

## ON THE GREEK CHIROMANTIC FRAGMENT

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There is evidently just one surviving discussion of chiromancy or palmistry written in ancient Greek, the anonymous fragment of six paragraphs and about as many pages entitled "Prognostic from the lines in the palm" and published in 1908 by Franz Boll.<sup>1</sup> Its discovery, made jointly with Franz Cumont, seems to have been little noticed, though it was of exceptional interest because no ancient exposition of this curious pseudo-science had previously come to light.<sup>2</sup> While there is no internal evidence that would date the text even to any one century, Boll observed that the religious beliefs which it reflects are such as to exclude Byzantine authorship,<sup>3</sup> and I see nothing in the style which would militate against the assumption that it is an actual survival from antiquity.<sup>4</sup>

In his introduction Boll assembled the few references to palmistry that appear in classical literature. First and most important is the statement of Aristotle to the effect that long-lived individuals have one

<sup>1</sup> *Catalogus Codicum Astrologorum Graecorum* 7 (Bruxellis 1908) 236–44, with an introduction and a diagram. I cite it as **G**, and by page and line in Boll's edition. The text is preserved in two manuscripts: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Gr. 2506, folios 188v–190v (saec. XIII?; Cumont, *ibid.* 8, Pars I [1929] 74, gives saec. XIV), and Erlangen-Nürnberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. Gr. 33, folios 192v–196r (saec. XV). Microfilms of these pages were kindly supplied by the directors of the two libraries, so that I have been able to check the readings in key passages.

<sup>2</sup> J. Heeg, *ByzZ* 19 (1910) 181, called attention to its unique character, but more than twenty years later W. Gundel wrote only that "... der Lehrtext über Cheiromantie ein besonderes Interesse verdient" (*JAW* 243 [1934] 67). W. and H. G. Gundel have only a cursory reference to it in their detailed study, *Astrologumena* (Wiesbaden 1966) 73.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.* (above, note 1) 236: *Neque vero fieri potuisse ut hoc opusculum ab homine Byzantino compositum sit, ex ipsis illis religionis antiquae vestigiis satis elucet.*

<sup>4</sup> The compilers of *LSJ* cite most of the technical terms which occur in the text, as presumably they would not do if they regarded it as Byzantine. No other work on palmistry is cited by either *LSJ* or *LSJ Supplement*.

or two lines (he calls them *arthra*, "joints") extending through the whole palm, while the short-lived have two lines which do not extend all the way.<sup>5</sup> Pliny quotes this principle and expresses astonishment that its author could have believed such things:

Miror quidem Aristotelem non modo credidisse praescita vitae esse aliqua in corporibus ipsis, verum etiam prodidisse . . . Vitae brevis signa ponit . . . plures . . . incisuras nec perpetuas. Contra longae esse vitae . . . in manu unam aut duas incisuras longas habentes (*HN* 11.273-74).

The *Suda* lexicon ascribes "chiroscopic" treatises to a Helenus and a certain Eumolpus of Eleusis or Athens as well as to Artemidorus of Daldis, the author of the extant dreambook.<sup>6</sup> Though the first two names, as Boll remarked, are clearly fictitious, they must have been attached to writings on palmistry circulated in antiquity, but it is doubtful that Artemidorus ever wrote on this subject because he includes the *cheiroskopoi* in his list of the false prophets (*Onirom.* 2.69). Finally, Juvenal speaks of a Roman lady who consults a palmist as well as a metoposcopist:

sortes ducet frontemque manumque  
praebabit vati (*Sat.* 6.583).

The terms for "line" in this material are worth noting: "joint" (*arthron*), Aristotle; "incision" (*incisura*), Pliny; and "wrinkle" (*rhytis*), the *Suda*.<sup>7</sup> It would be interesting to know how frequently each of these was used. The word *grammé*, found in Boll's text, must have become standard because it corresponds to *linea*, the only Latin word so employed in extant treatises.

Boll planned to return to this subject later<sup>8</sup> but he died in 1924 without having published anything further on it,<sup>9</sup> and indeed it is difficult to see how he could have written much more without

<sup>5</sup> *HA* 1.15.493B32; *Pr.* 10.49.896A37 and 34.10.964A33. Cf. R. Foerster, *Scriptores Physiognomonici Graeci et Latini* 1, p. lxxiii, note 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Suda*, s.vv. "Ἑλενος, Εὐμόλπος, Ἀρτεμίδωρος.

<sup>7</sup> John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* 2.15 (cf. note 12, below), also has "wrinkle" (*ruga*).

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.* (above, note 1) 236: *Diligentiore igitur inquisitione in posterum reservata pauca interim hic proferre liceat.*

<sup>9</sup> So, at least, I infer from the lists of his publications given by K. Meister, *Neue Jahrbücher für Wissenschaft und Jugendbildung* 1 (1925) 329-30, and by V. Stegemann in his edition of F. Boll, *Kleine Schriften zur Sternkunde des Altertums* (Leipzig 1950), pp. xxv-xxviii.

adducing comparable materials not readily accessible in his day.<sup>10</sup> So far as I have been able to discover, there are no published chiromancies from medieval Byzantium<sup>11</sup> but there are several of them in the Latin of medieval Europe, and in this paper I shall show that they have a common ancestry with the Greek fragment, so that they may be used to interpret and emend it.

Of the Latin tracts in question, two originated in the twelfth century and tradition would have it that they were translations from the Arabic made by Adelard of Bath and John of Seville (cf. note 14, below), but the evidence for this is inconclusive at best.<sup>12</sup> These writings and others more or less like them are preserved in a number of manuscripts ranging from the thirteenth century to the fifteenth. Hardin Craig once devised a provisional classification based on his inspection of such materials in the British Museum and the Bodleian Library: <sup>13</sup> (1) treatises which mention only three principal lines in the palm and say nothing about the "mounts" or the areas controlled by the planets; (2) representatives of the more ample discussion known as the *Summa chiromantiae*, dealing with four principal lines, the triangle and quadrangle, and the planetary relations, together with a section on chiromancy, the significance of the shape and general appearance of the hand; (3) expanded versions of the second class; (4) two manuals printed at Ulm in 1490 under the title *Cyromancia Aristotilis cum figuris*,<sup>14</sup> with the same

<sup>10</sup> He of course appreciated the need for exploring the subject as a whole: *Artis chiromanticae . . . nemo adhuc indagavisse historiam videtur* (loc. cit., above, note 8).

<sup>11</sup> A. Delatte, *Anecdota Atheniensia* 1 (Liège 1927) 152, published an excerpt on chiromancy from Ms. Gr. 1275 of the Bibliothèque Nationale, folios 49v–50r (saec. XIX). I find that the first statement in it, on the character of persons who move their hands while talking, is merely a translation from Pseudo-Aristotle, *Secretum secretorum*, "De physiognomonía" 14 (ed. R. Foerster, *op. cit.*, note 5, above) 2.210. Probably the remainder also lacks independent value.

<sup>12</sup> Two passages from about the middle of the twelfth century show that chiromancy was actively practised by that time in the west. They are Gundissalinus (Dominico Gundisalvi), *De divisione philosophiae*, pp. 119–20, edited by L. Baur (Münster 1903; *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters*, Band 4, Heft 2–3), adding chiromancy to the four Varronian arts of geomancy, hydromancy, aeromancy, and pyromancy (cf. Isidore of Seville, *Etym.* 8.9.13); and John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* 2.27 (Migne, *PL* 199, col. 461), arguing that it is fraudulent because it has no rational basis.

<sup>13</sup> H. Craig, *The Works of John Metham* (London 1916), "Introduction," pp. xix–xxix (especially xxv–xxviii), apropos of Metham's English translation of one of the Latin treatises.

<sup>14</sup> The second and longer of these was reedited by R. A. Pack, *AHMA* 36 (1969) 189–241, with a "Glossary of Terms." It contains quotations from Aristotle, *HA* 1.15

general contents as the second class except that the quadrangle and the planets are not mentioned; (5) a compilation by one Rodericus de Majoricis of Oxford University,<sup>15</sup> based chiefly but not solely on the second treatise of the fourth class. The late Lynn Thorndike more recently produced a valuable survey of this material.<sup>16</sup> There is no indication that either Craig or Thorndike was acquainted with Boll's Greek text.

In my comments I shall use the following symbols for convenience: **G**=the Greek text; **Lp**=a "planetary" treatise of Craig's second class<sup>17</sup> (this of course is most directly comparable to **G**); **La I** and **La II**=the two pseudo-Aristotelian tracts in the fourth class (see note 14, above); **Lr**=Rodericus de Majoricis (note 15); **LL**=these Latin works in general or collectively.

**G** falls into six long paragraphs:

- (I) the parts of the hand and palm; the three principal lines; the triangle and quadrangle formed by them; the mounts; the phalanges (**G** 237.2–238.29).
- (II) the planetary relations in general (**G** 238.30–239.5).

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(on the significance of long and short lines and the fact that the thumb has only two phalanges) and the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Physiognomonica* and *Secretum secretorum*. At the end the Klagenfurt manuscript adds a passage headed "Translatoris verba" and beginning: *Et ego Johannes Hispalensis hunc librum ab Arabica lingua in Latinam transtuli*. The first, shorter work, written after the death of Albertus Magnus in 1280, was described by Craig as "preliminary" to the other, but this is true only in the sense that it was printed first in the *editio princeps*; though its author knew and used the second work he was not writing an introduction to it. The opening chapter cites Aristotle (*loc. cit.*) and defends chiromancy against the charge that it is heretical because it denies freewill. A revised edition of this will appear soon in *AHMA*.

<sup>15</sup> Edited by R. A. Pack and Richard Hamilton, *AHMA* 38 (1971) 271–305.

<sup>16</sup> "Chiromancy in Medieval Latin Manuscripts," *Speculum* 40 (1965) 674–706, including a transcription of Johannes "Philosophus," *Summa chiromantie*, from Ms. 81 of All Souls College, Oxford (saec. XV–XVI). The first part of this compilation belongs to Craig's second class. In quoting it I have tacitly made a few slight and obvious corrections. Its author, whether he was this Johannes or somebody of a later date, copied the work of Rodericus de Majoricis into the latter part of his own—a fact unknown to Thorndike. The chiromantic manuscripts are helpfully listed by L. Thorndike and P. Kibre, *A Catalogue of Incipits of Mediaeval Scientific Writings in Latin* (revised ed., Cambridge, Mass. 1963) *passim*.

<sup>17</sup> Since none of these has been edited, I have used Thorndike's text (see note 16, above), citing it by the numbered paragraphs, except that I cite as "p. 685" the unnumbered introductory section which precedes par. 1.

- (III) the significance of the planets Selene, Helios, Kronos, Ares, Hermes, and Zeus (**G** 239.6–240.11).
- (IV) Aphrodite in relation to the line of necessity (*anankaia grammê*); other meanings of this line (**G** 240.12–23).
- (V) the significance of the line of life (*zôêphoros grammê*), and of the line of time (*chronikê grammê*) in relation to it (**G** 240.24–243.15).
- (VI) the line of necessity further considered (**G** 243.16–244.9).

It is clear that **G** is a large fragment or perhaps several excerpts rather than a complete treatise. For one thing, each of the **LL** which defines the triangle devotes a special chapter to its elucidation, and since **G** also defines this feature either **G**'s parent or **G** itself, if it was once more extensive, must have contained a separate treatment of it. It is noteworthy that the discussion is not organized solely on either the planetary or the linear principle but wavers between the two; this is most evident in paragraph IV. Further, though the planetary lore in **G** would relate it to Craig's second class, **G** is a bit more primitive because it reflects a three-line system, as in his first class.

Of the terms given in the first paragraph (**G** 237.2–238.29) some are defined and others assumed to be known. I list them together with their equivalents in the **LL**:

The parts of the hand: the palm (*palamê*, *akrocheir*: *palma*); the wrist (*karpos*: *rasceta*<sup>18</sup>); the "root" of the hand (*rhiza cheiros*: *radix manus*).

The parts of the palm: the mount of the thumb (*stêthos anticheiros*: *mons pollicis*); the mount of the hand (*stêthos cheiros*: *mons manus*, also called *mons acuminis*, *ictus*, or *incisionis*, since it is adjacent to the blade or striking edge of the hand); the hollow between these mounts (*hypokoilon*, *koilia*, *metastêthion*: *concavitas*, *concavum*); the space between the bases of the index-finger and the thumb (*metathenar* or *thenar*; see the discussion below); the triangle (*trigônnon*: *triangulus*), explained as the space between the line of time and the line of life (in **LL** the triangle is bounded by the *linea vitae*, *linea mediana*, and a line called *basis trianguli*, absent from some hands); the quadrangle (*tetragônnon*) or space between the line of life and the line of necessity (in **Lp** 7 the *quadrangulus* is the same as the *mensa*; see below).

The lines (*grammai*: *lineae*): the line of time (*chronikê*), which corresponds to the line of life (*linea vitae*) because it encircles the mount of the thumb;

<sup>18</sup> In some **LL**, such as **La I**, **Lr**, and two of the three recensions of **La II**, this correct term was expelled by the ghost-words *recepta* or *rafica* because *racta* or some such compendium was wrongly expanded. This process of corruption can be observed in **La II** (see *AHMA* 36 [1969] 198).

the line of life (*zôéphoros*), corresponding to the median line (*mediana*; proof of this is given below); the line of necessity (*anankaia*), matching the *mensalis*, so termed because it passes through the "table" (*mensa*) of the palm.

The thumb and fingers (of which each has its own *stêthos*, *mons*, at its base): thumb (*anticheir*, *megas daktylos*: *pollex*); index finger (*lichanos*: *index*); middle finger (*mesodaktylos*: *digitus medius*); ring finger (*paramesos daktylos*: *d. medicus*, explained by Macrobius, *Sat.* 7.13.7); little finger (*mikros daktylos*: *d. auricularis*, because small enough to insert in the ear, Isidorus, *Etym.* 11.1.72).

The phalanges (*phalangia*) of the four fingers: lower (*daktylopous*, *rhizodaktylos*), middle (*mesodaktylos*), upper (*akrodaktylos*, *metonychon*). The **LL** give no terms for the phalanges but, like **G** (238.27), they sometimes note (e.g., **La II** Proem. 2) that the thumb has only two phalanges (Aristotle, *HA* 1.15.493B29, Pollux 2.145).

The signs (*sêmeia*: *signa*): the only sign mentioned in paragraph I is the star (*astêr*: *stella*), resembling the letter upsilon (**G** 238.28). Later we read of the letter chi (239.9), omicron (240.30), a star (241.28), a club (242.3), a bow (243.2, 5), and branches (*kladoi*: *virgae LL*; **G** 243.10, 20, 244.3). Fine lines like scratches (239.15, 32) or a net (242.14) are specified, and of course there are other secondary lines (*passim*) varying in significance according to their relations to the principal lines. In **LL** the repertory of signs, especially those resembling letters and numerals, is vastly enlarged.

The general correspondence between **G** and the **LL** in terminology emerges clearly enough, and we shall find a resemblance in method also, as well as a number of verbal coincidences. The terms for the principal lines show the most striking discrepancy. It is unfortunate that **G** gives no explanation of *chronikê* or *zôéphoros*. We read that the *anankaia* is so called because its form results "naturally" (*physikôs*, i.e. "necessarily"?) from the bending of the fingers (**G** 238.17) but this is unconvincing, for we should expect it to be rather the line of necessity in the sense of fate. To be sure, in modern palmistry<sup>19</sup> this term is applied to a quite different line, that which the **LL** call the line of honor or of prosperity (see below), but this is not surprising, because it is obvious that the terminology for the lines has shifted over the centuries. The *chronikê*-*linea vitae* (referring to the heart, lungs, and diaphragm, **La II** 1.7) is still called the "line of life"; the *zôéphoros*-*mediana* (referring to the head and brain, *loc. cit.*, but likewise to length of life,

<sup>19</sup> See *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1970), s.v. "Palmistry."

**La II** 1.4, **Lr** 6) is now the “head-line”; the *anankaia-mensalis* (referring to the generative organs, **La II** 1.15–16, and p. 237) is now the “heart-line”; and the *linea honoris*, etc. (not known to **G**) is now the “fate-line.” This evolution cannot be traced until there is more evidence, particularly on the Greek side.

A delicate problem arises in paragraph 1 where the line of time (*chronikê*) is described as beginning ἀπὸ τοῦ μετὰ τὸ θέναρ E, ἀπὸ τοῦ μεταθένaros P; **G** 238.5). This is next defined (line 6)—with the variants τὸ μετὰ τὸ θέναρ E, τὸ μεταθέναρ P—as the space between the bases of the index and the thumb. Boll printed the readings of P, accepting the new word μετάθεναρ (by him correctly accented as a proparoxytone) both here and in **G** 239.3, where it is said that this area (τὸ μεταθέναρ P, τὸ μετὰ θέναρ E) is controlled by the planet Ares. The compilers of *LSJ* have never listed the word, though they include μεταστήθιον (**G** 238.3), evidenced only here. That the **LL** have no equivalent for it is of no consequence, as they have none for *meta-stêthion* or for several other Greek terms. There are several points in favor of μετάθεναρ: as a rare word, it is the *lectio difficilior*; it seems firmly supported by the readings quoted above for **G** 239.3; the lection of E is awkward, and one would expect a single word, such as would need definition, rather than a self-explanatory phrase.

Now according to Pollux, “the fleshy inside part of the hand, from the thumb to the index, is called *thenar*, the outside part *opisthenar*, and that from the index to the little finger, *hypothenar*” (2.143). He adds that “some think that the whole front part of the hand (i.e., the palm) is called *thenar*, and Hippocrates and Homer intimate this” (144). This proves that by the second century *thenar* had become ambiguous, designating sometimes the whole palm and again just a part of it, in fact the part to which *metathenar*, as defined by **G**, would refer.

In the three places in **G** where *thenar* occurs without variants it is applied unmistakably to this restricted area. First, if the *chronikê* and the *zôêphoros* are joined ἀπὸ τοῦ θένaros τῆς χειρὸς ἐκ τῶν ἄνωθεν μερῶν, the subject, if he is a free man, “will enjoy good fortune and lead a blameless life” (**G** 242.5–8). Compare **Lp** 9:

Si vero predictæ lineæ, mediana scilicet et dextra trianguli, coniunguntur recte ex opposito medietatis indicis, angulum acutum faciendo, tunc signum est . . . felicitatis et inculpabilis vite.

This gives the same lineation and interpretation and shows that the lines meet near the index-finger. By this criterion "palm" in **G** would be imprecise: *thenar*, if correct (I shall propose to emend it) would have to mean the space between the index and the thumb. Secondly, there is the passage (**G** 240.12) where the *anankaia* (*mensalis*) is described as bending toward the finger of Zeus (the index; see below) and ending ἐν τοῖς τοῦ θέναρος ὀρίοις. Finally, ἐπὶ τῷ μέσῳ θέναρι is mentioned as the place where the *chronikê* and the *anankaia* may touch, "in the same way as the *zôêphoros* and the *chronikê*," in case the *zôêphoros* (*mediana*) is so short that the two outer lines meet and form an angle beyond its end (**G** 242.27). The phrase is undoubtedly corrupt, for with the adjective in the attributive position it can mean only "at the middle *thenar*," which is nonsense on any interpretation.<sup>20</sup> I would accept Boll's word and emend here to ἐπὶ τῷ μεταθέναρι, and I would read <μετα>θέναρος in the other two passages. Granted that Pollux says nothing about *metathenar* and even supports for *thenar* the narrower meaning requisite in **G**, still a total rejection of *metathenar* would entail the acceptance of E's readings in **G** 238.5-6, where I have noted three counts against them. Further, they are inconsistent with the fact that elsewhere *thenar* would have to be taken in the restricted sense, as I have demonstrated. It is perfectly credible that the palmists coined *metathenar* to obviate the ambiguity of which Pollux speaks, and it is as logical as *hypothenar* to designate a part of the *thenar*, palm.

I turn to another problem in paragraph 1. When the *chronikê* and the *zôêphoros* touch, the point of contact is termed the *synaphê*: ταύτην δὲ τὴν συναφὴν ὅτε (sic ego: ὅτε Boll) μὲν οὐδαμῶς ἔστι συνιδεῖν τῶν γραμμῶν ἀπ' ἀλλήλων ἀφεστηκυῶν, ὅτε (ut supra) δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ <μετα>θέναρος αὐτοῦ μέχρι τοῦ κοίλου τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῆς (ego pro αὐτῇ) [πολλάκις] ὑποκαταβαίνει (**G** 238.13-16) "sometimes it is quite impossible to see this contact because the lines are separated from each other, and sometimes (i.e., when it does occur) it descends from the *metathenar* itself as far as the hollow of the hand itself." This means that when the two lines are in contact they may exceptionally touch in

<sup>20</sup> If this was written μ'θέναρι, according to the standard abbreviation, at an earlier point in the tradition, a scribe ignorant of the word might the more readily have mis-copied or falsely corrected it. In **P** it is written μ' ὧ θέναρι. In **G** 242.5, the second phrase, "from the upper parts," is superfluous and probably inserted in an attempt to preserve the right meaning after <μετα>θέναρος had become corrupted.

the hollow of the hand instead of in the space between the bases of the index and the thumb, where, as one can tell from a glance at one's own hand, they are most likely to touch if they touch at all. The **LL** make the same two points but in reverse order:

Nunc de angulis videamus, et primo de angulo superiori. Et est sciendum quod aliquando (cf.  $\delta\tau\epsilon$ ) contingit quod linea dextra (i.e., linea vite) et sinistra (i.e., mediana) angulum superiorem concludunt in concavo ipsius manus . . . quandoque ( $\delta\tau\epsilon$ ) non sibi obviant nec contingunt . . .<sup>21</sup>

Probably *πολλάκις* is intrusive, having been inserted when  $\delta\tau\epsilon$  came to be wrongly accented.

In Boll's diagram the line labelled *zôéphoros* is drawn in the exceptional position mentioned in this passage, with the *synaphê* at the arc of the *chronikê* and thus in the hollow of the palm instead of in its normal position with the *synaphê* in the *metathenar*; consequently the line is canted to the vertical. The actual *zôéphoros* is drawn in its typical, that is, almost horizontal position but, not surprisingly under the circumstances, it is left unlabelled. Clearly Boll overlooked the fact that the *zôéphoros* is the same as the *mediana*, as the matching passages in the **LL** suffice to prove. As it happens, there is a line of frequent occurrence which approximates the line which Boll marked *zôéphoros* and which he may have equated with it. This line appears, in the right hand, at the left of the *chronikê* or *linea vitae* and more or less parallels it, rising almost perpendicularly toward the middle finger; it is termed *linea prosperitatis* (**La I** 4 and 9) or *linea honoris* (**Lr** 11), and in modern palmistry is known as the line of fate (see above). It was not, however, regarded as one of the three or four "principal lines" (*lineae principales* **LL**), and **G** would hardly have raised it to this rank while totally ignoring the more conspicuous median line. One of the **LL** remarks that some of his sources do not mention this line or count it among the "natural" (i.e., principal) lines because they do not distinguish it from the median line.<sup>22</sup> This implies that when this line was mentioned it

<sup>21</sup> **La II** 1.9. Cf. **Lp** 9: *Angulus ergo supremus, si in concavitate manus . . . appareat . . . Aliquando tamen accidit ibi angulum non esse sed notabiliter predictae lineae distare videntur.*

<sup>22</sup> *Scias tamen quod de ista linea aliqui libri non faciunt mencionem nec computant eam inter lineas naturales, sed lineam prosperitatis dicunt esse lineam tabularem seu medianam (quod idem est), et sic secundum istos non essent nisi tres lineae naturales (**La I** 4).*

was properly added to the usual three or four principal lines including the median. There is no place for it in **G**, particularly because **G** is based on a three-line system.

In paragraph II (**G** 238.30–239.5) the seven planets are correlated with the parts of the hand: the hollow of the palm “and the lines” belong to Selene, the thumb to Aphrodite, the *metathenar* and the *zôêphoros* to Ares, the index to Zeus, the middle finger to Kronos, the ring-finger to Helios or Apollo, and the little finger to Hermes. Similarly **Lp** (p. 685):

Saturnus habet medium cum suo monte; Iubiter (*sic*), indicem cum suo monte; Mars, triangulum;<sup>23</sup> Sol, auricularem cum suo monte; Venus, pollicem cum suo monte; Mercurius, medicum cum suo monte; Luna mensalem cum quadrangulo et partes infra basim trianguli possidet.

**Lp** reverses the roles of Helios-Sol and Hermes-Mercurius; on this point **G** agrees with the Pseudo-Melampus on *palmoi* (*salisationes*), the divinatory twitchings which may of course affect the hand and fingers as well as other parts of the body.<sup>24</sup>

“One should, then, examine the lines in the right hand (**G**, 3, par. 239.6).” This simple principle becomes complicated in the **LL**, where we read either that a man’s right hand and a woman’s left are significant or else that the right or left hand of a man or of a woman should be examined in certain seasons or on certain days.<sup>25</sup>

Persons born under the sign of Helios will have “delicate lines, like scratches” on the lowest phalanx (sc. of the ring-finger) and they will be “clever (*euphyeis*), imitators of every work, practising what they have not learned” (**G** 239.14–20). The chapters in the **LL** on the mount of the ring-finger (*mons medici*), which also belongs to Helios-Sol, offer an analogy: if this mount has two lines equidistant from the *linea*

<sup>23</sup> Of course the upper angle of the triangle lies in the *metathenar*, which is controlled by Ares (see above).

<sup>24</sup> See the edition by H. Diels, *Abh. Berl. Akad.*, 1907, 4, 1–42. Boll notes that the Pseudo-Melampus differs from **G** in assigning the index to Ares-Mars. Fragments of works on palmomancy (a word which, needless to say, has no connection with “palmistry”) appear among the papyri (*P.Flor.* 3.391, *P.Osl.* 3.76, *P.Ryl.* 1.28, *PSI* 6.728). See T. Hopfner, “Palioskopia,” *RE* 18 (1949) cols. 259–62.

<sup>25</sup> See **Lp** 25; **La I** 2; **La II**, p. 236 (in a passage preserved only in the Klagenfurt manuscript); **Lr** 1.

*mensalis* and extending to the base of the ring-finger,

subtilitatem ingenii denotat, diversarum artium investigatorem, eloquentiam, arrogantiam et inanem gloriam affectantem.<sup>26</sup>

Here the planetary relation is not found but there are similar elements in the interpretation—talent and a vain or willful versatility.

Those born under the sign of Kronos are not only “good men and women, affable to their friends” but also ἀπλοὶ τε καὶ τὰ ἄριστα συμβουλευόντες, βαρεῖς τῇ διανοίᾳ, οὐ ταχὺ συνιέντες κτλ. (G 239.20–24), while protégés of Saturnus

sunt animati, utilia consulentes, diu in cogitatione permanentes.<sup>27</sup>

Here **Lp** also notes the planetary aspect and there is a verbal reminiscence, as *utilia consulentes* translates the second phrase of **G** while *diu in cogitatione permanentes* loosely renders the third or fourth.

For the child of Ares it is crucial if the *chroniké* and the *zôéphoros* do not meet, because it signifies that he will never be manumitted if he is a slave and he will be in need if he is a free man: δοῦλος μὲν ὦν οὐδέποτε ἐλευθερωθήσεται, ἐλεύθερος δὲ ἐνδεὴς ἔσται.<sup>28</sup> Exactly the same is the fate of one in whose palm the corresponding lines, that is, the *mediana* and the *dextra trianguli* or *linea vitae*, fail to meet:

Qui, si servus aut captivus fuerit, numquam liberabitur. Si vero liber fuerit aut dominus, ille misera vita finietur (**Lp** 9).

Perhaps *aut captivus* and *aut dominus* were added to make the situation more realistic for the Middle Ages.

At the beginning of paragraph V the text seems obscure if not corrupt: Ἐὰν δὲ ἡ ζωφόρος γραμμὴ συσταλῇ, πολυχρονίους δηλοῖ· καὶ ὅσῳ ἂν <πλέον> συνεσταλμένη ὑπάρχῃ, πολυχρονιωτέρους δηλοῖ (G 240.24). “If the *zôéphoros* is contracted it reveals persons of long life; it reveals persons of longer life the more contracted it is.” We read next that if this line extends to the finger of Hermes (the *auricularis*, little finger), it indicates short-lived individuals, while one who has the line incomplete “will perish losing consciousness, struck by a sudden

<sup>26</sup> **Lp** 23. Cf. **La II** 1.20, **Lr** 16.

<sup>27</sup> **Lp**, p. 685. Since Kronos-Saturnus controls the middle finger, we look further in the **LL** for the significance of the *mons medii* and find: *Mons medii . . . simplicem* (cf. ἀπλοῖ **G**), *quietum* (cf. **La II** 1.19: *hoc significat ociosum sine cura et cum quiete*; **Lr** 15: *quietem et ociositatem significat*), *sine cogitatione* (cf. **G?**) et *calumpnia denotat* (**Lp** 20).

<sup>28</sup> **G** 239.27–29. The statement is repeated in **G** 242.13.

crisis" (αἰφνιδίῳ ῥοπῇ πληγεῖς ἀπολείται ἀναισθήτως, *ibid.* 25–29). Parallel statements are found in **Lp** 2:

Sinistra trianguli que dicitur mediana, si directa fuerit et continua, bonam complexionem, sanitatem et bonitatem ingenii significat . . . Si autem extendatur ad inferiorem partem manus ex opposito auricularis et ibi finiatur, hominem parve vite denunciat . . . Si hec linea non habetur, illud signum est morbi caducis.

At the end it is merely a bit amusing to see how the "sudden crisis" has been transformed into an epileptic seizure. The first sentence quoted from **G** would be defensible only if "contracted" could mean "continuous" (what seems extremely doubtful), because "contracted" in the sense of "shortened" or "bent" is at odds with the **LL**, which say that a long, straight *mediana* is a sign of good health and long life:

Quando hec linea (sc. mediana) est recta, sine montibus, bone latitudinis, satis profunda et boni coloris, bonam dispositionem, bonum ingenium, sanitatem et fidelitatem indicat, et quando est bene articulata, bene apparens et profunda, protensa usque ad montem incisionis manus, significat longam vitam, et quando non transit per totam manum, significat brevem vitam (**La II** 1.4, cf. **Lr** 6).

The cure is simple: supply <μῆ> after γραμμῆ and replace Boll's <πλέον> with <ῆττον>.<sup>29</sup>

There are a few more places in paragraphs V–VI where **G** and the **LL** converge sufficiently to confirm their common ancestry.

If the *zôéphoros* is divided by some oblique lines, as many "bodily weaknesses" will afflict the individual (**G** 241.10–12). Compare **La II** 1.6:

si ipsa (sc. mediana) male fixa et diversificata fuerit variis lineis, multas egritudines et abhominaciones significat.

If this line is "twisting and blackish" (ἐλικοειδῆς καὶ μελανοειδής), persons who display it will be "common, awkward, and malignant" (φαῦλοί τε καὶ σκαιοὶ καὶ κακότροποι, **G** 241.26). Compare **Lp** 2:

Si hec linea (sc. mediana) fuerit tortuosa, illud malicias tractantem et consilia revelantem significat.

<sup>29</sup> **Lr** 5 says of the *linea vitae* that *quanto magis abbreviatur, tanto maiorem ostendit abbreviacionem vite*. Since this is true of the *mediana* also, it possibly supports the interpretation of *συνεσταλμένη* as "shortened."

He who has a star between the *zôêphoros* and the *anankaia* will be “just and pious” (δικαίος καὶ εὖσεβής, **G** 241.28). Compare **La II** 1.5:

idem (sc. virtutes et bonam conscienciam, fidelitatem et implecionem promissorum) significat crux inventa inter medianam et mensalem (similarly, **La I** 8, Lr 6).

One who has the *zôêphoros* and the *chronikê* separated from each other, with no intermediate line to tie them together, will be ἀπάνθρωπος, ἀναιδής, ψεύστης, ἀπρόκοπος, ἀποστερητής, ὀκνηρός, κοῦφος (**G** 241.29–242.2). Compare **Lp** 9:

Aliquando tamen accidit ibi angulum non esse sed notabiliter predictae lineae (sc. mediana et linea vite) distare videntur et tunc miserum, viciosum, crudelem, mendacem, malum debitorem, iactantem, vanos et inutiles sermones proferentem indicat.

If the *anankaia* inclines toward the *zôêphoros*, its possessor “will come into the greatest fear and danger of death, but he will suffer no ill” (**G** 243.16). Compare **Lp** 6:

Si autem hec linea (sc. mensalis) medianam naturalem respiciat, ille erit in periculis et timore mortis, sed bene evadet per mulierem.<sup>30</sup>

If the *anankaia* bends toward the finger of Kronos, οὐδέποτε αὐτὸν λείψουσι δίκαι καὶ ἀηδίαί (**G** 243.18–20). Compare **Lp** 4:

Si caput huius lineae (sc. mensalis) infra eundem digitum (sc. medium) finiatur, numquam sine angustiis, tribulacionibus et laboribus erit.

Again, if the *anankaia* turns toward the finger of Kronos, ἀπὸ τῶν οἰκείων οὗτος βλαβήσεται (**G** 244.2). Compare **Lp** 4:

Si vero versus digitum medium inclinet (sc. mensalis) et citra eundem terminetur, . . . a propinquis ledetur.

If branches run from the *anankaia* to the finger of Zeus, ἐντίμους ποιοῦσιν (**G** 244.3). Compare **La II** 1.14:

et si procedat (sc. mensalis) ascendendo versus indicem gradatim, quanto plus ascendit, tanto plus indicat augmentum diviciarum et dignitatum.

There is one passage that has a certain philosophical interest. On several occasions in the course of the thirteenth century ecclesiastical

<sup>30</sup> The last phrase recalls **G** 240.15, and 244.1, where other lineations, involving the planet Aphrodite, signify help to be received from women.

authority accused the practitioners of the occult sciences of heresy on the ground that their predictions contravened the Christian doctrine of freewill. For this reason the **LL** cautiously warn the reader that their science does not presume to foretell predestined events but merely identifies in the individual certain traits of character or natural inclinations which need not lead to crises in his life, because his will is free to resist them.<sup>31</sup> But there was nothing to prevent the author of **G**, who was presumably writing some centuries before the time of the **LL**, from asserting in the old Stoic vein that none can escape his destiny: *ἐκάστω γὰρ τὸ πεπρωμένον ἐκ μοίρας· πάντως γὰρ ἄφυκτος*<sup>32</sup> *καὶ ἀπαράβατα τὰ ἐκ ταύτης* (**G** 242.19). It is interesting that this statement is preserved only in P, for both here and in **G** 241.2, the E tradition has by deliberate rephrasing eliminated the idea of fatality, as Boll duly noted. These changes may well have been prompted by an apprehension similar to that felt by the compilers of the **LL**.

Finally, attention may be drawn to the fact that the discovery of **G** opened up a problem of general interest for the history of chiromancy, for it showed, as Boll with his usual sagacity did not fail to remark, that the union between this science and astrology must have taken place in antiquity and not in the sixteenth century, as had been supposed. Though this is undeniably true for treatises of the class to which **G** and **Lp** belong, might there not have been other Greek manuals in which chiromancy was always and forever unadulterated? Until more texts are published I can see no means of answering this question unequivocally.

<sup>31</sup> **La II**, Proem. 1, **La I** 1. This topic is discussed at length in the forthcoming edition of **La I** (cf. note 14, above).

<sup>32</sup> ἄφευκτος P and Boll. According to *LSJ* this faulty spelling is often found in manuscripts.