ μέλαν τῷ μέλανι συναρμόσῃ καὶ τὰ ἀφροδισιακὰ ἑαυτῆς ἐκτελέσῃ ἢ δεῖνα μετ’ ἐμοῦ, τοῦ δεῖνα, εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον τοῦ αἰῶνος” (400-406).

Other instances of this mode of discourse can be found in PGM IV.1390-1495, PGM IV.1469-1595, PGM XVI.1-75, PGM LXI.1-38, PGM CI.1-53, and *Supplementum Magicum* 46-50, among others.

The elements contained in these expressions of violence include, as mentioned above, the physical discomfort and torture of the *target* and the restraint of the *target's* (normal) sexual activities until the *target* fulfills the *client's* desires. These conditional commands are typically interspersed with claims of power by the *author/spell-caster*, *voces magicae*, and other injunctions to the νεκυδαίμων. The conditional aspect could possibly be seen as an alleviation of the violence; however, the expressed objective of these *logoi*, the absolute subjugation of the *target*, undermines any perception of mitigation. In the activated spells of the *Supplementum Magicum* that follow the basic format of PGM IV.296-46, the νεκυδαίμων is instructed to make the *target* inseparable from and subject to the *client*: “ἀδιαχώριστον μου αὐτὴν ποιήσῃς μέχρι θανάτου, ἵν’ ἔχω αὐτὴν Ἡρώων, ἣν ἔτεκεν Πτολεμαῖς, ὑποτεταγμένην ἐγὼ Ποσιδώνιος, ὃν ἔτεκεν Θσενουβάσθις, εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον τῆς ζωῆς μου” (46.24-26).¹⁶ The desired result of an *agogē* spell is expressed elsewhere in PGM as the complete suppression of the *target's* thoughts and will to the *client*: “καὶ μεταζήτησιν τῶν ἐμῶν τύπων καὶ θέλησιν τῶν ἐμῶν θελημάτων, ἄλλως ἂν ποιήσῃ τὰ ἐπιτασσόμενα αὐτῇ ὑπ’ ἐμοῦ” (PGM IV.1429-1431).¹⁷ The result of these

¹⁶ Other examples include *Supp. Mag.* 47.26 “ὑποτεταγμένην εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον τῆς ζωῆς μου” and *Supp. Mag.* 50.66-69 “καὶ ἀχώριστον αὐτὸν ποιήσῃς μέχρι θανάτου νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας, πάσα ὥρα τοῦ αἰῶνος”; and *Supp. Mag.* 39.5-7 “ἵνα με φιλήσῃ καὶ ὁ ἐὰν αὐτὴν αἰτῶ ἐπὶ κῆρος μοι ᾦν, ἐμοὶ Πτολεμαίῳ, ᾧ ἔτεκεν Θασεῖς”. PGM IV.296-46 has a slightly less focused expression of the same sentiment: “μέχρι οὗ ἔλθῃ πρὸς ἐμέ, τὸν δεῖνα, καὶ ἀχώριστός μου μείνῃ ἢ δεῖνα. ποιήσῃς, κατάδησον εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον τῆς ζωῆς μου καὶ συνανάγκασσον τὴν δεῖνα ὑπουργὸν εἶναί μοι, τῷ δεῖνα, καὶ μὴ ἀποσκιρτάτω ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ ὥραν μίαν τοῦ αἰῶνος” (378-383).

¹⁷ Other examples include PGM IV.1532-1533 “ποιήσῃς πάντα τὰ θελήματατά μου”; PGM LXI.28-29 “ἵνα με φιλήσῃ καὶ ποιήσῃ, ὅσα θέλω”; PGM CI.33 “longing for me and not disobeying me” trans. H. D. Betz in E. N. O’Neil in H. Dieter Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation: Including the Demotic Spells*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992) 308; *Supp. Mag.* 45. 51-52 “καὶ μηδὲν παρὰ ἐμὴν γνώμην πράξῃ”. Cf. the similar sentiment expressed in *Supp. Mag.* 47.26 “λέγουσάν μοι ἃ ἔχει ἐν νόμῳ”.

Νεκυδαίμονες

assertions is the complete effacement of the *target's* identity, which is replaced by the desires of the *client*.

The exaggerated, almost sadistic, aggression expressed in the *logoi* of *agogē* spells has created a locus of discussion for the interpretation of Greek erotic magic. While understanding the ambivalent hostility of Greek attitudes towards erotic love in a non-magical context can explain some of the violence, the sheer density and brutality of these images in erotic magic defies explanation through “traditional descriptions of the effects of erotic seizure.”¹⁸ In other words, the conceptualization of (violent) passion in Greek poetry may help to explain the association of erotic magic with violent language, but cannot account for the degree of brutality expressed in the spells. In addition, the violent imagery contained in most lyric poetry affects the speaker/poet, roughly equivalent to the *client* in the erotic spells. If there is a correlation between “erotic seizure” and the *agogē* spells, then the imagery has somehow been transferred from *client* to *target*, establishing an analogy – “since I (= the *client*) feel this way, then you (= the *target*) must also feel this way – which is not directly evidenced in the spells. Instead, the analogies directly expressed in the *logoi* equate the desired disturbance of the *target* to a magical substance used in the *praxis* of the spell.”¹⁹

The analogy between erotic magic and lyric/elegiac poetry also fails to elucidate another central question concerning violent language in erotic magic: when the *author/spell-caster/client* commanded the νεκυδαίμων to torture the *target*, did the *client* believe that the *target* would actually suffer? And, if he did, was the *target's* suffering physical or mental? In his analysis of *Pythian* 4, Faraone asserts that “the practitioner hoped to compound the naturally deviant behavior of the bird with the discomfort and madness caused by torture, and to project the resulting mental turmoil and physical anguish onto the victim.”²⁰ The torture of the *iunx*-bird, functioning as an effigy of the *target*, is used to create an agitated mental state in Medea “in the hope that she forget her proper respect for home and family and run away with her seducer,”²¹ a combination of sympathetic and persuasive magical techniques. Faraone connects the violent

¹⁸ Faraone (1993), 6: “especially in early Greek lyric.”

¹⁹ E.g., *PGM* IV.1496-1595 addressed to myrrh “ὥς ἐγὼ σε κατακάω καὶ δυνατὴ εἶ, οὕτω ἧς φιλῶ, τῆς δεῖνα, κατὰ καυσον τὸν ἐγκέφαλον, ἔκκαυσον καὶ...” (1540-1544).

²⁰ Faraone (1993), 14. He also refers to “the close cause-and-effect relationship between the torture and the madness of the victim” 10.

²¹ Faraone (1993), 18.

Νεκυδαίμονες

language in the spells to the agitated and deviant behavior desired for the *target* of this particular spell.

The violence expressed in these spells is reminiscent of the language employed by the Greek *defixiones* which bind (καταδέω) the body-parts and (sexual) organs of their targets. The self-description of PGM IV.296-46 as a φιλτροκατάδεσμος indicates that a relationship between *defixiones* and erotic magic was potentially recognized by the *author(s)* of the PGM spells, and, indeed, the concept of ‘binding’ or ‘restraint’ forms a motif in both the *logos* and *praxis* of many of these spells.²² Faraone analyzed the expression of violence in the curse-tablets within the agonistic context of Greek legal and commercial enterprise, and has concluded that in these circumstances the aggression was not imagined as literal violence.²³ The *author/spell-caster/client* of a given curse tablet assimilated the violent language of the spell to the ‘restraint’ of the *target*, transformed from literal to magical through the operation of the chthonic divinities, and resulting in the *client* overcoming his/her competitor(s).²⁴

However, this disjunction between magical discourse and the real social relationships that provide the context for Greek magic has generally not been extended into the framework of erotic magic.²⁵ Instead, interpretations of the *agogē* spells have focused on other aspects of the spells,²⁶ or assumed that the violence reflected a generalized societal perception of women in Roman Egypt. Versnel, in his discussion of healing charms, approaches magical rhetoric as the transgression of the normal bounds of discourse:

“Yet, although certainly being a rhetorical art, magic is both more than and, in many respects, different from ‘normal rhetoric’. For, as we have seen time and again, in the magical spell rhetoric often runs wild in explosions of repetition,

²² Cf. *Supp. Mag.* 45.1-2 “δεμεύω σαι δεσμοῖς ἀλοῖτοῖς Μοῖρε χθόνιοι καὶ τὴν κραταιὰν Ἀνάγκην”.

²³ C. Faraone, “The Agonistic Context of Early Greek Binding Spells,” in *Magika Hiera*, ed. C. Faraone and D. Obbink (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 8-10.

²⁴ Faraone (1991) asserts that this ritual “was primarily used by individuals involved in often-lopsided agonistic situations, to bind the power of their opponents” 20.

²⁵ Faraone (1993) approaches the subject obliquely, asserting that the physical torture of the *iunx*-bird is transformed into mental torture which is projected onto the spell’s *target*, Medea (14) – see discussion above. Cf. Lucian *Φιλοψευδεις* 14.11 “ὥς ἂν ἐμμανέστατα ἐρῶσα” on insanity as the observed result of an *agogē* spell.

²⁶ E.g. C. Faraone, “The Ethnic Origins of a Roman-Era Philtrokatadesmos (PGM iv 296-434),” in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, ed. P. Mirecki and M. Meyer (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 319-343, which examines the sources for the *praxis* of the spell.

Νεκυδαίμονες

variation and transformation of such hyperbolic dimensions as could never be tolerated in normal communication, since they would entail its ruin.”²⁷

This exaggerated approach to language provides a potential explanation for the degree of brutality employed in the *logoi* of many erotic spells, although it does not completely explain the rationale behind this inversion of normal discourse. Unless we are to assume that all the practitioners and clients of Greek love magic bordered on the sadistic, the exaggerated and violent language employed in the *logoi* should have some basis in the operation of the spells or in their underlying magical ‘logic’. However, the human actors – *author*, *spell-caster*, *client*, and *target* – are not the only entities involved in the production and activation of Greek erotic magic.

The Conditional Coercion of the Νεκυδαίμων

The *logoi* of *agogē* spells are typically addressed to one or more νεκυδαίμονες, the unfulfilled spirits of people who died prematurely (*aōroi*) or by violence (*biaiothanotōi*),²⁸ and who functioned as the direct agents of the spell.²⁹ These ‘restless’ spirits existed in a state of suspension between life and death which “would both facilitate interaction with the living and make them easier prey for the practitioner – they were neither impeded nor protected by the walls of the Underworld.”³⁰ Because the spirits of the ‘restless’ dead existed outside both the society of the living *and* the dead, they provided Greek magical practitioners with the ideal medium for communication between both worlds. These (νεκυ)δαίμονες appear in other PGM spells in addition to erotic contexts, frequently as the vehicle for (dream) oracles or as a magical assistant (πάρεδρος) of some other type,³¹ and their use might be recognized as a central, although not well-understood, factor in the practical operation of Greek magic. Thus,

²⁷ Versnel, 154.

²⁸ S. I. Johnston, *Restless Dead: Encounters Between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); especially 127-160. The use of νεκυδαίμονες in Greek magic appears to have derived from a synthesis of the traditional Greek fear of the ‘restless dead’ and the influence of Mesopotamian (and possibly Egyptian) magical practices (Johnston, 30-31 and 87-91).

²⁹ Versnel defined this function for healing charms as “a mediator (spiritual power)” (142); however, the role of the νεκυδαίμων appears to involve direct action rather than intercession with another divine entity.

³⁰ Johnston, 78. Cf. Johnston, 171: “That is, the demon or the demonic is not merely outside of any single, given category, but situated exactly between two categories that are otherwise considered to be mutually exclusive.”

³¹ E.g. PGM I.42-195, PGM IV.1928-2005, and PGM IV.2006-2125. Cf. Johnston, 75 on the roles of νεκυδαίμονες in curses and 80-81 on their use in aggressive magic in the classical period.

Νεκυδαίμονες

the language directed at the νεκυδαίμων or νεκυδαίμονες summoned by a practitioner of Greek magic may help explicate the role of violent imagery in the *logoi* of erotic spells.

Since these Greek erotic spells represent the νεκυδαίμων as an active participant in the magical process, the interaction between the *spell-caster* and the νεκυδαίμων adds another dimension to the analysis of the hierarchical and/or violent relationships between the human actors described in the *logoi*. The use of νεκυδαίμονες in Greek magic depended on the ability of magical practitioners to communicate effectively with the spirits of the dead, and assumed a certain degree of consciousness, at least on the part of the ‘restless’ dead. Johnston asserts that “Greek funerary rites attest to the expectation that the deceased had some sentience in the afterlife.”³² This communication with the νεκυδαίμονες appears to have taken the form of both the *epodai* attested in the spell’s *logoi*, the rituals and sacrifices described in the *praxeis* of these spells, and possibly even through *characterēs*. Some ‘oracle’ spells appear to indicate that the νεκυδαίμων could also ‘speak’ to the *spell-caster*, either directly³³ or through dreams,³⁴ implying that νεκυδαίμονες were capable of linguistic communication. However, the existence of these consultations does not reveal any specific details about the rationality of νεκυδαίμονες, or their memories or perceptions of the society of those still living.

Some details about how the *author/spell-caster* viewed the νεκυδαίμονες can be reconstructed from language incorporated into the *logoi*. The spirits used in erotic magic were apparently tied to the location of a tomb, or cemetery, “ὀρκίζω πάντας δαίμονας τοὺς ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ,”³⁵ or even to their skeleton.³⁶ Other indications in the language used to address these νεκυδαίμονες reveal that they were paradoxically thought to be ‘at rest’ until ‘aroused’

³² Johnston, 43. Cf. Johnston, 160: “In ancient Greece, as in many other cultures, the society of the dead mirrored that of the living, and what made the dead unhappy were precisely the same things that would have made the living unhappy.”

³³ E.g., PGM III.231-233; PGM IV.248-252; PGM LXII.24-46.

³⁴ E.g., PGM IV.2006-2125.

³⁵ PGM IV.345-6; also, *Supp. Mag.* 46.5, 47.5-6, 48.5-6, and 49.15; PGM IV.2038-2047; and PGM CI.1-5, 17; *Supp. Mag.* 45.1-4 “ὅτι ἐξορκίζω ὑμᾶς, δέμονες, τοὺς ἐνθάδε διατραφομένους καὶ ἐνθάδε διατρίβοντες καὶ τοὺς ἐνθάδε κούρους ἄωρους” and 14-15 “ἐξορκίζω ὑμᾶς, δέμονες, οἱ ἐνθάδε κίμενοι”. Cf. PGM IV.1390-1399 and 1408-1409, which specifically refers to the souls of ἥρωες as confined (συνέχεσθε) in an unspecified location.

³⁶ PGM IV.1872-1927; PGM IV.1928-2005, which identifies the invoked νεκυδαίμων as “οὐπερ ἀπὸ σκῆνους καρέχω”; and PGM IV.2006-2125 all require the skulls or (skeletal) corpse of a *biaiothanatos*. PGM IV.2125-2139 is a “κάροξος σφραγίς πρὸς τοὺς ἀκαταλλήλους τῶν σκύφων.”

Νεκυδαίμονες

by the *spell-caster*: “καὶ ἀνέγειρέ μοι σαυτόν.”³⁷ That the νεκυδαίμονες could be thought to be simultaneously ‘restless’ and ‘at rest’ reflects their complex liminal status, and corresponds to the perception of magic as transgressive of natural boundaries. The rules of normal society simply did not apply to νεκυδαίμονες, and this impacted the mode(s) of discourse which could be used to interact with them, just as the power of the Olympians demanded a certain degree of deference. This ‘arouse’ command forms part of a series of commands and binding oaths targeted at the νεκυδαίμων by the *spell-caster*, which were apparently designed to ensure that the νεκυδαίμων completed the objective of the spell. Potentially, such concerns with restraining the νεκυδαίμων could be traced to archaic and early classical period Greek concerns with the uncontrolled ‘restless’ dead, who might operate without supervision from a magical practitioner.³⁸

In order to impose effective limitations on the action of νεκυδαίμονες, the *spell-caster* needed to establish him/her-self as more powerful than the spirit invoked by the spell. In PGM IV.296-466, the *author/spell-caster* establishes a subordinate role for the νεκυδαίμων through a series of commands and invocations interspersed with his instructions concerning the *target* of the spell:

ὀρκίζω πάντας δαίμονας τοὺς ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ συναρσταθῆναι τῷ δαίμονι τούτῳ: καὶ ἀνέγειρέ μοι σαυτόν, ὅστις ποτ’ εἴ, εἴτε ἄρρην, εἴτε θῆλυς καὶ ὕπαγε... (345-348)

ὅτι σε ἐξορκίζω κατὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ φοβεροῦ καὶ τρομεροῦ, οὗ ἢ γῆ ἀκούσασα τοῦ ὀνόματος ἀνοιγήσεται, οὗ οἱ δαίμονες ἀκούσαντες τοῦ ὀνόματος ἐνφόβου φοβηθήσονται, οὗ ποταμοὶ καὶ αἱ πέτραι ἀκούσαντες τὸ ὄνομα ῥήσονται. ὀρκίζω σε, νεκύδαιμον, εἴτε ἄρρης, εἴτε θῆλυς, κατὰ τοῦ *voces magicae* μὴ μου παρακούσης, νεκύδαιμον, τῶν ἐντολῶν καὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων, ἀλλ’ ἔγειρον μόνον σεαυτὸν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐχούσης σε ἀναπαύσεως, ὅστις ποτὲ εἴ, εἴτε ἄρρης, εἴτε θῆλυς καὶ ὕπαγε... (356-371)

ἐάν μοι τοῦτο τελέσης, ἀναπαύσω σε ταχέως: ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι Βαρβαρ Ἀδωναί, ὁ τὰ ἄστρα κρύβων, ὁ λαμπροφεγγῆς οὐρανοῦ κρατῶν, ὁ κύριος κόσμου *voces magicae* (384-394)

ὅτι ὀρκίζω σε, νεκύδαιμον, κατὰ τοῦ φοβεροῦ, μεγάλου *voces magicae* (396-399)

³⁷ PGM IV.347. Cf. PGM IV.360-70 “ἀλλ’ ἔγειρον μόνον σεαυτὸν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐχούσης σε ἀναπαύσεως”; *Supp. Mag.* 46.6-7 “διέγειρέ”; *Supp. Mag.* 39.1-2 “ἐξορκίζω σε, νεκύδαιμον, καὶ διεγείρω τὸν δαίμονά σου”; *Supp. Mag.* 47.6-7 “διέγειραί” and 18 “ἔγειραί”; *Supp. Mag.* 48.20, 31; *Supp. Mag.* 49.16-17 “ἔγειρέ μοι σεαυτὸν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐχούσης σε ἀναπαύσεως” and 39; *Supp. Mag.* 50.12-13, 50-51; PGM 1.247-262; PGM IV.1419-1420; PGM CI. 4-5.

³⁸ Johnston, 30-31. In fact, one of the original functions of the *goētes* probably involved combating such vengeful, self-motivated νεκυδαίμονες, Johnston, 80-81.

Νεκυδαίμονες

The *spell-caster* ‘binds’ the νεκυδαίμων through the power of the invoked *voces magicae* to his/her service for the duration of the spell, and then ‘releases’ the spirit at its successful conclusion. The first address to the νεκυδαίμων (345-348) effectively summons the spirit, the second (356-371) establishes the *spell-caster’s* control over the νεκυδαίμων through the use of extensive *voces magicae*, and the third (384-394) and fourth (396-399) function as reinforcements of the *spell-caster’s* power. The activated spells in *Supplementum Magicum* 46-49 preserve almost identical formulaic language,³⁹ while *Supplementum Magicum* 50 displays a condensed version of the formula.⁴⁰ The *author* of PGM IV.1496-1595 addresses “myrrh” with very similar patterns addressed.⁴¹ The arrangement of these adjurations, which are interlocked with the commands regarding the *target* of the spell, provides the foundation for understanding the *logos* of PGM IV.296-466 as a cohesive magical utterance, whose mutually dependent elements influence and reinforce each other.

The formulaic language – (ἐξ)ορκίζω σε, νεκύδαιμον, κατὰ (τοῦ ὀνόματος)... – used by the *spell-caster* to establish control over the νεκυδαίμων “first shows up in the Greek

³⁹ *Supp. Mag.* 46.5-7 “ὀρκίζω πάντας τοὺς δαίμονας τοὺς ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ, συνπαράστατε τῷ δαίμονι τούτῳ: διέγυρῃ μοι σεαυτὸν, νέκυς δαίμων, ὅστις ποτὲ εἶ, εἴτε ἄρσης εἴτε θήλια, καὶ ὑπαγε...” and 12-19 “ὅτι ὀρκίζω σε κατὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ φοβεροῦ καὶ τρομεροῦ, οὗ ἢ γῆ ἀκούσασα τὸ ὄνομα ἀνοίγεται, οὗ οἱ δαίμονες ἀκούσαντες τὸ ὄνομα ἔμφοβοι τρέμουνσι, οὗ οἱ ποταμοὶ καὶ θάλασσαι ἀκούουσιν τὸ ὄνομα ἔμφοβοι φοβοῦνται, οὗ αἱ πέτραι ἀκούουσιν τὸ ὄνομα ῥήσσονται: ὀρκίζω σε νέκυς δαίμων, ὅστις ποτὲ εἶ, εἴτε ἄρσης εἴτε θήλια, κατὰ τοῦ *voces magicae*: μὴ μου παρακούσης, νέκυς δαίμων, ὅστις ποτὲ εἶ...”; *Supp. Mag.* 47.5-7, one of a very few examples of a named νεκυδαίμων, “ὀρκίζω... συνπαραστῆναι τῷ δαίμονι τούτῳ Ἀντινόῳ: διέγυρῃ μοι σεαυτὸν καὶ ὑπαγε...” and 12-18 “Ἀντίνοε, κατὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ τρομεροῦ καὶ φοβεροῦ... [γῆ, δαίμονες, ποταμοὶ, πέτραι] ὀρκίζω σε, νεκύδαιμον Ἀντίνοε, κατὰ τοῦ *voces magicae*: μὴ παρακούσης, νεκύδαιμον Ἀντίνοε, ἀλλ’ ἐγειραί...”; *Supp. Mag.* 48.5-6 “ἐξορκίζω σε, πάντας... τῷ νεκυδαίμονι: <ἐγειρέ μοι σεαυτὸν, νεκυδαίμων,> ὅστις ποτὲ εἶ...” and 14-20 “ὅτι σε ἐξορκίζω, νεκύδαιμον, κατὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος... [γῆ, δαίμονες, ποταμοὶ, θάλασσε, πέτρε] κατὰ τοῦ *voces magicae*: μὴ μου παρακούσης τῶν ἐντολῶν, νεκύδαιμον, ὅστις... ἀλλ’ ἐγειραί...” and 30-32 “μὴ μου παρακούσης...”; *Supp. Mag.* 49.15-17 “ὀρκίζω... συμπαραστῆναι τῷ δέμονι τούτῳ: ἐγειρέ μοι σεαυτὸν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐχούσης σε ἀναπαύσεως καὶ ὑπαγε...” and 28-43 “ὅτι ἐξορκίζω σε, νεκύδαιμον, κατὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος... [γῆ, δαίμονες, ποταμοὶ, θάλασσαι, πέτραι] ὀρκίζω σε, νεκύδαιμον, ἵτε ἄρσης ἵτε θήλια κατὰ τοῦ *voces magicae*: μὴ μου παρακούσης, νεκύδαιμον, ὅστις... ἀλλ’ ἐγειραί...” followed by two more repetitions of the ὀρκίζω σε κατὰ *voces magicae* formula.

⁴⁰ *Supp. Mag.* 50.10-16 the name of the νεκυδαίμων was inserted above the line, apparently as an afterthought, “συνπαρασταθῆναι τῷ δέμονι τούτῳ: ὅστις ποτὲ εἶ, Ἰκαμῆς, νεκυδαίμων, ἐγειρέ μοι σεαυτὸν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐχούσης σε ἀναπαύσεως: ἐξορκίζω σε γὰρ κατὰ τοῦ ἁγίου ὀνόματος, οὗ φρίσι τὰ ὄρη καὶ τρέμι τὰ δεμόνια: οἴπαγε...” and 32-51 “ἐξορκίζω σε γὰρ κατὰ τοῦ ἐνδόξου ὀνόματος *voces magicae*: ὀρκίζω σε, μὴ παρακούσης τῶν ὀνομάτων, ἀλλὰ ἐξέγειρε σεαυτὸν...”.

⁴¹ E.g. 1533-1540: “ὅτι ἐξορκίζω σε, Ζμύρνα, κατὰ τῶν τριῶν ὀνομάτων, Ἀνοχω, Ἀβρασάξ, Τρω καὶ τῶν ἐπακολου-θοτέρων καὶ τῶν ἰσχυροτέρων Κορμειωθ, Ἰάω, Σαβαώθ, Ἀδωναί, ἵνα μοι τὰς ἐντολὰς ἐπιτελέσης, Ζμύρνα”.

Νεκυδαίμονες

magical tradition in North Africa during the first century CE, presumably by way of Jewish rituals used to “exorcize” evil demons.”⁴² The application of this technique for controlling νεκυδαίμονες, and other (semi-)divine powers, is attested by Lucian in the *Φιλοψευδεις*: “ὁ δὲ ὄρκους ἐπάγων, εἰ δὲ μὴ πεισθείη, καὶ ἀπειλῶν ἐξελαύνει, τὸν δαίμονα” (16.14-15). The context, the ‘exorcism’ of an apparent epileptic by an unnamed expert Syrian practitioner,⁴³ may even demonstrate that the eastern influence on Greek demonology was recognized by some knowledgeable⁴⁴ Greeks. The invocations of *voces magicae*, interspersed with the names of known divinities, their epithets, and descriptions of their supremacy operate as displays of the power and effectiveness of the spell and its *author*, focalized through the actions and words of the *spell-caster*. The adjuration of νεκυδαίμονες in erotic magic resembles the use of legalistic formulae in curse tablets, where the spirits are bound in the presence of chthonic deities such as Hermes, Hecate, and Peresphone.⁴⁵ However, the binding oaths in the PGM spells function as a form of ‘persuasive’ magic directed by the *spell-caster* at the targeted νεκυδαίμων, and represent a ‘contract’ between two unequal parties – essentially, the *spell-caster* does not permit the νεκυδαίμων to refuse the agreement.

The most extreme examples of the *author/spell-caster* asserting his/her dominance over the νεκυδαίμων occur in those instances where the *spell-caster* assimilates him/her-self to the divine entities implicated by the *voces magicae* pronounced in the spell.⁴⁶ This quasi-rhetorical

⁴² Faraone (2002), 328. The Hebraic influence can also be seen in the use of the unnamed ‘name of power’ invoked at PGM IV.356-361, a formula repeated exactly only in *Supplementum Magicum* 46-49 but alluded to in many other PGM spells: e.g., *Supp. Mag.* 39.7-10 “ὅτι ἐξορκίζω τὸν πάντα συνέχοντα κύριον θεὸν Ἰαω *voces magicae*” which may allude to the Hebrew tetragrammaton, YHWH; *Supp. Mag.* 45.4 “ἐξορκίζω ὑμᾶς κατὰ τοῦ ἀνικήτου θεοῦ”; *Supp. Mag.* 50.14-16 cited in note 39; PGM IV.1531-1533 “ὄρκίζω σε κατὰ τοῦ παντοκράτορος θεοῦ ζώντος αἰεί”; PGM IV.2031-2034 “ἐχορκίζω σε, νεκύδαμον, κατὰ τοῦ ἰσχυροῦ καὶ ἀπαραιτήτου θεοῦ καὶ κατὰ τῶν ἁγίων αὐτοῦ ὀνομάτων”; PGM V.121-123 “ἐπικαλοῦμαι σε, τὸν ἐν τῷ κενῷ πνεύματι δεινὸν καὶ ἀόρατον θεόν”; PGM LXI.19-20 “ἐξορκίζω σε τὸν μέγαν θεὸν τὸν ἐπὶ τῆς ὀροφῆς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ”.

⁴³ “τὸν Σύρον τὸν ἐκ τῆς Παλαιστίνης, τὸν ἐπὶ τούτῳ σοφιστήν” (16.6-7).

⁴⁴ Regardless of the satiric tone of the *Φιλοψευδεις*, it is apparent that Lucian had intimate knowledge of several of the processes and magical formulae employed in the PGM. Cf. the description of an animated *Eros* figurine in 14-15 which parallels PGM IV.1829-1871 and PGM XII.14-95.

⁴⁵ Johnston, 72.

⁴⁶ PGM IV. 385-394. Other examples include PGM I.251-253 “I am Anubis, I am Osir-Phre, I am Osot Soronouier, I am Osiris whom Seth destroyed” translated from the original Old Coptic by E. N. O’Neil *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation: Including the Demotic Spells*, 9; PGM V.145-158 contains a series of “ἐγὼ εἰμι” statements which attribute divine power to the *spell-caster*; PGM V.247-303 also contains a series of “ἐγὼ εἰμι” statements interspersed with apocalyptic threats. Cf. PGM V.108-109 “ἐγὼ εἰμι Μοῦσης ὁ προγῆτης σου” and 113-114 “ἐγὼ

Νεκυδαίμονες

device claims divine authority for the *spell-caster* and links him/her directly to the very gods and goddesses who normally have supremacy over the νεκυδαίμονες. This appears to be a somewhat puzzling strategy, since the νεκυδαίμονες could presumably differentiate between a human *spell-caster* and a god. Moreover, it was apparently used sparingly, since this formula is repeated only once in the *Supplementum Magicum* spells which derive from PGM IV.296-466.⁴⁷ However, the repetitive nature of the commands and exhortations directed at the νεκυδαίμονες may demonstrate that they were viewed as vulnerable, and not particularly intelligent, by Greek magical practitioners;⁴⁸ their marginal status rendered them susceptible to manipulation since they were isolated from the social structures of both the living and the dead, and hence had no external support in resisting this compulsion.

In addition to the direct “ἐγὼ (γάρ) εἰμι *voces magicae*” formula found in the *logos* of PGM IV.296-466, the *author/spell-caster* of PGM LXI.1-38 orders the νεκυδαίμων to obey his commands “ὅτι περὶ ἐμὲ ἔχω τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ, οὗ οὐκ ἔξεστιν ὄνομα οὐδενὶ ὀνομάζειν, εἰ μὴ μόνῳ ἐμοὶ διὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ δύναμιν *voces magicae*” (23-25). This spell presents a more cautious claim: not directly assimilating the *spell-caster* to the god, but instead implying that the *spell-caster* has an exclusive relationship with the divinity based on secret magical knowledge. Although this is a subtle distinction, it may indicate that the *author/spell-caster* employed a different approach to the divine power(s) invoked to control the νεκυδαίμων, or that he/she was working from a variant magical tradition.⁴⁹ A final example combines an adaptation of the “ἐγὼ εἰμι” formula with a second aspect of the interaction between *spell-caster* and νεκυδαίμων, the common “μὴ μου παρακούσης” command. In PGM CI.1-53, a particularly forceful *agogē* spell, the *spell-caster* orders the spirit, “Do not disobey me, but do [it]

εἰμι ἄγγελος τοῦ Φαπρω Ὅσοροννωφρις” for a similar technique applied to mythical or legendary individuals with ‘divine’ power.

⁴⁷ *Supp. Mag.* 48. 40-47 “ἐγὼ εἰμι Βαρβαδωναιὶ Βαρβαδωναι, ὁ τὰ ἄστρα κρύβων, ὁ τὸν οὐρανὸν κρατέων, ὁ τὸν κόσμον ἀληθεύων *voces magicae*”; the formula is tacked on at the end of the spell and not integrated as in PGM IV.296-466.

⁴⁸ Cf. the injunction of the νεκυδαίμων in PGM CI.1-53: “May I not be compelled to say the same things again” (28-30), which implies that this spirit, at least, was not particularly intelligent and needed forceful instruction to stay focused.

⁴⁹ Other aspects of the language and discourse of this spell seem to indicate that the *author* shared the same opinion of νεκυδαίμονες as other practitioners of Greek magic. It is also possible that this is simply not as strong an *agogē* spell as others in the PGM, an interpretation supported by the spell’s coda, which describes the process for reversing the attraction – a magical ‘divorce.’ The discrepancy in a *spell-caster*’s mode of address between a god and a νεκυδαίμων can be seen in the *epodē* of PGM IV.1928-2005.

Νεκυδαίμονες

quickly, because ordering you is *voces magicae*" (23-28). This particular occurrence directly associates the *author/spell-caster's* assimilation of divine power to the coercion of the νεκυδαίμων.

Many PGM spells which employ νεκυδαίμονες include expressions which instruct or comment upon the obedience of the targeted spirit. This terminology establishes the *spell-caster's* supremacy in relation to that νεκυδαίμων, and constructs an environment in which the *spell-caster's* commands regarding the *target* of the spell will be successfully completed. In PGM I.247-252, a brief invisibility spell, the *spell-caster* – after assimilating himself to Anubis, Osiris, and other *voces magicae* – instructs the νεκυδαίμων, "ὁ ἐὰν ἐπιτάζω ὑμῖν ἐγὼ ὁ δεῖνα, ὅπως ἐπήκοοί μοι γένησθε" (254-255).⁵⁰ The generality of the command, even in the context of a single-purpose spell, emphasizes the desirability of the total obedience of the spirit. In PGM IV. 2006-2125, a spell to summon a demon assistant, the summoned νεκυδαίμων actually tells the *spell-caster*, "ὁ θέλεις, ἐπίταξον, καὶ ποιῶ" (2054) in the context of a dream oracle. Another example occurs in the 'advertisement' for the second half of PGM I.42-195. The *author* asserts that "ἐὰν ἐπιτάξης, παρ' αὐτὰ τὸ ἔργον ἐπιτελεῖ" (97-98).⁵¹ The emphasis on rapidity, as evidenced by the common tagline appended to many different types of spells,⁵² forms an undercurrent in Greek magical discourse. In reference to the instructions given to νεκυδαίμονες, this prominence may also reflect the practitioner's concern with controlling the spirit – the longer a νεκυδαίμων takes to discharge a spell, the greater likelihood that he will escape the *spell-caster's* control.

Other spells contain a more forceful version of this type of command: the "μὴ μου παρακούσης" formula,⁵³ an implied threat closely associated with the *author/spell-caster's* assumption of (divine) magical power. The primary meaning of παρακούω, 'to hear accidentally or imperfectly,' emphasizes the importance of the spoken incantation for these spells, and further evidences that Greek magical practitioners conceived of νεκυδαίμονες as at least partially capable of verbal communication. The injunction also implies that the

⁵⁰ Cf. PGM IV.1468-1469 "send up to me the phantoms of the dead forthwith for service in this very hour"; PGM IV.272-274; PGM IV.1977-1979; PGM V.161-170;

⁵¹ Cf. PGM IV.248-251 "finally, when you have called, whomever you called will appear, god or dead man, and he will give an answer about anything you ask".

⁵² "ἤδη, ἤδη, ταχύ, ταχύ".

⁵³ In addition to PGM IV.296-466 and its derivatives, cf. PGM I.42-195 "σὺ δὲ αὐτὸν ἐξορκίζε τῷδε τῷ ὄρκῳ... καὶ μὴ προσιγῇσθαι μηδὲ παρακούσθαι ὅλως" (79-81); PGM IV.1479-1481 "μὴ μέλλετε οὖν μηδὲ βραδύνετε, ἀλλ' ἀποπέμπετε, θεοί". Other examples will be discussed below.

Νεκυδαίμονες

νεκυδαίμονες had the potential to ignore the *spell-caster*, and hence required persuasion or coercion to perform the action(s) required of them. In Lucian's *Φιλοψευδείς*, this verb depicts an elderly snake's resistance to magical compulsion: "μὴ δυνάμενος παρακούσας τοῦ προστάγματος" (12.21). Although framed as satire, the anecdote reflects the pre-occupation of Greek magical practitioners with exerting control over the νεκυδαίμονες. In PGM IV.296-466 and the related *Supplementum Magicum* 46-50,⁵⁴ the "μὴ μου παρακούσης" directive occurs directly after the central invocation of the *voces magicae*, which includes the reference to the unnamed 'name of power.' The position of this injunction at the heart of the spell, and its association with an explicit reminder of the *spell-caster's* superior magical power, reinforces the potency of the command.

Other occurrences of this formula strengthen the coercion of the νεκυδαίμων through the use of direct intimidation: some threaten harm to the recalcitrant νεκυδαίμων, and others threaten the fabric of the universe itself. An example of the first type occurs in PGM IV.2006-2125, "βραδύναντι δέ σοι κολάσεις ἐπενεγκῶ, ἅς οὐ δύνασαι ἐνεγκεῖν" (2096-2097).⁵⁵ This type of threat attempts to ensure the spirit's cooperation through its self-interest and/or instinct for self-preservation. This implies that νεκυδαίμονες were, to some degree, self-aware entities capable of perceiving pain or discomfort. The second type of threat operates in a more oblique manner: "ἐὰν δὲ παρακούσητε καὶ μὴ ταχέως τελέσῃται ὁ λέγω ὑμῖν, οὐ δύνατε ὁ ἥλιος ὑπὸ γῆν, οὔτε ὁ Ἄδης οὔτε ὁ κόσμος οὐκ ἔστιν... ἐὰν δὲ μοι μὴ τελέσητε ἃ λέγω ὑμῖν, κατακαύση ὑμᾶς ὁ Εὐνεβυωθ" (*Supp. Mag.* 45.9-11, 14-15). The *author/spell-caster* attempts to control the νεκυδαίμων by threatening the order of the cosmos. Although magical operations at least partly depend on the inversion of natural forces, the degree of cosmic disturbance represented by this threat exceeds even normal magical discourse. A combination of the two types occurs in PGM LXI.1-38: "ἢ διακόνῃσόν μοι πρὸς τὴν δεῖνα, πρίν σοι ἐπαναγκαστικούς θεοὺς ἐνέγκω, ἐὰν μὴ πέμψης, ἐπεὶ σιδηρᾶς θύρας ῥήξω αὐτός" (11-13). The deployment of *voces magicae* in the (ἐξ)ορκίζω formula, along with the implied (or explicit) collapse of the

⁵⁴ PGM IV.367-369 "μὴ μου παρακούσης, νεκύδαιμον, τῶν ἐντολῶν καὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων, ἀλλ' ἔγειρον μόνον σεαυτὸν"; *Supp. Mag.* 46.18-19; *Supp. Mag.* 47.17-18; *Supp. Mag.* 48.19-20; *Supp. Mag.* 49.38-39; *Supp. Mag.* 50.48-51. The *Supplementum Magicum* examples condense the formula through the omission of one or both elements of "τῶν ἐντολῶν καὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων."

⁵⁵ Cf. earlier in the same spell "καὶ συνθέσθαι μοι τὸ διακονῆσαι. εἰ δὲ μὴ, ἐτέρας κολάσεις προσδόκα" (PGM IV.2064-2066); and the extensive threats directed against the "ὁ μέγας δαίμων" in PGM V.247-303.

Νεκυδαίμονες

human practitioner's power with the might of the gods apparently convinced the νεκυδαίμονες that the *spell-caster* had the power to enforce the condition.

In addition to threatening and coercive language, the *authors* (and *spell-casters*) of the PGM spells occasionally offered rewards to the νεκυδαίμονες upon completion of their commands.⁵⁶ In PGM IV.296-466, the *spell-caster* offers to 'release' the νεκυδαίμων after the *target* has been successfully attracted: "ἐάν μοι τοῦτο τελέσης, ἀναπαύσω σε ταχέως" (384).⁵⁷ This formula is directly followed by the "ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι" element, which acts as a reassurance to the νεκυδαίμων that the *spell-caster* has sufficient authority to fulfill his/her promise, as well as a not-so-subtle reminder of the consequences of disobedience. Three of the corresponding *Supplementum Magicum* spells employ a similar dismissal phrase: "ἐάν τοῦτό μοι ποιήσης, ἀπολύσω σε" (46.27), "ἐάν τοῦτο ποιήσης, ἀπολύσω σε" (47.28), and "ἄμ μοι τοῦτο τελέσης, λύσω σε ταχέως. (50.71-72). The combination of reward and punishment provided a bi-partite motivation for the νεκυδαίμονες, dependent on the *author/spell-caster's* authoritarian role. Significantly, the release promised the νεκυδαίμων in PGM IV.296-466 is apparently the same state it enjoyed prior to the activation of the spell: "ἔγειρον μόνον σεαυτὸν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐχούσης σε ἀναπαύσεως" (369-370).⁵⁸ Contrary to modern assumptions about the release of an earth-bound spirit, the Greek 'restless' dead were apparently content to remain in their liminal state, and none of the instances of this formula implies that the spirit will be sent down to Hades.

The two verbs employed in the dismissal formula, ἀναπαύω and ἀπολύω, have the general sense 'release.'⁵⁹ The use of ἀναπαύω employed in PGM IV.296-466 appears to be nearly anomalous, as the other examples of this formula in PGM generally employ ἀπολύω (see below). Sophocles uses ἀναπαύω with the sense 'to give rest (from wandering)' in *Oedipus at Colonus*, "κἀναπαύσατον τὸν πρόσθ' ἐρῆμον τοῦδε δυστήνου πλάνου" (1113-1114), and Demos-thenes employs the verb in "Against Phaenippus" to refer to release from civic involvement "λητουργοῦντας καὶ ἐν τοῖς τριακοσίοις ὄντας ἀναπαύειν" (42.25). The primary application of ἀπολύω, in contrast, involves acquittal in legal proceedings: "παῖδας

⁵⁶ Cf. PGM IV.2095-2096 "τέλεσον, δαῖμον, τὰ ἐνθάδε γεγραμμένα. τελέσαντι δέ σοι θυσίαν ἀποδώσω."

⁵⁷ Johnston, 78: "the practitioner who wants to persuade a soul to cooperate promises that, once it has finished his task, he will set it free or even protect it from having to serve other practitioners."

⁵⁸ Cf. *Supp. Mag.* 49.17 and *Supp. Mag.* 50.13-14, quoted above.

⁵⁹ Neither verb has the connotation of manumission: the terminology employed in the papyri appears to involve forms of ἐλεύθερα (e.g., P.Tebt.0407 and P.Col.:10:267).

Νεκυδαίμονες

δὲ αὐτοῦ ἀπαχ-θέντας Πανσανίης ἀπέλυσε τῆς αἰτίας.”⁶⁰ Herodotus and Xenophon both employ ἀπολύω to refer to release from military service,⁶¹ and Thucydides applies the term to liberation from political domination: “οἱ μὲν τῆς ἀρχῆς ἀπολυθῆναι βουλόμενοι” (2.8). The most significant application of ἀπολύω occurs in Plato’s *Phaedo*, where he employs the term to the release of the soul from the body: “φιλόσοφος ἀπολύων ὅτι μάλιστα τὴν ψυχὴν ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ σώματος κοινωνίας διαφερόντως τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων” (65a). Although framed in a philosophical dialogue, this passage explicitly connects ἀπολύω to matters involving the soul, often conflated with δαίμονες in later antiquity,⁶² and hints at the magical application of the term. The range of meanings inherent in these two verbs permits their application to a specialized magical function referring to the ‘release’ of a νεκυδαίμων.

The employment of ἀναπαύω and ἀπολύω in the context of the PGM spells supports the interpretation of these verbs as technical idioms pertaining to the release of a νεκυδαίμων from the service of a *spell-caster*, especially in the context of spells which invoke a spirit as an assistant to the practitioner. In PGM I.42-195, the *author* instructs the *spell-caster* to observe a particular libation when he releases the star/aerial *daimōn*/angel summoned for the purposes of an oracle: “ἐπὶ δὲ ἀπολύσεως αὐτόν, μετὰ τὸ ἀποστῆναι ἐπιθύει αὐτῷ τὰ προκείμενα καὶ σπένδε οἶνοι, καὶ οὕτως τῷ κραταίῳ ἀγγέλω φίλος ἔσει” (170-172). In PGM II.64-183, the *spell-caster* is also instructed to release a divine entity also summoned for divination: “μαθὼν δὲ ἅπαντα ἀπολύσεις δοξοποιήσας ἀξίως ῥάνας αἵματι περιστεῖρας καὶ ἐπιθύσας ζμύρναν εἰπέ: ‘ἄπελθε, δέσποτα *voces magicæ*’” (176-178). PGM IV.154-285 records two water divination spells which can summon both gods and νεκυδαίμονες. At the conclusion of both *praxeis*, the *spell-caster* is instructed to release the spirit: “ἐὰν δὲ εἴπη, ἀπόλυε αὐτόν τῇ ἀπολύσει” (232-233) and “ἐπὶ δὲ ἐκμάθης, ἀπόλυε τὸν θεὸν μόνον τῷ ἰσχυρῷ ὀνόματι τῷ τῶν ἑκατὸν γραμμάτων λέγων” (250-252). The first *praxis* in this spell appears to support the existence of a generalized dismissal formula, an ἀπόλυσις, perhaps with an attendant ritual that varied with the type of divinity or νεκυδαίμων. Each of these instances implies that the

⁶⁰ Herodotus 9.88. Also, e.g., Herodotus 2.174; Xenophon *Anabasis* 6.6.15; and Lysias 20.20. Cf. the release of Barabas just prior to the Crucifixion: Matthew 27:15, 17, and 21; Mark 15:6, 9, and 11; Luke 23:16, 18, 20, 22, and 25; and John 18:39 and 19.10 and 12.

⁶¹ Herodotus 4.84; Xenophon *Cyropaedia* 6.2.37.

⁶² I. Kidd, “Some philosophical Demons,” *BICS* 40 (1995), 222-223

Νεκυδαίμονες

release of the summoned spirit is dependent on the fulfillment of the goal of the spell:⁶³ the same conditional format evidenced in *PGM* IV.296-466. In *PGM* LXI.1-38, which displays several other anomalous traits, the *spell-caster* employs ἀπολύω to refer to the release of the νεκυδαίμων against the *target*: “ἀπολύω σε πρὸς τὴν δεῖνα, τὴν ἔτεκεν ἡ δεῖνα” (10). This apparent inversion of the formula may imply that the *spell-caster* intended the νεκυδαίμων to have a greater autonomy in the prosecution of this particular *agogē* spell, or conversely, the *author* of the spell may have confused or misunderstood the convention.

The passages presented above illustrate some observations concerning the character, status, and function of νεκυδαίμονες in the magical spells of Greco-Roman Egypt. Within the context of these practices, νεκυδαίμονες filled the role of the servants of magical practitioners, bound by an asymmetrical conditional coercion. The exceptionally inferior status of the νεκυδαίμων, compared to the (exaggerated) magical power and proficiency of the *spell-caster*, compelled the spirit to accept the terms expounded in the *logos* of a given spell. Many of these interactions took the form of a double condition: if the νεκυδαίμων completed the demands of the *spell-caster*, it was released; if it failed to complete its orders, it was tortured. The violent domination of the νεκυδαίμονες reflects a long-standing cultural apprehension concerning the spirits of the ‘untimely dead,’⁶⁴ and forms a special mode of discourse appropriate to a magical setting. Other factors suggest that the *PGM authors* viewed these spirits as capable of restricted communication with magical practitioners and cognizant of only a limited recollection of the complexities of human interactions.

The *PGM* spells portray the νεκυδαίμονες as identifying only two social roles: master and servant. Although the language employed in these spells does not directly parallel the Greek idioms of slavery and manumission, the existence of a social relationship determined exclusively by power and defined in terms of binary opposition certainly reflects the social realities of a slave-owning community. Bagnall’s observation “that though slaves provided much of life’s comforts to the slave-owning class, they also posed much of its trouble and even danger,”⁶⁵ could apply equally to the problematic relationship between *spell-casters* and the νεκυδαίμονες they manipulated. Although the marginalized νεκυδαίμονες were vulnerable

⁶³ Cf. *PGM* V.54-69, a short divination spell, “ἐρχέσθω ὁ θεὸς ὁ χρηματίζων μοι καὶ μὴ ἀπερχέσθω, ἄχρις ἂν ἀπολύσω αὐτόν” (57-59).

⁶⁴ Johnston, 84.

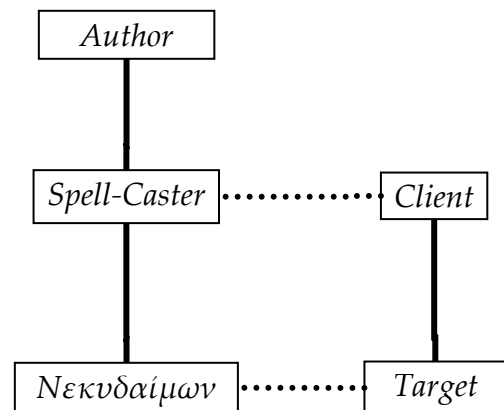
⁶⁵ R. S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 211.

Νεκυδαίμονες

to exploitation by Greek magical practitioners for precisely the same reasons that resulted in the enslavement of debtors and war captives, when left uncontrolled, their illicit nocturnal activities posed a serious threat to the structure of society.

Conclusions

The *epodē* of PGM IV.1928-2005, a prayer addressed to Helios, contains the *spell-caster's* authoritarian requirement that the νεκυδαίμων assistant he/she is summoning “μηδ’ ἀντία μοι φρονέοιτο” (1973). The close similarity between the sentiment of this statement and the expressions in PGM IV.1429-1431, PGM IV.1532-1533, PGM LXI.23-25, PGM CI.33, *Supplementum Magicum* 45.51-52, and *Supplementum Magicum*. 47.26 suggests that the *author/spell-caster* of these spells has transferred the necessity for absolute domination of the νεκυδαίμων into the description of the desired liaison between the *client* and *target* of the spell. The coercive dynamic between the *spell-caster* and the conjoured νεκυδαίμων, along with the associated violent discourse, permeates the magical language of Greek spells. This aggression transfers to erotic magic as a result of the νεκυδαίμων's limited understanding of real human relationships. The *spell-caster* creates an analogical relationship between the *client* and *target* on the one hand and him/her-self and the νεκυδαίμων on the other, in order to avoid confusing the νεκυδαίμων and maintain a consistent intensity in the *logos*. The ‘persuasive’ use of violent language in Greek *defixiones* provides a foundation for understanding the brutality of erotic magic in terms of a magical, formulaic discourse designed to reinforce the hierarchical relationship between the *author/spell-caster* and the invoked νεκυδαίμων/νεκυδαίμονες.



Νεκυδαίμονες

Works Cited

- Bagnall, R. S. *Egypt in Late Antiquity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Betz, H. Dieter, ed. *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation: Including the Demotic Spells*, 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Daniel, R. W., and F. Maltomini. *Supplementum Magicum*. 2 vols. Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Sonderreihe Papyrologica Coloniensia 16.1-2. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990-92.
- Dickie, M. W. "Who Practiced Love-Magic in Classical Antiquity and in the Late Roman World?" *CQ* 50.2 (2000), 563-583.
- Faraone, C. A. "The Agonistic Context of Early Greek Binding Spells," in *Magika Hiera*. Edited by C. A. Faraone and D. Obbink. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991: 3-32.
- Faraone, C. A. "The Wheel, the Whip and Other Implements of Torture: Erotic Magic in Pindar Pythian 4.213-19." *CJ* 89.1 (1993): 1-19.
- Faraone, C. A. "The Ethnic Origins of a Roman-Era Philtrokatadesmos (PGM iv 296-434)," in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*. Edited by P. Mirecki and M. Meyer. Leiden: Brill, 2002: 319-343.
- Frankfurter, D. "Dynamics of Ritual Expertise in Antiquity and Beyond: Towards a New Taxonomy of "Magicians," in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*. Edited by P. Mirecki and M. Meyer. Leiden: Brill, 2002: 159-178.
- Johnston, S. I. *Restless Dead: Encounters Between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- Kidd, I. "Some philosophical Demons." *BICS* 40 (1995): 217-224.
- Preisendanz, K., and A. Henrichs. *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*, 2nd ed. Stuttgart, 1973-74.
- Versnel, H.S. "The Poetics of the Magical Charm," in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*. Edited by P. Mirecki and M. Meyer. Leiden: Brill, 2002: 105-158.