The Classical World

A spell to cause uncontrollable passion, invoking the Greek God Eros.

Create a clay kolossoi of a woman or man depending on the intended target, kneeling and bound. Pierce the kolossoi 7 times using peronai. Place the kolossoi inside a pot made of red clay beside a lead tablet inscribed with the following spell:

“I call upon you Eros God of love rouse yourself for me and go into every place, into every house, and bind (target’s name), the daughter/son of (target’s father). Bring (target’s name), the daughter/son of (target’s father), to me. Do not allow her/his happiness or the ability to eat or drink until she/he is with me. Prevent her/him from falling in love with another, except for me alone, until she/he comes to me, (spell caster’s name), the daughter/son of (spell caster’s father). Bring her/him to me by the hair if you must, until she/he does not stand apart from me and until I hold her/him obediently next to me for the whole time of my life, loving me and desiring me.”

Every day for 7 days at 6 am remove the kolossoi and tablet from the clay pot. Hold the kolossoi while you recite the spell and remove one pin for every day when finished place the kolossoi back into the clay pot. On the eighth day, your beloved will be at your door.

According to Gager (1992), erotic magic was used by the Greek Magical Papyri, with the majority of the rituals and curses being written in the third and fourth centuries. The documentation of erotic magic predominantly focuses on spells and curses around causing attraction. (pg. 227) Erotic spells are mostly used by people who want someone they cannot have. For example, they are dominantly used to gain the attraction of someone who is not attracted to the spell caster. Anyone can be the target of an erotic spell; the target is most likely unaware they are under a spell. Erotic magic typically involves invoking a magical messenger or a god/goddess to send to the beloved. The god often called upon is Eros god of love the son of Aphrodite or Aphrodite herself the goddess of love and daughter of Zeus. The called upon magical being or god/goddess then drags the target through the streets, until they arrive at the spell caster’s door and feverishly knock on it.

Erotic spells often have similarities in the incantations, for example, using similar language, rituals, magical beings, deities, and ingredients. An example of a magical spell that shares a similar incantation to the “spell to cause uncontrollable passion, invoking the Greek God Eros” comes from the ultimate encyclopedia of spells by Johnstone. His spell is called “a spell to evoke a romantic response” the incantation is as follows,

Say aloud your name and the name of the person you are attracted to. Pause for a moment then repeat both names again and then once more. Look at the picture (if you don’t have one, bring one into your mind’s eye) and spell their name out loud. (pg. 90, Johnstone 2005)

Both pieces of erotic magic require you to say your name and the name of your beloved out loud. Both incantations also share a similar rhythm and require an item resembling the target. The spells differ in ritual, ingredients, and length of time.

Another example of a similar spell comes from Magic, Witchcraft, and Ghosts in the Greek and Roman Worlds by Ogden. The spell is attraction of a woman with a model dog

and sleeplessness the ritual goes as follows,

Take the eyes from a bat and let it go alive. Take a bit of raw dough or unmelted wax. Make a little model of a dog. Insert the right eye of the bat into the right eye of the little dog, and its left eye similarly into the left. Take a needle, thread the stuff [ousia] through the needle, and pull it through the eyes of the little dog, so as to leave the stuff showing. Put it into a new drinking cup and attach a papyrus label to it. Seal it with a personal ring with a motif of crocodiles head-to-tail. Deposit it where three roads meet, marking the place so that you can find it again if you want to take it up. (pg. 234, Ogden 2002)

This ritual is similar because they both use model, although the model used in this spell is to represent Hecate and not the target. This spell also shares a major similarity in the incantation with them both calling upon a deity to affect the target with some discomfort until they are with them and only them.

Lastly, another example sharing similar ingredients comes from curse tablets and binding spells from the ancient world by Gager. Gager (1992) discusses a spell in which “a female figurine has survived, pierced with thirteen needles. Yet these items are clearly not curses in any shape or manner. Their explicit goal is not to harm the target but to constrain her.” (pg. 81) This closely resembles the same ritual of sticking a figurine with pins, not to harm the target but to force them to be completely obedient to the spell caster.

The elements selected for the spell to “cause uncontrollable passion, invoking the Greek God Eros” came from the above three examples and personal knowledge. The god Eros was chosen instead of Hecate to represent the spell as an ancient Greek love spell. Aphrodite was also considered as the god of choice but Eros seemed more appropriate because, in some myths, he was considered a child of chaos. Gager’s example inspired using a bound figurine stuck with pins as the main ingredient to the spell. The figurine is bound to represent absolute obedience. Seven pins are used to represent each day of the week because your beloved arrived on the eighth day. The incantation draws together the ideas from all three examples into a spell that is easy to recite. The foundation for this spell illustrates how different features can work in different spells, for example, using the deprivation of sleep versus the deprivation of food both are just different ways to cause the target pain until they are with you.

References

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