

Curse Tablets And Binding Spells From The Ancient World

A brief but highly informative book on Greek religion in the classical period. The ancient Greeks commonly resorted to magic spells to attract and keep lovers. Surveying and analyzing various texts and artifacts, the author reveals that gender is the crucial factor in understanding love spells.

Most studies of Graeco-Roman magic focus on the Greek texts. Stimulated by important recent finds of Latin curse-tablets, this collection of essays for the first time tries to define the nature and extent of the originality of magical practice in the Latin West

The aim of this work is to map and analyse the extant Latin 'defixiones' whose production within the Roman Empire is attested from the 2nd cent. BCE to the end of the 4th/beginning of the 5th cent. CE. There are altogether five hundred Latin curse texts most of which are inscribed on lead tablets. These were intended to affect the actions or health of people/animals against their will and with the help of supernatural powers. As such, they provide the epigraphical evidence of magical practices which were widespread throughout the whole

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Mediterranean of antiquity. They are often aimed at rivals e.g. in circus or in love, opponents in lawsuits, or enemies, in general. Additionally, there is a special category of so-called 'prayers for justice' which are traditionally classified among 'defixiones' and share several characteristics with them. They are predominantly used against thieves, and are meant to harm or eliminate the culprit. At the same time, their aim is to achieve justice: returning the stolen property, a ?just? punishment, or revenge for the damage suffered (usually a theft, treachery, or fraud).

This 1999 book describes the religious life of the Greeks from the archaic to the Roman periods.

Parting company with the trend in recent scholarship to treat the subject in abstract, highly theoretical terms, *Magic in Ancient Greece and Rome* proposes that the magic-working of antiquity was in reality a highly pragmatic business, with very clearly formulated aims - often of an exceedingly malignant kind. In seven chapters, each addressed to an important arm of Greco-Roman magic, the volume discusses the history of the rediscovery and publication of the so-called Greek Magical Papyri, a key source for our understanding of ancient magic; the startling violence of ancient erotic spells and the use of these by women as well as men; the alteration in the landscape of defixio (curse tablet) studies by major

new finds and the confirmation these provide that the frequently lethal intent of such tablets must not be downplayed; the use of herbs in magic, considered from numerous perspectives but with an especial focus on the bizarre-seeming rituals and protocols attendant upon their collection; the employment of animals in magic, the factors determining the choice of animal, the uses to which they were put, and the procuring and storage of animal parts, conceivably in a sorcerer's workshop; the witch as a literary construct, the clear homologies between the magical procedures of fictional witches and those documented for real spells, the gendering of the witch-figure and the reductive presentation of sorceresses as old, risible and ineffectual; the issue of whether ancient magicians practised human sacrifice and the illuminating parallels between such accusations and late 20th century accounts of child-murder in the context of perverted Satanic rituals. By challenging a number of orthodoxies and opening up some underexamined aspects of the subject, this wide-ranging study stakes out important new territory in the field of magical studies.

A study of the question tablets from the oracle at Dodona and binding-curse tablets from across the ancient Greek world, These tablets reveal the hopes and anxieties of ordinary people, and help us to understand some of the ways in which they managed risk and uncertainty in their daily lives.

Full analysis of ancient and medieval expressions of Celtic cursing, using evidence ranging from magical charms to curse tablets.

Through an exhaustive analysis of Paul's letters to the Galatians and the Roman, illuminating answers are given to the key questions about the teachings of Paul. Despite the growing interest in Apuleius' *Apologia* or *Pro se de magia*, a speech he delivered in AD 158/159 to defend himself against the charge of being a magus, the only comprehensive study on this speech and magic to date is that by Adam Abt (1908). The aim of this volume is to shed new light on the extent to which Apuleius' speech reveals his own knowledge of magic, and on the implications of the dangerous allegations brought against Apuleius. By analysing the *Apologia* sequentially, the author does not only reassess Abt's analysis but proposes a new reconstruction of the prosecution's case, arguing that it is heavily distorted by Apuleius. Since ancient magic is the main topic of this speech, an extensive discussion of the topic is provided, offering a new semantic taxonomy of magus and its cognates. Finally, this volume also explores Apuleius' forensic techniques and the Platonic ideology underpinning his speech. It is proposed that a Platonising reasoning – distinguishing between higher and lower concepts – lies at the core of Apuleius' rhetorical strategy, and that Apuleius aims to charm the judge, the audience and, ultimately, his readers

with the irresistible power of his arguments.

This volume seeks to advance the study of ancient magic through separate discussions of ancient terms for ambiguous or illicit ritual, the ancient texts commonly designated magical, and contexts in which the term magic may be used descriptively.

With this volume Sarah Pomeroy provides the first comprehensive study of the Greek family. Knowledge of the family and kin groups is fundamental to understanding the development of the political and legal framework of the polis, a community of oikoi ('families' or 'households') rather than of individual citizens. Pomeroy offers a highly original and authoritative account of the Greek family as a productive and reproductive social unit in Athens and elsewhere during the classical and Hellenistic periods, taking account of a mass of literary, inscriptional, archaeological, anthropological, and art-historical evidence.

You could be the target of a spell or curse and not even know it! All people, witches or not, are susceptible to these attacks. The difference: witches and magicians can do something about it. Now you can too. *Protection & Reversal Magick* is a complete how-to manual on preventing, defending, and reversing magickal attacks of any kind. You will learn to: Set up early-warning systems. Appease angry spirits through offerings. Perform daily banishings and make

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amulets that will prevent most attacks. Make magickal “decoys” to absorb attacks against you. Summon guardian spirits or gods for help. Bind, confuse, or expel a persistent enemy who will not leave you be. These techniques aren't just for Wiccans, either, but for ceremonial magicians, rootdoctors, witches, and anyone else who puts magick to a practical use. Like the cunning men and women of old, now you can defend yourself and your loved ones against even the strongest attacks!

Interrogating the magic-gender connection / Kimberly B. Stratton -- From goddess to hag: the Greek and the Roman witch in classical literature / Barbette Stanley Spaeth -- "The most worthy of women is a mistress of magic": women as witches and ritual practitioners in I Enoch and rabbinic sources / Rebecca Lesses -- Gendering heavenly secrets?: women, angels, and the problem of misogyny and "magic" / Annette Yoshiko Reed -- Magic, abjection, and gender in Roman literature / Kimberly B. Stratton -- Magic accusations against women in Tacitus's Annals / Elizabeth Ann Pollard -- Drunken hags with amulets and prostitutes with erotic spells: the re-feminization of magic in late antique Christian homilies / Dayna S. Kelleres -- The bishop, the pope, and the prophetess: rival ritual experts in third century Cappadocia / Ay?e Tuzlak -- Living images of the divine: female theurgists in late antiquity / Nicola Denzley Lewis -- Sorceresses and

sorcerers in early Christian tours of Hell / Kirsti Barrett Copeland -- The social context of women's erotic magic in antiquity / David Frankfurter -- Cheating women: curse tablets and Roman wives / Pauline Ripat -- Saffron, spices, and sorceresses: magic bowls and the Bavli / Yaakov Elman -- Victimology, or: how to deal with untimely death / Fritz Graf -- A Gospel amulet for Joannia (P.Oxy. VIII 1151) / Annemarie Luijendijk.

From the Spartans to Alexander the Great, Paul Chrystal brings the murky world of sex with the Ancient Greeks to life.

This thesis analyzes the Greco-Roman amatory defixiones, or curse tablets, and binding spells from the fourth century BCE to the fourth century CE in order to investigate the existence of romantic love in the Mediterranean Basin. Binding spells provide a unique opportunity for cultural analysis, for they were popular with all levels of society, both genders and all sexualities. Three categories of amatory spells prevalent in ancient society (agoge, separation, and philia) undergo examination to establish romantic love as a sentiment separate from eros and philia and in opposition of the currently prevailing relationship theory of "power and penetration." Agoge spells called a lover forth, while separation spells blocked rival suitors from visiting the shared beloved. Philia spells were used to increase good will and affection towards those who cast them. Tantamount is the

examination of language, duration of binding wished, and specific desires of the clients ordering love spells. Additionally, the role of magicians in society and courtesans as magic workers is discussed.

Greek legends and historical accounts contain many references to special statues or images designed to preserve the safety or livelihood of a city, a business or a house. These images, which fall into two often overlapping categories (talismans and apotropaia), were erected according to special rituals and took on a variety of intriguing forms, including lions, locusts, and bound effigies of destructive deities like Ares. Looking closely at a wide variety of Greek texts and artifacts, Faraone provides a detailed description and survey of these images and then uses this information to provide new interpretations of early Greek myths about Pandora, the Trojan Horse, and the "living statues" created by Hephaestus. At each step he sets the Greek evidence in a wider eastern-Mediterranean context, with detailed discussions of Near Eastern and Egyptian practices that bear close resemblance to the Greek rituals. The study closes with a re-evaluation of the traditional scholarly approach to religious art as purely representational, suggesting that some images instead of simply illustrating the power of a god, were actually created to restrain and control the power of inimical supernatural forces such as plague-gods and ghosts. Focusing renewed

attention on these often misinterpreted talismans and apotropaia, Talismans and Trojan Horses will be illuminating for scholars and students of classics, art and archaeology, religion, the Ancient Near East, the Bible, and mythology.

Topics include binding spells, curse tablets, and the demonization of magic and sorcery by Christianity.

The Sanctuary of Zeus at ancient Nemea has been a rich resource for archaeological investigation and analysis conducted by the University of California over the past forty years. The Sanctuary hosted one of the preeminent athletic festivals of ancient Greece, the Nemean Games. Just as the Olympics were celebrated in connection with the cult of Pelops at Olympia, the games at Nemea were founded on the worship of the hero Opheltes. The Shrine of Opheltes in the Sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea offers one of the best examples of an ancient Greek hero cult documented in the archaeological record. This final and most significant volume in the Excavations at Nemea series presents the results of the excavation of the Shrine from 1979 through 2001 and analyzes the Shrine's features and contents in order to understand its history and use. A study of the literary and artistic evidence about the myth and cult of Opheltes contextualizes the archaeological findings and illuminates the hero's significance to the Sanctuary and its renowned festival, the Nemean Games.

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From Document to History, edited by Carlos Noreña and Nikolaos Papazarkadas, presents a series of new studies in Greek and Roman epigraphy, highlighting the contribution of documentary evidence to our understanding of ancient Greek and Roman history.

Was religious practice in ancient Rome cultic and hostile to individual expression? Or was there, rather, considerable latitude for individual initiative and creativity? Jörg Rüpke, one of the world's leading authorities on Roman religion, demonstrates in his new book that it was a lived religion with individual appropriations evident at the heart of such rituals as praying, dedicating, making vows, and reading. On Roman Religion definitively dismantles previous approaches that depicted religious practice as uniform and static. Juxtaposing very different, strategic, and even subversive forms of individuality with traditions, their normative claims, and their institutional protections, Rüpke highlights the dynamic character of Rome's religious institutions and traditions. In Rüpke's view, lived ancient religion is as much about variations or even outright deviance as it is about attempts and failures to establish or change rules and roles and to communicate them via priesthods, practices related to images or classified as magic, and literary practices. Rüpke analyzes observations of religious experience by contemporary authors including Propertius, Ovid, and the author of

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the "Shepherd of Hermas." These authors, in very different ways, reflect on individual appropriation of religion among their contemporaries, and they offer these reflections to their readership or audiences. Rüpke also concentrates on the ways in which literary texts and inscriptions informed the practice of rituals. Original and comprehensive, *Magic in the Ancient Greek World* takes the reader inside both the social imagination and the ritual reality that made magic possible in ancient Greece. Explores the widespread use of spells, drugs, curse tablets, and figurines, and the practitioners of magic in the ancient world Uncovers how magic worked. Was it down to mere superstition? Did the subject need to believe in order for it to have an effect? Focuses on detailed case studies of individual types of magic Examines the central role of magic in Greek life

In classical antiquity, there was much interest in necromancy--the consultation of the dead for divination. People could seek knowledge from the dead by sleeping on tombs, visiting oracles, and attempting to reanimate corpses and skulls. Ranging over many of the lands in which Greek and Roman civilizations flourished, including Egypt, from the Greek archaic period through the late Roman empire, this book is the first comprehensive survey of the subject ever published in any language. Daniel Ogden surveys the places, performers, and techniques of necromancy as well as the reasons for turning to it. He investigates

the cave-based sites of oracles of the dead at Heracleia Pontica and Tainaron, as well as the oracles at the Acheron and Avernus, which probably consisted of lakeside precincts. He argues that the Acheron oracle has been long misidentified, and considers in detail the traditions attached to each site. Readers meet the personnel--real or imagined--of ancient necromancy: ghosts, zombies, the earliest vampires, evocators, sorcerers, shamans, Persian magi, Chaldaeans, Egyptians, Roman emperors, and witches from Circe to Medea. Ogden explains the technologies used to evocate or reanimate the dead and to compel them to disgorge their secrets. He concludes by examining ancient beliefs about ghosts and their wisdom--beliefs that underpinned and justified the practice of necromancy. The first of its kind and filled with information, this volume will be of central importance to those interested in the rapidly expanding, inherently fascinating, and intellectually exciting subjects of ghosts and magic in antiquity. The most comprehensive book on Roman burial practices—now available in paperback Never before available in paperback, J. M. C. Toynbee's study is the most comprehensive book on Roman burial practices. Ranging throughout the Roman world from Rome to Pompeii, Britain to Jerusalem—Toynbee's book examines funeral practices from a wide variety of perspectives. First, Toynbee examines Roman beliefs about death and the afterlife, revealing that few

Romans believed in the Elysian Fields of poetic invention. She then describes the rituals associated with burial and mourning: commemorative meals at the gravesite were common, with some tombs having built-in kitchens and rooms where family could stay overnight. Toynbee also includes descriptions of the layout and finances of cemeteries, the tomb types of both the rich and poor, and the types of grave markers and monuments as well as tomb furnishings.

In a culture where the supernatural possessed an immediacy now strange to us, magic was of great importance both in the literary mythic tradition and in ritual practice. In this book, Daniel Ogden presents 300 texts in new translations, along with brief but explicit commentaries. Authors include the well known (Sophocles, Herodotus, Plato, Aristotle, Virgil, Pliny) and the less familiar, and extend across the whole of Graeco-Roman antiquity.

This book presents twenty chapters by experts in their fields, providing a thorough and interdisciplinary overview of the theory and practice of magic in the West. Its chronological scope extends from the Ancient Near East to twenty-first-century North America; its objects of analysis range from Persian curse tablets to US neo-paganism. For comparative purposes, the volume includes chapters on developments in the Jewish and Muslim worlds, evaluated not simply for what they contributed at various points to European notions of magic, but also as models of alternative development in ancient Mediterranean legacy. Similarly, the volume highlights the transformative and

challenging encounters of Europeans with non-Europeans, regarding the practice of magic in both early modern colonization and more recent decolonization.

This collection challenges the tendency among scholars of ancient Greece to see magical and religious ritual as mutually exclusive and to ignore "magical" practices in Greek religion. The contributors survey specific bodies of archaeological, epigraphical, and papyrological evidence for magical practices in the Greek world, and, in each case, determine whether the traditional dichotomy between magic and religion helps in any way to conceptualize the objective features of the evidence examined. Contributors include Christopher A. Faraone, J.H.M. Strubbe, H.S. Versnel, Roy Kotansky, John Scarborough, Samuel Eitrem, Fritz Graf, John J. Winkler, Hans Dieter Betz, and C.R. Phillips.

It was a widespread practice in the area of Palestine, Syria and Asia Minor during the fourth to the seventh centuries of the current era to use talismans written on metal sheets in order to ward off the powers of evil, to heal people, or to gain the love of a person. The common Babylonian practice of the same period was to write incantation texts on earthenware bowls. This book contains the texts of all the legible amulets in Aramaic known today, as well as 13 hitherto unpublished bowls. The texts are proved with translations and commentaries, and a detailed glossary of all the words is given. The study of these incantations provides a glimpse into the religious feelings and practices of common people in the Talmudic period and enriches our knowledge of

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Palestinian and Babylonian Aramaic usage. This book contains a wealth of new material for the history of magic in the Near East, edited and interpreted with meticulous scholarship.

One of the foremost experts on magic, religion, and the occult in the ancient world provides an unparalleled exploration of magic in the Greco-Roman world, giving insight into the shifting ideas of religion and the divine in the ancient past and in the later Western tradition.

Groundbreaking new interpretation of the relationship between Greek and Oscan, two of the most widely spoken languages of pre-Roman Italy.

Much like our world today, Late Antiquity (fourth-seventh centuries CE) is often seen as a period rife with religious violence, not least because the literary sources are full of stories of Christians attacking temples, statues and 'pagans'. However, using insights from Religious Studies, recent studies have demonstrated that the Late Antique sources disguise a much more intricate reality. The present volume builds on this recent cutting-edge scholarship on religious violence in Late Antiquity in order to come to more nuanced judgments about the nature of the violence. At the same time, the focus on Late Antiquity has taken away from the fact that the phenomenon was no less prevalent in the earlier Graeco-Roman world. This book is therefore the first to bring together scholars with expertise ranging from classical Athens to Late Antiquity to examine the phenomenon in all its complexity and diversity throughout Antiquity.

Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World explores the implications of sex-for-pay across a broad span of time, from ancient Mesopotamia to the early Christian period. In ancient times, although they were socially marginal, prostitutes connected with almost every aspect of daily life. They sat in brothels and walked the streets; they paid taxes and set up dedications in religious sanctuaries; they appeared as characters—sometimes admirable, sometimes despicable—on the comic stage and in the law courts; they lived lavishly, consorting with famous poets and politicians; and they participated in otherwise all-male banquets and drinking parties, where they aroused jealousy among their anxious lovers. The chapters in this volume examine a wide variety of genres and sources, from legal and religious tracts to the genres of lyric poetry, love elegy, and comic drama to the graffiti scrawled on the walls of ancient Pompeii. These essays reflect the variety and vitality of the debates engendered by the last three decades of research by confronting the ambiguous terms for prostitution in ancient languages, the difficulty of distinguishing the prostitute from the woman who is merely promiscuous or adulterous, the question of whether sacred or temple prostitution actually existed in the ancient Near East and Greece, and the political and social implications of literary representations of prostitutes and courtesans.

This study is the first to assemble the evidence for the existence of sorcerors in the ancient world; it also addresses the question of their identity and social origins. The resulting investigation takes us to the underside of Greek and Roman society, into a

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world of wandering holy men and women, conjurors and wonder-workers, and into the lives of prostitutes, procuresses, charioteers and theatrical performers. This fascinating reconstruction of the careers of witches and sorcerors allows us to see into previously inaccessible areas of Greco-Roman life. Compelling for both its detail and clarity, and with an extraordinarily revealing breadth of evidence employed, it will be an essential resource for anyone studying ancient magic.

This revisionist reading of early anti-Judaism offers a richer and more varied picture of the Jews and Christians of antiquity.

Ancient Greeks and Romans often turned to magic to achieve personal goals. Magical rites were seen as a route for direct access to the gods, for material gains as well as spiritual satisfaction. In this survey of magical beliefs and practices from the sixth century B.C.E. through late antiquity, Fritz Graf sheds new light on ancient religion. Graf explores the important types of magic in Greco-Roman antiquity, describing rites and explaining the theory behind them. And he characterizes the ancient magician: his training and initiation, social status, and presumed connections with the divine world. With trenchant analysis of underlying conceptions and vivid account of illustrative cases, Graf gives a full picture of the practice of magic and its implications. He concludes with an evaluation of the relation of magic to religion.

The Lived Ancient Religion project has radically changed perspectives on ancient religions and their supposedly personal or public character. This volume applies and

further develops these methodological tools, new perspectives and new questions. The religious transformations of the Roman Imperial period appear in new light and more nuances by comparative confrontation and the integration of many disciplines. The contributions are written by specialists from a variety of disciplinary contexts (Jewish Studies, Theology, Classics, Early Christian Studies) dealing with the history of religion of the Mediterranean, West-Asian, and European area from the (late) Hellenistic period to the (early) Middle Ages and shaped by their intensive exchange. From the point of view of their respective fields of research, the contributors engage with discourses on agency, embodiment, appropriation and experience. They present innovative research in four fields also of theoretical debate, which are “Experiencing the Religious”, “Switching the Code”, „A Thing Called Body“ and “Commemorating the Moment”. This book offers the first attempt at understanding interpersonal violence in ancient Athens. While the archaic desire for revenge persisted into the classical period, it was channeled by the civil discourse of the democracy. Performances such as the staging of trials and comedies ritually defined the meaning of violence and its appropriate application. Speeches and curse tablets not only spoke about violence, but also exacted it, deriving its legitimate use from a democratic principle, the communal decision of the human jurors in the first case and the underworld gods in the second. The end of the eighteenth century saw the end of the witch trials everywhere. This volume charts the processes and reasons for the decriminalisation of witchcraft but also

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challenges the widespread assumption that Europe has been 'disenchanted'. For the first time surveys are given of the social role of witchcraft in European communities down to the end of the nineteenth century and of the continued importance of witchcraft and magic as topics of debate among intellectuals and other writers>

For the first time text from tablets have been translated into English with substantial translator's introduction revealing the cultural, social and historical context for these spells and tablets of the ancient world.

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