SACRED SIGNIFIED: THE SEMIOTICS OF STATUES IN THE *GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRI*[1]

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It is widely accepted by scholars on ancient religion that the ancient Greeks believed certain divine images served as vessels for divinity; some scholars also suggest that animation rituals were on occasion used to call the gods into special images. Certain spells within the corpus of ritual texts subsumed under the name of the *Greek Magical Papyri*, in particular, seem to support this claim.[2] In this article, I will suggest two revisions of this opinion. First, I will show that we have little evidence for formal animation rituals per se, especially rituals that call on a divinity to enter a statue.[3] Although certain aspects of a few spells suggest that their authors may have been aware of and adapted traditions that did include formal rituals of animation (especially

1 This paper was first developed in a seminar on sacred images led by Fritz Graf and Mark Fullerton at The Ohio State University, and was subsequently presented at a conference at the Università degli Studi di Siena. I am grateful to Professors Graf and Fullerton and also to Sarah Iles Johnston, who helped me develop the paper at its various stages. I also wish to thank Maurizio Bettini for his useful comments after I delivered the paper in Siena.

2 Steiner 2001.119 argues that rituals in the magical papyri instruct "the practitioner of the rite first to shape the statue out of some inert material and then to place a particular set of objects or a certain text in the interior cavity; the finished product, thus vivified, becomes a source of omens and oracles." Cf. Dodds 1951.293: "The magical papyri offer recipes for constructing such images and animating them"; also the more detailed discussion of Johnston 2008.

3 It is only in the discussions of the theurgists that we find our first, clear evidence of divinity imagined to be contained in some sort of receptacle. For example, Iamblichus explains how materials found on earth can serve as receptacles (*hypodochên*) or dwellings for divinity, if they are pure and appropriately suited to the gods (*Myst.* 5.23). Proclus states more explicitly that statues can be made suitable receptacles for the gods through the use of the proper materials (*In Cra.* 19.12).

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the traditions of Egyptian religion and perhaps also of nascent theurgy), the core rituals of the papyri exhibit a less specific, more fluid approach to statues. Second, I will suggest that this fluid approach can be understood best if we approach the statues as what Charles Peirce calls indices, that is, if we approach ancient statues as objects that pointed to the divine without necessarily enunciating a specific relationship between the physical statue and the god it represented. Such statues might become ritually animated on occasion but need not be animated to perform their functions. An attempt to understand these spells and their statues using this semiotic model allows for a wider range of interpretations regarding interactions with the sacred that are not limited to statue animation alone.

To make my arguments, I will focus on spells from the papyri in which the construction of statues is described, along with the various ways in which these statues were used, and the rituals associated with them; towards the end of this article, I will extend my argument by looking briefly at some statues from outside the papyri. I focus on the spells of the papyri because they are valuable resources for exploring the question of how one ritually makes a connection between the image and the represented person or divinity—or with divinity in general. Many of the statues described are containers for material objects that can affect the status of the statues insofar as they serve as (Peircian) indices, but these inserted material objects do not necessarily serve to lure divinity into the statue. In my appendix, I will discuss examples in which it might be tempting to argue for animation, but even in these examples, the statues can almost always be better understood with a semiotic model.

Before I explore these statues and Charles Peirce's theory in more detail, some distinctions need to be made between engraved images and three-dimensional statues. These two different kinds of sacred images are often conflated by scholars, but in the papyri, there are clear functional distinctions between the two types. Engraved images are commonly carved on a stone and form part of a ring or amulet. These charms have a wide range of functions, typically giving their user protection, strength, and power. With very few exceptions, this type of spell uses the Greek word *teletê* and its cognates, which can be defined most generally in the papyri as reflecting the concept of "perfecting."[4] This term implies a consecration, a change

4 Johnston 2002.355–56 notes that *teletê* and its cognates, when they appear in the papyri, often have the sense of perfecting or consecrating an object for ritual use.

of status, and, correspondingly, the rituals associated with this term imbue objects, and sometimes even people, with divine power, efficacy, and agency. (In the following discussion of the rites associated with engraved images, I will use the term "consecrate" and its cognates to translate the word *teletê* and its cognates.) This term is rare in association with actual statues but very common in association with rings and amulets.

The rituals that are associated with engraved images involve a complexity that is not seen in most of the spells describing the manufacture and use of statues.[5] A spell to Helios seeks the consecration of a stone and asks the god to fill the stone with things such as strength, honor, success, luck, and power (IV.1596–1715). A stone upon which has been engraved Aphrodite, Eros, and Psyche is consecrated with a burnt offering of manna, *storax*, opium, myrrh, frankincense, saffron, *bdellium*, fig, and wine (IV.1716–1870). Also common is the anointing of the object, especially in the case of stones, such as a costly green stone upon which has been engraved a scarab. Several aromatic substances are burned as offerings to the image of this scarab, and the stone is soaked in a salve of lilies, myrrh, and cinnamon. Fresh bread and fruits are offered, followed by the burning of more incense and the recitation of a spell (V.213–303). A lead plate is engraved with whatever one desires and is then consecrated with a burnt offering of several aromatic substances, such as myrrh and thyme (VII.429–58). Another stone, upon which has been engraved a snake, Helios, and several magical names, is consecrated through the sacrifice of a goose, three roosters, and three pigeons, along with a libation of wine, honey, milk, and saffron. The ring into which the stone has been set is held over the smoke of these burning substances while a rather long prayer is recited (XII.201–69). A stone engraved with a snake and a scarab surrounded by sun-rays, later placed in a ring, is consecrated with a lengthy invocation, and the stone is placed in the guts of a rooster for a day (XII.270–350).

All of these engraved items, once they have been consecrated, give their users incredible powers, and most of these amulets and rings are multi-purpose (Table 1). They are expected to control and influence not only people and inanimate objects but even the divine powers themselves. The complicated rites of consecration and perfection associated with these objects serve to bestow upon them great power and efficacy, and, in some

5 Throughout this paper, I use translations, as needed, from Betz 1985.

Table 1. Engraved Items

PGM Citation	*Description*	*Purpose*	*Ritual Actions of "Consecration"*
IV.1596–1715	An invocation/prayer	A consecration for all purposes, for whatever the user wishes	Prayer only, calling upon divinity to bring power and strength, etc., to a stone, ring, or engraving
IV.1716–1870	Magnetic stone engraved with Aphrodite, Psyche, and Eros	To attract or bind a soul	Invocations to divinity, burnt offering of manna, *storax*, opium, myrrh, frankincense, saffron, *bdellium*, fig, wine
V.213–303	A stone engraved with a scarab and Isis, set in a ring	To know what is in the minds of all men	Burnt offerings of aromatics, anointment with a salve, offering of bread, fruits, incense, prayer
VII.429–58	A lead plate engraved with what the user wants to happen	Works for whatever the user wishes	Consecration of aromatics such as myrrh, *bdellium*, *storax*, aloes, and thyme
XII.201–69	A jasper engraved with a snake, sun, and moon, to be set in a stone	Works for all things, especially success or good fortune	Burnt offering of a goose, 3 roosters and 3 pigeons, incense, libation of wine, honey, milk, and saffron, prayer
XII.270–350	A heliotrope stone engraved with a snake, scarab, and sun-rays	Works for many things: power over other men, souls, demons, even inanimate objects	Invocation, libations, sacrifice of rooster, ring is to be placed inside the guts of the rooster

cases, this power is envisioned as life or soul. For example, in *PGM* IV.1716–1870, the burnt offering is expected to make the engraving and the entire rite *empsychon*, to endow the rite with a soul, although there is no indication as to whose soul is supposed to enter or be used. *PGM* XII.270–350 is specifically referred to as a rite that can "enliven with fire" (*zôpyreitai*) modeled images, engravings, and statues.

The possibility that these images are being endowed with divine efficacy is especially plausible when one considers the Egyptian influences and background of these magical texts. Ian Moyer and Jacco Dieleman argue (2003.40) that *PGM* XII.270–350 adapts an Egyptian ritual known as the "Opening of the Mouth" in which mummies and cult statues of the gods were vivified. However, despite the superficial similarity between the spell and the Egyptian vivification ceremony on the level of general intention, we should not mistake an influx of Egyptian concepts into this and other magical spells for wholesale adoption of Egyptian techniques. The spells of the papyri draw upon a wide variety of ethnically diverse ideas and techniques, and we must attempt to understand them from a vantage point that does not inappropriately privilege any one culture—Greek, Egyptian, or otherwise. My semiotic model allows for a more synchronic evaluation of the evidence without a focus on origins. While it is likely that those using the spells I will be examining were aware of Egyptian rituals of "Opening of the Mouth"—as well as of the theurgic rituals of animation examined by Sarah Iles Johnston 2008—my approach here is built on the assumption that we will better understand the spells of the papyri if we set aside concerns of historical priority and instead focus on how the spells themselves work.

To return to the topic at hand: the idea of transferring power to an image, whether an engraved ring or an amulet, is certainly evident within these spells. This power, difficult to define, may have characteristics of "life" or agency, but there is no clear, explicit evidence that *a divinity* resides inside of the image or that the image itself was thought to be alive. In fact, despite these hints of animation, none of the spells explicitly call a god or divinity into the image. Often in the prayers of invocation that address particular divinities in the spells, the god is called upon to perform a variety of actions, but never to enter the image. In *PGM* IV.1596–1715, the god is invoked to bestow strength, luck, power, honor, and success, among other things, upon a stone. In *PGM* IV.1716–1870, which involves several images engraved on a stone, the god is called upon to attract a woman to the practitioner. The other spells discussed above follow this same theme. The god is invoked either to perform a specific function or to give power

to a stone or ring, but not to enter the image and perform his functions through that image.

So far we have seen that rituals associated with engraved images, rituals that endow material objects with power and agency, can be connected to the function of the amulets or rings of which they are an important part. The entire amulet is given efficacy, but we certainly cannot conclude that the images themselves were animated. But what about the three-dimensional statues described in the papyri? They are constructed out of very specific materials, and some of them are purposefully made hollow in order for other objects to be placed inside. In the hunt for animation rituals, these spells would seem to be the place to look, since they might be understood to parallel practices common among the theurgists of the Roman period in which objects were placed inside of statues or used as ingredients in the mixtures from which statues were created (Johnston 2008.452–54).

In almost all cases, what is placed inside of the statue in the spells of the *Greek Magical Papyri* is a piece of papyrus with special, "magical" incantations and names of the gods written on it, as well as instructions for what one wants to be accomplished. In addition, as I mentioned, statues are made out of very specific materials, materials that are carefully specified in the spells, that is, and thus in a certain sense, the statue can be understood to "contain" these materials as well. Examples include a hollow wooden statue of Eros with the words "MARSABOUTARTHE, be my assistant and supporter and sender of dreams" written on a piece of papyrus and placed inside (IV.1716–1870); a hollow wax and plant figure of Hermes with "CHAIÔCHEN UTIBILMEMNOUÔTH ATRAUICH, give income and business to this place, because Psentebeth lives here" written on a piece of papyrus and placed inside (IV.2359–72); a hollow, three-headed wax statue with a magnetite heart and a list of eighteen names including an invocation for prosperity, fulfillment of future favors and oracles placed inside (IV.3125–71); a hollow plant, egg, and dough figure of Hermes with about six lines of sacred text placed inside (V.370–446); a clay, sulfur, and blood statue of Selene, to which is recited several times an incantation involving secret names and phrases (VII.862–918); a red wax hippopotamus statue with gold, silver, a special magical substance called *ballatha,* and papyri with instructions for what one desires placed inside (XIII.1–343); and a wax and plant statue of Eros in front of which seven birds are strangled so that their *pneuma* can enter the statue (XII.14–95). A few other spells involving statues not of divinities but of dogs, and one of a "begging" man, are not separately discussed in this paper but are included in the table of statue spells (Table 2).

Table 2. Statues

PGM Citation	*Description of Statues and their Purpose*	*Material Placed Inside Hollow Statues, If Applicable*
IV.1716–1870	Eros statue made of mulberry wood (this statue is part of a sub-spell included within a larger spell); to be an assistant and sender of dreams	Inscribed gold leaf
IV.1872–1927	Dog statue made of wax, fruit, and manna; a man's head-bone is placed inside its mouth; for binding	Nothing is placed in the interior of the statue, however the statue is set upon an inscribed piece of papyrus
IV.2359–72	Hermes statue made of orange beeswax, juice of *aeria* plant, and ground ivy; for better business	Inscribed piece of papyrus
IV.2373–2440	A statue in the pose of a beggar made of unheated beeswax, then cut into three sections; for better business	Nothing placed inside, but a spell is inscribed on papyrus for each of the sections
IV.2943–66	Dog statue made of dough or wax with the eyes of a bat; *ousia* is threaded through the eyes; for binding	Nothing is placed inside; the dog is set in a sealed cup with a piece of inscribed papyrus attached

(Continued on p. 486)

Table 2. Statues *(continued)*

PGM Citation	*Description of Statues and their Purpose*	*Material Placed Inside Hollow Statues, If Applicable*
IV.3125–71	Three-headed statue (falcon, baboon, and ibis) made of Etruscan wax; for prosperity wherever the statue is placed	Magnetite heart and inscribed piece of papyrus
V.370–446	Statue of Hermes made from laurel leaves, virgin earth, seed or wormwood, wheat meal, various herbs, and ibis egg; for prophetic purposes	Inscribed piece of papyrus
VII.862–918	Statue of Selene made of clay, sulfur and the blood of a dappled goat; for sending dreams and binding lovers	N/A
VIII.1–63	Dog-faced baboon statue made of olive wood; for favor, prosperity, etc.	An inscribed piece of papyrus is placed in a box on the statue's back
XII.14–95	Eros statue made of Etruscan wax and all kinds of aromatic plants; multi-purpose assistant statue	Seven birds strangled so that their *pneuma* can enter
XIII.1–343	Hippopotamus statue made of red wax (this statue is part of a sub-spell included within a larger spell); for sending dreams	Gold, silver, and *ballatha*

The importance of knowing the right substances and names to use when constructing one of these statues is attested by other sources as well. In a fragment that some argue belongs to the *Chaldean Oracles*, Hekate herself gives instructions as to what her statue is to be made of, specifying plant and animal material, including lizards, myrrh, gum, and frankincense (*Ch. Or*. frag. 224). There are also several spells in the papyri that express the importance of knowing secret names and the power that comes with this knowledge. Take, for example, a spell to Hermes in which the magician, after claiming knowledge of the god's forms, plant, wood, and city, finally exclaims: "I also know your foreign (barbarian) names" (VIII.1–63).[6] There are other examples in the *PGM* in which it is even clearer that certain substances are cognate with certain divinities. In the spell called the "Eighth Book of Moses," for example, each god has a very specific kind of incense associated with him or herself (XIII.1–20). In fact, preceding this list of types of incense there is a reference to things that are pleasing to the gods, things that are "born/associated with" the gods (*syngenikos*).

All of this evidence points to the importance of knowing the right substances for the fashioning of a statue, as well as the special names and prayers that must be recited and written on papyri to be placed inside. There is nothing to indicate, however, that any of this is meant to animate the statue or to call the divinity inside the statue. Rather, I suggest, these substances and words work in a manner similar to the *ousia*—"essence" or "material"—used to construct other types of magical figurines described in the *Greek Magical Papyri*. Perhaps the most famous example of a spell of this type is a binding spell in which the magician is instructed to make two figurines: a kneeling and bound woman and a figure of Ares holding a sword. Magical *ousia* is to be applied to the female figure, things which have been in contact with the woman who is the victim, her fingernails or hair for example (IV.296–466).[7]

Fritz Graf argues (1997.140) that this *ousia* could serve as a "pointer which establishes a symbolic relationship between two points, of which one is the object referred to (the 'signified': in our case, the actual girl) and the other is the sign (the 'signifying'; in our case, the figurine)."

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6 The importance of knowing the secret names of the gods or using a special name to obtain power from a god is found in several spells throughout the magical papyri. A few notable examples include *PGM* XII.79–93, XIII.55ff., 346, 734–40, 870–72.

7 Graf 1997.137–45 discusses this spell in some depth, including the preparation of the statues and the subsequent rituals performed upon them.

The special names recited and written on papyri, I suggest, in addition to the special substances used to construct the statues, serve a similar purpose. Each serves as an index, in Peircian terms, which is defined as,

> a sign, or representation, which refers to its object not so much because of any similarity or analogy with it, nor because it is associated with general characters which that object happens to possess, as because it is in dynamical . . . connection both with the individual object, on the one hand, and with the senses or memory of the person for whom it serves as a sign, on the other hand.[8]

Examples of indices of this type as given by Peirce include smoke from a fire: one does not have to see the fire, but can recognize the smoke as an index that the fire exists; or demonstrative and personal pronouns that point out a specific person or thing. The magical *ousia* in the example discussed above, the fingernail or lock of hair, as natural pieces of the person involved, are clear indices, and obviously much easier to obtain from a mortal victim than such *ousia* would be to obtain from a god. However, no one would argue that this statue now "contains" within itself the person whose *ousia* was used.

Indices that point to the gods, rather than being parts of their bodies, must somehow be found among the objects available to humans in the material world—plants, stones, incense, and animal parts, for example. *PGM* XIII.1–20, mentioned above, indicates that each god has a specific type of incense associated with him or her. Substances such as specific types of aromatic plants used to manufacture a statue, or specific types of wood, could parallel this example, meaning that gods could have been associated with specific plants as well, in line with the common association of Apollo and the laurel tree. An Eros statue, for example, is to be made out of mulberry wood (IV.1716–1870). A statue of Hermes is constructed out of orange beeswax, ground ivy, and the juice of the *aeria* plant (IV.2359–72). But in

8 Peirce 1955.107. Peirce distinguishes a symbol from an index in that the symbol is more culturally constructed in the mind of the interpretant and would lose its significance as a sign if there were no interpretant (104). Throughout this paper, I use the term index in Peirce's looser sense of a pointer, of "anything which focuses the attention," and, as such, I include several examples in which the index is effective only through the interpretant and clearly exhibits characteristics of both index and symbol (108).

any case, all of these indices work by pointing to the god or other entity who is to be involved with the ritual and who is represented by the statue that the practitioner has created, without specifying the exact nature of the relationship between the entity and its representation. Ancient participants may have, at times, imagined the entity to be in the statue, near the statue, or in any of a variety of other relationships to the statue; our texts leave this question open for both modern and ancient readers to decide. My semiotic model can allow for any of these emic interpretations, and thus avoids over-emphasis on the more strict interpretation of statue animation alone.

The pieces of papyri with special names and instructions for what one wants accomplished can also be interpreted as indices. Graf discusses the importance of "freezing" the words on wax or papyrus in order to preserve the memory of the ritual act and to make explicit what the magician wants (1997.212–13). The names and instructions written down on the pieces of papyri and placed inside a statue can thus serve to perpetually invoke and entreat divine power. The names of a divinity, in particular, can serve a different purpose in addition to the preservation of the ritual act. Names are indices in spoken spells, prayers, and, for our purposes, in the spells in which special names are inscribed and placed in or near the statue.

Names are, in fact, the indices *par excellence*, so to speak, for establishing a connection with divinity. The most common item placed inside of the hollow statues created in the magical papyri is either a piece of papyrus or a lamella that has been inscribed with special "barbarian" or foreign names and instructions. Statues that are not hollow can be placed on or near a piece of papyrus, such as a canine statue that is to be placed upon a strip of papyrus inscribed with special names and what one desires to happen (IV.1872–1927). As in the case of the engraved images, the divinities invoked in these spells are never explicitly called upon to enter the statue, but are called upon by name and, in some cases, asked to perform special functions.

It is interesting to note that the instructions for these statues are not often complex; in other words, they do not involve rites of "consecration" as discussed earlier in connection with the amulet or ring spells. The statue spells are simpler in that they typically describe the manufacture of the statue, what materials are used in its construction, its appropriate size and shape, and finish with instructions regarding what is to be inscribed on the piece of papyrus. The statue is then deposited in a specific place, and a sacrifice or libation is offered. These "statue" spells focus on the steps taken to manufacture the statue and the prayers that should be spoken to the god

or goddess, and, in contrast to the spells involving engraved images, there are few examples of consecration to or invocation of a divinity in order to give power to the statues. Many of these statues, once made, can be used and reused, after the proper recitation of prayers and the offering of libations or sacrifices. Thus the manufactured statue or image becomes the recipient of subsequent rituals, much like cult statues in mainstream religious practices. These statues might not have been thought to immediately have the efficacy of a cult statue in a temple that had been the recipient of rituals and sacrifices over a long period of time—and this might suggest another reason, in addition to the semiotic reason discussed above, that there was such an emphasis on creating the images out of specific materials, despite the lack of the complex rites of "consecration" found in association with the engraved rings and amulets. In looking back at the engraved images discussed earlier, one can see how the semiotic model allows for a wider range of interactions with the sacred rather than focusing interpretations solely the application of "animation." The consecration of these items can be better explained in relation to their intended purpose or use, not in relation to the divine images inscribed upon them. The consecration itself serves to activate the item, so to speak, but once activated, these engraved items, like the three-dimensional statues, provided the practitioner with an index to divine power, that is, access to and a point of interaction with divinity.

The semiotic model I have used here can also be applied to examples outside of the magical papyri, and not only to divine statues but to statues of the dead as well. Exploring this fully would take us beyond the scope of this article; here I offer as one example a Cyrenean inscription preserving purificatory rituals validated by Delphic Apollo. One of the many rituals in this inscription involves the manufacture of statues to avert a ghost. If one knows the name of the ghost, he is instructed to proclaim the name for three days. However, if one does not know the name, he is instructed to address the ghost with, "O person (*anthrôpos*), whether you are a man or a woman." Then follows the instructions to make statues, *kolossoi*, of wood or earth, offer these statues portions of food, and finally take the statues and deposit them in a forest that is utter wilderness. Scholars, again, have been tempted to state that the ghost, through this rite, is imagined to be somehow contained within the statue and that this "container," and thus the ghost, is then moved to a marginal location.[9] However, the ritual can also

9 Sokolowski 1962 no. 115. This text and its interpretations are further examined in Faraone 1991.180–88, Johnston 1999.58-63, and Parker 1983.332–51 (Appendix 2).

be understood as parallel to the processes that I have already discussed. Namely, in this ritual, it is important to have an index, specifically to know the name of the ghost; otherwise a more general address is employed. But the statue can also be an index in and of itself, in this case, pointing to the ghost. There is no explicit evidence in the text of the inscription that the ghost is called to enter the statue. Rather, the statue serves as a point of reference allowing the practitioner an imagined avenue of interaction with this supernatural entity.

In conclusion, any statue, divine or otherwise, can indicate the presence of a divinity, ghost, or other entity and offer to the practitioner a point of interaction with that entity. A statue, when understood through the Peircian semiotic model, becomes the focus of ritual action, whether a magician fashions it for a specific purpose and offers it incense or a libation, or a priest sacrifices to it at an altar in an established cultic setting, or a private devotee lays a votive object at its feet. Each of these individuals does not necessarily believe that the entity is inside of the statue when he or she makes an offering, but they might better trust in the entity's existence and presence thanks to the indexical power of the image that serves as a focal point throughout the ritual.

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APPENDIX

The Peircian semiotic model can help us to understand why ancient statues are constructed as they are and can provide various avenues into a more varied and comprehensive emic understanding of how these statues function without prioritizing the presumption that a god or similar entity is understood to "literally" enter into them. The statue *points to* divinity without any intimation that it *contains* divinity. It must be acknowledged, however, that there are a few possible exceptions in which "animation" seems to be the more obvious conclusion. The creators of the four spells I describe and discuss below may have been familiar enough with either the Egyptian "Opening of the Mouth" rituals or the theurgic idea of statue animation to incorporate these conceptions into their own spells. Nonetheless, as I will show, even these are not full-scale animation rituals; the *main* idea underlying them is simply that of what might be called the "temple statue" in miniature: a statue that must be worshipped, and when properly worshipped, can help to ensure the god's presence. Even in these spells, a semiotic model allows for a wider and more fluid range of interactions with sacred images and sacred beings than focusing strictly on animation alone.

PGM IV.3125–71: A wax statue with three heads is made hollow, and a heart of magnetite is placed inside, in addition to a piece of papyrus with special names. It is tempting to interpret a magnetite heart placed inside the hollow of a statue as indicating animation, but again, there is no explicit reference to calling a god inside of the statue; the magnetite heart parallels in function the rites of consecration involved with the engraved items, perhaps serving to "activate" the image in a more general sense. In fact, the practitioner is urged to recite the names that have been written on the papyrus, in addition to an invocation for prosperity, each morning. The words of the papyri exist outside as well as inside of the statue and thus are difficult to understand as elements in a spell of literal animation. Again, this reflects practices common in civic religion. The statue is not treated any differently from a cult statue, and its function is best understood as an index to divinity, providing access to higher powers much like an engraved ring or amulet.

PGM V.370–446: A hollow statue of Hermes is to be created, and a papyrus (or a goose's windpipe, the spell leaves it up to the practitioner to decide which to use) is to be placed inside for the purpose of *empneumatosis,* literally for the sake of "inserting a *pneuma*." However, I would again argue against both the assumption that the statue is thus envisioned to be "vivified" and the assumption that this vivification can be equated with a divinity entering the statue. Instead, this act of "inspiration" seems to refer to the practitioner rather than the statue, for Hermes is asked to bring a prophetic dream to the magician. A spell is written on the papyrus or the windpipe before it is inserted, and when the statue is to be used, hair from the practitioner's head is placed at the feet of the statue, wrapped up in the papyrus. The practitioner is subsequently instructed to recite this spell before sleeping (after placing the statue beside his head). After invoking Hermes by praising his various attributes and powers, the practitioner prays for a prophecy, but we need not assume that Hermes is expected to enter the statue at this time, as Hermes is invoked to appear "propitious" to the practitioner "in his own form" (*sêi morphêi ilaros*). Again, one need not limit interpretations of this statue to the conception that it is "animated" (thus Hermes can interact with the practitioner only once he has entered his statue); one can better see a variety of interactions between the divine Hermes and the practitioner when considering the statue as an index to divinity (through his interaction with the statue, the practitioner creates an avenue of interaction with Hermes, who appears to him in his dreams and prophesies in his own form).

PGM VII.862–918: This is one of two examples of statues associated with *teletê* and its cognates. A statue of Selene is consecrated with an elaborate incantation in order to send dreams or attract and bind lovers. In the spell, Selene is specifically asked to send a sacred helper for these purposes. The statue turns red to indicate that the rite is working, but there is no reason to assume that this means that Selene is inside of it. Parallel to this is *PGM* IV.1872–1927, in which a dog hisses or barks in indication of whether or not the spell is working properly. It is indeed interesting that these statues can be imagined to change in some way, but the spells associated

with these images do not provide any evidence for clear-cut rituals of animation or for the idea that a divinity was expected to be called into the image.

PGM XII.14–95: Perhaps the most complicated of the four rituals discussed in this appendix concerns a statue of Eros made from wax and plants. The ritual not only involves the fashioning of the statue, but also a three-day ritual of consecration (many cognates of *teletê* are used) that employs fruits, several kinds of cakes, dates, wine, and even votive offerings of daggers, tablets, and a bow and arrow, as well as the sacrifice of nine birds in total, seven of which are strangled on the first day in order that their *pneuma* may enter the statue, and the other two of which are burnt on the subsequent two days. There are four formulae to be recited, in addition to a later spell written on a piece of papyrus when the Eros statue is to be used.

I would like to focus on the *pneuma*, since this aspect of the spell might most easily be interpreted as pointing to animation of the statue. However, the spell uses the singular, *pneuma*, in spite of the fact that there are lots of birds, and this suggests that *pneuma* does not, in this instance, mean anything close to "individual spirit" or "soul." Rather it is the birds' collective "breath" or "strength" that is thought to enter the statue. This could indicate that some sort of power or efficacy is transferred to the object or the rite itself. Even more importantly, we do not have evidence that a divinity enters the statue, especially when one considers that it is specifically said to be the *pneuma* of birds that is expected to enter the statue. I offer as a *comparandum PGM* XIII.343–646, in which *pneuma* is used as an offering to divinity. The god accepts whatever *pneuma* is most pleasing, either that of a rooster offered by the practitioner or that of a pigeon. Thus the offering of the *pneuma* of birds is similar to the use of other substances associated with the god or pleasing to the god, such as red wax or myrrh or any of the other materials used to construct these statues. The sending of their *pneuma* into the statue could be understood as another way of "mixing" ingredients into the composition from which the statue is created. In addition, the magician sends the divinity to several places and advises him to appear in alternate forms to gain the consent of whomever he is sent to. Divinity would not have to enter the statue first to perform these functions, and, in fact, this assumption would limit the capabilities of the divinity as an agent in this spell.

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