

Setting the Womb in Its Place:

Toward A Contextual Archaeology of Graeco-Egyptian Uterine Amulets

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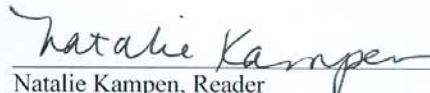
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Curriculum Vitae

Katherine Marino was born in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1982. She attended Brooks School in North Andover for High School. She earned a B.A. in classical civilization from Yale University in 2004 and enrolled in a Ph.D. program in the then Center for Old World Art and Archaeology at Brown University. While a graduate student she published a review article in the *Journal of Roman Archaeology* entitled “The Growing Field of Garden Archaeology” in fall 2005. She has also contributed a piece on an Etruscan fibula to the RISD Museum’s new catalogue and was the second editor for the final publication for 2007’s *Archaeology of College Hill* class, a book entitled “Churchyard Archaeology.” In 2008 she taught *The Archaeology of College Hill* and was first editor on the final publication entitled: “An Archaeology of College Hill.” In addition to presenting numerous papers at graduate, national and international conferences she co-organized TRAC: Ann Arbor in 2009. She earned a MA in classics in spring 2010 from Brown.

Preface and Acknowledgements

I am aching to get to work after the years of preparation. And I'm scared also, but I think that is healthy. I have spent a great deal of money and even more time on this project. It is perfectly natural that I should have a freezing humility considering the size of the job to do and the fact that I have to do it all alone. There is no one to help me from now on. This is the writing job, the loneliest work in the world. If I fail there is only one person in the world to blame, but I could do with a small prayer from you and from any others who feel that this should be the best work of my life and the most satisfying. Prayer is about the only help I can hope for now. Yours. And I am now going into the darkness of my own mind.

John Steinbeck Letter to his Editor, July 7, 1958

While I would never dare to compare myself with the genius of John Steinbeck, reading this passage in the Fall of 2009 as I attempted to finish my dissertation, his situation resonated with me. He summed up many of the same feelings of fear and trepidation, of hope and isolation that I felt about my own experience researching and writing this dissertation. I have been fortunate enough to have completed it, unlike the project which Steinbeck writes about. Nevertheless, I readily admit that I would not have been able to manage such an overwhelming task without a deep and hugely supportive network of friends and advisors. There are too many people to whom I am indebted to acknowledge each by name, but I would like to single out a few.

My core committee of Susan Alcock, John Bodel, Rene Nünlist and Veronika Grimm have had infinite patience with me and for that I cannot thank them enough. My readers Natalie Kampen and Rebecca Molholt generously offered (and with smiles!) to come on board this project at a late date and I am sure that it will benefit enormously from their expertise. I offer them my heartfelt thanks.

On a more personal note my parents Laurie and Anthony have never waived in their faith in me, supporting and encouraging me to explore whatever made me happy. They believed I could do this (or anything) even when I didn't. Their belief in me provided me the motivation to finish when I wanted to quit; I had to prove myself worthy of such love and encouragement. I could not have written this dissertation without them. Finally I would like to specially thank V.G. and R. N. Without the encouragement of former I would never have started graduate school, and without the friendship and mentoring of the latter I would never have finished.

Despite all the help I received in writing this dissertation, any errors which remain, are, of course, mine alone.

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I

The Nature of the Problem

All these diseases, then, happen more frequently to women who have not borne a child, yet they also happen to those who have. These diseases are dangerous, as has been said, and for the most part they are both acute and serious, and difficult to understand because of the fact that women are the ones who share their sicknesses...At the same time the doctors also make mistakes by not learning the apparent cause through accurate questioning, but they proceed to heal as though they were dealing with men's diseases...For the healing of the diseases of women differs greatly from the healing of men's diseases.

Diseases of Women I, 62, Prepared and Translated by A.E. Hanson, 1975, 581-582

Even women neither gestating nor lactating – whether for reasons of age, infertility, circumstance, or personal choice – may have been subject to innumerable afflictions of the reproductive organs, including menstrual difficulties, infections, and cancers, all of which might be further complicated by malnutrition...

M. Green, 1989, 435

The two passages above serve as apt entry-points into the discussion with which this work will engage. The first, excerpted from a case in the Hippocratic treatise Diseases of Women I, highlights the nature of women's diseases as a category distinct from those which afflicted men and children in the ancient Greek world. While it is not the intention of this work to debate the specifics of the origin and assemblage of the Hippocratic corpus as we have it today¹ it should be noted that the corpus generally reflects medical theories circulating in the 5th and 4th century BC in Greece and the Mediterranean. The second passage is from a work on women's health and the use of midwives in Medieval Europe, although its point is applicable to women from all eras of

¹ For this see the many excellent works by A.E. Hanson

history and prehistory. The main meaning to be drawn from it is that the role of the reproductive organs in a woman's body, including the uterus, ovaries, fallopian tubes, etc., is not strictly limited to conception and birth. Simply by existing, these organs have the capacity to impact the nature and quality of a woman's experiences and life-course and not only in relation to how often and how many children she bears.

These points may seem too obvious to need explicit assertion. Women are different than men, women gestate, the organs by which women affect reproduction are subject to the same bodily processes and insults as other organs within the body. Yet, despite the fact that this is common sense, and despite the fact that consciousness of these premises was attested to in a Hippocratic treatise dating back 2500 years, these are facts which are overlooked astonishingly often in academic work concerning the ancient body and medicine.

This dissertation will concern itself with the issue of women's health in the Roman Empire from the 1st until the 5th centuries AD. Specifically it will focus around a class of small haematite amulets of Graeco-Egyptian origin, using them both as objects of study in their own right and as jumping off points to consider social questions concerning the body in the society which created and used them, including the nature and creation of sex; gender; the understanding of physiology and the practice of medicine; agency and the use of magic to manipulate gods and influence bodies; and the semiotics of bodily representation.

Introduction to the Amulets:

Before proceeding further the amulets around which this work will revolve must be introduced. While the culturally specific understandings of an amulet of Greece and

Egypt will be considered shortly, for the present an amulet is to be defined as a portable object worn close to the body which is intended to deflect harm from or enhance a quality of its user. A passage from Ralph Jackson's Doctors and Diseases of the Roman Empire, a survey of Roman medicine popular in introductory courses on the topic but also widely cited by senior historians of ancient medicine (Nunn 2002, Hanson 1994)² introduces the specific amulets of this study well:

A fascinating example of a fertility or childbirth amulet was found in a Roman building at Dicket Mead near Welwyn, England. Dating probably to the fourth century, it is a tiny oval stone made of haematite and engraved on both sides. The complicated design and text include a serpent devouring its own tail (an Egyptian symbol of Eternity), the goddess Isis, a scarabaeus (sacred beetle), and the names of Ororiouth (a protector spirit of women's diseases) and Iao, Jewish Jahweh. Most interesting is the depiction of a human womb, which appears to include the Fallopian tubes, described by Galen and rediscovered in the sixteenth century. Below is a key which symbolized the locking and unlocking of the womb in pregnancy and delivery. The combination of motifs and words drawn from Greek, Egyptian and Semitic beliefs concentrated magical power in the amulet, which was probably sewn into clothing or hung from the neck in a pouch.

R. Jackson, 1988, 106

Jackson is not inaccurate in his physical description. The amulet which he describes (c. 69) accords well with the general class considered herein, although it does possess a few elements not found on every specimen.

The two criteria by which an amulet is judged to fall within the scope of this dissertation are either the presence of certain magical words inscribed upon it, or its possession of part of a particular iconographical package. This group of symbols in its most stripped down form comprises an upside down pot, identified by Lord Southesk for the first time in the modern era as a human uterus, a schematized key beneath its mouth,

² Hanson calls Jackson's volume "a refreshing new look at the medicine of the empire." (1989, 87) She does criticize his treatment of some of the gynecological material, especially in regards to the gynecological texts. However, in her 1994 article, "A Division of Labor," she cites this same chapter as evidence of the number of ancient specula preserved to us. At no point does she question his treatment of the amulets and generally seems to agree with him in regards to his treatment of the material culture relating to Roman medicine.

and an Ouroboros, a snake swallowing its own tail, surrounding both (Southesk 1908, Bonner 1950). Often, but not always, the vessel has lines extending off of its base and mouth, interpreted respectively as Fallopian tubes and uterine ligaments. The nuances of these symbols will be explored further in chapters 6 and 7, but the most salient point to note is the presence of a uterine vase on every amulet. For this reason the group will be referred to throughout as uterine amulets (Figure 1.1).

In addition to this most basic grouping of symbols, many amulets also have deities carved upon them. These are typically derived from the Egyptian pantheon. The most common include Duamoutef (a dog headed mummy), Chnoubis (a radiate lion-headed snake), Seth and Isis.

Many of the amulets are inscribed with words and magic formulae. Most of these words are in Greek characters and often represent intelligible Greek that can be read and understood. The remainder of the inscriptions in Greek characters fall into two categories. The first is comprised of foreign words which have been transcribed into Greek, such as from Babylonian, Hebrew, Aramaic and other languages. If one has the knowledge these inscriptions too are intelligible.³ Magic formulae make up the other group of inscriptions. Often these are no more than large groups of syllables which would sound interesting and perhaps powerful when intoned (i.e. “abracadabra”), although shorter groupings are also fairly common. The inscription of the seven vowels was also thought to be powerful and is commonly found, but is not exclusive to the class of amulets.

³ Most of the straightforward words have already been identified. What remains to be understood in this category involves in-depth knowledge of a range of ancient languages and some of their more obscure etymologies. See Appendix A on Mormorotokoumbai (and eulamo) for further discussion and examples.

One inscription which seems to be diagnostic of the group is the word “Ororiouth.” This word is often found on the undecorated reverse of the amulets, although it is occasionally located on the obverse. Thanks to an expanded inscription on an amulet it has been possible to identify Ororiouth as the protector daemon of the womb. Thus, the presence of this word on any amulet also warrants its consideration as a uterine amulet.

The only securely dated amulet which we have from this group of about 150 is the one discussed by Jackson that comes from Welwyn Herts in England.⁴ It is dated to the 4th century AD by the presence of a coin of Gratian in the same layer in which it was found (Wilson & Wright 1963). The problems in dating archaeological strata solely by the coins which are found in them are well known. Yet, in spite of this difficulty, by comparing these amulets to the magical practices of the Roman Empire and stylistically comparable amulets Delatte and others have been able to estimate the general date range of the uterine amulets as between the late 1st century AD and the late 5th-6th century AD. (Delatte 1914, Bonner 1950, Barb 1953, Michel 2004)

While the amulets of this class lack secure archaeological context, with the exception of the one dated example from England, they are all reported as having come from Alexandria and the Roman East. The problem of their origins and their lack of archaeological context will be treated further in chapter 2. For now, the idea that they all originated in the Roman east is supported by the unvarying language of their inscriptions; all are in Greek, even the 4th century example recovered from England, part of the Latin speaking western Empire. The few other amulets with purported but unconfirmed

⁴ It should be noted that most but not every uterine amulet known to the author was included in the catalogue, including those published by Petrie in his book entitled Amulets. See the introduction to the catalogue for more details.

contexts are all said to come from Egypt and the Near East (c. 23, 48, 63, 73, 89, 95, 111, 118, 120, 126).

Their invocation and depiction of gods derived from the Egyptian pantheon and from pantheons further to the east (such as Ereshkigal, the Babylonian goddess of the underworld) also seems to support the idea that they circulated in a cultural milieu which would have been well acquainted with such deities, such as in the Eastern empire of Egypt, Syria, and the other eastern borders of the Mediterranean. Finally, the amuletic traditions with which these seem to have the most in common appear in the classical Greek and Semitic worlds and in the Medieval Byzantine empire, not in the Latin west, which would seem to support further the idea that this is the area in which these amulets had the greatest purchase and influence (Bonner 1950, Barb 1953, Vikan 1984).⁵

Traditional Understanding of the Amulets and Thesis:

Having provided only the barest of outlines of the amulets in question, it is appropriate to return to the description by Jackson. His understanding, while not unique, embodies the problems most often found in such descriptions. He starts his comments by saying that the piece in question is “a fascinating example of a fertility or childbirth amulet.” This seems like a perfectly acceptable explanation of the pieces, and indeed, the majority of authors, both specialists in ancient medicine and those interested in the pieces because of their magical implications are content to accept it (Barb 1959, Hanson 2004, Dasen 2004 & 2005). The amulets do after all, possess the symbol for the human uterus, and what else could the key represent but to symbolize “the locking and unlocking of the womb in pregnancy and delivery”? (Jackson 1988).

⁵ Although see note 5 of Chapter 2

The fundamental problem with this explanation is that alternative meanings of these uterine amulets have not been explored, or even to my knowledge, adequately considered in any modern text. Even the most open-minded of authors intent on seeking out the nuances of the pieces, have not seriously questioned the most basic assumption on which their interpretations lie (Bonner 1950, Ritner 1984, Aubert 1989, Hanson 1995 & 2004, Michel 2001, 2004a & 2004, Dasen 2004 & 2005).

Although it is possible that these were birth and fertility talismans, this dissertation will seek to verify or disprove this interpretation based on an in-depth interrogation of the pieces within their cultural context. At present it is not possible to defend that proposition based on data available.

As to why past authors may have interpreted the pieces in this way, that will be further teased out in chapter 2, but it is sufficient to note here that many of the problems can be possibly attributed to male authors unwilling to deal with “women’s diseases” in any significant or rigorous way, whether for the sake of social propriety or personal bias.⁶ The female scholars who have worked with the amulets of late (Michel 1995, 2001,

⁶ For instance, even Jackson, who wrote in the late 1980s, never goes into depth about “women’s diseases” beyond birth and contraception. This is in spite of having a chapter entitled “Women’s diseases, birth and contraception.” No such reluctance is shown when dealing with male reproductive organs. This is well illustrated at several points in his book, perhaps the most obvious coming on pg 161 when describing votive dedications: “...Veii has a marked preponderance of votives which depict male and female sexual organs, and a correspondingly small number of hand and foot votives. The symptoms of gonococcal disease include urethritis, cystitis and urethral stricture, while other diseases such as phimosis, hydrocele, scrotal varix, testicular tumours and urethral stricture, all recorded in the medical literature of the day, must have occasioned the dedication of many of the male genital votives. Not all necessarily indicate the cure of an ailment, and some of the male genitals as well as many of the female breast and womb votives were probably offered in gratitude for the birth of a child” (Jackson 1989, 161) Breast and uterine cancer and numerous menstrual problems were also listed in the medical literature of the time, but at no point does Jackson consider the possibility that most of these votives, or these organs in general when depicted, could represent such a problem. His assumption that the uterus and breast were unflinchingly and only associated with childbirth while believing that male genitals and reproductive organs could have a wide range of meanings and functions can only be attributed to a general unease with the female reproductive system, a situation which one must conclude is common among academics, as it is found in most works which deal with these amulets, although not always so blatantly as in Jackson. See also chapter 2, this work.

2004a, 2004b, 2005, Hanson 1995, 2004, Dasen 2004, 2005) have demonstrated a greater willingness to engage with the functioning of women's bodies (Hanson 1995, 2004, Dasen 2005), but have for the most part clung to the idea of the amulets being used for birthing (Hanson 2004, Dasen 2004, 2005).

It is the contention of this dissertation that while a small portion of these amulets may have been meant to facilitate childbirth or conception, the majority of the pieces deal with diseases and disorders of the uterus outside the states of pregnancy and parturition. As the two quotes which opened this chapter highlighted and as chapter 7 will demonstrate further, there is much more to the workings of the reproductive organs, especially the uterus, than birth and reproduction.

The backbone of this interpretation rests on the pieces themselves. Iconographically this understanding derives from their focus on the organ itself and the gods concerned with the functioning of the organ, as well as the lack of symbols which one would expect to be present if they did deal with birth or conception (such as the goddess Thueris, the Egyptian goddess of pregnancy). Epigraphically, analysis of the prayers present will demonstrate a focus with the working of the organ as such, i.e. preoccupation with the organ not “wandering”⁷ or concern with the abnormal pathology of the organ. The prayers and inscriptions also fail to present direct, unequivocal evidence of interest in increased fertility and safe birth.

⁷ This refers to a condition envisioned somewhat differently by different groups such as the Egyptians, the Hippocratics, Plato and the physicians of the Roman Empire, but which was essentially common to the entire ancient Mediterranean (Dean-Jones 1994). It was thought that if the uterus became too dry (or for any number of other reasons) it had the ability to move about the body and attach to other organs, thereby inflicting potentially fatal harm to the woman in which it resided. See chapter 7 for further discussion and references.

To bolster the argument the material, iconographic and epigraphic evidence will be situated in cultural context in relation to the magical and medical traditions of Egypt, Greece and Rome (the most influential traditions out of which the amulets seem to have emerged) by looking at the textual and archaeological evidence remaining from those fields. The relationship of the amulets to other contemporaneous or related amulet traditions will also be investigated.

The amulets to date have been plumbed for information in relation to nothing beyond their own function. It is the second major contention of this work that these pieces are invaluable sources for the social circumstances of the world which created and believed in them. For instance, Laqueur, based on Galenic anatomy, claims that the ancient Mediterranean world believed in a one-body system where men and women simply had different versions of the same organs and were essentially the same being at different degrees of perfection (Laqueur 1992). He uses only textual evidence to support his argument about this ancient world-view and conception of anatomy (Laqueur 1992). Texts, due not only to the vagaries of preservation, but also because of the socio-economic-specific views of their writers (generally elite males) conveyed in them may not represent the full spectrum of views circulating in regard to the working of the body, or even the views held by the majority of the population. The amulets have the potential to fill in part of this gap and offer an understanding of anatomy and physiology not preserved in written sources. Alternately they may demonstrate that a similar conception of the female body was held in both popular and academic medicine.

The problem of academic formal theories of the body as preserved in writing vs. the beliefs held by the majority of (probably) illiterate poor is one which is felt acutely in

this work. Being without the luxury of leisure time and often without the ability to write, what the average ancient person believed about the make-up and functioning of his or her body is not available to us in well argued written sources. Instead, the archaeologist is left with bits of material culture which hint at these beliefs, such as votive offerings in the shapes of body parts, graffiti, and amulets, items which do not receive much explanation in ancient texts, or when mentioned are often dismissed as mere superstition.⁸ Soranus is clear that amulets have no power to influence the workings of the body and should be left aside as the superstitious nonsense of the uneducated masses:

Amulets employed to staunch uterine hemorrhage through their antipathy – the magnet, stone from Assos, rennet from a hare, and other things of this kind – are equally ineffective, although their use should not be forbidden, since the hope they provide possibly makes the woman more cheerful.
(III 42.3, 121 Ilberg quoted from Hanson 2004, 290)

Pliny too records the use of many popular amulets and magical practices, often, if not always, questioning their efficacy (For example Pliny NH 30, 63). The idea in the textual sources is fairly consistent – amulets are used by many people, and it seems that the majority of those are the poor, illiterate and generally the lower class that cannot or prefer not to hire the services of a trained doctor (Graf 2003, 10).

Since the belief in and use of amulets was mainly castigated by the writers of academic medicine, we can only assume that they represent a form of therapy probably common among those not represented by the texts.⁹ For this reason they are an invaluable source in assessing the views about the body, healing, gender etc. among a group which is otherwise voiceless in our sources. Difficulties can arise, however, when

⁸ For example, in the entire Hippocratic corpus, a group of texts which admittedly make a deliberate effort to eschew magical and non-rational therapies, only one amulet is mentioned.

⁹ And possibly an alternate form of therapy also used by those in the texts, but availed under other circumstances

using the academic medical texts as the key to interpreting the function of the amulets. Their input must of course be taken into account, but since amulets and medical texts potentially represent such radically different groups, other sources such as magical accounts and archaeology must be considered as well. The amulets cannot simply be taken as a material manifestation of the doctrines recorded in the Graeco-Egyptian medical texts. As Winkler mentions in relation to an amuletic cure for impotency, the wearing of a lizard tail around the neck: “this is useful knowledge and it circulated in massive quantities along informal channels on the ground, leaving but few traces in the stratosphere of dignified writing.” (Winkler 1990a, 80)

Yet, to infer social situation from the amulets or to attribute them to any particular group of people we must understand them within their greater context and use a body of theory to extract meaning in a structured manner. In the latter half of the dissertation they will be analyzed as magical tools, as medical instruments, as things and as gendered objects. Before those discussions are possible, however, the terms “magic,” “medicine,” and “gender,” repetitive themes throughout the dissertation, must be exploded and explored from both cultural and theoretical perspectives. It is to these discussions that this chapter now turns. The various theoretical approaches used to probe the amulets as material culture will be confined to chapter eight and therefore will be discussed at that point.

Magic:

Bounded by religion on the one hand, and on the other by medicine, magic has been considered inferior to both and has often received only perfunctory treatment in the study of either. Ritner 2008, 4-5

As a large part of the dissertation will deal with the fields of magic it will be beneficial at this point to consider this topic in relation to their past and recent treatment in anthropological and classical circles to understand how these greater frameworks into which the amulets may be slotted may have influenced their perception and treatment to this point. Theories of magic will be discussed first, followed by the development of a working definition for magic within this work. The consideration will be capped by a discussion of magic within the relevant cultures of the Mediterranean.

Within the field of Classics magic has traditionally been an area shunned by scholars (Graf 2003, 215). In the past, and still to a degree, the view of magic has been one of revulsion and disdain, with the majority of scholars believing that magic is too vulgar to warrant serious study. While the topic is growing in popularity at present along with a resurgence in interest in ancient religion there is still a stigma attached to it. Graf sums up the current situation nicely saying that:

Despite the revival of interest in ancient religion, interest in ancient magic remains marginal – curse tablets, papyrus books, and voodoo dolls are much less appealing than are mythological scenes on Attic vases or the papyrus fragments of Sappho. This situation is understandable and, to a certain degree, perfectly justified; nevertheless, scholarly interest in ancient societies should not be fastidious. Graf 2003, 2

Nevertheless, Graf is correct, and the academy should not turn its back on any evidence at its disposal, not only because of the limited sources already available to classicists, but also because whether one is pleased by it or not, these alternate magical sources will speak to an area of experience and enrich our understanding of what it was to be a part of those societies in which classicists and archaeologists profess such interest. While it may not be possible to ever fully derive the views and beliefs of any individual “ordinary” person of the ancient world, magical sources may provide us a means by which to

elucidate those beliefs more fully than it has been possible to date using more traditional sources that originate with the upper classes, such as literature and poetry (Lloyd 1999a, 8). Yet it must be remembered in dealing with any source that it is the product of a human who created it with an agenda. No statement can be taken purely at face value; rather it has to be contextualized so as to understand the cultural tensions and motivations which underlie it. As G.E.R. Lloyd has written: “There is no such thing as an observation-statement that is not to some extent theory-laden, though of course the degree of theory-ladenness varies” (Lloyd 1999a, 128, echoed by Wylie 1982, See also Eagleton 2003, 57-58 summarizing Gadamer, Truth and Method, 1960.).

The most pressing concern in dealing with magic is defining it or at least delimiting what will be considered magical in a given work. Often the term takes on a derogatory tone and is applied to emphasize the irrationality of a particular group. Ritner, who has written much on the topic notes that magic is used in a similar fashion to the word “myth” nowadays, with the accompanying implication that it denotes something known to be false, the product of more primitive thinking (Ritner 2008, 4). Indeed, the word “magic” in popular form carries distinctly Western and Christian overtones and is not something which can be viewed as a universal (Ritner 2008, 242). In this capacity magic seems so familiar to some authors, even academics, that often no definition is provided at all when it is discussed, to say nothing of a considered model as to what constitutes magic in any culture (Ritner 2008, 7). But this is not inexplicable; “designed more as a ‘category of exclusion’ (that which is not X) than as a ‘category of inclusion’ (that which is X), the inherited Western concept of ‘magic’ is notoriously difficult to define” (Ritner 2008, 237). The result is that magic must be defined within the culture in

which it operates and not by any universal paradigm. However, it cannot be ascribed meaning arbitrarily, as if it was not a loaded term with its own history. For this reason the various ways in which it has been utilized within disciplines relevant to this study must be briefly examined.

Among others Graf has been especially concerned to trace the history of magical studies within the discipline of Classics and to a degree, anthropology. In the modern period two schools of magical study emerged, the German and the English. German scholars such as Usener, Dieterich and Preisendanz (the last very active in amulet studies) showed the first modern interest in the magical sources, seeing them as vehicles to greater understanding of religion and history. They were not interested in magic itself (Graf 2003, 13). The other, slightly later, major school was Anglophone and originated with Tylor and Frazer within an evolutionist theoretical background. For Tylor magic was a means by which the world was explained and forces within it controlled (Graf 2003).

The major theoretical position on magic within Classics has been that of Frazer, developed within The Golden Bough (Frazer 1913). Frazer understood magic in a functionalist framework. It was used as a tool by an autonomous practitioner who tried to change certain aspects of the world by manipulating the forces at play, supernatural or other. Like science magic worked toward a goal. Religion on the other hand was seen as an irrational act lacking a practical goal in which the practitioner subjected him or herself to the power and will of supernatural forces (Graf 2003 14; Pinch 1995, 12). Religion and magic were only alike for Frazer in that they both admitted of supernatural powers.

Frazer's model was further marked out by its evolutionary perspective, whereby

magic was considered a primitive form of thinking associated with rural living. In this view proper religion developed out of magic. Science with its emphasis on rationality eventually replaced religion (Graf 2003, 13). The problem with this aspect of the model is that magic and “irrationality” are found in all phases of societies (Lloyd 1999a, 5).¹⁰ While late antique magic was occasionally accounted as an aberrant degeneration from a more advanced state, that magical practice seemed to steadily gain adherents in the centuries which marked the transition from antiquity into the middle ages, despite or perhaps due in part to the coming of Christianity, provides a major challenge to the evolutionist aspect of the model (Graf 2003, 28).

A further aspect of Frazer’s understanding of magic is the categories by which he labeled magical practices. His major classifications were homeopathic and contagious magic. In the former a like substance could influence a like substance, *similia similibus*. In the latter it is envisioned that once objects that have shared a bond are separated they are still able to hold influence over each other, similar to the modern concept of witches including the hair or toenails of their intended victim in a potion (Ritner 2008, 9).

While Frazer wrote at the end of the Victorian age and was highly influenced by those values, his model is still the most popular one used in studies involving magic in the classical world. Terms like sympathetic magic which have been subject to question in fields like anthropology where new models of magic have been developed, went virtually unquestioned in classical studies through the 1960s, and to this day the Frazerian model holds sway in classical circles (Graf 2003, 14). But as Graf has eloquently put it:

¹⁰ This view, that magic represents irrationality is highlighted nicely in discussing amulets of the same greater class as the uterine amulets by the Schwartzes in their 1979 article about the collection of the American Numismatic Society. “Magical gems were only one form in which an intense upsurge of irrationality was expressed in late antiquity” Schwartz and Schwartz 1979, 151

“since the notion of “primitive thinking” has melted away like snow in sunlight, sympathy will also have to disappear” (Graf 2003, 206). Along with it must pass the rest of Frazer’s model, built upon an evolutionist platform and emphasizing the separation between magic and religion.

The next major model to influence the theory of magic is that put forth by Malinowski. Malinowski falls into the same basic school as Frazer and indeed was a follower of Frazer’s. Both saw magic as a means by which the world was explained, but Malinowski took the argument a step further, making magic an almost purely functional pursuit (Graf 2003, 15). For him, magic and religion were similar in that both were more emotional than logical; however that is where the commonalities ended. Religion for Malinowski was an end in itself, but magic was a means to accomplish a goal, a pragmatic endeavor much like science (Pinch 1995, 14). What was especially important in Malinowski’s model, built in part on his work with Trobriand Islanders, is that magic was resorted to when technology had reached its limit to cope with a situation (Pinch 1995, 14). He also is known for his emphasis on the spoken spell (Ritner 2008, 10).

Both Frazer and Malinowski, as Ritner points out, are reductivist, absolutist and normative in their models of magic. Neither gives any thought to the potential impact of cultural differences on the formulation and practice of magic in any given group (Ritner 2008, 10). For this reason the social sciences have long since abandoned their interpretations (in regard to magic), however, they both continue to exert a considerable amount of influence among many Egyptologists and Classicists, although theory conscious studies such as those by Ritner, Pinch, Faraone, Winkler and Graf among others are starting to stem the tide on this trend (Ritner 2008, 10; Pinch 1995; Faraone

1991; Winkler 1990a; Graf 2003, 1991). Nevertheless, due to this longstanding influence many of the questions asked about magic in the disciplines of Egyptology and Classics have revolved around the issue of defining criteria by which to separate magic from religion. Most have come down in favor as using the type of ritual and the intention of the agent as the means of distinguishing magical from religious practice. While the question of differentiating between the two will be discussed further in relation to Greece, Egypt and Rome shortly, it should be noted that no agreement on the criteria has been able to gain any large scale support among those who study such questions including anthropologists and students of religion. Indeed, later theorists, such as Stanley Tambiah have refused to even attempt to separate the two (Graf 2003, 16).

Frazer and Malinowski have not been the only students to influence the study of magic. While they were busy investigating practical magic from the perspective of the performative agent, others like Evans-Pritchard and Marcel Mauss were concentrating on questions of ideology and the objects of magical influence (Graf 2003, 14-15). Mauss shifted his line of questioning from the action of magic to the arena of a culture's opinions about magic. Unlike Frazer he understood magic as coming from the same collective cultural storehouses as religion and myth (Graf 2003, 17). Evans-Pritchard's approach was to analyze the magical system of the Azande from the perspective of the Azande. His findings understood magic in a structural-functionalist manner and indicated that in this particular culture magic was used in a normative way to reinforce the current social order and make sense of misfortune. Although he advocated a culturally specific understanding of magic the terminology he developed in relation to the Azande, such as "witchcraft" has been widely taken up by other students of magic and applied along with

its culturally specific connotations, in many cases indiscriminately, to the magical practices of other groups (Ritner 2008, 11)

These two approaches, broadly that which focuses on the practice of magic and that which revolves around the meaning of magic, have been the dominant means by which to consider it during the twentieth century. Those investigations that focused on ideology by and large lead to culturally specific understandings of magic, advocating an emic approach to the subject. Eventually the studies that pursued the practice of magic began to question the applicability of Frazer's model to societies beyond the geographical and temporal bounds of 19th century Europe. When the two schools came into dialogue with each other the question of magic dissolved into a wider questioning of how to understand culture and what place ritual held therein; the questions became so broad as to be rendered almost useless as tools to illuminate the original topic for which they were developed (Graf 2003, 15).

There have, of course, been other approaches to the topic as well. Ritner points to the work of David Aune who takes magic to be "a universally regarded form of deviant behaviour" (Ritner 2008, 12). Tambiah is well known for his analysis of magic within a performative framework, while Lloyd, in studying the ancient world urges that the modern scholar should leave aside the question of efficacy and instead focus on the symbolic system of the culture to which it belongs (Graf 2003, 16).

Magic, so it has been forcefully and in part, at least, surely rightly argued, should be seen less as attempting to be efficacious, than as affective, expressive or symbolic. The criteria that are relevant to judging magical behaviour are not whether it achieves practical results but whether it has been carried out appropriately or not. Lloyd 1999a, 2

The question of how to define magic, and more importantly, how that definition shapes the study of magic is a sticky one, with, as demonstrated above, a long and

distinguished history. Many scholars today debate if the concept of magic itself is anything more than a semantic trap or relevant at all beyond the bounds of Frazer's world (Graf 1991, 188; Graf 2003, 17). Betz, on the other hand warns of the dangers of extreme relativism in an academic study; while academia may currently position itself so that magic and religion are understood as different parts of the same phenomenon, distinguishable from each other only by context if at all, there is a danger that one goes too far and that while the two may seem similar to a modern investigator, to those within a culture religious ritual may be understood as radically different from magic (Betz 1991, 246).

In studying the ancient Mediterranean it may seem that some of these issues are easily resolved, as the Greeks and Romans had their own terms for magical practice, indeed the word magic is derived from the Greek *mageia* a word also adopted into Latin. The answer is not so easily provided, though. Graf raises the valid question of whether we as scholars should attempt to define magic as the Greeks and Romans themselves did, or if we should follow our own conventions? On the one hand we cannot abstract ourselves from our own socio-cultural situation, and so we cannot help but understand ancient magic by our own measures, and on the other, even if we could slip into the mindset of an ancient, following his distinctions could create confusion in our audience. There are two common ways that the problem is dealt with among classical scholars. The first is to adopt Graeco-Roman terminology without considering that "magic" in these cultures is a normative term which is often used to disparage a group. The second is to use it as a way to designate the early roots of ritual in these societies, in a Frazerian

evolutionist way, although the introduction of the word *mageia* into these cultures long post-dates the actual early stages of their ritual and cultural development (Graf 2003, 18).

The answer to this conceptual and semantic trap, at least in part, is that the scholar of ancient magic has to be explicit about her terminology, and even then her categories of analysis may cross-cut native understandings and thereby muddy the waters to the point of misapprehending the situation altogether (Graf 2003, 17). Graf presents the alternative options of either developing a new modern definition free of the ideological baggage inherent to the word, or carefully using the word magic in studies of the ancient world as the ancients themselves used it. The latter option has the advantage of allowing one to better understand descriptions of magic and the various roles it filled within the society, bearing in mind the fact that the shades of nuance attached to the word may change over time (Graf 2003, 19).

So how then shall magic be understood in this study? In his study on of Egyptian magical practice Ritner writes that “any activity that seeks to obtain its goal outside the natural laws of cause and effect is designated as ‘magical’ in the modern Western sense” (Ritner 2008, 1). Ghalioungui, with a broader point of view suggests that “magic in its widest sense includes all measures protecting man against harm” (Ghalioungui 1965, 17). Graf in discussing the ancient Greek world understands *mageia* to comprise all non civic religious forms (Graf 2003, 34). Pinch points out that Titiev draws the distinction between religion and magic in relation to time, religion being calendrically oriented and magic responding to the unexpected crisis (Pinch 1995, 14). Betz espouses the idea of magic as a world-view, as a means of seeing the connections between things and explaining the cosmos, much as we use chemistry and physics (Betz 1991, 246).

Magic in this dissertation is understood in all of these senses. Ghalioungui's definition can apply equally as well to medicine as to magic, and as will be discussed below, the two in the Greek and Egyptian cultures were closely intertwined. Betz's point about magic as a world-view and his analogy to modern physics is an apt one, as the Egyptian culture believed that magic was immanent in the world and a driving force of much of it. Ritner's definition, that magic may also be identified by its appeal to forces which are beyond the scope of our worldview, also applies to the amulets. Graf's point is relevant because the amulets often preserve parts of the magical rite upon them, the spells which would have been spoken out, and which are virtually indistinguishable from the structure of Greek civic prayers except for the fact they confine their scope to the individual and not the state or civic cult. Pinch's citation of Titiev is also appropriate as the amulets, as it will be argued, seem to be a way to cope with bodily crisis or pain, something which is almost never anticipated, but is the result of an unexpected malfunction or pathology. The exception to this is the menstrual cycle, which, regular or otherwise, may also mark monthly points of symbolic or bodily crisis.

Betz is correct when he states that there is good reason why there is no universally acceptable definition of magic. For this work magic is understood in relation to the amulets as a force supernatural to our world view but natural to its users. It is a means to cope with crisis and chronic pain and while generally of a protective nature, it is not always. It manifests in many of the same ways as "religion" but confines itself to the individual rather than the group or state.

While the reader may wish for a more concise and precise definition, following the admonitions of Graf this study will venture no further formulation of the concept.

Instead of creating a rigid and artificial terminology, thus it will be necessary for us to consider and analyze the ancient use of the term magic as it constitutes an element of the indigenous discourse on the relationship between the human and the supernatural. Graf 2003, 19

While this work concerns itself with the material remains of magic rather than with literature as Graf's work in relation to the topic primarily has, his method is a valid one. It is with this in mind that the next section, a brief outline of the practice of magic within the two cultures most dominant upon the amulets, Egypt and Greece, is provided. The topic will be taken up further in chapter 6.

Egyptian magic does not fit the traditional models of magic well (Pinch 1995, 12). For the Egyptians magic was a force that was coeval with creation and the earth, not outside the bounds of nature (Ritner 2008, 8).

The use of [magic] could hardly be construed in Egyptian terms as 'activity outside the law of natural causality' since [magic] is itself the ultimate source of causality, the generative force of nature. It is the notion of [magic] which unites the tenets of Egyptian religion to the techniques of Egyptian religion. Ritner 2008, 249

It was not a force resorted to as suggested by Malinowski when all else had failed, it was not something that allowed the gods to be manipulated by man, nor did it fall outside the purview of traditional religion (Pinch 1995, 14; Ritner 2008, 8, 14).

The Egyptians had a specific word for magic, *heka*, which Coptic scribes often translated into Greek as the word *mageia* (Ritner 2008, 14). Magic was a force defined emicly by the Egyptians and not one thrust on them by modern scholars. To engage in magic was neither illegal nor subversive. Indeed, magic was used daily for over three millennia by the priests and pharaohs of Egypt to help maintain *maat*, the proper order of the cosmos, and to ensure the rising of the sun (Ritner 2008, 2, 13; Pinch 1995, 12). In this sense it was both calendrically and crisis driven, where the sun failing to rise was

seen as a very real potential crisis that reoccurred daily (Pinch 1995, 14). This form of proactive crisis management, of preventing a crisis before it happened is a hallmark of Egyptian magic. Indeed much of Egyptian magic was prophylactic, intended to put in place a magical defense system before trouble arose (Pinch 1995, 14).

Ritner argues that it was not until 359 AD when Constantius decreed that there were to be no unofficial oracles in the empire that Egyptian magic would have taken on a sense more akin to the modern western one. Although the proclamation did not end the practice of magic, it did drive it underground giving it an air of secrecy and illegality (Ritner 2008, 218-219).

In the Graeco Roman world the situation regarding magic was different than in Egypt. Although the word magic itself derives from the Greek *mageia* and the Latin *magia* these words in turn come from an adoption of the Persian term for a type of priest or ritual practitioner, the *magos* (Graf 2003, 19). As Graf demonstrates in Magic in the Ancient World the term may have been adopted into the Greek and Roman vocabularies but it is one that always carries with it an aspect of foreignness, constantly foregrounding its own Persian past (Graf 2003 chapters 2-3). While some ancient authors emphasize the religious power and proficiency of the *magoi*, the term loses any semblance of ethnographic accuracy by the 4th century BC, a time when the Greeks were at war with the Persian Empire (Graf 2003, 29). Persia and Mesopotamia did exert a large degree of influence on what was termed magic in the Graeco-Roman world (Graf 2003, 170). One example of such influence comes in the person of Ereshkigal, the Babylonian goddess of the underworld who for a span of two millennia seems to be forgotten only to reappear in

the magical paraphernalia of the Greek and Roman worlds, including among the amulets which are the subject of this study (Graf 2003, 170).

Nevertheless, magic in the Greek world was not wholly a foreign import. The Derveni papyrus dating to the end of the 4th century and coming from a grave near Thessaloniki links *magoi* to the mystery cult of Dionysus by analogy, both having initiates and performing sacrifices. The *magoi* therefore have some fundamental similarity to religious practices and institutions which if not originally Greek became synonymous with a distinct type of Greek religious practice quite rapidly. Further, the *magoi* in this papyrus are noted as having the ability to summon daemons, here understood as the souls of the deceased, and as having the ability to bring disease and chaos (Graf 2003, 23). As Johnston notes, while ritual techniques seem to travel through the Mediterranean basin with relative ease, the daemons that they are used to combat are much less mobile, being the manifestation of collective local fears. Daemons are “more deeply embedded in that culture’s cognitive map than are *technai*,” serving in one respect to marginalize the inappropriate and thereby reinforce proper modes of behaviour (Johnston 1995, 381). Thus the use of magical practices within the Greek world was a syncretic action, where native threats were dealt with by powerful exotic means.

Further, while it was not identified as *mageia* there was an area of Greek practice, testified to as early as the *Odyssey*, which we would understand as magic, as it works outside the bounds of what is now recognized as nature. This practice was the use of *epoide*, charms or spells, to promote the healing of wounds and the soothing of pain. Odysseus has his boar-inflicted wound healed by his uncle’s recitation of an *epoide* over it in the *Odyssey* (*Odyssey* XIX) (Graf 2003, 28, n. 29). Gorgias in his apology for

Helen speaks of the power of words to influence soul and body, and Plato even juxtaposes *epoide* with three other medical treatments, namely drugs, cautery and surgery, indicating that the division between what we would consider magic and medicine was not yet in place in 4th century Athens (Gorgias DK 82 B 11,10, Plato Republic 426 B, Graf 2003, 26-29).

A significant difference between Greek and Egyptian magic is that Greek magic is distinctly private and not used by the polis. It was used by individuals to cope with crisis and while it could have a negative connotation it did not always. Greek magic also aligned more closely with Frazer's model in that as early as Plato's *Laws* magic is seen to be something that attempts to persuade and manipulate the gods, while religion was viewed as a practice that gave the gods free choice (Plato, Laws as cited in Graf 2003, 27). Nevertheless, magic was viewed as a type of religious specialty as early as the beginning of the classical period. It was not viewed as antithetical or separate from other religious practices (Graf 2003, 30-35).

As Egypt and Greece had a relationship with magic, so did Rome. Its views on magic are reproduced to some degree in book XXX of Pliny's *Natural History*. As in Greece magic had a foreign connotation¹¹ and words for it and its practitioners such as *magus* and *magus* rapidly came to be a byword for fraud (Ritner 2008, 9). In this guise Rome always took an anti-magic position, where magic could be a punishable offence (Graf 2003, 36, 39). Lucan goes so far as to insist that it is a perversion of civic religion (Graf 2003, 204).

¹¹ Although the term *magus* apparently did not carry an ethnographic meaning until Cicero's time – see Graf 2003, 36-39.

Nevertheless, like the Greeks the Romans also had a category of native magic which was not always considered threatening and was not classified by the term *magia*. The earliest codified Roman laws, the Twelve Tables, included at least one provision for magical practice when they set a ban on the enchanting away of a neighbor's crops or the use of a charm to slander another. The verb used for "to enchant" is *excanto*, literally to sing out, and a charm is a *carmen*, a song (Graf 2003, 42-43). The oral nature of magic and the power of the spoken word is a strongly emphasized aspect of the Roman magical tradition.

Cato also mentions the medical use of such oral magic when he recounts a song sung ("incipe cantare") with the application of reeds to a dislocated shoulder. In this case a doctrine of signatures approach is taken where the straightness of the reeds symbolically demonstrated the hoped for outcome of the healing charm. The rite is communal, enacted by at least two to three people, something which marks it out as different from much later Graeco-Roman magic. Most importantly though the rite is mentioned by both Pliny and Cato and neither identifies it as magic (Pliny NH XXVIII 21, Cato On Agriculture 160 quoted in Graf 2003, 43). For both authors, and apparently the authors of the Twelve Tables, magic seems to be identifiable by its ill intention. Magic is a *carmen malum*, while anything that was not intended to harm was not classed as magic. In this manner the Roman system matches well with Frazer's criteria of intentionality of the practitioner of magic in drawing the line between religion and magic (Graf 2003, 43-46).

Magic in the Roman Empire was something which was generally frowned upon, as magic was understood to be harmful in intent. However the use of private rituals and

spells was acceptable and not interfered with unless it threatened the safety of the state at least until the third century AD when the Jurist Paul writes that the possession of magic books was illegal (Graf 2003, 55).

Magic, however, is not a static phenomenon. It changes over time. In Pliny's account Republican magic with its emphasis on the ill intentions of the practitioner does not match up with his assessment of current magic that focuses on healing and divination. The magical papyri, which are dominated by aggressive and love magic, match poorly with both of these pictures (Graf 2003, 52-53). And while medals gradually replaced amulets by 400 AD among elites as the preferred method to guard against magical assault, the idea "that magic was characteristic of the lower classes survived to the end of antiquity" (Graf 2003, 85).

Indeed, before the Graeco-Roman magical papyri there is almost no evidence of a supernatural hierarchy in which the magician could play upon rank to achieve his ends, calling upon the high gods to grant him power over the lower daemons and souls of the dead (Graf 2003, 233). This creation of magical hierarchy may reflect the situation of the world in which the papyri were composed. With the expansion of the empire and growing socio-political hierarchy, the magical sources also adopted a supernatural hierarchy. The more aggressive spells in the papyri may also speak to this growing hierarchy, where the only means by which to achieve personal prowess in a powerless situation may be by invoking supernatural means.

Finally, in 199 AD the prefect of Egypt threatened capital punishment for those who practiced divination (a possible threat to the state when used in a political context) and magic (Graf 2003, 66). The question then remains: does this mean that the magical

Hebrew, the foreignness of the languages adding mystery and power to the spells that are recorded (Graf 2003, 44). These magical papyri (many of which have been collected into the *Papyri Graecae Magicae*) offer some of the best sources for piecing together the rites and rituals of the performance of magic, since many include detailed instructions on how, when, where and under what circumstances the magician was to act.

The magical rite is comprised of the acts that are performed in conjunction with the recitation of spells or in any other circumstance in which action is being attempted that uses forces outside the bounds of nature (Ghalioungui 1964, 25). Ritner rightly classifies the magical rite in Egypt as the technique of religion, as the mechanics of cultic worship (Ritner 2008, 247). Through performance of a magical rite the purpose of the magical act is revealed, often in an over determined fashion in order that no mistake is made in interpreting the meaning behind the rite (Graf 2002, 209). Often multiple senses are involved. For example, in a ritual to harm an enemy the executer of the magic rite might form and then stab and melt a figure of wax, which involves seeing the wax melting, feeling the sensation of stabbing and smelling the smoke of the devouring flame. Each aspect reinforces the purpose of the rite and cements the situation within the memory, thus increasing its power.

Graf points out that often in the ancient Mediterranean, contra Frazer, magic did not operate upon sympathetic lines, with the magician attempting to establish his power by drawing on the attraction of different objects for each other. Rather, magic was a practice in which typical objects were given new and unusual meaning, in which the social relations of the world were inverted and the person's place in nature redefined (Graf 2003, 134). Thus although Ritner emphasizes the congruence with religion in

Egyptian state magic, the private magic of Egypt as recorded in the papyri and the magic of Greece and Rome often makes use of different substances than does religion. Where a religious rite might involve a public sacrifice with the meat shared out among the attendees, magic rites may use sand and salt as offerings to the gods, or if a sacrifice of an animal is made, the magician may consume its flesh alone with the god rather than in a group (Graf 1991, 196).

This isolation and secrecy in the performance in the rituals of magic is a main distinction between it and the state religions of the Mediterranean and also the reason for the creation of many of the magical objects which remain from these cultures (Graf 1991, 196; Graf 2003, 213). In even the smallest religious rites, including the healing ritual of Cato discussed above, there is an audience present to hear the words spoken and witness the actions taken (Graf 2003, 230). These words and actions have the potential to influence their audience, who likewise are able to testify to their execution, having stored the details in their memory. The audience's recollections of the rite can also be corroborated against each other and the experience thus reinforced (Graf 2003, 209). Magical rites, on the other hand, are undertaken alone for the personal purposes of the practitioner (Graf 2003, 211). There is no audience to be persuaded by the words spoken, or indeed to verify that the ritual happened at all. To this end the magical practitioner often creates a record of the event, thus externalizing the memory and making it tangible and verifiable since he cannot rely on the group memory (Graf 2003, 212). Further, where mutual recollection of a religious event maintains its ongoing power the inscription of magical words upon the magical memento serves to fix the rite, likewise making it permanent and ongoing (Graf 2003, 131).

If the isolation of the performance of magic was the main way by which to define magic, one must ask what it is being defined against. Is the religion-magic dichotomy proposed by Frazer and accepted by so many a valid aspect of his model? Most scholars of ancient magic today would claim that it is not. Ritner notes that neither magic nor religion are universal concepts, and yet the fact that there must be a distinction between the two often goes unquestioned (Ritner 2008, 238). "...Within the Egyptian world view there is no distinction between magician and priest, spell and prayer, not ultimately between religion and magic since a recognized category of 'religion' did not even exist" (Ritner 2008, 242). Within context of the Greek world Lloyd cites the religious pluralism of the Greeks as a method to explain magical practice, placing it as another form of religion (Lloyd 1999a, 10). Graf concurs in this assessment, stating that "magic does not historically follow after religion, neither is it earlier: religion contains magic, as one specific religious form" (Graf 2003, 211). Thus rather than magic being opposed to religion it will be treated in this study as a type of religious action, marked out from other types such as state cults by the nature of its rites, but drawing upon the same cultural stores, such as mythology, as other forms of religion (Graf 2003, 197).

This position is defensible on several points. Graf, Ritner, Pinch and other scholars of Mediterranean magic all stress the overlap in personnel between magic and religion, and Graf repeatedly emphasizes the fact that the magical practitioner would have understood his position as that of an initiate joining a mystery cult (Graf 2003, Ritner 2008, Pinch 1995). Further, the nature of the spells from Greek and Egyptian religion matches up so closely with the form of prayers as to make the two indistinguishable when removed from context (Ritner 2008, 6, Graf 2003, 217, Faraone

1991, 20). The word for “to pray” *euxesthai* is often found on what are considered to be the best known Greek magical remains, the *katadesmoi* or curse tablets, as are prayers which follow the normal structural pattern for Greek prayers in a “religious” context (Graf 2003, 217). Pinch would see a difference in the content of magical prayers and religious prayers in Egypt, noting that in a traditional prayer only certain things could be requested, but in a magical prayer one could ask for anything (Pinch 1995, 72). Nevertheless, the form of the prayer is the same.

Magic does not only overlap with religion but in the ancient Mediterranean also with medicine. “What distinguishes the purifier from the doctor is not rationality, but cosmology...” (Graf 2003, 32). Indeed physicians and magicians had much in common. In the early days of Greece both were probably itinerant and both used the same methods of observation and diagnosis (Graf 2003, 32-35; Lloyd 1999a chapter 1). Their difference lies in that one looks for a physical cause for ill health while the other searches out the daemon which harasses the afflicted (Graf 2003, 32). To this end physicians treat the body while the magical healer addresses the daemon or disease agent directly or persuades a more powerful deity to intervene (Graf 2003, 37-38). A deity may be compelled to help the one suffering by invoking the god by a secret name, goading the deity into action by blaming the affliction on his traditional enemy, using prayers, asking forgiveness for a transgression, threatening the deity, using a short story analogy to convince the god that he or she is involved in the situation, or calling on the guardian deity of various body parts amongst other techniques (Graf 2003, 37-38). While rational medicine and science sought to narrow the explanation for a condition to as few causes as

possible, magic tended to multiply the causes of disease and consequently the number of ways they may be combated (Pinch 1995, 16).

The Egyptian medical papyri often mix magic in among their medical remedies, indicating that the distinction between the fields is not a valid one for the ancient Egyptian world (Pinch 1995, 65). This should not be surprising to us although it is not the typical outlook in our world. In ancient Egyptian magic was understood as a basic causal force working within the world. It thus had the potential to both cause and cure disease. “Man’s interpretations of the universe and of his place in it have always constituted the mould in which his magical practices and his medical theories about disease have been formed” (Ghalioungui 1965, 18). Further, regardless of magic’s ability to cure disease, in its power to explain disease and give hope for a cure it also provides a means to alleviate psychological anxiety (Ghalioungui 1965, 17).

In the Greek world the situation was not much different. According to Pindar amulets fell into the class of *θεραπείαι*, or therapies by which to influence the body (Pindar Pythian Ode 3, 47-54, Kotansky 1991, 109-110). The law in Rome on poisoning, passed by Sulla in 81 BC, the *Lex Cornelia de Sicariis et Veneficiis*, developed into the main anti-magic law as well, being cited in the trial of Piso for the unlawful killing of Germanicus by sorcery (Graf 2003, 46). Pliny nearly 50 years later also rails against the use of magic as a means of healing, claiming that only medicine could guarantee health (Graf 2003, 50).

Having presented and discussed in brief issues of theory and practice which form a foundation for the rest of the discussion of magic in this study, it is now appropriate to do the same for the topic of medicine.

Medicine:

In defining what we will understand as medicine we must be attuned to the fact that the western biomedicine which is the dominant paradigm in our world bears little resemblance to what the ancients would class as medical practice (Nunn 2002, 113). One of the results of the Enlightenment is that medicine, religion and magic have been divorced from each other, a case which was not so in ancient Egypt and Greece (King 1998, 102-103). Another consequence of the Enlightenment is the general assumption that science and medicine are value neutral endeavors. Facts of nature are presented as unchanging and elemental, simply waiting for modern man to discover them. Others have written widely about the hidden cultural values which direct scientific enquiry and condition it to interpret “facts” in a given way (Latour and Woolgar 1979). While going into further detail falls beyond the scope of this study, it is sufficient to note that science is not a neutral enterprise, in our own society or in the past.

Anyone who interprets data pieces it together with an agenda, conscious or otherwise, and the same is true for the interpretation of the body and its workings. Percy has shown that the case studies of the Hippocratic corpus, even those that appear most stripped down and fact oriented have been constructed within and influenced by the rhetorical culture of classical Greece (Percy 1992). Indeed, as Helen King succinctly puts it:

Medicine is never neutral. In any society it carries cultural values, including beliefs about the human body and about the roles and relative importance of different age/gender groups. It constructs its object in a dialogue with culture; before treating sickness, it is necessary to decide who is sick and who is not, what behaviour is abnormal and what is normal. King 1998, 114

The impossibility of neutrality is a boon for the ancient historian. As Lloyd suggests, by studying the way that a society constructs sickness and health as well as the

way it understands the working of the body we can potentially gain great insight into the values and world-view of a culture (Lloyd 2003, 2).

The body in health and the diseased body can each offer insights into a culture. One means of expressing in words how the body works or is failing is through drawing culturally relevant analogies from other areas of life (Lloyd 2003, 4). For instance, we say the body in good shape works like a “well oiled machine” or liken the brain to a computer in which certain patterns of thoughts or behaviours are “hard wired.” These analogies would be meaningless to an ancient, but through them much information about our own culture is relayed. So it is with the Greeks, Romans and Egyptians as well.

Just as the conceptualization of the body differs from culture to culture so does the understanding of what is a disease and how it effects mind, body and the relationship between them (Lloyd 2003, 3). Where the body in health is often represented in only a handful of ways in medical sources, the diseased body has the potential to be discussed in relation to endless cultural phenomena. Lloyd has distilled down seven ways in which disease and the ailing body can help illuminate the social circumstances of the Greek past. According to him disease can 1. Illuminate ideas of self, the body and how it works, and gender; 2. Show ideas of causation and responsibility; 3. Shed light on ideas of purity and pollution; 4. Illustrate power dynamics by helping to delineate under varying circumstances who is considered an expert; 5. Highlight relationships in the greater society according to what groups or individuals are susceptible to given afflictions; 6. Demonstrate the envisioned connections between body and soul and mind and body, including any disparity as might fall along social or gender lines; 7. Help define the nature of good and evil. (Lloyd 2003, 5-8).

While his primary source material for formulating these categories has been the literature created by the Greeks he does acknowledge the potential for a gap between the popular and learned traditions of medicine and health. Nevertheless, he prefers to understand the difference between the popular and the academic medical understandings as one of degree rather than kind (Lloyd 2003, 4). While we may be left primarily with literary accounts of the body and medicine, no doubt the practitioners of the art learned more by observing and doing than by reading, and thus were probably exposed daily to the popular theories of medicine and the body as well as the academic ones. Indeed, it is inevitable that the popular did to some degree inform the academic, as one cannot wholly escape one's own culture and as King and Dean-Jones note, patients will not accept treatment that does not agree to some extent with their own explanatory model of the body and illness (King 1998, 111, Dean Jones 1994). Further, while the recording of an academic tradition of medicine in written form may be used as a means to assert the authority and dominance of that tradition, it can also be a way to capture and preserve aspects of the current popular medicine (Lloyd 2003, 4).

This brings up the question of the role of words in medicine. Lloyd advocates a technique called "semantic stretch" by which he means that one cannot hold the texts to a precision that may not exist. While language gives a basic notion of something the terms used to describe the body are layered and resonate culturally on many different levels. Scholars cannot demand the same degree of accuracy in the ancient sources as demanded of modern scientific writings (Lloyd 2003, 9-10). The same approach will be taken in this dissertation, and where possible the resonances explored.

Words are important in medicine, though, as they are in magic. They are important even in traditions of modern medicine as Ghalioungui points out.

Recourse to the Unseen is an eternal human need, and the expression of a wish or the recitation of a propitiary formula often gives us the courage to proceed to a significant act or to pronounce fatal words. In the East, the name of a serious disease is never uttered, unless it be preceded by invocations to cast it away like: 'God throw evil away' or, in Arabic, by the usual phrase...[your enemy].
Ghalioungui 1965, 20

Likewise, Scarry and Morris have suggested that chronic pain can cause the sufferer to lose language and words (King 1998, 130, Scarry 1985, Good 1994). Further studies of pain among modern patients have demonstrated that putting a word to a pain, naming it, is an effective means by which to gain control over it and eventually conquer it (King 1998, 56, Good et. al. 1992). Pain can also cause a separation of body from self which is not typically observed among healthy patients. For instance, the idea that a pain is within oneself as opposed to a part of oneself (King 1998, 56 citing Garrow 1992, 123).

The point of this focus on words and pain is to alert the reader to the fact that the nuances in the way words are used in a context which concerns the body can be quite significant. Many of the features of the language of pain are to be found on the amulets, including the naming of a daemonic force which is intimately connected to the uterine organ, as well as the dissociative description of the painful uterus which is characterized through words and symbols almost as an animal moving about the body at will and not an organ which is part of a woman's body. Even on those amulets on which there is no inscription or only a string of pseudo letters, symbols or nonsense syllables this may be significant. It has been hypothesized that the meaningless syllables inscribed on so many amulets may have been deemed powerful for the heavy sounds they would create when intoned. Could these sounds approximate or bring to mind the groans of agony of one

who is so afflicted that words have deserted her? In any case, words are an intimate part of medicine in the ancient world as now, but must be treated with some care as they reveal truths about the body and its experiences in more than one way.

Before defining “medicine” within the current work it is appropriate to look briefly at how the term was used in the ancient cultures which we will be investigating. While more detailed investigations as related to the amulets themselves will be undertaken for each culture in chapter 7, it will be sufficient here to limit the discussion to a few remarks on the Greek situation.

Medicine in the classical period was deemed to be the supreme sign of humanity. Aeschylus’ *Prometheus* produced between 483-478 BC¹³ heroized medicine, called it the greatest of arts (*technai*) and the one means by which humans are given hope of overcoming the savage misfortunes stalking the world (King 1998 115). Introduced by Prometheus to mankind, it was a gift of the gods. This connection between the divine and medicine appears repeatedly in the Greek world. Indeed, as King points out medicine and religion both operated within the same social conventions, used the same symbols and agreed, for instance, on the place of women’s bleeding in the proper order of the world (King 1998, 99).

Indeed Greece had several divine physicians including Apollo and later his son Asclepius, both of whom accepted votive offerings. Unlike the biomedicine of today which has moved with colonialism, it is the temple medicine of Asclepius which was exported from Greece (King 1998, 101). While in the Hippocratic corpus more male than female patients are recorded it is not clear if this means women regularly availed themselves more often of temple medicine (King 1998, 105, Dean-Jones 1994). Indeed,

¹³ The date is debated as is the authenticity

while the patients at temples like that at Ephesus regularly put up plaques to thank and honor the god for a successful cure, no such testimonial outlet developed for patients' who sought out rational medicine and so it is not possible to tell just how many patients turned to physicians as opposed to using temple based medicine at any time (King 1998, 105).

Modern studies such as that of Finkler among the Mexican spiritualists suggest that divine and rational medicine are often viewed as complementary rather than antagonistic options from the perspective of the patient (Finkler 1994, King 1998, 106). People attach meaning to their symptoms based on cultural expectations and seek out the treatment method which is best suited to validate and contend with that meaning (King 1998, 111). Access and cost are further considerations for a person in determining which therapy to pursue (King 1998, 107). Doubtless all of these factors are also at work in the ancient world.

The final situation that must be considered before venturing a definition of medicine based on the way it is used in the ancient world is a cautionary tale related by King (King 1998, 59). It revolves around Aphorisms 5.33 where it is related that a nosebleed is a good thing for women who suffer from amenorrhea. As it is generally agreed in our society that menstrual blood cannot rise up and exit through the nose Laqueur takes the nosebleed as a signal that normal menstruation will resume soon, not that the nosebleed is a substitute for menstruation. While the connection between epistaxis and amenorrhea could be argued to be illustrating the rare condition of vicarious menstruation in which various mucous membranes of the body respond to hormonal signals and bleed, this seems also to force a modern interpretation onto ill fitting ancient

evidence. Rather, King notes that medical texts from the 17th-19th century commonly take it for granted that bodily fluids can and do often switch the orifices from which they exit the body. It would seem then that epistaxis could easily be understood as a form of menstruation, and indeed that is the interpretation the rest of the corpus would seem to support. The point is that we must be careful to interpret the meaning of medical knowledge within its own cultural and anatomical framework and not force it to fit into ours. To do so strips the evidence of any ability it has to comment on the society which produced it, its main value to the scholar, and leaves it as no more than a quaint misstep in the development of modern anatomy and medicine. The lesson is an important one to keep in mind when analyzing the amulets.

The definition of medicine then that will be adopted in this work is a broad one based on the understandings of the concept of the ancients themselves. Never united in one single definition over time or place, nevertheless there are commonalities which unite the classical Greek understanding of medicine with the old kingdom Egyptian idea and to the 2nd century Roman concept. While some ancient authors (On the Sacred Disease etc.) would sever the connection between rational medicine and religion or magic that will not be the case here. Medical practice is understood as any practice which seeks to influence the body of oneself or of a willing patient in a way that would bring that body back into line with the model of health that is promulgated within the culture in which the practitioner is operating. Whether that return to health is attempted through rational, divine or supernatural means is of no relevance.

The Body and Gender:

Another related question raised by the pieces concerns the ancient understanding of biology and the social lens through which it was filtered. Mary Douglas expressed the idea well stating that ‘the human body is always treated as an image of society...and there can be no natural way of considering the body that does not involve at the same time a social dimension.’” (Douglas, 1973, 70) As Fausto-Sterling (2000), Laqueur (1986, 1992), Padgug (1979), Davidson (1987), Halperin (1990) and countless others have emphasized, the body is not a purely natural, asocial being. Meaning is ascribed to it according to cultural beliefs. For instance in the sixteenth century anatomy texts always drew the reproductive tract of women as a whole plate, one organ could not be envisioned separate from the others (Figures 1.2-1.4).¹⁴ The purpose was to emphasize the claim made in the accompanying text and handed down from Galenic ideas of anatomy, that the reproductive organs of women were the same as those of men but placed inside out. By the end of the seventeenth century these organs were depicted separately to illustrate the new message put forth by the associated text that they illustrated, that the female was not an inferior male, but was rather a completely different sex with organs unique to itself that deserved individual contemplation (as in Bartholin, Anathomia, 1668) (Figure 1.5). As Laqueur says so succinctly “bodies did not change, but the meanings of the relationships between their parts did” (Laqueur 1986, 12). The same types of cultural values are ascribed to organs in the ancient world. Thanks to modern anatomical knowledge we know that blood cannot accumulate in the womb and, backing up into the heart and diaphragm, cause madness or consumption. However, in

¹⁴ i.e. Vesalius, Tabulae sex, 1538; Georg Bartisch Kunstbuche, 1575; Walter Ryff Anathomia, 1541. See Laqueur 1992 Chapter 3.

the ancient Mediterranean, this was a very real possibility granted in the medical and popular belief systems.

When these things occur in this way, the young girl is mad from the intensity of the inflammation; she turns murderous from the putrefaction; she feels fears and terrors from the darkness. From the pressure around the heart, these young girls long for nooses. Their spirit, distraught and sorely troubled by the foulness of their blood, attracts bad things, but names something else even fearful things. They command the young girl to wander about, to cast herself into wells, and to hang herself, as if these actions were preferable and completely useful. Even without visions, a certain pleasure exists, as a result of which she longs for death, as if something good.

R. Fleming & A.E. Hanson, Hippocrates' Peri Parthenion, 1998, 251

The bodies of ancient Greece and Enlightenment Europe possess the same organs, albeit modified by various cultural practices,¹⁵ yet the organs possess completely different meanings and abilities to the people of the different periods. In the classical Greek world organs were considered dangerous and they could render those that possessed them dangerous as well. Woman cannot help but be weaker than man, she has enemies within herself with which she must contend and because of which she cannot be as rational or strong as man (Dean-Jones 1994). “The history of the representation of the

¹⁵ For the social construction of the body see Kemper (1994) and his theory of the bio-socio-bio feedback mechanism of the body. The theory in its most basic form states that the biology of an organism puts forth a series of potentials. These potentials are subjected to social situations which then impact the physical manifestation of various biological features. He uses testosterone levels of men in varying status levels as an illustration. Another more permanent example set out by Hass et. al. (2000) is myopia, or near sightedness. Myopia is virtually unknown among hunter-gatherer tribes as known today. These groups depend on long-distance vision to see danger approaching from afar. 20-20 vision is imperative to their survival. Yet among western populations (America specifically) approximately 25% of people are myopic. It has been proposed that this differential in visual acuity is the result of nature (good genes) and nurture (eye stress). As it turns out members of hunter-gatherer groups who become sedentary and send their children to school develop myopia at the same rate as the rest of the developed world. The myopia is the result of a combination of genetic predisposition (it is a heritable condition to some extent) and changes in the musculature that focus the lens of the eye. The eye's final form is determined during a critical period during juvenile growth. By emphasizing the necessity of reading at close distances while in the school years, a cultural choice, the musculature of the eyes among those who carry the gene for myopia loses the ability to return to its normal configuration, thus an example of the cultural significantly affecting the way in which a body functions. Among other populations the gene was never selected against since the potentially debilitating condition for which it coded was not often manifested among those populations, needing specific social factors to bring about a situation where the different potentials bestowed by the gene would be visible in the phenotype.

anatomical differences between man and woman is thus extraordinarily independent of the actual structures of these organs or of what was known about them. Ideology, not accuracy of observation, determined how they were seen and which differences would matter” (Laqueur 1992, 88). Laqueur concludes that the anatomical pictures of texts predating the end of the 17th century, born of Galenic conceptions of the body, are “anatomical pictures about gender and not about what we would call sex, or the structures in the body that mark male and female. About these they are remarkably uninformative” (Laqueur 1992, 133).

Can the same be said about the representations on the amulets? As will be demonstrated in chapter 4, they possess a pictorial rendition of the human uterus remarkably similar to that found in the anatomy textbooks referred to by Laqueur. In chapter 6 the medical philosophies behind this image of the uterus will be explored. The relevant issue here, however, is not whether the images on the amulets and in the anatomy books bear any ideological similarities, but the fact that what we deem to be natural fact – anatomy uncolored by social bias – is in fact one of the most fundamental arenas in which cultural prejudice can surface, and do so in such a way as to be virtually imperceptible.

In the case of the amulets this particularly concerns the nature of gender roles and their creation and maintenance in the world which used these amulets. This represents a major change in the understanding of the amulets, which until now, seemed to be pieces silent about the social, testifying only to their medical function. Nature in the ancient world “is not real nature, which we should call biology; rather it is a nature that is at once juridical, controllable and controlled” (Rouselle 1989, 307-308). Although speaking of

the 19th century, this comment by Laqueur can be easily imagined to apply to the Roman Empire as well: “Whatever one thought about women and their rightful place in the world could, it seemed, be mapped onto their bodies, which in turn came to be interpreted anew in the light of these cultural demands” (Laqueur 1986, 30).

What then do the seemingly “natural” terms man and woman, male and female mean? What does one mean when speaking of sex vs. gender? There are as many answers in the vast literature on this topic as there are authors who write about it. For the purposes of this work sex will be defined as the anatomy of the reproductive organs as judged via manifestation of the secondary sexual characteristics (hairy arms, breasts, low voice etc.). It is not a category that will be much invoked in the following discussions as we have neither the skeletons or descriptions of those who used the amulets.

Rather, discussion will focus on gender, which for the purposes of this work will mean the social role an individual adopted, including such indices as dress, behavior and status. Although typically correlated with sex this is not always the case. In our world there are typically considered to be two sexes, male and female, and two genders, man and woman.¹⁶ In many cultures, however, such as Iron Age Scandinavia and ancient Greece there was a single gender system where one was either a male in his prime or not (Halperin 1990, Winkler 1990b, Fisher 1998, Shepherd 1998, Green 2001, Weglian 2001). However, the assignment of a person to the category of “male in his prime” was neither permanent nor always tied directly to sex. This categorization could be achieved

¹⁶ It is not the purpose of this work to enter into the debate about how many genders there are, or if it is even a quantifiable concept in western culture. For further info on this the reader is referred to the many excellent works of Fausto-Sterling and Butler. Two genders and two sexes are taken as the “norm” in western culture since these are typically the choices given on government and school forms (i.e. the Mass Driver’s License application), although many authors have argued that there is a spectrum of possible sexes and genders.

symbolically by women who undertook certain activities or lost by old men who were no longer able to take care of themselves (Meiggs 1990, Green 2001, Weglian 2001). As such gender is a process and not a static state or thing. It can be remade based on the actions of a person or change based on the situations into which one enters. In Samoa there is a three gender system consisting of man, woman-wife and woman-sister (M. Green 2001). Each gender is essentially a different category of person deemed to have different rights, duties and status. Most typically in archaeological situations gender is assigned statically in death by the remains of dress and ornament (Sørensen 1997, 2006, Arnold 2006) and sex is assigned by skeletal analysis. We possess neither category in the case of the amulets. They have not been recovered in recorded graves or other known contexts so we do not know definitively with whom they were most often associated. One question this work will then attempt to answer is how gendered and how implicated in gender formation the amulets were.

Although the question of who used this class of amulets and how they were used will be taken up further in chapter 8 it can be speculated here, and I believe on rather firm ground, that they were probably used by women in an attempt to guard their own health. The things for which they pray can, therefore, provide great insight into what women prioritized in their lives and how they envisioned themselves. For instance, if it is found that the stones most often seek conception and the safe birth of children it might be inferred that a major part of a woman's status was determined by her ability to bear children, such as is the case in modern Egypt (Inhorn 1994). If on the other hand we find that the amulets contain prayers for relief of a physical ailment without mention of reproduction it might be surmised that fertility was not the only measure of womanhood,

that women were aware of the problems to which their reproductive organs were prone and sought to avoid or alleviate them simply for their own comfort and not in order to produce more children.

An important aspect of carrying out an investigation such as this is to recognize one's own inherent biases and what is deemed normal. One must beware of casting those valuations back inappropriately into the past. Indeed what is thought of as acceptable and typical in the current world, such as sexuality being determined by the sex of the beloved, is a concept which, it has been argued, does not exist in much of the ancient world where sexual relations were based on the power relationship between two people (Halperin 1990). "It is this automatic and immediate application of concepts, as though concepts have no temporality, that allows, and often requires, us to draw misleading analogies and inferences that derive from a historically inappropriate and conceptually untenable perspective" (Davidson 1987, 27). The history of sex, anatomy, gender, sexuality etc. are all especially prone to this pitfall since these are notions with which we are familiar, even unconsciously, from a very young age. What is "natural" may seem more innate when questioning such basic aspects of humanity.¹⁷ However, as discussed above, nature is always cultural and the need to distance oneself and determine how the society in question visualized "the natural" in relation to such topics is even more imperative here than in other more obviously socio-cultural arenas.¹⁸ Indeed it should be one of the more

¹⁷ As Davidson (1987), Halperin (1990) and others have argued we envision sex and gender in the modern western world.

¹⁸ For example, Davidson puts forth a compelling argument that the category of sexual deviant would not have been understandable to people of the ancient world, or indeed anyone who predated Freud. Rather there were deviant acts, which anyone was in danger of committing. He argues that western culture has been inculcated with this new psychological theory of sexuality as a personality facet rather than a physical fact which simply did not exist prior to the era of modern psychoanalysis. Thus what seems obvious and natural to us would strike most of humanity prior to the modern age as alien and probably upsetting.

pressing goals of a historian or archaeologist dealing with the topics of sex and gender to simply apprehend how the society within which one is working parsed issues of this nature, all the while realizing that:

Not only must the categories of any single society or period not be hypostasized as universal, but even the categories which are appropriate to each society must be treated with care. Ultimately, they are only parameters within which sexual [and gendered] activity occurs or, indeed, against which they may be brought to bear. They tend to be normative – and ideological – in nature, that is, they are presented as the categories within which members of particular societies *ought* to act. The realities of any society only approximate the normative categories...

R. Padgug 1979, 15

The lesson is simple to comprehend: gender, sexuality, nature – none of these are static or universal from period to period, society to society, person to person or even within the same person over the course of a life. This realization is much trickier to apply. The temptation always exists to treat a fleeting state as if it were permanent, since what is unchanging and normative is easier to pick apart and understand. The goal within this dissertation is to be aware of such potential differences and to evaluate the evidence in regard to those categories which are derived from the amulets, not the unquestioned assumptions of the author.¹⁹

Outline of Chapters:

Having broadly introduced the topic and some of the major discussions within the work it now remains to set out a brief synopsis of what will follow and how each chapter will be approached.

Chapter 2 will trace the modern history of scholarship on the amulets in greater depth. It will specifically address the question of how we might glean any social information from archaeological pieces that lack recorded find-spots and, indeed, whether

¹⁹ All the while aware of the fact that it is never possible to entirely step out of one's time and place and learning and thereby remove oneself from the one's native perspective and biases. Acknowledging such biases and attempting to minimize them is the best for which one can hope.

it is worth attempting such a feat at all? A major undercurrent of this chapter will be that the amulets are a valuable and heretofore underutilized resource that can comment on topics of interest to feminist archaeology as well as the history of ancient magic and medicine. There are many objects, like these amulets, languishing in museums having been unearthed in the era prior to the use of modern archaeology. Although they may not be able to enlighten us as fully we might wish, this dissertation will argue that enough information can be recovered from them to warrant further study of what we have before we dig up more; this chapter will set the stage for the rest of the arguments that will follow. This chapter also delves further into the way in which these pieces have been interpreted since their first appearances in antiquarian catalogues. It concludes that this lack of archaeological context is actually a context in and of itself and that the changing ways of dealing with these pieces illustrate nicely the changing concerns of the discipline of archaeology²⁰ as it has matured over the last 500 years.

Chapter 3 is concerned with the inscriptions of the pieces. Although the letter forms and technical issues relevant to epigraphy will be addressed here,²¹ the overriding focus of the chapter will be translation and analysis of both the written words, and the nonsense on the pieces. The idea is to attempt to strip away all preconceived notions about the function of these pieces and see what the prayers and words used might mean. Do they say “I want more children” or “Please help me deliver safely” or are they focused on issues of pain and pathology with prayers such as “Stop the blood” or “Fix the

²⁰ In its various guises. Although antiquarianism may not be considered part of the discipline of modern archaeology, it is certainly a direct predecessor in both sentiment and methods, and for that reason will be included in the definition of the discipline of “archaeology” here (Trigger 2004).

²¹ This is taken to mean the form of letters and other more technical aspects of epigraphic study, of less relevance to the study of the amuletic inscriptions than other inscriptions generally since the size of the pieces and the technology employed to carve them often demanded certain types of letter forms, irrespective of the various styles current in other inscription media at any given time.

prolapsed uterus?” While the inscriptions are more nuanced than this (and more ambiguous) the inscriptions do point clearly to their purpose. It is possible that much of the confusion surrounding these pieces has resulted from a reluctance on the part of scholars to analyze the pieces honestly, free from the notions of what an amulet with a uterus on it *must* represent.

Chapter 4 does for the images on the amulets what chapter three did for the words inscribed upon them. It will consider each image in relation to its meanings in other artistic contexts and try to decide what the most likely range of functions of these amulets was, given the combination of symbols present. As in Chapter 3, it has often been the case that a scholar has seen the symbol for a uterus or for Bes or for a key and hastily concluded that these must be fertility or birth amulets, disregarding the possibility that these symbols may be present in other capacities. It is not hard to understand why this is such a tempting interpretation; reproduction is an exciting thing, especially as compared to the more mundane aches and pains of existence.

Chapter 5 will compare the corpus assembled here to corpora of other ancient amulets. It will begin by looking at earlier examples from the three most influential traditions on these pieces: other Greek, Roman and Egyptian amulets. Following this comes a section on contemporary related amulets, particularly the “Gnostic” amulets which were used to ward off diseases of the stomach and which were often carved on the reverse of our uterine amulets. The chapter will conclude with a consideration of a group of amulets, that of the Byzantine “holy rider” which have been linked to the uterine amulets (Vikan 1984, Spier 1993). The material, words and motifs of these amulets will be compared with the uterine amulets to see how they are similar to and differ from each

other and if the former can shed any light on the use and function (medical and social) of the latter.

Chapters 6 and 7 will look at major works and practices of Egyptian and Greek magic and medicine respectively. It is hoped that by examining both the Egyptian and Greek lineages side-by-side the influences on the amulets derived from each may be pinned down more closely than has been the case thus far. It is interesting to note that previous authors on the topic have traditionally written from the perspective of Greek medicine and Egyptian magic. This dissertation will argue that elements are drawn from the medical and magical traditions of *both* cultures, and thus it is imperative that both be considered if a more accurate understanding of, and cultural context for, the pieces is to be constructed.

Chapter 8 will consider the important matter of the stones themselves. Why do the pieces manifest in the manner that they do? Why are they so small and what does this imply about the ways they may have been used? This chapter will be split into two main discussions. The first half will consider the physicality of the stones within the cultural practices of the Greek and Egyptian worlds. The second half will adopt the theoretical stylings of scholars such as Pierre Bourdieu, P. Lemmonier and Douglass Bailey (amongst others) in questioning the material properties of the stones and the ways in which they may have been created and consumed. This is an entirely new approach to the amulets, and one, which, if successful, promises many new avenues of enquiry. In undertaking this discussion the chapter will necessarily also consider the possible agency and efficacy of the pieces. For instance, would they have been used by women to gain

control of their bodies, or would they have been a means for men to gain greater control over the bodies of women?

Chapter 9 will conclude with a discussion of the information about gender and female nature encoded in the amulets as raised in the previous seven chapters. Is the uterus viewed as a wonder of nature, as some have argued, something which allows women to carry life within themselves and thereby change their status with the birth of children, or is it a wild and uncontrollable force of nature to be feared and tied down? Can it cause only physical pain, or social pain as well through being barren or over-productive? (Inhorn 1995) The chapter will end with a final drawing together of the major arguments of the previous chapters and formulation of a new picture of the amulets before suggesting further areas for research.

The study therefore draws on a broad range of methods culled from diverse disciplines in order to create a more coherent and nuanced understanding of the amulets. This method contrasts with earlier studies, as will be seen, which both fractured along disciplinary lines and neglected theory and in doing so arrived at incomplete and often erroneous conclusions as to what these pieces were and how they functioned. Chapter Nine is followed by the appendix, a catalogue of all the amulets assembled for this study.

These amulets represent an as yet untapped source of information about womanhood in the ancient world. Much social information is contained within them, ranging from the meeting and melding of separate cultures and religions, to the practical conception of anatomy and disease. As Winkler has said of ancient erotic magic, but which applies equally to the topic at hand “the subject requires exceeding care and a large

view, for the material contains much that is humorous and much that is horrifying”
(Winkler 1990a, 71).

II

A Contextual Archaeology without Archaeological Context?

In all of this we must remain sensitive to chronological, regional, religious, and class distinctions – in short to all the factors that create historical specificity and diversity.

M. Green, 1989, 472

Using Russian nesting dolls as a framework suggests that history, culture, relationships, psyche, organism, and cell are each appropriate locations from which to study the formation and meanings of sexuality and gender.

A. Fausto-Sterling 2000 254

Magic amulets have suffered doubly in the past, first from too much interest, then from too little.

R. Gordon 2008, 713

The above passages suggest that if several of the goals of this work are to be accomplished certain conditions are necessary. If the amulets are expected to make statements about their function, use and social niche, it must be known how, when, where and by what groups of people they were utilized. Unfortunately, that information is not known. This chapter will then consider the potential of attempting a contextualized archaeology when lacking all archaeological context.

It is not completely true that none of these pieces have been recovered from properly documented archaeological projects. Of the 148 uterine amulets listed in the

appendix,²² the sample on which this work is based, two have purportedly known places of recovery. Catalogue n. 95 is said to have come from Gebel-al-Tuna, although no documentation has been located to confirm that fact. The second example was recovered in 1963 from a dig on a Roman site in Dicket Mead, Welwyn.²³ It was associated with a coin of Gratian and found within the Romano British building on the site (Wright 1964). The presence of this coin dates the strata to no earlier than 375, the year in which Gratian assumed the position of emperor; however it could have been deposited any number of years after that date.²⁴ Based on this information it is known that at least one uterine amulet, of red haematite and typical iconography and inscribed in Greek was buried in the late fourth century AD or after.²⁵ It was not found in a grave or *in situ* within a home (i.e. with the Lares, or strung on a necklace) so it is not possible to tell anything about who made it, wore it, used it or owned it. Contextually it provides little to the class beyond a date and evidence that the pieces travelled widely throughout the empire.

²² At least this many have been classified as uterine amulets in prior publications. Some, it will be argued in later chapters, are not uterine amulets.

²³ The first such example found in England.

²⁴ The legend, Gloria Novi Saeculi was identified as a legend of the coins of Gratian by Mattingly et. al. Roman Coinage 9.54, 1923-1994. Dating by coins can be notoriously misleading, however, and the excavators think that the amulet may have been lost up to 50 years prior to the minting of the coin. The amulet is also interesting because of 50 inscriptions dating to the Roman period in Britain found in 1963-1964 it is one of only three Greek inscriptions, highlighting the close association between the Greek language and the religious syncretism and products of that syncretism which are seen in the Mediterranean world at this time. Although the amulets apparently found a use in the Latin west, they did not permeate so far into the culture that they began to be manufactured with Latin inscriptions until the late fourth century.

²⁵ The color of the stone is anomalous and is probably due to the stone's coming to rest in damp ground. As Pliny and others explain, when black haematite, an iron ore, is powdered and put in water it turns the liquid blood-red, the iron being oxidized upon exposure to moisture. When found this amulet was crumbling apart. The only way it was possible to maintain its form once exposed was to conserve it with a polymer in which it was steeped, and which replaced the water with a hard adhesive matrix when dried. Such penetrating exposure to moisture over time would have turned the whole amulet red from its original black shade.

What then is known about these amulets? Perhaps the best place to begin answering this question is by looking at how other scholars have approached these pieces. These amulets have been collected and studied as far back as the 1600s, at which time their lack of archaeological context posed no problem to their interpretation; that it was not deemed important for them to possess an archaeological history is a significant statement about what types of information they were intended to supply in earlier eras. The shifting nature of what was expected and required of the amulets at different points in time speaks to the history of archaeological and classical scholarship. The changing ways in which the amulets were housed, were illustrated, and interacted with, and the changing qualities for which they were valued provides them with a modern history which is as interesting and important to their life histories as the original social situations for which they were created. Their lack of archaeological context is a context in itself, one that relates closely to their lives post excavation.²⁶

It will be argued in this chapter that the amulets have passed through three phases of modern study, each of which has contributed to expanding the knowledge concerning their ancient roles. Modern scholarship has sought and still seeks to understand them within their cultural niche, a context of which they were deprived when they were recovered without record. Much of their modern history revolves around unraveling questions of their ancient history.²⁷

Stage One:

²⁶ Read recovery, by whatever means that was affected.

²⁷ The earliest history of the amulets and their academic interpretations relies heavily on the accounts put forth by Delatte 1914, Bonner 1950, and Barb 1953. Many of the sources of which they speak have been unavailable to me (despite many attempts to access them) and so I find myself trusting in their synopses. As they are insightful and rigorous scholars all, this has occasioned no anxiety in the author regarding the accuracy of these paragraphs.

The first recorded interpretation of a uterine amulet comes in a letter from Nicholas Claude Fabri de Peiresc to the painter Peter Paul Rubens dated the 27th of July 1623 in which he describes four amulets, one of which is a uterine amulet, that he is sending to Rubens.²⁸ Ironically, this amulet has been recognized as a forgery of a later era (Bonner 1950, Barb 1953). Nevertheless Peiresc describes the amulet as an “*intaglio d’amethysta con la vulva deificata et revestita delle ale di farfalla,*” an amethyst inscribed with a divine matrix flanked by the wings of a butterfly (Bonner 1950, 80). Bonner, after having perused other letters where Peiresc uses the word *vulva* is convinced that he meant it “in the ancient sense, i.e. as a synonym for uterus.” (Bonner 1950, 80) Although the gem in question has since disappeared, Rubens sketched the main design of the piece in his reply, dated August 3, thus we have a fair idea what it looked like. The wing pattern is known from no other specimen, and Bonner is sure that it indicates that the amulet was a forgery, however the rest of the piece seems accurate enough that he surmises it was based on a genuine ancient model. Peiresc in his letter of August 10th picks up the topic again, comparing the piece to others which were in his collection, noting that in no other example were wings present. He does explicitly state that he believes the lines extending from the vase to be the ligaments of the uterus. Bonner goes on to say that the forgery could have been recognized as such by Rubens if he had only compared it with a critical eye to the rest of his collection.

There are two important things to draw from this story. The first is Peiresc’s interpretation, which was correct and to which we shall return when discussing the work of Delatte. The second is the way in which these amulets were interacted with by Peiresc

²⁸ Published in Volume III of Correspondance de Rubens et documents epistolaires concernant sa vie, etc. Ed. Rooses and Ruelens. Antwerp, 1887-1909 (Bonner 1950, 80)

and Rubens. They both possessed what seem to be large collections of ancient (for the most part) amulets and intaglios. They sent specimens back and forth as gifts about which they could engage in the learned debate customary of the time. They were interested in collecting ancient curios and were drawn to the scenes inscribed upon them, and while they discussed the artistic merit of this or that piece, they never moved beyond the amulets as pieces of art. The function of the pieces, the meanings of their inscriptions and the ways in which they were used in the ancient world were not debated.

In this first phase of interaction with the amulets lasting roughly from 1600-1750 the amulets were seen as art, and whatever role they played in the ancient world it was not as important as their current role, as objects to be possessed and contemplated, valued for the skill with which they were carved or the rarity of the motifs in which they were covered. Even when the meaning of a motif is questioned, such as Peiresc's explanation of the womb symbol, the question is never asked why it is on the amulet and in combination with the other symbols present.

At this point it did not matter from where the amulets originated. If origin is listed at this time, it is typically in relation to the former collections of which an amulet has been a part, named by the owner or assembler of the group or its most eminent place of residence (i.e. "from the collection of P.P. Rubens" or from the "library of Sainte Geneviève in Paris" Bonner 1950, 81). Thus the problem of context was no problem at all.

Lest one think that this is an isolated example and not indicative of the greater trend of the period one should consider the illustrated catalogues of collections put out by J. Chiflet, Abraxas Proteus (Antwerp 1657), Claude Du Molinet, Le Cabinet de la

Bibliothèque de Sainte Geneviève (1692), and Antonio Capello, Prodromus Iconicus sculptilium gemmarum Basilidiani amuleti atque talismani generis. (Venice, 1702). All of these, while possessing short essays and commentaries on the pieces, mainly revolving around questions of artistic merit, are focused on the lavish illustration of the pieces included (Figure 2.1). Although inscriptions are noted and functions briefly commented on the main interest in the pieces lay in their value as ancient art. This is in keeping with the early antiquarian spirit and while not surprising is an important part of the early modern history of the pieces (Trigger 2004).

It seems likely that the lack of archaeological context for many of the amulets can be traced back to this time, when indeed, this type of engraved gem was immensely popular and a fair number seem to have been in circulation, but no one insisted on knowing the exact circumstances of their recovery (Schwartz and Schwartz 1979, 150). To be fair, this was the typical practice for collecting ancient art at the time and was not limited to the amulets.

Stage Two:

The next phase of interaction with and scholarship on the amulets is split between two impulses. On the one hand the amulets dropped out of favor and were ignored and condemned by the majority of scholars and gem collectors. On the other hand, those few men who continued to interact with the amulets shifted their focus from concentrating on them as art to attempting to understand their iconography.

With the classical revival of the 18th c. the amulets, typically classed as “Gnostic” “Basilidean” or “Abraxas” amulets, the first two because of their perceived relation to specific religious sects, and the third due to an inscription often found on them, fell out of

favor. Bonner and Delatte thoroughly debunked this classification in the 20th century, finding that no specifically Gnostic doctrines could be tied to the amulets, which were rather the product of a generally syncretic atmosphere and not of a single sect (Delatte 1914, Bonner 1950, 1954).²⁹ However, as the amulets, regardless of label, did not conform to the aesthetics of classical gem carving they were relegated to the fringes of classical study and gem collecting at this point. Indeed, in the late 19th century A. Furtwängler, the eminent scholar of glyptic art had those in the Berlin Antiquarium moved to the Department of Egyptology, deeming them unworthy of being connected to the more refined classical pieces housed in the former (Schwartz and Schwartz 1979, 150, Gordon 2008, 714). The British Museum followed suit, moving their collection to the departments of Medieval and Later Antiquities and European Prehistory (Gordon 2008, 714). This separating out of the amulets from the other engraved gems from the antique Mediterranean significantly delayed their publication, with very few appearing in the catalogues of major collections (Schwartz and Schwartz 1979, 150 and n. 7).³⁰

However, those scholars who did continue to work on the amulets during the 19th century developed a new relationship to them. During the 19th century the explanation of the meaning of the symbols took priority in the investigation of the amulets over their

²⁹ Bonner prefers they be called “syncretistic amulets” (Bonner 1932b, 362). Interestingly, C. King attributes 1/10th of all gems recovered in Europe to be of this class. Although the only uterine amulet with archaeological context comes from England, it is usually assumed that most of these gems that remain to the modern world would have been recovered in Egypt or the Near East because of their vulnerability to moist climates. King’s assertion would seem to indicate that this is not the case and a good number were found in Europe. “Gnostic gems have been already sufficiently considered: their number in Italy and France is incredible, and probably a tenth of all intagli discovered in those countries belong to this class.” C. King 1860, 381

³⁰ Lest the reader think that this prejudice was confined to the 19th c. Gordon relays an anecdote in his 2008 review of Michel’s *Die Magischen Gemmen* where a colleague who had been recently invited to give a talk at the DAI in Rome suggested that he might speak on magical amulets. He was politely rebuffed and told that “such things do not form part of Classical Archaeology.” Gordon 2008, 714.

consideration as pieces of art.³¹ It is from this period until 1914 that the wildest interpretations of the amulets surface. The first major example comes in J. Matter's Histoire critique du Gnosticisme, of 1828. At this time the idea that the amulets represented the exotic religious doctrines and practices of the Gnostic Christian sect was a deep seated tradition, extending back even to Peiresc's letter of July 27, 1623, and provided the intellectual scaffolding for many of the interpretations of the amulets, quite explicitly in the case of Matter. He understood the uterine vessel as a "vase of sins" in a scene of psychostasia, the weighing of the soul in the underworld (Matter 1828, Delatte 1914, Bonner 1950).³² Delatte expands Matter's logic providing the detail that the lines extending from the vase were taken as physical manifestations of the sins. The interpretation seems fanciful and Delatte discredits it thoroughly by putting it next to known Gnostic history and doctrines as well as the magical papyri. None of these supports Matter's argument and a new interpretation for the pieces must be sought.

The next major interpretation to be put forth comes from H. Köhler in 1836 in an article in the *Memoirs of the St. Petersburg Academy* (Köhler 1836, Bonner 1950). In the course of discussing the Rubens amulet he analyzed 26 other stones of this type. His conclusion was that the central symbol was a vase. However, he believed that it was specifically a vase meant to collect water from the Nile and irrigate fields. He explains the lines extending off the vase as ropes to attach the vase to a waterwheel. Köhler also

³¹ This shift is not surprising, given that in the greater atmosphere of the time they were not considered art in any sense. Such a denial of this interpretation, the dominant one to this time, necessitated that a new way of understanding the amulets be developed.

³² Bonner suggests that the idea of weighing came about when Matter contemplated the deities which stand on the lines extending from the top of the vase.

explains the symbolic importance of such a vase in the purification rites of the Gnostics and the belief they held about the role of a vessel in the creation of the universe.

Delatte accepts the interpretation as a vase but rejects the idea of an irrigation vessel for several reasons. Not only does this explanation leave unexplained the teeth of the ubiquitous key motif, but the handle of the key, which Köhler takes as a crank handle, is in the wrong place for a vase used in this capacity as compared to modern examples. Further, this task is done everywhere in Egypt and the Middle East that Delatte knew of by a pack animal and not a person (Delatte 1914). Bonner points out further flaws with this explanation by noting that the vase on the amulets never possesses a foot, a compulsory component of all known irrigation vases attached to waterwheels in the Near East. The vase is attached to the waterwheel by tying a cord to both the neck and the foot. The vase cannot then be a “Nilotic Vessel” as it has come to be known, an incorrect interpretation cemented by the approval it received from the major expert on magical amulets of the time, Drexler, and the endorsement of Roscher’s *Lexicon*³³ (Bonner 1950).

A. Vincent in the *Memoires de las Société des Antiquaires de France* in 1850 presented another new theory about the identity of the central symbol of these amulets. Vincent proposed that it was a pneumatically driven musical instrument. The handle of the key he believed to be the crank that forced air through the sac, the means by which music was produced. As Delatte rightly points out, the problem with this interpretation is that no description of such an instrument survives from the ancient world, much less a model or pictorial representation (Delatte 1914).

G. Zoega in the *Catalogo del Museu Borgiano in Velletri* in Volume III of *Documenti inediti per servire all storia dei musei d’Italia, pubblicati per cura del*

³³ W. Drexler. “Isis” in Roscher II, 1. 465. Cited in Bonner 1950 pg 83

Ministero della pubblica istruzione (Florence and Rome 1878-1880) explained several pieces of this class in the collection of Cardinal Borgia. To him the scene was suggestive of a pot on a grated furnace. The handle of the key would be used to open the furnace or flip the grate. The scene would be one of cooking (Bonner 1950). This is again problematic because in the vast majority of known examples the central vase is upside down, making it an ineffectual cooking pot.

C. King in his Antique Gems of 1860 and in The Gnostics and their Remains of 1887 vacillates between interpretations. At some points he believes the central symbol to be a breast shaped container carried by devotees of Isis as described in Apuleius' Metamorphoses (Metamorphoses 11.10), while in other places he endorses the "Nilotic Vase" Theory.

A curiously shaped globular vase, often seen on these gems, is explained by Matter as the receptacle of the sins committed during life, for it appears in company with Anubis weighing two figures in a balance; but I am inclined to take it for the vessel shaped 'like an udder,' used for pouring libations of milk at the rites of Isis. C. King 1860, 350-351 (also 367-368)

Elsewhere he accepts that an inscription on the back of the St. Geneviève example illustrated by Du Molinet and Köhler was authentic (contra Köhler) and involved the womb. However, he never connected the inscription on the back of the gem with the symbol on the front (Bonner 1950). Petrie, in 1914 in his volume Amulets, identified the vase as a solar disc and the symbol beneath it as a solar enclosure or cage (Petrie 1972, 30).

While all of these interpretations are based on examination of the stones themselves, and some even integrate knowledge of texts contemporary with the stones, none of them stand up to the weight of critical, well informed scrutiny. None of them is

so ridiculous as to be impossible, but neither was any of them formed within the bounds of interpretation demanded by the pieces. Most involve Gnosticism at a similar level of understanding, perhaps reflective of the general atmosphere of romanticism and mysticism by which much of the 19th century is marked. Nevertheless, all represent an attempt to understand the amulets in a way which goes beyond artistic appreciation. Thus these interpretations, ranging through the 19th century, comprise the second major stage of interaction with the amulets, the first being confined to contemplating them as art and collectibles.

Stage Three:

The third stage of interaction with the amulets begins around the turn of the twentieth century. At this point the major motifs of the amulets were finally being understood for what they were. That this task was not as difficult as may be assumed is demonstrated by the inscriptions on the pieces, many of which explicitly name the uterus in their prayer. Also, as mentioned originally, this was the first recorded interpretation put forth in 1623 by Peiresc.

In a work published in 1908 Lord Southesk insisted that the central motif of the amulets was a human uterus, contra current interpretations (Southesk 1908). The major turning point in the interpretation of the stones, however, came with Armand Delatte's 1914 essay in *Musée Belge*. In a large essay divided into several subchapters he analyzed a collection of gems in the National Museum in Athens that had never been published. At the outset of the essay he rightly says that, "notre catalogue est donc le premier essai d'explication par la magie gréco-égyptienne" (Delatte 1914, 22). He was the first scholar to deal in a systematic way with the magical practices of the Graeco-

Egyptians in the Roman Empire and situate the amulets against this backdrop. He denies outright the connection between the amulets and Gnosticism so ubiquitous in all interpretations of the prior century and dates the amulets to between the 1st and 4th c. AD, based on the evidence of magical practices dating to those times. Although he deals with a range of amuletic types, his most groundbreaking interpretations center on none other than the uterine amulets.

Accepting Lord Southesk's suggestion that the vase is a human uterus and bolstering it with further evidence, he then moved onto the other iconographic and epigraphic conventions most typically associated with the pieces.³⁴ An area of the amulets not typically considered or accounted for in earlier interpretations was the presence of the one-word inscription "Ororiouth" on the reverse. Delatte, examining the extended inscription on a stone in the Fouquet collection (to be dealt with further in chapter 3), was the first to realize that Ororiouth was the daemon of the womb, the protective deity who looked over it and ensured its proper functioning. The presence of this deity's name on these amulets provided a conclusive affirmation of Peiresc's and Southesk's interpretations of the vase as a human uterus, thus bringing to an end the long standing debate over the meaning of the central motif.

³⁴ Indeed, Delatte notes that the form itself looks much like a sac and reminds one of an organ such as the stomach; however the inscriptions leave no doubt about its true identity (Delatte 1914, 81). Bonner, suspecting that some still doubted this interpretation as late as 1950 writes: "Some who examine these uterine amulets may have lingering doubts about the identity of the principle feature of the type, because of its striking resemblance to a pottery vessel. It must be remembered, however, that the layman's idea of an internal organ will always be rendered in a schematic form, and even the surgeon trained in anatomy will be obliged, in describing it to one who has not had the advantage of an autopsy, to use some approximate comparison. Some of our dictionaries describe the uterus as a pear-shaped organ and Soranus compared its form to a physician's cupping vessel (☉) used in bloodletting, broad and round at the base, and contracting towards the mouth. The stylized uterus of these amulets departs no farther from nature than the conventional modern representation of a heart from the actual appearance of that organ." (Bonner 1950, 94)

Delatte went on to further expand the understanding of the pieces by identifying the motif under the mouth of the vase as a schematized key.³⁵ In support of this interpretation he brought to bear archaeological knowledge about the form of ancient keys as well as a citation of a Medieval spell in which a key is used as a metaphoric vehicle for locking and unlocking the uterus of a woman, allowing access only to the person who has used the charm. The publication by Eitram in 1936 of the *Papyri Osloensis*, a collection of magical spells from roughly the same period as the amulets, brought to light a spell just for this purpose titled a “*fusikleidon*,” a ‘natural key’ (𐤀𐤍𐤏𐤍, 𐤀𐤍𐤏𐤍 being the Greek word for key) (Bonner 1950).³⁶

A final if less controversial identification of the central iconography was also made by Delatte when he realized that the lines extending from the uterine vase were the ligaments which held it in place. “Les lineaments qui se détachent du sommet de la panse ou du col sont les ligaments de la matrice” (Delatte 1914, 81). Prior to this point there was confusion as to their identity, extending even to Southesk who had identified the pot as a human uterus. He thought that they might be snakes and water from the Nile.

From the bottom of the vase, which is set uppermost, two serpents usually extend horizontally to either side; and from the mouth a stream of water rushes forth on one side...But it must be noted that the serpents above the *metrikon* are not always present, their place being sometimes occupied by plain horizontal lines, and sometimes by irregularly waving short lines proceeding in various directions and rather suggestive of flames than of serpents or of jets of water. (Southesk, 1908, 159-160)

³⁵ The recognition of the key beneath the mouth of the uterine vase was an equally critical step in unraveling the iconography of the amulets. As clear as the representation may seem, it was misinterpreted by generations of scholars. Zoega understood it as a grill on which to cook (Zoega, 1878-1880). Southesk, understanding it as a table repeatedly puzzles over “the use and meaning of the handle attached to the horizontal table which the vertical legs uphold” asking “why, also are those legs so numerous and so invariably of the same pattern?” (Southesk 1908, 161). Petrie refers to it as the “sun’s...enclosure” (Petrie 1972, 30, 135j,p,s). Its identity was not immediately apparent.

³⁶ Vincent, in fact, attributed the identification of the key as such to Lenormant many years before Delatte, but since Lenormant never committed his interpretation to writing the credit has fallen to Delatte. Bonner 1950

However, despite Delatte's identification of the ligaments, the lines extending from the top of the uterus, described by Southesk as serpents, were not explicitly differentiated as Fallopian tubes until 1950.³⁷

Delatte's interpretations have been universally accepted as correct and he has in effect ended the debate about the identification of the major elements of the uterine amulets. With the problem of most of the major iconography solved, the works following Delatte's 1914 article have focused on refining the understanding of the amulets or shoring up his interpretations.

In a series of articles throughout the 40s and 50s, and in a major monograph of 1950, Studies of Magical Amulets, Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian, Campbell Bonner took up the topic of uterine amulets repeatedly. While generally more concerned with establishing the meaning of the iconography beyond a doubt, he did interpret them broadly as being concerned with uterine movement, pain, hemorrhage and reproduction (Bonner 1950, 82, 85-86, 87, 89, 94). His main contributions came in the form of providing a history of their study, bringing together in one place some of the major examples of the type, identifying stones which seemed likely forgeries, pointing out possible mistakes in transcription and translation of inscriptions and generally raising awareness of the class among scholars. He also discusses for the first time in English a modified iconography of the uterus, where the pot resembles an octopus more than a vase.³⁸

³⁷ At least I am unable to find a reference to them as such prior to Bonner 1950, 85.

³⁸ N.B. that Delatte made this point in 1914 as well, but that Bonner expands upon it considerably.

Like Delatte, he devoted a chapter in his larger work on magical amulets, to uterine amulets, claiming that “there is no type among all these magical amulets which has so puzzled the archaeologists as this one has” (Bonner 1950, 80). Perhaps his greatest contribution to the study of these pieces was his tendency to draw links between the uterine amulets and other traditions, including folk medicine of Greece and the Tyrol, connections to later Byzantine amulet traditions, and even connections between the uterine amulets and other contemporary amulets (i.e. stomach amulets). In this way Bonner began to contextualize the pieces in traditions that extended beyond literature and to push the boundaries of the questions which could conceivably be asked of them. Although a promising start, his entire chapter spans a mere 15 pages and covers so much ground that it necessarily raises more issues than it deals with fully and can therefore be considered more of a beginning than a finished study. Bonner himself intended this to be the case, stating in his introduction that “any well-informed student of ancient religion and magic, and many archaeologists, will be able to correct these studies at various points, and to supplement them in many respects” (Bonner 1950, ix).

In 1953 and 1959 A. A. Barb took up the subject of uterine amulets again, this time seeking widely for the inspiration for the iconography, suggesting Gnostic theories of Heaven as well as possible influences deriving from Egypt, Babylon, Greece, Rome, Byzantium, Israel and other places. His main conclusion is that the amulets are “birth amulets” (1959, 368). He also expanded further on Bonner’s connection of the Medusa head as having evolved from the uterine vase. Although his presentation of an enormous range of sources and evidence is a bit bewildering at times to the modern reader, this is also the key value in his work. Like Bonner he used the amulets as a starting point to

address various issues relating to art, religion and philosophy and in doing so he began to provide them a context in relation to the culture which created them, the same context which we are deprived of archaeologically. Barb begins to explain the amulets in the only way in which they can make sense – in their own terms.³⁹

Various other authors dealt with the topic between Delatte and Bonner (i.e. Preisendanz 1932, Seyrig 1934) and at the same time as Bonner and Barb (i.e. Rose 1951, Festugiere 1960/1961), but their primary purpose was to make a small emendation to this or that interpretation of a specific amulet.⁴⁰ The next major contribution did not come until 1984 with Robert Ritner's article in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, "A Uterine Amulet in the Oriental Institute Collection." In this piece Ritner makes the stunning statement that although the Egyptian nature of the pieces has never been doubted, they have never actually been investigated in relation to earlier Egyptian sources on the uterus and its associated gods. The article goes on to situate the amulet in question firmly within an Egyptian context of uterine magic. Although focusing primarily on questions of opening and closing Ritner also addresses a formula often encountered on the rim of the amulets but which is little talked about and also the Ouroboros which is so often present on the obverse of the pieces. He reserves his most provocative suggestion for last, noting that the goddess of pregnancy, Thueris, is rarely present on the pieces, an idea to which this dissertation will turn in chapter four.

³⁹ That said, his style of presentation, self admittedly of a somewhat antiquarian bent, often leaves one more baffled at the end than one was before beginning his work. He ends his article stating that further work "...can be left to those modern scholars who have thoroughly cast off the old-fashioned antiquarian chrysalis to stretch their wings in lofty flight."

⁴⁰ Leon Barry, 1906 also had a widely cited but minor article of this nature in 1906 which preceded Delatte's seminal piece.

Five years later, in 1989, Jean-Jacques Aubert wrote an article in *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* entitled “Threatened Wombs: Aspects of Ancient Uterine Magic.” In this piece his primary purpose was to discuss “the ancient evidence for magical practices and religious beliefs pertaining to the womb and its reproductive capacities, and the ways in which human and supernatural interventions were thought capable of interfering with the natural process of reproduction” (Aubert 1989, 421). Appropriately, uterine amulets were considered in this work. Interestingly he spends four paragraphs using the amulets as evidence of how ancient magicians/ people must have envisioned the womb as a wandering, animal-like creature, but true to his stated objective, spends the majority of the article focusing on the reproductive aspects of the womb. Like most earlier authors he pays greatest heed to issues involving the opening and closing of the womb and in regards to its other functions outside of reproduction simply states that the amulets “were supposed, *among other things*, to protect pregnant women against miscarriages” (Aubert 1989, 435, italics added by author). He describes the function of the key as to “open the womb to allow conception and delivery, and to lock it to avoid efflux of semen, menorrhagia, menstruation, miscarriage, and wandering of the womb.” He also focuses on the astral affiliations of uterine amulets. The final sentence of his article is striking: “What seems to have been a central concern in the life of women in antiquity has become obsolete as a result of scientific progress.” (Aubert 1989, 449)

While Aubert’s final remarks may be valid if one believes that the primary purpose of uterine magic, and uterine amulets more specifically, was to ensure healthy reproduction, if as will argued throughout the course of this dissertation, one believes the purpose of the amulets was to safeguard the uterus as such in all its varied states

especially those not involved in pregnancy or birth, then Aubert's final remarks are rendered null and void.



The last major works on the corpus have been completed by a trio of female scholars, the only women who have yet written on the topic: Ann Ellis Hanson, Veronique Dasen and Simone Michel.


Ann Hanson has considered the amulets in three articles: "The Medical Writer's Woman," (1990) "Uterine Amulets and Greek Uterine Medicine," (1995) and "A Long-Lived 'Quick-Birther' (okytokion)" (2004). She acknowledges that the amulets were used for many purposes, stating that the generic uterine amulet would have fulfilled a "range of prophylactic and therapeutic functions" (Hanson 1995, 282). Nevertheless, Hanson tends preferentially to understand the functioning of the uterus in light of its effects on reproduction. "Untimely opening results in morbid uterine hemorrhages and in abortion, untimely closing in sterility" (Hanson 1995, 286). Further, rather than investigating the greater class of uterine amulets she focuses the attention of her work on a subgroup of the amulets which she believes were used during birth (Hanson 1995, 2004).⁴¹

Nevertheless, her 1995 article is useful for placing the amulets within a general framework of Hippocratic and Graeco-Roman medicine. An interesting passage is one where she quotes from Soranus who says that "amulets used to staunch uterine hemorrhage..." should be allowed for the psychological comfort they afford patients, if not for their medical efficacy (Gyn. III.42.3). The quote is significant because it makes explicit the fact that there were such amulets in the Roman Empire. Although Hanson

⁴¹ In her earliest work Hanson labels the greater class as a whole as intended to promote "successful pregnancy" Hanson, 1990, 325.

obliquely acknowledges that our amulets may be this type of amulet, she prefers to deal with them in relation to their possible impact on fertility and not morbidity. She ends her 1995 article considering the etymology of the word “Ororiouth,” being heavily influenced by the historian of ancient magic, Roy Kotansky.

In her 2004 article she dwells on what she believes is a subclass of uterine amulets, marked out by their red color. These she proposes were used for hastening birth. They all possess the typical uterine iconography but based on the unique inscription on the reverse of one of the six of  which she emends to , she understands “somewhat tentatively” these amulets to be birth amulets, calling the baby out to stand on its own feet (Hanson 2004, 280). The argument is thought provoking, if not fully satisfying.⁴² She then goes on, as in her previous article, to muse on the greater amuletic tradition of birth talismans.

Veronique Dasen has also written about the amulets. Citing Hanson’s interpretation of the inscription  and linking it to a Late Antique Christian birth charm calling Lazarus from his tomb she argues that all of the amulets are birth and fertility amulets (Dasen 2004, 2005). She is at pains in all of her interpretations to explain how each element of the amulets relates back to fertility and pregnancy and thereby serves to reinforce her understanding of the pieces. Her interpretations, harkening back to Barb’s and unlike Hanson’s, admit of no possibility that the amulets were used to affect the functioning of the womb within the body in capacities unrelated to reproduction. For this reason many seem too forced to be accepted (Dasen 2005).

Simone Michel is the last scholar who has written on the amulets recently. Her primary focus has been to collect and catalogue many of the known examples of magical

⁴² It will be discussed further in chapter 5

amulets from the Roman Empire and she has not been specifically interested in the uterine amulets (Michel 1995, 2001, 2004a, 2004b, 2005). While her work has been immensely useful in making known many of these under-published pieces, her interpretations have not progressed much beyond those developed by Bonner and Delatte (excepting the Tantalos amulets) (Gordon 2008, 718).

Having surveyed all of the major studies on the corpus it is possible to define a third stage of interaction with the amulets, beginning with Lord Southesk's study and continuing through those of Hanson, Dasen and Michel. During this stage the scholars have been interested in the meaning of the pieces and with understanding the function, purpose and placement of the various iconographic and epigraphic features of the amulets. Their identifications as a whole are solid and grounded in high-quality scholarship. Additionally, they are starting to use the amulets to explore other areas of ancient history, such as astrology, etymology and the evolution of amulets through time. Yet, as a group they have not considered the amulets in any significant way beyond their possible roles in conception and birth, or to investigate the more mundane functions of the amulets.

As Bonner rightly says "the symbolism of the key in connection with either the promotion or the prevention of conception can be easily understood, and certain idiomatic expressions in various languages make it clear enough" (Bonner 1950, 85). However, the key could also be used for more subtle purposes, such as to prevent haemorrhage or open the womb to healing airs which may rid the body of disease or pain daemons, a commonly believed source of ill health in the ancient world (Nunn 2002). Uterine cancer is attested in the papyri and letters of the pharonic period, and mummies

with prolapsed uteri have been recovered (Smith and Jones 1910, Derry 1935, Aufderheide 2004). Shorter has graphically demonstrated that uterine health outside of reproductive matters was a major concern for women in preindustrial Europe, and as internal physiology is not easily altered from society to society it seems likely that the same held true for the populations by whom these amulets would have been used as therapy (Shorter 1983). It is argued in this dissertation that these life-altering conditions are not paid serious enough attention to in the scholarship on these amulets.

One reason for this situation, although only a suggestion, may be the fact that analysis of the pieces prior to Ann Hanson was undertaken exclusively by male scholars. It is quite possible that the inner workings of a woman were not deemed a “polite” topic suitable to be dealt with in detail by a serious work. Evidence to uphold this view may be hinted at by the subtitle of Bonner’s chapter on uterine amulets tellingly called “The Curse of Eve.” Barb’s discomfort with sexual motifs is evidenced by his use of phrases such as “the lewd Messalina” (1953, 197) the “embarrassingly ubiquitous deification of the Phallus” (1953, 197) and “Egyptian terracottas of Graeco-Roman times revealingly show Venus holding the shell in the proper (or rather improper) position” (1953, 205). Lloyd would support such an interpretation, noting that it was not only the functions of women’s bodies, but women themselves that classical scholarship has been uncomfortable with:

Whereas serious critical studies of one massively exploited group in ancient society – the slaves – go back to the late eighteenth century, it took the social and political developments of the last twenty years, and especially the new self-consciousness of the women’s movement, to focus attention explicitly on the neglect of many aspects of the study of the position of women in the ancient world. Some isolated earlier exceptions stand out as just that, and commentators have not failed to diagnose the neglect as due as much to the male domination of the classical profession as to the male domination of ancient society itself. Lloyd 1999b, 58. First published in 1983.

In the more recent studies the focus on birth and conception in relation to the amulets seems less a function of an author's unwillingness to take up issues of female physiology and more a product of habit. The amulets have been most significantly dealt with in regards to reproduction, so those have been the questions which immediately present themselves to new authors working on the corpus. To go forward one must acknowledge the works on which one's builds. In the case of the amulets, however, this has resulted in the repeated address of the original questions.

Hanson, Ritner and others have branched out as well. Expanding upon Bonner's impulse to draw connections to other ancient traditions more recent authors have begun to ask how the amulets fit into various cultural traditions. These are inquiries which must be made in order for us to understand the social niche of the pieces better. The authors to date have left space for future work in this realm as well. As of yet no serious social questions have been addressed to the amulets such as how they might reflect the world in which they were used, what they might tell us about the creation and maintenance of gender, and how they may attest to the popular practices and intertwining of religion, magic and medicine as opposed to those more formal accounts we have preserved in texts. Further, they have not yet been interrogated with any modern model of social theory.

Stage Four:

It is not proposed that this dissertation will answer every question, social or otherwise, which it raises, but it is suggested that in simply raising new questions it will mark out a new period of study in the history of the amulets. Using the amulets as

material springboards to address questions relevant to the greater society is a break from earlier approaches. Gordon has also noted that a new era of study of the amulets is imminent. Writing about Michel's 2004 work on the British Museum Catalogue, one of the most recent works on amulets of this period he says:

...the volume can be taken as a caesura of sorts: the demi-completion of the primary task of publication and inventorizing these small objects, and the beginning of a new phase of more properly archaeological enquiry. Gordon 2008, 713.

This dissertation represents just such a modern archaeological enquiry. Based on the amulets assembled in the catalogue, a collection which is unprecedented in its size, it is possible to ask questions of the objects and draw conclusions which were not possible when they were studied in isolation or in groups of one or two. This enquiry then will seek to both clarify the meaning and purpose of the amulets and to understand them within their cultural contexts, applying at times the modern archaeological tool of theory.

Conclusions:

It should be apparent to the reader by this point that while archaeological context for the pieces is absent, they do still possess a cultural context which can be probed. Each successive stage of work on the amulets has thus far expanded our knowledge of the cultural traditions out of which they evolved. In the earliest period a comparative base between amulet motifs was formed. From this base was possible to break the amulets up into different types or classes. In the second stage of study interest turned to exploring the meaning of the pieces. While many of the conclusions of this period have since been abandoned, the debate which was fostered ultimately culminated in the correct identification of the motifs during the third period. During this last phase the meanings of the amulets were established by comparing them against other classes of ancient

evidence. By expanding upon those cultural connections, intellectual, popular and artistic, it is a goal of this dissertation to provide the amulets as a class with a cultural context, if not individual amulets with a specific locative context.

As Fausto-Sterling's quote at the beginning of this chapter asserted "history, culture, relationships, psyche, organism, and cell are each appropriate locations from which to study the formation and meanings of sexuality and gender." If this is the case, as this author believes it is, there should then be more than enough cultural and historical context present for the amulets to be used as a valid means by which to plumb significant social questions.

III

Words and Letters: What do the Amulets Say for Themselves?

Because one's local bishop, town doctor, and neighborhood sorceress were almost certainly at odds over how best to evict the daemon that possessed one, the possessed did not indulge in the luxury of subtle differentiations. If need be he called upon Christ, Solomon, and the Chnoubis in one breath; this is the truth that our objects reveal with incontrovertible clarity. They reveal a world thoroughly and openly committed to supernatural healing, and one wherein, for the sake of health, Christianity and sorcery had been forced into open partnership.

G. Vikan, 1984, 86

Although magic could be written in Greek tradition, writing itself was not magic.

D. Frankfurter, 1994, 195

Inscriptions, sometimes in debased Greek, but far oftener in some little understood form of Coptic or Aramaic, though nearly always in Greek capital letters abound on these rude intaglios and in many cases constitute the entire or principle subject of the design.

Southesk, 136

Vikan's statement is no idle muse on how syncretism between radically different schools of religious thought might come about. It is a reaction to a class of amulets which have many of the same characteristics as ours, not least of which is the presence of writing and the invocation of multiple, often conflicting, divine figures. The purpose of this chapter, however, is not to tease out the religious implications of such inscriptions, but to explore closely the words and letters present on the amulets in an effort to further

understand how and for what purpose these pieces were deployed in the communities which made use of them. Before the inscriptions themselves can be examined the nature of epigraphy and the writing of magic must be commented on briefly. Why would such invocations, prayers and spells be written down in the first place? From here the chapter will continue to consider divine names commonly associated with the amulets and then the more complicated inscriptions often found on them.

Language and Style of the Amulets:

The majority of uterine amulets are inscribed. The Greek language and writing system is most common, and many of the words found on the amulets are of intelligible Greek however, Hebrew, Aramaic, Assyrian and Egyptian words transliterated into Greek are not uncommon (Bonner 1950, 188-194). Their letter forms are usually either all curvilinear (lunate sigma like a c, omega with bowed bottom) (Figure 3.1) or all rectilinear (lunate sigma of three straight lines, omega of four straight lines) (Figure 3.2) (Bonner 1944, 30-31). Due to the size of the amulets and the tools used to inscribe them lettering is almost exclusively of the latter type.⁴³ Amulets in which a predominantly curvilinear letter form prevails often, though not always, have other anomalous features which may raise doubts as to their genuineness, since a number of “modern” forgeries are not unknown.⁴⁴ The lettering, always capital, is of a type which is often dated to the second c. AD or later, however, since the stones vary in quality, date and place of

⁴³ C. King ascribes the letter forms to the use of the rotating disc to carve the stones, whereas Bonner credits them to the hardness of the stone in which they are carved. Haematite is not particularly hard, though, so King’s interpretation seems more likely (C. King 1860, Bonner 1954, 41, Schwartz & Schwartz 1979).

⁴⁴ Bonner mentions several of these at the beginning of his SMA, including even the stone of Rubens. The reader will also find several amulets in the appended catalogue which have been marked as of dubious antiquity.

production, it has seemed impossible to use the letter forms to date them more precisely or to construct a comparative chronological sequence among them (Bonner 1954, 41).

Reading the inscriptions which are still intact on the amulets, many having been worn away with frequent handling of the stone or damaged when an amulet was chipped or broken, also presents certain difficulties. The first problem encountered is one known to all epigraphers: engravers make mistakes. Some of the most frequent tendencies include leaving the cross-bar of the alpha off, causing it to be understood as a lambda or delta (Figure 3.3). The cross bar of epsilon is often missing which causes misidentification with a lunate sigma (Figure 3.4) and the theta can be taken as an omicron when the cross stroke is missing if it is a lozenge (Figure 3.5), or if it is a square can be confused with epsilon if the right hand vertical is shallow (Figure 3.6). Kappa, beta and rho can be very close in form (Figure 3.7), as can gamma and tau (Figure 3.8). Chi iota is often written as a zeta with a cross stroke on the diagonal which is often too shallow to be seen, allowing for misidentification with zeta (Figure 3.9). Additionally, upsilon is written with a midline down-stroke only about a third of the time, most often resembling an upper case "V," a form which nu also assumes at times (Figure 3.10). Early modern editors were often unaware of these propensities, which means that most older readings of the stones are incorrect at least in part (Bonner 1946, 41). To this end in the compilation of the catalogue every effort has been made to verify the transcriptions published previously against the photos of the amulets at hand or in person.

Placement of inscriptions on the stone can fall anywhere, and indeed some stones are covered over in hundreds of letters (c. 17, obverse, 107 obverse and reverse, 103 obverse). Most commonly longer formulas on uterine amulets are placed around the

obverse edge of the stone with invocations or commands and vowel clusters placed in the main field of the obverse and reverse (i.e. c.39). A single daemon is commonly invoked on the reverse. Many of the inscriptions around the edge of the amulets are partially lost due to the soft, easily abraded nature of the haematite in which these amulets were typically carved (Bonner 1950, 81). The placement of the inscriptions on the amulets can also be problematic for editors as it is not often clear that various groups of letters are meant to be read together when spread over the surface of the stone, or indeed, what order letters should be read in, as is demonstrated by an amulet published by Barry and Delatte, which Bonner republished in part in 1950, noting that both scholars had read the spiraling inscription in the wrong direction (c. 42) (Bonner 1950, 84, similar to the inscription on the reverse of c. 96) (Barry 1906, no.3, Delatte 1914, 80, Bonner 150, 84 no. 42).

In regards to the inscriptions, the amulets primarily integrate two attitudes toward writing and religion: Egyptian and Greek (Frankfurter 1994, 189). In Egypt writing itself was sacred and the hieroglyphs had intrinsic meaning and power, whereas in Greece the letters of the alphabet had no inherent force and the power in a spell came not from its being written down but being spoken out.⁴⁵ Greek and Egyptian religion began to intersect in the Roman period by means of writing, when the Egyptians, possibly to

⁴⁵ For instance, in Egypt hieroglyphs of dangerous animals painted in tombs were ritually defaced to prevent them harming the deceased in the afterlife – merely writing the words was enough for them to have power. One way for the illiterate masses to participate in magical ritual in Egypt was the pouring of water over a spell, which the participant then drank. The idea was that the magic of the letters washed into the water and could be imbibed. Amulets were also often made in the shapes of hieroglyphs, such as the eye of Horus. In Greece on the other hand one never sees an amulet of the pre-Christian period in the shape of a letter. The oral nature of Greek spells can be seen in the way they imitate speech patterns and is attested in various literary sources such as when Diogenianus (Diogenian 4.77 cited in Frankfurter 1994, 196 n. 50) in speaking of *Ephesia grammata* (originally possibly akin to the characters discussed below, but by the time of the amulets synonymous with *voces magicae*, senseless combinations of “magical” syllables) says that spells must be intoned to have power. See Frankfurter 1994, 192-197.

preserve the correct pronunciation of ritual formulae, gradually began to replace their traditional writing system, which lacked vowels, with transliterated Greek, which allowed for more accurate transmission of pronunciation via written text (Frankfurter 1994).⁴⁶

Vowels at this time gain a sort of sacredness which is reflected in the amulets and in religious texts by their constant repetition. Drawing on the Greek tradition of notating different quantities, such as numerical, astronomical and tonal values, with different vowels, these letters seem to take on a polyvalent meaning which transcended mere language and were believed by various groups, including the Gnostics and the Copts to bring one closer to god if chanted, sung or repeated out loud (Bonner 1950, 187, Bonner 1946, 39, Clement of Alexandria, Stromata V). This use of vowels is seen not only by their inscription on many amulets, but is also attested in contemporary literature:

In Egypt the priests, when singing hymns in praise of the gods, employ the seven vowels, which they utter in due succession; and the sound of these letters is so euphonious that men listen to it in place of flute and lyre. Ritner 1984, 218 quoting Demetrius *On Style* 2.71 as translated by W. Rhys Roberts, London 1932, 346-347.

Throughout the magical papyri and amulets different geometric shapes are formed by inscriptions, called *carmina figurata*. These are very often made exclusively with vowels, and this seems to be a melding of the Egyptian tendency to ascribe power to the visual form of a word, and the Greek belief in the power of vowels (Frankfurter 1994, 199-201). They are found in an Egyptian ritual text in the 2nd c. AD (Demotic magical papyrus of London) and are used here in the same way that they are on our amulets, as a unit of seven vowels, which seem to function almost as an independent spell or oath which is repeated at various points in the ritual (Frankfurter 1994, 203).

⁴⁶ Although languages such as Arabic function well without written vowels, the arcane knowledge which the priests were trying to preserve was not widely known. In order to ensure that it was recorded and recited faithfully among a shrinking pool of initiates it has been suggested that vowels were first introduced into ritual formulae and magic.

Conversely, the Greek tradition at this point takes a greater interest in symbol as a means of expression. Frankfurter provides several examples of this, including a late one where the seven vowels in different orders are written in cartouches on the walls of the theater of Miletus and are referred to as archangels intended to guard the city, although no angelic names are present. It appears that these vowel combinations in this situation were meant to symbolize the angels and were deemed sufficiently potent to invoke them simply by having been inscribed, a very “Egyptian” way of thinking.

The interest in symbol and imbuing writing with a type of sacredness is postulated by Frankfurter as an explanation for the profusion of characters which appear on the amulets and in the magical papyri and which are not derived from any known writing system. Characters are essentially series of lines which bend and intersect and which often have little rings at their ends, like an asterisk with dots at the end of every ray (Frankfurter 1994, 205-211. See page 206 for illustrations). They may be either a sacred code or pseudo-alphabet and as such possess either phonetic or symbolic meaning, or they may simply be the result of illiterate engravers attempting to reproduce hieroglyphs or writing which they could not read.

The types of words inscribed on amulets fall into several categories. There are groups of pronounceable letters, *voces magicae*, (either short mixes of vowels and consonants, long groups of heavy syllables, or simply vowels) which are clearly meant to be pronounced and which have no decipherable meaning. They most probably derived their perceived power from the sonorous sounds they would produce upon being spoken and had no meaning in the ancient world. Some undecipherable words are also secret

names of gods, or sacred words which have been put into an isopsephic code.⁴⁷ This isopsephic code represents another adoption into the Greek tradition of a more symbolic use of language. The meaning of the word could now be invoked by intoning or reading another word altogether, a far cry from the *Charmides* where a particular spell had to be precisely spoken while an analgesic was applied for the latter to have any ability to ease pain (Plato, 155e).⁴⁸ Palindromes also often occur on these amulets and in this case the Egyptian influence is quite clear, since the palindromes are often very long and would not be recognized as such if spoken aloud. It is their visual arrangement which is of significance.

The content of the decipherable inscriptions falls into several categories. In general, while the stones often invoke a god, express a wish, or command a body part, very rarely, if ever, does any medico-magical stone from this class express a moral idea or ask a question (Bonner 1944, 31, Bonner 1951, 315 # 3 contra Rose 1951). The most common inscriptions are names of daemons or divine powers and refer back to the traditional Egyptian practice of naming. Naming allows one to gain power over a god or daemon or body part by stating its name (often a secret name) out loud (Graf 2003, 95).⁴⁹ Indeed, in Egypt it seems that each body part had a special protector god associated with

⁴⁷ Isopsephic value is determined by assigning to each letter of the alphabet its value as a numeral and then adding all the numbers for a grand sum. A different combination of letters, possibly a unpronounceable group of meaningless letters would be contrived which had the same total sum as the sacred word and would then be substituted for it in order to increase the secrecy and power of a given word. For instance, Abrasax, a common word in the greater class of Graeco-Egyptian amulets, sums to 365, a sacred number. See Bonner, 1946, 39.

⁴⁸ “So I told him that the thing itself was a certain leaf, but there was a charm to go with the remedy; and if one uttered the charm at the moment of its application, the remedy made one perfectly well; but without the charm there was no efficacy in the leaf.” Plato, *Charmides* 155e, Trans. W.R.M. Lamb.

⁴⁹ In convincing Seth to tell him his true name so that he may cure him in a vignette from the 12th c. Turin Magical Papyrus Horus says that “one is able to work magic for a person by means of their name” (Pinch 1995, 29-31).

it and knowing the name of this god not only could force the deity to assist one in the healing of the body part, but could also grant one control of that body part (Nunn 2002, 104). One can also name a traditional enemy of another god or body part and essentially scare the first power into submission by knowing their enemy, their weakness (Frankfurter 1994, 197-199).

Deities and Divine Figures on the Amulets:



It is indeed the practice of naming which is seen most often on the uterine amulets. The most common inscription on this class of amulet is the inscription of “𐤀𐤓𐤕𐤓𐤕 . 𐤓.” The inscription is typically found in the reverse field but is also found on the obverse and occasionally circling the edge of both sides (for example c. 3-7). It is significant that this word does not appear in any other context outside this class of amulets.⁵⁰

The meaning of the word is debated. Bonner addresses the problem briefly suggesting that it may be a secret name for Artemis-Selene-Hecate based on stone c. 38 where “Aktiofi Ereschigal Neboutosoualeth” is inscribed, at least one part of which may be the name of a moon goddess and linked to the cycles of women. He also believes that it may be linked to Aphrodite occasionally as on stone c. 141 where the inscription 𐤀𐤓𐤕𐤓𐤕 𐤀𐤓𐤕𐤓𐤕 . 𐤓 is found, 𐤀𐤓𐤕𐤓𐤕 𐤀𐤓𐤕𐤓𐤕 being a secret name of Aphrodite (Bonner 1950, 199). Elsewhere he suggests that the name may be synonymous for the womb itself, citing stone c. 23 which has the inscription “𐤀𐤓𐤕𐤓𐤕 [𐤀𐤓𐤕𐤓𐤕] 𐤀𐤓𐤕𐤓𐤕 . 𐤓,” possibly meaning “I lie

⁵⁰ Although see Bonner 1950 p. 199 where he cites a “doubtful example” of a disguised version of the word with a Pantheos gem. It also appears with the Ibis motif (to be described in chapter 5), when that iconographical package is found on the reverse of uterine amulets, such as c. 73, 74, 155.

around Ororiouth” and which Bonner takes as possible evidence that the word Ororiouth may be another name for the uterus (Bonner 1950, 85).⁵¹

Barb is of the opinion that it means “Light of Lights,” and links this etymological explanation with the iconography of the octopus uterus (chapter 4) which he understands as a solar symbol for “light” and the Gnostic idea that the abyss from which creation emerged was a dark cosmic womb of sorts (Barb 1953, 202, 226 n. 143). Hanson expands on this explanation providing a derivation from the Hebrew “ôrā-ôrot” but rejects it on the grounds that due to the intimate connection of the word with uterine amulets one would expect a meaning more closely related to the purpose of the talismans (Hanson 1995, 293).

However in rejecting Barb’s explanation she also offers another, this one based on a derivation from Egyptian by H.B. Stricker and from the Semitic languages by Roy Kotansky. Stricker understands Ororiouth to be related to the Egyptian word *w r.t* which means uterus (Nunn 1996).⁵² Kotansky sees a connection to the root for ‘ûr, ‘ārāh, ‘ārar, which mean to be naked or bare. The –th or –oth ending of Ororiouth would indicate that the word is a name or title. On stone c. 20 the inscription  is found next to the word Ororiouth (perhaps an alternate title or name of the god). Kotansky notes that the *erm* at the beginning of the word comes from the same root as ‘ûr and the  ending derives from the two feminine endings –ît and –at, leaving the word Ermîtat, or “Naked One” as Hanson translates it. Her final argument then is that Ororiouth means “Pudendatrix,” and her line of reasoning is bolstered by the frequent finding of Semitic words such as

⁵¹ The inscription would seem to be from the mouth of the Ouroboros which lies around the uterine scene. See Chapter 6 for further discussion.

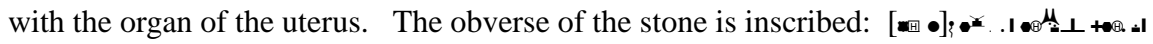
⁵² As cited in Hanson 1995 n. 51: Stricker, B.H., *De Geboorte van Horus I*. Leiden, 1963. 81 & n. 331

Yahweh and Sabaoth on these amulets, as well as all medico-magical talismans of this time (Hanson 1995, 293).

Although there is no simple answer to the etymology of the word Ororiouth, Hanson's explanation being the most attractive, its meaning has been made clear by several inscriptions. A stone in the Fouquet collection⁵³ discussed by Barry, Delatte and Bonner in turn (Barry 1906, 241-242 Pl. IIa; Delatte 1914, 80; Bonner 1950, 85, c. 83) has the following inscription on its reverse:


Delatte 1914, 80

God of womanly womb, Abanbao, god of the wombs of women..., lord of the wombs of women, Orouriouth, Aubach,⁵⁴ protector of the wombs of women..., saviour of the womb's of women, Amon (?) imachak, mex

The inscription makes it clear that Ororiouth is considered the protective deity concerned with the organ of the uterus. The obverse of the stone is inscribed:  meaning Omoorof of Omoorof (?), Genius of the wombs of women.

Although Omoorof should have a similar meaning as Ororiouth based on this inscription, and is even, perhaps, an alternate name for Ororiouth, the word hardly, if ever, appears on uterine amulets.



However, an interesting point of note is brought up by the inscription of Ororiouth. While the deities represented iconographically on the stones are both male and female, the divinities addressed on these amulets have traditionally been understood

⁵³ The collection was sold in pieces in the 1920s. Much of it went to the Brooklyn Museum however it was scattered throughout the world and much was lost (Cooney 1965, 42).

⁵⁴ Aubach is a proper name in apposition with Ororiouth with no intelligible meaning.

to be exclusively male, an odd situation bearing in mind the supposed uterine nature of the amulets. Both Barb and Bonner have commented on this supposed gender conundrum (Bonner 1950, 1999; Barb 1953).

The closest thing to solution Barb can provide is an in-depth treatment of the theology of various sects, the consideration of which is beyond the scope of this study. One relevant point he makes however is that in PGM I line 58 a male god-head is called the womb. The concept of a creation deity in the form of a womb can be traced to the Babylonians and several other groups (Barb 1953 198-199). It is possible that the figurative womb god of ancient creation myths somehow evolved and took on the protection of the actual wombs of women in the hyper-syncretic atmosphere of the Graeco-Egyptian world which produced these amulets.

However, despite the historical emphasis on the maleness of the divinities inscribed on the stones, it is possible that this focus is misplaced. As mentioned above female deities such as Aphrodite and Ereschigal are found on the stones. Ermitath, an inscription which is found on several amulets (c. 18 & 20), both in conjunction with Ororiouth and alone, seems also to be a feminine title or deity. Hanson has also proposed that Ororiouth is a female deity. On other amulets (c. 28⁵⁵, 53, 106) Hathor, the cow headed goddess of Egypt, seems to be called on by the inscription of . While there are definitely males mentioned such as Apollo, referenced as  the son of Leto⁵⁶ (c. 88), the presumably male Hebrew god discussed below, and possibly even a male mortal by

⁵⁵ C. 28 is a modern forgery as shown by its stone. It is not clear if it is a copy of a genuine stone as others that have this inscription seem to be ancient. See also Michel 2004, BM.

⁵⁶ Identifying people and deities by their mother is typical in the magical practices of the ancient Mediterranean, being contrary to the more normal way of identifying a person by their father. Although it has been pointed out that this is also a common epithet for Apollo, its choice over other epithets that do not identify him via Leto seems a likely nod to current magical practice. Certainly Bonner was puzzled by the choice of this particular epithet in the circumstances (Bonner 1950, 168, Bonner 1942, 467).

the name of 𐤎𐤓𐤁𐤌𐤕 ⁵⁷ whose name may be found inscribed on an amulet, one has to allow that the names graven on these talismans are not so gender biased as once presumed (Sijpesteijn 1989, 120). It should be noted that while working with the smaller collections which were available to many of the earlier scholars such as Bonner and Delatte, this mistake would be a simple one to make, with the frequency of female deities cited only made obvious by many of the amulets having been collected together, as in the accompanying catalogue, and by recent developments in scholarship (Hanson 1995).

The next most common inscriptions on the amulets, also representing male deities, are two words that are ubiquitous among the Graeco-Egyptian magical amulets (Bonner 1950, Delatte and Derchain 1964, Michel 2001). They are 𐤎𐤌𐤍 and 𐤎𐤌𐤍𐤕 . 𐤎𐤌𐤍 , along with 𐤎𐤌 and 𐤎𐤌𐤍 are all variations of the name of the Hebrew god, Yahweh. 𐤎𐤌𐤍𐤕 Sabaoth, is often but not exclusively found following 𐤎𐤌𐤍 . In traditional religious sources the two form an epithetic pair translatable as, Yahweh the Lord of Hosts. On the amulets, however, they seem to be used as independent titles or gods (Bonner 1950, 170). In a similar vein, an alternate title of the Hebrew god, Adonai, appears on several of the amulets, as do the names of various angels such as Gabriel, Raphael, Michael and Uriel. The presence of these divine figures on the amulets must be explained by the force which their names would add to a charm, and not any intrinsic link which they had to powers that could influence the uterus or increase fertility. In magical

⁵⁷ The inscription is “ 𐤎𐤓𐤁𐤌𐤕𐤍 .” Gramatopol (1974, 70 n. 398) suggests the male name “ 𐤎𐤓𐤁𐤌𐤕𐤍 ?” The odd orthography could be a misspelling of Artimedoros, as tentatively suggested by Gramatopol, or it could be a misspelling of Artemis (who is not found elsewhere on uterine amulets), or it could be a third option all together. The current ending is a dative suggesting a meaning of: for/ in the interest of/ in the possession of/ by / on account of/ in respect to/ within Artimedoros?. However, given the apparent confusion of the engraver that it is intended to be a dative is questionable. While Gramatopol notes that the letters of this word surround a “symbole incertain” (1974, 70) Sijpesteijn identifies it as a key as seen on uterine amulets. The reverse in two lines is “ 𐤎𐤓𐤁𐤌𐤕 ” which Sijpesteijn interprets as a variation of Ororiouth, also which suggests the uterine function of the amulet.

rites the more deities one could compel to aid one the more power one could harness to bring about a wish. The number three was deemed particularly powerful, thus a single deity may be invoked thrice, or as seen on many uterine amulets, three deities, ✕■W, C■W and ●W● could be called on to enforce a charm (Graf 1991, Kotanksy 1994, 251, 48.1).

Longer Inscriptions:

Having explored the shorter inscriptions on the amulets it is now appropriate to look at some of the longer, more specific engravings. These inscriptions are often restricted to few words and different combinations thereof. In interpreting the inscriptions one must pay particular care not to read into them more than what is present. To that end the argument about their function will be by and large held off until they have been presented, allowing the reader to come to his or her own unbiased opinion.

The simplest of inscriptions is found on an amulet in Athens published by Delatte in 1914 (c. 82). On the reverse is a ten line inscription which begins with Ororiouth, follows with some senseless syllables and a palindrome, and ends with the two words C.■x ■.■f . ● ● ★●● . ■ ● ●. This phrase translates to “be contracted womb.”⁵⁸ The word “contract” is meant in the sense of inflamed, swollen flesh becoming less irritated and engorged, not in the modern sense of uterine contractions, a sense in which it is not used in ancient medical treatises. Its medical meaning is established in Dioscorides book 5,

⁵⁸ The verb ●★ according to the 1997 impression of An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon founded upon the Seventh Edition of Liddell and Scott’s Greek English Lexicon, has several meanings. Its first is to set in order, arrange or equip, put on robes or get ready. Its second major meaning is to dispatch or send, or in the 2nd singular middle/passive imperative to “be gone.” Its third meaning is to fetch, while its fourth is to bring together or gather up. When in the middle voice it also means to “check, repress” and “to shrink from a thing, to avoid it” Liddell and Scott 1997, 744. It is this sense of gathering oneself in, and thus shrinking and being repressed that the word conveys on the amulets and in medical senses.

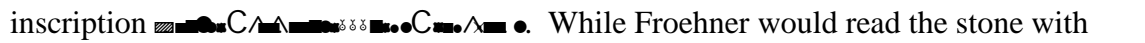


something sick, and the rearing of an animal.⁶⁹ 𐤀𐤁𐤁 is defined as the uterus as such, not the gravid uterus or the uterus attempting to conceive or in any other state. At face value then the inscription simply offers the amulet as a means to tend to the uterus, and given the senses of 𐤀𐤁𐤁 that uterus could be either divine (as in the worship of a deity), ill (as in something that needs to be tended to), or thought of as an animal (as in an animal that must be trained and reared). Any one or combination of these shades of meaning may be at work in this inscription. It is clear that the focus of the prayer's energy is on the organ itself, not any function which the organ carries out, such as conceiving or carrying a child to term. If this latter interpretation is to be understood as the concern of the inscription it must be by implication only, and revolve around some worry about the physical failing of the uterus in some respect.

It seems as likely, if not more so, that the inscription is concerned with a threat to the organ and what such a threat may do to the womb. Possible candidates that could cause such fear may include diseases such as uterine and ovarian cancer, which were known and feared at this time (Nunn 1996, 81, Aufderheide 2004, Kahun 2 via Stevens 1975), uterine cramps, and uterine haemorrhage and distention, the failure of the organ to contract and stop bleeding after birth.⁷⁰ Another condition, uterine prolapse, which was also known at this time as shown by archaeological and literary sources, may also be the

⁶⁹ Although in medical situations the sense of “tending something sick” is the one that is predominant, the different nuances of the word are important to highlight, as it will be argued in chapters 4 – 9 that a predominant understanding of the womb expressed on these amulets is that of a wild animal or enemy, making the third sense relevant. Barb's comments (1953) that a divine uterus created the cosmos in some Gnostic sects, and also Bonner's suggestion that Ouroriouth may be a “secret” and divine name for the womb both justify the “divine/ worship” consideration of the definition as well.

⁷⁰ Although these are just speculative suggestions as to what threats to the womb might encompass, based on the relatively stable potentials for experience that human physiology presents people, it is certain that these would have been afflictions suffered by the populations which utilized the amulets. Most are also attested in the papyri and Greek medical sources. See chapter 7 for further discussion.

object of this uterine therapy (Derry 1935, Aufderheide 2004, Kahun Papyrus). Uterine prolapse is a condition encountered relatively commonly after childbirth and later in life where the ligaments holding the uterus in place stretch and allow the organ to collapse down further into the abdomen and thus exert uncomfortable pressure on other organs.⁷¹ A further condition to which the amulets may address themselves is that of the “wandering uterus” where the organ could roam about the body at will throwing other organ systems off balance and sometimes even causing death (Hanson 1975, Zeyl 2000).⁷² Whether or not western biomedicine recognizes the condition as actually existing, it is a syndrome that would have been treated in the Mediterranean world and could be represented in the amulets.


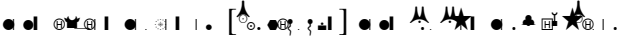

Another inscription found on stone c. 45 may express the same sentiment as the one above. Although the stone is missing roughly the left third (when viewed from the obverse) what is left of its spiraling inscription is intriguing. Surrounding what appears to be a draped woman clutching either the handle of the key or a Fallopian tube is the inscription . While Froehner would read the stone with minimal emendation as ⁷³ Delatte and Derchain prefer to restore the inscription as , protect Seleukia from all pains/evils of the uterus (Delatte and Derchain 1964, 257 n.

⁷¹ The condition can occasionally improve on its own with time. It can also effect other organs as well, including the bladder, Aretaeus mentions that on occasion the ligaments can be so stretched that the whole organ can slip out of the body and the woman can live like that, albeit uncomfortably, for quite a while. (Aretaeus, *Chronic Diseases*, Book II – Adams pg. 361). Shorter cites evidence from more modern European sources that also attests to how common the condition could be, and indeed, how some women could even live for years with an external uterus.

⁷² No doubt this belief was in part due to the observation of severe prolapse.

⁷³ A reading that makes little to no sense

363). If they are correct in their reconstruction of the lines then once again the inscription is one that prays for the health and the pain free equilibrium of the organ.⁷⁴

The next inscriptions are connected not by their language as much as their shared concern with a sense of place, specifically the proper place of the uterus. The most striking example of this type is on c. 41, introduced earlier : . . “Place the womb of So-and-So in its proper place, you who lifts the disc of the sun” (Bonner, 1950, 82). The use of  instead of an individual’s name indicates that the amulet was carved as a general piece to be sold to whomever might pass by and was not commissioned by a specific customer.⁷⁵ This would indicate that fear of the condition which it remedies was wide spread enough to make it saleable as a stock piece. Presumably, when and if the prayer was repeated the customer would replace it with her own name (Bonner 1950, 81).

Again the condition being remedied seems to be solely concerned with the uterus and its malposition. If somehow this would impact fertility and birth, this does not seem to be the focus of the plea. Rather, the user’s primary intent, for whatever reason, is to return the organ to its proper position within the body. Whatever other implications that

⁷⁴ It should be noted that although no note is made of it in Delatte and Derchain’s catalogue the stone on which this piece is carved is a yellow chalcedony. The only parallel for such a color is perhaps found in the c. 28, # 353 of Michel’s catalogue of the British Museum collection, which she and I agree in believing to be a modern forgery. The French amulet in question has also been drilled to be strung as a bead with a string passing through one side to the other. Although some stones have eyes on which to be strung, no other ancient amulet to my knowledge is drilled as a bead. It seems then that the piece is a modern work. However, the inscription on its obverse seems to be genuine enough and is reminiscent of the inscription of their # 358 (c. 100), prompting one to wonder if the piece has not been copied from an ancient model, a practice which Bonner and others readily admit as a possible origin for any number of stones.

⁷⁵ However, if this is the same piece noted by Southesk as seems likely given the rarity of comparable inscriptions, it has the proper feminine name “Stratinna” engraved on its reverse. The interpretation may be that the piece was “customized” once purchased by inclusion of the owner’s name on the reverse rather than incorporation into the existing prayer on the obverse. (Southesk 1908, 160)

has for the owner of the uterus in regards to health or fertility are not addressed on this stone. The only condition being remedied here is a movement of the uterus.

A similar command to be written on a silver lamella is prescribed in PGM VII. 260-271 where the uterus is commanded: “.” (stand and may you remain in your own spot) and compared to dog hungry to eat the heart of its woman (Betz 1986, PGM VII, 260-271, p. 123-124).⁷⁶ The material on which the command is to be inscribed is somewhat aberrant as compared to our amulets, but the spell clearly indicates that movement of the womb was a feared syndrome to be guarded against in this society. The comparison with a dog (. . .) presents the organ as a sentient animal with its own will and is a theme that reappears with force in later Byzantine uterine amulets (Betz, VII, 269). It may also be referenced in the inscription, where has a sense of taming and giving care to an animal. If there is any doubt as to the purpose of the charm from which this command is excerpted, its title “.” (for a running up/ retreating uterus) dispels it (Betz 1986, PGM VII, 269, p. 124).⁷⁷ Both this command and the preceding are concerned with the organ of the uterus and, although the movement of the womb which they treat may be a side-effect of parturition and may impact indirectly on fertility, they do not mention child birth or fertility in any explicit way.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ See pg. 194 in Chapter 6 for the full passage.

⁷⁷ The titles are not present for every spell in the papyri, but when listed in the PGM they are also present in the papyri, written by either the originator of the spell or a conscientious ancient compiler. Often times for aggressive spells they are written in red, a convention that hearkens back to Seth and his association with chaos and the color red, a connection explored more in chapter 6. See Kotansky 1991, 124 n. 4.

⁷⁸ Uterine prolapse, understood as a form of wandering uterus, can occur by pulling on the placenta post delivery and thus inverting and extruding the uterus (Shorter), is not strictly associated with childbearing. Hanson & Fleming on Peri Parthenion note how uterine wandering can occur in virgins as well as those

as in the case of uterine distention and haemorrhage brought on by parturition.⁸² Thus the inscription could be concerned with the location of the uterus or its abnormal bleeding.

The condition of distention may also be represented by the inscription of . . . ♂ (contract womb) with which this discussion began (c. 82).⁸³ Again it should be kept in mind that the word “contract” here does not refer to uterine contractions during birth, but a pulling back and a return to a normal state by angry and swollen or distended flesh.⁸⁴ The lack of an owner’s name within the command may again indicate that these amulets were stock pieces which were readily available for purchase. There would not be time to carve a custom amulet naming the one afflicted between the time of birth when uterine distension set in and the expiration of the mother should the womb fail to return to its normal size. The amulets may have then been purchased either by a member of the

not unknown in this society. Indeed, the verb is the most common on Attic *katadesmoi*, a topic that will be returned to in chapter 6.

⁸² Distention and the accompanying fatal haemorrhage is caused when the uterus fails to contract after parturition. Often it is massaged and stimulated to contract but after particularly violent contractions or extreme stretching it will occasionally remain stretched. The condition is fatal if bleeding cannot be stopped soon. Today it will lead to an emergency hysterectomy, a procedure which was not an option in the world in which these amulets were created.

⁸³ C. 82, Delatte, pg 76 #33. Republished by Bonner, 1950, pg 84


⁸⁴ Until Soranus and Galen the pains a mother felt were not understood as the bearing down of the matrix but rather as the clawing and kicking of her baby as he delivered himself from her womb (Hanson 2004). Even when uterine contractions were known the baby was still believed to be the primary agent of its own expulsion, the woman and her womb the passive space from which the baby battled to free himself (Hanson 2004). Although these amulets are not the sole product of Hippocratic or Roman medical systems, it should be expected that they may convey some of the ideas current in those schools, a topic that will be deconstructed further in chapter 7. For the moment it is sufficient to note that “contract” in this sense by no means refers to the uterine contractions of birth.


iconographical referencing of Set on the stone was meant to scare the womb back into place.⁸⁹

The mention of Typhon-Set may also fit into a vein of thought articulated by Aretaeus, among others, which attributes to the uterus a hatred of repulsive things and attraction to pleasant things, such as is seen in *On Acute Diseases*, Book II (Aretaeus On Acute Diseases 2.11. See chapter 7 for full passage). Here he prescribes applying foul smelling things to the nostrils and fumigating the genitals with sweet smells to lure the uterus back into position if it has wandered. Rather than prolapsing and falling out of the body or distending, if the uterus is reminded of the horrible character ready to snatch it if it does, it will draw back into the abdomen and retake its customary position. This thought process matches well with the ideas expressed in the inscriptions on the amulets – that the uterus has wandered and must be compelled by some force, whether it be a divinity or an affront to its senses, back into its proper place.

Magical Formulae:

The association of Seth-Typhon with uterine amulets extends further and raises the issue of another class of inscriptions: magical formulae. On the amulet found in Welwyn Herts in England in 1963 and dated to within 50 years of the reign of Gratian (367-383 AD) is found the typical uterine iconography and several other related symbols (Wilson and Wright 1964, 180-181, Wright 1964, c. 69). Circling the Orouboros is a 30

letter palindrome where the twenty-fourth E has no match: ⁹⁰


This same palindrome is found following the word  on the reverse of a uterine

⁸⁹ The fact that the womb could be scared into submission indicates a degree of belief in the free will and independent nature of the organ.

⁹⁰ The letters in parentheses have been restored.

amulet in red Carnelian published by Bonner (Bonner 1950, 275 # 141, c. 38). The palindrome appears in PGM IV 197 and in abbreviated form in PGM XIV 24 as an invocation to Seth-Typhon, as was noted by Delatte (Delatte 1914, 80 & 87, Bonner 1950, 86).⁹¹ The ways in which the womb can be controlled by Set are thus triple: the explicit naming of Set-Typhon, the engraving of the Set figure, and the force generated from a magical palindrome linked with Set.

This Set palindrome, in essence a spell, is only one of several magical formulae of multiple syllables found on the amulets. Although there are several of these which appear on the stones, the most common and the most closely tied to the uterine amulets is the Soroor formula. This formula written in its entirety is as follows:

 The formula is the most common inscription on the obverse edge of the amulets. It usually falls outside of the Ouroboros and circles clockwise. Bonner cites a few examples where it is also found on Chnoubis amulets, pieces known from literature and other inscriptions as a means to alleviate an upset stomach, and based on this concludes that it is probably a medical formula of some type. He notes that when found in the PGM it is usually deployed as a “general purpose” protective formula, and also notes that it is used in invocations to Yahweh and a solar deity (PGM IV 1567, XII 172ff, Betz 1992) (Bonner 1950, 206).

The connection to stomach amulets is the most productive lead to emerge from Bonner’s discussion, but Ritner’s treatment of the formula in 1984 reveals another facet. In addition to the two passages in the PGM cited by Bonner and noted above Ritner also cites PGM XIXa line 10 as a place where the formula appears (Ritner 1984, 218). In this

⁹¹ The Welwyn Herts amulet is also significant because prior to its discovery the Aemeinabar formula was found only on c. 38, and its association with Apollo in PGM I 296 seemed just as strong as its association with Seth. The discovery of this amulet doubles the known uterine amulets of this type.

example it is to be written on a piece of paper and inserted into the mouth of a mummy. In PGM IV 1567 it is to be spoken as a part of an $\epsilon\sigma\ \alpha\ \eta$, a spell which was used to forcefully compel its object to love and obey the person executing the rite (Winkler 1990, Ritner 1984). The charm was a powerful binding mechanism which offered total control over another being as the result of its deployment. This alone is interesting, as the control of the womb and the ability to return it to its proper place has already been demonstrated as a desired result of other inscriptions detailed above. However, in the two PGM passages mentioned above the purpose is not to control the womb but to open the mouth of a mummy and to open a woman to the power of the magician. Ritner notes that in “both there is the added nuance of opening for copulation” (Ritner 1984, 219).

The third example, PGM XII 172, is perhaps even more interesting. Here the Soroer formula is used as the name of a daemon who opens doors in a spell which was used as a means of making an escape.

Let the bonds of NN be loosed, and let the doors be opened for him...you who loosed all bonds and you who loosen the iron fetter that has been placed around NN, because of the great and unutterable and holy and righteous and awful and powerful and unspeakable and not to be despised daimon of the great god commands you, Soroer etc.
Ritner 1984, 219 quoting Preisendanz PGM vol. 2, 69 # 12 lines 169-173

When the three uses of the formula are taken in concert a clearer picture emerges as to the possible purpose of the spell on the uterine amulets. It was a means for opening the womb, a verbal counterpart to the iconographical key placed below the mouth of the uterine pot on so many of the amulets. One was meant to lock or unlock at specific

times, the other as a powerful means by which to ensure that the uterus was open and accessible when the time was right.⁹²

A final point which may support the above argument is noted by Kotansky in his work on magical lamellae (Kotansky 1991, 19). Syllables such as “𐤀𐤁𐤅, 𐤀𐤁𐤅, 𐤀𐤁𐤅, 𐤀𐤁𐤅, 𐤀𐤁𐤅, 𐤀𐤁𐤅, 𐤀𐤁𐤅, 𐤀𐤁𐤅,” may allude to a number of Semitic words built off the root for entrances and openings or to the destruction of such places (Kotansky 1991, 19). While he uses this connection to highlight how one might gain access to and control over powers of the netherworld daemons, it may also explain in part why these syllables are part of the Soroor formula, a spell of opening, and whence it derives its power.

Although no other formula is as common as the Soroor formula on the amulets several others do appear occasionally. The 𐤀𐤁 . 𐤀𐤁 𐤀 formula in partial form appears on amulet c. 70. Bonner has pieced together the entire formula from three amulets which are associated with solar deities. It is also on two amulets in the B.M which have no iconography and possibly on a curse tablet in an abbreviated form where 𐤀𐤁 . 𐤀𐤁 𐤀 is referred to as the lord of sleep (Bonner 1950, 206, Wunsch 4, 34). Given the current evidence, its presence does not add to our understanding of the amulets unless we are to assume that its purpose was to lull the uterus into a peaceful quiescent state (i.e. sleep).

The palindrome 𐤀𐤁 𐤀𐤁 𐤀𐤁 𐤀 is found on at least one stone in the catalogue (c. 138). Bonner dismisses any attempt to find meaning within it, suggesting that its power came from the sound produced when it was intoned and its symmetry when written (Bonner 1950, 202). While found with solar deities and very often with 𐤀𐤁 . 𐤀𐤁 𐤀 𐤀𐤁 𐤀 and 𐤀𐤁 . 𐤀𐤁 𐤀 𐤀𐤁 𐤀, discussed below, it is also often found alone or with other magical words

⁹² When that time might have been, and what implications it might hold for the meanings of the amulets will be discussed further in chapter 7, where the various meanings of opening and closing the womb in Greek, Roman and Egyptian gynecology will be explored.

(Kotansky 1991). The words 𐤀𐤍𐤌 and 𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤌 are also related to solar deities and occasionally appear on the amulets (c. 28, 33) (Bonner 1950, 204-205). Kotansky explores their meaning more closely on seven metal magical lamellae of known provenance (Kotansky 1991). He traces the word 𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤌 and its more common variation of 𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤌 to three possible Hebrew phrases meaning in turn “eternal sun,” “My name is Peace,” and “The Sun-God is strong” (Kotansky 1991, 45). The word 𐤀𐤌𐤍𐤌 and all its variant spellings he connects to the Hebrew or Aramaic word for “forever” (Kotansky 1991, 327-328). The presence of both words on the amulets can be best explained by a general sense of power and sacredness they brought to the amulet, not to any intrinsic connection they had to the subject matter of the stones.


Finally, there are many *hapax legomena* and meaningless, yet unique, combinations of letters found on these amulets. Since it is impossible to derive any sense from these given the current state of knowledge about magical amulets of this period, it seems futile to list each one. The reader is referred to the accompanying catalogue for further examples.

Conclusions:

The inscriptions discussed above all advance our understanding of the purpose and use of the amulets in the culture in which they circulated. The most common deity on which they call is Ororiouth, described on one stone as the lord of the womb, and possibly a female deity. They additionally use “generic” divinities such as Yahweh and Sabaoth as means by which to add force to their spells and prayers, or occasionally they call upon Set, a malevolent force who is hostile to the womb, to coerce the uterus to submit to the user’s wish. The repeated spells fall into two main types, those that deal

with relief from the wayward movement of the womb away from its proper place within the body, almost envisioned as the movement of a sentient being with its own will, and those which adjure the womb to shrink down and be less irritated.

It is the assertion of this chapter that these inscriptions demonstrate a concern with the womb as an organ and maintaining its proper equilibrium within the body. If it assumes an aberrant state it has the potential to harm its owner and cause her pain, as indeed any organ in the body might. It is this which the amulets combat, as evidenced by their own words.

Because of its integral role in reproduction there is the temptation to look beyond this straightforward understanding of the pieces and the inscriptions on them and impute to them a meaning which revolves around this function of the uterus (as has been done in past). To this end the negative evidence presented by these inscriptions is striking. At no point is pregnancy or conception mentioned in the inscriptions, and the one instance in which the verb “to give birth” is used, , it is in the past tense and is used as a magical convention to identify the woman for whom aid is sought. Thus attributing to these amulets a purpose that focuses on the functioning of the uterus in a reproductive capacity seems to read too much into words that are present.

All the inscriptions show a concern for changing the current state of the uterus. One group focuses on correcting the location of the organ, which has shifted position. Another is concerned with removing its inflammation and possibly ceasing its hemorrhaging. A third is occupied with the general care and therapy of the womb. The Soroor formula, nearly ubiquitous on the more ornate amulets is intimately involved with the forced opening of orifices which might stay closed on their own. While the opening

or closing of the womb certainly may affect fertility, as might its movement or inflammation, equally grave consequences for the greater health of a woman also result from these conditions not least of which is the potentially fatal situation of uterine hemorrhage, as well as less serious but possibly debilitating afflictions such as cramps, prolapse or wandering uterus.

The final argument must rest as this: given only the evidence of the inscriptions the most that one can say about the function of the amulets is that they were meant to ensure the health of the uterus and return it to its proper condition. To read more into the pieces based solely on the inscriptions at this point is to place too much faith in reading between the lines. The most challenging part of this investigation is to rein oneself in and rigidly restrict oneself only to the lines and angles, the words, which have been set down on the stones. Moving beyond this controlled investigation is the subject of chapter four, which seeks to broaden this interpretation by a study of the iconography that accompanies the words and letters of the amulets.

IV

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words: The Iconography of the Amulets

Literate sources are of only limited utility, however, in chronicling the history of a society that was predominantly illiterate. One particularly fruitful form of evidence...is artistic depictions of childbirth and other medical encounters, though here too, we need to be aware mistaking topoi (in this iconographic ones) for historical realities.

Monica Green, 1989, 471-472

Products of the superstitions and obscure religions of the earlier centuries after the Christian era, their subjects are mystical, frequently monstrous, generally hideous, and but seldom endowed with even the faintest suggestions of beauty. With them merits in workmanship almost never redeem uncouthness in design and unattractiveness in subject, for, as a rule, the engraving is of the coarsest description, and its poverty is rarely mitigated by any richness of the material on which it has been displayed.

Southesk, 1908, 136

Enlightening as the previous chapter and its consideration of the inscriptions of the amulets is, how much relevance would those inscriptions have had if the users of the amulets on which they were found could not read them? While we cannot be certain who would have been able to read the inscriptions, not least due to their size, we may be justified in putting as much or more faith in their iconography. The symbols and deities engraved on the stones would be recognizable to the users of the amulets by their presence in other areas of daily life, from monumental and temple art to mythological narratives. What then did the symbols on the amulets mean, and why are they found in

the combinations which they are on the pieces? This question is the central one around which this chapter will revolve.

With Lord Southesk and Delatte having put to rest the main iconographic puzzles of the class (as will be recalled from chapter 2) it now remains to tease out the more nuanced meanings of the amulets as conveyed by the variable imagery associated with them. Although the epigraphic conventions include both Greek and Egyptian traditions as well as words and deities from other Eastern and Semitic cultures, much of the iconography of the amulets is primarily drawn from Egyptian traditions (Schwartz and Schwartz 1979, 179, Ritner 1984, 217). As Ritner notes, this is a testament to the fundamentally Egyptian milieu in which they circulated (Ritner 1984, 217).⁹³

Their iconography falls into several categories, notably anthropomorphic deities, therianthropomorphic deities, the Ouroboros, and alternate iconography.⁹⁴ Although the accompanying catalogue is arranged in relation to the number of figures present on an amulet the exploration of the iconography in this chapter will proceed thematically, exploring each of these topics in the order set out above, with a discussion of the associated features and mythology of each figure presented.⁹⁵ The meanings of the

⁹³ Although the amulets show much variation in cultural influence in their inscriptions and are heavily influenced by Jewish religious traditions, as shown by the frequent invocation of Yahweh, Sabaoth and various angels, the iconography of the amulets distinctly lacks Jewish themes. The Schwartzes, citing Gooudenough's *Jewish Symbols in the Greco Roman Period*, 13 vols. New York, 1953-1968, notes that Jews of the time adopted much of their iconography from other peoples such as the Romans, Greeks and Egyptians. Thus their lack of Jewish symbols is not surprising. Schwartz and Schwartz 1979, 153

⁹⁴ Much aberrant and alternate iconography is treated in appendices B and C, especially that iconography which has been traditionally connected to uterine amulets, but which this dissertation argues has nothing to do with this class of amulets.

⁹⁵ It is this interest in the meanings and associations of the figures and objects carved on the amulets which is the primary focus of this chapter. In that way it proceeds not from an art-historical perspective, comparing one representation of a deity to another, but more in a more symbolic trajectory, probing the figures for meaning rather than style. Such a stylistic comparison of pieces would be a useful exercise and

groups as a whole can be best understood once these individual blocks of understanding are in place, and indeed the groups will be considered as possibly more than the sum of their parts toward the end of this chapter.

Anthropomorphic Deities:

The anthropomorphic deities which are most often present are usually identified as Isis, Nephthys, Osiris, Bes and Harpokrates. Isis is perhaps the most complex of these figures, and also the most commonly found (c. 50-67 among others) (Figure 4.1).

Although not playing a major part in Egyptian religion until the fifth dynasty, by the time of the Roman conquest of Egypt she had come to embody the roles of a great number of other female deities and had become one of the most popular deities in the empire (Wilkinson 2003).

One of the first aspects of Isis to come to mind is her association with fertility and motherhood. She was so fertile that she was able to conceive by the deceased Osiris. Further, in myth her pregnancy was a difficult one, during which time she was forced to hide lest Seth, (her late husband's enemy) force a miscarriage, and was capped by a difficult labor (Pinch 1994, 129, Wilkinson 2003, 132). Thus she was looked to at times as a guardian of pregnant women.

Having given birth to Horus, her son, she then proceeded to protect and rear him with the utmost care. A particularly favorite scene depicted in Egyptian representations of Isis is that of her nursing Horus (Figure 4.2) (Allen 2005, Wilkinson 2003, 146). Her name also literally means that she is the throne of the king, and in that respect is the

may point to such interesting conclusions as manufacture in different workshops, or perhaps even use in different areas of the empire and possibly slightly different belief systems among different populations.

mother of all kings (Tobin 1991).⁹⁶ Tobin emphasizes through his comparison of Isis and Demeter⁹⁷ that Isis did not gain her maternal role as a primeval vegetation goddess, but through her political associations. That said, by the time that these amulets were produced she seemed to be strongly associated with motherhood. Her connection to maternity is close and it is in this respect that she may be present on the amulets.

However, there are other aspects of Isis. Her roles in Egyptian medicine and magic are diverse. One of her main attributes is her magic, the means by which she brought Osiris, temporarily, back from the dead and by which she tricked Ra (Wilkinson 2003, 149).⁹⁸ Ghalioungui notes that she was considered the divine patron of magicians, so closely was she associated with magic (Ghalioungui 1965, 32).⁹⁹

Indeed, Isis' magic was often sought in spells for healing and protection; Pinch notes that she was called "the Saviour" due to her willingness to help, via her magical knowledge, mortals involved in any type of unfortunate situation (Wilkinson 2003, 147, Pinch 1995, 29). The reverse of the Metternich stela narrates the story of how Isis came to save a boy from the venom of a Scorpion and contains a spell that translates to "may the child live and the poison die. As Horus will be cured for his mother Isis, those who suffer will be cured likewise" (Nunn 2002, 110). In another instance of general protection Isis is invoked along with Horus, Osiris, Nekhbet and Nephthys to ward off a

⁹⁶ As no one can become a king until he assumes his throne

⁹⁷ Often claimed to be forms of the same deity in Greek sources i.e. Herodotus, *Histories* II, 171, 2-3; Plutarch *De Iside et Osiride*, 361 E; Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, I, 14.4, V, 5.2

⁹⁸ The Chester Beatty Papyrus relates a tale in which she saved her son from a poisonous and potentially lethal bite. Using her wit she creates a snake out of the spittle of Ra, the supreme god, which then bites Ra and causes him great pain. She promises to heal the wound if he reveals his true name, which he does and by which means she compels him to heal Horus who then becomes a healing god in his own right as a protector against snakes, crocodiles and stinging insects (Nunn 2002, 104).

⁹⁹ "Isis who practiced magic even before becoming a goddess, was always called the great enchantress, and was revered as the patroness of magicians." Ghalioungui 1965, 32

“wind of pestilence,” with Nunn noting that this group was often called upon to keep a variety of deleterious influences at bay (Nunn 2002, 106).

Wilkinson notes that Isis, having taken on myriad attributes and characters by the late Ptolemaic and Roman periods, features often in spells of all sorts, from inducing love to compelling hatred (Wilkinson 2003 149). Pinch also writes that “of all Egyptian deities, she was the one most closely associated with the kind of suffering experienced by the majority of humanity” and therefore very often called on for help (Pinch 1995, 29). Nunn likewise summarizes her position stating that “other Egyptian deities, Isis in particular, were predominantly benign with special powers and inclination to ward off evil, and to repair damage caused by malign influences” (Nunn 2002, 96). With such a broad range of benevolent powers at hand, and her flexibility as to what types of problems she would deal with, it is quite likely that Isis is present on the amulets as a kindly and generic protective power. Indeed, she is often shown holding an ankh, a symbol meaning “protection” or a cornucopia, another sign of divine blessing which could be read as relating to fertility or simply good fortune (c.46, 47, 85, 110,121) (Allen 2005, 32).

Another aspect of Isis is her connection with the birth of others. In the Westcar Papyrus a story is found in which Red-djedet a mortal woman pregnant with triplets by the god Ra is delivered by Isis, Nephtys, Meskhenet and Heqet. Heqet is the frog-headed goddess of birth and Meskhenet’s name means “birthstool;” both goddesses are intimately connected with reproduction (Nunn 2002, 192). Isis’ presence with such goddesses may reinforce the view that she too was fundamentally and foremost a fertility

goddess, but in light of the fact that the triplets go on to become the first three kings of the fifth dynasty, her presence can be better explained by her role in the making of kings.

Yet she also seems to be concerned with helping organs function correctly. She brought back to life according to some versions not Osiris *in toto*, but just his phallus in order that it function and impregnate her. Further, and of great interest for the amulets is that amulets of her girdle were reputed to halt the bleeding and haemorrhage brought on by miscarriage, helping the organ to resume its normal shape and function (Nunn 2002, 110). She was one of the four goddesses (matched with the four sons of Horus) who were responsible for the eviscerated organs stored in canopic jars after mummification. Her purview was the liver, while her sister, Nepthys, kept watch over the lungs (Nunn 2002, 103). Interestingly on the amulets, she is often shown holding a miniature uterine vase (c. 69, 101, 105, 106, 107). This could be understood either as wish for successful pregnancy (as hers was), or, as a concern with the proper functioning of the womb, referencing visually her ability to protect and influence other organs and to stop uterine haemorrhage.

Isis's link with Nepthys is a close one. On many of the amulets they are seen opposite each other, each with a raised winged arm framing the central figure(s) (c. 62) (Figure 4.3). This same posture is found on sarcophagi where each is responsible for protecting opposite ends (Nepthys the head, Isis the feet) (Wilkinson 2002, 160). The frequent representation of Isis on the amulets as a winged figure opposite Nepthys echoes the posture she takes on sarcophagi and canopic jars and may point to the interpretation that it is for the purpose of protecting the object on which she stands (sarcophagus and uterus) that she is pictured.

The connection between Isis and Nephthys is not limited to art alone. In two utterances of the pyramid texts, 413 and 661 respectively, the dead man is described as “Isis nurses him and Nephthys suckles him,” “Isis has conceived him and Nephthys has begotten him” and in many of the other pyramid texts the two goddesses are always together (Tobin 1991, 195). In some myths Nephthys is also said to have helped Isis find the pieces of the slain Osiris and to have protected her while pregnant. She does not possess a full mythology of her own and thus is almost always linked to Isis, Osiris and Seth (her husband for whom she shows little sympathy) (Wilkinson 2003:159-160). Nephthys’ presence on the amulets is thus as a complement to Isis.

The connection of Isis and Nephthys with death is not surprising and may be alluded to on the amulets in some form. Not only, as Wilkinson notes, are Isis and Nephthys the archetypal mourners but Isis was also closely connected with resurrection, based on her interactions with the dead Osiris (Wilkinson 2003, 107). During the Roman Empire she was the focus of one of the most popular mystery cults, where eternal life seems to have been promised to devout followers. In this respect she was seen as a life-giving force (Tobin 1991, 200). Upon dying one would be reborn into the afterlife, and thus death in the minds of the Egyptians, and those who later worshipped Isis in her more universal form, was linked intimately with birth (Allen, 2005, 28).¹⁰⁰ In a few of the coffin texts Isis is located as the womb from which the dead are reborn (Tobin 1991, 196). Thus this may also be a capacity referenced by the presence of Isis on the amulets.

¹⁰⁰ It is not surprising then that many accoutrements associated with the birth process, such as the ritual knife used for cutting the umbilical cord, appear in funerary rites as well, here in the form of a stylized knife used in the Opening-of-the-Mouth ceremony (Allen 2005, 28). Likewise many deities carved on objects associated with birth, such as the ivory “magic wands” tend to be covered with animals associated with the underworld and the night, particularly those that protect the sun in its dangerous transition through the darkness to its rebirth (Allen 2005, 29; Pinch 1994, 131).

Isis then is a powerful and multivalent goddess. Her connections range from protecting individual organs to fending off scorpions, being a potent magician and model mother, facilitating the rebirth of the dead, guarding pregnant women and warding off pestilence. As both Nunn and Wilkinson indicate, she was an all-round beneficent deity especially when it came to healing, and doubtless one with whom someone who had cause to purchase a medical amulet would like to be associated. For the time then, Isis provides no clear answer as to the purpose of the amulets, but a range of possible answers, any or all of which may be valid. The only way to make further comment is to continue with the iconographic analysis, at this point with Osiris (Figure 4.4).

Osiris was the husband and brother of Isis. Murdered by his brother Seth who scattered parts of his body all around the world he was reassembled by Isis and Nephthys, Isis conceiving posthumously by him. He then became the king of the underworld, where the newly dead king of Egypt was said to be reborn as Osiris. His connotations, like Isis, are several, revolving around the issues of resurrection and rebirth, fertility and death. Indeed, he is a chthonic deity often shown with green skin, probably to highlight his connection with the rebirth of the Nile valley each year and the sprouting of the crops. It is this fertility link which may provide the reason for his presence on the amulets, or perhaps the connection to death and rebirth. Like Isis he could be seen as a widely benevolent force who had taken on the attributes and powers of many other gods by the time of the Roman Empire (Wilkinson 2003). Attempting to pinpoint just one attribute which can explain his presence on the amulets may be counter-productive and it may be a better technique to understand his presence as due to his polyvalent life giving properties and his deep enmeshment with issues of life, death, birth and fertility.

The child of Isis and Osiris, Horus, is often present on the amulets as Harpocrates, which is the Greek form for the Egyptian “Horus the Child” (Wilkinson 2003, 132).

Over time, like Isis and Osiris, Harpocrates seems to have taken on the functions of other “infant” gods (Hall 1977, 55-58). On the amulets he is typically represented as a small child with his finger in his mouth sitting atop either a lotus or Bes (Figure 4.5).¹⁰¹

Plutarch reports that he sits because he was “prematurely delivered and weak in his lower limbs,”¹⁰² which certainly does not bode well for the amulets if they are to be understood as birth amulets (Hall 1977, 55 quoting Plutarch De Iside et Osiride, trans by J. Gwyn, 1970 p. 147, Dasen 2005). However, his placement atop a Lotus may grant him roles of regeneration and rebirth in association with the Lotus’ role in creation (Wilkinson 2003, 134, El-Khachab 1971, 138). Indeed, El-Khachab notes that to the Egyptians Harpocrates was understood as a form of Helios, specifically the first rays of sun of the day, rising up from the primordial sea in the cup of a Lotus as creation repeated itself every morning (El-Khachab 1971, 133). In this respect he is the very essence of successful birth repeated, despite myriad of nightly threats, *ad infinitum*.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ The meaning of his gesture, a finger in his mouth, has been the source of much debate from ancient times until the present. Understood variously as an infant sucking on a finger in a naturalistic attempt at portrayal of a deity, or as a symbol meaning that silence must be maintained, the gesture may have several meanings. It does not, however, appear to be relevant to the interpretation of Harpocrates on the amulets. The interested reader is referred to El-Khachab (1971), Redford (2002) and Wilkinson (2003) for further discussion.

¹⁰² Bonner 1950, 138 cites Plutarch Isis and Oriris 358E and 377C.

¹⁰³ Harpocrates is often also discussed in relation to the amulets as Horus of the Crocodiles, where he is shown as a nude boy with side lock often standing on crocodiles and holding snakes. In this depiction he resembles Khonsu, a healing child deity who was said to have exorcised a possessing spirit from the sister of Ramses II’s Hittite wife (Hall 1977, 55-56). Thus in this form his presence on the amulets would make much sense. He can dispel harmful spirits who would take control of the uterus, and protect it from poisons and harmful animals who would wish to attack it. However, this is not the form in which he manifests on the stones, where he appears only as a sitting child with a hand to his mouth, and thus the allusion seems fruitless.

Hall notes that Harpocrates was a popular and influential god in Hellenistic Egypt and particularly in Alexandria from 332 BC to 300 AD, the latter half of this period overlapping with the production of the amulets (Hall 1977, 56). It is possible then that Harpocrates was present as a generally benign and well-loved deity of the period, a thought supported by Mercer's suggestion that by the Roman period he may have become "the favorite god of the home and of the lower classes" (Hall 1977, 57 quoting S.A.B. Mercer, Horus, the Royal God of Egypt (Chicago 1942), 130). Indeed, Hall goes on to say that during imperial times the god's cult underwent many fusions with other gods, particularly with the ram of Mendes, the ithyphallic God Min, with Sobek god of the crocodiles and with Herakles. It is possible that any of the qualities of these gods may then be related by the representation of Harpocrates.¹⁰⁴

Between the syncretism suggested by Wilkinson, and the connection of Harpocrates with the rebirth of the sun and with the lotus¹⁰⁵ it is not possible to favor one explanation over another as to why he is present on the amulets. Perhaps his purpose on the amulets is in part to represent the child who survived. As Cooney points out, his childhood was a difficult one and his life was constantly in danger of being ended by his uncle Seth, much as many mortal infants would have been in danger of death from

¹⁰⁴ The ram god of Mendes, Banebdjedet was known for his sexual potency, his wise counsel during the fighting between Horus and Seth and for being the father of Harpocrates. He was apparently much discussed in Classical sources which may have influenced the perception of him by people at the time of the fashioning of the amulets as much or more than the more ancient myths about him (Wilkinson 2003, 192)¹⁰⁴. Min was an ithyphallic fertility god known primarily for his sexual powers and associated with Pan in the Hellenistic period (Wilkinson 2003, 115-116, Redford 2002, 218-220). Sobek, a crocodile god was known as a god of procreation who "takes women from their husbands whenever he wishes according to his desire" and as the god from whose sweat the Nile issue and thus the one responsible for the greening of the banks and land (Wilkinson 2003, 218-219). During the Graeco-Roman period this fertility god was worshipped at Philae with Hathor and their son, Khonsu (Redford 2002, 337). Herakles finds a natural parallel in Harpocrates in that both overcame poisonous animals as children, and both are depicted in various art forms as strangling snakes.

¹⁰⁵ As well as all of its connections to and powers over death, the abyss and associated threats.

innumerable causes in this society (Cooney 1972). However, El-Khachab suggests that Harpokrates and the Lotus was generally “a favorable subject for benediction and incantation to guard people against *all* evils. Consequently [people] depicted it in amulets...” (El-Khachab 1971, 144 author’s emphasis). Indeed, Harpokrates is found widely on amulets of this period and is not restricted in any sense to uterine amulets. Nevertheless, Dasen would prefer to see him as a representation of the fetus which the uterus on the amulet will bear (Dasen 2005). Given the above discussion and his ubiquity on all types of amulets of the time, this interpretation seems unlikely.

The last anthropomorphic deity commonly found on the amulets is Bes or his female counterpart Beset (Figure 4.6). His name possibly came from the word *besa* meaning “to protect” or from a rare and ancient word that meant a weak and early born child or misshapen being (Redford 2002, 29). He is generally seen as an apotropaic deity as well as a possible amalgam of as many as ten different divinities (Wilkinson 2003, 102). He was a popular god from the New Kingdom on and was thought to ward off all types of evil with his typically grotesque appearance. “He was especially associated with the protection of children and of pregnant women and those giving birth and is often depicted alongside Taweret in this role” (Wilkinson 2003, 102). One known spell called for a statue of Bes to be tied to a suffering woman’s brow while the spell to aid in the shrinking of the womb after birth or the delivery of the placenta was repeated over the statue (Pinch 1994, 129 see Borghouts 1970, 28-31). On a stele reported by Ritner he is called “greatest god of the womb of women” (Ritner 1984, 217).

However, he was also thought to protect people generally in times of vulnerability. “A popular deity, he protected during birth, childhood, sleep and eroticism,

and his image therefore, was put on numerous amulets and objects of everyday life, such as beds, mirrors, and toilet articles” (Redford 2002, 29). His ability to provide protection in sleep and erotic situations would further protect a woman and her uterus from the threat of incubi, male daemons who impregnated unsuspecting victims in the night. In the Ptolemaic period he seems to be involved in incubation rituals of healing as well as taking on a new prominence in the guarding of sacred temple spaces belonging to other gods, as a gargoyle might guard a church (Wilkinson 2003, 104, Pinch 1994, 162, 164). Thus although associated with children and birth, he was not exclusively relegated to that role, but was rather seen as a broadly benign and good-willed deity who could be called on in many situations when help was needed. Indeed, one theory for the origin of Bes is that he derived from the Mesopotamian lion-daemon La-Tarak who specialized in protecting against sorcery and other supernatural attacks (Pinch 1994, 45).

A common way to show Bes on the amulets is holding Harpokrates above or in place of his head. The link between the two became popular in the twenty second dynasty where the decoration of lotiform cups show Bes as the guardian of Harpokrates, a decorative theme that reappears in the *mammisi*, the birth houses of temples in Egypt (Redford 2002, 29, Nunn 2002, 101-102)¹⁰⁶. Further on cippi where Harpokrates is shown as a standing youth Bes’ head is often placed above Harpokrates. An inversion of this theme is found on the amulets where the child Harpokrates floats above the full figure of Bes or stands in place of Bes’ head.

¹⁰⁶ N.B. these are not places known to have been involved in any obstetrical matter involving real women. They were free standing buildings decorated with scenes of the birth of royalty and deities. It is unlikely, whatever their purpose, that a woman would be allowed to actually give birth here or anywhere else within temple bounds for fear of ritually polluting the entire complex. - see Nunn 2002, 102

Like other deities involved with protection and birth Bes was also connected with death and rebirth. In this respect a statuette of him or his female counterpart Beset was found within a grave at Lisht¹⁰⁷ as a means to ensure the successful rebirth of the deceased as a spirit each day (Allen 2005, 31). Also often found in tombs are the “magic wands” which feature Bes (then known generally as Aha, “fighter”) and other terrifying monsters to scare off anything that might harm a laboring mother or newborn child (Pinch 1994, 40-42, Redford 2002).¹⁰⁸

Thus the most commonly shown anthropomorphic deities are ambiguous in what they convey about the meanings and purposes of the amulets. All of them are multivalent in domain and all of them are generally beneficent. While each deity had an aspect dealing with fertility, or birth and the protection of women and children and other parts of the body, each was equally known for the more general protection provided to those in any type of need. Given the fact that they are present on a uterine amulet it seems more than likely that they are each present in some capacity to protect the uterus and its functioning as it impacts on fertility, birth or pregnancy, but unless a written text is found explaining the specific logic of why each deity was chosen, it is not possible to push the current evidence further.

Therianthropomorphic and Animal Deities:

The presence of animal-headed and animal formed gods upon the amulets will now be explored in the hope that their functions within the magic, religion and medicine

¹⁰⁷ Now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. See Allen 2005, 31.

¹⁰⁸ A typical inscription on them runs “Words spoken by these gods: We have come in order to protect the Lady of the House, X” with X always being a woman or a child (Pinch 1994, 40-42).

of this society may be more restricted and thus yield greater insight into the use of the amulets.

Henig (Henig 1997) has shown that animals on seals and amulets usually bore some sort of meaning and were probably not there simply for decorative purposes. What this meaning could be he summarizes in fifteen categories, several of which are useful in this investigation. Animals could be theriomorphic in meaning, taking the place of the god with which they were most closely associated; they could be apotropaic and draw away evil by their own bizarreness; they could evoke certain qualities of the commissioner of the stone; they could represent fecundity and prosperity as the hare, deer and sow often did; they could symbolize some sort of imprisonment and herding amongst other more personal meanings such as representing a family crest. The capacities in which animals appear on these uterine amulets will most probably fall into one of these categories. Indeed there is a tradition of animals in Graeco-Egyptian medico-magical amulets, and their presence can generally be explained in that they were meant to impart to or ward from the wearer of the stone a quality of the animal.¹⁰⁹

By far the most common animal form on the amulets is the god Chnoubis, the radiate lion-headed snake (c. 30-35, 60-71 etc.) (Figure 4.7). He is most well known for being the guardian of the stomach and the chest, and there are many extant amulets with his picture and an inscription saying “for the stomach” and “digest” (c. 149-152) (Bonner

¹⁰⁹ For instance in Columella 6.17.1-6 shrews are listed as dangerous to cattle. For that reason he says that a live shrew was often sealed in a jar which was hung around the cow’s neck to protect it (Faraone, 1992: 40). Similarly in Byzantine times Antioch was said to be protected from gnats, scorpions, storks and crazed horses etc by bronze statues of these made by (supposedly) Apollonius of Tyana. These *telesmata*, or consecrated objects placed near the entrance of the city would repulse the approach of the real animals. Similarly in 6th century BC Sicily we often see grasshoppers appearing on the coinage above a stalk of wheat. The wide circulation these coins on the island, whose economy was so dependent on a successful harvest, was probably like having many telesmata guarding the whole island and its precious crops, not just a single city (Faraone, 1992: 40-41).

1950, 9-60, Delatte & Derchain 1964, 56). In the *Peri Lithos* of Socrates and Dionysius there is a prescription to carve the lion-headed snake on a stone and wear it on the chest to alleviate stomach ache and promote good digestion (35.3-5).¹¹⁰ Galen in De Simplicibus 10.19 (ed. Kühn) recorded that King Nechepsos had a prescription for good digestion and protection of the esophagus, namely to carve Chnoubis on a green jasper and wear it over the heart (Bonner, 1950: 54-56). King Nechepsos wrote around 150 BC during Ptolemaic times, and thus it is not unreasonable to think that the practice was still in use during the early centuries of the first millennium AD.

His presence on the uterine amulets is explained by Bonner who says that perhaps the makers of these amulets wished to provide a catch-all for pains in the abdomen. Bonner's conclusion is in part correct; however, where Bonner believed that this was an act of quackery on the part of the amulet makers, this dissertation will argue that it is evidence of the true purpose of the amulets, to relieve general abdominal and uterine pain. This theme will be explored further in chapter 5 where the coupling of uterine amulets with other medico-magical motifs will be examined.

Beyond his role as protector of the stomach it is debated what exactly Chnoubis is. His name lends itself to several interpretations. He is often called Chnoumis, which in Coptic means "good spirit" (*chnoum* in Coptic means "good" and *is* means "spirit") (Osborn 1912, 138-139). In the zodiac of this period each sign was divided into three sections of 10 degrees guarded over by a decan. The first 1st decan of Leo is Chnoumos, a lion-headed snake who rules over ailments of the heart. The 3rd decan of cancer according to Hephestion of Thebes is Chnoumis who is said to be a protector of the stomach (Bonner 1950, 55). Betz says that Chnoubis is a combination of Khnoum the

¹¹⁰ Quoted in full in chapter 5.

ram-headed fashioner of children with Kneph and the star *Knm* (Betz 1992, 333-334).

Bonner postulates that he is the ram-headed god Khnoum fused with the Greek Aigathos Daimon in the form of a snake and that he is simply a later form of Khnoum and can be understood the same way (Bonner 1950, 162), whereas Drexler, having collected as many passages as he could related to Chnoubis vigorously denies this and says that he is the third decan of Cancer, an interpretation to which this dissertation holds.¹¹¹ Ritner states flatly the Chnoubis as a form of Khnoum was recognized by neither Delatte nor Bonner¹¹² and therefore it is actually Khnoum who is the most common god on these amulets present in his function of fashioner of children (Ritner 1984, 217).

The point that this study brings out is that it does not matter if Chnoubis is Khnoum. There are several examples of the traditional representation of Khnoum with his ram head and potter's wheel on these amulets (c. 78, 79, 101-104, 115, 119 and 121) and it is therefore possible to say that he had not been wholly replaced by Chnoubis at this point in time if indeed he ever was. He may also be present as a ram on some of the amulets (c. 68-72, 105-107, 116). The different forms of the ram-headed Khnoum and the radiate lion-headed snake Chnoubis, whether representative of different gods or not, are indicative of separate functions. Chnoubis is repeatedly and intimately linked with abdominal pain and stomach ailments, whereas Khnoum never seems to take on this function. Thus this dissertation would argue that the functions are not interchangeable and the presence of the Chnoubis snake on these pieces cannot be seen as indicative of the function of fashioning children. His presence provides evidence for the case that

¹¹¹ Drexler, "Khnuphis" in Roscher II, 1, 1200-1263

¹¹² Apparently he was not aware of Bonner's argument on pg 162 of SMA where he notes that Chnoubis is a late form of Khnoum.

these are talismans meant to ensure the general health and well being of the organ itself as it impacts on the greater well being of the abdominal area.

The next most prevalent therianthropomorphic god on the amulets is Seth, both in image and in invocation (Figure 4.8). Seth is a fantastical creature, representative of no real animal but a hybrid of many. Where an animal was chosen to represent a god based on possession of a quality shared by both, no one animal possessed any trait which could fully articulate the chaotic forces of Seth, who is commonly associated with the Greek monster Typhon (Teeter 2002a, 339). Part ass, part dog, possibly part ant eater Seth is often depicted as a donkey or as a hybrid animal with features of a donkey and other animals combined.

Pinch notes that “Seth was associated with rape and unnatural sex, which to the Egyptians seems to have meant intercourse that could not result in conception” (Pinch 1995, 32). His semen was believed not only to be sterile but to be absolutely poisonous (Nunn 1996, 53).¹¹³ When in a myth Seth is forced to reveal his true name to Horus in order to be magically healed, he says that his name is “the evil day on which nothing can be conceived or born” (Pinch 1995, 32). Indeed, as Horus was often referred to as a divine physician, Seth was conceptualized as a bringer of plagues and death (Ghalioungui 1965, 32). Certainly, as a figure so closely associated with disease and sterility there would be no place for Seth on the amulets were they conceived of as birth talismans.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ By some accounts he lost his testicles in a fight with Horus and thereby the ability to father children. Indeed, the only children attributed to him are Maga, the crocodile, and Thoth from an account in which he shares co-paternity with Horus (Redford 2002, 334, Barb 1959, 368).

¹¹⁴ Te Velde notes a myth by which Seth himself was not even born normally, but spit out, which would also seem to make the possibility of his involvement in a successful birth unlikely as he was not familiar with it in any way. Te Velde also points out that this would enhance his associations with chaos and disorder (te Velde 1968, 38).

this scene where no uterine vase or inscription is present (c. 144), he may push too hard here (Barb 1959, 370).

Thus while Barb would initially deny Seth any rightful place on these uterine amulets, stating that “the sinister figure of Seth could not possibly have any meaning on these birth amulets” it seems that he has indeed carved out quite a large niche for himself in the realm of these stones. His function is to help the speaker of the charm or the owner of the amulet to gain power over an unruly uterus which for whatever reason is not behaving properly. Barb concludes that Seth was engraved to compel an uppity uterus to be settled while the image of Chnoubis on the obverse of stones was meant to show the uterus in its “blessed” state of equilibrium (Barb 1959, 371).¹¹⁶

The next most common animal form found on the amulets is Duamoutef, a dog or jackal-headed mummy who is one of the sons of Horus and a protector of the visceral organs (Figure 4.9). He presides over one of the canopic jars in which the organs of a mummified person spent eternity (Piankoff, 1955: 19). His name in fact means “the one who adores his mother” and that is perhaps why he in preference to his three brothers was chosen to be present on these amulets (Delatte and Derchain 1964, 248). Importantly Delatte and Derchain call him “un protecteur de la matrice” and not a protector of fertility or childbirth but of the organ itself, much as he protects the viscera in the afterlife and is not particularly concerned with their function (Delatte and Derchain 1964, 248).

Wilkinson would have him as the guardian of the stomach, which may not present as large a problem to the argument as initially thought (2003, 88). As will be discussed in chapters 5 and 7 the stomach and the uterus both derived from a single root word and the

¹¹⁶ The positioning of Seth and Chnoubis as representations of two opposite states of the uterus is probably incorrect. Both deities help the user of the amulet assert control over the organ, and in this they are united in purpose.

words for stomach and uterus were used interchangeably at times in Greek literature and may have been thought to be linked in some respect in the popular conception of the body at this time.¹¹⁷ Also Redford notes that Hapy and Duamoutef were occasionally associated with different organs (Redford 2002, 134).

While Delatte and Derchain broach the idea that this figure is Duamoutef many of the other sources, including the most recent such as Michel (2004) take the figure as Anubis in mummy form. Although Duamoutef was strictly a funerary deity, his close association with protection of individual organs would make him a natural choice to depict on an amulet seeking aid for a particular organ. Anubis is also a funerary deity. Barb claims that he was “familiar as a protector of parturient women” being present on the wall at the temple of Dier el Bahari for the scene of queen Hatsepsu’s birth (Barb 1959, 368, n. 12). He is at pains to link Anubis with birth etymologically, arguing that the Greek $\kappa\alpha\iota$ can mean both “dog” (which Anubis probably was not – he was probably a jackal) and “pregnant person” (Barb 1959, 368, Redford 2002, 21). He continues his argument by citing Plutarch’s *De Iside et Osiride* (368F) where Anubis is identified with the god “who himself begets and carries in his womb the universe” (Barb 1953, 216 n. 45). His interpretations seem forced and as a result are unconvincing.¹¹⁸ While Anubis does have connections to fertility, it is via his funerary role as Psychopompos, leading the dead into new life, that this role is made manifest (Redford 2002). He begins to appear in

¹¹⁷ Professor Nünlist notes that the use of one organ for another (the belly for the womb) can be a mere euphemism. Although possible, I am inclined given the deep-seated connection between the words etymologically and mythologically as well as the interchangeable use of the words for stomach and womb in medical and popular sources (detailed by King 1998, Lloyd 1999a and b among others) to think that there was an early belief that they were part of the same organ system and that this belief may have still been current at the time of the amulet’s creation. See chapter 7 for further discussion.

¹¹⁸ Interestingly though, there was an ancient tradition of wearing a pickled puppy’s head, an unclean animal, by pregnant women in Egypt as a means of warding off evil spirits to maintain a pregnancy (Pinch 1994, 82).

the mammisi of the Roman period in connection to the birth of Horus, where he was a protector of Isis while pregnant (Wilkinson 2003, 189).¹¹⁹

While Anubis and Duamoutef are both possible explanations for the jackal-headed mummiform figure on the amulets, it seems that Duamoutef is the more likely candidate. His link to protecting organs is direct and the bandaged form of the figure is reminiscent of an actual mummy or canopic jar interred with one. The link between Anubis and the womb is more tenuous and with his jackal head he would have been readily recognizable if shown merely clothed as Isis or Nephthys are, i.e. there is no need to show him wrapped as a mummy. The principle of Occam's razor would seem to dictate that Duamoutef is the subject pictured on the amulets.

The last animal-headed deity who appears with any frequency is Khnoum (c. 78, 79, 101-104, 115, 119 and 121) (Figure 4.10). Alluded to in the discussion of Chnoubis, he is a ram-headed god and the cosmic potter who creates the bodies of children on his wheel. On the amulets he is always shown sitting, either holding the handle of the key, or holding a miniature uterus in his hand before a goddess such as Isis. Alternatively, the occasional ram appears on the amulets, and although it is not possible to be sure of its identity without an inscription (given the number of ram deities), it is likely that this is another manifestation of Khnoum (c. 68-72, 105-107, 116). Although not originally known as a great creator god, by the New Kingdom his role and iconography were in place and remained stable through the Roman period (Redford 2002, 185). He was associated with both vegetative and human fertility and was closely connected with the event of birth (Wilkinson 2003, 195). His presence on the amulets must be understood in

¹¹⁹ Anubis was also the main enforcer of curses in Graeco-Roman times in Egypt, a role in which may be relevant to the discussion of chapter 6.

respect to those qualities of his which promoted the functioning of the uterus in regards to reproduction.

Ouroboros:

This last section of the argument concerning animal figures present on the amulets will now center on a very special case. The Ouroboros, or the snake with its tail in its mouth, is nearly ubiquitous as the framing device for the obverse of the amulets (Figure 4.11).

Generally in magical practice snakes, scorpions and crocodiles were frequently invoked, such as on cippi (the stelae of Horus) to protect against the sting of venomous animals, an example of like warding off like (Teeter 2002b, 352). The Ouroboros snake is found on many classes of magical amulets and thus must have been felt to possess some sort of power (Ritner 1984, 218). In other non magical amulets often a similar device is used but its lack of a head leaves it as just a rope. Yet, for all that it is present on other magical amulets it is not nearly so regularly present as on uterine amulets of this period. For example, of nine holy rider amulets in Delatte and Derchain, which Vikan has suggested fulfilled a similar function to that proposed by some for the amulets in that they both protect women and children during childbirth, only one of them possessed an Ouroboros (Delatte & Derchain 1964, 259-264). Of nine amulets in the same source with Herakles and the Nemean lion on them, not one has an Ouroboros (Delatte & Derchain 1964, 202-206). Indeed the British Museum has a collection of 592 amulets, of which Michel lists 123 as possessing Ouroboroi.¹²⁰ There are 47 uterine amulets in this collection, of which 41 have Ouroboroi (87.2%). The uterine amulets make up just 7.9%

¹²⁰ Michel lists 122 total in her index, but neglects # 409 which clearly has an Ouroboros, a fact which I confirmed via personal autopsy of the stone.

of the entire collection yet they account for 33.3% of the total Ouroboroi in the collection. There is a close connection between this device and these amulets.

Granting that the Ouroboros had a special function on these amulets it is necessary to look now to its origin and history in Egyptian art, where it seems to have developed, to determine its possible meanings.

The serpent biting its tail first appears in the 18th dynasty on the left exterior panel of the second shrine of King Tutankhamun, where the serpent is seen twice, once surrounding the mummified king's head and once surrounding his feet (Piankoff 1955, 41, 120) (Figure 4.12). The one surrounding his head is labeled as Mehen (the enveloper) while the inscription enclosed by the one below is indecipherable and leaves the snake unnamed (Piankoff 1955, 120). Its next appearance comes in the 19th dynasty on the outermost sarcophagus lid of Merneptah (Ritner 1984, 219). Finally it makes some appearances in the literary papyri and the coffin texts of the 21st dynasty where it appears as Mehen surrounding and protecting the sun in the form of a child or scarab. It also surrounds beheaded captives and functions in the opposite way as "Enclosing Serpent" on Coffin Text Spell 495 (early 2nd millennium BC) where it says "I am the guard of the prisoners after the secret affairs of the coiled one (mhn)" (Ritner 1984, 219).

Based on these few occurrences and its appearance in written texts several theories as to the meaning of the sign have emerged. The first is that it stands for a type of time or eternity, much like the infinity sign today. A prototype of the Ouroboros, which was wrapped around Osiris or a mummy, was used to denote djed, a form of time (Dunand 2004, 70). Goff identifies the Ouroboros as a "common symbol of eternity" based on Anubis in the papyrus of Djedkhonsuiuefankh, and Osiris in the same papyrus

(Goff 1979, 173). In the earliest representations of the Ouroboros Hornung, contrary to Piankoff, says that it is called “he who hides the hours” (jmn-wnwt), however he also says that the earliest name is Mehen which is later replaced by the term “tail in mouth” (sd-m-r’) (Hornung 1971, 121, 178-179).

In a similar interpretation Bonner says that Egyptologists often take the sign as a symbol of the abyss. As far as nothingness can be symbolized, this is its manifestation, and specifically the nothingness which surrounds the earth (Hornung 1971, 178).

According to Hornung the Gnostics appropriated this symbol to transmit the idea of the outer darkness beyond the world, and yet neither this interpretation of the Ouroboros nor that which understands it as a symbol for time seems to adequately explain its presence on the amulets. Hornung offers a more nuanced interpretation of the abyss which the snake symbolizes in that this abyss surrounds the world for all eternity and although the world with all her gods and men and creatures will sink down into nothing and be destroyed, it will rise again from nothing and be reborn, and thus the abyss can be viewed as a type of stable generative force (Hornung 1971, 164).

The snake as a sign of rebirth and rejuvenation was certainly not a foreign concept to the Egyptians. There is another snake in the New Kingdom underworld books which is born at the beginning of every hour and swallowed at the end, representing limitless time and rebirth (Hornung 1971, 179). Further at the beginning of the New Kingdom the Amduat’s new image of rejuvenation was an elderly person walking through a snake from mouth to tail that encircled the world (called world-encircler). The snake was viewed to be the boundary between the world and the non-world. It was believed that regeneration, birth and creation could only happen in the chaos of the non-world

(Hornung 1971, 160-161). In the hieroglyphics the sign of the Ouroboros emphasized this action of rebirth where the snake was said to encircle the barque of the sun every night and protected it from the dangers of the dark. Every morning when the sun emerged from the coils of the serpent it was said to be reborn, thus emphasizing the cyclic nature of the cosmos and eternal rebirth (Teeter 2002b, 343-344). In Egypt the birth of a baby was associated with the rebirth of the cosmos (Pinch 2004, 103). This connection to resurrection and rebirth is also emphasized by Piccione in his discussion of Mehen and his relationship to coiled snake game-boards (Piccione 1990).

This role of protector of the sun is probably a variation on that which is seen on King Tut's shrine. The snake which protects the solar bark in its coils is known as Mehen, the encircler, a mere variation on the verb meaning "to surround" (Ritner 1984, 219). The Ouroboros is shown in this capacity, surrounding the disk of the sun and resting on the lions of the horizons Shu and Tefnut, in the 21st dynasty papyrus of Her-
Uben A (Piankoff 1957, 22, 28, 33). On Hellenistic Egyptian gems it assumes the same protective capacity as it regularly encloses the sun scarab and the solar bark (Ritner 1984, 11, 220). It is likely that this latest function is the one which is seen in its appearances on the amulets.

The last aspect of the Ouroboros is that of imprisonment or locking. On the Piye Stele describing the attack on Heracleopolis Magna the king is described as an Ouroboros (tail in mouth). "He made himself into a "tail in mouth" without allowing those who go forth to go forth, without allowing those who enter to enter, fighting every day" (Ritner 1984, 219-220).¹²¹ In the 21st dynasty it has already been mentioned that of the four

¹²¹ Citing N.C. Grimal La Stele tiomphael de Pi(ankh)y au Musee du Caire (Cairo, 1981) p 14-15, line 5.

appearances of the Ouroboros in papyri, one involves it surrounding and imprisoning beheaded captive enemies (Ritner 1984, 219). In Coffin Texts Spells 293 and 495 the dead says that “I am the guard of the criminals after (the manner of) the mysteries of Mehen” (quoted in Piccione 1990, 43).

During the third intermediate through the Roman periods it is the imprisonment aspect which is dominant on magical statuary, papyri, reliefs, and gems which usually show the Ouroboros surrounding hostile animals etc. beneath a pantheistic deity. From a written account from Ptolemaic times is excerpted this passage which testifies directly to its function: “Oh you who have four faces upon 1 neck, with 777 ears, with millions of millions of eyes, with hundreds of thousands of horns, Mhn.t has repelled the rebels...Be far from me; I am he who is within his Mhn.t-serpent”¹²² (Ritner, 1984: 220).

Ritner notes this passage and discusses it in relation to his theory that the Ouroboros could both protect what is inside from the hostile forces without and bind the hostile forces within itself. What is especially significant is the description of the daemon and his assertion that in this period the Ouroboros in literature and art often imprisons harmful forces and animals. The daemon is animal like with its horns and represents untold potential for pain and destruction if allowed to breach the barrier of the snake’s body, much as the uterus represents the potential destruction of the body if left free. The Ouroboros thus acts as a kind of complement to the key and the Soroor formula found on the amulets, which lock and unlock the uterus respectively, in that it can seal the uterus from hostile forces such as incubi and black magic as well as protecting the uterus itself (Ritner 1984, 220).

¹²² P. Louvre 3129, G, lines 19-22, 26 in S. Schott Urkunden Mythologischen Inhalts (Urk VI., Leipzig 1929) 75-77

In later Byzantine inscriptions relating to a wandering uterus, and earlier Greek literature, both of which will be explored further in chapter 7, the organ itself is often described explicitly as a dangerous animal, as a dog ready to eat the heart of its woman. By surrounding the uterine pot with the Ouroboros on these amulets the wearer has symbolically corralled or herded and imprisoned this dangerous animal, as Henig mentioned could be one of the functions of animals on gems. The uterus is thus tied down and rendered ineffectual in its hostile actions towards its woman, no longer free to roam about the body like a sentient being, at will, but imprisoned within the coils of the snake, protecting the woman and the rest of her body outside from the potential terror within. Like Seth the Ouroboros is thus used to control the organ as such and not to enhance its ability to reproduce successfully. Thus the uterus is bound in one spot, and hopefully actually as well as metaphorically tied down. While this would not aid in pregnancy or parturition it would ensure the health and safety of both the woman and the organ. And herein lies the reason for the preponderance of Ouroboroi on uterine amulets as opposed to other classes of amulets, where unruly, but not peripatetic organs are involved.¹²³

Groupings of Deities:

It now remains to explore three more questions regarding the figures present on the amulets. What significance do the groupings of various deities on the amulets have?

Are they more than the sum of their parts? Who is absent?

¹²³ Dasen explains the presence of the Ouroboros as delimiting a safe space in which the fetus could grow to maturity. “Le corps de l'animal délimite un espace magique protégé, favorisant la formation de l'embryon dans le ventre maternel” (Dasen 2005, 576). While this may be an aspect of the Ouroboros’ function if the woman using the amulet is pregnant, at times when she is not, understanding the Ouroboros in this fashion alone would render its presence ineffectual. Given its ubiquity it is suggested that interpreting it in such a fashion that it is relevant at all times, such as the interpretation presented here, is a more appropriate understanding.

The divinities are commonly found as single figures or groups of two, three or four standing above the uterine pot or otherwise placed about the field. There are a few stones that have five, six, seven and eight deities on them, but these are rare in the corpus. Groups of two, represented by only four amulets in the corpus are often used in Egyptian iconography to indicate complementary aspects of a phenomenon (male- female, chaos-order) (Wilkinson 2003, 74). On the amulets one of the groups consists of a woman reaching out to what appears to be an octopus uterus (c. 45), two have Isis-Tyche and Duamoutef (c. 46 & 47) (Bonner 273, Forbes 153),¹²⁴ and the fourth has two Seths standing on a uterus, touching a scepter and holding ankhs (c. 49). The groupings in these cases do not seem to show two sides of a single phenomenon. Isis-Tyche and Duamoutef may indicate that some sort of combination of luck and health of the organ may be equally important in the maintenance of the uterus or a pregnancy, but this is mere speculation.

The grouping of three deities on the amulets is the most common composition. Triads in Egyptian art often represent mythical families, or represent different gods that complement the functions of each other (Wilkinson 2003, 75-76). While Isis, Nephtys and Osiris are a repeating group they do not fulfill the traditional makeup of a family grouping which would consist of a mother, father and child. Were a family grouping to be seen one would suspect that the promotion of family and the role that the uterus plays in creating a family may be what is being supported by these amulets. Rather, what is seen is a grouping of deities which are related mythologically and are often seen together

¹²⁴ Bonner identifies one figure on one of the amulets as either Taweret or Anubis (Duamoutef) but the figure looks more like Duamoutef and given the other amulet with the same scene but with a definite Duamoutef it is most likely both examples we have Isis and Duamoutef

in places, such as on amulets and on coffins, where some special protection is needed.

The group speaks to the protective nature of the amulet.

Another group of three which is commonly seen is Isis, Chnoubis and Duamoutef. Again, these deities do not form a divine family, but each fulfills a different role in the support of the uterus. Isis can ensure successful pregnancy and prevent haemorrhage after miscarriage, Duamoutef guards the health of the organ as such, and Chnoubis prevents abdominal or uterine pain. The grouping of these three figures thus does amount to more than the sum of its parts, together preventing aspects of uterine, bodily and possibly emotional distress. While they are the most common triad, other deities such as Bes, Harpokrates, Khnoum and Osiris can appear in the place of any of them, thus what specific aspects any given amulet protects against must be considered on a case by case basis.

Groups of four, tetrads were symbolic of completeness in Egypt (Wilkinson 2003, 76). After triads tetrads are the next most common grouping of figures on the amulets. The explanation for tetrads as for triads is much the same, however, Wilkinson notes that unlike in dyads and triads tetradic groups often showcase figures who have begun to lose their individuality, the fourth figure often being present simply to complete the group and meet the desired numerical value. This trend is also seen on the amulets where it is not always possible to distinguish which divinities are present in the groups of four since oftentimes every figure does not have an attribute. If an identity cannot always be assigned to each figure in these groups it should not be worrisome, the number of deities present being more important for the general protective function of the amulets, than the identity of each one. These amulets then, are perhaps more generic than those that

possess triads, at least in those cases where not every deity is unique. Alternatively, the fourth anonymous figure may intensify the protective powers of the other three, making the amulet not more generic, but stronger in its purpose.

Groups of five deities are rare among the amulets only five of them outside of the notch style group being included in the catalogue. Each deity in this expanded group is identifiable, as is every deity in the one amulet with eight deities on it. It seems that each was included to fulfill a specific function as discussed above, and these amulets were covering every aspect of uterine and bodily protection possible. Though the ogdoad was a well-known group in Egyptian religion it should be noted that the eight deities present are not those included in that group,¹²⁵ thus it seems that the amulets are in no case referencing common religious groups like divine families or clusters of religiously important deities, but rather are tailoring the deities present to the needs at hand. Contrary to some earlier assessments of the amulets, they do show consistency among the deities they possess and in the groups in which they are assembled.¹²⁶

Who is Absent?

The next question is a complicated one of negative evidence. It has been argued throughout that the deities present, while they may have a special connection to pregnancy and birth, are most often either not present in that capacity on the amulets, or at least cannot be said to be present exclusively in that capacity. The complement to this argument would be to ask whose presence would prove beyond a doubt that these were

¹²⁵ The Hermopolis Ogdoad, the most prominent in Egyptian mythology consisted of Nun, Naunet, Heh, Hauhet, Kek, Kauket, Amun and Amaunet whereas the uterine amulet with eight figures on it is comprised of a Scarab, Isis, Harpokrates, Bes, Osiris, Nephys (?), Khnoum, and another unidentified figure (Wilkinson 2003).

¹²⁶ See the Table of Contents of the Catalogue for a better sense of the specific groups

primarily birth or fertility amulets. The answer to that question if working with material that was purely Egyptian in nature would be deities such as Heqet, the frog-headed deity of birth, Taweret, the hippo goddess of pregnancy and others such as Meskhenet (a deification of the birth brick), and Renenutet (a divine nurse). In Greek and Roman sources Eileithya or Juno Lucina might be expected. The situation is stickier given the present situation, however, since the amulets did not derive from purely Egyptian or classical traditions and thus the lack of any divinity may be due more to a lack of transference of this deity into the new *koine* than a conscious decision not to picture certain figures. Yet, both Ritner and Aubert have both commented on this puzzling affair and so an exploration of the lack of iconography is perhaps justified (Ritner 1984, Aubert 1989).

Aubert in his 1989 article on uterine magic sums up the case nicely in regards to deities and animals that are absent on uterine amulets: “We find that there is a conspicuous absence of...Egyptian deities traditionally associated with the protection of pregnancy and childbirth, such as Heqet, Nechbet, Renenutet, Mafdet, Menhet and Meschenet” (Aubert 1989, 244). He attributes this absence to a falling off in popularity of these deities during the Roman period. While this is certainly a possibility another possibility also presents itself: these amulets were not meant to fulfill the functions of fertility and birth amulets. Evidence that may be able to influence the decision one way or the other would be the presence of these deities upon contemporary but non-uterine amulets.

It is the frog goddess Heqet who is turned to first. As discussed in the consideration of Isis, the Westcar papyrus from the 5th dynasty tells the tale of the birth of

three princes where Isis, Heqet, and Meskhenet are present and aid the mother and children (Dunand 2004, 129). Heqet is the Egyptian goddess of fertility, a goddess of birth, and can symbolize the uterus (Aubert 1989, 432; Blanchard nd, 23). She is the companion of Khnoum and the protector of pregnancies (Germond & Livet 2001, 213). She is shown as a woman with a frog's head or as a frog, and is seen as such on the magic wands common from ancient Egypt (Pinch 1994, 40, figure 19). The association of the frog and fertility is not surprising as several days before the annual inundation of the Nile little green frogs appear along the banks in huge numbers; they were a common sign of coming life (Budge 1978, 143-144). Amulets in the shape of a frog from ancient Egypt are common and come in gold, steatite and faience and were worn during childbirth (Budge 1978, 143-144). That they were still used for protection at the same period as the uterine amulets (and probably still during birth) is demonstrated clearly by a green glass paste amulet on the underside of which is written "*phulazai*," protect (Bonner 1950, 243). Other frog amulets are known from this time as well (Sliwa 1989, 94-95, ns.140 and 141). This was also a symbol adopted by the Christians and which continued to be associated with fertility through at least the 18th century,¹²⁷ and yet it is striking that there is not a single frog on any of the uterine amulets, nor is Heqet there in her therianthropomorphic form. This absence of one of the most clearly defined reproductive goddesses in Egypt on all of these amulets, if they were intended for aid and protection during reproduction, is striking.

The next goddess whose absence is conspicuous is Thueris, or Taweret, who was always shown in the form of a Hippo on two legs with human breasts and a crocodile tail.

¹²⁷ In the jewellery display at the Victoria and Albert museum it is posted that 17th and 18th c. vinaigrettes in the shape of frogs were also symbolic of fertility

Ritner ends his article on uterine amulets with the thought that “perhaps significantly, the major Egyptian goddess of pregnancy – Thueris – rarely appears on these stones,” and goes on to doubt the one supposed example in the accompanying footnote (Ritner 1984, 221). The hippo’s rotund belly mimics the swelling of pregnancy and it is thus not surprising to learn that she was the divine wet nurse and protector of pregnant women and children (Germond & Livet 2001, 216). Ritual knives or magic wands carved of hippo ivory are often found decorated with snakes, scorpions and other hostile animals and daemons which are summarily being devoured or chopped up. These knives, made from the sacred animal of Thueris, seem to have belonged exclusively to women and children and were meant to symbolically protect pregnant and nursing women and young children, as inscriptions on some attest (Pinch 2004, 102-103). Thueris is present in various art forms of the period in which the amulets were created and used and retains her distinctive shape (Bonner 1950, 40, 24, Pinch 1995). Indeed she even appears on a magical amulet from this time which is not uterine in nature (Bonner 1950, 24, 40 number 51, Ritner 1984, 221). If uterine amulets were meant to protect during birth or the period following, one wonders why Thueris is not present on them.

Nechbet is a vulture goddess who is depicted as the mother of the King in the pyramid texts and is present in scenes of the birth of the king at the funerary temple of Sahure at Abusir. She was popular in the older periods of Egypt’s history and she remained popular through the Ptolemaic and later periods when she was assimilated to the Greek goddess of childbirth Eileithya, her city being called in Greek Nekheb Eileithiaspolis (Wilkinson 2003, 214-215). It is strange that this vulture deity never appears on the amulets if they are birth amulets, since she has been so explicitly

connected to the Greek goddess of childbirth. It may also be noted that neither this Greek goddess of childbirth nor her Roman counterpart, Juno Lucina, is ever invoked.

Renenet on the other hand was a snake goddess who served as a nurse to infants as well as protector to the crops (Wilkinson 2003, 225). She is not present on the amulets, which would seem to suggest that if they are intended to protect newborns and small children who sometimes come under the purview of birth amulets, these amulets did not extend so far as to the nursing of children or any point beyond their delivery. The lack of imagery with Isis nursing Horus also speaks to this point, although it should be noted that amulets with this scene dating from this period are known, such as one held by the American Numismatic Society (Schwartz and Schwartz 1979, 170 no. 24).

Meskhenet is another goddess who might be expected to be present. Part of the divine obstetrical team in the Westcar Papyrus her name actually means “birth-brick” the structure upon which Egyptian women squatted to give birth. Her attribute is either this brick above her head or a column with two coiled ends which Wilkinson suggests may be a representation of the uterus, or which may reference the ritual tool in the opening of the mouth ceremony, in turn derived from the ritual knife used to cut the umbilical cord (Wilkinson 2003, 153). She is often shown in *mammisi* of the Ptolemaic and Roman period and in other scenes of ritual birth (Wilkinson 2003, 153).

Another goddess whom might be expected is Hathor who appears as a woman with cow head or a woman with cow’s ears and whose image was often worn on necklaces by women who were desirous of large families (Budge, 1978, 149). Although she does not appear iconographically on the pieces, she seems to have been invoked in

several inscriptions on them. It is also possible that Isis, having absorbed many of Hathor's attributes by this period was meant to represent her in part on the amulets.

None of these gods, either in their therianthropomorphic forms or by association with their sacred animal, are present on these uterine amulets. Were these talismans primarily fertility and birth amulets it would be expected that they would be present on them since they are present in other forms during pregnancy and birth such as in the protective frog amulets of Heqet and the ritual ivory knives of Thueris and are still known in the Graeco-Roman period, as is evidenced by the mammisi walls on which they are still depicted. Still the absence of evidence does not provide the evidence of absence, although it does raise interesting problems, if like Barb and Dasen one wishes to insist that these must be birth amulets, especially given the size of the accompanying catalogue.

Octopus Uterus:

The next subject for exploration is an alternate form of the womb, commonly referred to after Bonner's lead as the octopus uterus (Figure 4.13). It is found on c. 69, 70, 72, 78, 83, 96, 99, 104, 106, 107, 114, 140, 141 of the catalogue, all but c. 99 and 140 also being topped by a scarab beetle. It is commonly found on the reverse of amulets with a more conventionally depicted uterus (c. 69, 70, 72, 78, 83, 96, 99, 104, 106, 107, 114), however it also appears on the reverse of amulets which depict a woman giving birth (c. 140, 141).

Prior to Bonner other authors, such as Barry, had understood the symbol as a solar disc with appendages, such as snakes, emerging from it (Barry 1906). There are still those, including Michel (2001) who entertain the notion that this is a solar symbol, as it is similar in form to the hieroglyph for "light." The dot in the center of some of the bodies

of the octopi would support this solar interpretation (a circle with a dot in the center being a hieroglyph for the sun) (Majno 1975, 76) (Figure 4.14). The scarab above many of these symbols may also be interpreted as Khepri, the rising sun.¹²⁸

Bonner's evidence for understanding the symbol as a different form of the uterus came from the inscriptions which circled several of these representations, many of which include the word *Ororiouth* and at least two of which adjure the womb to contract. It should also be noted that a similar symbol is found on a "magic wand" of the lady Seneb (inscribed with a promise for her protection) dated between the 19th – 17th centuries BC (Figure 4.15). On this wand, traditionally thought of as a birth or post-partum amulet for mother and baby, no less than three of these forms appear (one on the obverse and two on the reverse) as circles with five kinky lines extending from their bases and a dot in their center (Pinch 1995, 40-41, figures 19 & 20). They are surrounded by figures such as Aha (Bes), Taweret and Heqet amongst others, indicating that while they may be stylized representations of the sun, it is also possible, given their context, that they are an Egyptian precursor to the octopus uterus which appears on amulets of the early centuries AD.

Dasen's discussion of the octopus uterus is useful because it brings to light a number of classical precedents linking the octopus to the uterus. As transmitted in Soranus *Gyn* 4.6 Herophilos compared the cervix to the head of the octopus (Dasen 2005, 576). Soranus in *Gyn*. 1.4 says that women who have given birth develop a calloused cervix, which is similar in texture to the head of an octopus (Dasen 2005, 576). Dasen also mentions a belief of Galen that the uterus had small suckers, like the tentacles of an

¹²⁸ Although the frequent presence of a human or rooster head on the beetle may indicate that it is not to be taken as Khepri

octopus, by which the placenta was held to the uterine wall (Dasen 2005, 575)¹²⁹. She also notes that he called the ligaments of the uterus the *plektanai*, the same word used for the tentacles of an octopus (Dasen 2005, 576).¹³⁰ Further, the Hippocratics used octopus to remedy gynaecological problems, such as the retention of the lochia for which they prescribed its consumption (Dasen 2005, 576). Finally she says that octopus was a common gift at an Athenian Amphidromos, a celebration which took place after the birth of a child (Dasen 2005, 576).

Lloyd also discusses the octopus in relationship to the work of Aristotle (Lloyd 1999b, 45). This animal was traditionally viewed as an anomaly among the animal kingdom, deceitful in its ability to be both a fish and not a fish at the same time, although Aristotle notes that it is a normal cephalopod, if extraordinary in its ability to use its tentacles as hands (Lloyd 1999b, 45). However Aristotle cleaves to this interpretation of the octopus as a treacherous animal when discussing the respective natures of males and females of species, including humans. In HA 608a 21-28 and 33b 18 he states that when her mate is caught the female octopus flees while the opposite is not the case for males if their mate is captured (Lloyd 1999b, 99). Thus he holds the female octopus up as a model of treacherous behavior, especially marked out by her desire to flee from her proper spot. Given the popularity and influence of Aristotle's work one wonders if this treacherous desire to flee is the capacity of the womb referenced on the uterine amulets which depict an octopus uterus. Further, the eight hand-like tentacles of the creature have a four-fold greater ability to create mischief in the body than the mere two hands

¹²⁹ The passage of Galen is not cited. Likewise for her following observations including Galen, the Hippocratic corpus and social history.

¹³⁰ Used as the tentacles of an octopus in: *Alex.187.2, Eub.150.7, Diph.34, Arist.HA524b1, PA685b4, Thphr.HP8.8.4,9.13.6*; of the nautilus in *Arist.HA622b10* as listed in the LSJ

possessed by most other animals, perhaps explaining the simultaneous multiple and far ranging pains attributed to the uterus.

Bonner stresses that the importance of the octopus uterus lies in its ability to connect the uterine amulets to Byzantine pieces which command the womb to obey, but which are not graced with familiar imagery. Rather, they are possessed of a Medusa face with snakes radiating from it and a spell addressed directly to the uterus (Figure 4.16) (Bonner 1950, 90). Bonner argues that this Medusa face is a modified version of the octopus uterus. Vikan would connect this medusa to Chnoubis who is often shown with seven rays surrounding his head, but as the octopus uterus is also often possessed of seven extensions it does not seem that one has to look as far as Chnoubis (Vikan 1984, 77).¹³¹

Bonner is also tempted to connect the octopus uterus to more recent conceptions of the uterus among Tyrolean and Greek peasants of the early part of the former century. In the Tyrol women who have had a uterine problem healed devote offerings called Gebärmutter at the altars of St. Vitus and St. Leonard. Shaped as a large oval or circle and covered over with spikes (Bonner compares them to cockleburs) they represent the healed uterus, the spikes demonstrating visually its fearsome ability to pain the body of its owner (Bonner 1950, 91). In “modern” Chios Bonner (citing Argenti and Rose, *Folklore of Chios*, I, 270) notes that the placenta is especially feared. It is explicitly described as an octopus (ὀκτώπους) that will climb to the neck of the new mother and strangle her if it is not properly removed (Bonner 1951, 315). The concept of the womb moving to the throat and choking a woman was known in Hippocratic medicine (see

¹³¹ The discussion of these Byzantine amulets will be expanded in chapter 5 where they will be probed for what they may be able to illuminate about the uterine amulets.

chapter 7) and it is possible that both this conception of the placenta and its identification as an octopus both derive from ancient sources.

Indeed, the idea that the womb could move about at will, like a sentient beast, is a concept which appears in various ancient sources such as the *Timaeus* where the womb is explicitly described as a wild animal (See chapter 7). It is a conceptualization that would be well expressed visually as an octopus, an animal form which both mimicked the conventional representation of the womb as a pot with extensions radiating out from it, and captured the wild and erratic nature and movements envisioned of the uterus. Further, the octopus is able to fit itself into the tightest spots in its environment, as the womb could do within the body. This idea of the womb as wild animal explains the prevalence of Ouroboroi on uterine amulets, as a vehicle to bind and control the unruly uterine beast. Bonner's idea does not seem overly far-fetched – indeed it is convincing even if one might wish more direct rather than circumstantial evidence to support it.

It is interesting to note that this octopus uterus appears on the reverse of several amulets which this study understands as undoubted birth amulets (c. 140 & 141). On c. 140 a woman with loose hair squats or sits over a conventional uterus symbol on the obverse. It appears that the arms of a birth chair may flank her. On the reverse is the octopus uterus with the inscription "Ororiouth AEHIUW." On c. 141 a woman with a distended belly clearly sits in a birth chair, gripping its arms. She too has loose hair since it was believed that removing all knots from the body, even those that bind the hair, would hasten birth (Pinch 1995, 84, Bonner 1950, Lloyd 1999b quoting Soranus Gyn. II 6, 54.11ff). On the reverse of this amulet is inscribed KKK above a scarab and octopus uterus.

What is particularly interesting about these amulets is that they clearly represent the act of birth, which raises the question of the necessity to represent such a scene if the rest of the amulets are to be taken as birth amulets, as Barb and Dasen would have (Barb 1959, Dasen 2005). The reason may be that this is a special event not typically covered by the more general uterine amulets and thus requires exceptional iconography. That the uterus is then represented on the reverse of the amulets in octopus form would indicate that the uterus is in need of its own protective force during and after this event, separate from the protection granted to the woman and her womb during the act of birth. If the womb were included in the protection granted by the birth amulet there would be no need to represent it separately from the birthing scene on the other side of the amulet.¹³² Why the uterus takes the octopus form at this time, as opposed to the more conventional pot it is not possible to say. Perhaps, it represents a particularly painful uterus, symbolized by the kinky, crackling extensions radiating out of it and shooting pain into the woman's body.

Interestingly this octopus uterus is also preferentially paired with obverse scenes that contain Khnoum. For example: Bes, Isis and a quadruped/ ram (c. 69, 70, 72); Khnoum, Isis, Harpokrates (c. 78); Isis, Bes, Harpokrates, Khnoum (c. 104); Isis, Harpokrates, Bes, quadruped/ ram (c. 106, 107); Isis, Bes, Harpokrates, Chnoubis and Khnoum (c. 114). The consistent pairing of this motif with scenes that include Khnoum as a ram-headed man or as a ram proper, the fashioner of children (9 of the 13 times it appears in the catalogue if c. 83 also carries such a scene as seems likely), indicates that there is a close connection between the two. In total possibly 11 of 13 amulets which bear this octopus motif are paired with an obverse scene with Khnoum or a birthing

¹³² Indeed in c. 140 it is represented in the birth scene conventionally

woman; 84.6% of amulets which bear this motif are linked with the formation of children and the act of birth. It seems likely then that when this octopus uterus is found on an amulet that it is referencing the reproductive aspect of the womb, and possibly the pain associated with labor. If the form does come out of a solar symbol, it is also likely that it is the daily rebirth of the sun which the symbol references, highlighted by the use of the scarab Khepri, the rising sun.

Notch-Style:

Another form of the uterus depicted on a sub-class of amulets is termed “kerbenstil” by Michel (2001) and will be referred to here as “notch style.” In these amulets (c. 122-129), the uterus is little more than a oval dug out of the stone with a horizontal slash underneath it representing the mouth. The fallopian tubes are represented by one straight line and while Chnoubis is often schematically represented and identifiable by his stature, coils and radiate head (c. 126, 127), the other figures, when present are no more than vertical slashes with an occasional horizontal slash to represent limbs. The Ouroboros is usually present but represented by a circle with angled notches coming off of it, reminiscent of a crude scale pattern.

It seems that these pieces, while recognizable as uterine amulets, were either created later than the bulk of the amulets within the catalogue, or else were probably less expensive versions of them. While carving any amulet requires skill, these certainly seem to have required less skill than the other pieces, possessing almost no fine detail. Some of them have short inscriptions on the back which can be used to link them to the overall class, but others possess pseudo-inscriptions, lines which would appear as letters to the illiterate, but which are not letters or which are simply nonsense (c. 127, 128).

Although the evidence to further tease out the nuances of the relationship between this subclass to the rest of the amulets is lacking, one seems justified in suggesting that they were probably cheaper versions of the majority of the pieces.¹³³

Conclusions:

The iconography can thus add to the understanding of the amulets. While many of the deities present on the pieces, such as Isis and Bes have special ties to pregnant women and children, they, like most of the other deities present, are well known beneficent forces called upon for help in all manner of crises. Their presence along with deities such as Chnoubis, Duamoutef and Khnoum is explained by the different types of protection which they offer to the uterus. Khnoum represents the uterus' ability to shape the bodies of children within itself, Isis is present as a protector of women and pregnancy and a guardian against fatal haemorrhage, Chnoubis is present as a means of warding off pain caused by the uterus and Duamoutef is pictured to ensure the survival and general health of the organ overall. Each is in essence a visual representation of one aspect of the uterus and its role within the body of the woman who used the amulet. To that end, the wild threatening aspect of the uterus is implied and suppressed by the presence of the near ubiquitous Ouroboros and the often present Seth.

The iconography helps us get closer to understanding how this culture viewed the uterus and its various roles within the body. Interestingly, not all the deities present are female, the balance of the sexes being about equal (or even biased toward male deities).

¹³³ Were that the case though, should we expect that more would have survived, their reduced cost leading to an increase in quantity in circulation? Perhaps their small proportion is attributable to their poor workmanship, with people not valuing them enough to take care of them and pass them on? See also chapter 8 which suggests that they may be understood as originating from a slightly different tradition or may be the product of workshops located elsewhere from those which produced the majority of the amulets.

In this sense the uterus and its care was shared out among the sexes, and was not the sole care of females. It would be interesting to know if this paralleled the situation in real life as well in regards to the sex of doctors and other gynecological care givers.

Overall the impression one takes away from the iconography is the sense the matrix was viewed to be a complex and multifaceted organ which had to be addressed and cared for on several different levels. This is not a body part that was thought of only in relation to reproduction. It was envisioned as having different roles and functions within the body and for each role it fulfilled a deity was assigned to watch over it. Thus while Bonner was correct in that the gods watch over different aspects of human life, he oversimplified the complex associations that those gods brought to bear in their depictions on the amulets. The role of each deity on the amulets is, as has been demonstrated throughout this chapter, not as simple as it seems upon first glance.

The various deities shown in connection with the design are to be regarded just as in other amulets; they exercise control over the department of human life to which the amulet ministers. In some cases the appropriateness of the individual deities is obvious. Isis as a guardian of women and Harpocrates as a divine infant are naturally associated with the functions of reproduction, and the comical dwarf Bes is known to have been regarded, even from dynastic times, as a protector of children. The goddess Thueris, who sometimes appears among the deities in the upper field, was apparently a guardian of pregnant and nursing women. Other gods are present only because of their general powers of protection and help. Bonner 1950 85-86.

V

Parallel and Intersecting Amuletic Traditions

The night-sun, the Ouroboros or the mummy of Osiris may have been considered ‘mysteries’ in the temple, but it is quite another matter to claim that amulets that carry such references were intended to relate specifically to these aspects, rather than elementary themes of collective and personal well-being and life rhythms.”

Gordon, 2008, 716

Gordon’s point is an important one. As shown in the previous chapter, much of the iconography which adorns uterine amulets is polysemous begging the question, which interpretation can most logically account for the collection of deities which that are found upon the pieces? The answer toward which any person will lean is dependent on what she broadly believes the purpose of the amulets to be. If one sees them as something pertaining to ancient cult the understanding which one derives from their analysis will differ considerably from that arrived at by someone who sees them as medical devices. Why then is it supposed that the interpretation presented here, that they are medico-magical amulets as opposed to ritual paraphernalia, should be the accepted one? This chapter will explore this question from the perspective of the greater amuletic traditions to which these pieces belong. By establishing their place among other similar stones, both those that are contemporary and those that stretch


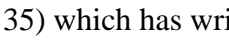

diachronically out from them, it will be possible to better pinpoint the unique niche which they occupied and how they related to the world which created them. In the next chapters this question will be taken up again, extending the scope of the evidence to include the medical and magical traditions out of which these pieces emerged.

The chapter will proceed in two parts. The first will look at other amulets which were made at the same time as the uterine amulets and which often bear similar iconography or epigraphy. Using these pieces the general role which the amulets would have been expected to fill will be established. The next portion of the chapter will explore amulets with similar iconography or with a supposedly similar purpose but which were created and used either before or after the amulets. The benefit of this line of questioning is that it will help refine by comparison the understanding of the specific purposes which the amulets may have filled by comparison to amulets that have been supposed by various scholars to fulfill the same functions.

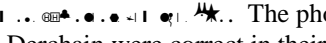


Parallel Traditions:

Turning to the first part of the analysis, that of parallel traditions, several types of amulets will be scrutinized. These include amulets which bear the motifs of Chnoubis, the Ibis, Herakles throttling the Nemean lion, the Reaper and several other individual amulets which bear on the case at hand. These traditions represent established types that are thought to be well understood. They are particularly relevant to the investigation for two reasons. The first is that every type seems to be concerned with averting pain in a particular body part. Any

(author's emphasis) (Socrates and Dionysios 35. 3-5 in Halleux and Schamp, 1985, 170, Bonner 1950, 55).

Delatte and Derchain have published an amulet which expresses much the same sentiment as the passage above. Chnoubis is on the obverse and the following inscription on the reverse: , Maintain in health the stomach of Proklos (c. 150, Delatte and Derchain 1964, 67 no. 80, Bonner 1950 p. 59¹³⁶). Michel published an amulet in the Skoluda collection (c. 35) which has written around a Chnoubis and a uterine pot the inscription:  , Chnoubis, stop the pain of the stomach, Abrasax (Michel 2001, 124 no. 145).

Even the briefest of examinations of the accompanying catalogue will reveal that Chnoubis is one of if not the most common deity inscribed on the uterine amulets. He is often placed at the center of the group of deities standing on the Fallopian tubes. On some amulets (c. 30-35) he is the only deity present, and in the notch style pieces he is the only deity who is reliably present and identifiable. On at least two amulets he is the reverse motif to an obverse which bears a simple form of the uterus scene, just a pot and a key (c. 21, 33)¹³⁷. His presence is closely related to the purpose of the amulets. Bonner comes to this same conclusion when he notes that at least two Chnoubis amulets of which he is

¹³⁶ Bonner provides the transcription: . The photo provided in Delatte and Derchain makes it seem like the Delatte and Derchain were correct in their reading of  but as the beginning of the inscription is damaged it is not possible to tell who is correct in their reading of . The sense is not affected by which transcription is preferred.

¹³⁷ It was not possible to get a clear picture of the obverse of Delatte and Derchain 352, c. 33, as it is mounted in a large gold ring with the Chnoubis facing the outer side. Delatte and Derchain do not provide a picture of its cast either. The obverse has been verified as a simple uterine pot by the author and confirmed by Michel 2004 p. 261 (Michel 2004 not being known to the author when the stone was autopsied).

aware (which lack any uterine imagery) bear the Soroor formula so often found on uterine amulets and which Ritner has related to having an ability to open things (Bonner 1950, 57). In Delatte and Derchain's 1964 catalogue of thirty nine Chnoubis amulets in the Cabinet des Médailles five of these also possess the Soroor formula (Delatte and Derchain 1964, 58-72, no. 75, 76, 77, 78, 81).¹³⁸

Bonner characterizes the situation by saying that "it is possible that in amulets intended for women the makers pretended to provide in one magical stone a remedy for various pains and disorders located in the abdomen" (Bonner 1950, 57). Bonner, in believing that the combination of the motifs of the uterus and the Chnoubis is an act of dishonesty on the part of a few practitioners, has missed a major point in the understanding of these stones. This study would argue that this mixing of motifs provides evidence of a main function of the amulets, that is to relieve general uterine and abdominal pain. A similar pairing of motifs which dispel stomach pain with uterine amulets is also seen with the Ibis and Herakles types which will be discussed shortly. Indeed the influence between Chnoubis and uterine amulets does not flow one way: uterine formulas end up on Chnoubis stomach amulets and Chnoubis is found extensively on uterine amulets.

The linkage of the two indicates that there may be a connection in the minds of people as to how these organs worked in the body, perhaps forming one larger and more general "abdominal system" than the modern and more function specific "reproductive" and "digestive" systems. Alternatively, perhaps it was envisioned that the organs were separate but able to exert influence over each

¹³⁸ Michel 2004 lists at least 13 Chnoubis amulets which bear the Soroor formula. Michel 2004, 257-258. One is also held in the Schwartz collection (Schwartz and Schwartz 1979, 165 no. 15)

other. Certainly, if either the stomach or the uterus is upset the result is general abdominal pain. Laboring women sometimes mistake early contractions for stomach cramps, and without the aid of modern technology to precisely parse the sources of pain in modern bodies and assign responsibility to different organs modern people would perhaps find themselves with a similar belief system.

Barb has an extensive footnote in his “Diva Matrix” which deals with the etymology of the words for stomach and uterus and where he notes that both organs spring from the same root (Barb 1953, 222 n. 105). In Latin *uterus* is equivalent to Greek $\dots\alpha\upsilon\tau\epsilon\rho\varsigma$ which is equivalent to the Sanskrit *udaram*, all meaning womb. The word $\dots\alpha\upsilon\tau\epsilon\rho\varsigma$ is also related to $\dots\sigma\tau\epsilon\rho\varsigma$, stomach or womb. $\dots\sigma\tau\epsilon\rho\varsigma$ is in turn linked to the Latin *venter*, belly, both of which are used interchangeably with $\dots\alpha\upsilon\tau\epsilon\rho\varsigma$ and *uterus* in Greek and Latin literature at various points (Barb 1953, King 1998).

King also picks up on the connection between the womb and the stomach, noting that it is a deeply seated concept in Graeco-Roman thought, manifesting in some of the earliest literature of the Greeks such as Hesiod’s *Works and Days* and *Theogony* where Pandora¹³⁹ is both a gigantic ravenous stomach that men must toil endlessly to sate, and the first woman who bears a womb and provides men a means to reproduce themselves (King 1998, 24). King notes that *gâster*

is an ambiguous word which can indicate ‘belly’ in the dietary system, or ‘womb’ in the reproductive system; to receive, to have, or to hold in the *gâster* means to be pregnant in both medical and non medical texts. The concept of two separate organ systems is, in any case, ours rather than the Greeks,’ so that one should perhaps think of the *gâster* as a single organ. King 1998, 25



¹³⁹ Who is made of clay and water, like the pot on which the uterine vase is modeled




A connection between stomach and abdominal ailments with uterine problems would not be surprising and may be attested in later antiquity by the amulets. It is interesting that the word *gâster* is not used on any uterine or Chnoubis amulets known to the author, but the sense of the word seems to have been transferred to the related .𐎔𐎍𐎎.


The Ibis:

The Chnoubis amulets are not the only type connected to both the stomach and the uterus. The Ibis flanked by snakes and chained to an altar with three reeds extending from its top is also a common motif found on the reverse of many uterine amulets (c. 73, 74, 76, 112). The scene is also found on its own quite often or combined with a Chnoubis motif on its reverse (c. 153-155, 156-158). When the amulet is devoted solely to the Ibis motif the reverse field is often taken up with either a three line inscription of 𐎔𐎎𐎎𐎎𐎎𐎎𐎎𐎎𐎎𐎎𐎎𐎎𐎎 (c. 153) or the two line inscriptions of 𐎔𐎎𐎎 or 𐎔𐎎𐎎𐎎, meaning “digest” and “digest well” respectively (c. 155) (Bonner 1950, 52, Michel 2001 no. 400, 401, 405, 406 407). It is the bird’s supposed powers of iron digestion (as Ibises were believed to have been able to eat poisonous snakes and remain unharmed) that is being referenced on these stones. If the animal were being urged to take care of an actual local snake problem the inscription would more likely be *phage*, eat (Bonner 1950, 53). A similar scene with an ibis¹⁴⁰ is seen on several stones where the bird has a halo and is flanked by frogs, scorpions and snakes and is standing on an alligator. On

¹⁴⁰ N.B. Bonner says that this second type of bird is a crane or phoenix (1950, 60). Delatte and Derchain class it with the other digestive amulets and merely say that it is derived from Thoth the Ibis headed god of literacy and magic among other things. Michel also includes it amongst the Ibis digestive amulets. To my eye the bird’s form is not different enough from the Ibis as to call it a different species.

the reverse of these the connection of the Ibis to good digestion is reinforced by the inscription of either “.”¹⁴¹ (Michel 2001, no. 402, 403) or  (Michel 2001, no. 401, 404, Bonner 1950, no. 103, 104, 105, 106). Delatte and Derchain have a similar amulet (no. 193) with the inscription on its reverse.

The most common of inscriptions, , is also found occasionally on Chnoubis amulets. For example, Bonner cites a grey chalcedony in the University of Michigan collection which has Chnoubis on its obverse and the inscription of  on its reverse (Bonner 1950, 53 no. 83). A brown chalcedony in the Museo Borgiano also has Chnoubis on its obverse and a thrice repeated  inscription on its reverse (Bonner 1950, 59).¹⁴² Numbers 81 and 82 in Bonner’s SMA have the Ibis motif on their obverse and the Chnoubis scene on their reverse, as do Delatte and Derchain’s 191 (c. 158) from the Cabinet des Médailles, Michel’s number 408 from the British Museum (c. 156), and Michel’s number 127 of the Skoluda collection (c. 157, Michel 2001). The mixing of the two motifs in both word and picture is not uncommon, and this is not surprising given that they combat similar problems. The Ibis amulets concern themselves with the proper functioning of the stomach, adjuring it to behave correctly and digest well, and the Chnoubis amulets prevent pain that might arise from a misbehaving stomach that either did not digest its contents well or was stricken by some other affliction.

¹⁴¹ The use of a genitive on medico-magico amulets for the body part that is the object of the charm appears to be a fairly standard practice. Amulets for relief of hip pain are also often inscribed with the genitive, , “for the hips.” Bonner 1950 72

¹⁴² See also Michel 2004, 259-260, 11.3.e


Like the Chnoubis amulets the Ibis amulets are also linked to the uterine class. Although on many Ibis amulets the word ⲙⲓⲨ is found beneath the baseline on which the Ibis stands (c. 34, 76, 112, 156), on those Ibis amulets which have a uterine scene as their reverse (c. 34, 73, 74, 76, 98, 112, 155) the inscription ⲙⲓⲨⲓⲛ is often found beneath the Ibis scene (c. 73, 74, 98, 155). As discussed in chapter 3 this word is found exclusively in relation to uterine amulets and is the name of a divine protector of the uterus. Interestingly on these amulets that combine the Ibis and uterine motifs, for those that possess three gods standing on the uterus the Chnoubis in the center is usually the largest, drawing attention to itself and foregrounding its meaning on the stone above those of the deities which accompany it (c. 73, 74, 76).



These three types, Chnoubis, Ibis and uterine amulets, are closely connected to abdominal pain caused by several factors which modern biomedicine now recognizes as unrelated but which in antiquity may have been understood either as emanating from the same source. Alternatively the users of the amulets may have recognized the different sources of abdominal pain, but wished to have a single amulet which could combat several or all of them, hence the use of uterine and digestive inscriptions in combination with iconography which included the uterine vase, the Chnoubis and the Ibis.

Herakles:

One last amulet type shares its function with the above groups. That is the amulet class of Herakles throttling the Nemean lion. Bonner attributes to Gorlaeus the connection between this motif and a prescription of Alexander of

besides Herakles amulets, thus permitting a student of the amulets to understand any appearance of three kappas as a specifically anti-colic formula.¹⁴⁴

This Herakles colic amulet is found in connection with several uterine amulets. Catalogue number 44 is a red jasper amulet with a Herakles and lion scene perched above an Ouroboros that encircles a uterine vase and key. The vase is flanked and topped by three kappas. On the reverse of this amulet is the longer formula found on other Herakles amulets. Catalogue number 141, a red amulet which shows a birthing woman on its obverse, has on its reverse an octopus uterus surmounted by a scarab beetle. Above the beetle are the letters  On the reverse of c. 146, also carved of bright red stone, is Herakles throttling the lion. On the obverse of the stone is a squatting woman with an upraised right hand gripping a sword. She is flanked by two kappas, one to her right and one to her left. Although the bottom third of the stone is broken away it is clear that this scene fits into the topos discussed in chapter 4 which center on a woman who is being assaulted by a donkey and which, in at least two instances, reference the uterus (c. 147, 148). Presumably the third kappa is in the missing part of the stone.

¹⁴⁴ A few other explanations of the kappas have also been put forth. One is that they refer to the name of a daemon who fought fever and is known from the PGM (Bonner 1950, 64). Another is that they simply served as a memory aid for a magic charm, such as that prescribed by Marcellus for an anti-colic gold ring which was inscribed with a fish and the legend “” which Bonner translates as “God bids bowels breed no banes” (Bonner 1950, 64). The latter explanation may also be appropriate but is not known on a ring except in one instance where Drexler put forth an “ingenious but somewhat conjectural reading” of “” (Bonner 1950, 64). If this reading were correct it would link the type quite explicitly to uterine amulets. However, as the first formula also contains three kappas and has been found on multiple amulets not just in prescriptions preserved from the ancient world this dissertation understands the former as the reference for the tri-kappas.

The tri-kappas and Herakles scenes that appear in conjunction with uterine amulets are not as common as other motifs used to combat abdominal pain such as the Chnoubis or the Ibis. They appear on only three stones known to the author, all of which are red, a rare color for uterine amulets. Further, two of the three amulets showcase naked women with distended abdomens in squatting positions in the midst of a painful ordeal. The octopus uterus is also often found on these types of amulets and it was suggested in chapter 4 that this particular form of the uterus may be associated closely with the sharp and shooting pains of birth. It is possible that these sharp pains were also connected more closely with the sudden intense pain of colic than those brought on by indigestion or a generic stomach ache. To that end it may be interesting to note that for this study amulets which combined the Chnoubis and Ibis motifs with the Herakles motif or three kappas have been sought, but despite extensive research, none have been located. It seems that these motifs were not mixed.¹⁴⁵

The Reaper:

Another well known type is the Reaper amulet (c. 159-160). This type was used to combat hip problems and sciatica. The inscription of .ⲛⲟⲩⲁⲓ or .ⲛⲟⲩⲁⲓⲓ, the late antique aphaeretic form of ⲛⲟⲩⲁⲓ, for the hips, on their reverse is near ubiquitous (Bonner 1950, 72 no. 124, Delatte and Derchain 1964 no. 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, Michel 2001 no. 425, 426, 428 and 429). Further evidence of their purpose is found on

¹⁴⁵ King has noted that in the Greek world there are two types of pain associated with birth, *ponos* which is normal and *odynē* which is pathological and must be treated. The separation between the Chnoubis/Ibis motifs and the Herakles motifs seem to indicate that abdominal pain was parsed along the lines of indigestion v. colic as well. The close association of Herakles to birth scenes makes one wonder if amulets with his image, carved of red stone and linked with the octopus uterus, were not associated with one of the pains of birth, be it *ponos* or *odynē*, while the Chnoubis and Ibis amulets with uterine motifs were associated with more quotidian cramps and aches.

understood as related in some way since they were frequently chosen to pair together. But what of those motifs who have no obvious connection and who do not normally occur together?

Epi Podia & the Relationship of an Amulet's Faces:

Bonner asks this question of a reaper amulet which bears a uterine scene on its reverse (c. 120, Bonner 1950, no. 126). On its obverse is the reaper motif. The rarity of this pairing may again attest to the fact that uterine amulets were not generally concerned with matters of pregnancy and birth, as sciatica is a common side-effect of pregnancy.¹⁴⁸ Bonner's answer to the question is that there does not have to be a relationship between the two sides of an amulet. While he postulates that in this case the sciatica or lower back pain may be located in the body of a woman who suffered from prolapse or other uterine problems, he generally accounts the amulet as a unique piece and cleaves to the idea that each side of an amulet could serve entirely different purposes.

A particularly interesting amulet fits squarely into the center of this debate. The stone is part of the Bonner collection held by the Taubman Medical Library at the University of Michigan (c.64, Bonner 1950, no.134). It is a bright red jasper. On its obverse is a typical uterine scene. The central deity above the uterus is an Osiris mummy holding a whip and flail and who looks remarkably like a uterine vase himself in his shaping. On its reverse is found the inscription $\text{Ⲁ} \cdot \text{Ⲁ} / \text{Ⲁ} \cdot \text{Ⲁ} \cdot \text{Ⲁ}$ which Bonner understands as $\text{Ⲁ} \cdot \text{Ⲁ} \cdot \text{Ⲁ}$. Bonner suggests that the obverse was a typical uterine amulet and the reverse would have been used to relieve pains of the feet. He notes that although one would

¹⁴⁸ As is nausea and morning sickness, arguably a possible reason for the presence of the Ibis and Chnoubis motifs on the amulets. However, the argument that the Ibis and Chnoubis may have been meant to combat nausea is less convincing when one bears in mind that the inscription on these amulets are often "digest" and not something that begs for relief from nausea or vomiting.

Hanson's understanding of this amulet is quite different. Her interpretation centers on the implicit assumption that the two sides must be related. Noting that the way to describe breech births in the Hippocratic corpus is by the phrase "ἄρ' ἐπιταξάτω" and deciding that no mother would wish for a difficult delivery she concludes that the meaning of the inscription must be a calling out of the baby to stand on its two feet. She seeks to strengthen her argument by noting that the phrase ἄρ' ἐπιταξάτω in Greek was so commonly used with the verb ἐπιτάξω to mean "to stand on one's feet" that the verb would have been understood, even though it is not present.¹⁵¹ She accounts for the diminutive by the charm being directed toward a fetus with, understandably, small feet. She does note the interesting situation that this interpretation forces, namely that the object of the inscription is not actually a part of the mother at all, but a separate being, the baby gestating in her uterus. Thus although the two sides of the amulet are related, they actually address separate people. Though her explanation fits well with the Hippocratic understandings of birthing, where the baby frees itself from his mother by his own actions and will (and therefore can be successfully adjured to be born or start the birthing process), it does not seem to fit well with the greater corpus of medico-magical amulets of which this study is aware, where no other amulet can be shown to deal with two different people. Perhaps due to the close nature of the relationship between a pregnant woman and her fetus the benefit accrued to one by this charm could be seen to extend to both, if even indirectly.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ She points out that standing on one's feet is a euphemism for "to live" as when a warrior had his knees loosened and he fell off his feet, it meant that he had died. Hanson 2004, 271.

¹⁵² i.e. the birth would benefit and bring relief to both the child and the mother and therefore even though it addresses the baby it is also intended for the mother.

Hanson's interpretation is possibly bolstered by one last point, that is the color of the stone, red jasper, of which it is carved. This aspect of her argument will be discussed further in the next half of this chapter and in chapter 8. The essence of her argument is that birth amulets are red in the Greek tradition. Her argument cannot simply be dismissed out of hand, partly for this reason. Given only the epigraphic evidence, however, Bonner's citation of another amulet with this formula is significant. The phrase ἄσπερον ἐπιτοκίου although connected with birth (albeit breech) in the Hippocratic corpus seems to have occurred elsewhere in the amuletic corpus created at this period in other contexts than those strictly tied to birth. Bonner's suggestion that the two sides of an amulet may be unrelated and treat separate conditions (implied within the same person) still stands.

Deities such as Chnoubis and the digestive Ibis did not have cults, and thus it seems that all these amulets are medico-magical in nature. The parallel stones seem to link the uterine amulets to traditions of abdominal pain, colic, sciatica, and on occasion birth.

Intersecting Amuletic Traditions:

Having explored a range of amulets which were contemporaneous with the uterine talismans, the "parallel" group of the chapter's title, it is now appropriate to turn toward an investigation of those types that various authors have connected to the uterine amulets through time. The discussion will begin with amuletic traditions from which the uterine amulets may have emerged and proceed to amulets of the Byzantine and medieval period which may have developed from them.

Hanson brings up the important point that many amulets prior to the Hellenistic period and later Roman Republic appear to have been made of perishable materials. It is

only at this point that gemstones and more permanent items become popular materials out of which to create amulets (Hanson 1995, 288). To that end, many of the earliest amulets from these cultures have not been preserved for scholars to compare to the uterine amulets. Hanson notes a number of amulets made of plants preserved in the literature, such as Theophrastos' prescription to use cyclamen root to hasten birth (whereas Dioscorides and Pliny list it as an abortifacient),¹⁵³ and Dioscorides' advice that leaves of the *anagyros* are ebolic and emmenagogic and can be worn as an amulet during difficult labor (Hanson 1995, 288-289). One important point she notes that has been touched on already and will reappear throughout the following discussion is that birthing amulets in the Greek tradition tend to be red in color.

Birth Amulets:

Ann Hanson's work on *oxytokia*, quick-birthers, provides the first amulet which has been linked to the uterine amulets. She points out that the earliest preserved Greek medical treatises tend to eschew the use of amulets, and it is a rare event that in *De Morbis Mulierum* I an amulet for birthing is described (Hanson 1995, 287). Indeed it is, according to her expert opinion, the only example of an amulet in the Hippocratic corpus (Hanson 2001, 277). This amulet, intended to promote a quick and easy birth, consisted of a piece of red wool smeared with squirting cucumber that was then affixed to the pubic area of the laboring woman.¹⁵⁴ She emphasizes that the color of the fleece, reminiscent of the blood of birth, was the important part of this amulet, and indeed it was an important element. However the importance of the botanical aspect of the amulet should

¹⁵³ Dioscorides 203 2.194; Kapparis, 28. Interestingly enough both species of cyclamen today are known as abortifacients. They are used as emmenagogues and to treat dysmenorrhea. It seems that the effect of the amulet has some grounding medicine and chemical action. See Riddle 44 and Duke, Herbs, 237. See also Marino, Roman Chemical Contraception and Abortion, n.d.

¹⁵⁴ The word in Greek according to Hanson's citation of 8.170-172 Littré is *λοινία* which translates to loin.


not be minimized. Squirting cucumber, *Ecballium elaterium* or *Momordicum elaterium*, is prescribed by Dioscorides as an abortifacient pessary, by the Hippocratic corpus in the same way, and as an abortifacient taken any way by Pliny (Dioscorides, 548, 1.155; Riddle, Contraception, 77; Pliny, 1951, 9, XX.9).

It is probable that the Hippocratic authors who prescribed the amulet were associating the abortive powers of the cucumber with delivery, ascribing to it ecboic properties which would hasten delivery if the fetus was at term but cause abortion earlier in pregnancy. Thus this amulet is perhaps not entirely “magical” but also incorporates current medical knowledge. Indeed, Soranus writing during the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian records a similar oxytotoxic amulet consisting of wax and the squirting cucumber. Hanson notes that he forgets to include the red wool in this prescription which had to have been a mistake as it was “the redness of the material [that was] crucial to the Hippocratic prescription” (Hanson 2001, 277). Perhaps it was not a memory lapse on the part of Soranus, but a preference for a medicament with which he was familiar as a uterine stimulant rather than trusting to the power of a color which he would have eschewed as superstition.

Ultimately her point is that red uterine amulets are likely birth amulets based on ancient precedent. Indeed several of the few red amulets in the corpus (c.38, 44, 99, 141, 142, 143, 146) seem to be linked to birth through their imagery and may indeed be birth amulets. Not all of these amulets are overtly connected to a birth scene or to an octopus uterus, like c. 38, and others are Herakles or incubus amulets which were traditionally carved in red stone (c. 161). The color red may indicate a heightened possibility that an amulet is a birth amulet (c. 141), but it cannot be accepted as such without investigation

of the accompanying iconography (For example c 38 or c. 69 which turned red upon exposure to moisture).

Another ancient amulet that Hanson touches on and which may be of direct relevance to the uterine type is that mentioned in passing by Soranus (Hanson 2001, 277). Although Soranus allows women to keep their amulets because it provides them psychological comfort, he believes that overall they are useless, mentioning particularly the stones of magnetite used as staunchers of uterine haemorrhage (Gynaecaea 1.63, 3.42, 3.47 and 3.121).¹⁵⁵ With this statement Dioscorides has established that such amulets, fashioned specifically of durable material to combat uterine haemorrhage, existed in Rome and the Roman Empire and that archaeologists might hope to recover them. It is perhaps not insignificant that the haematite of which the majority of the amulets are fashioned is an iron ore which is often mistaken for magnetite which it resembles closely.¹⁵⁶ This connection may suggest that the uterine amulets were intended to staunch uterine haemorrhage or control menorrhagia.


One amulet which may support Hanson's view that the  amulet was meant to call the fetus to birth is found in a papyrus collection originally published by Maltomini¹⁵⁷ (then republished as PGM CXXIII a-f, Betz 1992) and which was apparently written or copied in the fifth century AD. Hanson notes lines 48-50 which read "For a woman giving birth: Come out of your tomb, Christ is calling you. [Place] a potsherd on the right thigh" (PGM CXXIII, Betz 1992, 319). The tradition to place the

¹⁵⁵ III. 42 Quoted in chapter 1.

¹⁵⁶ The confusion between the two materials was current at the time when the amulets were created as well, as will be discussed in chapter 8

¹⁵⁷ Maltomini I Papii Greci, SCO 29, 1979, 65 and 81-84

amulet on the thigh is seen in both Dioscorides and Soranus and the ruddy color of a terracotta potsherd is reminiscent of the color of red jasper or dyed red wool.

Maltomini used an eleventh century Latin charm with similar language and an expanded but related cast of characters (including Elizabeth, Mary, John the Baptist and Lazarus) to provide a parallel to his charm and was aware of others in both Greek and Latin which conformed to the this type. Thus it appears that this genre of charm, of calling the baby out of the uterus extended at least from the 5th c. to the 11th century AD and if we are to believe that the  amulet is meant to call the child to its feet the tradition can be extended back to at least the point when it was carved. Still, it is a dangerous tactic to rely so heavily on evidence that post-dates the manufacture and use of the amulet.

Citing research done by Marianne Elsackers on a group of charms she has dubbed “*peperit* charms,” Hanson also traces the tradition of calling the child out to be born through the medieval period (Hanson 2001, 279). In her survey of more than seventy versions of these Elsackers noted several features which link them to the Hippocratic predecessors noted by Hanson, including the common practice of writing them down and binding them to the leg of the laboring woman as well as the charm heading of “*ad difficultatem pariendi probatum*” (proven for a difficult birthing) (Hanson 2001, 279). Yet it should perhaps not be neglected that a title is also preserved in the contemporaneous magical papyri for a spell closely related to those found on the uterine amulets and that it assigns the spell to an amulet for “a running up uterus,” not for one experiencing difficulty in birth (see chapter 3). The difference in titles perhaps indicates that these *peperit* birth charms are of a different tradition than most of the uterine

amulets. Interesting is that some of the *peperit* charms contain *voces magicae*, heavy meaningless syllables which are often seen on the magical gems of the 2nd-5th c. including the uterine amulets (Hanson 2001, 279).

The one feature all the *peperit* charms have in common is a command in Latin to the fetus to “come out” and the inclusion of short stories of miraculous births found in the bible. The command is reminiscent of but not identical to the $\text{ἔλθε} \cdot \text{ἐκ} \cdot \text{τῆς} \cdot \text{μητρὸς} \cdot \text{ἐμοῦ}$ command (if it is understood as a command to be born). While one might not expect that the charm would remain unchanged for a millennium, given the basic and rather generic sentiment it expresses, without something more unique to tie it to c. 64, such as the word $\text{ἐκ} \cdot \text{τῆς} \cdot \text{μητρὸς}$, this dissertation is reluctant to explicitly connect the two traditions. However, the languages in which the instructions which accompany these Latin charms are written are varied, suggesting not only wide use in the medieval world but perhaps an older common origin for the charm, which became a tradition before later groups broke away and took up new languages (Hanson 2001, 280). Again, while all of these charms seem to be related to an earlier tradition, it is debatable whether this tradition can be truly anchored to the uterine amulets or even medico-magical amulets of the eastern Roman Empire more generally based on one uterine amulet with $\text{ἔλθε} \cdot \text{ἐκ} \cdot \text{τῆς} \cdot \text{μητρὸς}$ written on its reverse.¹⁵⁸

Medusa / Ustera Amulets:

There are other amuletic traditions which seem to be better tied to the uterine amulets. One such group is a collection of metal jewelry that comes from Byzantium and

¹⁵⁸ Hanson suggests that another later link to the $\text{ἔλθε} \cdot \text{ἐκ} \cdot \text{τῆς} \cdot \text{μητρὸς}$ amulet might be provided by Hildegard of Bingen (1179 AD) who recommends that for a woman who is going through a difficult labor one should rub sard (often a reddish stone) on her back and recite a spell. The stone should then be held at the exit of the birth canal and the womb ordered to open as well as the child ordered to exit. The stone should then be placed in a belt which is fastened to the mother. This tradition ties back into the redness of ancient birth amulets as well as the tradition of uterine amulets to influence the opening and closing of the womb.

has been published on by Gary Vikan (1984) and Jeffrey Spier (1993) (See Figure 4.16). While Vikan would date some of these rings, pendants and amulets to the period between the 7th-9th c. Spier presents a convincing argument that none should be dated before the 10th c. and indeed, most probably fall around the 11th or 12th c. AD (Vikan 1984, Spier 1993, 27-28, 33). These pieces include rings and pendants of cast lead, engraved bronze, silver gold and copper as well as rare later pieces in multicolored enamel and in haematite (Spier 1993, 27-28). They are found widely in Asia Minor and the east, with many having been found in Russia. Indeed, a whole subgroup of what are known as *zmeeviki*, serpent amulets, which bear inscriptions of Church Slavonic and Greek, are thought to have been produced widely in medieval Russia (Spier 1993, 28). Although the rings and amulets from this time can be broken into many subgroups based on subtle differences in material, iconography and epigraphy distinctions of this degree are beyond the scope of this study. What is of relevance to the investigation is the class as a greater whole, which must be admitted, is very coherent despite individual pieces having been made in different places at different times in different materials (Vikan 1984, Spier 1993).

The two hallmarks of the Byzantine amulets are their iconography and their inscriptions. The iconography will be dealt with first. The tondo of the ring or pendant is always taken up by a human face ringed by serpents or rays, much like a gorgoneion (See Figure 4.16). While Vikan would connect this figure to the Chnoubis based on 6th-7th c. armbands which feature Chnoubis in their center (Figure 5.1), this interpretation has been rejected by Bonner, Barb and most recently, Spier (Bonner 1950, Barb 1954, Spier 1993). Barb attempts to explain the figure in a number of ways ranging from psychoanalytical

theories of the 1930s explaining the gorgoneion as symbolic of the female genitals (Ferenczi and Freud), to the perspective of comparative mythology and the Gilgamesh epic (Barb 1954, 208-212; 217 n.55). In the end he settles on the same explanation as Bonner, that the face was intended to symbolize the womb itself.

These amulets now show the Gorgon's head surrounded by fearful serpents, not, I think, to frighten the 'Hystera' away but as illustration, as her portrait. Just as knowledge of his or her real name gives the exorcist power over the daemon, so does possession of her image. The idea is the same in both cases: I know you – therefore you cannot evade or deceive me. Barb 1950, 211

Bonner understands the face with its radiating serpents and rays as an elaboration of the octopus uterus which features on a handful of the amulets (c. 69, 70, 72, 78, 83, 96, 99, 104, 106, 107, 114, 140, 141) (Bonner 1950, 90-91). One piece of evidence which may support Bonner's case is the apparent inclusion of a stylized key, like those found on the uterine amulets, beneath the head of some of the gorgon-like faces, such as that as shown in Vikan plate 3 figure 13 (Figure 5.2).

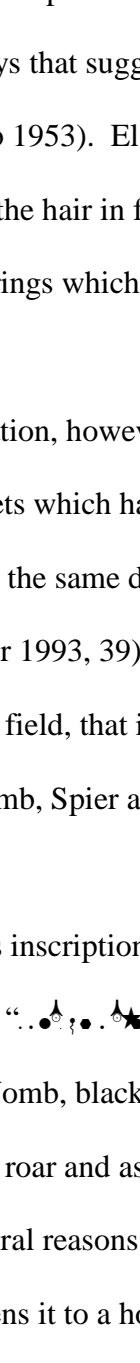
Spier agrees that the face is not derived from Chnoubis and adds to the debate by noting that the face does not closely match the ancient gorgoneia of the classical period, postulating a more recent development of the motif (Spier 1993, 38).¹⁵⁹

Spier also notes the work of the Russian scholar Zalesskaia who suggests that the face may be related to the daemon woman in the Testament of Soloman, Abyzou (also known as Obyzouth, and related to the Greek female daemons Gyllou or Gellou, Mormo

¹⁵⁹ He argues that Chnoubis was only related to the womb when combined with other explicitly uterine imagery and that the presence of Chnoubis would make little sense in explaining the function of the amulet, especially given the nature of the *ustera* formula which always accompanies it (Spier 1993, 38). Further in order for Chnoubis to have acquired this uterine meaning and so radically changed the engravers, magicians and scribes would have to have either lost or ignored the magical knowledge and papyri of the first few centuries AD, an unlikely situation given the tight adherence of the long *ustera* formula across time and space to a postulated written prototype and the survival of magical handbooks to the present time (Spier 1993, 39-42).

and Emousa), who stalked parturient women and attempted to strangle their newborns (Spier 1993, 39, Johnston 1995). Abyzou in this work is described as having wild hair and a dark, almost imperceptible body, a written description which would accord well with the bodiless face surrounded by snakes and rays that suggest unkempt hair (Spier 1993, 39; Bonner 1950; Vikan 1984, 79 n. 91; Barb 1953). Elsewhere in the Testament of Solomon the hero hangs the head of Abyzou by the hair in front of the temple, another image which matches closely the symbol on these rings which shows only the head and its hair (Spier 1993, 39).

Vikan and Spier both dismiss this interpretation, however. Vikan does so on the grounds that the daemon is shown on several amulets which have this face symbol on their opposite side and it would be overkill to show the same daemon twice.¹⁶⁰ Spier does so by similar logic (Vikan 1984, 79 n.91, Spier 1993, 39). Further, based on the fact that the medusa face is always the lone figure in its field, that it is almost always accompanied by a formula which addresses the womb, Spier also concludes that the face must be the womb itself (Spier 1993, 39).

The next defining feature of this group is its inscription, commonly called the *ustera* formula. The base form of the inscription is “ Womb, black, blackening, as a snake you coil and as a serpent you hiss and as a lion you roar and as a lamb, lie down!” (Spier 1993, 29).¹⁶¹ The inscription is interesting for several reasons. Like the uterine amulets it addresses the womb directly and intriguingly likens it to a host of dangerous animals,

¹⁶⁰ In direct contrast to the logic which allowed Bonner to ascribe two different forms of the uterus, pot and octopus, to opposite sides of the same amulet. This logic also contradicts ancient magical practice whereby messages were often over rather than underdetermined.

¹⁶¹ Spier’s transcription and translation. Also see note below.

seemingly explicitly articulating the implied message of the earlier amulets which bind the womb with an Ouroboros *as if* it were a dangerous animal that needed to be controlled. Also like many of the inscriptions on the uterine amulets the womb is told in so many words to relax and quiet itself, perhaps even told to return to its proper position with the phrase “lie down” (all thoughts which find expression on the more ancient pieces with such phrases as “be contracted womb” or “return to its proper place”).

The formula is often found with variations or additions. These include the phrases ...¹⁶² “womb protection,” ... (womb help), ... ‘for the benefit of the womb,’ as well as ... [] ... ‘eat blood, drink blood’ (Spier 1993, 29).¹⁶³ These additions make the purpose of these amulets clear – they are meant to protect the uterus, whatever that protection might entail. Notably, none of them mention birth, conception or pregnancy. One addition of particular note is ... ‘having been bound, eat [and] drink blood’ (Spier 1993, 29). ... “having been bound” would seem to supply the key to understanding the purpose of the Ouroboros on the ancient amulets, and indeed the greater purpose of the amulets in general. However the amulets predate the production of this piece by six to eight centuries. Nevertheless, the coincidence is striking and may, given further information about the origins of these Byzantine pieces, be utilized with relative assurance to help further explicate the meanings and uses of the ancient amulets.

There is a significant detail which to this point has been overlooked in this discussion, namely that all of these amulets and spells use a different word for the uterus,

¹⁶² The words and grammar of the inscriptions are Byzantine/ colloquial Greek. For example, in classical Greek ... would be ...

¹⁶³ For this last inscription see “Tantalos” in Appendix C

.I. ●▲ ; ● than that found on the uterine amulets .▣ ●●. Indeed, none of the ancient uterine amulets use anything like the traditional *ustera* formula. The connection between the types comes only through the fact that both types feature a portrait of the womb and an inscription which either addresses the womb directly or attempts to control it. Spier cannot connect these later Byzantine amulets directly to any ancient predecessors, even a similar group from 6th c. Syria and so although Bonner suggests that the medusa-like face which they all bear may have developed from the octopus uterus symbol it is by no means an assertion beyond questioning (Spier 1993, 31; Bonner 1950, 90).

While he cannot prove that these amulets derived in any way from the uterine amulets Spier does suggest that they developed out of an ancient prototype, elements of which are traceable in early Byzantine writings, and which was probably in place by the 5th century (Spier 1993, 44). His point that the extant amulets of the early centuries AD do not match up well with those described in magical papyri of the time is well taken and does to a degree support his suggestion that there was probably another set of magical papyri and sources from which the majority of medico-magical gems from this period were taken and which may have included the *ustera* formula as well (Spier 1993, 47).

Larger problems arise for his argument when one considers its implications— that a prototype for the *ustera* amulet was described in a magical handbook in antiquity by the 5th century but that the formula was not inscribed on amulets until the 10th century, at which point it spread widely throughout Asia Minor and the Byzantine Empire (Spier 1993, 47). His insistence on the formula having been passed down from a common and early source is based on the fact that the formula is long and appears in identical form through vast periods of space and time, where the only practicable mode of transmission

would be textual. Although the argument may seem improbable, given the archaeological contexts in which these pieces have been found and the complexity of the formula, it seems that it may in fact be the most likely scenario for the origin of the amulets. If that is the case, these *ustera* amulets may have a source contemporaneous with the amulets and may spring from the same impulse to protect the womb from harm.

However, Spier denies any close connection between the Chnoubis (and by extension the early uterine amulets which are born of the same cultural background) saying that:

Chnoubis belongs with a body of beliefs derived from the syncretistic magical-astrological practices developed in Egypt. The medieval Byzantine amulets derive from a parallel but distinct magical tradition, based more on medical than magical folklore, which viewed the womb (𐤀.𐤍.𐤁 or 𐤀.𐤍.𐤁) as an independent creature living in the human body. The belief is no doubt very ancient, perhaps appearing in old Egyptian magic. Spier 1993, 41-42

However, in ascribing the two amulet types to different cultural traditions, the “magical-astrological” as opposed to the “medical” he not only underestimates the intimate and inseparable relationship of “magic” and “medicine” in this culture, he also fails to understand that the ancient uterine amulets as a whole also express the view that the womb is a living, moving and dangerous creature, as argued in chapters 3 and 4. The two amulet types, the ancient and the Byzantine, then seem to treat the same problem: how to best cope with and control an unruly uterus. Given this fact and the postulated temporal overlap of the uterine amulets with the textual prototype for the *ustera* amulets, it seems a valid exercise to cautiously use the later to further explain the earlier.

Holy Rider / Solomon Amulets:

One aspect of the Byzantine amulets which has been touched on but not discussed thoroughly is the reverse motif found on some of them. Occasionally a nimbate rider piercing a prostrate female figure is seen on the reverse of these amulets. This type is commonly known as the “Holy Rider” or “Seal of Solomon” amulet. Often it is accompanied by the inscription . . . ; ● @ . . . ☉ . ☿, seal of god, which refers directly to the tradition of Solomon receiving from god his seal, the means by which he mastered all daemons and harnessed their power to build the first temple (Vikan 1984, 79-80, Bonner 1943, 45). The daemon that Solomon pierces is called Lilith or Aybzou, the same female daemon who attacked newborns discussed above in relation to the medusa-like face found on the Byzantine amulets. Spier makes quick work of explaining the presence of this motif with the *ustera* amulets.

The medieval amulets can then be placed firmly in the long tradition of belief in an animalistic womb in need of calming. According to these beliefs the womb displays some daemon-like behaviour, but it cannot be equated with the Abyzou-Gylou daemon. This entirely separate belief, derived from daemonological folklore, is none the less combined on some of the amulets with the spell or calming the womb. Spier 1993, 44

Although the rider saint never appears in the field with the medusa-like face nor does any part of the inscriptions associated with him, Spier probably rightly suggests that the occasional appearance of the two motifs on opposite sides of a pendant or amulet may indicate a conflation and mixing of beliefs as well as the occasional use of the pieces to guard parturient women or newborns. This is by far the exception, however, and not the rule (Spier 1993, 44).

Vikan, on the other hand, takes a very different view of the Holy Rider motif. While agreeing on the identity of the central figures of the scene and the

meaning of the daemon, his interpretation brings this class into more direct conversation with the uterine amulets than Spier would allow. Initially Vikan suggests that

Obviously, in attacking this archenemy of parturient women the holy rider was serving one and the same goal as that implicit in the very presence of the Chnoubis/Gorgon (as “master of the womb”) and explicit in uterine charms like “lie down,” and “drink blood”; namely, the goal of healthy, successful childbirth. Vikan 1984, 79

He understands both the *ustera* and holy rider amulets as aids to childbirth, an interpretation which may stand for the latter, but as discussed above, is unlikely for the former. From here he goes on to argue that the Holy Rider motif went on to replace the Chnoubis amulets in late antiquity. There are several problems with this proposition, one of which is that Chnoubis continues to appear into late antiquity and not in significantly diminished frequency as compared to the first centuries AD. The other is that the chronology of the Holy Rider amulets is fuzzy. Vikan would place them in Late Antiquity; Michel lists almost all of the British Museum examples as 4th c.; Philip classes them as 3rd-4th c. AD; and Spier would argue that they are bit later than most of the uterine amulets based on the shape and edges of the amulets, the style of the carving and parallels to Christian amulets, concluding that the class probably dates to the 5th c. AD (Vikan 1984, 79, Philip 1985, Michel 2001 BM, Spier 1993, 36 n. 47). The uterine amulets, replete with Chnoubis figures date between the 1st-5th c. as best as is known, firmly within the range of the Solomon/Holy Rider amulets.

The issue of chronology is relevant because Vikan suggests that these amulets were essentially later versions of the uterine amulets. He notes that on at

least one a key is pictured under the inscription. (Figure 5.3, Vikan fig 20).¹⁶⁴

Although saying “that the key was, in early Byzantium (and especially in the Testament of Solomon), functionally equivalent to, and interchangeable with, the seal,” he preferred to understand the key as an intentional visual allusion to the uterine amulets (Vikan 1984, 80). This key along with the holy Rider which he understood as a latter day “master of the womb” combined with the

“most interesting point: [that] the vast, majority of surviving Greco-Egyptian ‘clé de matrice’ amulets’ are of the same size, shape, and material as...[the] Solomon amulets...suggests [to him,] of course, that they were part of the same medico-magical tradition and fulfilled basically the same function. And it seems likely that the most important ‘constant’ in that tradition was neither format nor iconography, but rather the material itself: haematite (‘bloodstone’)” (Vikan 1984, 80-81).¹⁶⁵

Thus according to Vikan the Holy Rider amulets are a later version of the uterine amulets. The chronology of the Rider amulets has already been presented as an obstacle to this interpretation. A further problem arises with his reliance on the size, shape and material of the amulets. After personally visiting, holding and studying on the order of 120 of the uterine amulets as well as several Holy Rider amulets the author can with assurance assert that on the whole the uterine amulets are much smaller than the Rider amulets. Figure 5.4 is a photo of a small but not abnormally small one in the British Museum with a pencil placed next to it for scale; the entire amulet fits within the diameter of the pencil’s eraser (c. 71). As to the shape of the amulets, uterine amulets are not invariably oval as the Rider

¹⁶⁴ In a somewhat ironic twist Vikan seems to have not noticed what appears to be a stylized version of the uterine key beneath the Medusa-like face of his figure 13, a piece of iconography which may also undermine his identification of the figure as Chnoubis rather than some form of the uterine vase.

¹⁶⁵ One might also add the inscription to the list of things that have changed along with format and iconography, but are apparently unimportant, from one “equivalent” amulet to the other.

amulets are; indeed, uterine amulets are often round. As to the material, haematite was the stone of choice for many other amulets as well, including the reaper amulets discussed earlier in this chapter, and was by no means restricted to uterine amulets. Indeed the reaper amulets are a more appropriate parallel to Vikan's Holy Riders, being closer to them in size and almost invariably oval in outline. Having come to this thought independently, it was a pleasant surprise to find that the Schwartzes had drawn attention to the similarity of the two classes in their 1979 publication:

It is interesting to note that these [Reaper] amulets are too large to be worn as rings and too soft and fragile to be mounted or holed for suspension. They are similar in size and shape to the Solomon amulets already described and to several other types. (Schwartz and Schwartz 1979, 189).

It would seem then that all aspects of Vikan's argument have been debunked. Nevertheless it has been necessary to go through it point by point as he has so closely and explicitly equated the uterine amulets with the Holy Rider amulets.

Of the intersecting amulets it seems that the red birth amulet within the Hippocratic corpus noted by Ann Hanson may be a precursor for the few red amulets among the uterine amulets, several of which also have birthing imagery associated with them. Nevertheless, this connection is only relevant for a small portion of the greater class of uterine amulets, most of which are the color of graphite. Most of the amulets do not seem to fit into the long tradition of birthing amulets that she traces from Hippocrates through the Middle-Ages.

Soranus' magnetite amulets have not yet been identified by archaeologists and it is tempting to connect them to the uterine amulets as they are made of

haematite, often mistaken even in the lapidaries and by Pliny for magnetite. If that is the case than staunching uterine bleeding is included among their function.

Although the Holy Rider amulets have in the past been equated with the uterine amulets, it seems that they probably focus more on the warding off of child-killing daemons and on the protection of parturient women and newborns than on the control of the womb, the field with which the uterine amulets seem most concerned. It is the Byzantine *ustera* amulets which occupy the niche closest to the uterine pieces. By the way they describe the womb in pictures and words, as a scary gorgon-like face and as a roaring beast in need of binding, they echo the understandings of the womb transmitted more subtly on the uterine amulets.

Conclusions:

Although there are other amulet types which may be of relevance indirectly to the uterine amulets which are the subject of this dissertation, this chapter has attempted to restrict the discussion to amulets which shared either a chronological or a postulated functional link with the amulets. Discussion of amuletic and magical practices more generally will come in the following chapter, including several examples of Middle and Old Kingdom birth and fertility amulets and such practices as binding.

This chapter has surveyed the connections between uterine amulets and contemporary medical amulets, including those that treated sciatica, colic, digestive problems and general abdominal pain. The close connection between all of these amulets and the uterine amulets, their mixing of iconography and

inscriptions within the same scene and the frequent sharing of opposite sides of an amulet provides further evidence that the uterine amulets were meant to combat abdominal pain which may have been caused by the uterus. While other medical amulet motifs are known only a restricted group of motifs appear in concert with the uterine imagery. These were deliberately chosen with a purpose in mind, and it is this purpose that this chapter has sought to tease out.

After a short discussion which concluded that different faces of an amulet did not necessarily have to have anything to do with each other, the next half of the chapter continued with a consideration of amulets separated from the uterine amulets in time, but that were connected to them by iconography, imagery, material and possibly intent. While some of these traditions seemed only tangentially related, or indeed erroneously linked to the uterine amulets, each was duly explored. Earlier Greek amuletic traditions, centering on the color red, seem to eliminate the vast majority of the uterine amulets as birth amulets. Further, one late tradition, that of the middle Byzantine *ustera* amulets, has significantly reinforced the conclusions reached in chapters 3 and 4, that the amulets were intended to deal with a misbehaving and painful womb. While the choice of words and iconography differs from the amulets, both seem to come from sources dating to the earlier centuries of the first millennium. The expanded vocabulary of these amulets has also painted a vivid picture of how the womb could be understood, as a wild and angry animal, an understanding only hinted at by the iconography of the ancient uterine amulets.

VI

Binding, Cursing and Trampling: Major Magical Influences on the Amulets

Contrary to modern preconceptions of magic as impotent fraud, the question of magical effectiveness is a genuine issue within societies which accept (and fear) the possibility of its success. Within such societies, hostile sorcery or “witchcraft” is often highly successful, resulting in a lethal wasting sickness (dubbed “voodoo death” by anthropologists).

Ritner 2008,189

● † ◦ ■ ● † . † ◦ ◻ ◻ ● – For a Running-Up Uterus

I conjure you, O Womb, [by the] one established over the Abyss, before heaven, earth, sea, light, or darkness came to be; [you?] who created the angels, being foremost, AMICHAMCHOU and CHOUCHAO CHEROEI OUEIACHO ODOU POSEIOGGEIS, and who sit over the cherubim, who bear your own (?) throne, that you return to your seat, and that you do not turn [to one side] into the right part of the ribs, or into the left part of the ribs, and that you do not gnaw into the heart like a dog, but remain indeed in your own intended and proper place, not chewing [as long as] I conjure the one who, in the beginning, made the heaven and the earth and all that is therein. Hallelujah! Amen!

PGM VII. 260-71, Betz 1992, 123-124. Author’s Emphasis

Magic is a powerful force for those who believe in it. As Ritner points out in the above passage it cannot be dismissed out of hand as ineffective or mere superstition. Thus the magical conventions deployed upon a tool such as the uterine amulets would have been chosen carefully by their makers. The words and images graven upon them would have represented an immense amount of power concentrated into one small object.

It is the purpose of this chapter to explore the major Egyptian and Greek magical conventions expressed on the stones. By engaging in such enquiry the amulets will be more precisely located within the magical traditions of the two main cultures on which they draw. By positioning them within these traditions it is anticipated that the social place and purpose of the amulets may be revealed.

The discussion that follows is not exhaustive. Rather than matching features of the amulets point by point with traditions of magical practice, the chapter will take a more selective trajectory, focusing on methods of magical control in Egypt and Greece such as encircling and ritual binding. The discussion will also briefly consider aspects of fertility magic in these cultures to assess how well the amulets match those traditions. The chapter will begin by considering Egyptian influences and then proceed to Greek features.

Egyptian Magic:

It has been noted repeatedly throughout this study that the amulets seem to understand the womb in part as a force which needs to be controlled and isolated, and the analogy to a wild animal has been frequently utilized, as it is an analogy found within the relevant ancient sources (see PGM passage which heads this chapter). It will be argued in this discussion that many of the features of the amulets came from Egyptian magical conventions which were used in order to gain power over an enemy. By using these magical techniques in relation to the womb that organ is then characterized as something akin to an enemy within one's own body.

The first question to be explored is that of the representation of the womb upon the amulets. Does the composition of the uterine scene have any magical significance, or

is it merely a convenient way to bundle together the elements necessary for the amulet to be effective? Given the regular format of the amulets which is repeated across almost all examples (that is a group of deities standing on the uterine vase and the oviducts and surrounded by an Ouroboros) it seems that the format would have some meaning. If it did not, the scene would be portrayed differently more often, reflecting the taste of different customers or engravers rather than conforming to an arbitrary and meaningless layout. It seems likely that some sort of power was derived by the positioning of the elements on the amulet face.

Such a concern for the relationship of symbolic and artistic elements to each other is likely to derive from the Egyptian traditions which influenced the amulets. Much as the Egyptians granted power to the written form of words (see chapter 3), they also believed that symbols and pictures when written down had their own power. Due to this belief, care had to be taken when creating a scene, with some elements even ritually defaced upon creation lest they become too powerful and threaten the people around them. Indeed the mutilation of images of enemies and hostile animals extends from the Old Kingdom representations of Seth down to the Roman amulets where Delatte and Derchain have published an example of an amulet representing the evil eye being pierced by a knife and two arrows (Ritner 2008, 165, Delatte and Derchain # 89b). Bearing this importance of representation in mind the layout of the amulets will now be addressed.

There are several Egyptian magical practices that relate to the artistic rendering of enemies, which this dissertation argues, is how the womb is often characterized on the amulets. The practice of painting enemies under the feet/ on the bottom of sandals so as to ritually trample them with every step is a practice which extend from the time of King

Tut, with the sandal's of the Pharaoh, through the Roman period with the depiction of enemies on the foot of mummy cases. It is a means by which to perpetually and actually trample the enemy (Ritner 2008, 119-123). This same practice is demonstrated on the amulets by the deities who stand on the uterine pot and fallopian tubes, placing these potential enemies beneath their feet and thereby subjecting them to their power. This is a major visual theme upon the amulets and with very few exceptions it is only when there is no more room on top of the uterine vase that deities are portrayed elsewhere in relation to it.¹⁶⁶

While the motif of trampling is shown, the act of actually crushing the enemy, a motif which has a long history in Egypt (often involving the portrayal of enemy heads on the base of columns which are being symbolically crushed underneath the weight of the Egyptian building and by extension by Egyptian civilization) is not shown on the amulets (Ritner 2008 119-134, Feldman 2006 Plate 2 for an example of enemies crushed on a small object). Perhaps it is the case that one would not want to outright crush and thereby destroy one's own organ, but would want only to bring it under control.

The destruction and subjugation of enemies is also shown on the Narmar palette (Figure 6.1), which shows the killing of captives by the king, a motif which continued from the first Dynasty in Egypt through the reign of Titus. Ritner notes that these scenes that depict the domination of an enemy were not meant to commemorate the action of this event but to perpetuate it *ad infinitum* by fixing it permanently in stone (Ritner 2008, 115-116). By engraving the subjugation of the uterus on the amulet, by committing it to stone, the same property is bestowed upon that talisman. The amulet has now become a

¹⁶⁶ And in those cases the deity who does not stand above the uterus often touches the handle of the key, expressing his or her power over the uterus by asserting his or her ability to open and close it at will via manipulation of the key.

permanent record of that control; the uterus is perpetually hemmed in and can no longer rebel. Thus, these pieces fit to some degree into a much greater and long lived Egyptian artistic and magical canon involving the treatment of enemies.

Ideologically, the Egyptian magical tradition also contributes to this characterization as womb as animal and enemy. A common way to conceptualize forces which threatened the order of the cosmos and of the body was by linking them to wild animals or foreign peoples.

The figures of wild animals (reptiles, geese) are equally explicable as well-known symbol of the daemonic forces of chaos believed to threaten the Egyptian cosmos *through the medium of foreign enemies*. The relationship between wild animals and foreign enemies is thus an intimate one in Egyptian symbolism (*both may personify disease*), and the two images are regularly coupled in ritual scenes of hunting, *trampling*, and offering. Ritner 2008, 160 (my emphasis)

Given the argument that made in chapters 3, 4 and 5 that the one aspect of the womb's portrayal is as a wild animal, Ritner's words are striking. For cultural reasons to be addressed in chapter 7¹⁶⁷ the womb is symbolized upon the amulets as a jar rather than a goose or other wild animal. However, its behaviour as a moving, attacking force trying to upset the balance of the body would have immediately brought to mind to an Egyptian audience ideas of wild animals and hence of disease, ill health and chaos. The analogy of the womb as a wild animal thus finds resonance in part in the Egyptian tradition.

The concept of the womb as wild animal is expressed eloquently in the other opening passage of this chapter, PGM VII 260-271. Here the womb is explicitly described as a dog, one of the animals understood by the Egyptians as embodying the force of chaos and by the Greeks as displaying the loathed qualities of women (Ritner 2008, King 1998). It wanders and turns in the body and attacks the ribs and heart as an

¹⁶⁷ Relating to Greek medical traditions

animal unattached to the body in which it is housed. It behaves as if it were a foreign enemy, trapped within a body which is not its own. Indeed, it is described as not only having a will of its own but as having consciousness enough to hear the prayer and respond to it. It is commanded to return to its own spot just as on amulet c. 42 it is ordered to retake its customary form lest it be snatched by Seth.¹⁶⁸

Interestingly, iron was the material used by Seth to kill Apophis and was therefore associated with the defeat of wild animals (Ritner 2008, 166). As haematite is an ore of iron, being heavy and cold to the touch like an ore, one wonders if this may have played a role in the choice of materials for the amulets.

Graf and Pinch both note that the Egyptians were fond of using verbal puns in their magic (Graf 2003, 74, Pinch 1995, 68). Certainly this representation of the womb, a human internal organ and therefore an intimate part of the species working for order and *maat*, being shown on the amulets as external to the body and portrayed in a way that suggests it is like a wild animal fighting for the forces of chaos is odd. Further, its being lassoed and tied down by a snake, another wild animal and not a human agent is just as odd. One wonders if the scene wasn't appealing in an ironic, existential punning way with the boundaries between internal and external, and order and chaos being transgressed.¹⁶⁹

Another type of chaotic force, that of foreign Nubian enemies, was dealt with at Mirgissa via the means of execration figures (mid 12th dynasty) (Ritner 2008, 153).

¹⁶⁸ Although the PGM are not derived solely from Egyptian sources (for the debate on the degree of dependence on Egyptian traditions see Pinch 1995, Graf 2003 and Ritner 2008), they embody both Greek and Egyptian traditions, the same traditions which inform the amulets, and in this case also seem to be in accordance with Egyptian belief.

¹⁶⁹ As mentioned in chapter 1 magical rites often invert the normal relationships of the world, thus these inversions could also be a source of power for the amulets.

These figures were of clay and were mutilated and buried nearby the decapitated and mutilated body of what appears to be the remains of a Nubian hostage pieces of whose body were casually strewn about the area (Ritner 2008, 163). The implication of the situation is that the rites enacted upon the figurines have a counterpart in the human world. Although the amulets are not figurines, they do picture a human organ which they attempt to control. It is possible that the mechanism was envisioned in a similar way – that by taking action on a symbolic level that action would also be mirrored on the human uterus which the figure represented.

These execration texts and figures are not uncommon in Egypt.¹⁷⁰ They were not inherently magical but became so based on the rite to which they were subjected, much like the amulets as based on the evidence from the PGM (discussed further in chapter 8) (Ritner 2008, 142). The binding of the figurines was apparently a large part of that ritual and was a practice that was continued into the period in which Egypt was ruled by Rome (Ritner 2008, 143).¹⁷¹ These practices of encircling or binding enemies were major aspects of Egyptian magic and are also prominent on the uterine amulets (Ritner 2008, 68, 60 n. 267). “The magical ritual of ‘encircling’ ... is almost coeval with Egyptian civilization itself” (Ritner 2008, 57). This prominence in the Egyptian tradition and the notion of encircling as a means of protection is not surprising given the geographic situation of Egypt, where the surrounding deserts insulate and cut the country off from much contact with potentially hostile neighbors (Ritner 2008, 57 n. 266, 60).

¹⁷⁰ The earliest preserved texts come from Giza and date to the reign of Pepi the II, the last ruler of the 6th dynasty (2278-2184 BC) and Ritner cites many more. See Ritner 2008, Chapter 4, 110-190

¹⁷¹ Ritner claims that the use of these execration figures was later adopted into Graeco-Roman private magical practice, but Faraone notes that a very similar ritual can be dated back as far as the 5th c. BC for Greece (Ritner 2008, 166, Faraone, 1991).

The word “to encircle” is *phr* (Ritner 2008, 57). It has the nuance of “to enchant” as well, a meaning which is made explicit by the related Demotic word *phr* “to enchant” (Ritner 2008, 43, 61-64). The word and practice of encircling has ambivalent connotations. On the one hand there is a negative controlling aspect of encircling which is demonstrated by Coffin Texts spell 114 where the deceased escapes execution by proclaiming “I am not encircled! I am not enclosed!” (Ritner 2008, 64). In the Ramesseum papyrus Seth also encircles the body of the slain Osiris with goats and Osiris’ avenger states that he will cause a curse to *circulate* against the murderer (Ritner 2008, 65). In Coffin Texts spell 16 Horus is said to have control over Seth’s powers as well as his own, the word for control being “*phr*” (Ritner 2008, 65). Thus binding spells could apply to gods and daemons as well (Ghalioungui 1965, 24).

On the other hand the word also has positive connotations. In the Book of the Dead spell 108 Seth is represented as the beneficent god who is the encircler, and therefore protector of the solar barque (Ritner 2008 65-66). As early as the 18th c. there is also an idiom in Egypt that “to encircle the heart” of someone is to enchant or capture their mind and attention (Ritner 2008, 66). This idiom is interesting because it shows that organs could be encircled and brought under control or bent to one’s will by encircling, if even only on a metaphysical level. Again, one wonders whether the encircling Ouroboros was not a visual pun on the more common idiom.

Encircling could therefore be positive in that it offered protection to that which was encircled, or negative, as when what was encircled was imprisoned and subjected to the control of another. It is not insignificant that the uterine vase is so prominently and consistently encircled by the Ouroboros on the uterine amulets. There is, as argued in

chapter 4, an aspect of control over the uterus implied by this encircling which is used to immobilize and seal off the organ from the rest of the body, thus protecting the surrounding area, the rest of the woman's body, as well as protecting the organ from itself by preventing it from destroying the body it needs to survive.

This type of encircling constitutes a type of ritual binding. Binding itself is a major practice in Egyptian magic, and like encircling it is polyvalent (Ritner 2008, 143). Binding or knotting two things together could have the positive connotation of creating something new, or binding could have the negative aspect of forceful restraint (Ritner 2008, 143).¹⁷² Nevertheless it is not binding which is seen on the amulets as much as encircling, and indeed, Ritner notes that encircling and surrounding as opposed to tying was the preferred idiom in general magical practice.¹⁷³

Another means of containing an enemy or potentially harmful force in Egyptian magical rites was the sealing of a model of that enemy within a box, a type of three dimensional encircling (Pinch 1995, 84). Jars were also used as coffins or to enact a symbolic form of burial. Rather than burying an execration figure it was possible to seal it in a jar and contain it (Ritner 2008, 175). A temple ritual preserved in a papyrus

¹⁷² When plant material that has been knotted and had an anti-venom spell spoken over it is applied to a poisonous bite the venom is said to be bound and imprisoned. Knots in general are a means by which to throw up magical barriers that cannot be surpassed by daemons and harmful forces and Pinch notes a rite from Graeco-Egyptian magic in which a magician ties 365 knots in a black thread while reciting "keep him who is bound" with each knot having its own individual god standing on it and acting as a method to maintain control over a subject (Ghalioungui 1965, 36, Pinch 2008, 83). Knots can also prevent preterm birth or hinder the progress of regular birth and so untying all knots on the body of a laboring woman is a major part of the birth ritual, a point Bonner notes as well (Pinch 1995, 84, Bonner 1950). The custom is attested in Hyperides fr. 67 ed. Jensen, Callimachos Se. 209, Oppian *Cynges* 3.56, Pindar *Ol.* 6.39, and Apollonios of Rhodes 1.288.

¹⁷³ One could also bind daemons, as did the red hair ribbons of the Seven Hathors (Pinch 1995, 37). Indeed, daemons are often shown having been lassoed or with their hands bound behind their backs, a tradition continued down into even the Graeco-Egyptian period when on the blood staunching Tantalos amulets often supposed to be uterine amulets, a daemon is shown with hands bound behind his back (See Appendix C) (Pinch 1995, 84, Michel 2005, 150).

records that a daemonic enemy could be put in a jar on which is written “go around it,” seemingly addressing the jar directly and charging it to reinforce by encirclement the binding and burial of the daemonic figure (Ritner 2008, 176).¹⁷⁴ (One wonders if the jar carved on the uterine amulets would have brought this practice to mind for an Egyptian audience). As the jar could be sealed the orifices and organs of the human body could also be sealed thus preventing harmful forces from entering (Pinch 1995, 84). The key pictured on the amulets could also function in this way, to close the uterus to harmful supernatural forces as well as regulate bodily processes.

Thus, the amulets embody many aspects of Egyptian magical practice directed at enemies. They showcase a womb being trampled beneath the feet of a cadre of deities who thereby gain control over it. Most prominently they encircle the womb and thereby isolate and protect it. The permanence of the amulets also reflects the eternal subjugation of the womb. Like the execration figures, it was probably hoped that the amulet would work by persuasive analogy, where by showing the situation as one would like on a symbolic level, the actual situation would come to pass in reality.

Fertility Magic:

One well developed area of magic that seems never to appear on the amulets is that of fertility magic. Although particularly common in the earlier periods of Egyptian civilization fertility figurines were made at most points of Egyptian history (Pinch 1995, 126, Bulté 1991). Made of stone, pottery, faience and wood they were typically in the form of a woman who was naked except for a cowrie shell belt and occasionally a Horus falcon or a crescent moon pendant (Figure 6.2) (Pinch 1995, 126). Some also lack legs,

¹⁷⁴ The burial of the execration figure within a jar or within the earth itself is also seen in the Greek and Roman period, especially as regards love spells. Burial renders the victim absolutely isolated and helpless, dependant on the magician for rescue (Ritner 2008, 177).

either to keep them from leaving where they were deposited or because only the body parts necessary to reproduction were shown (Pinch 1995, 126). They were placed in tombs, occasionally shown holding babies, as a way to ask the deceased to intercede on the supplicant's behalf with the gods and grant the supplicant a child (Pinch 1995, 126).

Two such figures from Beni Hassan were made of knotted strings, knots being particularly associated with pregnancy and birth. A pottery example from the 17th c. has an iron ring around its upper thighs (Pinch 1995, 126). As iron was a precious metal at this point in Egypt's history this would seem to indicate that this figurine was not intended as a means to inflict punishment, but was rather an exceptional measure to prevent miscarriage or birth (Pinch 1995, 126). Although this one figure may find parallel in the amulets, where the closing of the uterus is in part accomplished through an external object, a key, no figures approximating the fertility figurines are found on any of the amulets.

Pinch also notes that while magico-medical papyri from the 20th c. BC to the 4th c. AD contain many herbal and magical remedies for impotence and tests to determine a woman's ability to conceive, "comparatively few spells that promise to make a woman conceive are recorded. It may have been felt that only a deity could create life in the womb. From at least the fifteenth century BC, childless women or couples are known to have visited temples to pray for help" (Pinch 1995, 125). Indeed, the situation is strikingly illustrated in the PGM which contain a number of spells to prevent conception and almost none to encourage it. It is likely then that the amulets, if they are reflecting Egyptian fertility traditions, do not contain a plea for successful conception and by extension, birth.

On the other hand oracular decrees from temples were used to enhance fertility. These, in the name of gods promised the wearer that she would conceive and have an easy birth, not deliver twins and avoid other reproductive problems (Pinch 1995, 130). The generic nature of the spells on the amulets and their lack of any claim to speak in the name of a god seem to preclude this option as a source for the spells on the talismans.¹⁷⁵

The traditions of Egyptian magic can thus be seen to have played a large part in the form that the amulets. Indeed the imagery of the amulets is consistent with Egyptian magical traditions involving enemies and other potentially harmful forces, such as those represented by wild animals. The gods stand above the uterus on the amulets, akin to the king trampling his enemies underfoot. The uterus is also encircled with the Ouroboros, a divine snake who provides protection to the gods, a more powerful way to encircle it than simply using a rope. Being encircled by the snake the uterine vase is thus sealed off from the rest of the body, the snake being able to both imprison and protect the uterine vase within it and protect the body which surrounds it. The Ouroboros, as encircler, controls the uterus. The Egyptian penchant for puns may also be reflected in the imagery of the amulets which show a human organ being controlled by a wild animal, which both inverts the normal relation of the world and refers perhaps to the idiom of “binding the heart” as a way of saying “enchant.”

By committing the images on the amulets to stone the maker has, as on the Narmar palette, made the controlling and binding actions of the gods and the Ouroboros eternal and ongoing. Additionally, it is possible that, like the birth-scene ostraka and the execration figurines of Pepi II, the amulets were meant to depict the ideal situation for

¹⁷⁵ Ostraka with scenes of women giving birth may have been a magical birth tool that were meant to promote the process of successful parturition by showing its happy outcome (Pinch 1995, 128, See Schulman 1985 for examples).

which the user was striving. Perhaps the user's own uterus and abdomen were diseased, painful or otherwise "misbehaving," by depicting the uterus as the user desired it to be, controlled and functioning quietly without disturbing any other part of the body, *heka* and the other forces of the universe which maintained *maat* might make it so.

Indeed, as explored above, the amulets and execration figures have much in common. What is striking is the lack of commonality between the accoutrements of fertility magic and the amulets.

Greek Magic:

As in Egyptian magic, the best parallel in Greek and Roman magic for the amulets is found among those spells that concern binding, the *katadesmoi* and *defixiones*, the binding spells of the respective cultures.¹⁷⁶ While superficially related to the *devotio*, the public imprecation, the *defixio* is marked apart by its enactment by an individual rather than a group and its purpose in seeking personal benefit to the agent and harm to the object (Graf 2003, 128 following Audollent).¹⁷⁷ While ritually binding someone with a *katadesmos* pursued different purposes at different times, Faraone has called the rite as a whole "a uniquely Greek form of cursing" (Faraone 1991, 3, Graf 2003, 135). In general the topic is well explored, having been considered even in ancient sources by men such as Pliny, and because of this it is possible to discuss it and its possible links with the amulets in great detail (Graf 2003, 118-119).

The earliest spells of this type date from the 5th c. BC and have been found in Olbia, Attica and Sicily (Faraone 1991, 3). A graphic example is provided by two

¹⁷⁶ Faraone uses the terms interchangeably and so will they be used here (Faraone 1991)

¹⁷⁷ It is unclear if the rite was performed as an act of ancient "self-help" or if a professional magician was usually involved, although Plato does refer to itinerant magicians who would perform the rite for a fee (Faraone 1991, 4).

inscriptions on a piece of lead in the shape of a human silhouette found at Carystus on Euboea dating to the 4th c. BC (which now resides in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris) which read: “I register Isias, the daughter of A(u)toclea, before Hermes the Restrainer. Restrain her by your side!” and “I bind Isias before Hermes the Restrainer, the hands, the feet, the entire body” (Faraone 1991, 3). Material remains of the tablets on which the curses were written are found in every part of the Roman Empire by the 2nd c. AD (Faraone 1991, 3).

The rite in the classical period represented a dedication of a victim to the chthonic deities (Graf 2003, 232). After the classical period all types of gods are invoked (Graf 2003, 232).¹⁷⁸ Other gods that become popular in time include those that have connections to magic, like Hermes or those that are involved with punishment such as the Erinyes. Further, “Egyptian and oriental gods such as Osiris and Typhon, and many daemons [also] appear” (Versnel 1991, 64). Gods such as Seth-Typhon, used in a threatening manner are also seen on the uterine amulets as will be recalled from chapters 3 and 4.

There are several types of formulae commonly used on *katadesmoi* (Graf 2003, 124, Faraone 1991, 5). The first type is a direct statement which often uses the first person singular indicative present as in “I bind” or “I dedicate NN” (Faraone 1991, 5, Graf 2003, 124). The second type charges the action to an intermediate party such as a god or daemon (Faraone 1991, 5, Graf 2003, 124). This type often uses the imperative present verb but occasionally employs the subjunctive or the future (Faraone 1991, 6, Graf 2003, 124). The third type explicitly states a wish (Faraone 1991, 5). The final type

¹⁷⁸ Versnel suggests that the chthonic gods were originally appealed to since they were not as powerful as the Olympians and were therefore more likely to be manipulated by human desires and machinations (Versnel 1991, 62).

works by *similia similibus* and apposes either a ritual act or a fact with the desired for state of the victim (i.e. “as the lead of this tablet is cold, so let NN be cold,” or “as the cat was sacrificed so may NN be sacrificed”) (Faraone 1991, 5, Graf 2003, 124). By the Roman period the class had developed to the point where one commonly finds spells of some length that beg, command and even threaten the gods to force them to do the what the tablet commands (Faraone 1991, 18).

The first type, the direct statement is a type of performative utterance whereby saying something encompasses the action of the statement (Faraone 1991, 5). It is akin to the performative statements made in Egyptian magic. With this type of statement that directly binds or consecrates a victim “often various bodily parts or personal possessions are listed alongside the person’s name as more specific targets, for instance, DTA 52 (Attic, third century B.C.): ‘I bind Mnesithides and the tongue, work and soul of Mnesithides’” (Faraone 1991, 5). This type was often modified by naming a deity, presumably as a witness to the action (Faraone 1991, 5). The verbs used in this type of statement were often legal terms, such as $\text{ⲙⲟⲟⲩ} ; \text{ⲟⲩ} \text{ⲛⲟⲩ}$, register, and when found in short fragments of formula such as $\text{ⲙⲟⲟⲩ} \text{ⲛⲟⲩ} \text{ⲛⲟⲩ} \text{ⲛⲟⲩ} \text{ⲛⲟⲩ} \text{ⲛⲟⲩ}$ would have been recognized as short hand for the longer prayer formula (Faraone 1991 5).

The second type of binding, that of invoking a deity to help, may have developed as early as the 5th c. BC in Sicily and is widely used by the 4th c. in Attica. Like any prayer this type of formula would begin by invoking gods.¹⁷⁹ The more names of the

¹⁷⁹ comparison of Greek spells and prayers where he finds no significant difference between the two in terms of structure, content or context except for the addition of *voces magicae* to magical spells and the use of inverted *materia magica* in rituals of aggressive magic (Graf 1991, 191). Both traditional prayers and magical spells in Greece had a tripartite structure with an invocation, a narrative middle and a final wish addressed to the divinity (Graf 1991, 189). In the spells often the names, titles and other identifiers of a divinity are multiplied in the invocation of the deity in order than it might feel more compelled to attend to the one summoning its attention (Graf 1991, 189). In the middle section of both prayers and spells the

deity that are invoked the more power that possibly accrued to the god or the greater willingness of the god to aid in the binding act and so by the Roman period the lists of epithets and *voces magicae* used in these spells could be extensive (Faraone 1991, 6). While the verb in this type was most often a second person imperative occasionally a third person imperative was employed (Faraone 1991, 6). The third type is in practice often subsumed into the fourth, which by its use of analogy subject may hint at rituals involved with the binding rite (Faraone 1991, 6-7).

On the amulets are found many of these four types of spells, often in mixed form. While use of the first person singular is unknown on the uterine amulets,¹⁸⁰ many times the inscription will end with an unconnected deity's name, apparently functioning in a witness or supervisory role as in the first type of spell, for instance a vowel row followed by a name such as Iaw, Sabaoth or Ororiouth, or c 72 which read "Ororiouth, Iaw, Sabaoth, contract womb." The second type, the prayer, is that most commonly found on the amulets. The second person imperative is the form of the verb most often found on the amulets, and Typhon is often used as a divine intermediary to accomplish the goal of the prayer as in c. 96 which read "Ororiouth, Sabaoth, contract womb, lest Typhon seize you." And while it is the womb that is being ordered with the verbs ⲛⲟⲩⲟⲩⲟⲩⲟⲩ and ⲛⲟⲩⲟⲩⲟⲩⲟⲩ as in the second type, the common abbreviation of the spells down to only the verb ("contract") and the use of ⲛⲟⲩⲟⲩⲟⲩⲟⲩ in other spells would, like the first type with its use

user's credentials for summoning the god are established. In prayers this often takes the form of a narrative where the user of the prayer displays his knowledge of the deity or equates himself with the deity so as to stir the interest of the deity in the user's case. In spells however these credentials are often proven by a display of *voces magicae* which also serve to demonstrate the extent of the user's knowledge of powerful words (Graf 1991, 189). Graf maintains that the use of *voces magicae* is not intended to force the deity to oblige, but rather proves that the user of the spell is worthy of divine attention (Graf 1991, 192-194). This section of a spell is not essential. Spells and prayers then generally both express a wish to conclude (Graf 1991, 189).

¹⁸⁰ Although it is not unknown on a ⲛⲟⲩⲟⲩⲟⲩⲟⲩ amulet as discussed in chapter 5

of abbreviation, technical terms and the generic “ $\text{ⲕⲁⲧⲁ} \text{ⲛⲉⲧⲉⲧⲉⲛⲉ} \text{ⲛⲉⲧⲉⲧⲉⲛⲉ}$,” bring to mind the fact that these were abbreviated versions of longer prayers. The use of the *phrase* “lest Seth seize you” as a threat also represents a type of inverse wish, a type of fear clause that one hopes to avoid, making it an appropriate threat, and linking it to the third type of *defixio* formula.

One of the most interesting aspects of the *katadesmoi* is their choice of words. Most verbs which are used in them are compounded with the prefix “kata” connoting images of being bound and dragged down below the earth. Many verbs on the amulets are also prefixed with “kata” such as $\text{ⲕⲁⲧⲁ} \text{ⲛⲉⲧⲉⲧⲉⲛⲉ} \text{ⲛⲉⲧⲉⲧⲉⲛⲉ}$ and $\text{ⲕⲁⲧⲁ} \text{ⲛⲉⲧⲉⲧⲉⲛⲉ} \text{ⲛⲉⲧⲉⲧⲉⲛⲉ}$. The most common verb used on many of these *katadesmoi* tablets is $\text{ⲕⲁⲧⲁ} \text{ⲛⲉⲧⲉⲧⲉⲛⲉ}$, to hold tight, bind, restrain or contract (Graf 2003, 144). It is also found in the inscription on amulet c. 23.

In the Attic curse tablets the verb $\text{ⲕⲁⲧⲁ} \text{ⲛⲉⲧⲉⲧⲉⲛⲉ}$ (hold fast) is easily the most frequently used verb in the prayer formulas and...must be connected with the Epithets of Hermes Katochos and Earth Katochē, the two most frequently invoked deities on the early Attic curse tablets. Both verb and epithet are virtually unknown on *defixiones* from outside of Attica or areas deeply influenced by Athenian culture, such as Euboea. Faraone 1991, 25 n. 27

Although the verb seems to be most common on Attica curse tablets, it is not unlikely that it is in this function that it appears on the amulets or at least would bring to mind the idea of a *katadesmos* to an informed audience. Many ideas from Attica, including those derived from the philosophy of Aristotle, seem to show up on the amulets, (as will be discussed in chapter 7).¹⁸¹

What all early binding spells had in common and most later ones as well is the general social context in which they were executed. *Defixiones* were proactive measures taken in response to an impending crisis; they were not used as a means of revenge once

¹⁸¹ The fact that Hermes in any guise, including Katochos does not appear on the amulets is not surprising given the general lack of Greek deities on the amulets.

a deed against their author was accomplished (Faraone 1991, 4).¹⁸² The binding force of the *katadesmos* was not meant to destroy its victim, but merely control or torture them, as has been demonstrated by the limited scope of the analogies used to persuade the deity who is to help the agent (Faraone 1991, 4, 8.). Binding was a sort of torture often accomplished with the help of a daemonic helper (Graf 2003, 162).

What all these cases of ritual binding have in common is that they are performed in the context of a crisis. It is always a situation in which a great uncertainty predominates, one that will be resolved by a future decision, while the ways to influence the result are very limited. Graf 2003, 157

The crisis against which they take action is provoked by lack of information and the *katadesmos* is a means to influence the outcome of the crisis (Graf 2003, 160, 153).

Audollent classified the *defixiones* into five broad classes according to what type of problems they addressed: 1. Trials, 2. Love, 3. Contests and spectacles, 4. Slanderers and thieves 5. Commercial (Audollent 1904 cited by Graf 2003, 120-121). Faraone has convincingly argued that it is the aspect of competition, the possibility of winning or losing, which provides the social context for the development and use of these rites (Faraone 1991, 20). He suggests that the *katadesmos* developed as a special form of ritual to accompany prayer by individuals who were involved in asymmetric competitive situations (Faraone 1991, 20). Noting that the general sense provided in the few early texts which describe the binding rite is that it was a prophylactic and protective defensive ritual in intention rather than an unprovoked hostile rite Faraone suggests that *katadesmoi* were probably used by people who doubted their ability to triumph under normal circumstances, the underdogs (Faraone 1991, 9, 20).

¹⁸² Exceptions to the rule are late and are illustrated well by some of the curse tablets at Bath which curse the thief who stole a cloak etc. These *defixiones* were responses to an action after it was completed and are more closely related to Versnel's judicial spells discussed below than traditional *katadesmoi*.

Versnel, among others have hailed Faraone's highlighting of social competition as a breakthrough in understanding the rite (Versnel 1991, 62). If it is accepted, as argued above that the binding spells are related to the spells on the uterine amulets, what then does this imply about the situations of the amulet's use in the society which produced them? Perhaps the battle against a diseased or painful organ was understood as a nearly unwinnable fight by rational medical means.

There were positive and negative social ramifications of using such spells in the societies that employed them. Versnel argues that the reason why the author's name is rarely seen upon them due to either the fear of accidentally misdirecting the charm to oneself, or the implicit acknowledgement that using such underhanded means would invite social censure. Nevertheless, one does what is necessary to survive (Versnel 1991, 62-63). Yet one must also note that even the name of the victim was increasingly left off of the engraved spell until by the 1st c. AD it is almost never included anymore (as on the uterine amulets which use "that one" to designate their target)(Faraone 1991,5). On the other hand the explanation of binding was a useful and culturally acceptable way to explain sudden disease or death as well as professional failure, thus removing the blame from the victim in either case and providing hope that the situation could be reversed (if it was not already fatal) if the binding tablet could be located and destroyed (Graf 2003, 166).

Binding provided a safe way to distance oneself from one's own odd behaviour or that of a family member and provided a culturally acceptable way to explain the mysterious behaviour of the body, organs and other medical enigmas (Graf 2003, 167). Further, while Graf categorizes the act as negative in that it reduced the power of another

while other magical acts were positive in that they meant to increase one's own personal energy, one could argue that if someone bound her own uterus that she both eliminated the power of the organ to be wayward and increased her own power over her body (Graf 2003, 158).

As touched on above, the problems that the *katadesmoi* deal with all relate to some aspect of personal competition and achievement of status, including commercial, judicial, amatory and athletic competitions (Faraone 1991, 10). This is not surprising given the nature of ancient Mediterranean society where status was often achieved rather than ascribed.¹⁸³

One means by which a competitive edge was achieved in *defixiones* was by targeting certain body parts to prevent them working as they normally would or harm them outright, such as one that asks the goddess "to cut the heart of the thieves or thief" (Versnel 1991, 61, 66). Magicians were able to sew up orifices of the body and, as quoted above, the spell that bound Mnesthides also bound his tongue, while the spells on the 4th c. lead man quoted above bind the hands and feet of Isias (Graf 2003, 195, Faraone 1991, 5, 3).

One of the most commonly attacked body parts is the tongue, often in order to prevent successful pleading in court (Graf 2003, 123). In Wasps by Aristophanes lines 946-948 allude to the tying of the tongue of the orator Thucydides and Cicero later recounts how he plead against a man who forgot his argument and blamed it on his tongue being tied. In later antiquity Libanius talks of his tongue being tied (Orat. 1.245-

¹⁸³ However, *katadesmoi* were not popular in all competitive contexts at all times. The commercial and judicial *katadesmoi* were most prevalent in the classical and Hellenistic periods while those that dealt with athletics (often times horse racing) and the stage came into vogue in the Roman period. Separation curses, spells meant to break up a couple, are found from the classical period through Late antiquity while aphrodisiac ones appear only in the Roman period (Faraone 1991, 10-11).

49), indicating that the magical topos of binding specific organs was a deeply entrenched long lived tradition that was still current at the time when the uterine amulets were produced (Faraone 1991, 15). Binding could also produce other symptoms of illness, such as those exhibited by Libanius and attributed to his enchantment including headache, fever and other illnesses for which amulets existed (Graf 2003, 166). It could also provoke illness of a sexual nature, as mentioned by Ovid (Amores III 7. 27-29)(Graf 2003, 141).

The notion of the uterine amulets representing a form of binding spell as enacted on the uterus would not be without precedent in regards to binding specific body parts. Nor would the purpose of binding the object in order to prevent its movement be a novelty, as *defixiones* are known which command the horses in a race to get tangled in their harness and thereby fail to move toward the finish line (Graf 2003, 155).

Winkler's work on *agogai*, forceful spells which aim to compel a person to become the lover of the spell's agent, and which also employ the objects, methods and language of the *katadesmoi*, is an example of the branching out of the types of *defixiones* in the Roman period, and it is to this class of expanded *katadesmoi* that this dissertation understands the uterine magical spells belonging (Winkler 1990, 94, Graf 2008, 178), perhaps with the unique twist that they are the only group which would have been practiced on oneself.¹⁸⁴ However, if one understood the uterus as a separate being

¹⁸⁴ Another group of Greek charms which demonstrate how *katadesmoi* may change according to local need share some characteristics with the uterine amulets are what Versnel calls judicial spells. Whereas the *katadesmoi* from mainland Greece use manipulation of the gods to achieve their ends at times, judicial spells, which seem to come mainly from the eastern fringes of the Greek world or the provinces of the Roman world, tend to supplicate the gods they invoke using terms like *kurios*, a term for "lord" found on Fouquet amulet which bore the expanded Ororiouth inscription (see chapter 3) (Versnel 1991, 91, 68). Versnel ascribes the different approach to divinity displayed in the judicial spells to the difference in governmental systems, Greece being by and large broken into democratic cities where each man had a say in the way his city was run, as opposed to the eastern lands which were used to monarchy and being

within oneself, as an enemy within with which one had to contend, perhaps the question of self-cursing is not a question which is even valid.¹⁸⁵ This question of agent will be investigated further in chapter 8.

Figurines were also occasionally used along with binding spells, but since they are not nearly as common as the texts themselves it is believed that they were not an essential part of the rite (Graf 2003, 145). Because the figurine then did not need to be closely connected to the victim, when it was constructed it was in the form of a generic human man or woman and not a portrait (Graf 2003, 139). This type of generic representation may explain why it was acceptable on the amulets to use a symbol, the upside down pot, without any specific qualities to identify its owner.

When figurines associated with *katadesmoi* are found, like two bound figurines from the Kerameikos in Athens dating to the 4th c. BC, it is noted that the texts of the *katadesmoi* do not always match exactly with the figures, who may be bound with rope or pierced with nails (Graf 2003, 136). The goal of such binding and piercing may have been immobilization, or as in the case of a Roman period female figurine in the Louvre who was found with an accompanying text and who had been pierced 13 times, the goal may be to simply assert control and force the person to love the agent of the magic in all the pierced parts of her body (Graf 2003, 137, Betz 1996). Indeed the figurine in the Louvre indicates that the texts of later spells and probably earlier *katadesmoi* as well were not directly relatable to performance, as the written spell has redundancies and

subservient to a higher power (Versnel 1991, 91). Other oddities of these spells include the inclusion of the author's name in the text, address of deities other than the chthonic ones, and calls for injustice and punishment for acts already completed (Versnel 1991, 68). The curse tablets at Bath seeking revenge for wrongs already done fit into this class of spell (Versnel 1991, 90).

¹⁸⁵ Aubert in his 1989 article in passing also notes the possibility that aggressive uterine magic may have been self directed

mythology not referenced on the figure, and also calls for the construction of an Ares figure, which has yet to be recovered although several of these figurines are known (Graf 2003, 152). For this reason Faraone suggests that the figurine didn't work by a sympathetic mechanism, but rather as a means of persuasive analogy to encourage a future situation to develop (Faraone 1991, 8). The appearance of a figurine may also satisfy the occasional mention of a votive figure which was to be delivered to the deity upon acting as the text urged (Versnel 1991, 64-56).

Thus, it is now possible to review the links between aggressive Greek magic and the uterine amulets. The closest parallel for the amulets in the Greek tradition comes in the form of the *katadesmoi*. The structure of their formulas matches closely with the formulas inscribed on the amulets, as do the choice of verbs that are compounded with HOO on both. Indeed the most popular verb on the *katadesmoi*, $\text{H}\text{O}\text{O} \text{H}\text{O}$, is also found on one of the uterine amulets making the connection explicit.

A characteristic of later *defixiones* is the identification by use of the matronymic, thereby inverting the social norms of identification (Faraone 1991, 14, Graf 2003, 127-128). This trend is also seen on the amulets where the object of the charm is child born of a named mother (c. 23, albeit the mother's name is no longer present). The use of the actual name of a victim on the *katadesmoi* decreases from the inception of the spells until it ceases altogether in the first century AD and is replaced by phrases like $\text{O}\text{H}\text{O} \text{H}\text{O}$, that lady, the typical phrase used on the amulets.

While the early *katadesmoi* call mainly on chthonic deities, mirrored on the amulets by invocation of deities such as Ereshkigal, these, like the amulets go on to invoke a myriad of deities, including Seth and those in the Egyptian pantheon who are

commonly found on the amulets. Set also figures prominently in the *agogai*, an aggressive erotic binding which was also a type of *katadesmos* (Winkler 1990, 95).

Some aspects of the relationships with the gods demonstrated on the amulets also suggest affinities to the judicial spells of Versnel, a type of less forceful (or provincial) *defixio*.

The use of *katadesmoi* was precipitated by lack of information in a crisis, particularly whether or not one would be able to triumph in a venture in which social status was at risk (i.e. sports, love, court and the market). It was a prophylactic means to even out the odds going into such a competition, not a path to revenge once the act had been completed.

The competitive crisis described by Faraone and Graf as the circumstance which would provoke the use of a binding spell applies equally well to a woman's relationship with her uterus. What bigger crisis could there be than a part of one's own body attacking that body? One was always at the disadvantage because one never knew how the organ, which approximated an irrational wild animal, was going to behave at any given moment. Binding it ritually would give one an opportunity to gain more control over it than one could naturally. There was the added nuance in *katadesmoi*, provided by the *kata* prefixes of many of the verbs, of actually tying down and immobilizing the victim of the spell, graphically demonstrated by the recovery of many bound clay figurines in association with *katadesmoi*. As these figures did not work through sympathetic magic but rather by persuasive analogy they did not have to be portraits of their victims. In the same way the uterine amulets don't use distinctive renditions of the uterus but a generic symbol for it. *Defixiones* are even known where the halting of

movement, particularly of animals, is the purpose of the charm. Here again the *katadesmoi* align well with the uterine amulets.

Binding could also be directed at specific organs and body parts in a bid to prevent their proper functioning. Having such a specific target as the uterus then would not be alien to the larger class. While binding may be considered generally a negative rite, for a woman who bound her uterus, it would also be an empowering act, and like the other classes of *defixiones* this rise in personal power came at the expense of the drop in power of one's enemy. This aggressive personal aspect to the *defixio* demanded that it be carried out by isolated individuals rather than by groups which seems to approximate the binding of the uterus represented by the amulets which were small personal items which and would have been worn on the body and not publicly displayed.

The basic commonality between both *katadesmos* and the uterine amulets, though is the uncertainty of the situations which spurred both

The performance (or commission) of a spell made it possible to regain the initiative and the hope that one could affect the outcome. The ritual thus offered both the community and the individual a means to master emotionally an otherwise difficult crisis. Graf 2003, 157.

Conclusions:

This chapter argues that the amulets find their closest parallels in magical practice among both the Egyptian and Greek traditions with those mechanisms which are used to restrain enemies. The Egyptian influence on the amulets is primarily visual and relates to the carving and artistic composition of the amulets. The deities trample the organ beneath their feet symbolically subjecting it to their will. The Ouroboros encircles it, protecting and imprisoning it at the same time. The organ is quiescent on the amulet, unlike how it is described in the medical papyri, and the scene might represent a type of

persuasive analogy to be enacted within the field of reality. By engraving it on stone the control of the uterus is perpetuated eternally.

The Greek traditions focus more on the ritual cursing of the uterus. The words and formulas of the inscriptions link them to the *katadesmoi*, a type of aggressive magic deployed when involved in competitions where power is distributed asymmetrically. The fact that this type of spell is used to control the womb speaks to the power it held in the minds of the people who used these amulets. The fact that one might consider bringing such a serious curse against a part of oneself attests to the idea that the womb was not understood to be a fully integrated part of the body. On some level it was understood as an animal, a foreign body that merely lived in one's body. Elsewhere, such in the discussion of stones c. 140 and 141 and the amulets which name Seth it was noted that it seemed to be deemed worthy of cursing, as if it had the ability to respond to a curse, and here again that idea is reinforced. As noted in chapter 4 Anubis was the main enforcer of curses in Graeco-Roman Egypt, and if the jackal headed mummy on the amulets is not accepted as Duamoutef it is perhaps Anubis, present in his capacity to enforce curses, and thus ensure the womb's compliance to the *katadesmos* placed upon it.

The nature of the major magical themes upon the amulets reinforce the idea that the amulets as a whole were meant to control the womb and prevent it from causing mischief within the body. Their magical features align poorly with Egyptian (and Greek) fertility magic. Once again one is left with the impression that these pieces were meant to guard the organ, and perhaps promote its compliance with the wishes of the rest of the body by whatever means necessary.

VII

Medical and Philosophical Influences

The plurality of recipes for the same complaint, often in succession, seemed to demonstrate that there was a variety of procedures, all equally efficacious. The conclusion that we would reach, viz. that such a sequence was a virtual admission that none was predictably reliable, was apparently not drawn.

Stannard 1984, 207

As for therapy, that ranged all the way from prayer and supplicating the gods to spells, to taking drugs that might be poisons, to curing your rational soul by philosophy. The cacophony of conflicting advice, from priests, doctors, and philosophers, all claiming in their different ways to dispense the appropriate therapy, continued from the archaic period to late antiquity – and beyond.

Lloyd 2003, 240

This chapter will take up the question of whose medical theories, of all the many which Lloyd points out, are featured on the amulets. While the scope of the investigation could range far it will in the main be restricted to the formal written sources of both the Egyptian and Graeco-Roman worlds which are both rich and intimately connected to the amulets.¹⁸⁶ The discussion will proceed from Egyptian sources to Classical and Hellenistic medical and philosophical sources and will conclude after a brief consideration of Roman and Byzantine medicine.

¹⁸⁶ Although there are many aspects of both Egyptian and Greek medicine which may be of peripheral interest to this discussion, such as the conception of disease and social practice and plurality of medicine and healing arts within the society, due to the many written sources which this chapter will consider, for reasons of space that discussion has been deferred to the future.

Egyptian Medicine:

The main source for both the logic and practice of Egyptian medicine are the medical papyri which remain to us. From these it is possible to both sketch a general approach to the practice of medicine in Egypt and draw out more specific beliefs about the uterus and its role within the body. Most medical papyri are marked by what Ghalioungui calls their “lack of theory,” that is their preoccupation with case studies as opposed to demonstrating anatomical or other principles (Ghalioungui 1965, 72). Indeed, there are very few named diseases in Egyptian medicine, authors instead preferring to describe symptoms followed by a prognosis and method of treatment; each case appears to be judged solely on its own merit (Ghalioungui 1965, 116).¹⁸⁷

Papyri:

It is generally agreed that the older papyri, such as the Edwin Smith surgical papyrus were more rational in their approach to the body (Ghalioungui 1965, 170). This papyrus is the oldest medical papyrus known and it is also the least superstitious (Ghalioungui 1965, 58). It deals with wound treatment of the head and neck and clearly addressed the issue of inflamed and infected tissue as the result of trauma to the body (Majno 1975, 97). Swelling and inflammation were known then from the earliest times in Egyptian medicine, and both seem also to be referenced on the uterine amulets. However, even the Edwin Smith papyrus contains one incantation to be used for a patient

¹⁸⁷ This tendency to focus on the individual manifestation rather than the overarching principle may be the result of a belief that most diseases were caused either by daemons or by improperly placed rotting food. In this way the cause of an illness was already known, it was just a matter of dealing properly with the particular individual daemon or that unique case of poor digestion.

whose prognosis was otherwise hopeless (Pinch 1995, 136).¹⁸⁸ Later medical papyri such as the London medical papyrus are split nearly evenly between magical and medical remedies (25 of 61 are considered medical in the modern sense) (Ghalioungui 1965, 50).¹⁸⁹ Of principle concern in this work are the gynaecological papyri, of which there is a relative abundance (Pinch 1995, 122). Clement of Alexandria in speaking of the Egyptian temples noted that one of the six volumes of medicine housed in them was devoted to gynaecology (Pinch 1995, 122). Indeed, of the six remaining papyri that deal with gynaecology, the Kahun, Ebers, Berlin and Carlsberg are so similar as to prompt one to wonder if they all derive from the same source, possibly this fifth book of temple medicine (Ghalioungui 1965, 45, 119).¹⁹⁰ Nevertheless, there are no directly parallel passages between any of the papyri, but the Kahun, Carlsberg and Berlin are the closest in phrasing and content (Nunn 1996, 34).

The Kahun papyrus is the oldest preserved medical papyrus, having been produced sometime between 1840-1792 BC, and seems to be a copy of an even older original (Ghalioungui 1965, 48, Nunn 1996, 25). Its gynaecological content is presented on three badly fragmented pages of 29, 30 and 28 hieratic lines respectively, the first two containing 17 recipes for gynaecological problems (and containing no surgical remedies),

¹⁸⁸ Ghalioungui suggests that the few spells in the early medical papyri may indicate a split between popular and academic medicine, the former being characterized by magical treatments and the latter by rational means (Ghalioungui 1965, 40-41).

¹⁸⁹ Another papyrus from Crocodilopolis dating from the second c. AD and thought to be a copy an early Ptolemaic original contains no magic whatsoever which also rebuts the idea of medicine becoming more magical with time, and indeed reinforced Nunn's original statement that there is just not enough Egyptian medicine that remains to us to understand it well (Nunn 1996, 41, 208). Interestingly this papyrus contains 201 drugs, of which 59 are not attested in Pharonic sources indicating the gradual opening up of Egyptian medicine to other traditions (Nunn 1996, 208).

¹⁹⁰ The six papyri that have sections that deal with gynaecology are the Kahun (1800 BC), Ramesseum III and IV (1700 BC), Ebers (1500 BC), Carlsberg VIII (1300 BC), London (1300 BC) and the Berlin papyrus (1200 BC). See Nunn chapter 2 for dating and individual discussion of each.

the last page containing 17 tests to judge the possible sterility or gravid state of a woman (Ghalioungui 1965, 48, Nunn 1996, 34). Despite these 34 entries and their clear link to issues of women's health, Nunn notes that they bear little relation to the modern understanding of gynaecology and they contain nothing about the field of obstetrics (Nunn 1996, 35). Indeed, there is no known word for "midwife" and none of the gynaecological papyri treat the logistics of childbirth, normal or otherwise (Nunn 1996, 132). Like the Edwin Smith papyrus this treatise also contains only one spell, apparently to aid in the effectiveness of a pregnancy test (Nunn 1996, 35).

The Kahun papyrus does concern itself with other issues of women's health though, including "inanition, terrors, biting of the uterus, [and] dejections of the uterus to the eyes" among other uterine problems, some of which Ghalioungui, a senior professor of medicine at Ans Shams university in Cairo variously diagnosed as gonococcal rheumatism, uveitis, trismus, deafness, and general apathetic hysteria (Ghalioungui 1965, 119). Indeed, the uterus was used as an explanation for pains or problems involving the eyes, neck, uterus, anus, pubis, thighs, teeth, mouth, limbs, feet, legs, back of the neck, vulva, urine, and general all-over body pain and weakness that may require one to be bedridden (Mersky and Potter 1989, 752). Although Ghalioungui understands the mechanism by which these pains are brought about as a wandering womb which attaches itself to various other body parts, claiming that "the pelvic organs seem to have been imagined free in the abdomen. To treat them it was essential to attract them, 'to put them again in their place' by fumigations performed under the standing woman," Mersky and Potter suggest that no mechanism for the causation of the pains is indicated within the papyri (Ghalioungui 1965, 119, Mersky and Potter 1989, 752). Given the means of

fumigation to treat the problems, even those that manifest in the eye or head, and given the similar practice in Greek and later Roman medicine as well as the picture of the uterus painted on the amulets this dissertation is inclined to agree with Ghalioungui's interpretation.¹⁹¹

The next oldest papyri, the Ramesseum papyri, also contain gynaecological work and date to after 1854, probably around 1700 BC (Nunn 1996, 25, 39). Ramesseum III contains sections on gynaecology, diseases of children and eye problems while IV has 45 paragraphs in five sections. Ghalioungui notes that the two papyri are similar to the Kahun papyrus and can be used to fill in some of the gaps of that papyrus, however Nunn, writing more recently notes that the subject matter of IV includes passages on labor, parturition, assessing the viability of the newborn and protection of the neonate but of such magical nature as to reveal nothing about the actual practice of obstetrics (Ghalioungui 1965, 49, Nunn 1996, 40). And while Ramesseum IV does mention a concern with the protection of the newborn, all the gynaecological papyri show an overwhelming focus on the protection of the mother as opposed to the child (Pinch 1995, 123).

Other papyri are also relevant to understanding the body and the female body in ancient Egypt. The Ebers papyrus contains a section on gynaecology similar to that of the Kahun papyrus, but also includes more discussion of diseases of the breasts, something akin to cancer described as an eating of the womb, the promotion of conception and easy labor and many remedies for upset stomachs (Ghalioungui 1965, 50-52). It also attributes the source of disease to divinities or the dead (Ghalioungui 1965,

¹⁹¹ As is Suvorov (2006) who carried out a study of the problem within the greater medical traditions of Egypt

50-52). The Leiden Papyrus also assigns a deity to each body part, which in a way makes the body a scaled down version of the cosmos, with different areas defined by different mythological episodes (Pinch 1995, 142). The Zauberspruch, spells for mother and child, and also the pyramid texts both record the practice of assigning a deity to each body part (Ghalioungui 1965, 38-39).

Anatomy:

The anatomy of the body described in these papyri is useful in revealing the Egyptians' understanding of the human form and its greater place in the universe and society. It may also relate to the way that the uterus is depicted on the amulets. It should be noted that despite the practice of mummification, there is no evidence for dissection in Egypt until the Ptolemaic period with Herophilos and Eristratos (Nunn 1996, 42).¹⁹² Gardiner's sign list contains 63 hieroglyphic signs derived from external human body parts, but contains no human internal body parts (Nunn 1996, 52). Internal organs were denoted by similar structures found in animals, for instance the uterus was originally symbolized by the bicornuate uterus of the cow, which may later account for the form of the Pesesh-kef knife used for opening the mouth of mummies, indicating symbolic rebirth (and possibly used in the severing of the umbilical cord as suggested by Allen, Roth (1992) and Harer (1994)) (Ghalioungui 1996, 68, Nunn, 1996, 165). The bicornuate bovine uterus also forms the headdress of Meshkenet, the goddess of the birth bricks (Nunn, 1996, 165).

A later sign for "uterus" and later synonymous with "woman" was the well (N 41) (Gardiner 1957, 492, Nunn 1996, 52). It was originally used to indicate the letter

¹⁹² Nevertheless, Nunn suggests that if one extrapolates out from the anatomical knowledge presented in the Edwin Smith papyrus, the Egyptians' knowledge of the human body was quite sophisticated (Nunn 1996, 52).

combination of *hm* in words having to do with woman and uterus, uterus in Egyptian being written as *hmt*. Gradually the sign came to be used as a determinative for woman/uterus (Nunn 1996, 52, caption 3.5). Its use seems more linked to the letters and sounds it represented than to any overarching concept of woman as receiver and container of liquid, or woman as jar, as Pandora was and as the uterus in Greek writings often was (to be discussed further below). Its use was not determined by an anatomical concept, but a phonetic coincidence (Nunn 1996, 53).

Liquid does seem a recurring concept in the Egyptian anatomy relevant to this discussion. Indeed Ghalioungui understands that in Egyptian anatomy “the abdominal cavity was conceived of as a basin where the organs were floating” (Ghalioungui 1965, 69).¹⁹³ Further, all bodily excretion, including menstruation, was denoted by a hieroglyph of fluid arcing from the lips (Nunn 1996, 53). This is a sign which never appears on the amulets.¹⁹⁴

Pathological Behaviours and Bleeding:

Of central concern for this investigation are the roles that the uterus is described as filling in these papyri as well as the problematic behaviors it exhibits. The preponderance of such descriptions and prescriptions to deal with them illustrates both the importance of fertility to the culture as well as the many problems women

¹⁹³ Organs like the uterus were not the only thing that could float about the body. A term that repeatedly appears in the papyri but which was so well known as to never warrant a gloss is *wekhedu* (Nunn 1996, 61). It is described as something that could afflict organs, could be driven from them, and could move about the body. Often translated as “pain” or “pain matter” It could be understood as a pain daemon or a putrefaction agent that moved out from the bowels after death or about the body during illness. Whatever it is it represents a septic and rotting force that one strove to bind and control (Nunn 1996, 61). It may also be possible that the organ was understood as stationary but the *wekhedu* associated with it was mobile. Perhaps it is this *wekhedu*, so well known as to need no explanation, which appears on the amulets.

¹⁹⁴ If the anatomy of the body and the uterus was less than clear, the physiology of the reproductive tract was equally different from the view held by western biomedicine own. While in the fertile woman the uterus could communicate with the whole body, in the infertile woman that communication was somehow blocked (Ghalioungui 1965, 124).

encountered with their reproductive organs beyond issues of fertility (Ghalioungui 1965, 123).

The problems of improper bleeding and opening or closing of the uterine mouth are commonly encountered in the papyri. The problem of amenorrhea is mentioned at least three times in the papyri (Ebers 832 and 833, S. 20) but it is never linked to pregnancy (Ghalioungui 1965, 121). In Ebers 833 if the sufferer of amenorrhea vomits it is predicted that she will feel better, the doctor explaining that the condition is due to “a rising up of blood in her uterus” (Nunn 1996, 196, Ebbell 1937, 112-113, Bryan 1930, 87). The condition seems to be brought on then by an accumulation of blood in the uterus which does not evacuate normally, and by implication may back up into other parts of the body or seek egress through other orifices. Indeed, in Ebers 855 an excess of blood accumulating in the arteries or veins, lungs or heart was taken as a cause of subsequent disease in something akin to plethora, the choking by blood, postulated by the Greek Erasistratus (Ghalioungui 1965, 76-77).

Lack of menstrual bleeding therefore could cause serious health problems for a woman, and may be addressed on the uterine amulets with the concern for the proper opening and closing of the organ as demonstrated by the key and Soroor formula. (Interestingly, though, the word for blood in Greek or Egyptian is never found on the amulets.)¹⁹⁵

While bleeding too little was undesirable, bleeding too much, or hemorrhaging was equally problematic. The London medical papyrus has a section on bleeding and a prescription against uterine haemorrhage (Paragraphs 40-45), explicitly signaling that it

¹⁹⁵ Although it is found on two classes of amulets discussed in Appendices B and C which this dissertation argues are not uterine amulets.

was a known problem and common enough to warrant space in a medical text (Ghalioungui 1965, 53, Nunn 1996, 39). Pinch cites two spells against haemorrhage, possibly post delivery, that invoke Anubis and involve the practical and magical action of inserting a knotted cloth into the vagina (Pinch 1995, 130). While menorrhagia is not mentioned explicitly in the papyri Nunn suggests that Ebers 898-30 may address this problem, where the remedy of drawing the blood out of a woman might entail the removal of excess blood and the consequent halting of bleeding (Nunn 1996, 197). “Other prescriptions of the Ebers papyrus concern leucorrhoea, metrorrhagia, vaginitis, means to empty the uterus or to retain a threatening miscarriage” (Ghalioungui 1965, 119). Egyptian medicine paid great attention to the proper and timely role of bleeding in a woman’s body, believing that too little or too much endangered a woman’s health. If this issue is addressed on the amulets it is expressed via a concern with the proper opening and closing of the organ.

This opening and closing also regulated menstruation. A closing spell for the uterus and reproductive tract, Papyrus B.M. 10059, spell 45, compares the reproductive tract to Lower Egypt and the mouth of a valley with menstruation compared with the inundation of the Nile (Ritner 1989, 212). Spells 41 and 42 also use the image of the inundation as metaphor for menstruation or haemorrhage (with perhaps one implication being that one must bleed to be fertile), while spell 40 is explicitly says that the bleeding must stop in order for the egg to grow firm (and form a fetus) (Ritner 1989, 213).

Opening and closing of the womb and of menstruation have different meanings based on the contexts in which they are applied (Ritner 1989, 213). In spell 41 the uterus is closed before bleeding commences, the purpose of the spell being to proactively

prevent haemorrhage. In spells 42 and 45, however, bleeding has already started and while the uterus is told to close, it is also told in spell 42 to expel its contents and in spell 45 the contents are drawn out (Ritner 1989, 213). In these two spells the purpose of the incantation is to aid the uterus in purging before it can be sealed, thereby regulating menstruation and not preventing it (Ritner 1989, 213). Opening and closing were both important aspects of uterine function, and if the uterus were to remain locked constantly and accumulate blood within itself, it could be as dangerous as if it remained open and subject to constant haemorrhagic bleeding. It is this dual function of opening and closing which is represented on the amulets by the Soroor formula, a formula for opening things, and the key, a tool to lock (or unlock) passages and containers.

The opening and closing of the womb was a clearly articulated concern of Egyptian gynaecology. Ritner notes that although the Egyptians were aware of the uterus' role in receiving sperm and providing a place for the child to form, they were unaware of how this happened, and therefore discussions of its function are usually limited to descriptions of it opening and closing (Ritner 1989, 212).¹⁹⁶

A final aspect involving opening the womb is birth. Indeed, in the Old Kingdom the phrase "opening the womb" is a euphemism for giving birth (Ritner 1989, 214). A birth spell in the Papyrus Leiden I.348 (n. 28) addresses the womb directly and orders it to "open for me" with the "me" apparently being Khnoum (Ritner 1989, 214). Like the uterine amulets the spell directly addresses the womb. Khnoum at his temple at Esna is also called "Shu who opens a woman for birth" (Ritner 1989, 214-215). While Khnoum

¹⁹⁶ Ritner notes that the role of the uterus in reproduction is evidenced by its alternative name, *mw.t-rmt*, "mother of man." However, Ghalioungui and Nunn have accepted the term not as an alternative name for the uterus but as the term for the placenta, an explanation Ritner finds unconvincing (Ritner 1989, 212 n. 29).

does appear on the uterine amulets, he typically holds a mini uterine pot, and only on gems c. 82 and 115 (Barb 1939, pl. 38 d) does he touch the uterine key (Ritner 1989, 215 n. 43). Nevertheless, it seems to be in this function, as opener of the womb in preparation for birth, that Khnoum appears on the amulets, in a direct continuation of Egyptian medical and magical traditions.

Nevertheless, while Nunn ascribes a basic knowledge of reproduction to the Egyptians, Ghalioungui notes that the part played by the uterus during pregnancy is never clearly articulated in the papyri so it is possible that it was not completely understood (Nunn 1996, 56, Ghalioungui 1965, 121).¹⁹⁷ It is likely that the uterus was seen merely as a site for the development of the male seed into a person with no contribution from the female (Nunn 1996, 56).¹⁹⁸

On the other hand, the other word for uterus, *hmt*, occurs in numerous gynaecological descriptions, but is mentioned only once in relation to childbearing, the usual word to designate the situation of the developing child or the place whence it comes out being equivalent to our word for 'the belly.'
Ghalioungui 1965, 121

The word used here would be *khet* which had the broader meaning of belly, body or uterus (Nunn 1996, 54). Here the connection between stomach/ abdomen and uterus is similar to that seen on the amulets, where the two are connected often and may represent belief in one larger abdominal system.¹⁹⁹ Of course if the belly and the uterus are most often connected at times of birth that is also significant for the amulets.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ As there was no term for the ovaries and that they were unknown.

¹⁹⁸ Although Nunn notes that inheritance through the female line as an important social mechanism in Egypt implying some sort of role to women in reproduction other than mere incubator. Nunn 1996, 56

¹⁹⁹ The blurring of the relationship of organs to each other is also observed in relation to the stomach and the heart in Egypt. The stomach was known as the mouth of the heart and the organs are not always clearly understood as two separate structures (Nunn 1996, 54). The connections between the two are detailed in the section of the Ebers papyrus known as the Treatise of the Heart (Ebers 854), and again points to the

Birth as understood in the Egyptian tradition may then be represented on the amulets. Indeed, labor pains and stomach ache are often grouped near each other in the medico-magical papyri, and similar treatment of the laying on of hands is recommended for both in at least one source (Pinch 1995, 100).²⁰¹ It should be noted that on the amulets which seem to show a woman giving birth (c. 140, 141), the scene bears a close resemblance to the hieroglyphic for delivery, excepting the depiction of a baby presenting cephalically which does not feature on the amulets (Figure 7.1) (Ghalioungui 1965, 122).

Movement:

Movement of the womb is a major concern on the amulets, a concern that seems to be mirrored in the Egyptian sources themselves. As discussed above the Kahun papyrus mentions the uterus causing pain in parts of the body as remote as the teeth. In the Kahun papyrus, there is a treatment that is introduced by the label “instructions for a woman suffering in her uterus by wandering,” which seems to indicate that fear of a wandering uterus was part of Egyptian medicine as Suvorov in her article on the topic also concludes (Nunn 1996, 81, Suvorov 2006). Ebers 789-795 is a collection of seven remedies to make a woman’s womb return to its proper spot in the body (Ebbell 1937, 109). It seems clear that an itinerant womb was a medical condition in Egypt. The phrasing of these labels, such as a “remedy to cause a woman’s womb to go to its place”

idea that combination of amuletic motifs pertaining to more than one organ on the uterine amulets may have originated in Egyptian anatomical conceptions (Ghalioungui 1965, 70).

²⁰⁰ Adding to this debate is the question of the placenta and whether the Egyptians recognized it as an organ separate from the uterus. Ghalioungui suggests that the common word for “uterus” is *hmt*, a fact generally agreed on, and posits the meaning of “placenta” for the term *mwt rmt* based on the ways it is used and the fact that it is never mentioned elsewhere besides issues of birth (Ghalioungui 1965, 68-69). Nunn would agree on the definition.

²⁰¹ Contraction remedies to hasten labor are found in Ebers 820-827 which prescribe materials injected intra vaginally. Ebbell thinks that these were meant to combat a gaping womb rather than hastening birth. Ebbell 1937, 112

is very close to the commands found on some of the uterine amulets such as c. 41 with the phrase “place the womb of so and so in its proper place,” although on this amulet the command is to a third party deity as opposed to the medical prescriptions which attempt to influence the womb directly (Ghalioungui 1965, 119).

Other Pathologies:

A number of other medical concerns are noted in the papyri in relation to the womb, including according to Ghalioungui patulous cervix (gaping or distention of the cervix) (Ebers 821-22), metritis or inflammation of the womb (Ebers 820) and something called an “eating in the womb” which sounds like cancer but is difficult to confirm (Ebers 813), (Ghalioungui 1965, 119). What appears to be a cancer of the breast emanating from the milk ducts is also described in Ebers 810 where an incantation is included commanding the disease not to eat the breast, not to cause lactation and not to induce bleeding (Nunn 1996, 197).

Kahun 24 and Ebers 812 both mention something called *setet* of the uterus, which is either a problem involving mucous or, based on the determinative of an arrow piercing an animal skin, shooting pains (Nunn 1996, 196). The latter interpretation is an interesting one as it coincides to a degree with Bonner’s interpretation of the octopus uterus as an organ in pain as symbolized the lightening-like lines shooting out of it and into the body. Nevertheless, Ebers 819 makes it clear that the womb was understood as capable of suffering pain (which in turn causes its woman pain), as it prescribed the milk of an ass, an animal sacred to Seth as an analgesic (Ritner 2008, 213 -214). The analgesic substance seems to be deemed efficacious according to the same logic that places Seth upon the uterine amulets, as an intimidating substance that will quiet the

pains of the uterus by threatening it (Ebbell 1937, 111). Whatever it is doing to cause its owner pain, the uterus will desist when exposed to such a terror.

One source of uterine pain may have been localized infections. Certainly there are many references in the papyri to cooling the uterus and driving out excess heat (a sign of infection) (Ebbell 1937, 111-112). This is another instance in which care for the uterus is based on the role it plays in the woman's body and not in its potential capacity as a reproductive organ (Nunn 1996, 196). The woman's health and comfort as discussed above, always takes precedence in the papyri, which extends also to situations involving the non-pregnant uterus.

Another problem that seems to be addressed in the papyri (Kahun 34) is that of an uro-vaginal fistula and the resulting incontinence it would cause (Nunn 1996, 35). The description allows identification of the problem with certainty (urine exiting from the vagina, and with no control) and until recently it was a relatively common problem, often brought about by a rough birth or rape. The papyrus also says that the problem could not be fixed, and indeed, it could not until recent advances in surgical technique (Nunn 1996, 197). Clearly this would have been a disturbing problem that would apparently suggest the involvement of the uterus outside of a reproductive capacity, and one for which a woman would avidly seek cure.²⁰²

It seems that a host of serious diseases of and related to the uterus, from displacement to cancer to fistulae to infection and general shooting pains were known by the Egyptians. Due to the preservation of mummies from this culture it is occasionally

²⁰² Indeed Ramesseum IV may have the first recorded account of an ano-vaginal fistula post delivery "a lump of faeces as something which has gone down into the vagina (kat) of his mother." Quoted in Nunn 1996, 1944.

possible to confirm modern diagnoses based on the symptoms described in the papyri. For instance, while Ebers 789-795 deal with descent of the uterus, remedies “to cause the uterus to go down to its place,” (a phrase eerily similar to that found on the amulet – which commands that the uterus be returned to its own place) mummies have also been found which support the diagnosis of prolapsed uterus which is often assigned to these passages (Nunn 1996, 196). Smith and Jones in 1910 reported at least two cases of ante-mortem vaginal prolapse in Byzantine mummies from Nubia as well as at least one case of intestinal/anal prolapse in a girl dating from the same period (Smith and Jones 1910, 267-268). Smith notes in passing that based on his work among predynastic populations in Naga ed Deir in Egypt, the condition seems also to be known among this population (Smith and Jones 1910, 268). Prolapse of internal organs can be a spontaneous event during decomposition and mummification of a body, presenting a common pseudo-pathology, but Smith and Jones are aware of this and are careful to present cases that are clearly ante-mortem, which Aufderheide, an M.D. specializing in palaeopathology, cannot find reason to doubt in his treatment of uterine prolapse in mummies (Aufderheide 2004, 479, Janssens 1970, 119).

Derry in his 1935 article on the pelves of five Egyptian women from the 11th dynasty also reports a mummy with a tear from vagina to bladder in the princess Hehenit, possible support for fistulae among the population (however it is unclear if the tear was caused by post-mortem processing) (Derry 1935, Ghalioungui 1965, 118-119). Janssens in 1970 ascribed this fistula to an extended labor (Janssens 1970, 118, Aufheidere 2004, 480).

Although cancer is suggested by Ebers 813 (an affliction which eats the uterus and is diagnosed by a smell of burnt meat), and Kahun 2 (a similar affliction that seems like uterine cancer) Nunn notes that cancers are rare in ancient populations as represented by mummified remains (Nun 1996, 81, Harer 1993, 20). A cystadenoma is known from the ovary of the mummy of Irty-senu (the Granville mummy) of the British Museum, and while it was originally believed to be malignant it is now thought to have been merely a benign growth (Nunn 1996, 81, Aufheidere 2004, 482). Leiomyomas, tumors of the smooth muscle of the uterine wall which tend to calcify, are known from a 3rd-4th c. AD Nubian mummy and Neolithic Swiss populations (Aufderheide 2004, 480). These tumors are more commonly known as fibroids, and while they are not malignant they can cause menorrhagia, cramping, urinary problems and general abdominal pain and discomfort. No malignant tumors of female genitalia have yet been identified in Egyptian mummies (Aufderheide 2004, 482). Thus it is possible that the uterine amulets may deal with the pain of fibroids and other tumors, though malignancies have yet to be located in the mummy record.

An interesting aspect of ancient Egyptian medicine and gynaecology is its remarkably long life. Although Greek, Arabic and western biomedicine have all been adopted in turn by the inhabitants of Egypt, nevertheless, until even the turn of the last century, much of the gynaecology, if witnesses and ethnographies are to be trusted, matched almost exactly with many of the practices discussed in the papyri. Indeed, Inhorn remarks repeatedly on the overlap between ancient and modern folk gynaecology and treatments for infertility in Egypt, even in the 1990s. Ghalioungui did the same for the 1960s.

It is especially in the domain of gynaecology that survival of old usages is remarkable. Female students were admitted into the Faculties of Medicine in Egypt only in 1929, and for centuries old midwives have monopolized the treatment of the secluded women in remote areas of Egypt and thereby kept century-old traditions alive. As in the Kahun papyrus, gynaecological diseases are still treated by boiling aromatic herbs under the sitting patient. Ghalioungui 1965, 167-168

Ancient Egyptian medicine is not so far removed from the present as some might think.²⁰³

In summary ancient Egyptian medical traditions have much in common with the uterine amulets. Both share a concern for the correct opening and closing of the uterus and both spend much energy focusing on returning the womb to its proper position when it has moved. The papyri show evidence of much mixing between magical and rational medicine, a mix also found on the amulets, as well as a belief that many internal disorders are caused by daemons and thus must be combated by supernatural means. Moreover, magical and medical papyri both assign protective deities to each part of the body, as is seen with the daemon Ororiouth on the uterine amulets.

Egyptian anatomy of the female body understands the uterus as bicornuate like a cow's uterus or as a well, through a phonetic connection to the word for womb, *hmt*. The concept of the matrix as a jar or vase is not one seen in Egyptian medicine. The anatomical tendency to link the uterus and the stomach or belly, and to blur the lines between organs, is one seen on the amulets. Further, while fertility medicine was a large part of the gynaecological treatises, this is a tradition which does not seem to carry over to the amulets.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ Just as Ghalioungui reports that in the 1960s many people still caught the night dew to use for medical purposes, a common ancient practice, mothers-in-law still palpated the breasts of their daughters-in-law to test for pregnancy, as described in the Kahun papyrus (Ghalioungui 1965, 144, 49).

²⁰⁴ In regards to preventing miscarriage or prescribing contraceptives etc. See Ebbell 1937, 108-114

The main contribution to the amulets comes from the repeated prescriptions in the papyri meant to battle uterine pain or pains caused by the uterus. These prescriptions describe disorders that would be understood in modern terms as uterine fibroids, menorrhagia, amenorrhea, uterine prolapsus, fistulae, metritis, infection and cancer. Without applying these modern terms to the papyri, it is enough to note that most of the prescriptions describe pains that combat pains associated with the non-pregnant uterus. They are a keen reminder of the general impact the uterus can have on a woman's health simply by existing within her body. Efforts to combat these problems are what dominate the imagery and epigraphy of the amulets, which are only marginally concerned with fertility and reproduction.

Greek Medicine: The Hippocratics, Plato and Aristotle

The Hippocratics

A major school of classical Greek medicine and one which Ann Hanson has claimed influenced the uterine amulets significantly is the Hippocratic school. Based on Cos from the 5th -4th c. BC it is said to have been founded by Hippocrates (Hanson 1975, 567, Nunn 1996, 12). The authorship of the Hippocratic corpus, a body of texts of classical Greek medicine, has traditionally been attributed to Hippocrates, though in fact based on internal contradictions and the use of various dialects and phraseology it can be shown to have had many authors and to have been composed over a long period of time. It may have taken a form similar to its current one in the museum at Alexandria in the Hellenistic period (Nunn 1996).²⁰⁵

²⁰⁵ While it is not always possible to determine the relationship of texts to each other with any certainty, (although many have tried) it is possible on occasion to date and place a text, for example Peri Parthenion, was composed somewhere in Ionia during the late 5th or early 4th c. (Flemming and Hanson 1998, Hanson 1989).

Due to the lack of unity among the texts of the corpus making generalizations from it can be a scholastically questionable exercise; however King maintains that there are enough points of agreement between many of the individual tracts, especially the gynaecological, to warrant it (King 1998, 21). Dean-Jones is of the opinion that unless a point is challenged in another Hippocratic text it can be assumed that all the authors would agree with it (Dean-Jones 1994, 11). This approach has been used profitably by authors like Ann Hanson, Leslie Dean-Jones and Helen King to make broader arguments about women's health and the practice of medicine in the ancient world, and it is also the approach that will be adopted here (Hanson 1990, 1994, Dean-Jones, 1994, King 1998).

In general the Hippocratics eschewed the use of amulets and other non rational medical methods (However see Chapter 5, Hanson 1995, 287-288). It should not be expected that the tradition of using amulets came from this quarter, but rather that the contents which the amulets bear and the ideas that they embody may be derived from this tradition. Indeed, there are many prescriptions in the Graeco-Egyptian papyri for manufacturing and activating amulets similar to the uterine talismans, and King points out that many of these recipes or at least elements of them seem to have originated in Hippocratic medicine (King 1998, 229). For instance, the author of On Regimen links the seven Greek vowels to the seven senses of hearing, sight, smell, taste, speech, touch and breath as the seven means by which a healer is able to gain knowledge (King 1998, 40-41). The seven vowels are popular motifs on the uterine and other amulets produced in Roman Egypt, and although it was mentioned in chapter three that the vowels were generally deemed powerful symbols, it is possible that they are also included on healing

amulets in the capacity of representing the senses by which a healer gains the knowledge by which to alleviate a pain.

The Gynaecologies:

The gynaecologies of the Hippocratic corpus gain coherence in their treatment of diseases and pathologies of the womb and the female body (Hanson 1975, 569). These texts are unique in that they discussed information readily available only to females and were directed at the treatment exclusively of females (Dean-Jones 1994, 27). On the one hand these treatises act as if female physiology and anatomy are pathological and require medical intervention, thus establishing the “normal” female as something alien and wrong according to the benchmark of “man,” yet on the other hand they also send out the message that these functions are natural for females and it would be deviant for females to take on the characteristics of men (King 2002, 81). In this way the texts demonstrate and reinforce through a medical vehicle how one could best become a non-threatening female, a potentially foreign and therefore dangerous creature under control (King 2002, 81). These treatises operate within the bounds of and respond to the wider assumptions about how the female body works, both physiologically and within the social realm (Hanson 1990, 316).²⁰⁶ Medicine and the gynaecologies of the Hippocratic corpus must have accorded with a patient’s expectations of diagnosis and treatment or else it would not have been employed.

The characterization of women by the treatises is that of a different animal than men, as opposed to later traditions such as that developed by Aristotle where women are

²⁰⁶ If they did not and adopted an approach to women and their bodies which was totally unfamiliar to the greater culture, even if it were to arguably gain favor with women themselves, the *kurioi*, or male guardians of women would not employ and pay such practitioners and his women patients would not follow his orders (King 1998, 21-22).

seen as a substandard male (Dean-Jones 1994, 225). Medically women were not just separated from men in respect to their possession of a womb, but on a variety of fronts. For example, the flesh of women was spongier than that of men and women were consequently moister (King 1998, 27-28, Dean-Jones 1994, 45-46). Women also possessed a tube that ran from their head to their reproductive organs which men did not, and while the authors of the Hippocratic treatises could not decide if women were hotter or colder than men, they did agree on the fact that they did not operate at the same temperature as men (although this was not always obvious to the touch) (King 1998, 27-28, Dean-Jones 1994, 45-46). While Aphorisms and Coan Prognoses treat male and female illnesses in the same way in other treatises such as Airs it is noted that diseases manifest differently in women than men (Lloyd 1999b 65-66). In practice, however all the treatises focused on the reproductive organs of women when illness struck, which is in itself different from the treatment of men (Lloyd 1999b, 66).

From the age of menarche to menstruation her body was a constant source of danger to a woman and to those around her (Dean-Jones 1994, 47). The womb itself was so dangerous that it necessitated that a woman take a master, a *kurios*, for her body in order to tame this organ and prevent it from harming her (Hanson 1990, 319-320). If a woman did not marry soon enough, as shown in the Peri Parthenion her womb became dry and migrated about her body, suffocating her and inducing madness. If the womb was not moistened often enough by intercourse after a woman had married or been widowed it would become desiccated and migrate to other organs in search of moisture where it could cause mortal damage. A woman's body, and particularly her womb, was a looming source of danger to her at all times during her reproductive years, and it was

necessary in the Hippocratic medical tradition to impose some sort of control on it to prevent it from carrying out its threats. In classical Greece, this control was provided by a husband, on the amulets by the Ouroboros and other magical devices.

This point of a woman's body being inherently perilous brings up the important consideration of understanding the body in regards to a modern cultural framework. The notion today is preposterous, but it was a real threat to the Greeks who wrote and lived by these works. To dismiss their content as ridiculous or to attempt alternate diagnoses over 2.5 millennia does the texts an injustice and strips it of its cultural meaning and values, the most valuable things that it can convey to modern scholars (King 2002, 85).²⁰⁷ Arguing what clinical diagnosis was the inspiration for "wandering womb" will not be considered in the following discussion; rather emphasis will be placed on teasing out the internal logic of the Hippocratic treatises and trying to ascertain what if any overlap they have with the amulets.²⁰⁸

Anatomy:

The best way to continue is by looking at the anatomy and physiology of the female body as presented in the corpus. In the Hippocratic corpus it is the case that organs tend to be of secondary importance to fluids in determining the health of a body (King 1998, 34). Blood in particular was important, especially in regards to female

²⁰⁷ For instance, while Lloyd Jones notes that the ancients didn't always notice amniotic fluid as a separate material from blood, King suggests that this argument misses the point altogether – that what we should be focusing on is not how our categories don't fit with those of the ancients, but rather how the Greeks developed a logic as to why menstrual blood and amniotic fluid are one and the same (King 1987, 117-118).

²⁰⁸ Indeed, one wonders if some sort of feedback mechanism is not at play in medicine and the human body, whereby one expects certain culturally defined afflictions with their attendant symptoms, and the body therefore obliges. The degree and nature of psychosomatic interaction in a person is still not understood well, and may make it possible that afflictions like wandering womb were very real conditions although they do not affect the modern population, who have no cultural expectation of suffering from such diseases.

health. Blood separated not only gods from mortals, but also men from women, the latter having too much blood. Men shed the blood of others in war and sacrifice; women shed their own blood (King 1987, 119-120). The difference between the sexes in relation to blood was also related to the different body temperatures of the sexes. Women maintained a different temperature than men, a fact which allowed for the creation of menstrual blood (Dean-Jones 1994, 45). Women's flesh was also less compact than men's which allowed it to soak up more blood from the stomach where it had been concocted from food (Dean-Jones 1994, 55). Thus even in the earliest sources sexual differentiation rested not on the possession of a single structure but rather on the processes which happened in the bodies of women and men.

Nevertheless, a consequence of this belief that men's and women's bodies functioned differently and indeed that women were like a different species. Anatomically this meant that men and women did not have to have corresponding body parts (extending even beyond the sex specific reproductive organs.)²⁰⁹ For example, it was believed that women, unlike men, had no urethra, that they simply micturated through their vaginal canal (Dean-Jones 1994, 85). Thus organs, while not the primary source of difference between the sexes, were involved in defining that differentiation. The most prominent organ in doing this was the uterus.

How then was the uterus conceptualized in Greek anatomy? Lloyd has noted that anatomical structures are often named in relation to common objects and this seems to be the approach in regards to the womb (King 1987, 123, Lloyd 1999a, 159). The Greeks, like the Egyptians did not practice dissection of human subjects, and thus as On Ancient

²⁰⁹ Contra Laqueur's assertion that in the ancient world women were merely inside-out men. This thought apparently did not surface until Herophilos

Medicine 22 notes, it was hard for medical practitioners to gain a solid knowledge of internal structures (Lloyd 1999a, 159). The solution this treatise recommends is to use objects outside the body as means to conceptualize an organ. For example it suggests that the bladder, skull and uterus can all be likened to a cupping glass as all are broad at the top, taper to the bottom and have a sort of round shape to them (Lloyd 1999a, 159, Hanson 1995, 286).

More commonly the uterus is compared to a jug or pot (Epidemics 6.5.11, 5.318.14-15 L; Mul 1.33; Gent 9.3) and more especially an upside down jug, a *κεραύς* or *κεραύη* with the bottom on top and the mouth, *os* or *stoma*, on the bottom (Hanson 1990, 317). It should be noted that this is the exact image that is found on the amulets symbolizing the human womb, a situation which is not accidental. Rather, the symbolism of the amulets seems to be derived from the Hippocratic, or possible the popular Greek conception for the shape of the human womb.

De Genitura 9.3 and De Morbis Mulierum I.33 make the comparison even more explicit when they note that a child, like a gourd, can only grow to the size of its surrounding pot (referencing a Greek agricultural practice), and that trying to deliver a breech presenting baby is similar to trying to shake an olive pit sideways out of a narrow necked pot (Hanson 1995, 286). The idea of womb as jar also relates back to Pandora who was formed out of clay like pots were and who also possessed the first womb of the human race (King 1998, 26).²¹⁰ A further connection to the idea of the womb as a vase comes from the verb *κεράω* “to mix liquids in a container.” Although not found

²¹⁰ That this connotation was not archaic and irrelevant at the time of the production of the uterine amulets is seen by a comment in Athenaeus Deipnosophistae where a guest puns on the connection between the word for womb, *κεραύη*, and the word for “latter,” *κεραύω*, which King suggests would have brought to mind the idea that Pandora, the first womb, was a late arrival to what is the human party (King 1998, 34).

on the amulets, the verb was a common euphemism for intercourse in popular and scientific sources, the womb serving as that container used for mixing (Hanson 2004, 298, Hanson 1990, 325).

Most texts such as Epidemics 6.5.11²¹¹ use the word $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\sigma$, a jar or wine vase to describe the womb (King 1998, 34). However, the text of Nat. Puer uses the term $\alpha\sigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron\sigma$, soft, to modify the uterus and a swollen womb is described as an $\alpha\sigma\kappa\alpha$, a wineskin. These terms have lead Dean-Jones to suggest that a wineskin is a more appropriate metaphor for the womb, as both womb and skin are soft, flexible objects (Dean-Jones 1994, 65). This representation of the womb may perhaps be seen on amulet c. 97, on which the shape of the uterine vase is not rigid, but is corrugated and possibly slightly collapsed on itself. Indeed, Delatte in 1914 noted that the vessel at times looked more like a sac than a rigid pot. It is possible than both metaphors were current in antiquity and at the time the amulets were carved.

The connection to the womb and vessels is deep and far ranging. King in her consideration of amniotic fluid notes that only menstrual blood and lochial flow are linked to sacrifice (King 1987, 119-120).²¹² The vessel that would catch sacrificial blood was called in the Homeric world by the word *amnion* (King 1987, 119-120). The word was also linked by popular notion if not etymology to the words for blood, *aima*, and for little lamb *amnion* or sheepskin *amneion* (King 1987, 119-121). The inner membrane of the chorion was called the amnion, apparently for several overlapping reasons: not only because it was soft and fine like a lambskin, but also because in popular conception it

²¹¹ Where it is claimed that paleness in the nipples is a sign of disease in the jar, and which Galen later glosses as the womb – King 1998, 34

²¹² Noting also the connection to Pandora, the first woman who was given as punishment for the deliberately deceiving sacrificial offering of Prometheus to Zeus

collected the lochial and menstrual blood within the uterus prior to birth, making the uterus an internal sacrificial vessel of sorts (King 1987, 121-122).

Other popular metaphors for the womb involved cooking which likened the womb to an oven. Pandora was given to man in place of fire, and her womb and *ἡ μήτρα*, like fire was drying and desiccating (King 1998, 25). In Genitura and Nature of the Child as well as in Aristotle (GA 764a12-20) the womb is called an oven, *ἡ μήτρα* (King 1998, 33, Hanson 2004, 302-303). Aristophanic jokes also likened the pregnant womb to a pot set over the fire (Hanson 2004, 302-303).

This characterization of the womb as an oven or pot in which food is cooked overlaps with the characterization of the stomach. “In the gynecological treatises the womb shared characteristics of the belly (stomach) that both processed food by means of heat and transformed it into increase and nourishment” (Hanson 2004 -, 303). Indeed a conflation between the two organs was maintained in the popular phrase for pregnancy “*ἡ μήτρα ἡ μήτρα*,” (Hanson 2004-, 304).²¹³ Similarly, the word *ἡ μήτρα* was used to denote the esophagus, the stomach, the neck of the bladder, the womb and even the neck of the vagina (Lloyd 1999b, 162). According to Lloyd, Galen explains it as a term for any narrow passage leading into a cavity (Lloyd 1999b, 162 n. 172). The meaning of the term is only made clear by context (Lloyd 1999b, 165).²¹⁴ What a modern physician would deem the inconsistent use of anatomical terminology reflects the actual inconsistent knowledge of internal anatomy in most of these cases (Lloyd 1999b, 158).

²¹³ Hanson would trace back the connection between the belly or stomach and the uterus to the earliest myths of the Titans where the children of Gaia and Ouranos were forced back into the body of Gaia, back into her womb, whereas the children of Rhea and Kronos were swallowed down into Kronos’ stomach, an equivalent position (Hanson 2004, 303).

²¹⁴ Lloyd provides many literary references to the use of the word in 199b note 172

The connection between the womb and the stomach is also seen in texts such as Nature of the Child 21 which explains how when the pregnant womb exerts pressure on the stomach it causes the stomach to exude the fat of food which then migrates to the breasts where somehow it is made sweet and turned into milk through heat from the womb (Lloyd 1999b, 84, Dean-Jones 1994, 218).²¹⁵ A further link between the womb and the stomach is found in Diseases of Women I 38 where it is said that “the womb perceives when a diarrhetic flux comes down from the belly” (Hanson 1975, 580).²¹⁶

Hanson’s translation of Diseases of Women I takes up the idea of the womb as an agent slightly apart from the rest of the body, as having its own power and quirks.²¹⁷ “Wombs by themselves also have natural dispositions by which miscarriage can occur: wombs that are flatulent, for example, or tightly packed, loose, overly large, overly small, and other types which are similar” (Hanson 1975, 580). The uterus in this description

²¹⁵ Dean-Jones also argues a genital-chest link as well, but this is not immediately relevant to the amulets. Dean-Jones 1994, 215

²¹⁶ This link may not have been a hard one to forge, as a severe diarrhetic bout can cause widespread bodily havoc, including loss of pregnancy and death.

²¹⁷ It might also be noted that the uterus is often referred to in the plural in the Hippocratic corpus, which may indicate that by the authors of the works or in popular discourse it was held to have multiple separate compartments, such as the uteri of pigs or cows, organs with which the ancients would have been more familiar with than their human counterpart (Dean-Jones 1994, 67, King 1998, 34). Galen in his On Anatomical Procedure 12.2 also specifies that it is one organ with two compartments (King 1998, 34). Mul. 2.146 and 2.162 also refer to the multiple mouths of the uterus while Superfetation describes it as having two horns (Dean-Jones 1994, 66-67). Dean-Jones proposes that since the mouth of the womb was pointed in the wrong direction for blood to easily funnel into it, that the ancients may have understood the stumps of the Fallopian tubes as these multiple mouths or horns, passages into the body through which moisture could enter the organ (Dean-Jones 1994, 66-67). The mechanism by which the womb becomes full of blood is debated in the Hippocratic corpus. The author of On Ancient Medicine claims that the womb actively draws blood to itself, while other Hippocratics believe that the flesh is triggered to release its blood to the womb based on an action of the womb, but that the uterus is not inherently an attractor of blood (Dean-Jones 1994, 63-64). Nat. Puer asserts that blood flows daily to the womb during a pregnancy because the fetus attracts the blood from the body (Dean-Jones 1994, 63-64). While the blood is said to flow into the womb, Dean-Jones is careful to assert that this does not mean that the organ is a passive recipient and does not actively draw the blood to itself at regular intervals (Dean-Jones 1994, 63-64). Her interpretation would suggest a womb with a power to command and affect other parts of women’s bodies, a portrait in keeping with that drawn on the amulets.

seems different than other organs. Simply by attributing to it a “disposition” one grants it a degree of personification, a will to be one way or another. The idea of a willful uterus which does what it likes is one which is found on the amulets.

The Womb and Health:

According to the treatises of the Hippocratic corpus the health of the woman was directly related to that of her womb. Hippocratic treatises such as Diseases of Women I 72 speak of inflamed uteri (often caused by abortion attempts with corrosive materials) which indicates that their authors were familiar with the concept of a uterus ailing in its own right and in need of medical attention, a concept expressed on the amulets. “But violence is troublesome, and brings risk that the uterus be ulcerated or inflamed, a very dangerous result” (Hanson 2004, 299 quoting Mul. 1.72).

However, while dangers to the uterus were noted in the corpus, the majority of the works focus on the dangers to the greater health of the women either caused or alleviated by action of the womb. Therapies for treating the diseases of women were based on the idea that the underlying sponginess of women’s flesh could not be altered, and that the retention of too much fluid within the body was dangerous to a woman’s health (King 1998, 36, Hanson 2004 -, 304). Most therapies therefore either focused on reducing the amount of fluid retained in the flesh by regulating diet and therefore production of moisture, or by squeezing it out by oiling and binding the body (King 1998, 36, referencing Diseases of Women 2.127, L 8.272 and 2.129, L 8.278). The most important means of regulating moisture however, was through the womb, the means by which the female body regularly purged itself of excess blood.

Because of this connection between blood, sickness and the womb “for many Hippocratic physicians, any disease a woman suffered was gynaecological and the cause of all these diseases was the womb” (Dean-Jones 1994, 136). Being female and having an excess of blood that must be evacuated by a very temperamental organ which was prone to acting independently and irregularly meant that one constantly teetered on the edge of sickness and frailty (Dean-Jones 1994, 136). Places in Man 47 states explicitly that “the womb is the origin of all diseases of women” (King 1998, 12). The meaning of the statement is simply that any disorder of a female body could be linked to the improper evacuation of blood by the womb, thus bleeding too much or too little was a central concern in the health and medicine of classical Greek women.

This argument, that a woman’s reproductive system (which to the Hippocratics meant only the uterus) was of central importance whenever she was ill is found in many of the Hippocratic treatises (Dean-Jones 1994, 110). The disease from which a woman may be suffering may be one that men suffered from and may have had nothing to do with reproduction, nevertheless it was almost inevitably tied to the actions of the uterus, an organ in the treatises which was in Dean-Jones’ words “fragile” and subject to monthly adjustments (Dean-Jones 1994, 135). The uterus was the first and last line of defense in maintaining a woman’s health.

While the theory of the four humors is common throughout the rest of the Hippocratic corpus, it plays very little part in the gynaecological treatises such as *Diseases of women I and II*. Again, this is because the nature of women was such that blood was their dominant humor and one organ, the uterus, existed to regulate this humor (King 1998, 69). While fluids typically took precedence over organs in Hippocratic

physiology and treatments, the uterus was an exception to this rule. The woman's body is "defined by blood hydraulics" and the womb was the means by which the physician could adjust the system as required (Dean-Jones 1994, 225).

Most of cases in the Hippocratic gynaecologies are accounts of how certain uterine pathologies were treated; the majority of the ailments seemed to have arisen when blood had or had not passed into the womb as normal (Dean-Jones 1994, 59). While the whole body of a woman may be wracked with illness, in Diseases of Women I the doctor is able to diagnose the illness through abnormalities in the menses or inspection of the menstrual rags (Dean-Jones 1994, 122, King 1998, 57). Generally the source of illness was first assumed to be retained menses, a condition which the Hippocratics and later Aristotle describe as a painful disease of itself (Dean-Jones 1994, 125, 129). Retained menses in the Hippocratic corpus could lead to such conditions as headaches, gout, fever, haemorrhoids, sciatica, consumption, suffocation and madness (Dean-Jones 1994, 131).

According to Mul. I after two months of missed periods it was possible for the menstrual blood to migrate to the lungs and cause *phthis* (a condition probably similar to tuberculosis) and then death (Hanson 1975, 572). More commonly, however, the woman is simply wracked with pain if amenorrhea continues for two months (Hanson 1975, 572). If the condition extends into a third month Diseases of Women 1 specifies that she will be afflicted with chills, fever, suffocation and lower back pain (Hanson 1975, 572). In the fourth month she will also suffer from thickened urine, a hard and distended abdomen, insomnia, lack of appetite and a propensity to gnash her teeth (Hanson 1975, 573-574). The fifth month brings even more severe pain, while the sixth will see her suffer from all of the above and also restlessness and tossing, vomiting, violent thirst,

strangury, a gurgling and descending womb, back pain, a thick heavy tongue, aphasia, neck pain, haemeturia, swelling of the legs and abdomen and then severe pain and death (Hanson 1975, 573-574). From this disease course it is clear why so much attention is paid in the corpus to ensuring that proper monthly bleeding occurs.²¹⁸

There were alternate paths that amenorrhea could follow as well. For example in one account after a period of two to three months the retained menses were occasionally thought to rot and turn into pus, causing pain to the touch and being classified as a *nosos*, disease or *rhoos*, a pathological flux (Hanson 1975, 574, Dean-Jones 1994, 129-131). It was possible that the menses in this case could migrate to a point above the groin, to the inner thigh or elsewhere such as to the anus where they could burst forth (Hanson 1975, 575). If the woman survived she would be barren and menstruate from that alternate orifice from thence forth (Hanson 1975, 574-75). If the pus was in part derived from lacerations of the womb and those cuts or lesions were not healed she would also die (Hanson 1975, 574).²¹⁹ Blood not released via menstruation could also overflow into other parts of the body causing madness, lethargy, numbness and general havoc (Flemming and Hanson 1998, 251, Hanson 1990, 318).

As dangerous as too little bleeding was, too much bleeding also could have horrible consequences for the female body; indeed it could be fatal (King 1998, 84). Consequences of menorrhagia included lethargy, fever, anorexia, anxiety, weakness,

²¹⁸ “Luckily” for the afflicted woman measures were known to stimulate the menses, including intercourse with one’s husband (Hanson 1990, 316).

²¹⁹ One means of healing these uterine ulcers was through the application of raw meat, a common cure in Egyptian medicine, but rare in the Greek world (although known to neurosurgeons of the earlier half of the 20th c.) (Majno 1975, 192 n. 277).

pain, sterility, paleness and weight-loss (Dean-Jones 1994, 134). Haemorrhage was, of course, a constant danger after birth and could also quickly be fatal.

Nevertheless, menstruation did have its benefits for women. In Epidemics it is asserted that although women may get sick more often, they also are more likely to be less sick than men when afflicted with the same disease, and more likely to survive than men when suffering from a serious disease. It is because of the womb's thorough connections to the rest of the body and its regular ability to purge excess blood that bore disease that women were more likely to survive a fever or other illness (King 1998, 50-52). In Prognoses 7 it is stated that if a man is sick and he suffers a nosebleed, a type of vicarious menstruation, that he will be purged of all the disease agents and survive (Dean-Jones 1994, 143). Women did not have to rely on such unpredictable events as epistaxis to be rid of the harmful substances within their body, for that they could depend on menstruation.

Given the importance of proper bleeding in maintaining a woman's health it is of no surprise that great lengths were gone to in order to regulate the womb and its functioning within the body. A healthy, well functioning uterus was the key to being a healthy woman, indeed to survival. It is this concern with the health of the womb that is evidenced on the amulets. Although blood and bleeding are not mentioned on the amulets, the mechanism by which the uterus would control such events, its opening and closing is a theme that manifests itself on the amulets repeatedly. It is to this theme within the Hippocratic corpus to which we turn now.

Opening and Closing:

There is some debate as to what state the mouth of the womb would have been in “normally” for the Greek woman. Hanson believes that the womb would have opened and closed every month. Evidence to support her contention comes from Diseases of Women I 24 where it is said that the mouth of the womb lies open and more stretched out after the menses and the empty veins are best able to draw the seed to themselves (Hanson 2004, 294). She understands by implication that before menstruation the mouth of the womb would have been closed and the engorged veins would have no attraction for the male contribution (Hanson 2004, 294). She also cites Diseases of Women as a source for the view that the sperm may flow out of the woman after intercourse if the mouth of the womb either never opened to admit it, or did not close quickly enough to retain it (Hanson 2004, 296).

According to Generation the mouth of the womb opens due to it having been moistened by the emission of the male seed (Hanson 1975, 583, Hanson 2004, 297). The womb is similarly stimulated to open by the friction of intercourse, which is why sex is prescribed as a therapy for amenorrhea which may be caused by a uterine mouth that is shut and will not release the menses (Dean-Jones 1994, 51, Lloyd 2003, 50, Hanson 1990, 319).

Arguing against Hanson’s view of the regular and cyclic opening and closing of the uterus is Dean-Jones who asserts that in a healthy non-pregnant woman the closing of the womb was considered a pathological condition (Dean-Jones 1994, 69). She believes that the Hippocratics did not expect the womb to close monthly, for if they did they would not have made such a fuss about its closing in times of ill health or due to pregnancy (Dean-Jones 1994, 62 and n. 70).

Regardless of its “normal” state, be it open or closed, they seem to agree that opening and closing the womb could have dire consequences both in terms of the health of the woman and in terms of the maintenance of pregnancy. A gaping womb lets both blood that nurtures a pregnancy, and possibly even a fetus slip away and can cause abortion and disease (Hanson 1975, 580).

For women who have not yet given birth the phrase is used in Diseases of Women I that the “womb lies less open,” which makes menstruation and a first birth more painful and difficult (Hanson 1975, 572). The logic here does not seem to be that the mouth of the womb is what is open, but rather that the pressure that the baby exerts on the abdomen while growing and by passing through the birth canal causes the breakdown of the surrounding flesh and the opening of the passages that lead blood into the womb, thus making the chance of painful uterine congestion and amenorrhea lower for one who has given birth (Hanson 1975, 570, Hanson 1990, 359). Hanson also notes that the womb is said to open wider for those who have given birth and they are more easily rid of menstrual blood (Hanson 1990, 359). Although the actual opening and closing of the womb is not in question here, the use of words like “open” makes it possible that the key symbol on the amulets refers not only to the actual opening and closing of the womb to regulate menstruation and fertility, but possibly also refers to the opening of the womb’s passages so as to make its functioning less bothersome and more easily tolerated.

Pregnancy and Birth:

What role then did the Hippocratics envision the uterus playing in pregnancy and is this a theme which also appears on the amulets? While barrenness, such as described

in the Peri Parthenion, could cause madness and longing for death, the pregnant womb and the fetus in *utero* were also potential causes of harm to a woman (Flemming and Hanson 1998, 252, Hanson 2004, 293). One verb meaning “to be pregnant” is ἔμειναι which is related to the word for a female dog, κύων or κύωνίς (King 1998, 24). The dog is a predatory animal that while usually tame has the ability to go feral and behave like a wild animal. Agamemnon in the *Iliad* uses the dog as a simile for women and Hesiod invests Pandora with a “bitch mind” (King 1998, 24). That is all to say that women and their uteri in particular (which are especially tied to the dog), κύων , are dangerous animals with only the thinnest veneer of civility about them. The wildness of the uterus can even be turned against the woman it resides in.

After conception had taken place it was imperative that all the menses be retained as they were the nourishment by which the fetus gained energy and matter to grow (Hanson 1990, 318).²²⁰ Bleeding while pregnant was not only ominous in that it might indicate an impending miscarriage, but it also signaled loss of blood for the fetus to utilize (Hanson 2004-, 298). If the child did not receive enough blood it moved (presumably with the uterus) to the liver to find more, at which point it could cause serious harm to the woman’s body (Dean-Jones 1994, 200 n. 183, Mul. 1.32). While later in pregnancy the baby consumed all the menstrual blood, earlier it could not handle such a great volume, so this excess was stored eventually to emerge as the lochial flow (King 1987, 118).²²¹

²²⁰ In regards to becoming pregnant in the first place, the Hippocratics advised that the uterus be made to stand as wide open as possible, going so far as to recommend dilation of the cervix with a lead probe immediately prior to intercourse (Hanson 1975, 578). For the Hippocratics, the menses were not actually necessary in the process of conception (Mul. 1.32) (Dean-Jones 1994, 200 n. 183, 153).

²²¹ Prior and immediately after the birth of a child the Hippocratics were aware of several other complications related to the uterus and induced by pregnancy. Many prescriptions attempt to combat lower

Once a baby was born the Hippocratics (Mul. 1.1, 2.143) recommended that a woman refrain from intercourse until the lochia had stopped flowing due to the increased danger of a prolapsed womb occurring at this time (Dean-Jones 1994, 214). Prolapse was a definite worry, and while many modern scholars connect it to wandering womb, its separate mention here would seem to indicate that it was understood as a separate condition.

In regards to the role of the uterus during birth, Hanson, citing research carried out by Fasbender²²² asserts that the authors of the Hippocratic gynaecologies did not know of uterine contractions (Hanson 2004, 269). Labor pains were thought to be caused by the baby struggling to make its escape from its mother (Hanson 2004, 269, Dean-Jones 1994, 212). Dean-Jones, while agreeing with this assessment on the whole, notes that one Hippocratic text, Mul. 1.34, may display knowledge of uterine contractions when it asserts that “through the entire intervening time the woman has pains in her stomach from time to time inasmuch as her belly, especially her uterus, is contracting around the embryo” (Dean-Jones 1994, 212). Nevertheless, the text seems to indicate that the whole abdomen, including the stomach, is contracting around the fetus. Nor does it state what the purpose of the contractions was, whether to expel the fetus from the woman’s body or as an attempt on the part of the abdominal organs to regain their original, pre-pregnancy positions within the abdomen as the baby begins its exit. Overall it seems that

back pain induced by pregnancy marking it out as a common problem faced at this time (Hanson 1975, 581). For uterus that refuses to send forth the lochia they recommend sitz baths and medicating the lower back (Hanson 1975, 581). A uterus whose lining was too smooth could also cause an involuntary loss of pregnancy due the fetal membranes just slipping away from it (Hanson 1975, 579). This may be one reason why a corrugated or fleshy uterus is shown on some amulets like c. 97, or why uterine votives were also often corrugated.

²²² Heinrich Fasbender, Entwicklungslehre, Geburtshilfe und Gynäkologie in den hippokratischen Schriften, 1897.

contractions were not known among the Hippocratics, and that the command to “contract womb” must either mean to “shrink down,” or if contraction is meant in the sense of birth, it is a command not derived from the Hippocratic tradition.

While the “Thesmophoriazousae” of Aristophanes satirized the medical conceptions of birth and the female body by presenting a surreptitious child kicking its way out of the pottery jar in which it was smuggled into the house, this satirical treatment of birth also clings to the concept that it is the baby who frees itself from the jar of the womb (Hanson 1994, 179). That said, the Hippocratics were clear that a breech presentation, with the baby kicking its way out was a dangerous situation in which a woman could very quickly lose her life (Hanson 1975, 581). Diseases of Women I 68-70 addressed this situation and others in a general coverage of distocia, difficult birth (Hanson 1994, 160).

Nevertheless, King argues that there are two types of pain in the birth processes of the Greeks, that which is normal and necessary, and that which is pathological and requires medical treatment (King 1998, 114). While men’s contribution to the preservation of the state in the form of bodily pain and suffering came in the form of war, women were expected to contribute by bearing children (King 1998, 124). *Ponos*, the word for pain in birth was also used for pain from battle, and passing through it gave the sufferer a degree of glory and accomplishment (King 1998, 124).²²³ No pain treatment was given for *ponos*. However, *odynē*, a sharp and acute pain in birth was indicative of an underlying problem and was treated for in Hippocratic gynaecology (King 1998, 124).

²²³ King also notes that in Plutarch only Spartan men who died in battle and women who died in birth were permitted commemoration with inscription, while Medea compares birth pains to battle concluding that she would rather fight in the lines three times than have to give birth once. King 1998, 124).

An interesting aspect of this consideration of birthing pain in the Hippocratic corpus is that while the amulets could conceivably be used to combat this *odynē*, there seems to be no trace of this on them. At no point does an inscription ask for relief in birth or the hastening of birth, and yet, were they birth amulets, this would seem like a logical niche for them to fill. Perhaps the octopus uterus motif, found often in relation to birthing scenes (chapter 4) speaks to this pain without using so many words.

Movement:

What the inscriptions do seem to address is the inflammation and movement of the womb. The latter is an area that the Hippocratic corpus comments on. While it is clear that the Hippocratics believe in the movement of the womb, it is unclear exactly how far this movement extended (Adair 1996, 159). While the modern term “wander,” *περιπατεῖ*, is never used in the corpus, Dean-Jones has gathered terms which are used to describe its motion (Adair 1996, 159, Dean-Jones 1994, 70). These include *ἐπιπέσει*, to turn to the side, *ἀποπέσει*, to move away, *ἐπιπέσει* or *ἐπιπέσει*, to leap upon, *ἐπιπέσει*, to fall forwards, *ἐπιπέσει*, to run or rush, *ἐπιπέσει*, to set in rapid motion, and *ἐπιπέσει*, to urge on, all of which usually indicate a direction or destination and all of which imply violent motion when used in relation to an organ (Dean-Jones 1994, 70). Diseases of Women II describes many of these movements of the womb, arranging them in order from head to toe (Hanson 1975, 568). The mobile womb could attach to, among other things, the brain, heart, liver, bladder and rectum (Dean-Jones 1994, 70).

Adair asserts, and Hanson would agree that while the movement of the womb could have grave consequences in the body, it was not undertaken by a sentient organ with a will of its own; rather the uterus was like any other organ and simply responded to

mechanical stimuli (Adair 1996, 153, Hanson 1990, 319). For example, in Nat. Puer a womb is said to move when it is too dry, which results in pain to the woman (Hanson 1975, 583). Strenuous exercise which heats the organ and causes the moisture to evaporate out of it, and lack of intercourse which is a normal means by which to wet the organ, are two causes of such drying (Hanson 1990, 318, Hanson 1975, 573). A stomach which is not full of food exacerbates the problem by providing the womb more room into which to move (Hanson 1975, 573). As Diseases of Women I explains it:

When a woman is empty and works harder than her previous experience, her womb, becoming heated from the hard work, turns because it is empty and light. There is, in fact, empty space for it to turn in because the belly is empty. Now when the womb turns, it hits the liver and they go together and strike against the abdomen – for the womb rushes and goes upward toward the moisture, because it has been unduly heated by hard work, and the liver is, after all, moist. When the womb hits the liver, it produces sudden suffocation as it occupies the breathing passage around the belly. Hanson 1975, 576²²⁴

This uterine movement and its attendant knocking of other organs within the body also explains the greater pain in the abdomen treated by the uterine amulets.²²⁵ It is likely that abdominal pain, even that originating in the liver or stomach, was conceived of as caused by a womb striking that organ or attaching to it.

²²⁴ The suffocation discussed in the passage could come in one of several ways. The occupation of the areas around the lungs would lead to *apankhonisai*, or suffocation via pressure or strangulation (King 2002, 85). *Pnix* was the mode of suffocation often associated with the womb and this would have entailed the stifling of breathing through the application of heat (King 2002, 85). Movement of the womb could cause either or both forms of respiratory distress (King 1998, 226). One form of suffocation described in Diseases of Women one sounds very much like epilepsy, and is linked to Herakles disease.

“When the womb is near the liver and the abdomen and when it is suffocating, the woman turns up the whites of her eyes and becomes chilled some women become livid. She grinds her teeth and saliva flows out of her mouth. These women resemble those who suffer from Herakles’ disease. If the womb lingers near the liver and the abdomen, the woman dies of suffocation.” Hanson 1975, 576

Indeed, Galen essentially diagnoses Herakles disease as epilepsy. One wonders if this connection between uterine suffocation and Herakles may be part of the reason why Herakles is occasionally found on the uterine amulets (in addition to his association with colic).

²²⁵ Because there is a mechanical, rational explanation for this movement, called hysterical in that it is the adjectival form of the word for uterus, it is not considered a shameful condition or associated with a derogatory sense, as are attendant in modern understandings of hysteria (King 2002, 84).

Movement of the womb could also be directed downward, into, or out of the abdominal cavity. Prolapse of the womb after birth or after intercourse indulged in too soon after birth are referred to in Nat. Mul 4-5, Mul 2.143-145, 153, and Steril. 248 where treatments including being shaken while upside down or tied to a ladder upside down overnight were recommended for such cases (Dean-Jones 1994, 71, Lloyd 1999b 73 n. 59). It would not be surprising if a woman desired to trust to an amulet to relieve such a problem given the torturous nature of her medical alternatives. If a woman worked too hard she was also in danger of her womb falling down onto her bladder and causing strangury (Hanson 1975, 576). All in all, in the Hippocratic corpus, wandering or not, the uterus is a highly mobile organ.

In keeping with its rational basis the corpus does not turn to amulets to combat the movement of the womb. However, one physical means for keeping the womb in one spot does find parallel on the amulets. King mentions that the Hippocratics actually bound the outside of the body with bandages to bind the womb internally in its place (King 1998, 36 citing DW II 127, L 8.272 and 2.129, L 8.278). This idea that the uterus could be physically restrained and its movement controlled and restricted by encircling it (and the abdomen in which it resides) with bandages is the same idea that spurs the inclusion of the Ouroboros which encircles and restrains the uterine vase on the uterine amulets.

This study would argue that between the inscriptions referring to a dislocated uterus, and this medical practice of binding the organ in place with encircling bandages, the influence of the Hippocratic corpus in regards to the tradition of the movement of the uterus on the amulets is clearly discernable. This influence is seen further in the overlap between the corpus' preoccupation with the womb as the center of all women's health

with concerns that are expressed on the amulets (such as through the inclusion of opening and closing items like as the key and Soroor formula, and with the amulets repeated depiction of myriad deities who indicate the multiple functions of the womb within the female body, many of which are not related to reproduction).

One question which has not yet been addressed, but is useful to consider, is why this concept of a moving womb developed and why it was still current at the time of the amulets' manufacture and use? Hanson probably correctly suggests that the concept may have originated in the fact that males have no uterus, yet male anatomy was better known (practically due to corpses left from battles and ideologically because males were the "normal" and perfect form of human anatomy) and it left no space for a womb to occupy. By conceptual necessity the womb was forced to wander through the body, having no natural place of its own (Dean-Jones 1994, 71 citing Hanson 1991, 82).

Nevertheless, the Hippocratics did not need a mobile womb to explain their diseases. Blood overflowing into various parts of the body from a congested but sedentary womb would have provided an equally flexible and possibly more powerful (in that it adheres more closely to the explanatory theory of humors current in the greater corpus) disease model to explain female illness. Dean-Jones must be correct when she states that the only reason a mobile womb was preferred and continued to be used in Greek medicine is that it must have fulfilled a cultural niche that the humoral explanation could not (Dean-Jones 1994, 74). It is possible that the preconception of the human female as beastly, vicious and in need of taming, as put forth by the myth of Pandora, resonated with and was justified by the idea of a dangerous, unruly and peripatetic womb,

an organ that was uniquely female. Whatever its origin it continues to be found on uterine amulets of late antiquity and beyond.²²⁶

Plato:

The next major Greek influence on the amulets comes not from Greek medicine but from Greek philosophy, which would go on to have major impact on the popular understanding of the workings of the womb and the bodies of men and animal alike.

Plato was the first author who would have such an effect; Aristotle was the second.

While Hanson warns that both are highly idiosyncratic, write in a tone of playfulness, and appeal to the ideal of what might be, not what is, nevertheless, their works became highly influential and were often used out of context resulting in a situation where their doctrines, whether or not they were recorded in jest, became the serious beliefs of many (Hanson 1990, 313).²²⁷

The Timaeus of Plato is the work which gave the uterus its popular cast as a wild ferocious creature, as opposed to the mechanically responsive organ of the Hippocratics.

In the Timaeus the lowest part of the soul, the mortal part that was possessed of desires for food, drink and bodily pleasures, was described by Plato as wild animal which must

²²⁶ Manuli has argued that the wandering womb was a conscious male construct designed to effect the subjugation of women to their will, however Dean-Jones notes that the womb was also a difficult organ for men to control with their rational medical therapies, or even by brute force, so Manuli's argument does not stand up (Dean-Jones 1987, 75). However it developed, it should also be noted that it could be wielded to a woman's advantage as a safe way to demand sex from a husband without threatening to rob him of his manly initiative (Dean-Jones 1994, 76, Lloyd 1999).

²²⁷ While Plato's account of disease and the body can be accepted at face value by those readers who do not wish to see a subtext, Lloyd notes that each illness agent in Plato has political overtones, Plato wrote not as a physician but rather using the body to illustrate political and organizational principles which he espoused (Lloyd 2003, 154). For example the body parts in the Timaeus are described by loaded political terms, like enemy (ἐχθρὸς), natural order (κόσμος) and war (στρατήριον) (Lloyd 2003, 155). Medicine is used by Plato in several of his works as a metaphor for order and rightness, a choice which granted Plato's assertions an air of objectivity, as health and disease are assumed in many cultures to be objective facts and not subjective states open to interpretation (Lloyd 2003, 145, 150).

be tied down to prevent it wandering where it should not within the body (Adair 1996, 161). This part of the soul is associated with the gut and upper abdomen.

The part of the soul that has appetites for food and drink and whatever else it feels a need for, given the body's nature, they [the gods] settled in the area between the midriff and the boundary towards the navel. In the whole of this region they constructed something like a trough for the body's nourishment. *Here they tied this part of the soul down like a beast, a wild one*, but one they could not avoid sustaining along with the others if a mortal race were ever to be. ... And by infusing the bitterness all over the liver it could project bilious colors onto it and shrink the whole liver, making it wrinkled and rough. *It could curve and shrivel up the liver's lobe and block up and close off its receptacles and portal fissures, thereby causing pains and bouts of nausea.* ... Timaeus 70e-71e, Zeyl 2000, 64-65

The passage, finds several parallels with the amulets. It notes pain explicitly connected to an abdominal organ and explains that pain as a consequence of the poor behaviour of the misbehaving animal like force which is necessary for the survival of the species.²²⁸ This force, the animal soul is likened directly to a wild beast in need of binding. Though referring to the animal soul, the description of the situation is closely reminiscent of the situation found on the amulets in regards to the uterus.

Indeed, it is a description that is similar to that which Plato provides later in the Timaeus when considering the womb. The main difference in the descriptions between that of the womb and other body parts, even the phallus, is that it is described via a metaphor as a living creature, whereas similes are the rhetorical mechanism deployed in the other characterizations. This may have been a one reason why the image of the womb as a wild animal developed in the Timaeus became a trope in the popular mind of

²²⁸ Albeit the pain is a mechanism devised by the creator gods to punish the mortal soul and not the direct result of its attack on an organ.

the ancient Mediterranean (King 1998, 223).²²⁹ On the other hand, the womb as beast may have become such a popular image not because of rhetorical devices etc. but because it fulfilled a cultural expectation which was already in place whether articulated or not.

What then are Plato's words in the Timaeus about the human womb? Although brief, they have generated much scholarly interest, and a long lasting legacy in the classical world in respect to the way in which women's bodies were perceived.

This is why, of course, the male genitals are unruly and self-willed, like an animal that will not be subject to reason, and, driven crazy by its desires, seeks to overpower everything else. The very same causes operate in women. A woman's womb or uterus, as it is called, is a living thing within her with a desire for childbearing. Now when this remains unfruitful for an unseasonably long period of time, it is extremely frustrated and travels everywhere up and down her body. It blocks up her respiratory passages, and by not allowing her to breathe it throws her into extreme emergencies, and visits all sorts of other illnesses upon her... Timaeus 91b-c, Zeyl 2000, 87

The womb is not unlike the phallus, yet while the phallus causes the man to move in certain ways to achieve its end, the womb is confined to the interior of the woman's body, where it madly dashes about its body seeking its desire. Unlike the phallus, it seems to be detached from the rest of the body it belongs to. It is a separate being.

"Plato, perhaps writing at the same time or soon after the composition of the Hippocratic treatises, even went so far as to suggest that the womb was an animal in its own right, with feral characteristics that explained its errant behaviour" (Green 1985, 19). Dean-Jones also notes that "Plato characterizes the womb as an irrational animal wandering round the body of a woman" (Dean-Jones 1994, 70).

The description of this feral, dissociated womb matches exceedingly well with the characterization of the womb on the uterine amulets which must be tied down and

²²⁹ The text in general is fond of using analogies with living beings to forcefully illustrate its points (King 1998, 223). Plato also describes the desire for sex as an animal in the Timaeus and characterizes the inferior soul as a parti-colored multi-headed beast in the Republic, neither being descriptions which gained wide currency (Adair 1996, 160).

immobilized, trampled under the feet and made subject to the will of multiple deities. It was an organ possessed of its own intelligence, which when one was thrust into competition against, gave one the sense of a contest not of equals, but where the person was at a distinct disadvantage (which lead to the use of *katadesmoi*-like uterine amulets).

The Timaeus expresses the belief that man is the superior counterpart to woman (Timaeus 42a-c, Zeyl 30). Plato characterizes women as the first degeneration of cowardly men, who further degenerate into birds etc. if they prove to be unworthy women (Lloyd 1999b, 94-95). By this logic woman was, in a similar but non-identical vein of thought to the Hippocratics, almost a different species from man, and therefore logically need not be governed by the same rules of physics. Not only were women not regularly present on the battlefield to observe how their organs were arranged internally, but women had an organ that was completely alien to men. Who was to say if this strange thing obeyed the same rules as other organs, and indeed, based on the varied and often intense pains it could cause all throughout the body, unlike any organ in a man's body, it was only reasonable for Plato and others to believe that it moved about at will and could move through an otherwise solidly packed abdomen.

Thus, Plato's description of the uterus added a nuance to the moving uterus described by the Hippocratics. It was sentient and vicious and could not be controlled by traditional means such as moistening through intercourse. It was a dangerous animal and had to be restrained as such, and this is how it is presented in many later sources, including the uterine amulets.

Aristotle:

The next philosopher to have a major impact on the understanding of the female body and the relationship of females to males was Aristotle. Dean-Jones attributes to him a greater impact on the Roman doctor Galen²³⁰ than the Alexandrian physician Herophilos who was among the first and only ancient physicians to perform dissection of the human body (Dean-Jones 1994, 24). With such long lived impact it would be not be unlikely for his tenets to appear in part on the uterine amulets.

The Hippocratic view whereby women were a separate species (almost) and confined to their own realm was replaced by the Aristotelian view of women where they were of the same species of men but by nature were weaker (Dean-Jones 1994, 20).²³¹ Unlike earlier theorists Aristotle does not separate out woman into her own species, but sees her as a type of natural deformity of man (Lloyd 1999b, 41). The greater volume of menses and its closer resemblance to blood than sperm indicated to Aristotle that females were cooler than males and lacked the capacity to fully cook blood into sperm (GA 726b3, Lloyd 1999b, 97, Lloyd 1999a 215, 1999b, 95). While females could transform regular blood into menstrual blood, there is an implicit judgment Aristotle's argument that females *failed* to produce sperm. It was not the case that males failed to produce menses (Lloyd 1999b, 98). Because of this inability to produce pure sperm women are left with a glut of dark blood in their interior, a case which is not true of men, but reminiscent of the Hippocratic view that women stored more blood in their flesh than men (Lloyd 1999b, 100).

²³⁰ Who was in turn the author of the medical canon that would dominate western medicine through the Renaissance

²³¹ Dean-Jones traces this change in paradigm to a concurrent change in the social system whereby the formal strict gender dichotomies of the classical world (men's space v. female space etc.) were passing away in the Hellenistic world where women were given more freedom to move about in public and engage in trade and business (Dean-Jones 1994, 20). Thus Aristotle's ways of thinking are heavily influenced by the times in which he lived, although his use of the biological to justify the social is no new development.

Nevertheless, for Aristotle the difference between male and female is one of degree not kind. For example, he likens' women's bodies to those of boys, opposing both to the bodies of men (Dean-Jones 1994, 46).²³² The woman's contribution to the human race for Aristotle came in the form of providing a place for the offspring to develop, the uterus, as well as the raw matter for the child (Lloyd 1999b, 97). He likened the womb to an oven in GA 764a 12-20 and also envisioned it as having two parts (Dean-Jones 1994, 61, 67-68). Most significantly he believed that any sealing of the womb outside of pregnancy was pathological as expressed in GA 773a 15-29, and called for one cause of such sealing, the growing together of the stoma, to be corrected surgically (Dean-Jones 1994, 54). Thus the concern with opening and closing of the womb that is seen on the amulets may also have its root in Aristotelian thought.

The sole purpose of the uterus for Aristotle was to incubate children. Unlike the authors of the Hippocratic treatises for him the uterus played no greater part in the health of a woman (Dean-Jones 1994, 64-65, 85). Aristotle, like Plato wrote about the functioning of the body as a metaphor for the well run state where normative function was striven for in regard to each organ (Lloyd 1994, 176). In this more politicized reading of the body women can be understood as amorphous bodies existing only to produce children for the benefit of the polis, existing as no more than a disembodied uterus (Hanson 1990, 312). This is the closest that the ancient world comes to making womanhood and femininity synonymous with the uterus. Given all the functions and symbolic meanings given the uterus on the amulets, this does not seem to be over-riding

²³² Like in Scandinavian gender systems (Sørensen 1997) if one were not a male in his prime one was considered a genderless "other," however, young boys had the potential, and so too did Greek women theoretically, to grow into men (GA 728a17, Dean-Jones 1994, 46).²³²

meaning that it takes. It is not a part meant to symbolize the whole of the woman, and its domination by multiple deities and methods does not imply subjugation of the female to a greater power. Rather a small, almost alien part of her which is often understood as almost a separate being is being subjugated.

Hippocratics, Plato and Aristotle Summarized:

Before moving on it is appropriate to summarize the three main classical and Hellenistic positions on the womb, that of the Hippocratics, of Plato and of Aristotle, all of which are highly influential on popular and medical conceptions of the female body which develop after them. The Hippocratics don't seem to believe in a living animal like womb, rather it is an organ which responds to mechanical stimuli like any other organ in the body. It just happens to respond by moving. Plato's Timaeus adds to this characterization the idea that the womb is an animal separate from the rest of the body and possessed of a mind of its own. This view is perpetuated by later authors like Aretaeus as well as among the non academic modes of medicine, such as on the amulets (King 1998, 224).

The Hippocratics also comment on the greater function of the womb within the body, believing it to be the mechanism by which potentially harmful excesses of blood could be removed or controlled (Dean-Jones 1994, 85). For this reason the opening and closing of the womb as well as the management of the organ within the body is of major importance within the Hippocratic gynaecologies. Plato does not comment on this topic, but Aristotle dismisses it by assigning to the womb only a role in reproduction. Both the

Hippocratics and Aristotle agree that women's reproductive role is limited to the womb and does not include supplementary organs like the ovaries (Dean-Jones 1994, 68-69).²³³

For the Hippocratics the womb was needed to keep a woman healthy and drain her flesh while for the Aristotelians the womb was only useful for purposes of breeding. Given the multiple functions attributed to the womb on the amulets as discussed in chapters 3 and 4, such as movement, the ability to be swollen and inflamed, the ability to impact on digestion and abdominal pain and also to be involved in reproduction, it seems that of the Greek schools of thought on the issue, Hanson's assessment was correct, the Hippocratics did have the greatest influence on the forms that the amulets took. Nevertheless, Plato's contribution, that the womb was a living animal, was also if not equally significant. While Aristotle may have had a significant impact on authors like Galen and Aretaeus, his influence is not so strong on the amulets.

Herophilos through Christianity:

The lines extending off the topmost part of the uterine vase on the amulets can reasonably be traced back to Herophilos. Postdating Plato by about 70 years and working in Alexandria, Herophilos made many advances in human anatomy (Adair 1996, 159). Along with Eristratos he engaged in the dissection of human corpses and possibly even

²³³ However the two schools are divided in regards to menstrual blood. The Hippocratics did not believe that it was necessary for conception while for Aristotelian theory the menses were required in conception as they provided the matter by which to build the fetus (Dean-Jones 1994, 153, 200). "The role of menstruation in the context of a woman's general health and pregnancy in the Hippocratic and Aristotelian theories is reflected in the functions they attribute to the womb. The Hippocratics thought that menstruating made it possible for a woman to maintain her health and that menstrual blood was only utilized in pregnancy after the fetus had been conceived, which occurred more readily if the womb was empty. Therefore, while remaining empty for most of the month in preparation for conception, the womb also played an active prophylactic role in Hippocratic conceptions of female physiology. Aristotle, on the other hand, believed that a woman's heavy menstrual flow caused her paleness and deficiency of physique. The sole purpose of menstrual blood in his theory was to provide material for the conception and growth of a fetus, so if it was not present in the womb when a man ejaculated semen into a woman the production of it by the woman's body would have been wasted. In Aristotle's theory a woman possesses a womb solely for the purpose of reproduction." Dean-Jones 64-65.

vivisection. Although none of his writings have survived to the present Galen records that he was the first person to discover the ovaries and their function as analogues to the testes (Lloyd 1999b, 108). Indeed, he seems to be the source for the idea later espoused so vehemently by Galen, that women were not a separate species from man or inferior to man, but simply a man whose reproductive tract was turned inside out (King 1998, 38). He also discovered the ligaments which held the uterus in place and noted that the uterus was made of the same substance as the rest of the tissues on the body (King 1998, 38, Hanson 2004, 272). While this should have put to rest any notion of a mobile womb, his work did not meet with widespread approval, many doctors and philosophers simply ignoring him, and belief in a wandering womb persisted (Lloyd 1999b, 108). For those who did take account of his teachings like Soranus and Galen, therapies to combat wandering womb, such as aroma treatment to lure the womb back into position, were not abandoned and while the idea of the womb itself as mobile was nominally cast aside, in reality it was often simply relabeled as the womb sympathetically acting on other organs (King 1998, 38). In addition, while Herophilos recognized that the womb was made of layers of muscle, no source records that he realized that its function was to contract and expel the baby (Hanson 2004, 272). His main contribution to the amulets comes in the form of the fallopian tubes and ligaments which are almost always feature on the pieces.

Roman Medicine:

As the amulets were produced in the first centuries AD within the Roman Empire, it is likely that they also express Roman medical views about the uterus and the female body. Hanson notes that it is a useless exercise to try to pinpoint the “Roman” aspects of medicine as opposed to those derived from the Greek tradition during the Empire, as

most upper-class Romans sought out Greek physicians and medicine of the empire was a thorough amalgam of traditions (Hanson 1990, 87). Nevertheless, given the gap in time between Aristotle and Herophilos and the production of the amulets it is appropriate to look briefly to the medical traditions current at the time when the amulets were made and used.

Lloyd has placed classical Greek medicine alongside Roman medicine of the Empire and found that the larger themes and “daily assumptions” underpinning both ally them more closely than the few divergent details between them (Lloyd 2003, 202, Hanson 1990, 313). Humoral medicine permeates both, but neither formulated one single answer or approach to humoral imbalance and disease, or even an accord on the identity of the humors at work (Lloyd 2003, 204). The gynaecologies of the Hippocratics and Soranus are alike in that they criticize some folk beliefs while rationalizing others (Hanson 1990, 313).²³⁴ However, whereas the Hippocratics relied on the uterus to control the greater health of the woman by allowing frequent, healing purges, in the Roman tradition a diametrically opposite view held pride of place, that which was “characteristic of Soranus’ *Gynaikeia*, that female health can and should be separated from a woman’s participation in reproduction” (Hanson 2007, 502).²³⁵

²³⁴ Dean-Jones would argue that the differences between Roman medicine and Hellenistic is bigger than that between classical and Hellenistic medicines. The main impetus for changes in the gynaecologies from the Classical to the Hellenistic was the expanding role of women in Greek society. In Roman society women always held a more public position, and during the Empire they occupied a very different social space than that of the classical or Hellenistic Greek woman. In Rome women could be educated outside of the home, and be involved in trade and with crafts (Hanson 1990, 330-331). Further, from the Hellenistic on smaller families became fashionable and celibacy was also an increasingly accepted choice (Hanson 1990, 330-331). These different cultural *mores* were reflected in the Empire’s gynaecologies (Dean-Jones 1994, 25).

²³⁵ Hanson argues that the medical paradigm shifted superficially in that women were now thought to have cooler bodies, which meant that they were not in imminent danger if they were not constantly reproducing, but that the nature of women had not changed much from the Hippocratic to the Roman gynaecologies (Hanson 1990, 333-334).

Roman medicine continued to be just as pluralistic in its philosophies and methods as earlier Greek medicine until at least the 3rd c. AD or later at which point Christianity began to gain significant sway in the realm of healing (Lloyd 2003, 216-17). Indeed, a new aspect of medicine introduced under the Empire was competitive hypochondria, such as that exhibited by Aelius Aristides (Lloyd 2003, 214). While Aristides put all his faith in Asclepius, it is possible that the growing interest in competitive illness also played its part in the use of medico-magical accoutrement such as the uterine amulets. The specificity of the diseases for which each amulet type was suited would fit well with this type of competitive atmosphere, where possession of multiple amulets might indicate a person who was more ill, or more capable of attending to their various illnesses. This is the situation we see in relation to health amulets at this time.

Thus in the Roman Empire the treatment of diseases with amulets seems to have required the proper diagnostic identification of the ailment, and we find that the texts found on the amulets often indicate the specific diseases for which they are written.²³⁶ Kotansky 1991, 116

The plurality of general medicine applied also to gynaecology. Pliny in his Natural History described childbirth from the point of view of folklore, while Soranus addressed it from an obstetrical position (French 1986, 69). And while the wandering womb of the Hippocratics and Plato “suffered a temporary eclipse” in the 3rd c. BC, under Herophilos, the theory was revived academically by Aretaeus in the 2nd c. AD if not earlier, and had remained as a traditional view since its inception until at least the 16th c. AD (Aubert 1989, 432, 424).

Votive offerings of body parts were a prominent part of medicine in the central portion of Italy from the 4th c. BC until they seem to be replaced by simple inscriptions

²³⁶ Also a useful fact to recall when reading the inscriptions on the amulets. They are likely to state their purpose plainly and scholars should not be tempted to overcomplicate that purpose.

(Treggiari 2007, 415). Votives of internal body parts were particularly popular in central Italy, such as at Gravisca which had a high proportion of its collection comprised of female genitalia, as opposed to Ponte di Nona which was dominated by votives of eyes (Treggiari 2007, 416). Schultz finds at least 42 deposits made exclusively of breasts and uteri in Italy (Treggiari 2007, 416).²³⁷ The shape of many of these votive uteri is closely related to the shape of the uterine pot on the amulets (Figure 7.2). While the Greek texts compared the uterus to a pot, they did not provide illustrations. It is possible that the shape of the uterine vase on the amulets took its inspiration from uterine votives that were well known in the areas around Rome.

Soranus:

The most important Roman gynaecology, the Gynaikeia of Soranus was written in the late 1st c. or early 2nd c. AD. Soranus was a Methodist and used the same treatments on men and women, even in regards to diseases that today would be understood as primarily gynaecological.²³⁸ He noted that very active women did not menstruate and based on this concluded that men and women were possessed of the same nature, *phusis*, and if women lived more like men they would eventually develop bodies like men (Dean-Jones 1994, 59). In this respect he was closer to the beliefs of Aristotle and Herophilos than the Hippocratics and Plato.

There is less emphasis on blood and bleeding in the gynaecology of Soranus and the Romans than in the Greek sources. Soranus believed that menstruation and childbirth

²³⁷ It is not clear with the votives if they were dedicated as a means of beseeching the deity for a cure, or in thanks for having received one (Treggiari 2007, 415).

²³⁸ His procedure involved the identification of a bodily state of either relaxed, constricted or a mix thereof and to take action to relieve the imbalance, an approach that was valid for both sexes (Dean-Jones 1994, 24).

were harmful for women, unlike the Hippocratics (Hanson 1990, 332). He also rejected the idea that the uterus was by nature dangerous to the woman who possessed it (Hanson 1990, 330). Further, he denied that the womb wandered, though acknowledging that some people did believe that it was peripatetic, and also asserted that this was not an unreasonable belief given several characteristics it shares with animals, including a sense of touch and pain (King 1998, 223).²³⁹ He expressed this view in Gyn. I 8, 7.18 ff, as well as in a passage describing what he thinks is a misguided therapy for a prolapsed uterus (Lloyd 1999n, 172):

Some people apply a hairy bag to the womb, so that the organ may suffer pain from the sharp hair and contract. They are not aware that paralysed parts do not suffer any pain while parts that feel pain contract for a little while and prolapse again. But the majority administer pleasant aromas to smell, while they apply fumigations to the womb of an opposite character; and they believe that now the womb like an animal flees the bad odours and turns towards the good ones.
Lloyd 1999b, 172 quoting Gyn IV 36. 149.21 ff

Soranus shared this view of a fixed womb with Aristotle and Galen, and also agreed with Herophilos that the womb was constructed of the same materials that make up the rest of the body (Hanson 1990, 331).²⁴⁰ Despite his denial of uterine movement, he (and Galen after him) continued to use odor therapy (Hanson 1990, 319).

Soranus paid close attention to the uterus in birth, supporting the idea that the uterus opened and closed based on his observations on how midwives would palpate the cervix during labor and note its gradual dilation (Gynaikeia III 3, II.1 151-152, Hanson 1994, 189). While he noted that the uterus did play some role in birth, including dilation and effacement of its mouth (the cervix), and also acknowledged that women played an

²³⁹ Adair asserts that Soranus did believe in a wandering womb citing note 1 in Temkin 1956 p. 153 as evidence to support his claim.

²⁴⁰ Nevertheless, he does admit of the condition of *pnix*, formerly attributed to the movement of the womb, but instead explains it as caused by the membranes which held the womb in place (King 1998, 231).

active role in bearing down in the expulsion of the child, he still attributed to the baby an active role in initiating its birth, as the child was the one who tore the membranes (Gyn II 3.6, Hanson 2004, 273, French 1986, 75).²⁴¹

Hanson notes in general the much greater sophistication in Soranus with which difficult childbirth, distocia, is discussed and wonders whether it did not represent a larger trend among the public of worrying about difficult labor (Hanson 1994, 197). Certainly it seems that preparations could be made if a difficult birth was anticipated, but the sources do not specify what those might be, perhaps lining up the aid of a physician in advance, or possibly acquiring amulets (Hanson 1994, 197).

Whatever the cause, it seems that the gynaecology of Soranus' time was loaded with superstitions, possibly in response to this heightened awareness and probably partially due to time-old traditions (Lloyd 1999b, 168). Soranus repeatedly goes to lengths to insist that those employed in any aspect of gynaecology, obstetrics or wet nursing be free from superstition (Lloyd 1999b, 168-69). While he eschews the use of amulets among his patients, he does address them three times in the Gynecology. In Gyn 1.63.3 he asserts that contraceptive amulets such as those made of mule's uterus and dirt from the inside of a mule's ear do not work (Hanson 1995, 290).²⁴² In Gyn. III.42.3 he says that amulets used to staunch uterine haemorrhage such as those of magnet, rennet

²⁴¹ After birth Soranus is explicit in his criticism of doctors and midwives who yank on the umbilical cord to retrieve a retained afterbirth, noting that this could lead to uterine inversion, prolapse, haemorrhage and death; likewise with physicians who applied weight to the cord (Hanson 1994, 192). He was careful in his tying off of the cord as well, doubly ligating it in order to prevent haemorrhage in mother or child and using an iron knife to sever it. He also rails against midwives who superstitiously shun iron for this task and instead prefer materials such as glass, potsherds, reeds, bread crusts or generally squeezing the cord apart (Gyn II. 11.2-5, 58-59, Hanson 1994, 194).

²⁴² The mule is of course an animal of Seth who was the enemy of all pregnancy. This amulet that seems to be well entrenched enough in the Roman world as to merit direct address by Soranus would seem to betray an Egyptian origin.

and other materials were not efficacious but should be tolerated by the physician as they comfort the afflicted (Hanson 1995, 290). In Gyn IV.13.2 he discusses some of the methods used by the Hippocratics, including the amulet of red wax and squirting cucumber discussed in chapter 5 to hasten delivery (Hanson 1995, 290).

While Soranus refers to loosening the belt in birth as pictured on the birthing scenes on c. 140 and 141, he does so for practical rather than superstitious reasons:

Whence, for the unhindered passage of the breath, it is necessary to loosen their girdles as well as to free the chest of any binder, though not on account of the lay (ἡ ἀσπίς) conception according to which womenfolk are unwilling to suffer any fetter and thus <also> loosen the hair; it is thus for the above-mentioned reason that even loosening the hair possibly effects good tonus of the head. Gyn. II 6, 54.1 1ff, Lloyd 1999b, 175.

While he generally dismisses the ideas of sympathetic influence of substances on each other, he does claim in Gyn. I 15, 10.27, that the diseased womb influences the stomach and the meninges in a negative way (Lloyd 1999b, 178-180). This is the same connection between stomach and womb which appears repeatedly on the amulets.

Soranus is also concerned with the inflammation in the womb which may be caused by the formation of blood clots (Lloyd 1999b, 179). Here he reveals knowledge that the womb does become inflamed and may need treatment for this alone, a condition which also seems to be addressed on the amulets with the phrase “be contracted womb” (Lloyd 1999b, 179). In Gyn III 20 106.19 he notes again the possible inflammation of the womb, this time localizing it to the mouth of the womb (Lloyd 1999b, 179).

Thus Soranus informs his reader that many of the ideas which originated with the Hippocratics, Plato and Aristotle are still current when the uterine amulets are beginning

to be produced.²⁴³ While he does not believe the womb is or is like an animal, he makes it known that other people believe that it actually is an animal (King 1998, 224). He admits that the womb is bound in place, yet his continued use of odor therapies indicate that Herophilos' discoveries had little impact on the daily practice of gynaecology by even the most sophisticated of physicians. He illustrates the preoccupation with distocia in the Roman Empire and provides numerous examples of a gynaecological practice rife with superstitions and superstitious acts, a culture into which amulet use fits comfortably. He may actually refer to the use of the uterine amulets themselves in reference to such superstitions. Through his multiple discussions of the uterus and its roles he also demonstrates multiple ways in which it could be afflicted, such as by inflammation and infection, inversion, haemorrhage and other pains. Soranus seems to illustrate that all of the worries and fears of the early gynaecologies are still very much alive in his own day, and not surprisingly so, given medicine's ability to effectively combat such medical crises such as uterine haemorrhage, puerperal fevers and difficult births.

Galen:

Galen was another highly important and influential Roman doctor living and practicing in the 2nd c. AD whose ideas may be expected to appear on the amulets.

In describing the mechanics of conception in Natural Faculties he describes the uterus with the same analogy that many of the Hippocratics use, that is as an upside-down jug,

²⁴³The Gynaecology of Soranus was a hugely popular medical text in both the Eastern and Western Roman Empires. By the 5th c. it had been translated into Latin by Caelius Aurelianus and by the 6th c. by Muscio. It also figured prominently in the encyclopedias of Aetius of Amida and Paul of Aegina, thus making the views of Soranus into the basis for gynaecological practice in some areas along with Galen well into the Renaissance (King 1998, 231). It should also be noted that in Muscio's Latin version of Soranus' Gynaikaia, Soranus' view on the womb's inability to move is significantly diminished, and as this was a widely transmitted and preserved version, from an early date uterine movement was actually part of the western tradition of Soranus (King 1998, 236).

and claims that when conception occurs the mouth of the womb closes (Hanson 1990, 321). He again proves that the imagery and concerns of the amulets were commonly known in the 2nd c. AD even though they were developed nearly 600 years prior.

While he knew the uterus to be held in one spot within the body he continued to believe in hysteria. However, the mechanisms by which he described the negative influence of the womb on the rest of the body did not explicitly include the movement of the womb (King 1998, 233).²⁴⁴

While Majno claims that Galen's physiology was so primitive that it was not even aware of muscle contraction, Hanson notes that in Natural Faculties he describes how the uterus contracts during birth, having observed the peristaltic movement of the uterus in animals giving birth, as well as how the bladder and stomach also shared this expulsive ability (Majno 1975, 409, Hanson 1995, 285, Hanson 2004, 273-274). Nevertheless, like Soranus, he still credited the infant with the initiation of its birth (Hanson 2004, 274). Thus Galen is one of the first physicians of the ancient Mediterranean who espouses the idea of uterine contraction, but given the late date of his works and the necessarily limited movement of his work within his lifetime, it is probable that this knowledge came too late to be represented on the amulets, which seem to illustrate a store of well entrenched traditional beliefs about the womb and the roles it played within a woman's body.

²⁴⁴ If the menses were retained they could cause *apnoia pnix*, an inability to catch one's breath leading to suffocation. This could be affected by the membranes of the uterus becoming saturated with blood and pulling down on the womb and other viscera, the rotting of the blood which affected other organs through sympathy or through some other unknown mechanism (King 1998, 207, 231-233). The result of Galen's continued belief in *pnix* was that he reinforced the importance of proper bleeding among women, and although he eschewed the movement of the womb as its cause, he probably reinforced the belief among many that the womb did move, the subtleties of his explanation of the condition being confusing and probably lost on most. He also continued to use odor therapy, a treatment intimately tied to the movement of the womb (Hanson 1990, 319).

Pliny, writing during the 1st c. AD slightly prior to the production of the amulets or contemporary with the earliest pieces, is an invaluable source for alternate beliefs available to the Romans, both esoteric and traditional. Most interesting for this study is King's observation that he readily accepts that a state of deep coma where there is so little sign of breath present as to be easily mistaken for death is caused by the turning of the womb, once again demonstrating that belief in a mobile womb is well and strong in the 1st c. AD (King 1998, 227).

Aretaeus²⁴⁵ may have also made a contribution to the form of the amulets. He describes the womb as an animal inside another animal:

In the middle of the flanks of women lies the womb, a female viscus, closely resembling an animal; for it is moved of itself hither and thither in the flanks, also upwards in a direct line to below the cartilage of the thorax, and also obliquely to the right or to the left, either to the liver or spleen; and it likewise is subject to prolapsus downwards, and, in a word, it is altogether erratic. It delights, also, in fragrant smells, and advances towards them; and it has an aversion to fetid smells, and flees from them; and, on the whole, the womb is like an animal within an animal. Aretaeus, SA 2.11, Trans. Francis Adams, 1856.

While the membranes of the womb prevent it from moving all about the body, it is still able to move a bit. More interesting, he describes it as vicious and with a will of its own, reverting back to the picture put forth by Plato in the Timaeus (King 1998, 230).

Nevertheless, the view of the womb was not static from century to century, each generation and culture reinterpreted to suit its own needs. The Hippocratic for example ascribed a wandering womb most commonly to older women who had dried out, but Aretaeus claims that it is more likely to move about in younger women as they tend to lead a less settled sort of life; here the organ reflects the behaviour of the woman to which it belongs (King 1998, 222).

²⁴⁵ Second c. AD

Byzantine Medicine:

A final brief mention must also be made of Byzantine medicine, which is defined as having its beginning in the 4th c., within the time which the uterine amulets were being produced (Nutton 1984, 1). Byzantine medicine was largely derived from the combination of various classical sources, often transmitted in encyclopedic form. By the 4th c. Galen had become the main medical source, with other physicians, like Soranus also being studied in digest form (King 1998, 235- 236, Nutton 1984, 2). In regards to medical theories, those authors already discussed continued to be the main sources.

One important development relevant to the manufacture and use of the uterine amulets was the adoption of Christianity as the main religion, and the centrality of healing within that tradition (Nutton 1984, 5). The growing influence of Christianity can be seen not only in the use of Christian words and symbols on the amulets, but also on the changing views on health and disease within the Roman Empire (Hanson 2007, 503). Paradoxically, with Christianity comes an increased acceptance of the use of amulets and charms (Nutton 1984, 8). Alexander of Tralles, a Late Antique physician includes many amulets and spells in his works, including ones which Galen and Pliny pronounce as useless, such as the blood of a gladiator, and claims that he knows many more (Nutton 1984, 8). Ammianus Marcellinus also records great use of talismans and charms in the late antique court (Nutton 1984, 8).

There is an obvious shift between Galen's time and that of Alexander in the definition of what is or is not medically and socially acceptable as a type of remedy. We should not regard the injunctions of Alexander to pick a mandrake with one's left hand, or the instructions he gives for the correct formula to be spoken over a sufferer from gout as being new or confined to him. They can be found centuries earlier, but in what we would term magical texts, or in early Roman domestic medicine. Nutton 1984, 8.

Though items such as the uterine amulets may have originally been produced as a sideline to academic medicine, recording the long held popular traditions about health and disease of the culture, in late antiquity they move more firmly into the mainstream of medical practice. Their abundance in modern collections should not surprise us, as they embodied medical beliefs held nearly universally in the Mediterranean of the first centuries AD, and they only became more popular with time, until eventually they evolved into other more relevant forms or the needs they met were addressed by other means.²⁴⁶

Conclusions:

In summary, Greek and Egyptian medical traditions both contributed to the conditions referenced on the amulets, although Hanson's assessment that the Greek tradition, and specifically the Hippocratic corpus seems to have contributed more directly appears to be accurate (Hanson 1995, 283). A general concern with the functioning of the womb and a knowledge of the many conditions which could affect the uterus can be argued to have sprung from both cultures. The main concerns of the amulet's inscriptions and iconography, to stop movement, to control uterine opening and closing and thereby menstruation, and to cause a swollen and inflamed uterus to be appeased, are those which figure prominently within the Hippocratic corpus, although the last perhaps more so in the Egyptian and Roman sources.

The idea that the uterus was like or was a wild animal originated in the Timaeus of Plato and took hold of the Greek imagination. This form of the uterus appears on the

²⁴⁶ Although it is hard to imagine the needs of the uterine amulets being met more expertly by medical practice in late antiquity with Hanson noting one (undoubtedly among many) 7th c. medical commentator and professor of Hippocratic medicine advising his students to read Diseases of Women last of all their studies, and to restrict their reading only to the sections that concerned the diseased uterus, as it *only* pertained to women's diseases. Hanson 1990, 311

amulets as the creature which needs to be bound, as the enemy which the Mehen snake must bind within its coils. The belief of the wandering, animal-like uterus is clung to in popular and academic accounts of the uterus, despite Herophilos' discovery of the fallopian tubes and the ligaments which held the womb in place, discoveries which are pictured on the amulets. Indeed, the form of the uterus as an upside down vase is derived from Hippocratic descriptions of the organ, and not the Egyptian traditions which picture it as a well or a bicornuate bovine uterus.

Nevertheless, the womb as shown on the amulets and as described in the papyri is formed from an amalgam of cultural sources. In spell PGM VII. 260-71 in the papyri which begins chapter 6 the womb is described as a dog eager to attack the heart of its woman (Betz 1992, 123-124). The simile of a dog would suggest to a culturally informed Egyptian the use of puppies in fertility magic and the negative associations of contamination, chaos and danger symbolized by the animal. To one aware of Greek tradition the simile would have also brought to mind the Greek belief that dogs were dangerous, associated with disease, death, and dark magic, and would have reminded one of Pandora and her insatiable body and bitch mind as well as the common word for pregnancy and a pregnant woman. The imagery and inscriptions on these amulets are derived from both cultures and as such resonate with more than one meaning. Yet, as King says, "in this spell we are not far from the womb of the Timaeus, running through the body when its desire to conceive is thwarted" (King 1998, 234). That same womb runs riot on the amulets as well.

VIII

The Amulets as Material Culture: Logistical and Theoretical Concerns in the Manufacture and Use of a Medico-Magical Instrument

Hence may the healing art new aid derive,
Taught by their virtue plagues away do drive;
For sages tell that by creative heaven
Distinctive potency to gems is given.
And hoar experience surely doth attest
The native virtue by each stone possessed.
Though in the herb a potent virtue lurks
Greatest of all that which in jewel works.
Lapidary of Marbodius,
Quoted in C. King, 1860, 391-92

The performance (or commission) of a spell made it possible to regain the initiative and the hope that one could affect the outcome. The ritual thus offered both the community and the individual a means to master emotionally an otherwise difficult crisis.

Graf 2003, 157

Having established the intended purposes of the amulets in chapters 3 and 4, and situated them in relation to other amulets and the magical and medical traditions from which they draw inspiration in chapters 5, 6 and 7, it now remains to consider a very large question: why do they manifest in the manner that they do? Why aren't they painted on bits of broken pottery like Egyptian birth ostraka or made to more closely approximate the life size uterus like Italian votive objects? These concerns can be

addressed on several levels. On the one hand, an explanation based on the technological abilities and the artistic traditions from which they emerged is a legitimate and an appropriate response. On the other hand, a consideration of their size, shape and agency as scaffolded by modern theoretical paradigms and abstracted from immediate cultural concerns is also a valid approach. This chapter will attempt both paths. The first part is devoted to the logistical and cultural motivations for why and how the amulets take the form they do. The second part will present a consideration of the stones informed by modern theories of agency, the body and material culture.

Logistical Considerations:

Creation and Activation:

The investment of power in the amulets began with the preparation of their materials and extended through the process of manufacture (Ritner 2008, 158). Although it is not certain who would have been responsible for the production of the uterine amulets, in Egyptian tradition, the amulet maker, *Sau*, the doctor and priest were in some prescriptions addressed at the same time, daemonstrating the intimate and overlapping relationship between the three (Nunn 1996, 99). Pinch asserts that amulets in Egypt were probably purchased directly from temple workshops, having been blessed by the gods via the temple priests and imbued with heka.²⁴⁷ The Papyrus Insinger, a text dating from the late 1st millennium BC notes that amulets only work because they channel the power of a deity (Pinch 1995, 117). Amulets for pregnant women and children in Egypt are also attested as having been made by midwives and nurses (Pinch 1995, 56).

²⁴⁷ She and cites amulets of Bes which probably were produced and obtained at the Temple of Hathor at Dendera (mid 2nd millennium BC) along with other votive objects (Pinch 1995, 117, 129).

Given the technical difficulties of engraving the uterine amulets it is likely that they were produced in a formal workshop rather than on the fly by medical practitioners. While such workshops were familiar in the Egyptian tradition, there is no evidence which links the uterine or any other late antique medico-magical gems to a particular temple. Thus it is also possible that they were produced by independent workers functioning either in the Egyptian tradition of “amulet man” or in the Graeco-Roman tradition of gem engravers, a profession which was not intimately linked with religion, but was considered a specialty of the arts (C. King 1860).

Whoever the engravers were the amulets do retain a significant link to the Egyptian tradition in that they needed to be invested with divine or magical power before they would be considered objects with power; they had to be “activated” (Pinch 1995, 118-119). The Papyri Graecae Magicae provides multiple examples of activation procedures for medico-magical rings and gems like the uterine amulets. For example:

Hermes’ ring. Preparation of a scarab: Taking a scarab engraved as described below, put it on a papyrus table and put under the table a clean sheet and olive twigs, scattering them about, and in the middle of the table, a small censer, burning myrrh and kyphi. Have ready a little faïence vessel in which there should be salve of lilies or myrrh or cinnamon. And taking the ring put it into the salve, having in advance purified [it?] from everything, and burning on the censer the kyphi and myrrh. Leave [the ring] 3 days, and taking it [from the table], put it in a pure place. Have at hand for the consecration pure bread and whatever fruits are in season. When you have made another [incense] offering on [a fire of] grapevine twigs, during the offering take the ring from the salve and put it on. Anoint yourself at dawn with the ointment from it and stand facing the sunrise [and] say the spell given below...

Carving of a scarab: Carve a scarab in costly green stone and, having pierced [the stone], thread it with gold [wire?]. On the underside of the scarab engrave holy Isis. And when you have consecrated it as written above, use it. The days in which it is proper to perform [the rite] are, [counting] from the rise [of the new moon] the 7th, 9th, 10th, 12th, 14th, 16th, 21st, 24th, 25th. On the others, restrain yourself
PGM V. 213-303. Trans. Morton Smith, Betz 1992, 104.

Or:

Taking a field lizard, let it down into oil of lilies until it be deified. Then engrave the [image of] the Asklepios [worshipped] in Memphis on a ring of iron from a leg fetter and put [the ring] into [the] oil of lilies [in which the lizard was drowned]. And when you use [the ring] take [it and] show [it] to the pole star, saying this spell 7 times: 'MENŌPHRI who sit on the cherubim, send me the true Asklepios, not some deceitful daimon instead of the god.' The take the incense burner in where you are going to sleep and burn 3 grains of frankincense and wave the ring in the smoke of the incense, saying 7 times the [spell], 'CHAUAPS ŌAEIAPS ŌIAS LYSIPHTHA, lord Asklepios, appear.' And wear the ring on the index finger of your right hand.

PGM VII. 628-642, Trans. Morton Smith, Betz 1992, 136.

Clearly the procedures employed in activating an amulet were elaborate and laborious. Pinch cites one example which extended over fifteen days and involved storing the amulet within the body of a sacrificed black rooster for a period of 24 hours (Pinch 1995, 118). Others, such as PGM IV 1596-1715 were generally applicable to any amulet and used only formulaic words to imbue the phylactery with the power of the deity (Betz, 1992, 68-69).

Nevertheless, the Schwartzes express doubts as to whether every medico-magical amulet which was created would have undergone such an activation procedure.

Even though there is evidence that some of the types were described in specific magical procedures, it is unlikely that the majority of these amulets were used in so elaborate a manner. Once established as protective or helpful in a particular situation, amulets could have been produced in large numbers without the necessity for the actual presence of a magician. Schwartz and Schwartz 1979, 153

By this logic once the efficacy of an amuletic type had been established there would have been little need to imbue each specific example with power; the type as a whole would already possess it by virtue of an archetypal amulet having been activated. They also offer this lack of individual need for activation as a potential reason why so many of the amulets have differing or incorrect orthographies and combinations of symbols,

suggesting that the ‘degradation’ of the various types may be explainable by the repeated copying of amulets without reference to the original magical procedure with which they were associated (Schwartz and Schwartz 1979, 154). Galen lends support to their argument in his discussion of his experiment with a Chnoubis amulet prescribed by King Nechepsos, where he mentions the carving of Chnoubis on a green stone and its use as an amulet, but includes no mention of a magical rite which was to accompany the carving (Galen, De Simplicibus 10.19).

Methods of Engraving:

Not all the amulets in the Papyri Graecae Magicae are made of stone; many are formed from more perishable materials such as papyrus and string. This also seems to be the case for most Hellenistic and early Roman amulets (Hanson 1995, 288). Hanson, citing Morton Smith, notes that amulets made of stone are not generally found on Graeco-Roman sites before the 1st century BC (Hanson 1005, 282). Kotansky supports this observation, adding that engraved amulets rise to popularity from the Hellenistic period through the height of the Roman period (Kotansky 1991, 112).

For those amulets that are fashioned from stone such as uterine amulets it is useful to reflect on the method of their engraving. Consideration of these means of engraving can hint at the environment in which the stones were created, and thus possibly the greater social and economic webs into which they slotted. Various tools and techniques may have also presented technical barriers to which can be attributed the form of elements on the amulets. Examination of carving methods can also betray amulets which were created during the Renaissance rather than in antiquity or that may have been genuinely produced in the ancient world but modified at a later date. In order to look into

any of these issues more fully, a basic understanding of the process and techniques used to create an amulet must first be grasped.

The Egyptian tradition includes amulets and beads carved from stone from an early date (Gwinnet and Gorelick 1993, 126). Although few tools remain from early Egyptian stone carving, based on micro-examinations of the surface topography of the interior of bead holes, Gwinnet and Gorelick have been able to determine the methods of carving hard stones, such as carnelian, from the earliest periods of Egyptian history through the latest (Gwinnet and Gorelick 1993, 125).²⁴⁸ They have found a carnelian bead dating from the time period of the uterine amulets, the 2nd c. AD, which was drilled with a tubular drill, as well as a haematite scarab which was drilled with either a hollow tube or a solid rod (Gwinnet and Gorelick 1993, 130-131). Of eight beads analyzed from Roman Naucratis one of quartz appears also to have been drilled with a twin diamond drill (and may have been manufactured in India) (Gwinnet and Gorelick 1993, 131). Many of the tools and techniques by which these beads were carved were also employed in the creation of the uterine amulets.

It should be noted that all of the amulets were carved as *intaglii*, with the design sunk below the surface of the stone, as opposed to *cameo* where the background stone is removed and the design stands in relief. Osborne suggests that the amulets would have been polished before they were carved so as to not soften the lines of the engraving, and that this would have been done by rubbing the stones on a surface coated with powdered Naxian emery, the popularity of which in gem carving is also attested by Pliny (Osborne

²⁴⁸ For example, they have shown that carnelian beads from Egypt dating to the Badarian period (5500-4000 BC) were drilled with conical flint drills and a powdered hard stone such as emery (Gwinnet and Gorelick 1993, 126). They also established the use of the tubular copper drill in the same period and its continued use throughout Egyptian history (Gwinnet and Gorelick 1993, 126-128).

1912, 276, Pliny 36.54, Eichholz 1962, 42-43). This produces tiny parallel and often wavy lines along the surface of the stone. If an amulet is polished to a mirror shine it betrays either modern retouching or forgery (Osborne 1912, 276).²⁴⁹ After the stone had been polished it is possible that the design to be engraved was scratched onto its surface, later to be destroyed as the surface was carved out (Osborne 1912, 273).

The use of the diamond point to carve amulets (as opposed to the twin diamond drill discussed by Gwinnet and Gorelick) has been a subject of debate among archaeologists. Pliny notes the use of the *adamas* tipped tool among engravers of gems (Pliny 37.60, Eichholz 1962, 210-211). Often translated as diamond, Osborne notes that Pliny records six different types of *adamas* and prefers to understand the *adamas* tipped burin as actually tipped with white sapphire, corundum, which is the next hardest mineral on the Mohs scale (9) (Osborne 1912, 271). Charles William King, on the other hand believes the tool to employ diamond, and sets this as the bench mark by which to measure the true antiquity of an amulet (C. King 1860, 107).

...as a general rule, according to the observation of the famous gem-engraver Natter, the extensive use of the diamond-point is the great distinction between the antique and the modern art. The word itself, *scalpere*, used by the Romans to express the process of engraving on gems, signifies to scratch, and, in itself, supplies a proof of the manner in which the work was carried on when first introduced to their notice; and the Greek technical term, $\star \cdot \uparrow \cdot \text{ca}$ ²⁵⁰ [sic.] has the same primary signification. The use of the diamond point...produces an admirable and natural effect which cannot be given by the modern instruments. C. King 1860, 105-106

²⁴⁹ Osborne asserts that these later creations are not forgeries in the sense that they deliberately attempted to cheat and fool people (although many authors disagree on this point), but rather were merely attempts of a later age to tap into the power and knowledge of an earlier period by recreating the symbols of that power. Nevertheless, whatever the intent of their artificers, as they have entered most modern collections as genuine products of the ancient world, they will be referred to here on out as forgeries.

²⁵⁰ He probably means $\star \cdot \uparrow \cdot \text{ca}$ the verb meaning “to carve into”

The modern instruments to which King refers include the use of the rotating wheel or disc (C. King 1860, 105). For King an antique stone would not have employed such a tool. Rather the larger parts of a design would have been sunk with a blunt tipped drill, like those used to drill out the earliest Egyptian beads, and the details would have been supplied by the diamond tipped graver.

Again, a very satisfactory proof of antiquity is found when the engraving appears to have been executed almost entirely with the diamond point; that is to say, when all the hollows seem cut into the stone by a succession of little scratches repeated one upon the other, while the deeper parts of the design show that they have been sunk by means of the drill, a tool with a blunt and rounded point, producing a succession of hemispherical hollows of various dimensions. C. King 1860, 105

Osborne has disputed King's assertions, claiming that he grossly overemphasized the importance of the diamond tipped tool in ancient gem carving, but does note that it was often used in Graeco-Roman period (Osborne 1912, 272). The truth probably lies in between. In any case, traces of engraving with the diamond tip, with its sharp edged hollows, may be found on the amulets.

Likewise, the *terebrarum fervor* of Pliny, the rotating drill, a main tool of the Etruscan gem trade was also used in the creation of the amulets. Its use is betrayed by the creation of a design out of linked and overlapping round hollows and divots which are cut in several of the amulets (c. 38, 113) (C. King 1860, 107, Osborne 1912, 272). It is generally agreed that the larger portions of a design would be drilled onto a stone with a drill of a larger diameter smeared with oil and emery, and the detail work would be done either by a diamond point, or a drill or disc of a smaller diameter, the drill leaving hollows with softer edges than the point (Osborne 1912, 273).²⁵¹

²⁵¹ Furtwangler for example believed that the finest lines on ancient intaglii could have been achieved with the drill, and relegated the diamond point to a marginal position. Osborne 1913, 273. It is unknown if the gem would have been immobilized and the drill applied to it, or if the opposite, as in modern gem carving

A further tool, the wheel, seems to have come into use shortly after Pliny wrote possibly during the reign of Domitian. This tool is similar to a drill in that it rotates, but uses a small copper disc as its bit rather than a blunt metal tip (C. King 1860, 109). It seems to have been a popular tool in the production of amulets like the uterine talismans, and may be the reason for the letter forms adopted on the stones, which will be remembered, are almost always angular rather than rounded.

Of the use of this instrument we see abundant marks in the intaglio of the Lower Empire; more especially are its effects observable in the letters occurring upon the Gnostic amulets, where we find the square form of the characters usually employed, on account of the difficulty of cutting curved lines by an instrument revolving in a vertical plane, and consequently working forward on the surface presented to it, and in a straight direction. C. King 1860, 109²⁵²

Thus the tools used to create the amulets can be used as a measure to determine the genuineness of an amulet, and provided compelling technical reason as to why the elements of the amulets, such as the letters, adopt the forms that they do.²⁵³

would have been the case. Furtwangler believed that the drill was moved over a stationary stone, but Osborne, taking his lead from modern jewelers believed that the drill would have been stationary and the jeweler would use his two free hands to manipulate the gem against it. The latter is the more likely situation (Osborne 1912, 274-275).

²⁵² See also C. King 1860, 347 where he again compares the use of the drill to the diamond point in forming letters: “The letters of these inscriptions are usually of a square form, the rudeness of the instrument employed, or the want of skill in the artist, having prevented his forming circular characters; to do which neatly requires the greatest dexterity and practice, and is the most difficult task that can be required for the wheel; for the elegant and minute inscriptions of the earlier engravers will be found to have been scratched into the stone with the diamond point, and hence their perfect neatness of execution.”

²⁵³ The reader may be curious as to why no attention has been given to the magnifying lens in this process. It seems that it was not used by engravers. Pliny mentions their eye strain and says that it was relieved by pondering the *smaragdus*, an emerald, (Pliny 37.63), but does not include it in the list of tools used by the artisans. Osborne has noted that modern gem cutters rely on their sense of touch to execute their work, as they cannot see a design being cut while the stone is pressed to the wheel and only occasionally check the progress in a wax impression (Osborne 1912, 275). Nunn has proposed that miniature carving on gems was the purview of those suffering from extreme myopia, a view which has been expressed in regards to Babylonian seal cutters, a job which incidentally was often passed down through families, possibly because the extreme degree of myopia that was demanded by the job may have been genetically linked (Nunn 1996, 69).

The shape of stones and amulets can also help determine if they are genuine. Pliny notes in Book 37 of his Natural History that convex and concave stones were less valuable than planar, and that the elongated oval was more valued than the lenticular or the round form. The uterine amulets are almost without exception either oval or round, and all are planar with both sides dressed (Pliny 37.196, Eichholz 1962, 324-325). The pentagonal shape of amulet c.45 may indicate that it is a later creation and not genuinely antique (Schwartz 1979, 166). Of all 162 amulets in the catalogue c. 45 is the only bead, a form which marks it out as suspicious, as does its biconvex shape, material and rounded hexagonal form.²⁵⁴

While most gems of this time period were small in order to be safely set in rings, with larger gems typically created as forgeries during the Renaissance, excepted “from this rule [are] the large Gnostic gems which were intended to be worn on the dress, or to be carried on the person as amulets, and not to be employed as signet rings” (C. King 1860, 102) The uterine amulets as part of this “Gnostic” class could conceivably be quite large, and some like those carved in serpentine or limonite (c. 156, 157) are several inches in length. For the most part, however, the uterine amulets are exceptionally small compared to other “Gnostic gems.” The purpose for this will be discussed in more detail at a later point in this chapter.

Material:

The choice of what stone to employ in the manufacture of an amulet was a major one. Speaking of the “Gnostic” amulets King notes that:

²⁵⁴ While a pentagonal bead in the Schwartzes’ collection may provide amulet c. 45 a precedent, its own octagonal silhouette marks it out as a potential forgery as well.

Instead of the choice Sardis, Amethysts, and Nicoli of an earlier period, we find *these* amulets almost without exception cut upon inferior stones, most commonly on bad Jaspers, black green, and yellow; on dull Plasmas, or perhaps Jade, and sometimes on Loadstone, but rarely on Sardis or Chalcedony. C. King 1860, 343.

While King denigrates the choice of stones in the amulets of the Empire, Osborne notes that it can be turned to the modern investigator's advantage. "Good work on fine stones may pretty safely be placed as fifteenth century or later products..." (Osborne 1912, 137). The uterine amulets fall squarely within this frame, being almost exclusively engraved on haematite.

Some stones were used exclusively in ancient times, while others are only found in modern forgeries (C. King 1860, xxviii reproducing a letter of Goethe). Osborne estimates that 49/50ths of ancient intaglios were carved out of a quartz-based mineral, with a good deal of those being red carnelians and sardis (Osborne 1912, 278, C. King 1860, 5). The carnelian to moderns represents a deeply red opaque sardis (Osborne 1912, 278). Found in Italian streams and in Egypt as well it was a material that was widely available and often used for scarabs, both Egyptian and Etruscan (Osborne 1912, 278). It is not surprising that several of the uterine amulets, those which this dissertation agrees with Hanson in deeming "birth amulets" are of this material. Another popular semi-translucent mineral for ancient gems was chalcedony (the blue more so than the yellow variety) (Osborne 1912, 279, C. King 1860, 7). Yet C. King also notes that chalcedony was also the most widely used mineral in later periods for creating forgeries (C. King 1860, 8 n.3).

Indeed, c. 28 of the British Museum is of a semi-opaque yellow chalcedony which immediately strikes the viewer as incongruous when in the company of the rest of the museum's collection of uterine amulets, which are all of haematite. This amulet Michel

acknowledges as the work of a much later century. Catalogue number 45 is of a similar colored material, in addition to being a bead. The material alone is enough to mark it out as a later work.²⁵⁵ In combination with its anomalous form as a bead and biconvex shape, there is no doubt.

The choice of stones for the ancient craftsman was influenced by similar considerations demonstrated by traditional Egyptian magic in determining the material to be used in an amulet. However, the choice of the actual material seems to be determined by the Greek tradition as opposed to the Egyptian.²⁵⁶ Amulets received their power in part from their material (Ghalioungui 1965, 26).²⁵⁷ There is typically a complex interaction between the material of an amulet and the function of the piece (Ritner 2008, 51 n. 241). It played a symbolic role in the magical rite of which the amulet was a part. For example the use of a reddish purple stone which mimics the color of blood, such as porphyry, to halt uterine haemorrhage made sense because of its color (Pinch 1995, 81, Kyranides “pi”, Waegeman 1987, 119).²⁵⁸ Osborne agrees that the material of an amulet was often as important as its device, and Galen goes so far as to assert the green stone

²⁵⁵ It is to be noted that nowhere do Delatte and Derchain note the aberrant color of this stone in their 1964 publication. Nor do they note that it is a bead.

²⁵⁶ The material of amulets in Egypt was often important and intimately related to the purpose and form of the piece. The color and shape of a material might suggest its use in an amulet. Of these, color is the one most important in choosing the material of the amulets (Pinch 1995, 81, 165). In Egypt the colors orange, red and yellow were described by the same word. Black and green were colors associated with rebirth and growth and blue was linked with the heavens and divinity (Pinch 1995, 81). Nevertheless it would seem that while Egypt had a rich amuletic tradition that these late amulets may be better explained by Greek sensibilities toward form and color.

²⁵⁷ Natural amulets were due to things like shape, color or scarcity, for instance, the cowrie shells strung as belts in Egypt to protect female fertility (Pinch 1995, 107).

²⁵⁸ For instance, Ritner describes an amulet of green stone in the form of a papyrus plant whose purpose is listed as “to flourish” (Ritner 2008, 51). The color of the amulet, green, denotes life while the papyrus is a plant that grows vigorously, both aspects that reinforce the function of the amulet, to promote health and success. Another example is the use of ivory in “birth wands” a material derived from the hippo, the sacred animal of Taweret the goddess of pregnancy. Their shape as throw sticks, used to stun birds (forces of chaos) is appropriate for also stunning and driving away daemons (also chaotic forces).

worn over the stomach was enough to cure stomach upset without the engraved figure of the Chnoubis (Osborne 1912, 277, Galen De Simplicibus, 10.19).

We find so marked a preference for haematite, green and yellow jaspers, and heliotrope that we may fancy that some especial virtue was supposed to dwell in these substances. Plasma or greenish chalcedony was also sometimes used and it is quite possible that color alone may have been regarded as efficacious in some way. Osborne 1912, 136.

Osborne goes on to note that despite the stones' lack of inherent beauty as opposed to the gems employed by the artists of the classical period, the question of beauty in an amulet was not even a consideration. The same also applied for the quality of engraving or the composition. The manufacture of these amulets was not aesthetically driven. All parts of them, including material, motif and inscription served a higher purpose. This may explain why such pieces as executed in the "kerben stile" of Michel, so rough and terse as to be hardly recognizable as uterine amulets, were acceptable to those who bought them. That said, it should not be imagined that high quality and harmonious composition were never considered (such on c. 96, 114), they were just not the first priority in the creation of these pieces.

In light of the above discussion it should come as no surprise that imitations of the amulets in glass, pottery or other materials are not known (Osborne 1912, 137). Osborne and C. King both also note that given the more common nature of the stones employed, it would have been no cheaper to create the amulets in glass (Osborne 1912, 137). "Pastes of this class do not exist: the real stones were cut so rudely, and doubtless produced so cheaply, that it was not worthwhile to imitate them in less valuable material" (C. King 1860, 343).

Lapidaries and Materials:

The next major discussion focuses on the material of the amulets and its relationship to the classical tradition of lapidaries. These books on stones and their physical and supernatural properties began with Theophrastus' Peri Lithon (314-305 BC).²⁵⁹ Those which bear on this discussion and include the 36th and 37th books of the Natural History of Pliny (1st c. AD), The Collection of Remarkable Things by Solinus (3rd c. AD), the 4th c. Lithica ascribed to Orpheus, the epitome of this lapidary known as the Orpheus – Kerygmata (of uncertain date), the Lithica of Damigeron-Evax (5th c.), the 4th c. AD Kyranides, a Hermetic book of magic current at the time of the production of the uterine amulets, the lapidary of Marbodius composed in the 11th c. AD and based almost exclusively on Pliny, Solinus and Orpheus, and parts of the De Materia Medica of Dioscorides (2nd c. AD) (Burnett 2006, 327, C. King 1860, 389, Aubert 1989, 442). The consistency among these texts, especially the later ones, is remarkable, indicating a high degree of borrowing between sources, and perhaps also a strongly ingrained popular belief system in regards to the more common or remarkable stones. Interestingly, while the use of the stones as amulets is noted in these texts, with the exception of the Kyranides, the engraving of them with magical devices is not known (Aubert 1989, 442).²⁶⁰

²⁵⁹ While the Egyptian tradition had a similar genre of literature as attested by Berlin Papyrus 8769 which lists stones and their magical properties, since it has not been translated into a modern language and Egyptian is unknown to the author it has not been included in this discussion (Ritner 2008, 39). It should be noted though that often the lists of odd ingredients in Egyptian magical texts are simply codes for more common stones and plants. For example PGM XII.401-444 provides a key for such ingredients listing “blood of a snake” as code for “haematite” (Betz 1992, 167-169). Lists like these betray popular belief about stones and other magical things by the associations they append to them in their code. Here haematite is connected to both blood and snakes, associations it also has in many of the Greek lapidaries.

²⁶⁰ Aubert finds this strange, as most archaeological evidence for amulets suggests that they were engraved. However the equally valid point does not occur to him – would archaeologists recognize an unadorned stone as an amulet? If not how can we claim that the majority of amulets are engraved, as we have no idea of the total employed, just those which we can recognize by their modifications.

Having provided the barest of introductions to the lapidaries and their relative dates the discussion will now turn to a consideration of their content and what understanding its application to the amulets might draw out. It should be noted, however, that this is not as simple as looking up haematite in these texts and considering the explanations they provide. Since mineralogy based on chemical identification was unknown to the ancients, identification often relying on the subjective and variable assessment of the color of a stone or mineral, it is often hard to match a stone to its ancient name and much attention has to be given to properly identifying the intended material in the descriptions. (Osborne 1912, 277, Bonner 1950, Devoto and Molayem 1990).

The first stones to be considered are those which affect the uterus and are used to minimize or enhance fertility (including stimulating lactation). Dioscorides lists 15 stones which had such effect as presented in table 8.1.²⁶¹

Table 8.1: Minerals in Dioscorides' *De Materia Medica* which affect the female reproductive system.

| Material | Modern Identification | Action | Book V, Number: | Page in Gunther |
|--------------------------|--|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Kinnabari</i> | Cinnabar | Same functions as <i>haematite</i> – styptic | 109 | 638 |
| <i>Chalkitis</i> | Copper ore | Repress fluxes and nosebleeds | 115 | 639 |
| <i>Stupteria</i> | Alum | Prevent conception, abortifacient, styptic | 123 | 642-643 |
| <i>Theion</i> | Sulphur | Stimulate abortion or birth, styptic | 124 | 643-644 |
| <i>Trux</i> | Lees of wine | Eases uterine bleedings and stomach flux | 132 | 647 |
| <i>Aimatites Lithos</i> | Haematite | Combats uterine haemorrhage | 144 | 652 |
| <i>Schistos Lithos</i> | Haematite/ Schist | Same qualities as haematite but weaker | 145 | 652 |
| <i>Gagates Lithos</i> | Fossil bitumen | Combats hysteria and uterine wandering, “heals the hidden griefs of women” when fumigated | 146 | 653 |
| <i>Melitites Lithos</i> | Honey stone, Galactites (milk stone) | Stimulates lactation, keeps infants safe, generally good for fluxes like chalk (<i>galaktites lithos</i>) listed above it | 151 | 654 |
| <i>Morocthhos Lithos</i> | Soapstone | Combats uterine bleeding | 152 | 654 |

²⁶¹ Stones which had an implied effect, such as “good for bleeding” but which did not explicitly link that bleeding to the uterus were not included in the table.

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|-----|---------|
| <i>Selenites Lithos</i> | Selenite, moonstone | Fertility amulet, generally causes crop fertility | 159 | 655 |
| <i>Iaspis Lithos</i> | Jasper | Speeds and eases delivery | 160 | 655 |
| <i>Aetites Lithos</i> | Eagle stone ²⁶² | Prevents miscarriage | 161 | 656 |
| <i>Ostrakites lithos</i> | Fossil oysters | Contraceptive if drunk after menstruation, eases inflamed breasts | 165 | 656 |
| <i>Terra Samia</i> | Samian earth | Stops uterine haemorrhage, eases inflamed breasts | 172 | 557-558 |
| <i>Lithos Samios</i> | Samian stone | Speeds delivery and decreases maternal mortality, general hemostat | 173 | 658 |

Of the stones that Dioscorides lists sulphur, eaglestone, selenite, jasper and *lithos samia*²⁶³ have the ability to increase fertility and ease birth. While a small group of uterine amulets are made out of red carnelian (c. 22, 38, 142), often thought to be used interchangeably with red jasper (c. 44, 64, 141, 143, 146, 147, 161) due to similarity in color, and are in some cases argued to be birth amulets based on their imagery (c. 64,²⁶⁴ 99, 141, 142²⁶⁵) the overwhelming majority of uterine amulets are made out of haematite, whose only link to the uterus is its ability to combat uterine haemorrhage. Since Dioscorides specifically lists four stones which positively affect fertility and hasten birth, it can be understood with relative certainty that in his sources haematite was not connected with fertility or childbirth.²⁶⁶ Dioscorides was not a doctor relating his own

²⁶² See Barb 1950 for more on this stone

²⁶³ Pliny also lists *Lithos Samia* in 3.152 as an amuletic means to prevent miscarriage (Eichholz 1962, 120-122).

²⁶⁴ See discussion in chapter 5 about this amulet. This dissertation does not believe that it is a birth amulet, following Bonner, but Hanson has argued that it is.

²⁶⁵ N.B. many of these red amulets (c. 142-147) are what Michel classes as anti-incubus amulets and not birth amulets. Only 142 has been included here because of the similarity of its imagery to a more “classic” birth amulet, c. 141.

²⁶⁶ Other stones were also linked to birth and fertility by other authors as well. None of these are ever found as the material for uterine amulets. Their conspicuous lack of use, despite their widely attested impact on reproductive function, again speaks to the lack of association between the uterine amulets and a desire to affect fertility either positively or negatively. For example: Solinus (XIII) and Marbodius (C. King p. 409) note that *paeanite* help women at the moment of birth. Galactite is listed as an amulet to ease birth when tied about the thigh by Marbodius (C. King 1860, 411) as well as a means to stimulate lactation

prescriptions, but rather compiling a pharmacopoeia based on local remedies throughout the east, where he researched. Given the high correlation of uterine motif (which has been shown to be primarily concerned with functions of the uterus outside of pregnancy) and the material of the amulets it must be supposed that the notions related in Dioscorides were widely known and used, and not the recording of mere esoterica.

The material of the uterine amulets is almost without exception haematite, a form of iron ore that is susceptible to dampness (Hanson 1995, 290). When crushed and added to water or oil it turns the liquid blood red, which may be the reason it was called “blood-stone” (Hanson 1995, 290-291, Orphic Lithica, Lithica of Orpheus and Kerygmes).

According to ancient traditions it was good for a number of bodily problems. In the Ebers papyrus (197) a man suffering from stomach ache is instructed to eat a mixture of carob, ground haematite, honey and oil over the course of four mornings (Nunn 1996, 140). Pliny notes that Sotakos prescribed three drachms of haematite in oil on an empty stomach for any type of blood disorder (Pliny 36.148, Eichholz 1962, 118-119).

According to the lapidary of Damigeron-Evax it had styptic properties and could stay the flow of blood, which was also true in the Egyptian tradition (Damigeron-Evax – and additions 2 and 3, Ritner 2008, 213). Dioscorides also notes that it is a good treatment for the spitting up of blood and blood shot eyes and that when drunk with wine it eases

by Marbodius, Solinus (XI) and Pliny (37.162) and a protective amulets for newborns by Pliny (37. 162, Johnston 1995, 384). A stone called *ostracites* is said by Pliny to help the breasts (36.113) while honeystone when powdered and applied on wool eases uterine pains (36.33). Neither *ostracites* nor *melitinus* can be identified as modern minerals (Eichholz 1962, Pl. 36 p. 115 n.d). On the other hand Marbodius identifies a stone called *orites* which functioned as a contraceptive and abortifacient (C. King, 1860, 412). The “frog stone” of Kyranides prevented uterine haemorrhage and also protected against venomous bites and calmed the temper of enemies – all of which remind one of the potentially dangerous, biting womb, an enemy within (Waegeman 1987, 169, “Phi”). Porphyry was lined by the Kyranides to prevention of uterine haemorrhage (Waegeman 1987, 119, “Pi”).

menorrhagia (Dioscorides V.144, Gunther 652).²⁶⁷ Marbodus concurs that it will halt female flux but adds that it also cures poisonous bites, which the accounts of Kergymes and Damigeron-Evax also claim (Marbodus XXXII, C. King 408, Kergymes, Damigeron-Evax). The Orphic Lithica notes that it is “good for shameful parts” when drunk and also notes that it is effective in curing eye problems, a function also found in Dioscorides, Marbodus, Pliny, Kergymes and Damigeron-Evax. Outside of the body it can also be used to make oneself persuasive and thus successful in the courts and in politics (Kergymes) as well as to assure victory in battle (Orpheus).

Mythologically Evax ties it to the castration of Ouranos by Kronos, the blood of the former falling to the earth and hardening into haematite which accounts in the Greek tradition for its connection to both blood and cures for the reproductive organs (Evax 9). In the Egyptian mythological tradition iron was used by Seth to kill Apophis and was traditionally associated with the defeat of wild animals (Ritner 2008, 166). It may be that as an iron-ore haematite was especially suited then from both traditions to combat problems of the womb, which often involved blood and which was conceptualized on the amulets as a wild animal and potential enemy.

²⁶⁷ The descriptions of the medicinal properties of haematite as described by Dioscorides and Pliny are uncannily similar. Dioscorides (as translated by Gunther) says that “it hath a faculty of binding, of somewhat warming and extenuating; of wearing off ye scars and scabrousness that are in ye eyes, with honey; and with a woman’s milk (it is good for) lippitudes and broken and bloodshot eyes. And it is drank with wine for ye dysurie, and for women’s fluxes; and for spitting of blood with pomegranate juice. And there is made of it collyries, and touch –stones fitting for the passions in the eyes. But it is burnt like to the Phrygian stone, only ye wine outset....Some counterfeit it....from schistos” Pliny in NH 36.144 (as translated by Eichholz 1962) says: “schistos and haematite are closely related. Haematite...is roasted in the same way as the Phrygian stone, except that it is not quenched with wine. It can be counterfeited,...It is extraordinarily good for bloodshot eyes, and checks excessive menstruation if it is taken as a draught. It is drunk also, with pomegranate juice added, by patients who have brought up blood. A draught of it is an effective remedy for bladder trouble; moreover if it is taken in wine it is an effective remedy for snake bites...” They both go on to speak of haematite’s relationship to schist and that stone’s uses. Clearly borrowing has taken place, or else the traditional lore of haematite is so thoroughly engrained as to be almost in the form of a memorized prayer or credo.

Dioscorides claims that the best haematite is dark and solid and lacks veining, (which sounds very much like the stone of which the amulets are carved) (Dioscorides V. 144, Gunther 1996, 652). Theophrastus says that “the *haimatitis*, also is of a solid texture; it is dull in color, and in accordance with its name seems to be made of blood that has become firm and dry” (Theophrastus Peri Lithon 37, Caley and Richards 1956, 53). It is with these physical descriptions of the stone that problems begin to arise in regards to its identification.

Understanding Theophrastus’ description as meaning that haematite must be red in color the modern scholar is faced with the problem that the amulets which are made of what is now known as haematite, are of a steel grey, black or dark brown color. Ignoring the fact that dried blood is a dark brown, almost black shade (like the amulets), the editors of the 1956 version of Theophrastus’ Peri Lithon suggest that the stone he describes is red jasper (Caley and Richards 1956, 53 n. 38). They base this conclusion on the color of the stone which Theophrastus describes as well as its opaque quality and its relation to a whitish (or yellowish) stone called *xanthe* that he describes immediately following haematite and which they identify as yellow jasper (Caley and Richards 1956, 139, 53 n. 39). Osborne in 1912 put forth the same suggestion in regards to Pliny, that red jasper was the stone known to him as *haematites* (Osborne 1912, 280). C. King noting that haematite dissolved in water in many of the ancient sources had dismissed this interpretation out of hand in 1860:

The so-called red Jasper is a softer stone, and of a different species; it is now often called haematite, but the ancient *Haemetites* bore no resemblance at all to this substance, for it could be dissolved in water, and was used in medicine, and was, there can be little doubt, nothing more than our Bole Armoniac.²⁶⁸ C. King 1860, 17.

²⁶⁸ An iron rich clay

This confusion begins to be cleared when Caley and Richards note that there is more than one type of haematite in the ancient world, and indeed, that the red varieties may have been too soft to be properly used as the material of carved gems.

Theophrastus described it in accordance with its name as having the color of dried blood, and Pliny also states that *haemetitis* was blood-red in color; but these descriptions do not apply to the kinds of haematite that are hard enough for use as ornamental stones, since these varieties of the mineral are black, steel-grey, or at the most, a dark brownish red inclining to black. Only the streak that appears in these varieties and the soft compact kinds of haematite exhibit the pronounced red color from which its name was derived. Caley and Richards 1956, 138-139

This black/ steel grey haematite is the stuff of the uterine amulets. When scratched or carved the area newly exposed is red and when rubbed against a whetstone the streak it leaves is bright red or yellow. When broken it is possible to see veins of more highly oxidized red iron running in layers through parts of the stone; it is possible that the fact that the stone turned red when scratched and left a trail of red when abraded, like a human body itself would leave a red trail of blood when scratched or cut, suggested the name of the stone. Further when left in a damp environment, such as amulet 69 found in England, the stone itself may oxidize (turning red) and start to break apart. Thus while many parts of the stone are red, the amulets themselves are the color of graphite or a very dark brown.

This recognition of the different types of haematite and its relationship to other iron rich stones is expressed in several ancient sources, in spite of the lack of a chemical basis for categorizing minerals. Pliny in book 37 of his natural history lists blood red haematite, a cure for both the liver and the eyes, as originating in both Africa and Arabia (and rails against the fraud of the Magi who claim that it will make one victorious in battle, court and politics) (Pliny 37.169, Eichholz, 1956, 301-303). In the same passage

he also mentions another type of haematite that is sometimes called *xuthos* or *menui* which is of a very dark brown or a yellowish shade (which the editors, Caley and Richards identify as limonite, another stone used occasionally with the bigger uterine amulets) (Eichholz 1962, 301-303).

In his book 36 Pliny records another five varieties of haematite which were identified by Sotakos (Pliny 36.146-148, Eichholz 1962, 116-119). The first type is from Ethiopia and is useful for treating the eyes and burns as well as generally useful. The second he calls “man tamer,” *androdamata*. It is black in color, exceptionally hard and weighty, comes from Africa and attracts silver, copper and iron. When tested on a whetstone it gives a blood red smear, and it is a “capital remedy for affections of the liver” (Pliny 36.146-148, Eichholz 1962, 116-119). Pliny mentions it again in book 37.144 where he specifies that it has a silvery sheen and can turn back the anger of an enemy (Pliny 37.144, Eichholz 1962, 280-281).²⁶⁹ This type certainly sounds similar to the material of the amulets, which almost resembles graphite due to its sheen, is very dense and heavy for its volume, and is black and cold to the touch. Further its ability to turn aside the ire of an enemy would be a useful feature in averting the wrath of an angry uterus. However the material of the amulets is not magnetic.²⁷⁰ The third type comes from Arabia and is as hard as the “man tamer” but leaves a yellow streak. The fourth is simply described as liver ore and the fifth is called schistos (Pliny 36.146-148, Eichholz 1962, 116-119). Schist will be discussed more below.

²⁶⁹ Solinus also lists “man tamer” as having a silvery sheen and possessing the same qualities. Solinus XLV, Golding 1955.

²⁷⁰ As far as the author knows

In addition to these five types of haematite relayed from Sotakos Pliny also describes the *haemetites magnes* in NH 36.129 (Eichholz 1962, 102-103). This “magnet” is found in Ethiopia and is bright red. When ground it produces red or yellow powder. Interestingly it lacks the ability to magnetically attract or repel things from itself (i.e. it is not a magnet by the modern definition). Nevertheless, Pliny places it alongside five other types of magnet identified by Sotakos (Pliny 36. 127-129, Eichholz 1962, 100-105). The first type is the best and like the haematite magnet comes from Ethiopia. The second type is from Magnesia near Macedonia and is red and black. The third type is from Hyettus in Beotia and is more red than black. The fourth hails from Alexandria in the Troad and is “black and female and therefore exert[s] no force” (Pliny 36. 128, Eichholz 1962, 102-103). The fifth is found in Magnesia in Asia Minor and is white, similar to pumice in texture and also exerts no magnetic force (Pliny 36. 127-129, Eichholz 1962, 100-105).

Pliny notes that the best magnet is that which is most blue and divides based on color individual specimens into the male or female gender. This is significant for the uterine amulets, as the fourth type of magnet, described as black and exerting no force because it is female, matches quite well with the material of the amulets. It would be appropriate to choose a female stone for amulets bent to the purpose which these were applied. It also sounds very much like the “man-tamer” haematite except that this material was magnetic. There seems to be in Pliny general confusion as to what qualified as a magnet and what qualified as haematite, which is not surprising given that they are both iron based minerals, and the strength of a magnet may be affected by the impurities it may contain, impurities which it may share with haematite. Indeed, as Osborne sees it:

The old name of *haematites* included not only the red jasper but also a class of iron-stones which run in color from steel-grey to iron black or brownish red. Much used for Oriental cylinders, it had spread into Greece in the Mycenaean Age and appeared there also in the Archaic. Later, it naturally fell into disrepute, only to be revived again in late Roman times, when the wonderful magic influence with which the Chaldeans had invested it made it a very common material for Gnostic talismans and amulets and for other wonder-working gems. Osborne 1912, 284-285.

C.W. King also describes many “Gnostic” amulets like the uterine amulets as having been carved on such magnet, which may have been understood as either haematite or magnet by the ancients.

On magnet, a black compact and hard iron ore, I have seen rude intaglio of the Lower Empire, and especially of Gnostic subjects: the mysterious quality of the stone naturally pointing it out as a fit material for amulets. C. King 1860, 60.

Dioscorides even says that haematite can either be mined or if that is not possible, manufactured from a burnt lode-stone (magnet). The medicinal properties of magnet are also similar to those of haematite: “All magnets, incidentally, are useful for making up eye-salves if each is used in its correct quantity, and are particularly effective in stopping acute watering of the eyes. They also cure burns when ground up and calcined” (Pliny 36.130, Eichholz 1962, 105). According to the *Lithica* of Orpheus magnet is also useful for treating poisonous bites, as is haematite according to Pliny, a useful quality in any amulet which is intended to fend off a wild, and potentially biting, organ (Orpheus 306-333, Pliny 36.145).²⁷¹ Kergymes also attributes to it the power to grant harmony between two potentially quarrelling people involved in a close relationship, such as brothers or husbands and wives (Kergymes 11). Again this quality would be desirable when trying to persuade one’s womb to “get along” with oneself.

²⁷¹ PGM VII.260-71: “I conjure you, O womb,...that you return to your seat, and that you do not turn [to one side] into the right part of the ribs, or into the left part of the ribs, and that you do not gnaw into the heart like a dog, but remain indeed in your own intended and proper place, not chewing [as long as] I conjure...” Trans. John Scarborough, my emphasis

Both Dioscorides and Pliny discuss schist in relationship to haematite. Though today schist refers to a broad class of metamorphic layered rocks, for these authors, it is a stone that is closely related to haematite and possesses all its medicinal powers but in weaker form (Dioscorides 5.145, Pliny 36.144). Haematite can be counterfeited and both describe how when *schistos* is heated it can take on the appearance of haematite, except that it is brighter in color and easily split along the plane of its layers, a feature which haematite does not possess (Dioscorides 5. 144). Pliny also lists *schistos* as a type of haematite as known to Sotakos, who also knew another type of schist called anthracite, which was also a black stone but which left a black rather than a red or yellow smear (Pliny 23.148, Eichholz 1962, 118-119).

A final black stone which helped the womb and which may have suggested that the black form of haematite or magnet was most appropriate for the amulets was jet, as recorded in Marbodius and Pliny who both claim that its fumes relieve suffocation of the uterus (Marbodius in C. King 1860, 401, Pliny 36.142, Eichholz 1962, 112-115).²⁷²

The issue of color is relevant to the discussion because color seems to be the way by which minerals were classified. Further, color seems to be, via the doctrine of

²⁷² Other black minerals as recorded in the lapidaries could have also been conceivably used to explain the material for the amulets if haematite was thought to be exclusively a red stone. The *aspisatis* of Pliny (37.146) is described as having a silvery sheen and is good at turning back wild x (where x represents a corrupted text). The *aspyctos* is described by Pliny as black with red and is said to combat coldness (Pliny 37.148) while the *baroptenus* is also described as black with red or white nodules (although it causes monstrous births) (Pliny 37.150). *Botryitis* is identified as botryoidal haematite and may also be the former nodule formed *baroptenus* (37.150). Other stones such as the hepatitis, the liver stone have been identified as forms of haematite (37.186) and still yet others such as the dendrites and *euanthes* cause wild animals to calm down and would be equally appropriate for the task at hand were the sole purpose of the amulets to calm the uterus (Waegeman 1987, 35, 41-44). The fact that stones like these do not appear argue to the multiple uses of the amulets, which included stanching blood flow as well as combating the results of attacks by wild animals.

signatures²⁷³ the basis for much of why certain medical attributes were assigned to various stones in the first place (Nunn 1996, 97). Hanson has argued that the red, yellow and orange colors of the small group of uterine amulets not made out of haematite marks them out as birth amulets, following in the tradition outlined in chapter 5 (Hanson 2004, 265). Indeed, it is the ability of crushed haematite to turn liquid red, like blood, which gave the stone its name. Yet, the color of many styptics stones, such as heliotrope with its red spots and cinnabar, whose color Dioscorides likens to haematite and which he calls a good blood stauncher, is also red (Marbodius in C. King 1860, 407, Osborne 1912, 281, Dioscorides 5.109, 638). Marbodius puts it well when he writes of carnelian:

That, where the colour of raw flesh is found,
Will stanch the blood fast issuing from the wound;
Whether from mangled limbs the torrents flow,
Or inward issues, source of deadly woe.
Marbodius in C. King 1860, 403

It is the color red which links all these stones to blood and makes them effective hemostats. Except for the fact that Dioscorides and Theophrastus both link red jasper with easy delivery, the color red would be no more linked to birth than any other color (Hanson 1995, 289). Nevertheless, the fact that the inscriptions of the amulets show such concern with the correct opening and closing of the organ, presumably in part to promote a proper bleeding regimen, it may be significant that the majority of the stones on which they are carved are not red, a color which is overtly linked with blood and birth in the Greek tradition.

While black haematite is still a styptic its color marks it out as a stone which would not hasten or ease parturition. It is possible that the black form of the stone was

²⁷³ Where the appearance of an object reveals what part of the body it will be medicinally active in regards to i.e. a walnut is good for the brain because the wrinkles of the walnut are similar to the furrows in the brain

deliberately chosen to mark it out as not primarily being a birth amulet or only concerned with the bleeding of the womb. As shown in chapter 4, the deities that appear on the amulets attest to the range of ways the organ could function in a woman's body, and using a red stone, a color intimately tied to the Greek tradition of birth amulets, might have privileged the functions of reproduction and menstruation too highly. Many of the black stones, such as *androdamas* "man tamer," or the third type of Sotakos' magnet had other aspects which might suggest that they would be more appropriate choices for the material of the amulets, such as the former's ability to calm anger or the latter's gender assignment as female. As C. King suggested in the passage quoted above, perhaps the lodestone's ability to attract things to itself was demonstration enough that a magnet or other iron ore was more powerful than most stones, and given the severity of the problem at hand, such a power may have had to have been utilized.

Moreover, the color black in Egyptian magic was a powerful positive and regenerative color, and was especially associated with magic. Red in this tradition was typically associated with Seth and with "doing evil," and it may not have been desirable to encourage further chaos in any situation which required the use of the amulets. Finally, one wonders if the use of iron to kill Apophis, the ultimate chaotic and wild animal, was not also a factor in the choice of material.

Having discussed matters of manufacture and choice of materials for the amulets, it is now appropriate to turn to questions of size and art and magical mechanisms as they relate to aspects of their cultural position that were not discussed in chapter 6.²⁷⁴

Magical Mechanisms:

²⁷⁴ A further consideration of size will be undertaken at the end of the chapter, framed by a theoretical perspective.

Within Egyptian magical practice from the 1st millennium on, when a deity or daemon was summoned, it was required that a “body” be provided for the divinity to enter (Pinch 1995, 78). Often a drawing on papyrus was sufficient, but figurines were also appropriate. It is possible that the uterine vase on the amulets may have provided such a body for Ororiouth, the daemon of the womb.²⁷⁵ By placing a womb upon the amulet, he was given a place to lodge where he could assert his control and work for the good of the person who invoked him. Likewise, Ritner asserts that images of gods and daemons were actually thought to be animated by that deity (Ritner 2008, 248). Ghalioungui also notes that in relation to disease if a picture or ideogram related to that disease were provided close to the ill person, the illness might move into the object which represented it and abandon the person (Ghalioungui 1965, 20-21).

The question of the size of the amulets is one which has surfaced several times in the course of various discussions. The amulets are, on the whole, smaller than other “Gnostic” amulets. Comparable items such as the amulets which combat sciatica are on the order of two inches long, whereas some of the uterine amulets are smaller than the surface of an eraser at the head of a pencil. Within the conventions of Egyptian art, this makes perfect sense. As it was tradition to trample enemies under foot in art to represent their eternal and ongoing subjugation, so it was also practice to reduce the size of enemies in relation to the pharaoh or other power (Pinch 1995, 19). The reduction of size in art and magic was directly linked to a reduction in the enemy’s ability to do harm. The reduction in size of the uterus to minute proportions as represented on many of these amulets supports the argument this study has put forth throughout this dissertation, that the conceptualization of the uterus on the amulets is one of a potential enemy who must

²⁷⁵ perhaps giving support to Bonner’s suggestion that Ororiouth could even be the name for the organ.

be dominated. While the use of miniature objects such as cippi was a means by which to personalize magical protection, the extreme miniaturization of some of these amulets argues to the point that the uterus was understood as a very fearsome foe when it took up that mantle, and extreme measures, even within the realms of art, had to be employed to regain control over it (Pinch 1995, 110).

Another major magical mechanism which may have been thought to be at work in the amulets is that of transference.²⁷⁶ In Egypt it was not uncommon for magicians to transfer a harmful substance to an inanimate object which could be ritually defaced or removed, and thereby ensure the destruction of the harmful agent, be it illness or a possessing daemon (Pinch 1995, 80).²⁷⁷

Winkler notes the act of transference in the magic of the later empire in regards to *agogai*, love spells which worked by compulsion. Here the disease (a burning passion) was not forced into an inanimate object, but onto another human being.

Between the agent and the victim, as depicted in these scenarios, there is a curious transference. The rite assigns a role of calm and masterful control to the performer and imagines the victim's scene as one of passionate inner torment. But if we think about the reality of the situation, the intended victim is in all likelihood sleeping peacefully, blissfully ignorant of what some love-struck lunatic is doing on his roof, while the man himself, if he is fixated on a particular woman, is really suffering in that unfortunate and desperate state known as eros. The spells direct that the woman's mind be wholly occupied with thoughts of the lover: from the evidence of the ritual we can say rather that the lover himself is already powerfully preoccupied with thoughts of the victim. Winkler 1990, 87.

In this way the sufferer is rid of his affliction and still achieves his desire while gaining control of the greater situation. Like the amulets, Winkler understands the *agogai* as

²⁷⁶ In the Greek world certain pure or impure substances were especially suited for transference rituals, being adept for a number of reasons at "absorbing" and impurity. It is not clear if haematite was understood in such a way (Parker 1983, 230).

²⁷⁷ Indeed, some amulets, particularly the blood stanching Tantalos amulets which are often found split in half along their vertical axis show evidence of ritual breakage and may be the result of such a transference ceremony.

having a therapeutic value in that they allow the sufferer to displace both the pain of and the blame for the affliction onto another object (Winkler 1990, 88). Like the amulets they are a proactive way to deal with disease and may work through a type of ritual persuasion (I claim to be in control and free of disease, therefore I am in control and free of disease). Thus transference of disease and impurity is a part of both Greek and Egyptian tradition and may inform in part the magical mechanism by which these amulets worked.

Aubert claims that the uterine amulets are primarily apotropaic, meant to ward off aggressive uterine magic (Auber 1989, 441). While this study would agree that they do seem to be used proactively to combat uterine complaints, it would not limit the source of those potential disturbances to the realm of magic. The amulets were a magical way to prevent uterine pain from physiological and supernatural forces, aggressively directed or otherwise. Throughout it seems that the primary source of danger on the amulets comes from the nature of the misbehaving womb itself, and not the malicious effects of a spell cast on the womb. His evidence for claiming the prevalence of aggressive uterine magic is weak, primarily consisting of PGM LXII. 76-106 which is a spell that asks that the victim of the incantation have an open womb and bleed night and day. Far more common is the evidence for a strong belief in a naturally dangerous womb, as evidenced in both the Greek and Egyptian medical traditions and by the precautions aimed against the womb on the amulets (Ouroboros, spells, the gods standing on top of it etc.).

The Schwartzes note that most amulets with apotropaic intent are directed against a specific medical condition (Schwartz and Schwartz 1979, 153). This is certainly the case on the amulets, which were intended to function against several types of uterine

problems. One example of such spells is demonstrated by PGM XX 13-19 which is attributed to a Philinna as a remedy against headache: “Flee headache, [lion] flees beneath a rock, Wolves flee; horses flee on uncloven hoof [And speed] beneath blows [of my perfect charm]” (Betz 1992, 259, Kotansky 1991, 112). Interestingly, the condition being warned off is one which may have been caused by a daemon, something which is not naturally connected to the human body and easily removed from it without damage to it. One wonders if the same types of spells would work on or with the uterine amulets, as the agent of destruction in this case is the organ itself, something with which one was stuck and which could not be removed from the body. It seems likely that the binding of the womb by the Ouroboros may be a proactive and preventative apotropaic measure to be used in a situation where the best one could hope for was to isolate the threat rather than remove it from the body.

The inscriptions on the amulets cope with a uterus that has already been compromised, as shown by those that command the womb to contract, or adjure the god to place it back into its proper spot. They indicate that the womb has already moved and must be returned to its place, or has already become swollen and must therefore contract. In these cases it seems that the proactive prevention of harm through apotropaic means was not appropriate. Thus while apotropaic intention may be a part of the motivation which lay behind the creation of the amulets, it does not seem to be the only reason for their manufacture or their use.

Use:

How then, were they used and by whom? The former question will be considered first. Many passages in the PGM attest to the use of engraved gems and amulets. For example, PGM V. 447-58, and PGM XII. 1-13:

On a jasper-like agate engrave Sarapis seated, facing forwards (?), holding an Egyptian royal scepter and on the scepter an ibis, and on the back of the stone / the [magical] name [of Sarapis?], and keep it shut up. When need [arises] hold the ring in your left hand, and in your right a spray of olive and laurel [twigs], waving them toward the lamp while saying the spell 7 times. And when you have put / [the ring] on the index finger of your left hand with the stone inside, [keep it] thus and, going off [to bed] without speaking to anybody, go to sleep holding the stone to your left ear.
PGM V. 447-58, Betz 109, Trans M. Smith

Attach a phylactery to your right and your left hand at night and wear it.
PGM XII 1-13, Betz 153-154, Trans Hubert Martin Jr.

Interestingly these texts explicitly describe a ring, and something else that seems to be attached to the hand possibly like a ring. In the first there is a small magical ceremony before the ring is slipped on and in both the item is worn attached to the body at night. The Greek sources also attest to the wearing of magical rings from a very early point in time (Kotanksy 1991, 110):

Just Man: I fear you not, for I wear a ring that Eudamos sold me for a drachma.
Karion: But it is not inscribed, for an informer's bite
Aristophanes, Plut. 883-885, quoted in Kotanksy 1991, 110

Kotansky also notes a fragment from the comic poet Antiphanes (circa 350 BC) in which it is mentioned that a character purchased a ring for digestive pain (Kotansky 1991, 110, Kock frag. 117).²⁷⁸

While Michel consistently describes the amulets as ringstones in her 2004 catalogue of the British Museum collection many of the Gnostic stones are specifically

²⁷⁸ The ring itself as a piece of jewellery was supposedly an invention of Prometheus, and the name for it in Greek, daktylion, is a native word as opposed to other types of jewellery which were imported from outside the Greek world (C. King 1860, xxxviii). Indeed, they seem to have been imported into Egypt at a relatively late date (17th c. BC) and did not become popular in magical rites until the Graeco-Roman period (Pinch 1995, 112).

singled out by other authors as being unsuitable for such use (Michel 2004). Osborne claims that many of the “Gnostic” stones were too large to be set as rings, while the Schwartzes suggest that amulets like the reaper were too big and too delicate to withstand the daily buffeting they would inevitably encounter if worn as a ring (Osborne 1912, 136, Schwartz and Schwartz 1979, 189). “Most of these gems appear to have been designed merely for amulets, and not for ringstones, for which they are unfit, on account of their large dimensions” (C. King 1860, 349).

Nevertheless, Osborne does note that the smaller amulets may have been set as rings and Kotansky also says that small semiprecious stones could be inscribed and set in rings (Osborne 1912, 136, Kotansky 1991, 114). As the uterine amulets were so small generally the possibility remains that they were set in rings and worn in that manner. As no stone has been recovered in such a setting from a known archaeological context, nor is recorded in any museum record, it is not possible to say for certain that they were ever employed in this manner. However, several have been placed in gold settings from the Renaissance to the modern day such as c. 86 and that of Professor A. Hanson (c. 9) who wears one set in metal strung from a necklace which demonstrates that it was in theory possible.

If they were not worn as rings, how were they employed? In both the Greek and Egyptian traditions it was common to string amulets as pendants or to tie them to the body in small pouches, a practice attested to also in the Papyri Graecae Magicae (Kotansky 1991, 114). The Greek word for amulet is *periapta* or *periammata* from the verb *periaptein* which means to attach or to tie on (Hanson 1995, 287, C. King 1860, 349). C. King claims that the only Gnostic amulet he ever witnessed in its original

setting was intended for this purpose of suspension (C. King 1860, 349). Dioscorides says that certain amuletic stones such as *melitites lithos*, *selenites lithos* and *iaspis lithos* are hung, while jasper is also tied to the thigh during birth (Dioscorides 150, 151, 159, 160, Gunther 1996, 654-655). Pliny also attests to the practice noting that *galactites* is tied, *adalligata*, to the neck of babies as an amulet (Pliny 37.162, Eichholz 1962, 295-297, Majno 1975, 346 n. 85). Egyptian scarabs and signets were also often strung on cords and hung (C. King 1860, 121, Pinch 1995, 108).

While some of the larger amulets, such as c. 156 which often bear a Chnoubis and Ibis on them do have eyes by which they could have been suspended, upon inspection many of these appear not to have been used (as there is little to no evidence of wear), and were perhaps carved more for decorative value. The other amulets (with the exception of c. 45, which as established earlier is a bead and the work of a later era) have no such eyes bored for threading, thus if they were worn as part of a necklace they had to be put in a setting or a suspended pouch of some sort.

The idea of wearing an amulet sewn into the clothes or carried on the body in a small pouch is one that is also familiar in both Greek and Egyptian traditions (Kotansky 1991, 114, Pinch 1995, 108). In an Anaxilas passage *Ephesia grammata* were said to be in a stitched hide pouch,²⁷⁹ and early Greek leather amulet capsules have been dated as far back as the 4th c. BC (Kotansky 1991, 111, 126 n. 26).

Fayum portraits occasionally show women and children wearing tubular amulet cases, and similar ones in metal are known from Greece and Rome (Kotansky 1991 114, 111, 126 n. 26, Ogden 1973, 1974). Pliny even cites one made of ivory for use with a

²⁷⁹ "Carrying about the excellent Ephesian letters in little stitched hides." Frag. 18 Kock quoted in Kotansky 1991, 111

contraceptive amulet. Egyptian amulet cases have been preserved from Pharonic times through the Roman period and beyond while the Schwartzes note that leather cases for carrying Hebrew amulets are discussed in Maimonides commentary on Shabath 61b-62a (Schwartz and Schwartz 1975, 189, Mishneh Torah 10:5). Leather and metal pouches and tubes thus seem ubiquitous throughout the Mediterranean as means to attach amulets to the body and it is likely that many of the uterine amulets were carried in this manner.

Amulets may have been worn throughout the life of their owner if they dealt with a potentially chronic problem (like epilepsy or malaria) or only when they were needed in acute ailments and then discarded or devoted to a deity like a votive (Kotansky 1991, 120). The medico-magical texts of Egypt are clear that amulets could be applied to any body part or bodily orifice, and Aubert even suggests that the uterine amulets may have been used intra vaginally or used in potions and fumigations, although he adduces no written evidence to support this suggestion (Pinch 1995, 112, Aubert 1989, 442).

If the amulets were worn in pouches or carried about in clothing, several authors note that they would not have been seen by most people, just their owners. Osborne suggests that this concealment would have potentially made them more powerful (Osborne 1912, 136). Even those that were set as rings would have been carved on both sides, thus always leaving some aspect of the design hidden (Osborne 1912, 136). The emphasis within ancient magic of secrecy and private ritual is one which was mentioned as a key difference between it and mainstream religion. The *devotio* is a public ritual spoken out before a group, whereas the *defixio*, the *katadesmos* is a private ritual which often leads to the burial or concealment of the ritual tablet that is produced (Graf 2003, 128). The *agogai*, the compulsory love spells which employ aggressive magic are also

carried out in secret (Winkler 1990, 94). Given the relationship postulated between the *katadesmoi* and the amulets the emphasis on secrecy in the former may suggest circumstances of use in the latter. Wearing them hidden on the body may have increased their power and been a parallel action to the burial of the *katadesmoi* tablet in the Greek tradition or the bound figure in the Egyptian tradition. Given the relationship of these amulets to Egyptian and Greek binding procedures it seems likely that the amulets would have been concealed in some fashion rather than worn in rings or as part of necklaces.

Turning now to the question of who wore the amulets, in excavations in Egypt it has been noted that from the 4th millennium on there is a paucity of amulets directed towards males save for those that engaged in quarrying and boating (Pinch 1995, 106). Amulets also occur far more frequently in the graves of women and children during the pharonic period than in those of adult men, which Pinch suggests speaks to the attitude of the culture towards women (Pinch 1995, 106, 113). Women were probably thought of as more susceptible to sudden misfortune due to the increased risk faced by women in childbirth as compared to the bodily risks faced by men (Pinch 1995, 106). Further, they may have been thought of as more emotionally unstable and prone to more violent emotions, which in Egyptian culture seem to be attributable to the influence of daemons and deities (Pinch 1995, 106). In general women would have been more vulnerable to supernatural attack than men, since they could serve as mediums and since they shed menstrual blood which was believed to be impure and an attracter of ghosts. Because of this they would have been more likely to wear permanent amulets made from durable materials like stone (Pinch 1995, 106). Because of their natural vulnerability children were also likely to employ amulets to ensure their safety (Pinch 1995, 106).

Kotansky's observation about the representation of women and children with amulets in the Fayum portraits is in keeping with Pinch's observations about the differential use of amulets by these populations among Pharonic Egyptians, although the Fayum portraits generally date from the 1st to the 3rd c. AD during the Roman Empire (Kotansky 1991, 114).

In Greece as well the wearing of amulets seems to be the province of women. Theophrastus as recorded in a fragment of his lost Ethics and in a borrowing by Plutarch, records how Pericles, weak and dying was unhappily badgered by the women of his household into wearing an amulet around his neck but beneath his clothes (Plutarch, Perikles 38.1-2, Ethics, fragment 21 of Fortenbaugh, Kotansky 1991, 107, Hanson 1995, 287). The concession to allow him to wear it under his clothes seems to indicate that it was viewed at least by Perikles himself as a shameful state.

Diogenes Laertius relates how the atheist philosopher Bion similarly took up amulets as he lay dying (4.54-57) (Kotansky 1991, 107). Plato further mentions that amulets and spells profit those with little self control no good (Plato, Respublica IV, 7261-b, Hanson 1995, 287). The people in the Greek world with the least ability to control themselves according to medicine, philosophy and other literature were generally women, and Plato here seems to be making a sly comment on the superstitious and weak nature of women. Indeed, the general stance of the rationalist Greek texts towards the use of amulets was that they were the especial purview of women and that their use was no more than unfounded superstition (Hanson 1995, 287).

For their own culturally specific reasons, amulets in Greece and Egypt seem to be predominantly the reserve of women. They appear in both cultures to be a gendered

phenomenon, at least to a degree. This is interesting given the trend Winkler has noted, that in literature the users of magic are typically female, but in the magical papyri of the empire they are typically male (Winkler 1990, 90, Graf 2003, 185).²⁸⁰ Who then would have used the uterine amulets to control the uterus?

The use of *historiola*, where the person to be protected is equated with the protagonist of the story/ spell, a popular magical technique from the earliest “everyday” spells is not used on the amulets. If it were we might with reasonable certainty guess the sex of the user based on the sex of the deity in the tale (Pinch 1995, 23).

Aubert makes the valid point that the uterus as the means by which society is reproduced is a concern to more people than just the woman who possesses it (Aubert 1989, 426). As such the womb could also be the target of attack by people, as he claims for the PGM LXII. 76-106 which apparently attempted to induce miscarriage (Aubert 1989, 428, Betz 1992). While he is correct that there are spells which try to block the uterus of a woman to all men but the executor of the spell, these seem to be as concerned with making the woman desire the executor of the spell as making her spurn others, or barring that making it impossible for her womb to accept others (Aubert 1989, 428). Nevertheless, the existence of such spells provides a precedent which makes it possible that the users of these amulets were occasionally men trying to magically influence the functioning of women’s bodies.

²⁸⁰ This could be the case for several reasons. Many of the spells seek to not gain mere lovers, but to win wives by magic. Graf notes that respectable or socially desirable women were not always of easy access and that magic would be one way to guarantee their accessibility. Further, by imagining that magic is the practice of women it removes it from the male sphere while admitting its existence. It can also be used as a way to safely distance oneself from the mad passion of love, where a man’s control, and hence his masculinity, lost or compromised – Graf 2003, 186-188

Given the fact that many have inscriptions which seem to be unconcerned with opening and closing the womb (for sexual access), but are rather focused on keeping it in place and keeping it calm and at ease, one may suggest that the amulets were used primarily by women who were concerned with the effects of the uterus on their greater bodies. However this is not also without its challenges. As Treggiari notes, votives such as the uterus, while probably primarily dedicated by women could also be dedicated by men, and while Juno Lucina was the goddess of birth Horace and his commentator as well as several inscriptions clearly demonstrate that married men traditionally prayed to her on March first (Treggiari 2007, 415-416). Thus the female body and its functions are not exclusively the purview of females. Further, as Hanson points out the multiple recipes in the Greek medical corpus to cure female sterility seem to indicate that Greek men thought it normal for intercourse to always result in a child unless something in the female body was broken (Hanson 1990, 327). If men take action in the sphere of rational medicine to “fix” and control women’s bodies, why not also in the supernatural sphere using a medico-magical instrument such as a uterine amulet?²⁸¹

Hanson concludes that the amulets were used by women of the cities dotted around the Mediterranean, this study cannot come to so firm a conclusion (Hanson 1995, 283). Although it seems likely that the majority were used by women, there is no evidence by which their use by men as a means to manipulate the bodies of women can be excluded. Indeed, there is evidence in the PGM in the form of multiple *agogai*, and

²⁸¹ Interestingly much the same view is held today among the poor in Egypt. Indeed Inhorn has documented that even when infertility can be traced to the male partner, responsibility for it is still laid upon the body of the female. Although in modern Egypt the female partners generally take the responsibility for finding a solution to this problem, this finding may be the result of the sampling procedures used by Inhorn, and it is possible that matters may be taken to “fix” a wide by either a modern husband or an ancient male. Inhorn 1995

possibly a spell to force miscarriage that men were interested in such manipulations. Nevertheless, this study cannot help but believe that the greatest number of these amulets were used by women as a means to gain control over their own bodies. Perhaps on some level they were even a criticism of the Hippocratic philosophy which informed much of the medical beliefs expressed by the amulets, especially the belief that a woman needed to take a master for her body if she wanted to survive.

Theoretical Consideration:

The focus of the chapter will now shift to understanding the amulets in a more abstract manner, attempting to explain their form and function in relation to their general position as pieces of material culture, as objects, as things. The general premise espoused is that the amulets were active agents in the canalization of efforts to combat an unfortunate personal situation. They were loci for the focus of human attention, means by which experiences were ordered and made understandable, and provided a coping mechanism that empowered their users.

Things:

Before it is possible to proceed further it is necessary to first set out a basic understanding of what an amulet, as a thing, is. According to V. Gordon Childe a thing is the tangible manifestation of people's ideas projected onto the world (Dobres and Hoffman, 1994). This understanding is close to the original meaning of the word "thing," coming from the German *ding*, which means a gathering or collection, especially a gathering of ideas and meanings which can resonate on multiple levels of understanding (Chris Witmore, pc). In this discussion a thing will be considered a tangible object of

substance, rather than a process or idea. Therefore an amulet is a thing, but gender as a process of repetitive action, is not (Sørensen, 2006).

Brown has argued that a thing is less an object than a subject-object relationship (Brown 2001). That is, an amulet in isolation means nothing; it is only when it interacts with other objects and people that it gains meaning. Gosden and Marshall have noted that this is an important aspect of things, as it is through this reciprocal social interaction that both object and person are imbued with meaning (Gosden and Marshall, 1999). In this way people become a part of things and things a part of people (Holtorf 2002). It is for this reason that many have argued that material culture cannot be studied in isolation, that it must be contextualized to be understood (as best as one operating from outside a culture can ever comprehend the meanings of a foreign object lacking cultural competence), and it is for this reason that much of this dissertation has sought to build a social, intellectual and ideological context for the amulets (Sørensen 2006 citing Conkey). It is also because of this dependence on context that that status of thing is an impermanent and quickly variable characterization (Holtorf 2002).

Childe's original definition of objects, and therefore things, as the embodiment of human thoughts and ideas can perhaps be accepted with a few modifications suggested by the above discussion. It should be noted that the idea does not spring fully formed from the mind into material form. It is mediated through social mores that regulate what is acceptable and in what ways an idea may be expressed. Further, it must be inscribed upon the material world somehow, which necessitates the deployment of technology and an ability to translate an idea into the physical world. All of this means that objects are not pure reflections of mental processes, but rather may dimly reflect such ideas and

values as their originator envisioned, heavily influenced by the society in and technology by which they are created.

It is because of these social and technological additions to objects (which of course, also affect the underlying ideas which occur to their creators in the first place) that things are of use to archaeologists. Without such mediation things would merely reflect the perspective of the individual who created them; with it the scholar is able to access wider thought processes, belief systems and world views shared by groups of people. The things a group creates have the potential to lay bare via non-verbal methods its values and priorities when understood within their proper context (Wylie 1982).

As Wobst understands it artifacts demonstrate human intentions to change something about their world, or equally to prevent a change which would shift the world from its correct form (Wobst 2000). Things are material interferences in the world and thus always have agency, revealing what their creators deemed important enough to dedicate time and effort to, as well as what conditions they thought lead to a “perfect” world and what things they might be able to change (Wobst 2000).

The amulets as tangible creations of mankind, graven with images and words which express a hope and intention to influence the world around them fall squarely into the category of “thing.” It is through their interaction with human body, (a thing in itself) including the ways in which the amulets are handled and the ways in which they represent the human body, that they are defined and help to define the body as thing (Brown 2001). What their images and words, and the way those elements are arranged on the stones, reveal is a glimpse into their creators’ understanding of their world and bodies.

The representation of ideas within things can take several forms according to different theorists, all of which may be at work in the amulets. Rowlands points out that material culture can act as a mnemonic device, whereby more complex messages are sent and memories triggered through interaction with an object (Rowlands 1993). He gives the example of pain and mourning being associated with a certain color, and when that color is used in certain objects it may not trigger the exact same reaction among all viewers, but its meaning is stable enough that it would be mutually intelligible to those with cultural competence (Rowlands 1993). The compressed design elements of the amulets which allude to complex mythology, medical and artistic traditions would certainly trigger such a reaction in the viewer of the amulet. It is this ability to condense meaning into a few mnemonic trips that grants the amulets a large part of their power. Their color and material too may have the same effect, haematite in the cultures of Greece, Egypt and Roman Greece all being associated with blood and uterine flux. As Brown understands it, the amulets take on an indexical quality (Brown 2001).

Rowlands notes that objects that are highly visible and are of importance in ritual, in storing knowledge or in legitimizing power tend to have a conservative record of transmission, with form maintaining relative stability from object to object as each iteration strives to faithfully reproduce its model (Rowlands 1993). He goes on that repetitive form is the result of the collective mind and although meaning may change over time or from viewer to viewer, this is not reflected in the object itself (Rowlands 1993). If this model is applied to the uterine amulets, objects which are known to have been ritual in nature and which represented and stored knowledge of the body, it is clear that the amulets don't fit the paradigm well. While they tend to share the same basic

format of uterine scene on the obverse and inscription on the reverse, this is not universally the case. Some have figural scenes on both sides, some have no inscriptions and while they all seem to draw from the same basic pool of deity groupings the way that any particular amulet groups its deities seems open to individual choice rather than constrained by a restrictive tradition. Likewise, even when the same scene is shown on two different amulets the way in which it is carved and placed on the amulets is highly variable (c. 102, 103). The same observation is true for the inscriptions. The conclusion to which one is drawn is that these pieces were not highly visible, but rather very personal pieces which were not subject to public review, only private contemplation. The interpretation is one which fits well with the deductions of Osborne and others, namely that the amulets were probably worn in pouches or sewn into clothing rather than worn as jewellery or public ornament. Indeed, Osborne goes so far as to suggest, probably correctly, that they gain a measure of their power by the secrecy in which they were maintained. The basic similarities in form would argue that they all draw on a common tradition, but that there is wide variance in their manifestation seems to point to the fact that there was little pressure for emulation to take place from piece to piece.

As things the amulets would also have played a part in the structuring of their world. The reproduction of an object type lends a sense of stability to the world, especially when the object is highly visible (Rowlands 1993).²⁸² But even those things that are not public and visible can act as a focus for self definition and the mental parsing of experiences (Gosden and Marshall 1999). By owning and using a uterine amulet its possessor would have identified him or herself as someone interested in controlling the

²⁸² Think only of driving into a new town in America, like Seekonk, to find the same *mélange* of chain stores, Target, Best Buy, Walmart, Home Depot, Lowes, McDonalds, Burger King, Wendy's and Chili's, that one knows from one's own hometown. The sense of familiarity and comfort is almost immediate.

uterus. Further, the user would have been interested in utilizing supernatural means in addition to or perhaps in place of medical means to achieve his or her desire. Each decision like this identifies the owner of a piece of material culture as part of one group as opposed to another. Thus by choosing certain objects and rejecting others an identity is built up, or at least projected onto the physical world.

Further, whereas an abdominal or uterine pain may not have been easily verbalized, by possessing a uterine amulet it did not have to be. One could show the amulet to another when trying to explain a physical sensation and a basic grasp of that feeling could be conveyed to the other person (at least in the general terms by which such amulets were defined, as opposed to the specific presentation of symptoms within an afflicted person). The amulets also would help the afflicted to understand and compartmentalize her pain. Sciatic pain could be relegated to one amulet, headache to another and uterine and abdominal to a third. In this way large and perhaps overwhelming bodily sensations are attached to smaller more manageable physical tokens. Trying to decide to what amulet a certain pain belongs may help the afflicted regain control of her own body and also dissociate that pain from herself as she ponders it in a logical and impersonal manner. Good and Scary have both discussed how the person in pain has a tendency to dissociate the suffering body part from herself, and the uterine amulet would provide a good material focus for that pain and the thoughts surrounding it. In the manner discussed by Gosden and Marshall, who credit Hoskins with its development, the amulets serve to organize the experience of the person (Gosden and Marshall 1999). This focus on the amulets thus allows for human thoughts and efforts to be shifted to one area over another and thus, as Rowlands puts it, the uterine amulets have

canalized those energies into certain paths which might not have been explored had the amulets not been present (Rowlands 1993).

A precondition of the amulets ability to focus energies in various directions is that they were produced with the intention of specific types of individuals using them in specific ways (Sørensen 2006). Presumably, as discussed above, the majority of users were women who were trying to gain control over an unruly part of their bodies. However, as with any type of material culture, the amulets also present a means by which the power which they deliver to their user could be subverted, specifically when they are not used by whom and when they were intended (Sørensen 2006). One likely situation that springs to mind is the use by men attempting to control the reproductive and sexual organs of women whom they either desired, as attested by numerous spells in the magical papyri, or in an attempt to control the bodily functioning of women to whom they were already attached (i.e. wives to increase fertility etc.). Sørensen notes that such intentional undermining of power can only be accomplished by those who are culturally informed.

Indeed resistance and domination are closely tied to things. Typically interactions between dominator and dominated are mediated by objects, each trying to win over the other by material enticements, or using the material culture of the other group to undermine their identity and demoralize them. Objects can also be used as physical tools to dominate. It is in this sense that the uterine amulets are most closely linked to intentional relationships of power. They were physical means by which the individual could to attain and express her control of her uterus. Most probably this was done daily as part of a regular routine.

In the structural theory of Giddens and the theory of habitus by Bourdieu it is just these types of interactions with objects, the routine interactions which material culture, which in part shape the structure of the environment and society in which one lives. The amulets as small personal items which would probably be used daily and without too much thought as part of the quotidian routine would have thus affected how their users spent their time and structured their day. In this way they fall squarely within the structural model of Giddens whereby the shape of people's world is an unintended consequence of their daily actions and which in turn shapes their actions (Dobres and Robb, 2000). These daily, unobtrusive routines are called by Bourdieu, *habitus*, and often go unnoticed (Bourdieu 1990). Society is made up by many individuals who live by just these types of relationships that they forge during the business of everyday material production, labeled by Bourdieu and known to practice theory as *praxis*. Cultural history is formed via the *praxis* of a society's members who are not subject to free will but are rather constrained by the cultural situation into which they find themselves inserted. This cultural situation has a strong basis in the material world and its institutions, both of which are created by those currently living in them, and which are based on the antecedent conditions into which people are born (Dobres and Robb, 2000, Bourdieu 1990). Going about one's daily business daily recreates society, which in turn shapes the way one approaches life and society.

Thus within the realm of structuralism and practice theory as envisioned by Giddens and Bourdieu, although the amulets are small and probably did not take up much of anyone's attention on a daily basis, it is just this quality of subtly influencing people's routines and daily actions that potentially give them such power to shape the lives of their

users and the society in which they are a part. The potential for longevity which uterine amulets have is a result of their slight but deeply engrained position of a person's daily life. A child observing her mother using the amulets unthinkingly absorbs this behaviour and recreates it in her own life thus allowing the amulet to help shape her life and the world around her. Thus the amulets as material culture also fit nicely into the model of practice theory, which can be used to explain from a theoretical standpoint why they seem to be produced over such a long period of time, yet were never large public foci of attention and ritual.

While Wobst's theory discussed above, that they extend the agency of their creators by interfering physically with the world is a theory that deflects most of the agency from the amulets to their creators (Wobst 2000) other theorists such as Gell and Miller postulate a more active role for material culture, similar to that put forward by Bourdieu and Giddens, and it is one which is espoused here (while still acknowledging the validity of Wobst's understanding). Namely, as the means by which the field of social interaction is framed, and the means by which people mediate their experience with the world, things are social agents and have the power to change the way people interact with their world (Gosden and Marshal 1999).

Objects further make action real and provide it material consequence in the world. Sørensen discusses this role of objects in relation to making gendered action real (Sørensen 2006). The same is true for the amulets. They make tangible the domination of the womb. It is not an action without record, debatable in its reality. The amulet serves as a concrete testament to the fact that the uterus is actively being controlled. In the tradition of Egyptian art, this idea is taken further whereby picturing such domination,

such as the smiting of enemies on the Narmar palette, the action is not only made real, it is made eternal and ongoing.

Nevertheless, the amulets, while providing such a physical testament of action also admit of multiple meanings and ambiguity. As agents they are not essential beings with definite qualities, but are physical metaphors for the domination of the womb (Brumfiel 1990). As metaphors they leave room for multiple interpretations, allowing the user to adapt them to his or her immediate purpose. This ambiguity is also a source of power for them (Moore 2000, Webster 1995).

As objects they also can accumulate their own life histories and power, even acting as agents on their own behalf. Ben Cullen's model of eusocial pottery which as it spreads through the world creating desire in people to possess a pot like the type they see in the possession of another, is a model well suited to the uterine amulets (Cullen 1996). While a pot may be useful and aesthetically pleasing, possession of an object of power which could significantly better the quality of one's life such as a uterine amulet would no doubt inspire people who were shown the amulets and made to understand their power to seek to procure their own. The increased numbers of amulets found in female graves throughout Egyptian history would seem to indicate that women were deemed at higher risk and may have preferentially sought out more amulets than men (Pinch 1995, 106). Indeed, Pinch cites a study of Egyptian peasants from the early 20th c. which made special note of how they allocated much of their meager incomes to procuring amulets, spells and protective charms, which indicates that belief in the ability of an object to summon supernatural protective powers is one which can command a large part of a person's fiscal resources (Pinch 1995, 60). In this type of environment of worry and

belief in the power of amulets a eusocial model for their agency may fit exceptionally well.

The amulets could conceivably have been used as heirlooms, which Lillios characterizes as objects which are portable, typically of cosmological significance or possessing other power, and passed down from generation to generation (Lillios 1992). Heirlooms are likely to gain their own life histories, with memories and stories attached to them. Or if they were shared and traded they may have behaved more like *tabua* which were anonymous in regards to their former owners and uses, but revered because of their age which could be gauged according to their wear and color (Gosden and Marshall 1999). Most of the amulets use the phrase “that woman” in place of the name of the object on whom their spell was to work. It is possible that this is because they were never meant to be used by only one person, but rather were passed down through families or shared among groups of women, like heirlooms. The well worn condition of many of the pieces, with features softened or obliterated apparently from frequent handling may also attest to a long life for the amulets.

Other amulets, such as several of the Tantalos amulets seem to have been split in half and destroyed intentionally. While it is likely that this had the practical intention of destroying the daemon which was now thought to inhabit the amulet, Rowlands also notes that in destroying an object the thing is remembered for itself. One no longer thinks about what the amulet will do for one in the future, but it is remembered for its absence and what it has already accomplished (Rowlands 1993). Significantly most of the uterine amulets do not seem to have been destroyed before they were deposited. It is possible that they were unintentionally lost which is what preserved them intact, but

given the state of wear on many of them it might be useful to consider Lillios' proposal that heirlooms are only deposited after they have become irrelevant or useless, thus allowing them to be relinquished by the heirs and deposited with their last owner.

Perhaps so many of the uterine amulets are intact but worn because they were deemed powerful for a long span, handed down from woman to woman, only at long last to die out of favor and be intentionally deposited with their last owner.

As a final cap to this discussion of the amulets as generalized things, Holtorf's stance that the life history of an object does not end with its deposition, but rather is only created with its recovery is also applicable to the amulets. Certainly their treatment by collectors and museums from their recovery until the present is a chapter in their history, which contrary to the expectations of some archaeologists, did not end when they entered the earth. Holtorf's point is valid to a degree; while one strives to understand the amulets within their cultural context, that understanding is one formed entirely based on one's own interpretations of the data, whose recovery and interrogation is subject to one's own interests and classifications. Thus the amulets shape experiences even today, as scholars attempt to understand them. They did not cease being active with the coming of the modern age, and while people now interact with them differently than the ways originally intended by their creators, that makes them no less active in the process of mutual ascription of meaning with those who enter into a subject-object relationship by interacting with them.

Thus the amulets as things are the tangible manifestations of people's ideas projected onto the world and mediated by cultural mores. As objects they have the potential to be an intimate part of life and shape the way in which people perceive the

world and therefore the way they interact in it. As such they can be considered to have an agency of their own, although what qualifies as agency varies from scholar to scholar (Dobres and Hoffman, 2000). Primary ways in which objects influence human life are through the change in bodily experience of the world, as a means to concentrate or subvert power, in the transmission of culture, and as messengers.

Having considered the amulets in a variety of theoretical frames deployed in material culture studies and practice theory the remainder of this chapter will consider their size, technology, impact on identity formation and as charms in a series of theoretically framed short discussions.

Size:

The size of the amulets is a significant part of their physicality. It is also a potential source of great power and will be discussed in relation to Douglass Bailey's model of miniaturization of archaeological artifacts. Often understood as art from the modern perspective, in Bailey's model of miniaturization the amulets spur the modern viewer to ponder issues of construction, leading to an appreciation of the skills of the artisan who created them (Bailey 2005, 29). However to the ancient user of the amulets they would not have been understood as art, but rather as small tools. They were what Bailey would class as a miniature, a form of representation which would not attempt to faithfully and anatomically record all details of the uterus, but a form in which decisions about what to include in the representation and what to leave out are meaningful (Bailey 2005, 29 similar to Laqueur's discussion of anatomy plates 1992).

Miniatures by their very nature require that the thing they are representing be both abstracted and compressed, a fact which both enables and inhibits understanding by their viewers (Bailey 2005, 28).

Miniaturism gains force from its inherent condition of compression. In miniatures, values are enriched. Miniaturism concentrates and distills what is normal in people's routine day-to-day activities and thoughts and then produces a denser expression of a part of that reality. Bailey 2005, 32.

In reducing and schematizing the elements of the uterus and its control mechanisms on the amulets the creator has increased the importance of the elements shown many times over. Everything that is present is significant. There is not extraneous detail both because there is no room for it and because if it does not serve a purpose it detracts from what is important. To that end the presence of the uterine ligaments on the amulets has never been questioned, but it can now perhaps be explained. Although the uterus was characterized on the amulets as wandering, and the ligaments were mainly ignored in ancient anatomy, their purpose within the body is to hold the uterus in place and control it. This is a main function of the amulets, and thus by picturing these ligaments, which otherwise play very little part in the medical traditions by which these pieces are informed, their creator once again reveals their purpose and attempts to assert another means by which to control the uterus and bind it in its place.

In choosing what to include in the miniature amulet, the creator must also decide what to leave out. Thus miniaturization makes the amulets active in that the viewer is forced to ponder what is absent and draw conclusions as to why it is not there (Bailey 2005, 32). "The brevity that comes with abstract representation forces the viewer beyond the information that is provided. The abstraction of a miniature demands that the

spectator draw inferences” (Bailey 2005, 32). Because of these inferences, this ambiguity which is built in to the amulets by their size, their culturally competent users are able to draw multiple meanings from them, all of which can arguably be deemed correct (Bailey 2005, 32). Again, their ambivalence is a source of power for the amulets and their users.

Through compression and distillation, something that is physically smaller becomes more powerful than what is larger. The small stimulates big thoughts about larger worlds. Even more importantly, the reduction of quantifiable dimensions increases levels of significance. Bailey 2005, 42

The size of the amulets also surprises the user who, as a human, is used to measuring things in relation to her body. The world is gauged in anthropocentric terms and the relationship to the human body is the guiding principle for all spatial relationships (Bailey 2005, 29). Yet miniature objects which are only a few centimeters large at most, and which contain representations of human body parts which are even smaller jostle one from the comfort of the anthropocentric scale and force one to question the belief that there is one implicit scale within the world (Bailey 2005, 42). While alluding to the human body through its visual representation of the uterus, the amulet already removes it from the realm of the normal and comfortable, making it seem strange and inhuman (Bailey 2005, 42). In this way Bailey asserts that miniatures are not simply alternate representations of the world, but rather actually constitute an alternate reality (Bailey 2005, 32). In this reality the uterus is extremely tiny and may not be bound by the same laws which govern human-sized reality. The miniature provides a new avenue by which to consider the uterus, and perhaps engage with and manage it.

Bailey’s main exhortation when analyzing small items is that the student focus on the types of interactions that a user who handled the object would have (Bailey 2005, 28).

By necessity miniature objects require that they be picked up and held by those who use them. They must be brought near to the face to be squinted at and turned over to see their details from all different angles (Bailey 2005, 32, 38).²⁸³ This demand on the part of the object also invests it with agency, and hence power. The person using it must handle it and examine it on the amulet's terms. "The intimacy that is demanded (yet implied) in objects that are both small and palpable" is great (Bailey 2005, 28). This close handling also allows for better understanding of the object, and by extension the thing which it represents (Bailey 2005, 33). Thus by merely handling and pondering the amulets the user has stimulated thoughts about the uterus which they represent and feels like she has gained a better understanding of the mechanisms by which it can be controlled. She is keenly aware of the deities on whom she will call, the words she will use, the daemon who rules the womb and the various binding and opening/closing symbols and formulas which she can count on, as she has seen all these with her own eyes and held the key to her success in her hands.

The miniaturization of the amulets and its concurrent requirement that they be brought within the personal space of its user "has proxemic consequences" (Bailey 2005, 39). The space between people and things often relates to social organization and power dynamics, with those things that are closest often used to define oneself and proclaim personal identity (Bailey 2005, 39). While the amulets may not have been worn so that the greater part of society could see them and identify their bearer as a powerful person, presumably they were visible to the supernatural powers on which they called. By

²⁸³ Bailey notes that there is a difference between two-dimensional and three dimensional objects, where with two dimensional objects the perspective of the scene is dictated by the artist and three dimensional objects can be viewed from unlimited angles. The amulets combine aspects of both of these objects, with an obverse face which is flat and has a built in proper perspective from which to view it, and also possessing depth and another face, the reverse to ponder. See Bailey 2005, 39-40

wearing them close to the body the association between the amulet and its possessor became as close as possible. Like the credential's listed in prayers and papyri (Graf 2001), the amulet thus empowered its bearer and made known to the powers that be that she was someone worthy of help. Alternately or additionally, by wearing the amulet so close to the body the bearer may have been proclaiming her own power to her adversary, the uterus. If the amulet was a means by which to control the womb, keeping that tool on one's person at all times gives the organ no room to misbehave without fear of instant retribution.

The fact that the amulet displayed a miniature human organ is also significant. As Bailey says, it "is made object-ful; it is an object infused with the essence of the body" (Bailey 2005, 84). Such an objectification of the body has several results. On the one hand it engages people and spurs them to think about themselves and others, providing a thinking place, but it also forces the viewer to contemplate what it means to be human when something so alien and small is in some sense human (Bailey 2005, 84). On the other hand, and most significantly for the interpretation of the amulets, it provides ultimate control over a body part that is otherwise uncontrollable.

First miniaturism enlarges the spectator. Physically, it makes the viewer gigantic, omnipotent and omniscient. It insists on transcendence by the viewer. Thus, miniaturism empowers the spectator. It allows a physical control over a homologue of a thing; Bailey 2005, 33

By making the uterus so tiny the user's power over it is multiplied a thousand times. "By reducing the world-at-large's reality, a miniature provides a way of making sense of the world. Literally, it makes the world manageable" (Bailey 2005, 33). If the uterus fits easily on one's fingertip or within the palm of one's hand, how much damage could it truly do? The smaller the amulet, the larger the user is in comparison and the

less powerful the organ. It is for this reason, which is echoed in the logic of Egyptian artistic convention, that the uterine amulets of all the classes of magical amulets are particularly small. The .-@. and Tantalos amulets are so large as to preclude their use in ring settings. These amulets simply deal with pain or a bleeding wound that needs to be stanching. Making them smaller doesn't reduce the power of the problem significantly as it is a general problem attributable to a blood daemon or other source which can be driven from the body.

The uterine amulets, however, are meant to combat a source of pain that is well defined and of significant danger to the woman. Most uterine problems can be traced back to a raging organ that behaves like a wild animal and will kill its owner if presented the opportunity. As it is not possible to remove the organ from the body, to drive it out like a daemon, the next best thing is to shrink its influence, and its actual size as much as possible, a feat achieved by minimizing the amulets on which it appears and which also increases the power of its possessor relative to it.

Bailey notes that miniaturization in this way offers significant psychological comfort, suggesting to the users of such miniature tools that the problem by which they were previously overwhelmed is actually manageable (Bailey 2005, 33). True to the word's Latin roots, the small amulet allows the problem of the misbehaving womb to fit in the hand and be manipulated and controlled according to the desire of its owner. In this way much anxiety is relieved.²⁸⁴ Indeed, Bailey's claims for the psychological

²⁸⁴ Miniaturization of the human body can engender psychological conflict as well, but given the potentially dire circumstances in which these amulets could be employed, the philosophical affront of the human body on such a small scale was probably the farthest thing from the user's mind. See Bailey 2005, 83

effects of miniaturization are not founded on mere archaeological opinion, but have been found to be valid in numerous studies (Bailey 2005, 28).²⁸⁵

Thus the size of the amulets is a major source of their power. Their manifestation as extremely small objects among a class of small objects is notable and explainable in both cultural and theoretical terms. By the former logic an enemy is rendered less powerful when depicted in a smaller scale than his opponent. The theoretical stance toward miniaturization of objects also holds that the smaller something is the more manageable and less scary it becomes. Both explanations are valid the case of the amulets.

The fact that these philosophical stimulants were made in miniature is critical; miniaturism powers anthropomorphs in ways that are not available to the life-size or larger. Miniaturism reduces the massive scale of philosophical issues down to a manageable and manipulatable size. Miniaturism allows people to engage, display, discuss and handle issues of identity, status, inter-personal, inter-group differentiation in comfortable and unthreatening ways. Miniature anthropomorphism allows the abstraction of issues of human identity, individuality, difference and similarities from the highly complex, almost ethereal and inconceivable down to the simple, graspable and physical. Bailey 2005, 85

Technology:

The technology of the amulets and their production is a topic dealt with in depth earlier in this chapter. It is also an area that can be explored from a theoretical and more abstract perspective. It is an area of archaeological investigations that is typically under theorized and which has the potential to yield insights into aspects of social organization including how gender and labor are constructed on the ground, as well as to reveal greater understanding of a culture's science and values and its economic ties and histories (Geselowitz 1993, Good 1992).

²⁸⁵ Some effects include the speeding up of the perception of time within small environments, and the brain becoming more alert when playing video games on a smaller screen. See Bailey 2005, 36-37

The standard view of technology is that it is driven by common sense. Binford contributed to this idea greatly by proposing that culture is an extra somatic means of adaptation whose creation is spurred by necessity (Pfaffenberger 1992). From this view came the idea that form follows function and style is a secondary consideration. It is also often assumed that technology moves linearly in one direction and by analyzing the technological record one can gain an understanding of the problems which it was meant to tackle (Pfaffenberger 1992). All of these notions, described as Pfaffenberger as core assumptions in the “common sense” understanding of technology are disputable, especially in regards to the amulets.

The amulets are a technology of medical and magical practice, a tool by which to gain control of the uterus.²⁸⁶ While they did address a perceived social need, their existence and form are not guaranteed by any objective physical conditions which they must meet. While their miniature size can be understood by Bailey’s model, they could have just as easily taken the larger form of terracotta models which were buried, like the “voodoo doll” of the Louvre. That they took the form that they did reflects the choices which were made by their creators. In choosing one path and denying others certain elements are prioritized. These choices have already been analyzed within the cultural framework in which they were made (i.e. why haematite?), and now will be explored in regards to aspects of theories of technology.

It should first be noted that the study of technology is not simply the study of the mechanical means by which something was created or by which it affects other objects. Technology is an embedded process which draws on the same networks that create the

²⁸⁶ Pfaffenberger is quick to note that magic can indeed be part of a society’s technology; just because we don’t have faith in its mechanisms does not make it any less valid an area of technology for the society which employed it (Pfaffenberger 1992).

political, familial and ideological landscapes of a society (Dobres and Hoffman 1994). As it is intimately a part of these social webs it also reproduces their values and social relationships in its products (Dobres and Hoffman 1994). It becomes the means by which humans engage with the physical world, a tangible metaphor for social interaction (Dobres and Hoffman 1994).

On a practical level this means that what is socially acceptable manifests itself in the technological record (Geselowitz 1993). People are not only constrained in their creation and use of tools by the material properties of the medium with which they are working, but they are even more tightly bound by the social norms within whose bounds they live (Geselowitz 1993). In regards to the amulets it is thus possible to understand them as the product of technological ability of the craftsmen who created them, as well as social pressure in regards to what form it was acceptable for them to take. A giant uterine amulet would not have been culturally appropriate to deal with pain at hand, nor would a life-size statue set up in a shrine. These were not socially sanctioned outlets for coping with the problem. It could be argued that the difficulty of a wayward uterus was a personal one of small scale which is why the amulets manifest as small personal objects, but the reproduction of the family unit, the basis for society, which the uterus facilitated was of concern to the greater society. Augustus' marriage laws, tax breaks and status enhancements offered to families and matrons who produced a given number of live children are the most blatant testimony to this fact. Therefore one is again left with the conclusion that societal mores are a main factor in determining how the amulets manifested physically and in what ways they, as tools, were used.

Thus technology represents choices made within a society and not just by craftspeople (Lemmonier 1986). As Lemmonier points out, there is always a guiding logic behind these choices. Sometimes thanks to written sources or the clarity with which this logic is expressed in the object, this system of organizing the world and technology is recoverable, such as why with the amulets haematite is their favored material and why they are so small. More often it is not, but that does not mean that it is not present (Lemmonier 1986).

By paying close attention to how a society crafts the world with which it surrounds itself, searching for the underlying organizing logic, one can begin to tap into the non-verbalized world view and values which underpin a culture (Dobres and Hoffman 1994). The encoding of world-structuring views of a group into objects which it creates, such as the amulets, is relatively common. Dobres and Hoffman cite Lechtman who found that the underwriting world view expressed in Mochica weaving and metalwork was that crafts should bring out the essence of the materials of which they were constructed. To this end Mochica weaving was double sided, a laborious technique with results similar to those achieved by embroidery, (a means of surface decoration that is much less labor intensive) and metal work was always created of solid gold and never of gilt over a base metal. The guiding principle of a craft was to proclaim the inner substance of a material on its exterior and throughout its whole body. The degree of conformity to rules such as this in craftwork may point to unrecorded codes of behaviour (Dobres and Hoffman, 1994).

Likewise the amulets express the broad understanding of the group who used them in regards to women and their bodies. The message repeatedly expressed is that the

uterus is unruly and cannot be trusted. Not only does it require multiple gods standing upon it to control it, but it also needs to be ritually bound and contained. Women's bodies put them at risk. These views are tied to those expressed by Hesiod, the Hippocratics and Aristotle, namely that women are a separate species who have wild parts not found in men and who need to take extra measures (whether it be a man or an amulet) to control their own bodies. While men might need women, women can't control their bodies or themselves and cannot therefore be trusted. Women are inherently deceitful and weak, an idea which begins with Hesiod, continues through the Hippocratic corpus and Aristotle and permeates Greek thought (King 1998, Dean Jones 1994, Parker 1984, Lloyd 1999b).

Deducing values and behaviours from the properties of everyday items rests on the ability of the archaeologist to understand the technological and material parameters which also affect the creation of the objects (O'Brien 1996). The angular shape of the letters on the uterine amulets with their sharp and jutting corners could conceivably be understood as a symbolic reinforcement of the idea that uterine pain could be sharp and stabbing. However, such an argument is much less effective when one realizes that it was the technology of the spinning disc by which they were carved which necessitated such a form. At least three elements of technical process, including material, tool action, and the specific technical knowledge of the group as well as the societal constraints on technology should be considered when inferring values from objects (Lemmonier 1986).

The technique thus becomes a place where multiple decisions are faced by the craftsperson creating an amulet, and by its user. The ways in which the amulet is created and in which it is used refer back to the greater society, which in turn reinforces itself by

the technology it employs (Lemmonier 1986). Technical choices then, from the creation of the amulets to how they are deployed from one group to another can occasionally be used as ethnic markers (Lemmonier 1986, Gosselain 2000). Functionality is not the only factor at play. For example, in regards to the amulets, most are rather similar in execution, yet a small subgroup, the “notch style” break from the greater whole. These amulets are minimal in their detail and appear to be created by scratching into the haematite rather than carving it with a rotating disc or drill. Since no find spots are known for these amulets or those which are more common in execution it is not possible to say if they were created in a different area of the Empire by craftspeople guided by different social pressures, if they were created alongside the rest of the amulets by people of different background serving a different group than the majority of the amulets, or if they were meant to serve a lower socio-economic class, as is usually assumed.

Lemmonier points out that small difference in objects like these two classes of amulets, which are otherwise similar enough to be identified as belonging to the same group overall can be of great use in helping the archaeologist understand the subtle differences between one sub population and another (Lemmonier 1986). The manifestation of the elements of the amulets can also give an idea as to what audience was being targeted, for instance the use of pseudo-inscriptions on the notch style amulets as opposed to legible inscriptions on most of the other amulets (Pucci 2001).

In future, should more amulets be found in situ and have their find spots recorded it may be a useful mode of analysis to see if these differences in technology do correspond to different socio-economic or cultural groups.

As Lemmonier points out, technology represents choice to varying degrees. Using the example of shoes he notes that they are a necessary adaptation to the cold, but the choice to wear sneakers as opposed to loafers may be ideological and a symbolic expression of ideas (Lemmonier 1986). The choice to create or use an amulet that has a more realistic carving or a notch-style carving may indicate such symbolic preference. It is the basic amulet which assures success in the venture in which it is used; its style may reflect more the individual status of its possessor.

In regards to how the amulets were used, as objects they do not speak so clearly. Pfaffenberger notes that cultural intentions to use are often so poorly coded in objects that the ways in which they are supposed to be used are not obvious to someone who is not culturally competent (Pfaffenberger 1992). To this end the way modern scholars envision them being used, carried in pouches and perhaps held when intoning their spell, may be completely different than the way their producers envisioned them being utilized and their consumer's actually did use them. Objects and tools are reinterpreted and adapted to fit the needs of the culture, not the other way around (Pfaffenberger). Michael Shanks calls this an affordance of an object. For instance, to an American it is obvious that one should sit in a chair, while to someone who has never seen one, it may be thought a most convenient object with which to hit someone. Thus while it seems that the amulets were likely worn in pouches and handled often as based on their wear patterns and description of the use of rings in the magical papyri, it is not possible to be certain how they were used.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁷ Aubert suggests the possibility that they were worn intra-vaginally. As the sources are silent on this it is impossible to verify the suggestion, but neither is it possible to concretely refute it.

The whole question of the function of the amulets as opposed to their style is one which Pfaffenberger asserts is a modern one, the result of the decontextualization of an object. Providing the example of a Victorian hall bench where the servants would sit, he notes that the austerity of the bench, its “style”, was an intimate part of its function. Its hard and uncomfortable design was meant to remind the servants of the comfortable chairs of their employers and that contrast was meant to reinforce the inferior social position of the servants. The object is thus part of a rich ritual and symbolic system. When it is removed from its context this knowledge is lost and the idea of “style” is born. Pfaffenberger notes that once such ritual and symbolic systems of knowledge are gone, it is nearly impossible to reconstruct, its complexity belied by the simplicity of its tools (Pfaffenberger 1992). Thus what appears to modern scholars as the “style” of the amulets may have had a much deeper purpose.

The example of the Victorian bench is a good one to illustrate how technology is used to build intangible power into the physical world through objects (Dobres and Hoffman 1994). By framing the experience of reality in a certain way the technologies of everyday objects can make obvious the power differentials which exist in a relationship. The amulets are a physical reminder to the uterus about who is in control. They also bring together in one place a number of technologies by which the womb can be dominated. They are also a means by which to pass on the knowledge of those power differentials. In interacting with the amulets people would have been made aware of their power and purpose and become more sensitive both to other amulets and the issues in which these amulets dealt. Thus the amulets as tools made people more aware of the

world around them and created new sensitivities toward certain phenomena (Pickering 1997). In this way they helped to form and define their users.

Identity:

How else might have the amulets served to define their users? A model which may suggest itself as an appropriate way to understand the amulets in this respect is that of the use of costume and ornament in Prehistoric Europe. In these studies it has been demonstrated time and again that the adoption of various small personal items of jewellery and costume was a crucial element in the development of personhood and personal identity in Prehistoric Europe (Treherne 1995, Sørensen 1997, 2006, 2007, Dommasnes 1982). Such pieces signaled both the individual status and group membership of a person (Treherne 1995, Sørensen 1997). Sørensen notes that the viewing of the costume of others actually serves normatively to build one's own identity, as did the gradual building up of personal ornament as one scaled the social hierarchy (Sørensen 1997). However, the uterine amulets seem to have been tucked away out of sight by those that used them, so can a model that relies on visibility really be of use?

This study would suggest that it can based on a suggestion in Bergerbrant's 2001 study on bronze tubes in Bronze Age costume. Bailey has already emphasized how personal and powerful the objects that are kept closer to the body are, suggesting that in general objects of this class do serve as a means of defining the self. Bergerbrant suggests that bronze tubes on women's costumes by their jingling and flashing would have signaled where someone interacting with a person wearing such garb should direct their attention (Bergerbrant 2001). I would suggest that the amulets play a similar role, marking out their possessors to the supernatural powers which they invoke for help.

Magical practice as demonstrated in the PGM is very concerned with identifying precisely the person to whom a charm is intended to apply, going to such lengths as using the matronymic. Further, Graf repeatedly discusses the need of the person working a magical spell to provide credentials which prove he is worthy of help, such as displaying the knowledge that he knows all the epithets of the deity on whom he is calling (Graf 1991). The amulets would seem to fulfill both functions for their possessor. They are intimately and closely connected to the body of the afflicted, and depending on where worn, may actually sit above the afflicted organ, and thus provide a good focus point to draw the deities' attention, much like Bergerbrant's flashing tubes draw the attention of a person. Further, by possessing an amulet one marks oneself out as the possessor of arcane and powerful knowledge, as someone worthy of being aided by a deity.

Thus the amulets do serve in the process of self definition, but their intended audience is not other people. One is not trying to exhibit status to other members of the human group, but to define oneself in relation to the daemons and deities. These can presumably sense the presence of the amulet, an object of great power, when it is hidden from human sight. The maintenance of the appearance of power through possession of powerful objects, such as heirlooms or amulets, may be critically important, but that power is not meant to be wielded against other people (Lillios 1992). There is no reason to display the piece externally, yet it still serves to build the identity of its possessor, as the ornaments of Bronze Age Europe also did.

Pinch notes that amulets and hairpins and other intimate objects were often destroyed or buried upon the death of their possessor, being too closely associated with them to ever be used by anyone else (Pinch 1995, 104, 148). Clearly in this case the

objects, small portable objects worn close to the body like the uterine amulets, are defined by their relationship to a specific person, who in turn would have been defined by those objects. This sort of intimate connection is also noted in certain Melanesian memory systems where people externalize themselves into objects, using those objects to define various pieces of their life and history (Rowlands 1993). As the amulets were so small and intimate it would not be surprising if they also to some degree became external parts of their owner. If this is the case, one wonders if the diversity in the way they portray the uterus and the deities which stand on it represent the various personalities and unique values of the different people who owned them, as Sorenson notes diversity in ornament form in prehistoric Europe may have meant a diversity in the messages certain ornaments could send and thereby the identities they could create (Sørensen 1997). Thus they may also have functioned in this capacity to form identity.

Coping and Charms:

The last theoretically framed discussion on the use of the amulets is to consider them as charms. The study of charms and magic spells is a vibrant field of enquiry, and although magical spells are often the subject of study in the ancient world (PGM, Versnel 1991, Graf 1991 etc.), they are primarily explored in regards to their poetics and the cultures which created them, not as a common phenomenon which may find parallels in other cultures. As Roper explains in his introduction to a 2009 book on recent research into European spells, they are common to most cultures and can be used as a means by which to compare cultures and illustrate how a given culture dealt with crises.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁸ The transmission of spells in other cultures may also indicate how traditional magic may have been passed on in Egypt and Roman Alexandria. For instance, in Suedophone areas the teaching of spells ideally was contra gender, with males teaching females and females teaching males (Roper 2009, xix). Herjulfsdotter in her work has found that Swedish snake bite and illness charms were passed down

The paradoxical neglect of charms by students of culture, be they historians, anthropologists, folklorists, or others. Such ‘minor,’ ‘obscure’ items have repeatedly been overlooked in favor of (seemingly) more interesting or more significant phenomena. But verbal charms are a cultural near-universal (perhaps universal), a way of coping with ill health, with misfortune, and with anxiety about success in fields from agriculture to love. Roper 2009, xiv

In the process of healing and coping with illness charms and spells are particularly popular and can yield insight into the world view of a people as well as their views on the physiology of the human body. Why some diseases are suitable to be combated via magical means is a cultural quirk that deserves further investigation (Roper 2009, xxiii). However, all medical spells are dependent on the existence of a folk illness system and the common belief that illness can be treated with magic (Roper 2009, xxiv). A seemingly common mechanism in medical charms is one which also plays a major part on the uterine amulets, namely binding. For example, Swedish snake charms recorded in the 1800s are replete with binding imagery, including the tying down of individual organs such as the liver, lungs and tongue, the last of which is also a common target in classical binding spells (see chapter 6) (Herjulfsdotter 2009, 55-56).

Nunn emphasizes that this belief in the ability of magic to heal would not be without its benefit to the afflicted.

It would be wrong to dismiss magic in the healing process. Suggestion and expectation of cure have a measurable curative value, particularly in the relief of pain, a phenomenon now known as the placebo effect. Nunn 1996, 97

In a discussion of spiritual healing among Mexican citizens Finkler also notes that supernatural healing methods such as charms or spiritualist intervention also provide the afflicted with a proactive way to engage in their own recovery (Finkler 1994, 188).

vertically through the generations and never shared among peers (2009, 59). Likewise although known to men and women both, they were taught during textile work or herding, women’s activities conducive to discussion, and were primarily used by women (Herjulfsdotter, 2009).

Simply doing something to aid one's own recovery, repeatedly speaking a charm, calling on a higher power for help and expecting help to come can be tremendously comforting and actually aid in the body's ability to recover.

As Ghalioungui explains it:

Recourse to the Unseen is an eternal human need, and the expression of a wish or the recitation of a propitiary formula often gives us the courage to proceed to a significant act or to pronounce fatal words. Ghalioungui 1965, 20

A charm or spell gives one the courage and hope to go on fighting.

Wolf-Knuts also emphasizes the proactive sense of involvement that charms present to their user when faced with a crisis (much as *katadesmoi*, a type of charm, represent a proactive way to handle a contest in which one is the underdog) (Wolf-Knuts 2009, 68). Wolf-Knuts classifies charms as a coping mechanism. In general people create a system of orientation constructed of customs, values and relationships by which they conduct their lives. When faced with a crisis a person has to decide how to react and how to explain the situation. The person chooses the way which lends significance to the situation and his choice therein, thus allowing him to understand it as the best course of action (Wolf-Knuts 2009, 64-65). In this way he creates meaning within a bad situation and is able to move on. By this means of coping he is able to allocate blame or determine why the crisis was precipitated (Wolf-Knuts 2009, 65).

The mechanisms of coping are specific to both culture and individual, but one way of instilling meaning into a crisis is through the use of explanatory models (Wolf-Knuts 2009, 66). Charms and spells can provide such models. In examples which involve a short story with mythological figures, *historiola*, the afflicted often takes on the role of the protagonist; in the Swedish charms which Wolf-Knuts studies this is usually either a sorcerer or the virgin Mary. This assumption of role provides a means to

actualize the cure in the mortal sphere which is related in the story of the charm, provides a model of behaviour when confronted with such a situation, and helps to attribute meaning and understanding to one's own situation (Wolf-Knuts 2009, 66).

While the uterine amulets provide charms to combat uterine pain, and also a model to explain why the uterus is behaving as it is (it is a type of wild animal), they do not use long story-like charms. However, Pinch notes that the earliest everyday spells from the early 2nd millennium BC do use such a mechanism, where the person to be protected is equated with the protagonist of the myth (Pinch 1995, 23). This model, while not present in full verbal form on the amulets is most probably alluded to by the addition of deities such as Isis and Duamoutef to the carving of the stone. The culturally competent viewer supplies the story herself. Interestingly the Swedish snake charms insert the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist into a host of situations not attested in the bible, which seems to be evidence that the charms and the explanatory models they provided were largely generated as needed to correspond to the situation at hand, and may suggest a similar use of the deities found on the uterine charm (Wolf-Knuts 2009, 63). Again, their ambiguity may be a source of power.

Wolf-Knuts and Ghalioungui are of the opinion that mankind's psychological needs have not changed significantly during historical times, which would imply that charms, even modern European ones may provide a valid comparative route by which to study the amulets (Wolf-Knuts 2009, 64, Ghalioungui 1965, 20). Modern charms, if not ancient have been explicitly understood as coping mechanisms in the face of crisis, a model which suits the amulets well, and also the *katadesmoi* to which they are related. As such they provide their users language by which to express their anxiety, a model of

behaviour in a given situation, and an explanatory framework by which to understand the situation and the significance of the crisis (Wolf-Knuts 2009, 68).

Conclusions:

As this discussion draws to a close it is appropriate to recap the different concerns in the making and use of the medico-magical instrument which have come out in the course of its pages. The material, color and construction of the amulets were explored within the cultural traditions of the society that produced them. Their magical mechanisms, employing secrecy, transference and minimization of power through the diminishing the size of an enemy as well as the way they would have been carried on the body and by whom they may have been used were likewise discussed within their cultural framework. The second half of the chapter concerned itself with exploring the amulets through various theoretical positions on material culture, including the amulets as things, as representations of ideas, as means of structuring the world and experiences, as players in power dynamics and as active agents who accumulate life histories. The last part of this chapter explores the technological implications of the use and construction of the amulets as well as the ramifications of their size, their possible role in identity formation and as coping mechanisms and charms.

The physicality of the amulets has many aspects which can be explored. Some have been interrogated here more closely than others, but all have yielded interesting insight in the types of considerations which go into the creation of a powerful magical tool. They are not simple things to be created and discarded lightly. The culturally bound thought processes which go into their creation and use are complex and not as straightforward as they are often treated. The theoretical discussion of the amulets is to

the author's knowledge a new way of considering them, as they are most often simply listed in catalogues with a few paragraphs on their function accompanying them. It may be that it was not structured as some might wish, as a discussion of the amulets within a single theoretical paradigm, but as they have never been considered by any theoretical light, it seemed more pressing to demonstrate a range of perspectives by which they may be further analyzed fruitfully. In this light it has been a very productive approach, yielding up understandings of the amulets which are provocative and which demand further exploration.

In the end the dual treatment of the physical issues concerning the amulets has painted a picture of them which is far more complex, and perhaps also complete than the casual observer, noting their lack of archaeological context, might ever think possible.

IX

Conclusions and Areas for Further Exploration

Medicine is never neutral. In any society it carries cultural values, including beliefs about the human body and about the roles and relative importance of different age/gender groups. It constructs its object in a dialogue with culture; before treating sickness, it is necessary to decide who is sick and who is not, what behaviour is abnormal and what is normal.

King 1998, 114

The medical texts and other artefacts here examined, their assumptions, expositions, and prescriptions, all participate in the formation of the categories of men and women in the Roman empire, their shape, texture, and meaning, the understanding and articulation of their interrelationship; and, however then complex and now obscure the relations of real women and men to this ordering and organization, they certainly could not ignore it, just as it could not ignore them.

Flemming 2000, 27

Gender:

Having concluded the greater part of the discussion and analysis of the amulets it is now appropriate to consider what larger conclusions can be drawn out from the preceding pages. No doubt the reader has reached his own understandings of the pieces by now, but before I review its interpretations and attempt to weave them into a picture which is greater than the sum of its parts, I would like to return to Ann Fausto Sterling's quote which began Chapter 2 and its assertion that gender and its study can take place on multiple levels.

Using Russian nesting dolls as a framework suggests that history, culture, relationships, psyche, organism, and cell are each appropriate locations from which to study the formation and meanings of sexuality and gender.

Fausto-Sterling 2000, 254

It is the belief of this dissertation that gender has played a role in the understanding of the amulets and that the understanding of the process of gender in the ancient world can be enhanced by them. The passages which head this chapter by King and Flemming support this belief and so it is proposed to examine briefly how the issue of gender formation and maintenance in the ancient world was made manifest in these objects by extracting the relevant conclusions nestled within each chapter and placing them side by side so a more coherent understanding can be formed than the fractured picture within each chapter.

Chapter one made bold claims about the nature of gender and the power of feminist theory to help understand the life experiences and relationships among not only women but all people who are not part of the ruling elite that tend to be the focus of archaeological investigation.²⁸⁹ In chapter 1 the concept of gender was looked at from several different perspectives, including the idea that it “was developed, to refer to all those things about women and men that are culturally and relationally constructed rather than biologically given; this bodily residue being left as ‘sex’” (Flemming 2000, 4-5). It was defined as a process of personal definition as opposed to a static part of a person and could shift according to the context into which a person was inserted. It was made clear that sex does not equal gender and that it can be understood as both a category and a practice which is constructed through living (Arnold 2002, 2006). Because it is not a

²⁸⁹ Because they left the most evidence of their belief systems and colored or suppressed the beliefs of the people around them. Moore and Scott 1997.

discreet “thing” and it is recreated through daily practice it could be studied on multiple levels (Arnold 2006).²⁹⁰

Further, the question of whether a similar situation as developed in the 18th century, where womanhood came to be synonymous with the ovary, could be detected on the amulets, was posed in this chapter. Does the womb substitute as a part for the whole and encapsulate everything that was meant by the word “woman.”

The means by which these questions were explored in this work was via the uterine amulets themselves. It is generally agreed that the most easily investigated aspect of gender for the archaeologist to investigate is the material culture by which it was created and made use of (Arnold 2006). Indeed, Sørensen and Butler note that it is through the use of objects that gendered action is made real and given consequence and impact on the physical world (Sørensen 2006, Butler 2006). Without the use of things gender is simply a set of power dynamics whose existence can only be attested through memories, a resource unavailable to the archaeologist. Objects, on the other hand, not only record gendered action but play an active part in creating and mediating gender throughout one’s life (Sørensen 2006).

The uterine amulets, as pieces which represent a human organ specific to the female body are perhaps especially suited to making comments on gender in regards to the society that created and used them. The problem of using them in such a way prior to this point has been that they have no archaeological context. Many of the arguments

²⁹⁰ While some authors like Knapp suggest that gender should be a fundamental category which is explored by students of human culture since by his logic so many factors go into its creation that we don’t fully understand, others like Holtorf (in discussing the more general problem of classification in the archaeological record) caution that the questions which we investigate as scholars are contingent on our own values and interests (Knapp 1998, Holtorf 2002).

which have come about in the archaeological interpretations of gender have relied on the context of objects within the grave and the differential access of some groups to certain objects as opposed to other groups (Arnold 1991, 2002, 2006, Weglian 2001, Sørensen 1997, 2006). It is not known where the amulets were recovered or with whose remains they were found (if anyone) which bars this course of enquiry to the modern scholar.

Other comments on gender from archaeological objects have been made on the basis of the objects themselves, and their apparently mutable gender via removable genitalia or denial of such organs (Miranda Green 1997, 2001, 2004). This method, which focuses on isolated objects seems more appropriate for use with the amulets, however as the organ of the uterus is shown isolated and separate from the rest of the human body on the amulets unlike the other objects noted, it is not wholly comparable. Its envisioned relationship to the body and its role in forming gender therefore can only be guessed at.

Nevertheless, as Laqueur points out in relationship to anatomy plates from the 1500s to the 1900s, the depiction of bodily organs separated from or in relation to other body parts can still provide insight to the scholar. The representation of an isolated uterus upon the amulets might suggest that it was understood as a thing apart from the rest of the body, an idea which was explored further and found support in many of the following chapters.

In Chapter 2 the discussion of the amulets began with their treatment by scholars from the 16th century until the present. Although the first written interpretation of the amulets claimed that they represented the female reproductive tract and was expressed in the 1600s, this conclusion was not accepted, or indeed even considered again until 1908

with Southesk's catalogue, and not widely known or accepted until Delatte's seminal publication in 1914. In this case the amulets reveal much about the state of gender in the academy and female status in general during the intervening centuries. Male scholars (who exclusively published on the amulets until the 1990s) for a period of roughly 300 years thought that the likelihood of the amulets representing anything female was so negligible as to ignore the possibility altogether, instead proposing farfetched interpretations of the amulets and their iconography which had little (or no) basis within the archaeology and literature of the time. The uterine vase was understood alternately as a vase of sins which would be weighed in the Egyptian afterlife, as a musical instrument similar to the bagpipes, as an enclosure for the sun at night, as a vase used in Isiac rituals, a grill, and a jar in which to store Osiris' head.

The interpretations could be understood as legitimate well informed attempts to understand the amulets given the state of knowledge at the time of their development were it not for several points. The first is that many of the amulets have the inscription .●● ★⊙⊙ . ⊠ ●● on them naming the womb outright. If this connection was thought too difficult to make, the Hippocratic literature is replete with descriptions of the womb as a jar. It should be noted, as Hanson has discussed, that it was widely the practice to ignore the Hippocratic treatises which dealt with the female anatomy; even now some of them have no translation or commentary in any modern language (and are not at present, for instance, included in the Loeb edition of the Hippocratic corpus) (Hanson 1990, 311).

Granted, there is the possibility that the originators of these theories, although well versed in classical writings may not have been familiar with the Hippocratic or Roman treatises on the anatomy and physiology of women. However it would be

expected that they were acquainted with more main-stream literature such as the poems of Hesiod which contain the metaphor of woman as jar and womb, and the Timaeus of Plato which compares the womb to a wild animal. Indeed, the simile is present in many Greek literary texts, as documented by Lloyd (2003, 1999b), and it is one to which a classically educated scholar writing on the amulets would have been exposed. The classical lapidaries, with their repeated use of haematite for uterine afflictions might also have been expected to have been taken into account.

That it took so long to come to the current interpretation of the amulets can only be understood as a deliberate blindness which was instilled by the cultural values in which these scholars were steeped. Women were just not a subject of interest and would not have factored as such in the works of the antique world, even those more minor and “debased” ones such as the Gnostic amulets.

Once the interpretation that the amulets did in fact represent the womb became accepted they entered a period of study which tacitly acknowledged their functions as pertaining to “women’s ailments” or vigorously asserted that they could only have been intended to increase fertility and aid birth (Barb 1953, Barb1959, Dasen 2005). The language used by some of these scholars of the 20th c. as quoted in chapter 2 again demonstrates a discomfort with the discussion of women’s bodies and their functions. While some authors of late have acknowledged that the greater part of the class probably combated general uterine pain (Hanson, pc), they still prefer to focus on the small subgroup of amulets which may have been used as birth amulets (Hanson 1995, 2004). Other modern treatments have simply continued in the safer path of many of the earlier

works of this century, compiling catalogues of the amulets without devoting more than a few paragraphs to their use and purpose (Michel 2001, 2004a, 2004b).

Although modern classical scholarship, or at least a part of it, has shown itself to be eminently open to transparent discussion about women's bodies in antiquity and teasing out the social implications of these representations of the body, the discussions concerning the greater part of the amulets have as of yet not participated in this dialogue (Lloyd 1999a and 1999b, Dean Jones 1994, King 1998, Hanson 1975, 1990, 2004). The amulets have thus served as a barometer of the western academy's stance on gender from their discovery to the present. It is one of the goals of this work to merge the discussion of the amulets with modern considerations of women's bodies in the ancient Mediterranean world.

The next chapter, Chapter 3, was concerned with the inscriptions of the amulets. The inscriptions are dominated by the command for the womb to contract, for its swelling and inflammation to go down. The next most common inscription involves the womb returning to its proper position within the body. Threats to use Seth to punish it are also often invoked. The primary purpose of the inscriptions is not to hasten birth or enhance fertility, but to restore the health and proper functioning of the womb, which would seem to indicate that it was envisioned as functioning within the body in other capacities than those tied strictly to childbirth. Indeed, prayers for safe delivery and the word for birth are never mentioned on the amulets.²⁹¹ The Soroor formula which is so often inscribed on the pieces has been shown by Ritner to be a formula for opening things, which may affect the ability of the womb to give birth or maintain a pregnancy, but also to function regularly in its menstrual cycle.

²⁹¹ Except for one instance when birth is used in a formulaic way to identify the object of the charm.

This inscription and the word Ororiouth are often found abstracted from the womb motif and appended to Chnoubis or Ibis iconography, both of which are intimately tied to proper digestion and pain in the stomach. In this way the inscriptions link the womb to other abdominal organs and abdominal pain more generally and move them into the realm of daily pain, as opposed to the exceptional, and relatively infrequent, pain of birth. Likewise the inscription of the deity Ororiouth is in keeping with the Egyptian tradition preserved in the PGM of assigning a different deity to each part of the body and serves to tie the womb to a greater tradition of approaching the body. In this way the womb seems to be closely related to other body parts and organs, and not marked out as something different, subject to different treatment than the rest of the body or unique in defining womanhood. It is simply another organ.

Chapter 4 examined the iconography of the amulets and explained it in relation to the cultural and mythological traditions to which it alluded. Interestingly, the womb did not fall exclusively under the sway of female deities, nor did the deities who were most consistently associated with it, such as the Chnoubis and Ouroboros, have any intimate connection to fertility or primary ties to women. The womb once again does not seem to be linked through its iconography and religious ties to anything particularly feminine. What is made clear through chapter 4 and the inscriptions of chapter 3 is that the matrix is thought to fulfill many functions in the body and to be an inherently dangerous organ in need of regulation.

The potential danger that could be caused by the womb was shown in several ways. The Ouroboros is traditionally a means by which to both protect and imprison what it encloses. Further, the vast majority of amulets show the Egyptian deities standing

on top of the womb, an artistic convention in Egypt which was associated with the conquest and subduing of enemies. Thus the inscriptions from chapter three reveal that the womb could move and become inflamed, playing many roles within the woman's body while the deities and iconography of chapter four identify that movement as hostile and something which must be controlled. There is no immediate indication on the amulets that this movement is harmful to anyone but the possessor of the uterus herself. Part of being gendered female may involve coping with a belligerent uterus, but the uterus itself seems to be sexless.

Chapter 5 investigated the amulets further within related amuletic traditions. Once again a concern with the womb as being linked to issues of general health common to both sexes, such as digestion and stomach upset, seems to predominate and indicate that the womb as envisioned on the amulets is just another factor to address in maintaining abdominal health. While it added its own health issues to the more general task of maintaining health in people, these concerns were not all that different from those relating to the stomach or other body parts shared by both men and women. Being a woman entailed having extra things to worry about in regards to organs, but they were not so far removed from those concerns shared by both sexes.

Chapter 6 examined the magical traditions on which the amulets drew. The binding of organs, animals and females was found to be a common practice in Greek society through *katadesmoi* and in the PGM with *agogai*. By binding the uterus it was made similar to other non-sexual organs of the body, such as the tongue which was commonly a target of ritual binding, and was also linked to animals, as horses in races could also be bound to prevent their movement. Thus, the uterus was characterized as

both an organ and an animal. Significantly, the other organs to which it is typically linked, such as the stomach, are not bound on the other magical amulets. This nearly ubiquitous feature of the amulets is specific to the uterus. This betrays the mentality of their users, that as in the deployment of other *katadesmoi*, they were the disadvantaged participant in a contest, in this case with the womb for control of the body. The uterus is a powerful and mobile organ which requires special bonds to control it. In this way it is unlike other organs in the body. It was a wild element within women which could easily overpower them unless special action was taken.

Thus, the womb did play a part in defining womanhood, for unlike men, unless women took on an outside mechanism to control their bodies, they could be destroyed. Men had no such threat lurking within themselves. In a sense the bodies of women were deceitful, with allegiance split between the greater woman as a whole and to the womb alone. By combating this internal division on a regular if not daily basis, part of a woman's *habitus* and her gender would be formed.

Chapter 7 further explored the medical traditions from which the amulets descend. Both the Egyptian and the Greek traditions share the concept of a mobile womb which can affect the overall health of a woman. In the Hippocratic tradition movement is caused by mechanical stimuli, and this seems to be the case in Egypt as well, where the condition is treated like any other medical complaint. In the Hippocratic tradition females are seen as a separate species from males, not bound by the same physical rules. In this tradition the womb is the means by which all female health is regulated through its ability to evacuate illness-causing excess moisture. It is in the Timaeus of Plato that the idea of the womb as animal is first recorded, the same womb which appears on the

amulets and which cannot be controlled by traditional medical therapies, but needs supernatural intervention to control it. Plato's womb is long lived in Graeco-Roman thought, reappearing in Aretaeus in the 2nd century AD and later. Aristotle went on to discuss the nature of women and essentially came to the conclusion that the uterus was primarily good for reproduction and women were merely the means by which men could reproduce themselves. He was a major force for understanding the uterus as synonymous with women. While he believed that women were not a separate species from man, he did believe them to be inferior to men. By the time of Soranus health was no longer tied to the ability of the womb to bleed, and the question of the relationship of man to woman is not raised.²⁹²

Out of this discussion comes the shape of the womb as it was conceptualized on the uterine amulets, both conceptually and literally. The womb as pot hearkens back to the Hippocratic tradition as does the idea of uterine movement and the concern with regulating the proper opening and closing of the womb, seen so often on the amulets. The idea that the female is a different species and all the gender repercussions that would entail however, does not seem to appear on the amulets, where the relatedness of the womb to the stomach and other organs is repeatedly emphasized, organs possessed by males and females.

Rather, the nature of the womb on the amulets, as a peripatetic enemy who must be forcefully tied down and subdued, hails from Plato's Timaeus. While the womb in

²⁹² Indeed, Flemming suggests that the apparently deep-seated acceptance and comfort of Roman men and women within their prescribed roles may be a deliberate choice, of sorts. The restructuring of the Republic into an Empire only preceded Soranus by a century and a half or so, an event which had vast implications for status, identity formation and power dynamics and which must necessarily also affected gender roles. If there seems to be no change from an earlier time, this must be in response to a decided effort to maintain "normalcy." Flemming 2000, 26.

this way hearkens back to the womb of Hesiod, an organ which almost defined woman and was deceitful, it does not go so far as Aristotle who made it metonymous for womanhood. The womb is a part of the woman but it is not the whole of the woman. Its functions are diverse on the amulets and not limited or even primarily concerned with reproduction. The amulets are genuinely concerned with controlling a wayward organ and preventing the horrible damage it could do within the body; they give no indication that they have an alternative motive in controlling the woman to whom the organ belongs. Controlling one, the woman or the womb, does not automatically result in control of the other. They are separate organisms, and herein lies the motivation for the amulets in the first place, if the womb were synonymous with its woman, acting in accordance with the rest of her body, there would be no call for such an amulet, where it is bound and trussed and trampled by gods and confined within the Ouroboros lest it get loose and wreak havoc on the body which surrounds it.

Thus chapter 7 makes many comments on the gender of the users of the amulets. Once again their womanhood is not encompassed by the ability of one organ to reproduce mankind. They are not a separate species from man, and indeed share much of the same physiology and anatomy as man, but part of being a woman is taking precautions that one's womb does not overpower oneself. Indeed, the idea that the womb could overpower its owner is a comment on the inherent weakness of females and their weak nature, unable even to control their own bodies. In this way the amulets also reinforce the idea rampant throughout classical culture, that women are not as strong or trustworthy as men, and are a bit wild. Gender is tied in part to the womb, but not through

reproduction, rather through its wayward nature and what controlling that nature meant for the daily actions of a woman.

Finally, chapter 8 investigated the material concerns of the amulets from both cultural and theoretical perspectives. The most salient points to emerge from that discussion in regards to gender included the fact that amulets were traditionally used more often by women than men in both Greece and Egypt, indicating that the users of the amulets were probably females and that their use alone was a gendered activity. It was suggested also, although it cannot be proven, that amulets were primarily used by women as a means to empower themselves and gain control over their own bodies. While in the Hippocratic tradition a woman would take a male to appease her womb and protect herself from her treasonous body, these amulets could fulfill the same function and exclude the middleman. Further, by suggesting that the amulets would be part of the daily routine of their user, as the womb was an ever-present threat, they would have become part of the *habitus* of that user helping to build up the gender and identity of the person in an unobtrusive yet profound way (Flemming 2000, 25).

In this way the amulets make a gendered action real. Gender, unlike the amulets, is not a thing, but by using these amulets and being daily confronted with their messages and allusions their user would have created her own womanhood out of them, at least in part, and likely taught it to those around her through example and word. Being a woman meant coping with a threatening uterus from puberty to menopause. The amulets were a proactive way to cope with this stress and to build this constant activity into one's daily routines, providing an external focus for the anxiety which the organ may engender. The organ itself was made of the same stuff as other organs, as proclaimed by Herophilos, and

was closely related to other non sex-specific organs of the abdomen including the stomach and liver. It was not in its possession that gender was ascribed, but gender was created through one's daily reactions to the womb. The amulets provided a focus for such action and thus were gendered objects, not through what was inscribed on them as much as how they would have been used.

Thus, the amulets can expand the understanding of gender in the ancient world. If that understanding is not as profound as some may wish, this study must reply with Flemming's observations that

...it is not assumed that medicine will, by right and definition, have contributed anything particularly authoritative to the meaning and patterning of sexual difference in the Roman Empire, but only that it will have contributed something, as befits its own position and aspirations within that world. Medicine is a site of social negotiation, where men and women may meet and interact, both with each other and among themselves, in a range of guises – as practitioners and patients, providers and purchasers of services – and a site of discursive production, where men and women may variously act as producers, and feature as products and recipients of the discourse itself all this being, of course, intermeshed. The making of medicine is thus inevitably and multiply bound up with the making of gender; what is not inevitable, however, is the significance of medicine's part in this, as well as the way it is played out. Flemming 2000, 25

The same holds true for the amulets as medico-magical tools. No matter how meager or great the contribution to the greater understanding of gender, it furthers and nuances that understanding, and is therefore worth the effort of its investigation.

Final Interpretations:

What then of the initial question which began this dissertation: what are the amulets and what are they used for? Moreover, how can they be subject to a contextual archaeology when they are devoid of context? Each chapter in its own way has made progress towards answering this query and building the amulets back into their cultural framework. Chapter 2 examined their modern treatment and illustrated the ways that

they have been investigated of late. Chapter 3 demonstrated that in their own words they are primarily concerned with the return of the uterus to its proper place and form as well as ensuring that it opens and closes properly. Chapter 4 upheld this concern of proper opening and closing by looking at the iconography of the pieces, including the key. Its analysis of the deities most commonly present on the amulets in relation to their mythology and the posture they assume on the pieces indicates that the womb was felt to have many functions within the body, and therefore many places where those functions could break down. The deities trampling the organ indicated that it was deemed an enemy of sorts, and the Ouroboros confirmed this interpretation, as it was often used in Egypt to protect the world at large from what it imprisoned, as well as protecting the object it encircled. Interestingly, traditional fertility gods were not present.

Chapter 5 looked at amulets related to those which are the subject of this work and in doing so illuminated the close connections between the uterine amulets and those that were concerned with the stomach, colic and digestion thus placing the uterine class within the sphere of general abdominal pain. It also linked them to later uterine amulets which were likewise not concerned with reproduction but with ensuring that the womb did not harm the woman to whom it belonged.

Chapter 6 explored the aggressive magical roots of the amulets. Out of this discussion it became clear that the amulets drew heavily on the Egyptian tradition of encircling, which was a means of protection. The Egyptian magical tradition of depicting a conquest in stone and thereby enabling it to continue throughout eternity was also at work on the amulets, as was the tradition of naming and using threats to compel the object of the charm to do as bid. The amulets were also closely linked to the *katadesmoi*

through their language and content. The social situations in which *katadesmoi* were used have been shown by Faraone to involve mainly contests in which one partner is significantly weaker than the other and hence invokes a supernatural means of evening out the odds of being successful. This seems to indicate that the uterus was understood as a powerful and nearly uncontrollable force when it was misbehaving.

Chapter 7 focused on the medical background on which the amulets drew, both Egyptian and Greek. The Egyptian gynaecological tradition is filled with many examples of pathological uterine conditions which had nothing to do with reproduction, indicating a belief in a wide assortment of roles which the womb could play within the female body. It also contained a tradition of a highly mobile womb, and indeed most pains within a female's body could be attributed to the womb. The Graeco-Roman gynaecological tradition was more complex and variable, as discussed above, but many aspects of it manifested on the amulets, from the Hippocratic concern with the proper uterine bleeding as demonstrated through the amulets' concern with opening and closing, to the raging willful womb of Plato's *Timaeus*. Even the ligaments and fallopian tubes of Herophilos appeared on the amulets, although they were not widely popular in later traditions.

Chapter 8 focused on the physicality of the amulets and their role as objects. Within the cultural bounds of their society that used them their physical manifestation as small haematite amulets worn in pouches (most probably) close to the body were explained, as were the angular letters of the pieces and their means of creation, all of which can help the modern scholar distinguish an ancient specimen from a modern forgery. The material of the amulets demonstrates links to Greek traditions concerned with pathology and not reproduction (and may in the Egyptian tradition relate them to the

slaying of wild-animals). The second half of the chapter explored the amulets as things providing a variety of theoretical lenses through which they might be fruitfully examined. Of particular interest in this discussion was the idea that the size of the amulets further empowered their users and was due to the extremely dangerous nature of the beast which they combated. They were also shown to encode the cultural values in regards to women of those who created them, and the ways in which they could shape identity through repeated mundane use was also investigated.

The overall picture of the amulets that has come out of these investigations is of a medico-magical tool which was used to maintain the health of the uterus, and thereby the health of the body, as well as a means to regain a sense of control when uterine crisis struck, primarily in the form of movement or swelling and painful inflammation. The presence of multiple deities on the stones indicates the multiple ways in which uterine health could fail and had to be actively shored up. Chnoubis was responsible for combating abdominal pain and its uterine causes while Bes was a general protector of women and enemy of daemons, while Duamoutef guarded the organ itself and Khnoum was present to represent its reproductive capacities. The array of deities is too wide to be explained merely in terms of reproduction, yet reproduction was one of the functions which their range encompassed. Contrary to other arguments, reproduction was not the main function of the amulets as is also demonstrated by the lack of central fertility deities on the amulets such as Heqet, Meshkenet, Taweret and Hathor.

The nearly ubiquitous Ouroboros also attested to the ever-present threat which the uterus represented to the woman in whom it dwelt, an idea which hearkens back to Egyptian and Greek medicine and philosophy. The fact that these amulets manifest in

such small form also reinforces the particular need associated with them to minimize the force of the uterus, a potential enemy and increase one's own power in relation. The symbolic conquest of the uterus is made eternal and ongoing by representing its binding by the Ouroboros and trampling by the gods. The class's close connection to the *katadesmoi* also testifies to the fear and anxiety the uterus engendered and the lengths gone to control it.

The idea of the uterus as a force of chaos and a moving wild animal is articulated in the PGM, in the Timaeus and to a degree in the Greek, Egyptian and Roman medical literature. The overriding understanding of the uterus drawn from all the arguments presented in this dissertation is an understanding of the uterus as the enemy within. It is this message which is dominant on the amulets. It is a message sent through the words, images, materials, compositions, scales and allusions used in the amulets. True to magical form the message is over-determined and present in some way on every level that has been investigated. It is to this end, the combat of an inner chaotic force, that the amulets were primarily conceived, constructed and used.

Areas for Further Exploration:

In concluding this dissertation, I would like to suggest some further avenues of exploration which I have not been able to pursue in this work. While Bonner, Delatte and Aubert discuss briefly the amulets' astrological connections this is an area which has not yet been fully teased out. Although the occasional star or crescent moon appears on the amulets, the astrology does not seem to be a main symbolic system at work, and so it was passed over in favor of focusing on other cultural traditions.²⁹³ In a similar vein this

²⁹³ Moreover, in many sources it tends to be blown out of proportion and lead to odd connections being proposed which this author for the most part found unconvincing (Aubert 1989). Nevertheless, it was a

study has not considered the artistic links of the amulets very extensively. Although it seemed to the author upon a cursory examination of several Mediterranean and Near Eastern intaglio comparisons that the pieces most closely resembled Assyrian seal stones, bearing very little relationship to the hieroglyphic covered scarabs of Egypt, that claim cannot be made with any authority at this point.²⁹⁴ It is a study for others to complete. Further, the various depictions of gods and other stylistic studies, especially those that further explore the connection between motif and message (like the linking of the octopus uterus with birth) may be productive.

Although this study has made a start at exploring the stones within a theoretical construct, much work remains to be done in this respect. Particularly interesting results might come about by studying the amulets further in the context of ritual studies, practice theory and as material culture. Further, Flemming's suggestion that gender be replaced as an object of study by nature, or the "givenness" of various statuses, where status is explored by the perceived preconditions which exist in a person as opposed to a process of identity building, might be an interesting way to look at the amulets.²⁹⁵ That said, given the fact that the stones have never been analyzed in any way other than within the cultural bounds of the societies which created them, the modest start made here with the application of a theoretical lens seems to the author a success.

movement which was growing in popularity at the time of the production of the stones and may play some minor part in their form.

²⁹⁴ Osborne proposes that they developed out of Etruscan rather than Egyptian scarab carving.

²⁹⁵ She argues, rightly, that it is a more emic way of understanding a foreign culture, as our categories of sex and gender do not map exactly on those of other groups, and making them fit can cross cut native classificatory systems which leaves more confusion and less understanding in their wake. Flemming 2000, 16-23. Nevertheless, gender has to date been a useful tool and rather than throwing out the baby with the bathwater at this early date, it may be more useful to try Flemming's suggestion and compare the results to those achieved here before we rush to discard the idea of gender.

It is also suggested that the economic role of the stones be explored further. Although no workshops are known it seems that a detailed study of the technology of the carving of the amulets, looking at each individually, might yield interesting results, especially among the stones that are obviously created so differently, such as the notch-style as compared to the greater group. The fact that the only stone with context was found in England suggests that they were probably widely traded and may have been of some economic importance.

Summation:

Finally, it is hoped that this study has demonstrated to the reader that just because the archaeological find spot of a piece is not known, that does not mean that it is useless for archaeological inquiries. While an archaeological context may never be restored, a cultural context can be built back into the object with careful observation of its features. With a bit of luck enough detail can be prized from the piece to truly begin to understand it from the point of view of those who made and used it. In the case of the amulets, it is the author's impression that this restored context has significantly reduced their "coefficient of weirdness" (Gordon 2002, 670). Nevertheless, as promised in the introductory chapter, the exploration has been full of humorous and horrifying twists. This study will leave the reader with one final quote from Lord Southesk, one which it hopes that he can no longer agree with:

Of late years I have bought but few gems of this so-called "Gnostic" class, finding it sufficiently represented in the eighty-nine specimens that I now possess, and caring little to accumulate ugliness no longer endowed with the charm that a supposed investigable mystery had at one time conferred. *With these gems their discovered mysteries are unimportant, while those still hidden are neither likely to be revealed, nor to prove interesting if ever brought to light.* Southesk 1908, 137-138 (Author's emphasis).

Appendices

A: Mormorotokoumbai

On several amulets the daemonic name 𐤀 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 is found with slight variations in spelling. It is first encountered on an amulet formerly in the possession of C. Schmidt, published by Preisendanz and Bonner and illustrated by Michel (Preisendanz 1932, Bonner 1932, Michel 2004, c. 136). It is a triangular haematite with unparalleled iconography for a uterine amulet. On its reverse it has an anchor flanked on either side by the word “ 𐤀 𐤓 𐤓 ,” “eternally.”²⁹⁶ The inscription “ 𐤀 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 ” surrounds this center group.²⁹⁷ An almost identical amulet to this one, c. 137 also has 𐤀 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 written on it.

Another haematite amulet discussed by both Delatte and Barb is a typical uterine amulet except that it lacks Ororiouth on the reverse and in its stead is the word 𐤀 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 (Delatte 1914, 87 # 35, Barb 1953, 201). Finally a fourth amulet published by Sir W. Flinders-Petrie is of a black material and has only the word 𐤀 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 𐤓 written on it with no other symbols or words (Petrie 1972, 30 #135d). Barb says that this inscription is only found on the reverse of amulets with a uterine vase or a woman squatting to give birth, but Petrie’s amulet which Barb himself cites seems to disprove this. As two of the three known amulets with this word on them

²⁹⁶ Bonner and Youtie (1937, 62) and Preisendanz (1932, 105, N. 35/38) note that Jacoby Arch. F. Religionsw. xxxvIII 1930, 283f. suggests that *eulamo* is a transcription of a west-semitic adjective formation which means “eternal” or “eternally.” R. Ganschinietz in the same journal vol. xvii (1914, 343f), *Philologische Wochenschrift*, Supplmtb II n 448, gave the word the same meaning but derived it from the Assyrian *ullamu*. Other earlier explanations, which Bonner and Preisendanz did not deem as likely are found in Waser in *Philologische Wochenschrift* VI 1064 and Preisendanz *Akephaolos* 35 ff. Betz in the glossary to the PGM 1992, 384 notes that the word (sometimes as *Eulamosi*) appears in PGM III. 57, VII. 401, IX. 8, and XVI. 18.

²⁹⁷ An almost identical amulet also possessing the same inscriptions is illustrated by Zazoff 1983. Both pieces are shown next to each other in Michel 2004

Theocritus associates Mormo with a horse and warns bad children that they will be snatched by just such a daemon (Johnston 1995, 375). Hesychius on the other hand describes Mormones as planetary daemons, those who were not fully integrated into society when they died and were therefore able to travel between the mortal and underworlds, as they were not able to integrate fully into the society of Hades (Johnston 1995, 370).

Accepting that any of the above interpretation of the name could be valid one must then unravel the second part to see which if any is likely. Two interpretations have been put forth for the second half of the word, -tonkoumbai. Eisler in an article from 1909 put forth the suggestion that the root of the word is “ku(m)ba” an ancient word for “womb” which is manifested in later forms in the names of the goddess Kybele and the Mesopotamian goddess Kubaba (Eisler 1909, Barb 1953 n. 90).³⁰³ Eisler’s findings, if correct are convenient for the interpretation of this otherwise unintelligible daemon or guardian. Combining Eisler and Hesychius we are left with something like “ⲧⲉⲧⲁⲃⲁⲓ ⲛⲉⲧⲁⲃⲁⲓ” “terrifying-uterus” or “uterus-scarer.” This would fit into the tradition discussed in chapters 3 and 4 of scaring the uterus back into place. If we believe as Bonner does regarding the word Ororiouth that the name could also stand in for the organ itself at times, its connection to a strong binding formula as found in the papyri would also perhaps make it the object of that formula. It is something that needs to be controlled and tied down. If the above interpretation is accepted then the purpose of the amulet which Petrie found and which has no symbols on it is explained in spite of its lack of iconography.

³⁰³ Apparently the word is feminine in gender, as it refers to several Near Eastern goddesses. See Barb 1953 n. 90 for further literature.

However, Preisendanz' and Eisler's interpretations seem to some to be too esoteric and derived from too many disparate sources to be likely. Bonner in response to Preisandanz's interpretation of Mormorontokoumbai as "uterus scarer" put forth his understanding of the word (Bonner 1932). For the first part of the word he speculates that Jacoby may have been correct with his interpretation of .𐤌.𐤍. and .𐤌.𐤍.𐤏 coming from the Aramaic word "Mar" meaning "Lord" coupled with a phonetic glide.³⁰⁴ He also draws several links to Coptic for the second part of the word. Specifically, he notes that "ontok" in Coptic means "thou" while "bai" means "soul" and "Ne Bai" (nbai) means "lord of Souls." His speculation is not without precedent as a magical gem of different type (Abraxas) in Michigan has the inscription on its reverse: 𐤌𐤍𐤏/𐤌𐤍𐤏/𐤌𐤍𐤏 /1𐤌𐤍𐤏 /1𐤌𐤍𐤏 (illustrated in Michel 2004), as does an amulet in the British Museum (56024), and one published by Montfaucon (*L'antiquité expliquée* vol. 2 part 2, pl 146.4) (Bonner *Amuletum Ineditum*, 376). All of his suggestions make sense given the general nature of the gods most commonly inscribed on these amulets however in terms of the linking the word to the subject of the amulet, his ideas don't get us much further.

The conclusion which must be reached in regard to the etymology and meaning of this epithet is that at present it cannot be linked conclusively to the class of uterine amulets. It may or may not have a uterine meaning depending on which derivation the scholar chooses, but given the proliferation of suggested meanings, it would be less than responsible to favor one over another until further, more decisive evidence surfaces.

B: Aberrant Iconography

³⁰⁴ In *Amuletum Ineditum* he cites on pg 377 Jacoby as ARW 28, 273,9 # 270 and 279. See also *Studies in Magical Amulets*, 1950 for further discussion of the first part of the word which he does not go into depth about in his 1932 article

Various amulets seem to have a metal vase or amphora upon them instead of the typical uterine vase (c. 138, 31). While some are clearly still uterine amulets (c. 139) others have been recognized as strange (142, 143) and may with new evidence be reassigned to a different category of amulet such as Michel's category of amulets meant to ward off incubi (c. 144, 145). It would not be a good use of space in this dissertation to go over each example, but the reader should be aware that much of the strange iconography may be due either to the individual artistic inclinations of ancient engravers or to the modern forger, particularly active in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Michel has suggested that many more examples than suspected in museum collections are actually later forgeries which may explain much of the odd iconography, including the relatively common case where the uterine vase was shown upright (Michel 2001). This may be a genuine feature of some ancient stones, but since the meaning of the scene had yet to be made clear when many stones were forged it would not be surprising if the engraver restored the pot to what he assumed would be its natural position.

C: Triangular amulets misidentified as uterine

Other stones seem genuine enough based on the peculiarities of their accompanying inscriptions, but based on their iconography and inscriptions do not seem to be uterine amulets. A particularly well published example that falls into this category is stone c. 136. Published by Preisendanz (1932), Bonner (1932 & 1950) and Michel (2004), its identity as a uterine amulet has never been questioned (discussed in Appendix A in considering the meaning of Mormorotokoumbai). Part of this reason is that Preisendanz and Bonner both published this complex piece without illustration. While

Zazoff published an illustration of a near identical stone he did not discuss it (Zazoff 1983). It was only in Michel's 2004 catalogue that the stone and Zazoff's comparable piece are actually published with a photograph. When one takes illustration in combination with text it becomes clear that there is no parallel for the stone in the known corpus of uterine amulets. It is a triangular stone with anchor on the reverse and three deities on sphinxes surmounted by a winged cherub with a scale on the obverse. Surrounding the anchor on both sides is the word "eulamo," eternally,³⁰⁵ and edging the sides of this field is the word *mormorontokoumbai*. Zazoff's example (c. 137) is identical to this first stone in every detail, if less finely cut, with the exception of an inscription on the bottom bevel of the c. 136 which reads "𐎎𐎗𐎎𐎕𐎗𐎎𐎕𐎗𐎎𐎕𐎗𐎎𐎕𐎗𐎎," meaning "stop the blood." Preisendanz used this inscription to explain the purpose of the anchor (Preisendanz 1930, Bonner 1950). Given that the only other stone of this type lacks this inscription, and both lack all other elements typically found on uterine amulets, I am not persuaded by Preisendanz's argument that this is an amulet meant to stop menorrhagia.


Preisendanz's suggestion that the sphinxes were present as visual representation of the word 𐎎𐎗𐎎𐎕𐎗𐎎𐎕𐎗𐎎𐎕𐎗𐎎𐎕𐎗𐎎 which means "to tie or bind together" and in this way they would stop the flow of blood, by binding it, seems forced. He also believes the winged figure with scales was meant to represent a measure of the proper amount of blood flow (Preisendanz 1930). The entire argument is conjectural. Although Bonner seems willing to believe that the stone was intended to stop menorrhagia and thus must be a uterine amulet of some sort, this interpretation on iconographic and epigraphic grounds must be thrown out (Bonner 1932, Bonner 1950).

³⁰⁵ Derived from either Assyrian or a Western Semitic language. See "Mormorontokoumbai" Appendix A for further discussion of this inscription and references.

reasons. Catalogue numbers 130 and 132 both have an altar on their reverse with an upright pot flanked by two snakes sitting on it. Although the pot is upright and its shape does not closely match up with the uterine vase seen on the vast majority of uterine amulets, and although the scene lacks a key, an Ouroboros and the word Ororiouth, Bonner understood it to be a uterine amulet on the basis of the pot. He was not alone in this interpretation, as Barb (Bois du Sang 1952) and Delatte and Derchain (1964) made the same argument. He took the inscription on the obverse, *dipsas* referencing a type of perpetually thirsty viper, to be an urging to the snakes flanking the pot on the reverse scene to drink deeply of the pot and cure menorrhagia. Although he understands the armed warrior on the obverse to be Ares rather than Tantalos he accounts for his presence merely by saying that Ares was a protective force capable of driving away disease. However, Michel has put forth a new explanation which seems more tenable. She suggests that these amulets were meant to staunch blood (Michel 2005, 150). She cites an example in Theodorus Priscianus in which “drink Tantalos” was to be written on a laurel leaf three times to cure a nose bleed (Michel 2001, 242).

She also discusses c. 133 and 134, both stones which are engraved with the Tantalos pterygoma, but instead of the warrior figure possess a daemon with its hands bound behind its back, a posture which denotes its helpless and contained state. Bleeding, and indeed almost any disease in the ancient world, could be attributed to the influence of daemons. In this case the shape of the pterygoma which dominates the stone less and less each line until it disappears provides a model for what the daemon itself is to do, wield less and less influence in the body until it disappears altogether. The content of the pterygoma, adjuring Tantalos to drink blood, is also a threat to the daemon, who

flows within the blood. If it does not stop the blood from leaving the body that blood will be swallowed up by Tantalos, and the daemon thereby destroyed (Michel 2005, 150-151). The pterygoma would seem to apply to any type of aberrant bleeding in this interpretation and not be exclusively linked to uterine bleeding as has been formerly proposed (Bonner 1950, Barb 1953, Delatte and Derchain 1962).

A related class of amulets is that which places the armed warrior in the center of the obverse field, links that warrior figure to protection of the liver based on the accompanying inscriptions (c. 133) (Michel 2001). The inscription surrounding the Ares figure on this amulet is  Ares cut off the pain of the liver (Bonner 1950, 66, Michel 2001, 244 n. 385). Bonner mentions several times in his work that Ares was the particular protective deity of the liver, even citing at an earlier point in his monograph an amulet which bears a figure strikingly like that of the warrior on the Tantalos amulets which is understood as a liver amulet (Bonner 1950, 89 & 66). Michel also notes that the warrior figure is reminiscent of Mars Ultor. Mars being the god of the liver, an organ tied closely to blood. Although Gordon questions Michel's argument on the basis of her incompletely cited evidence, the interpretation must stand on the basis of the inscriptions.

While the reverse of these particular liver amulets is often taken up exclusively by inscription, the reverse of the Tantalos amulets always has either a distinctive schematic figure or the scene with the altar and pot surrounded by an inscription. Based on comparisons it seems most likely that the schematic figure is a type of pared down trophy such as those seen on Delatte and Derchain 281-286 which match the shape of these figures and further connect them to Ares (c. 132). This trophy figure is found on the

reverse of a fragmentary Tantalos amulet found in the British Museum, (Michel 2002, 244, n. 384) as well as on the reverse of the intact Tantalos amulets c. 132 and Michel 2004 56.5. The inscription which surround the trophy is distinct. The word WVA is written across the top of the scene (Michel 383, 384, Michel 2004 table 56.5), WV runs down the left side, vowels are on the bottom and WV reads down the right side (c. 132). These same exact inscriptions are found surrounding the pot and the altar scenes on the other Tantalos amulets (c. 130 and 131).³⁰⁶ Thus they share not only imagery but also words, which suggests to that they are all of the same type.

The use of the pterygoma formula in place of the hepatic formula next to Ares and its explicit mention of blood may refer to the fact that in the ancient world the liver was occasionally thought to be the source of blood for the body as well as the place where the blood was cooked into the more pure substance of sperm, the most manly and perfect of substances (much as the warrior ideal, here represented by Ares, could be considered the most perfect example of physical manhood). The liver and blood were intimately connected in medical systems of the time.

As to the presence of the pot on the reverse, several explanations suggest themselves. Perhaps it was a more softly rendered version of the trophy, carved by an artist who did not understand the meaning of the original sign, an interpretation supported by the bi-wasted silhouette created by both forms (See especially Michel 2001 384, Michel 2004 56.5, c. 130 and 131). Or, perhaps, it is a schematic rendering of the liver itself. Its bi-lobe shape corresponds fairly well with the outline of the Piacenza bronze

³⁰⁶ Although in Bonner's 144 there is a W that precedes WV and the V of WV has been rubbed off, however these are the only differences in the inscriptions, which are more tightly correlated in spelling and position than one would expect for such length. For some reason great care was taken in ensuring that the written formulas were precisely copied onto the stones.

liver model. However, it is also reminiscent of the corrugated uterus votives deposited throughout the Mediterranean world, a form which interestingly enough is not found on any of the other uterine amulets in the corpus, the uterus being represented by a smooth surfaced pot.

The “altar” on which the pot sits is interesting, as a similar crescent shape, albeit lacking a base, is found in the PGM drawn in the middle of a spell which apparently was meant to induce abortion (Figure A1) (PGM LXII. 76-106, Betz 1992, 294). The crescent is also associated with the word ADONAEI in PGM CXXIII.f along with a spell replete with mentions of blood (Figure A2) (Betz 1992, 320). The closest parallel to the shape of the altar, however, comes on a series of ostraka in which a nearly identical shape is identified as a birthing chair (Figure A3)(Schulman 1985). However, the resemblance is only close for one ostraka shown by Schulman, and so it seems likely that this is not the meaning of the altar either. All in all it seems that the tropaieon explanation is the most likely.

The connection to the uterine amulets is understandable given the mention of blood on the Tantalos amulets and the presence of a symbol which resembles a pot on their reverse, however this study would argue that these amulets have been misinterpreted and do not belong to the class of uterine amulets, rather they are a variation of an amulet meant to staunch bleeding or cure the pains associated with another organ closely associate with blood, the liver. Indeed, nothing about Tantalos, drinking blood or the imagery of snakes and an upright pot on an altar suggest menorrhagia, nor do the inscriptions on the reverse. As addressed in chapter 3, the mere presence of a pot without

another part of the “package” such as a key, upside down position, an Ouroboros or the word Ororiouth is not enough to prove an amulet uterine.

At least 2 Byzantine amulets also carry a similar inscription to the Tantalos amulets. The command for the uterus to “eat, drink blood” occurs on at least two pieces and conspicuously hearkens back to the Tantalos amulets which are often understood as uterine amulets (Spier 1993, 29). In some post Byzantine Greek magical handbooks various versions of the hystera charm have survived, all versions of which have preserved the word $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\iota$ in place of the word $\sigma\tau\omicron\mu\alpha\chi\eta$ (Spier 1993, 48). Festugiere would emend the term to $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\iota$ in the sense of colic, but the word could also mean belly or womb (Liddell and Scott). Although it is tempting to interpret the word as “stomach” or belly, an organ which typically digests and in a sense ‘eats’ and ‘drinks,’ this suggestion has been roundly rejected (Barb 1954, 237 n. 301; Spier 1993, 48). Indeed Spier even cites a manuscript in Paris which describes how to make an amulet $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\iota$ for the wombs, that begins by urging the womb to eat and drink blood (Spier 1993, 48). Here also, as with the Byzantine amulets, the link between the organ and the phrase is made explicit. Although this may suggest that the Tantalos amulets may have been uterine amulets, based on the above discussion (contra Bonner 1950, Barb 1952, Festugiere 1960/61, Delatte and Derchain 1964) (Michel 2005). Rather it is more likely that these Byzantine amulets represent a blending of two earlier traditions. They also represent the potential pitfalls of projecting later traditions into earlier periods.

One piece of evidence which may uphold Festugiere’s emendation is a unique early Byzantine amulet which is inscribed $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\iota$ “stomach, stomach, as you eat blood, as you drink blood, thus I

bind you” (Spier 1993, 46; Festugiere 1951, 88; Mousterde 1942/1943, 124f no. 58). This inscription seems to combine aspects of uterine amulets, including the binding of daemons with the Tantalos amulets discussed above. The use of the word for stomach opens the door to the possibility that this early amulet forms a bridge between the Tantalos amulets and the later 10th c. Byzantine amulets.

The Tantalos amulets don't refer to any particular body part, and indeed as I have postulated above the vessel on their reverse may represent a liver, or perhaps as suggested here, a stomach. Delatte himself but for the use of the word for matrix would have interpreted the uterine vase as a stomach, another fleshy sack-like organ easily visualized as a pot (Delatte 1914). Although some medical theories of the Greek world (discussed further in chapter 7) put forth the idea that the womb stored up blood and “consumed” it in the process of forming a foetus, the most obvious organ that would be expected to eat and drink would be the stomach.³⁰⁷

E: The uterus in the Papyri Graecae Magicae

A short survey of the nature of the Graeco-Egyptian papyri and magic in the Roman Empire and the amulets' relationships with both will be undertaken here. Gems with recognizably magical engraving began to appear in Egypt and the near east during the 1st and 2nd c. AD (Schwartz 1979, 151). “Amuletic gems of the Graeco-Egyptian type

³⁰⁷ .I.●▲● could also be used for the stomach. Were this the case this entire class would be rendered stomach amulets. Although the continued use of this formula in regard to specifically female contexts even through the 14th c. as attested by an Italian manuscript in which a spell is labeled “Questa orazione e buona al male del fianco di matrone” and which the womb, *matrone*, is said to “low like a cow, spring like a deer, bite like a wolf, bark like a dog, roar like a lion, swim like a fish, writhe like a serpent..” and includes various transliterations of Greek would seem to indicate its close connection to the womb, by whatever name it's called. Quoted from Speir 1993, 49 who cites Drexler 605-607 who in turn cites G. Amanti *Ubbie ciancioni e ciarpe del secolo XIV* (Scelta di curiosità letterarie inedite o rare dal secolo XIII al XVII. Dispensa, lxxiii), Bologna 1866, 20-23; and G. Giannini, *Una curiosa raccolta di segreti e di pratiche superstiziose fatta da un popolano fiorentino del secolo XIV* (Rara, Biblioteca dei bibliofili ii), Città di Castello 1898, 92f.

were popular all over the Roman empire. These amulets were part of an international tradition of magic, in which anything Egyptian enjoyed high prestige” (Pinch 1995, 166). While part of an international tradition of magic, nevertheless Ritner argues that the use of amulets simply maintain the tenets that were central to Egyptian magic and religion. “The use of amulets, images, and spells to preserve the living and the dead was an integral element of the Egyptian world view at all periods” (Ritner 2008, 245). He would argue that the basic behaviour which they represent is Egyptian albeit expressed in a pan-Mediterranean *koine*. Graf on the other hand has, while conceding that the gems and the Graeco-Egyptian papyri do follow a pattern of Hellenization as set forth by Bowersock, where native concepts are merely translated into a Greek idiom, such as the carving of the Egyptian deities on the gems in Greek style, argues that Ritner takes his argument too far (Graf 2003, 5, Pinch 1995, 166). As based on the preceding discussion on the magical influences on the uterine amulets in chapters 6 and 8, it seems like Graf’s position of moderation is the more tenable one, with the Greek tradition of *katedesmoi* and less concern for magical materials contributing as much to the final amulet as the Egyptian practices of encircling and the control of enemies.

Indeed, while the papyri and their contents can be understood from the perspective shed by the contemporary philosophical and magical writings of the *Hermetica*, a series of works in Greek composed in Egypt from the 1st-4th c. AD, they can be understood equally well by looking at the Greek and Egyptian traditions from which they develop (Pinch 1995, 166). Like the amulets the papyri are the result of magical and religious syncretism.

The papyri display a concern with the zodiac that seem to stem from a Greek impulse, as are the connections they highlight between stones, stars and body parts (Pinch 1995, 166-167). Likewise the tendency of the papyri to add numerical value to the letters of the Greek alphabet and construct words based on the number their letters would sum to. Abrasax, a common word or deity in the papyri which is also seen on a few uterine amulets is the alphabetic equivalent of the number 365 (Pinch 1996, 165).

The spells in the papyri go far in furthering the contemporary magical understanding of the uterus. For the most part there is little attention paid to spells to increase fertility or aid in birth. Most of the spells that have to do with the uterus are concerned with acting as contraceptives (PGM XXXVI. 320-32, PGM LXV. 1-4, Betz 1996, 277, 296), to induce or halt bleeding or (PDM xiv. 953-55, 961-965, PGM LXII. 76-106, Betz 1996, 242, 294) or “liquid” (PDM xiv. 970-77, 978-980, 981-84, Betz 1996, 243), or to ascertain if a woman is pregnant (PDM xiv. 956-960, Betz 1996, 242). Only one short one which is Christian, (that I can find) was specifically purposed for birth. It is a historiola as demonstrated by parallels uncovered by Maltomini alluding to Elizabeth’s pregnancy with John the Baptist conflated with the tale of Lazarus leaving the tomb and reads: “come out of your tomb, Christ is calling you” (PGM CXIII a 50, Betz 1996, 319).

The uterus is described and characterized eloquently in PGM VII. 260-71, titled “for ascent (running up) of the uterus” ⚙️ ◉ ◼ ◉ ⚙️ ◉. The charm instructs that the following be written on a tin lamella and wrapped in seven colors of string:

I conjure you, O Womb, [by the] one established over the Abyss, before heaven, earth, sea, light, or darkness came to be; [you?] who created the angels, being foremost, AMICHAMCHOU and CHOUCHAO CHEROEI OUEIACHO ODOU POSEIOGGEIS, and who sit over the cherubim, who bear your own (?) throne, that you return to your seat, and that you do not turn [to one side] into the right

part of the ribs, or into the left part of the ribs, and that you do not gnaw into the heart like a dog, but remain indeed in your own intended and proper place, not chewing [as long as] I conjure the one who, in the beginning, made the heaven and the earth and all that is therein. Hallelujah! Amen! Betz 1996, 123-124.

The womb is described as a dog, one of the animals understood by the Egyptians as embodying the force of chaos and by the Greeks as displaying the loathe qualities of women, wandering and turning in the body and attacking the ribs and heart as an animal unattached to the body in which it is housed. Indeed, it is described as not only having a will of its own but as having consciousness enough to hear the prayer and respond to it. It is commanded to return to its own spot, like amulet c. 147 commands it to contract.

Based on the above Aubert concurs that the purpose of most inscriptions on the amulets is to prevent the painful wanderings of the uterus around the body (Aubert 1989, 425). He notes that the spell is not specific in whether it is prophylactic or curative, and that it could probably be used both ways. Given the tendencies of both Egyptian and Greek magic it is likely that the spell was primarily prophylactic (Aubert 1989, 425). While he believes that the amulets were probably also used to prevent miscarriage, there is no such spell in the PGM. Rather, there is spell LXII 76-106 which seems to encourage it reading: "Let the genitals and the womb of her, NN, be open, and let her become bloody by night and day" (PGM LXX. 76-106 lines 101-105, Betz 1996, 294). The instructions indicate that the spell would be directed against a woman who had harmed the agent previously and that an accompanying diagram and the spell must be written in sheep's blood on a papyrus and buried beneath a sumac (Betz 1996, 294). The

whole seems very aggressive, and the use of blood, burial and apparent reference of past harms seem to link it to the Greek tradition of *katadesmoi* or judicial spells.³⁰⁸

While there are spells for opening the womb and doors, Aubert notes that there is no spell that explicitly locks the womb (Aubert 1989, 439, PGM XXXVI. 312-20, Betz 1996, 277). However, there is at least one titled “Pudenda Key Spell” which adjures the womb of a certain woman to open for him and later goes on to ask for her chastity. Presumably any spell that is a key has the power to open as well as lock, but the purpose seems to be related only to sexual access and not to extend to the opening and closing of the womb as it applies to pregnancy and miscarriage:

I say to you, womb of NN, open and receive the seed of NN and the uncontrollable seed of the Iarpe Arphe (write it). Let her, NN, love me for all her time as Isis loved Osiris and let her remain chaste for me as Penelope did for Odysseus. And do you, womb, remember me for all the time of my life, because I am AKARNACHTHAS. PGM XX VI. 283-94, Betz 1996, 276.

Like other spells in the papyri it uses mythological allusions and *historiolae* to clarify the desire of the agent and provide divine (or at least heroic) precedent for the accomplishment of such desires. These short stories are also used to persuade an illness to depart (Kotanksy 1991, 112).

Other aspects of Graeco-Egyptian magic in the papyri are also found on the amulets. Coptic magic for instance was dominated by written charms that were grounded in Christian theology (Pinch 1995, 171). The presence of the archangels such as Gabriel, Ouriel, Michael and Raphael is common throughout the texts and on the uterine amulets.

³⁰⁸ In relation to this spell, located in Papyrus Warren, Aubert speculates that the figure to be drawn and buried looks like the female genitalia, although it is identified as the heart (Aubert 1989, 431). I would argue that based on the photo of P. Warren he provides it bears a striking resemblance to the horned altar on the reverse of the Tantalos amulets (or a boomerang). He goes on to speculate that the sheep’s blood mentioned should probably be understood as menstrual blood, as in Roman agricultural texts this was a highly destructive substance that could cause abortion if smeared on a pregnant woman, which is in keeping with the apparent sentiment of the text of the charm.

However, Coptic birth spells from this era calling on the 7 archangels to deliver a woman are not found on the amulets (Aubert 1989, 440). The Ouroboros, called the akrouboros, is noted in a lunar spell in the PGM (VII. 896f) alongside the goddess Ereshkigal and based on this, as well as other evidence Aubert would class the amulets as lunar (following Bonner, as opposed to Delatte who understood them as solar) (Aubert 1989, 445-6). However, I would argue that astrology, aside from a few tangential links such as Chnoubis, did not play a large part on these amulets and they were neither solar nor lunar and that to push them into one camp or another stretches the meager evidence that can be adduced too far.

While before the papyri there is no evidence in the Greek or Egyptian traditions of a supernatural hierarchy, whereby the magician addresses the high gods who then coerce the angels, daemons and dead to do the magicians bidding, this is an element of magic within the papyri (Graf 2003, 23). As mentioned in chapter 1, this system probably developed in response to social changes including greater hierarchy within the empire than had been known in either culture previously. This supernatural hierarchy is referenced slyly on the amulets, where deities like Seth and Isis would probably have been envisioned to be more powerful as the obscure daemons such as Ororiouth and the angels occasionally listed. While coercion spells, *epanagkoi*, as aimed against the deity are known in the papyri, they do not appear on the amulets (Graf 1991, 194, Graf 2003, 202). The only thing being coerced is the womb itself, but the threats applied to it including Seth mirror the methods found in the supernatural hierarchy, such as sending a more powerful god after an offender if it did not respond to the initial command.

Both the spells in the magical papyri and the amulets do not seem to distinguish between the specific illness being suffered and the daemon that causes it (Kotansky 1991, 117). To take action against one is to take action against both. Indeed, some amulets have a list of unrelated diseases which they are inscribed as working against (Kotansky 1991, 119, Graf 2003, 158). For example, one cited by Kotansky protected its owner from rabies, the evil eye, falling sickness and daemonic attack (Kotansky 1991, 119). Our amulets may demonstrate a similarly polyvalence in warding off all types of pains and diseases from the uterus as represented by the host of deities that stand above it and represent protection provided to it different states and against different ailments as discussed in chapter four.

A helpful aspect of magic at this time and in the Roman Empire are the lamellae which are similar to our amulets but inscribed on metal sheets and often deposited in the ground or folded or rolled and worn on the person. Their roots as demonstrated by the material form they take also seem to lay in the *defixio*. Lamellae though, like our amulets, were primarily concerned with the health of the bearer, many for example bearing a spell against gout (Kotansky 1991, 116 -118). Others, like one against headache, liken an ailment to wild animals such as wolves, lions and horses, and bid it flee in the manner they would (Kotansky 1991, 113). Our amulets share this trait of comparing pain to a powerful wild animal, but do not use the “flee” formula with the verb ⲉⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓⲛⲓ , perhaps indicating that undue movement is the cause of the pain in the first place, or more generally that since the pain is caused by the uterus, an internal organ, it is impossible for it to flee the body.

Kotansky has noted that the lamellae and the amulets of this period dealing with health recall the Greek tradition of using an amulet to treat for a specific, diagnosed ailment. Thus Kotansky leads us back to chapters 3 and 4, trusting that the purpose of the amulets should be clear, as they did have a specific purpose, if we can read them from a perspective akin to those who produced and used them:

Thus in the Roman Empire the treatment of diseases with amulets seems to have required the proper diagnostic identification of the ailment, and we find that the texts found on the amulets often indicate the specific diseases for which they are written. (Kotansky 1991, 116)

Figure 1.1: Uterine amulet and features (c. 118)



Figure 1.2: A plate from Vesalius' *Tabulae Sex*, 1538. The male and female reproductive tracts are shown next to each other, emphasizing their similarity. Each is also shown in full rather than having individual organs illustrated separately. Note the resemblance to the representation of the uterus found on the amulets

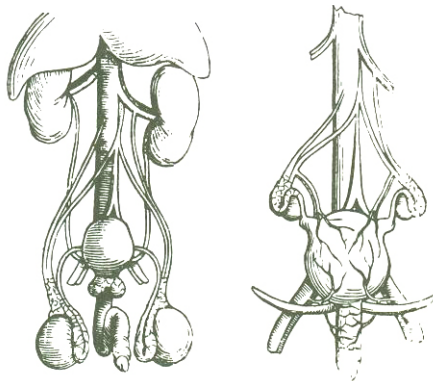


Figure 1.3: A plate from Georg Bartisch's *Kunstbuche*, 1575. The plate shows the entire reproductive tract and emphasizes its similarity to that of the male, the message put forth in the accompanying text.

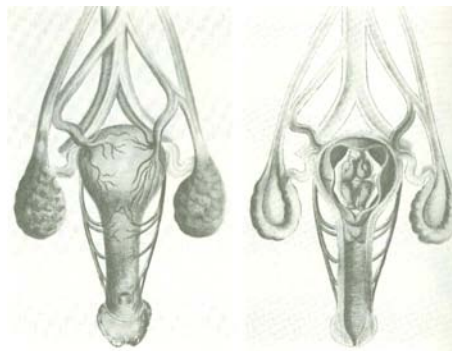


Figure 1.4: Plate from Walter Ryff's *Anathomia*, 1541. Note the resemblance of the uterus to the uterine pot found on the amulets. The representation of the entire reproductive tract is in keeping with the conventions of the time.

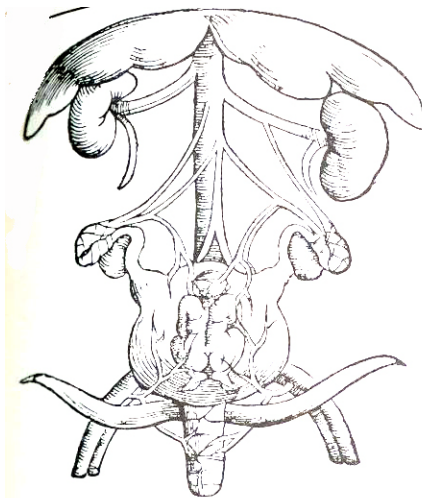


Figure 1.5: Plate from Kaspar Bartholin's *Anatomy* 1668. Note that the various parts of the organs are dissected out in contrast to the anatomy plates from the previous century.

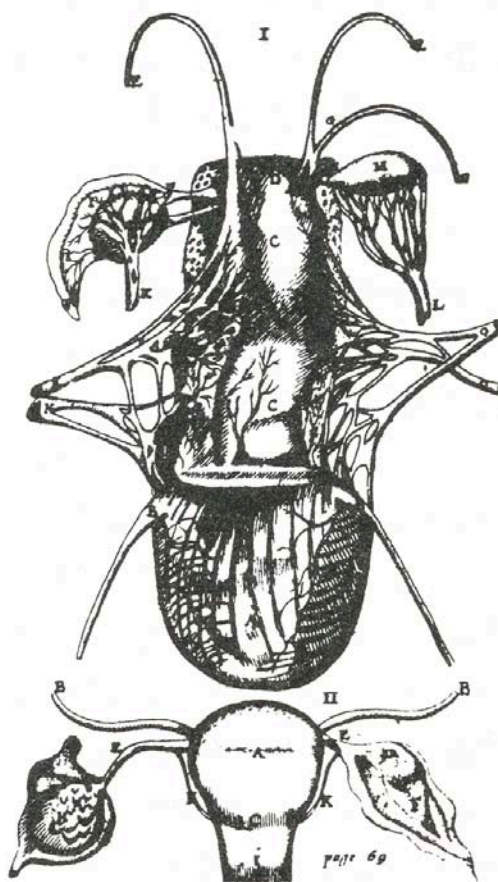


Figure 2.1: Illustration from Gorlaeus' *Dactyliotheca*, 1601

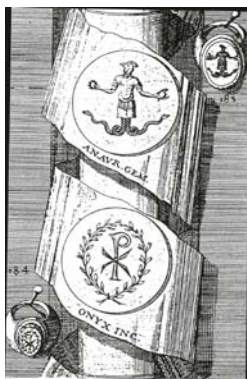


Figure 3.1: Curvilinear Letter Forms

Omega Sigma Theta Omicron
 ω σ θ ο

Figure 3.2: Rectilinear Letter Forms

Omega Sigma Theta Omicron
 W C ϑ ϖ

Figure 3.3: Alpha, Lamda, Delta

Alpha Lamda Delta
 Α ↔ Λ ↔ Δ

Figure 3.4: Epsilon and Lunate Sigma

Epsilon Sigma
 Ε ↔ Σ

Figure 3.5: Theta and Omicron

Theta Omicron
 ϑ ↔ ϖ

Figure 3.6: Theta, Epsilon, Omicron

Theta Omicron Epsilon
 ϑ ↔ ϖ ↔ Ε

Figure 3.7: Kappa, Beta, Rho

Kappa Beta Rho
 Κ ↔ Β ↔ Ρ

Figure 3.8: Gamma T

Gamma Tau
 Γ ↔ Τ

Figure 3.9: Chi Iota, Zeta

Chi Iota Zeta
 Ζ ↔ Ζ

Figure 3.10: Upsilon Forms

Upsilon Forms
 Υ ↔ Υ ↔ Υ

Figure 4.1: Forms of Isis on the Amulets:



Figure 4.2: Isis nursing Horus



Figure 4.3: Nephthys



Figure 4.4: Osiris on the amulets



Figure 4.5: Harpokrates on the Amulets



Figure 4.6: Bes on the Amulets



Figure 4.7: Chnoubis on the Amulets



Figure 4.8: Seth on the amulets



Figure 4.9: Duamoutef on the Amulets



Figure 4.10: Khnoum on the Amulets



Figure 4.11: Ouroboros on the Amulets



Figure 4.12: The Ouroboros on King Tut's coffin



Figure 4.13: The Octopus Uterus on the Amulets



Figure 4.14: Hieroglyph for Sun (Majno citing Grapow 1936, 65)



Figure 4.15: The Magic Wand of Seneb



Figure 6.1: The Palette of Narmar



Figure 6.2: Egyptian Fertility Figurine, Thebes 1900-1800 BC



Figure 7.1: A Hieroglyph for Birth



Figure 7.2: Votive Uteri at the Wellcome Museum, London



Figure A1: Crescent from PGM LXII

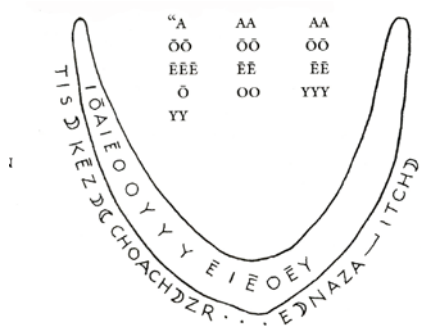
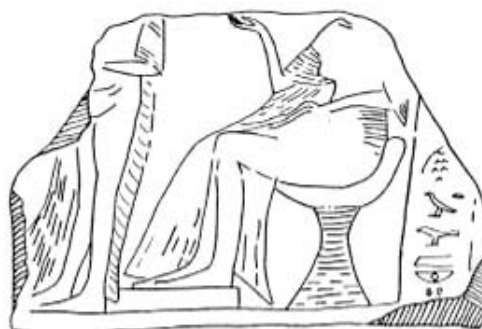


Figure A2: Crescent from PGM CXXIII



Figure A3: Scene from a Birth Ostraka



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Volume 2:
Catalogue

Introduction to the Catalogue

I have attempted to construct the following appendix according to the best practices of current scholarship on ancient gems as modeled by Michel Simone's 2001 catalogue of the British Museum's magical gems and discussed by Gordon in his 2002 critique of this work (Michel 2001, Gordon 2002). These models served as inspiration, not a rigid rubric for the following entries and readers familiar with these works and others will note that no single source provided the entry paradigm *in toto*.

When designing the format for the appendix my primary concern was to provide the reader who wanted more information those resources what she would need to extend her study, but not to overwhelm the layperson who may also be interested. I have used my own encounters with myriad catalogues as a basis of determining what could be usefully included and what information must be present.

A primary problem with many of the earliest publications is the limited illustration of the gems of which they speak (Southesk, C.W. King, Perdrizet, Bonner *Amuletum Ineditum* etc.). Even those works which were exemplars of best practices in their own day, such as Bonner's Studies in Magical Amulets (1950) or Delatte's work in *Musée Belge* (1914) and which endeavor to provide an illustration of every stone in their catalogue often only illustrate one side and even more vexingly contain discussion within their texts (beyond the catalogue) of similar amulets to those being analyzed and of which they provide no illustration. This is problematic on several levels. The complex iconography and the variation between even the most similar of pieces does not lend

itself well to written description – readers often cannot draw a mental picture of the piece in question. Further, many pieces are minute and crowded in their orthography and iconography. This coupled with the state of knowledge of colloquial Greek at the time of the first publications of these amulets lead to a plethora of misreadings and misunderstandings. As the earlier publications were naturally used as sources for later publications, many of these mistakes have become part of the scholastic tradition of various amulets. Clear, enlarged photographs are the only feasible way to permit scholars to verify for themselves the inscriptions and iconography of the pieces and in this way such mistakes can be rooted out and new understanding of the amulets and their function be brought to light.

To this end I have endeavored to include as many illustrations of the pieces as I have been able to obtain. In the ideal situations (rare) I provide a black and white photo of both sides of the amulet, as well as a color photo and drawing of each side. While the drawings may be favored by some readers, since the 592 amulets in the British Museum collection occupied a draughtsman for 19 years (Gordon 2002), I have only included drawings when have been already available. I have not endeavored to create any of my own. I have further been frustrated by the lack of color photos of many of the amulets, black and white being the preferred medium for clarifying the details of the engraving. However, as Hanson and Michel both touch on color and texture may be a large contributor to the efficacy of any particular amulet (in which view they are supported by the ancient texts). To show them only in black and white or grey scale thus robs them of one of their most essential qualities. To that end I have obtained many new photographs in color of the pieces in the catalogue. If the detail in these photos is not as clear as the

black and white photos that is acceptable, as they fulfill a different function than the black and white photos. Should the reader wish to clarify an engraved detail she is referred to the black and white photo, should she wish to understand the stones more holistically the color photo will be of more use.

The acquisition of these illustrations and the further acquisition of the permissions needed to reproduce them in this catalogue has varied in difficulty. To that end, while most of the 162 amulets have at least one illustration a handful (around 5) have no picture. I have included these because they are either particularly important specimens or have been mentioned in a major publication. For instance, although Delatte's 1914 article is the seminal one in the modern study of the amulets it is preserved in only one library in the world (known to WorldCat) and there only on microfiche. The film is badly scratched and the plates have been reduced to mere blobs of white and grey with no recognizable features on any of the amulets. The museum which possessed them in 1914 (The National Museum in Athens) has no searchable catalogue and indeed, Delatte provides only his own numbering schema and neglects to include accession numbers to aid the researcher seeking out these stones. Though part of a massively important publication these particular amulets are in essence lost at the present and thus have no accompanying figure. It is a boon in cases like this that many of the amulets are similar and what any given amulet must look like can be puzzled out based on the author's description and comparison to the many other stones within the catalogue.

Following Michel's example and Gordon's warnings I have attempted to provide images of the original amulets whenever possible. As stressed in many places, amulets are not seals and are therefore meant to be viewed and read as they are, not in reverse, as

in a seal (Southesk preface, Gordon 2002). However, the reader should be aware that as it has been the *modus operandi* for the field since at least the 1800s to provide photos of the plaster impressions made from the amulets illustrations taken from earlier catalogues such as those published by Bonner and Delatte & Derchain are photos of the impressions, not the pieces themselves. In most cases, such as in the publications of Bonner this does not present a problem as the negative of the photos of the impressions were reversed for publication thus restoring the correct orientation of stones. However, Delatte & Derchain did not adhere to this practice. Therefore, while a text would be read right to left on the actual stone, in impression and in their photographs of the impressions the same inscription is read backwards. Although I use their images, in my descriptions I compensate for this and describe all the iconography and inscriptions as they would appear in the originals. I also provide my own photos of the stones which Delatte and Derchain published, which for the above reason appear to be mirror images of their illustrations.

When describing stones I use the terms right and left to mean the viewer's right and left. Therefore if one was looking at a stone with two figures facing each other the one on the right would be described as "right figure, facing left" whereas if you put yourself in the plain of that figure it would be the left figure facing right. Although I have attempted to strictly adhere to this system on certain occasions, especially those involving movements of the figures (holding up an arm etc.) I may describe the action from the point of view of the figure, i.e. holding up right arm means the right arm as judged if one were that figure. While not important in many cases, should the reader wish to build a more complex argument off of this type of evidence, he is cautioned that

he should check the original stone rather than relying solely on the author. To that end, Gordon has also noted that several of the drawings of the B.M. amulets have slightly altered details from the original stones (Gordon 2008). The reader should consult the photo of the actual stone when in doubt.

Another major issue when designing the appendix was the question of whether or not to include dates with the stones. Erring on the side of caution, and falling in the same camp as Gordon, I have decided to omit this piece of data, although it is found in many of the more recent catalogues (Zwierlein-Diehl 1992, Michel 2001). Borrowing Gordon's words "these are frankly educated guesses" (Gordon 2002). While a scholar such as Michel may be better able to approximate a date for a magical amulet than almost anyone else as based on stylistic and epigraphic criteria I am uncomfortable doing so or reproducing her assessments. Nowhere does Michel³⁰⁹ set down her guidelines for assigning a stone to a particular period and with the great variation in engraving styles and competencies among the apparently myriad makers of these stones, I doubt that such a chronology as based on style could be formed or forced to bear more precise results than those already established by scholars such as Bonner (i.e. between the 1st and 5th c. AD). The lack of proven archaeological context for all but one stone also compels me to shy away from assigning dates until more clear evidence can be brought to bear.

I have followed neither Delatte & Derchain who divide their catalogue into sub chapters with introductions to each section nor Michel and Philip who provide one long explanatory entry for the first amulet in a group and summary ones for all that follow (Delatte and Derchain 1964, Philip 1985, Michel 2001, Gordon 2002). I prefer and have followed after the model of Bonner's Studies in Magical Amulets whereby he discusses

³⁰⁹ Or indeed the other authors who include dates in their catalogues

the nuances of the various stones in the text and provides the catalogue with brief discussions of each stone as a supplement to the larger arguments of his work. This structure has lent itself especially well to the current project because of the limited scope of the topic covered. Unlike the previous works cited which broadly cover either a single collection in its entirety or all the major types of magical gems from the eastern Roman Empire, I have not had to provide short introductions to many types. The entire text of the dissertation was designed to fulfill the function of introducing and explaining one type in depth and therefore these introductions have been eliminated within the appendix. The reader is directed to the text and appendices to clarify issues brought up by the catalogue.

I have, however, followed Zwierlein-Diehl and Michel in their epigraphic conventions, at least in part. Whereas Bonner and Delatte & Derchain provided transcriptions of inscriptions in lower case letters neatly broken into separate words and given accent marks Zwierlein-Diehl and Michel transcribe the inscriptions in uppercase Greek capitals, the letter forms actually found on the stones. Although Gordon bemoans this practice claiming that it makes it difficult to see Greek in them and that it “exaggerate[s] their ‘coefficient of weirdness,’” I believe that it more aptly provides the reader with a sense of the amulets as objects and of the people who used and created them (Gordon 2002, 670). The capitals have a certain undeniable visual impact which does indeed make the text of the amulets seem foreign and bizarre. This, no doubt, was part of their mystique and was probably thought to add to their power. Homogenizing their orthography detracts from the actual meanings of the stones. Further, providing cleaned up transcriptions with accents and neatly broken apart words can be a hindrance

to the interpretation of the inscriptions. On several inscriptions in the literature the words have been broken apart incorrectly where the author was unaware of the meaning of a section of the inscription and thus took it to be a part of a larger unknown word or presumed that it was part of two separate words thus breaking it apart and making its recognition that much more difficult. The reader will, I hope, come to regard the capitals as less 'weird' as they interact more with the inscriptions. It has certainly been the case for me.

I do recognize Gordon's point, however, and to that end I have endeavored to provide a more traditional transcription of the inscription where it seems logical (i.e. there are known Greek or Semitic words present). This will be located in the "emended transcription" section for the obverse and reverse and follows the conventions of the Leiden system. Where there is debate about the breakdown of longer inscriptions into smaller words and syllable units I discuss this further in either the emended transcription sections or in the notes and translation sections. It should also be noted that with the exception of cases where no photograph was available, or the quality of a photograph was too low, both of which were rare occurrences, the inscriptions have all been verified by the author and not taken on blind faith from another secondary source, a practice which has turned up and remedied a surprising number of errors found in earlier works.

The general organizing principle of the catalogue has been the iconography of the amulets, following after Michel (2001). I begin with simple amulets with only the uterine pot and key on them and then work to amulets with one, two, three, four and more figures and anomalous scenes. I then move onto amulets which are carved in the notch style. I finish up with comparanda such as warrior, reaper, Herakles, Ibis and Chnoubis amulets.

While many amulets may fall into more than one category, especially those that possess octopus uteri or ibis imagery, I have chosen to group them according to the primary uterine motifs.³¹⁰

Finally I should note that this is not a comprehensive catalogue which includes all uterine amulets known to me. In cases where an amulet was not part of a major work and either no photograph was available or insufficient information regarding its history and description was present, it was not included in the catalogue. For instance, many of the early publications will mention an amulet that is referenced in passing in a source. These amulets have not been included here. That said, I would venture to say that the majority of known and published uterine amulets have been gathered here, both the well known and more obscure. The reader is referred to Michel 2004 for further lists of known uterine amulets.

While I designed this catalogue to meet my own research needs, to fill in the frustrating blanks I found in other catalogues, and simply to organize a vast amount of data, I hope that the reader will also be able to derive some benefit from it as well.

³¹⁰ As opposed to listing a single amulet in two different sections. Michel 2004 provides useful lists of amulets divided according to different iconographic conventions if the reader is interested in how often uterine amulets utilize various motifs. While useful, this strategy has the disadvantage of multiplying the number of records in a catalogue, something which was judged undesirable in the case of this work.

Catalogue Contents

| Subject | Amulet # |
|--|-----------------|
| Simple Uterine Amulets | 1-29 |
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| One Word Reverse Inscription | 3-8 |
| Longer Reverse Inscription | 9-19 |
| Figure and or Inscription on Reverse | 20-21 |
| Inscription on Obverse | 21-23 |
| Other figures on obverse | 24 |
| Known or suspected forgeries | 25-29 |
| Uterine Scene with 1 Figure | |
| Chnoubis | 30-35 |
| Winged Uterus with Chnoubis and or Seth | 36-37 |
| Harpokrates | 38 |
| Bes | 39-40 |
| Anubis? Seth? | 41-42 |
| Mummiform Figure | 43 |
| Herakles and the Nemean Lion | 44 |
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| Isis, Chnoubis, Nepthys | 65-67 |
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| Chnoubis, Duamoutef, Osiris | 73-77 |
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| | |
|---|---------|
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| Isis, Bes, Harpokrates, Khnoum | 101-104 |
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| Isis, Duamoutef, Bes, Nephthys | 108-109 |
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| | |
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| Notch Style Amulets | |
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| Chnoubis and four other possible figures | 126-128 |
| Chnoubis and characters | 129 |
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| Hepatic Warrior | 133 |
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| Metallic Vase | 138 |
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| Squatting Amulets | |
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| | |
|-----------------|---------|
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| | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Chnoubis | 149-152 |
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 As an ass proper – 142, 144, 146, 147, 148

With uterine vase repeated in Figural Scene: 69, 79, 101, 102, 103, 105, 106, 107,
 119, 148

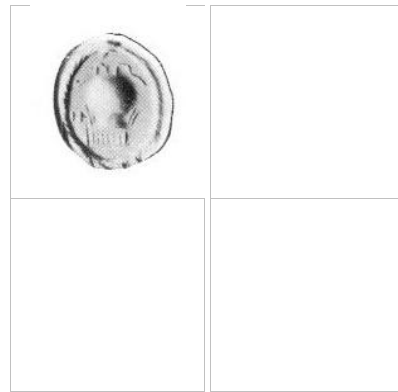
Red Amulets: 22, 38, 44, 64, 69, 99, 141, 142, 143, 144, 146, 147

Corpus ID: 1

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.5

Reverse Subject: blank

Width: 1.2

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Blanchet 56

Haemetite

Current Location: C.D.M. Bl 56

grey/ greenish sheen
with red in carving

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 246, # 336

Images: Delatte & Derchain, 1964, p. 246, # 336

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse edge

Physical State: Gouges on the bottom center.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

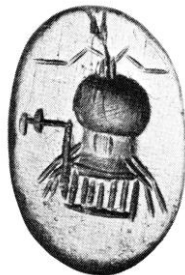
Reverse Notes:

Function:

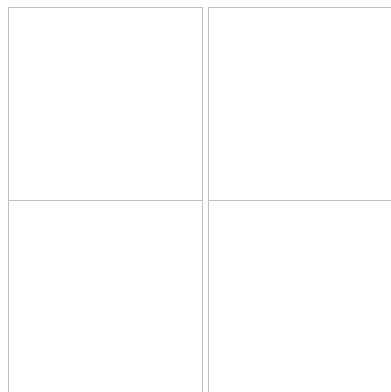
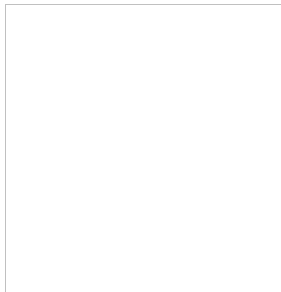
Magical Formulae:

Corpus ID: 2

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Reverse Subject:

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations:

Current Location: Staatliche Museen Kassel

Publications: Zazoff 1983, p.XVIII, 117.2
AGD III Kassel, Nr. 174

Images: Zazoff 1983, pl. 117.2

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: In fairly good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: Uterine pot is upright and has a very detailed neck and odd markings thereon. Does not feel "right" Possible forgery?

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Corpus ID: 3

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.6

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: .9

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations:

Haematite

Current Location: B.M G 371, EA 56371

Dark Brown

Publications: Michel 2001b, 354

Barb, Diva Matrix, Plate 25a; P. 213 n. 15

Images:

Michel 2001b, 354

Barb, Diva Matrix, Plate 25a mislabeled as 56540

Manufacture/Use: Rear beveled, possibly used as a ring-stone

Physical State: horizontal striations on obverse, vertical reverse. Ouroboros badly chipped and abraded

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOYΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

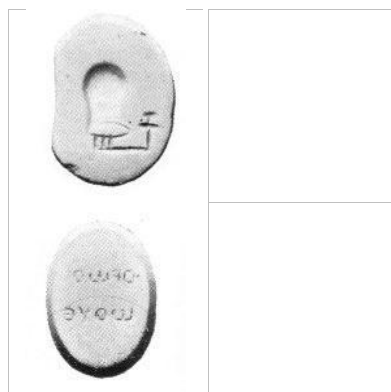
Reverse Notes:

Corpus ID: 4

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations:

Current Location: C.D.M. 2202/2

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 246, # 337

Images: Delatte & Derchain # 337 p. 246

Manufacture/Use: Bevel on reverse edge indicating possible use in a ring or other setting

Physical State: left obverse edge chipped - remarkably vertical break

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWOI
WOVΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWPIOVΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes: I can see no evidence of a cross stroke which would render the omicron a theta at the end of line 1 as read by D&D

Function:

Height: 1.8

Width: 1.3

Depth:

Haemetite

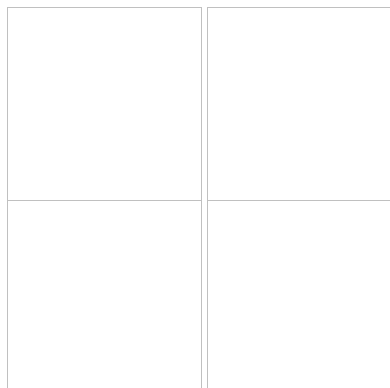
graphite/brown

Corpus ID: 5

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.44

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: .89

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .15

Past Locations:

Haemetite

Current Location: Staatliche Museen Kassel

black

Publications: Michel 2001a, 73 # 75
 Michel 2004 MG, 54.1.b
 Pinder 1873, III. 56
 Völkel 1791, S.251 IV
 AGD III, Kassel, 241 # 174

Images: Michel 2001a, pl. 13 # 75
 AGD III, Kassel, pl. 109 # 174

Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse edge. Michel calls a ring stone

Physical State: Deep gash on reverse. Does not seem to interrupt inscription

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OP
 W PO
 I
 Θ C

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes: The spelling of Ororiouth is relatively mangled. The placement of the iota in the third line far to the right implies that the gash to its left was there when the stone was manufactured

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

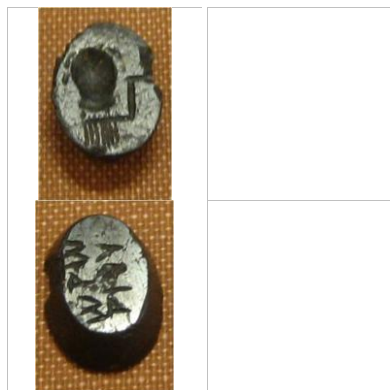
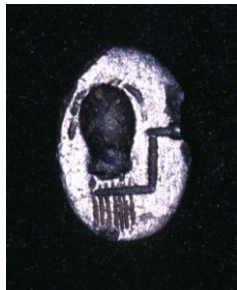
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 6

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.3

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: .9

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .4

Past Locations: Bonner # 25

Haemetite

Current Location: Michigan, A. Alfred Taubman Medical Library # 138

Dark Grey/Brown

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 275, # 138

Images: Bonner SMA, D 138 (obverse only)

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled suggesting possible use in a ring or other setting. Very basic carving of symbols and of inscription.

Physical State: Many surface scratches/abrasions. Large chip on right obverse edge which has removed the handle of the key. Obverse left upper margin of the stone is badly chipped.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: WPW
PIOY

Rv. Emended: WPWPIOY<Θ>

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes: inscription is crude and it appears that the final theta was never carved.
The first omega is generally an omicron.

Function:

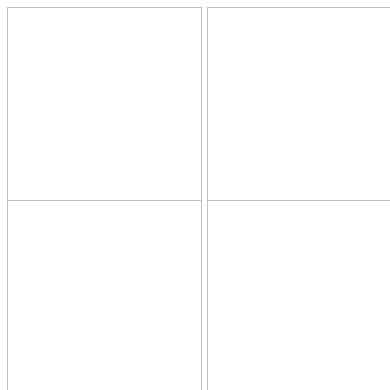
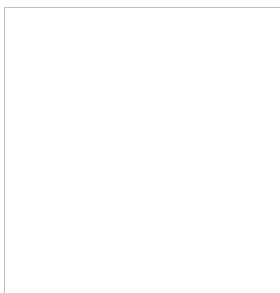
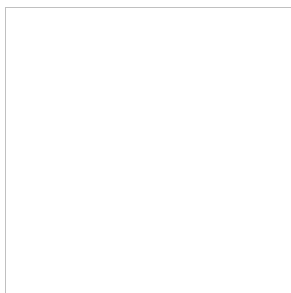
Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 7 Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image: Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.5

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.4

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Athens 611 N

Jasper, oval

Current Location:

Black with red spots

Publications: Delatte 1914, p. 75, #32

Images: Delatte 1914,

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State:

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWPI
OYΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

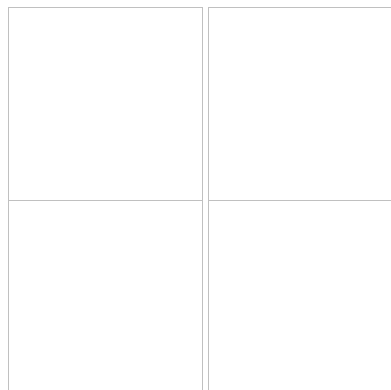
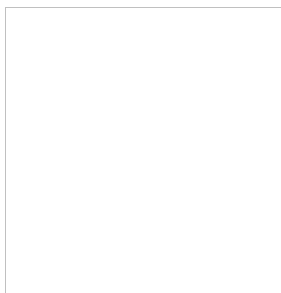
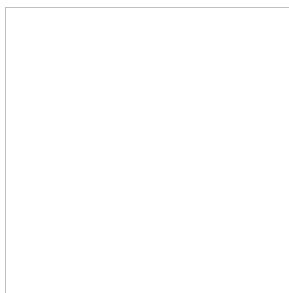
Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Corpus ID: 8 Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image: Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.5

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.1

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: N 9503 or 3501

Jasper

Current Location: National Museum, Athens (as of 1914)

Black

Publications: Delatte 1914, p. 87, # 35

Images: Delatte 1914

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State:

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: MAPMAP
OTOKOM
PAI

Rv. Emended: Μορμωροντοκομβαι

Rv. Translations: Marmarot? Μαρμαραωθ

Reverse Notes: Links to a solar god BAINXWWYX in pap. 123.14

Function:

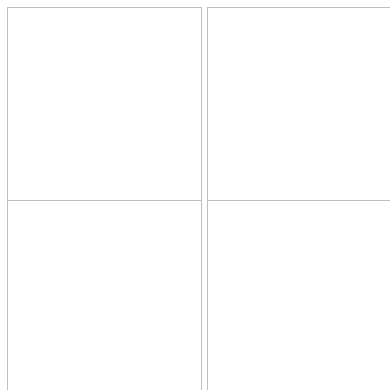
Magical Formulae: Marmaotokombai Delatte suggests is to be connected with the solar lion

Corpus ID: 9

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.5

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: .9

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: unknown

Haematite

Current Location: Professor A.E. Hanson

Dark brown/ grey

Publications: Hanson, 1995, p. 281, p. 295 n. 1

Images: Hanson, 1995, p. 282

Hanson, 1990, p. 338

Manufacture/Use: Beveled obverse and reverse edge suggesting that it may have been set in a ring or pendant

Physical State: in good condition

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIOY
 ΘΙΑHWIAWC
 ABAWΘIAW

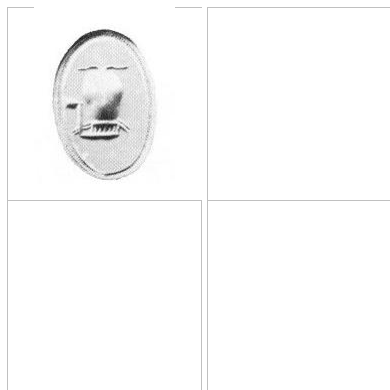
Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ Ιαηω Ιαω Σαβαωθ Ιαω

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth, Yahweh, Yahweh, Sabaoth, Yahweh

Corpus ID: 10
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations:

Current Location: C.D.M. # 2202

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 247, # 341

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 247, # 341

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: Only obverse is shown but it appears to be in good condition. Given the dots in the reverse transcription it must be assumed that some damage has removed part of the inscription, however, as the reverse is not shown it is not clear what this damage is

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: A rope-like Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse: Ouroboros on reverse instead of obverse.

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIOYΘIA
HWIAWCABAW
ΘMH..IAHW
IAWAI

Rv. Emended: OPWPIOYΘ IAHW IAW CABAWΘ MH.. IAHW

Height: 1.5

Width: .9

Depth:

Haemetite

Dark brown/ black

IAW AI

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth Yahweh Yahweh Sabaoth ... Yahweh Yahweh Yahweh

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

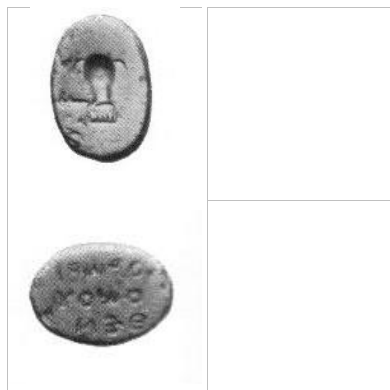
Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 11
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Froehner 2920

Current Location: C.D.M. Fr 2920

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 246, # 338

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 246, # 338

Manufacture/Use: Bevel on rear edge

Physical State: Generally worn. Several small gouges on obverse and reverse

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWPI
OWOY
ΘEN

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθεν

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes: Three line inscription in field. While D & D read an upsilon at the end of line 2 the photo also makes it seem possible that this was a lower case alpha in scale with the rest of the inscription. Given the difficulty of

Height: 1.5

Width: 1.1

Depth:

Haemetite

Black

creating curved script on such a small piece it seems likely that D & D were correct and the appearance of an alpha is due to later scratches

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

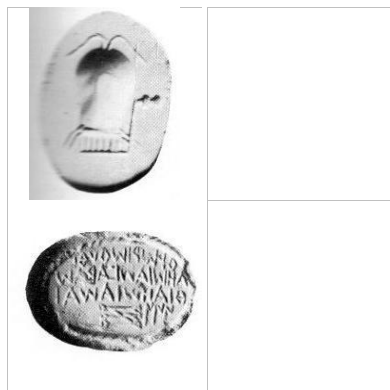
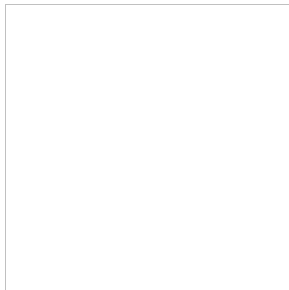
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 12

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.4

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width:

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Schlumberger 349

Haemetite

Current Location: C.D.M. S 349

1.7

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 247, # 339

Images: Delatte & Derchain 1964, p. 247, # 339

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: Obverse has abrasions on top left and right. Reverse is badly gouged and abraded, especially lower left and left side

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse: Ouroboros on reverse not obverse

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIWOYΘI
 AHWIAWIACABAW
 ΘIAHWIAWAI
 4 4 4 Z

Rv. Emended: OPWPIWOYΘ IAHW IAW IA CABAWΘ IAHW IAW AI
 4 4 4 Z

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: Odd 3 barbell symbol beneath writing and next to tri-gamma/ symbol that resembles a modern reverse N with extended down stroke, and a Z with cross stroke and circles at the ends of each stroke - D&D call a "Z barre et pommete."

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 13
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.7

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.4

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Schlumberger # 436

Haemetite

Current Location: C.D.M. S 436

Black/ graphite

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 247, #340

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 247, #340

Manufacture/Use: slightly beveled reverse edge suggesting possible use in a ring or other setting

Physical State: Gouge on top center obverse through the head of the Ouroboros

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

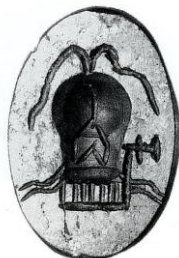
Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIOYΘ
IAHWIAWCA
BAWΘ ηηηΖ
IAW AIW

Rv. Emended: OPWPIOYΘ IAHW IAW CABAWΘ ηηηΖ
IAW AIW

Corpus ID: 14
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene
Reverse Subject: Inscription
Provenance: unknown
Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden in 1986

Height: 1.37
Width: .98
Depth: .4
Haemetite

Current Location: British Museum: G 1986,5-1,31

Dark Brown/ Black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 351

Images: Michel 2001b, 351

Manufacture/Use: Michel suggests that the bevel on back suggests it was worn in a ring

Physical State: no major cracks or chips

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: I
A
W

Ob. Emended: ΙΑΩ

Ob. translation: Yahweh

Obverse Notes: The inscription is connected and vertical within the uterus symbol, making it difficult to immediately understand it as IAW. Almost looks like an inverted tulip or flower.

Rv. Transcription: OPWPI
OVΘIAHW
IAWCABAWΘ
IAWAIEBOΘ

CTAΘHTI
MHTPA

Rv. Emended: Οροριουθ Ιαηω Ιαω Σαβαωθ Ιαω Αειβοθ στάθητι μήτρα

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth Yahweh Yahweh Sabaoth Yahweh be set matrix!

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 15
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.7

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.3

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .2

Past Locations: Collection of Rev. Greville J. Chester until 1876

Haematite

Current Location: B.M since 1876, G 320, EA 53620

Black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 355

Images: Michel 2001b, 355

Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse - possibly used as a ring-stone; engraving is particularly angular

Physical State: One gash on right of obverse

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: AEHIOVW

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: vowel row

Obverse Notes: alpha is top center of middle field, the inscription then rotates clockwise through the whole field

Rv. Transcription: OVPWPIWΘ
HTPVKOV
OPWPIOVΘ
TPOVBA
TA

Rv. Emended: OVPWPIWΘ H TP<O>VOV
OPWPIOVΘ TPOVBATA

emended after Michel

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth the troubon, Ororiouth Troubata

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 16

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.8

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.3

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .2

Past Locations: Black/graphite

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. G 540, EA 35441

Publications: Michel 2001b, 352

Barb, Diva Matrix as # 56371, plate 25a; p. 213 note 15

Images: Michel 2001b, 352

Barb, Diva Matrix as # 56371, plate 25a4

Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse edge. Ring stone?

Physical State: slight abrasions on obverse; small gash lower left obverse

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIOVΘ
 ΘIAHWIAW.
 ZCABAWQ
 IAHWIAWAI
 OROUWI

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ Ιαηω Ιαω Ζ Sabaoq Iahw Iawai Orwriouq

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: *Z* is a character Michele says often designates Zeus or Serapis - the absolute deity; the character at the end of the second line resembles a Hebrew final Tsadi, Michel ids it as an abbreviation for "Kadosh" "holy."

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 17

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene with surrounding field entirely inscribed

Height: 2.6

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.8

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .5

Past Locations: Jack Ogden, donated in 1986

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1986m G 1986,5-1,22

Black/ graphite

Publications: Michel 2001b, 357

Images: Michel 2001b, 357

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse so possibly a ring-stone

Physical State: Soil still remains in stone so hard to read, reverse badly abraded

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: Inscription abraded and soil encrusted to the point of illegibility. Crowded and badly damaged

Rv. Transcription: KKNE
 ΠΙΑΓW
 ΔΔΕ...
 ΔΤΜΚ
 ΝΚ.....
 Μ...

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: Michel contends that the inscription, besides being illegible due to damage is also unintelligible, a series of letter combinations which do not form words

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 18

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.65

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.37

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .21

Past Locations:

Haematite

Current Location: University of Koln, Inv. G 2.

Publications: Zwielerin-Diehl 1992, p. 93 # 27
Wortmann, Gemme, p. 71 # 11

Images: Zwielerin-Diehl 1992, pl. 18 # 27 a&b and round

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge is beveled suggesting use in a setting

Physical State: chip on the right center edge of the obverse extending into the Ouroboros. Otherwise in good shape

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: Very cleanly cut but the key is compressed into the neck and mouth of the pot. Ouroboros has much more detail than is typical with lips, eye and brow clearly discernable

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: HIAEHIHEAAIHEAIAIIIAE

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: Vowels. Inscription circles the edge of the field clockwise starting top center within the Ouroboros. Odd placement. Z-D mentions that if certain sections of the inscription are removed, other sections are palindromic

Rv. Transcription: TPACAP
HTIΨWTET

ΡΑCΑΡΗΤΙΨΩ
 ΤΕΤΡΑΓΕΤΑ
 ΒΑΡΡΩCΗΑΨ
 ΟΡΡΩΡΕΡΜ
 ΙΤΑΘΗΑΧ
 WB

ΕΩΘΑΡΡΩΕΙΛΛΑΑΛΑΟΘΩΡΑΛ

Rv. Emended: ΤΡΑCΑΡ ΗΤΙΨΩ ΤΕΤΡΑCΑΡ ΗΤΙΨΩ ΤΕΤΡΑ ΓΕΤΑ
 ΒΑΡΡΩCΗ ΑΨΟΡΡΩΡ ΕΡΜΙΤΑΘΗΑΧΩΒ

Τρασαρ ητιψω τετρασαρ ητιψω τετρα γετα βαρρωση αψορρωρ
 ερμιτατηχωβ

ΑΡΡΩΕ ΛΛΑΑΛΑΟΘ ΩΡ ΑΛΕΩΘ
 Αρρωει λλααλαοθ 'Ωρ αλεωθ

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: The first inscription is in the field and the second is on the bevel. Z-D sees tra as an abbreviation for tetra, SAR as an abbreviated for Sarapis and for "Prince", IYW as the name of a god, geta is a simple repeat of sound from tetra, Barrwsh Bar introduces a gods name and Wsh is short for osiris, ayorrwr has been read as a variation of the soroor formula, or the last two letters could be short for Horus, and the next word a version of Hermes. In the bevel inscription Arrwei may be short for Arwi who Z-D postulates is probably a Decan, or "you are great" referring to "Horus" who is mentioned as wr and sandwiched between two senseless magic words. Ermitaq has been proposed by Kotansky and Hanson to mean "the naked one".

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: The inscription on the back is known in no other examples but Z-D seems to deem it genuine and easily explained.

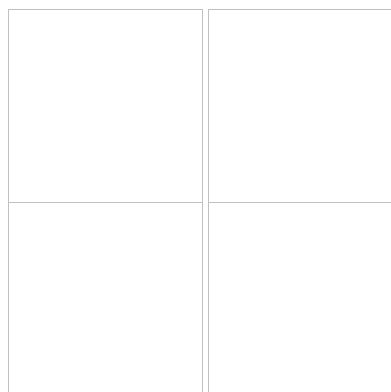
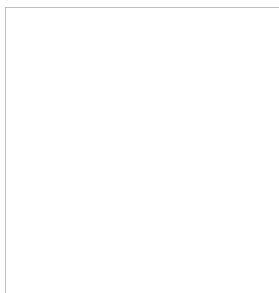
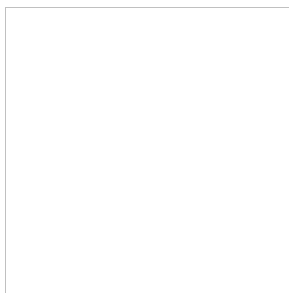
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 19

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.9

Reverse Subject: Inscription surrounded by Ouroboros

Width: 1.4

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Seyrig Collection

Haemetite

Current Location: unknown

Publications: Bonner, 1954, p. 149-150, # 38

Images:

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State:

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Not only is the symbol circling the inscription on the reverse but the Ouroboros is actually represented in words with the last line of the reverse inscription. The spelling reflects popular pronunciation of the time according to Bonner.

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: IAHWIAW
 KAIOY
 CABAWΘ
 IAHWIAW
 AIPOBOPON

Rv. Emended: Ιαω Ιαω και ου Σαβαωθ Ιαω Ιαω Ουροβορος

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: Bonner says that this inscription is is eight lines including a beginning line with three characters that look like modern reversed Ns with extended down strokes and a Z with a cross stroke - possibly the Chnoubis symbol, however he does not provide a line by line transcription and no picture is provided from which to recreate proper line breaks

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 20

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: uterine vase with key circled by Ouroboros

Height: 1.7

Reverse Subject: Nude woman squatting with hands on her distended abdomen (or Bes)

Width: 1.3

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: R.O.M.A. C 1145

Haemetite

Current Location: Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology, Toronto

Dark Brown/ graphite

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 91-92, p. 277 # 147
Michel 2004 MG, 348 V.3, 54.2.jImages: Bonner SMA, D 147
Michel 2004 MG, pl V.3

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: more or less intact

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene: Standing/squatting naked woman with a swollen abdomen and hands pushing in on it, legs wide apart and turned out - pregnant or swollen abdomen

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OYPWPEPMIΘAΘHOYPWPPIOYΘIAIAIAHW

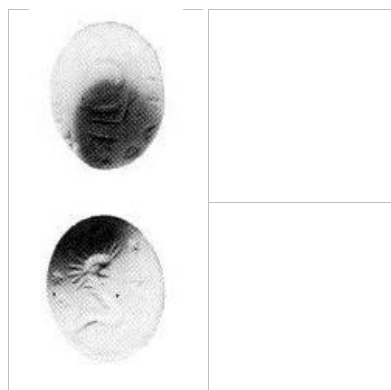
ΚΑΤΑΚΤΙΛΟΝ

- Rv. Emended: ΟΥΡΩΡΕΡΜΙΘΑΘ Η ΟΥΡΩΡΙΟΥΘ ΙΑ ΙΑ ΙΑΗΩ
 ουρωρερμιθαθ η ουρωριουθ ια ια ιαηω
 κατάστειλον οι κατάστιλον (according to Bonner)
- Rv. Translations: Ourorermithath Ouroriouth, Yahweh, Yahweh, Yahweh
 contract! (Retract!)
- Reverse Notes: The longer inscription is outside of ouroboros on the edge of the amulet. κατάστιλον starts at the top right of the woman's head and goes down to the middle right of the amulet
- Function: Bonner says that it is to promote easy delivery of child or relieve congestion.
- Magical Formulae:
- Amuletic Links?:
- Other Notes: Similar c. 143 and 144 with woman in the same position

Corpus ID: 21
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Reverse Subject: Chnoubis

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations:

Current Location: C.D.M. 2187

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 252, # 351

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 252, # 351

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: seems to be in good condition based on photos of impressions

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: "sign of Chnoubis"? "some of three S barres with one cross stroke" (D&D see this on the obverse, the photo does not provide enough detail to confirm or deny.)

Reverse Scene: Leontocephalic serpent with 12 rays and 7 stars in center = Chnoubis

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: ΧΝΟΥΦΙΘΩ

Ob. Emended: ΧΝΟΥΦΙ ΘΩ

Ob. translation: Chnoubis, god (?)

Obverse Notes: The inscription circles the edge of the obverse. It is hard to read on the original stone both in person and in the photo due to the reflective polish of the stone and its convex shape

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Height: 1.5

Width: 1.2

Depth:

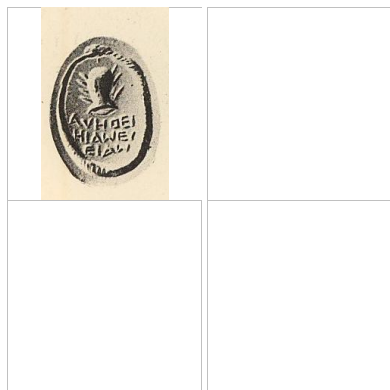
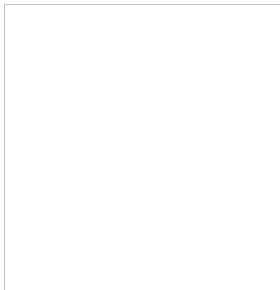
Plasma

Dark green/ black

Corpus ID: 22
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Pot and Ouroboros

Height: 1.7

Reverse Subject: Blank

Width: 1.3

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .5

Past Locations: Michigan 26036

Carnelian

Current Location: Ann Arbor Michigan. Kelsey Museum #
0000.02.6036

Red

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 274-275, # 137
Hanson 2004, p. 265, n.1

Images: Bonner SMA, D 137 (obverse only)

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: No major damage

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: Ouroboros. The uterine iconography is different than a typical piece. There is no key, the tubes and ligaments are reduced to four extensions on both sides of the whole length of the pot and there are no deities.

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AYHOEI
HIAWEI
EIAW

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Vowels

Obverse Notes: Located in the main field under the mouth of the pot in three lines.

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

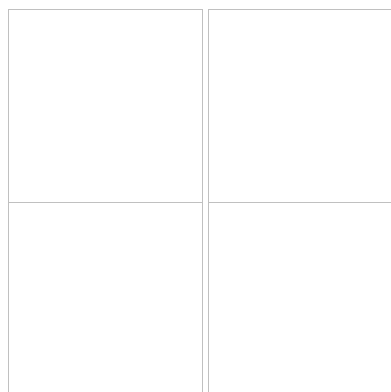
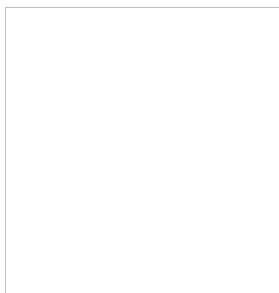
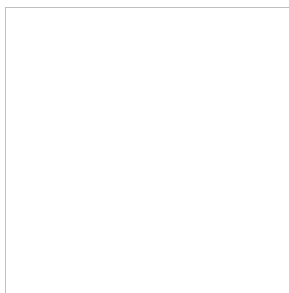
Other Notes: Bonner notes the conspicuous lack of the Ορωριουθ name.

Corpus ID: 23

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine Scene

Height:

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width:

Provenance: In Jalabert and Mouterde is put in the "Aleppo Region" section.

Depth:

Past Locations: Collection Guillaume Poche

Current Location: unknown

Black

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 86
Jalabert & Mouterde vol.1. #222

Images: Jalabert & Mouterde vol. 1, p. 121 has transcription of the text.

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State:

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Bonner just says that the iconography marks it out as one of this class and Jalabert and Mouterde did not publish a picture of the obverse

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended: Α. Περίκειμαί τῷ ορωριου

Ob. translation: I, Ororiouth lay around it

Obverse Notes: Τῷ is dative indefinite pronoun, Ορωρου is genitive or incomplete form of Ororiouth? Perikeimai = deponent + dative = to lay around . Professor Nünlist suggests it may be a dative and therefore translate to "I lay around Ororiouth"

Rv. Transcription: ΚΑΤΑΧΗCΤΗΝΜΗΤΡΑΝΜΑΞΕΙΜΑCΗCΕΤΕΚΕΝ

Rv. Emended: ΚΑΤΑΧΗC ΤΗΝ ΜΗΤΡΑΝ ΜΑΞΕΙΜΑC ΗC ΕΤΕΚΕΝ

κατάσχεσ τὴν μήτραν Μαχείμας ἧς ἔτεκεν ---

Rv. Translations: Restrain the womb of Maxeima (whom) --- bore (in line with other amulets which identify the object of the charm as X whom Y bore)

or

Restrain the womb of Maxeima which bore --

Reverse Notes: It is unclear if by their "large face, petit face" they mean obverse and reverse, or the central field and the bevel of the obverse...

Function: "κατάσχεσις" 'check,' 'restrain' suggests that Maxima's complaint was the same as that of the woman who was healed by the touch of Jesus' garment" - SMA 86; Bonner wonders if the stone were not broken if a name would not have been present or on the bevel

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 24
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterus and key in a ring of five animals shown 3 times each

Height: 3.3

Reverse Subject: Ororoiuth

Width: 1.7

Provenance: unknown

Depth: 1.2

Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden, 1986 to the B.M

Haemetite

Current Location: British Museum: G 1986,5-1,30

Black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 350

Images: Michel 2001b, 350

Manufacture/Use: Michel ids bevel on bottom as evidence that it was set in a ring. Clean execution

Physical State: chips on bevel of reverse, top and bottom

- Pot Ororoiuth Magical Formulae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: three: scarabs, falcons, snakes (?), crocodiles and goats

Reverse Scene: no

Other Reverse: Ouroboros on reverse around inscription

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
OVΘIAW

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ Ιαω

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function: Michel suggests that the animals are all associated with the rising sun and

therefore (re)birth. She also suggests that the lack of Thueris means its not actually a birth amulet, just one in spirit

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 25

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: From the Collection of Sir William Temple

Current Location: B.M. since 1856, G 238, EA 56238

Publications: Michel 2001b, 356
Barb, Diva Matrix, Plate 25a; p. 213 n. 15Images: Michel 2001b, 356
Barb, Diva Matrix, Plate 25a; mislabeled as 56320

Manufacture/Use: No border on obverse, letters to sharp edge; beveled reverse - possible a ring-stone

Physical State: edge chipped but not badly

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturnd Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: NWBTKIPETTOOW

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: Inscription begins at top left and rotates clockwise around whole face

Rv. Transcription: IAW
NWBTK
IPEITO

Rv. Emended: Ιαω Νωβτκιρεπο

Rv. Translations: Yahweh Νωβτκιρεποω

Height: 1.8

Width: 1.4

Depth: .7

Haematite

Dark Brown/ graphite

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

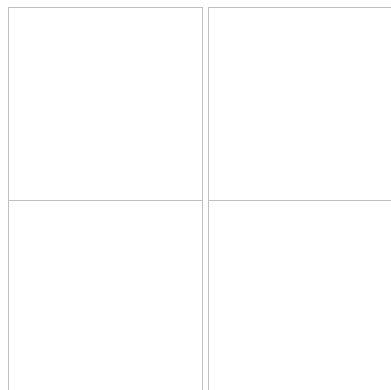
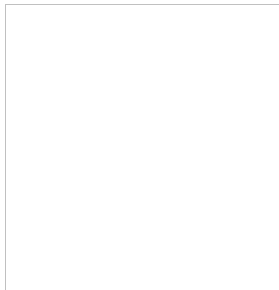
Other Notes: The uterine pot on the obverse has odd proportion and shape - the top is more bulbous than normal and the neck more elongated

Corpus ID: 26

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: .89

Reverse Subject: not discussed in source

Width: .7

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .2

Past Locations:

Lapis Lazuli

Current Location: Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Spain, # 353

Publications: Casal Garcia 1990, vol. 1., p. 189, # 506

Images: Casal Garcia 1990, vol.2, p. 82, # 506

Manufacture/Use: The stone is minimally carved and from pictures of the obverse, appears to have a beveled edge on the reverse

Physical State: large chip on bottom right portion of obverse

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: The amulet has only partial iconography. The key is rendered as teeth that extend over the mouth of the vase and are not attached to the rest of the key structure. There is a base line beneath the pot and a diagonal line with a start on the end, like a wand, extending through it. There are no ligaments, tubes or deities present

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

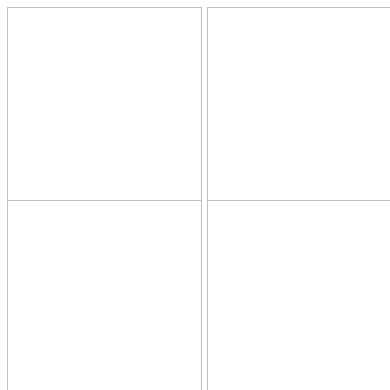
Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes: Given the odd material in which this was carved, as well as the strange iconography one is tempted to say that its production was separated in either space or time from the bulk of the group. Perhaps it was a "special order," but whatever the case, it has no known parallels of which I am aware

Corpus ID: 27
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.6

Reverse Subject: inscription

Width: 1.3

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .4

Past Locations:

Haematite

Current Location: Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Spain, # 299

Publications: Casal Garcia 1990, v.1, p. 189, # 505

Images: Casal Garcia 1990, vol. 2, p. 82, #505

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled, obverse edge rounded, both suggesting possible setting in a ring or pendant

Physical State: obverse abraded at top center. Reverse has gouged vertically through the inscription and is abraded horizontally as well.

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: It appears that the octopus and regular uterus symbols have melded in this piece, where instead of a base for deities to stand upon the fallopian tubes and ligaments off the belly of the vase appear to be vertical tentacle like extensions. The teeth of the key have also melded with the mouth of the vase. Overall an odd representation

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: ΠΕΙΚΤΩΡΟΙΟΥ

Ob. Emended: Πέσσε τω οροριου ?

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: The inscription starts at the top right and circles clockwise around the outer edge. It is possible, but unlikely that there are letters missing at the top center portion of the stone, where the abrasions are.

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: Inscription in six lines but badly enough damaged to render it illegible,
 although a few letters are recognizable

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 28
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene
Reverse Subject: Inscriptions in center field and on bevel
Provenance: unknown
Past Locations: Castellani Collection
Current Location: BM since 1886, G 395, EA 56395
Publications: Michel 2001b, 353
Images: Michel 2001b, 353
Manufacture/Use: Possibly a modern reproduction given the material and the upright orientation of the uterine pot

Height: 1.2
Width: .9
Depth: .25
Chalcedony
Yellow

Physical State: In good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: BOYΛΑΛΑΙΑ
AM

Rv. Emended: ΟΡΩΠΙΟΥΘ ΑΘΕΡΝΕ ΑΘΩΡ ΑΘΕΡ ΝΕΚΛΗCΙ
Bou λαιλαμ

Rv. Translations: ΟΡΩΠΙΟΥΘ ΑΘΕΡ ΝΕ ΑΘΩΡ ΑΘΕΡ ΝΕΚΛΗCΙ
Bou Lailam (?)

Ororiouth, Hathor, heavenly Hathor, heavenly blessing (?)

Reverse Notes: The longer inscription is inscribed on the bevel of the reverse side

Function:

Magical Formulae:

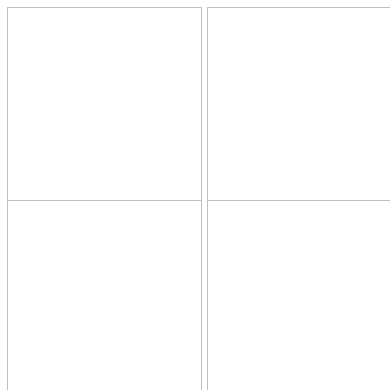
Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 29
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene Height: 1.56

Reverse Subject: pseudo-inscription Width: 1.38

Provenance: unknown Depth:

Past Locations: Haemetite

Current Location: Harvard University, Sackler Museum, 1983.25

Publications: Michel 2001a, 358, 73.1, 54.5.a

Images: Michel 2001a, pl. 73.1

Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse edge. Softer letter forms and round handled key.
Inscription on reverse of false letters

Physical State: Gash on top obverse to uterine vase - may affect inscription

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: No

Other Obverse: The uterine vase has an elongated neck and the ligaments rather than being shown as horizontal or sloping down, shoot up and back, like "wings"

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: OPYW .PIOVΘ

Ob. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Ob. translation: Ororiouth

Obverse Notes: The orthography of the inscription is off as are the letter forms including very rounded omicron and theta, angular omega and one upsilon formed as a Y with another formed as a V.

Rv. Transcription: XΘΓΘ
_ _ _

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: letters as in the second line

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

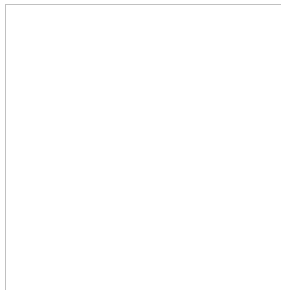
Other Notes: This is probably a forgery based on the odd letter forms (rounded and angular), the pseudo inscription on reverse and the odd depiction of the uterine vase

Corpus ID: 30

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene with one figure

Reverse Subject: blank

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Donated by Jack Ogden in 1986

Current Location: B.M. since 1986, G 1986,5-1,23

Publications: Michel 2001b, 358

Images: Michel 2001b, 358

Manufacture/Use: A distinct lion head/ head is not carved for Chnoubis, but a corona with six rays is present, beveled reverse so possibly a ring-stone

Physical State: Obverse is gouged on bottom left and chipped on top right

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoum, but without a picked out lion head. One and a half sideways infinities make up coils, as opposed to simple infinity sign often found.

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Height: 1.2

Width: 1.0

Depth: .2

Haematite

Black/ graphite

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes: An atypical stone in the respect that there is no inscription and the Chnoubis is not fully picked-out

Corpus ID: 31
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine Scene with one figure

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Schlumberger #352

Current Location: C.D.M. S 352

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 251, # 350

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 251, # 350

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: seems remarkably intact with deep clean carving on obverse

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Coiled snake with radiate head in center flanked by 2 swords topped by letter "E" facing toward snake

Other Obverse: swastika underneath right sword "U" underneath left sword. Shape of the vase looks like an Egyptian heart or an amphora.

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse: four stars

Ob.Transcription: ΓΑΒΡΙΗΛ*ΟΥΡΙΗΛΣΟΥΡΙΗΛ

Ob. Emended: ΓΑΒΡΙΗΛ * ΟΥΡΙΗΛ ΣΟΥΡΙΗΛ

Γαβριήλ * Ούριήλ Σουριήλ

Ob. translation: Gabriel, Uriel, Suriel

Obverse Notes: The inscription "starts" on the lower right of the obverse edge and circles clockwise. Between Gabriel and Uriel there is a character which looks like a small cross or x

Rv. Transcription: ΑΔΩΝΑΙ

Rv. Emended: Ἄδωναί

Height: 2.2

Width: 1.7

Depth:

Haemetite

Graphite

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: Writing at 180 degrees to the scene on obverse. The inscription is bordered above and below by two six pointed stars or asterisks (four total)

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

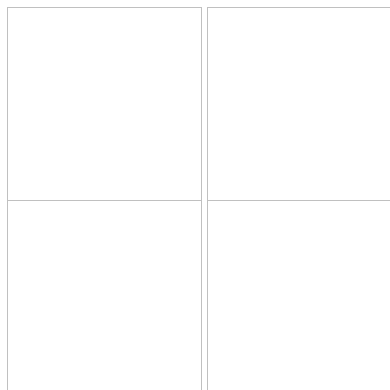
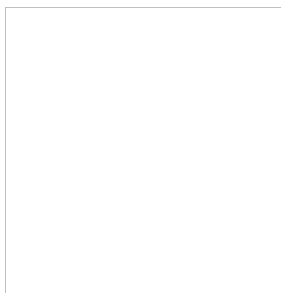
Other Notes: The imagery and iconography of this amulet are a bit strange and may point to a function other than uterine amulet. The uterine vase for instance faces upward and is shaped more as a fat amphora than a typical uterine pot. Also, none of the words has any specific uterine connection.

Corpus ID: 32

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Radiate headed (although not lion headed)
snake above a uterine vase

Height: 2.4

Reverse Subject: unknown

Width: 2.4

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: unknown

unknown

Current Location: unknown

Publications: Bonner, Brit Mus, p. 326 # 24

Images: Bonner, Brit Mus, pl.97 # 24

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: In fairly good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: A radiate but not lion headed snake sitting on an oddly square uterine vase which faces upright and has no fallopian tubes or ligaments. Snake sits on a flat platform.

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: IAWΣABAWΘAΔONAI

Ob. Emended: IAW ΣABAWΘ AΔONAI

Ob. translation: Yahweh, Sabaoth, Adonai

Obverse Notes: The inscription is legible when the picture is enlarged and begins at the bottom left and runs clockwise. The form of the Sigma in Sabaoth is a classic type rarely if ever seen on these gems, the lunate sigma being preferred. Also the form of the delta in Adonai is odd, with two lines off the top making it look more like a lowercase gamma than a delta. The position of the start of the inscription is also odd (but not unheard of), most starting at the top center and running clockwise.

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

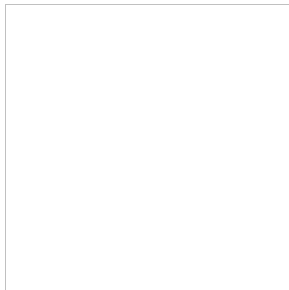
Other Notes: Possible forgery given quirks of iconography and aberrant formation of two letters

Corpus ID: 33

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.5

Reverse Subject: Chnoubis

Width: 1.4

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations:

Jasper

Current Location: C.D.M. M 5993

Black with red spots

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 252, #352

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 252, #352

Manufacture/Use: Reverse has a beveled edge suggesting that the stone was meant to be set in a ring etc. Currently set in a ring

Physical State: only the reverse is shown and it is in good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: Uterine scene but it is set in a ring so Delatte and Derchain were unable to give a precise description. Unclear where their description derived from if the didn't see it out of the ring.

Reverse Scene: Radiate lion headed snake coiled above a box on which is inscribed "ΠΙΧΙ"

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: ΠΙΧΙ

CEMECIAAMANOX

Rv. Emended: CEMECIAAM ANOX

Σεμεσιλάμ ἄνοχ

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: The short inscription is in the box on which Chnoubis rests. It is not visible in the current photo but attested by D & D. The longer inscription starts at the bottom right and progresses counterclockwise around the figure. At the bottom of the field is a hieroglyph

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes: It was not possible to get a clear picture of the obverse of D&D 352 as it is mounted in a large gold ring with the Chnoubis facing the outer side. Delatte and Derchain do not provide a picture of its cast either. The obverse has been verified as a simple uterine pot by the author and confirmed by Michel 2004 p. 261.

Corpus ID: 34
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Chnoubis above a uterine base

Height: 4.5

Reverse Subject: Ibis bound to an altar

Width: 2.5

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .5

Past Locations: Gift of Rev. Greville J. Chester in 1891

Serpentine

Current Location: B.M. since 1891, G 526,EA 26732

Black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 413
Goodenough II, p. 243, n. 241
Goodenough III, p. 1072

Images: Michel 2001b, 413

Manufacture/Use: well polished and cleanly if shallowly carved. Eye with use-wear for suspension of amulet

Physical State: In fairly good condition if a bit polished by long handling

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis

Other Obverse: Characters are in the field but are not clearly discernable for the most part. One "S" character to the right of Chnoubis

Reverse Scene: Ibis chained to an altar with three plants. Flanked by two "S" characters and surmounted by a cross character

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AEHIY.AW.IO..AEHI

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: vowel combinations

Obverse Notes: the inscription runs around the edge of the piece outside of the Ouroboros and is well polished, in places to the point of destruction. It starts at the top right and rotates clockwise

Rv. Transcription: IAW

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: Inscription below Ibis scene. Scene is flanked by two "S" characters and topped by a cross/ star character

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

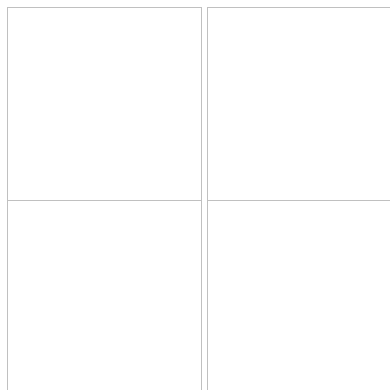
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 35

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Busy scene with an animal headed, snake footed warrior over a sacra over a lion and deity over a crocodile, surrounded by and Ouroboros and inscriptions Height: 4.62

Reverse Subject: Chnoubis with a Uterine vase on the left and a key on the right. All surrounded by inscription Width: 2.49

Provenance: unknown Depth: .58

Past Locations: haemetite

Current Location: Skoluda collection M085 Black

Publications: Michel 2001a, 124 # 145
Sotheby's Auction 18.Vi.97, London Sale LN7381 # 263

Images: Michel 2001a, pl. 24 # 145

Manufacture/Use: Michel calls it a medallion, reverse edge beveled

Physical State: left obverse edge/ right reverse bevel chipped. Does not interfere with inscription

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Scarab, Lion, Isis?, Abrasax?

Other Obverse: Above left and right wing of scarab a possible small and compressed uterus or snake? Crocodile at base, all with Ouroboros

Reverse Scene: Chnoubis, uterine vase with key

Other Reverse: another possible key without vase to the right of Chnoubis?, Triple barred S above

Ob.Transcription: IAW
ABPACAΞ
IAEO..ABPACAΞ

Ob. Emended:

- Ob. translation: Yahweh...palindrome...Abranax
- Obverse Notes: IAW is beneath the scarab and the Abranax in the field starts above the scarab, climbs the left side of the amulet and comes back down the right. The letters of the inscription outside the Ouroboros are poorly formed, but Michel reports that they make up a law and Abranax (the last name legible) divided by a long and nearly illegible palindrome
- Rv. Transcription: XNOVBICTTAVCONITONONTOVCTOMAXOVABPACAΞ
- Rv. Emended: XNOVBIC ITAVCON ITONON TOV CTOMAXOV ABPACAΞ
- Rv. Translations: Chnoubis, stop the pain of the stomach. Abranax
- Reverse Notes:
- Function:
- Magical Formulae: Palindrome on obverse - not specified which one
- Amuletic Links?:
- Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 36

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Chnoubis on a uterine vase with "wings."
Background covered in characters

Height: 3.3

Reverse Subject: Seth/ a warrior

Width: 2.0

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Purchased in Cairo from Naaman in 1909

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1909, G 556, EA 48954

Graphite/ Brown

Publications: Michel 2001b, 381
Barb, Diva Matrix, Pl. 26f & g; p. 195, p. 216 n.
Bonner, Brit Mus., p. 328, # 28
Barb, Seth or Anubis, Pl. 38a, p. 367, p. 371

Images: Michel 2001b, 381
Barb, Diva Matrix, Pl. 26f & g
Bonner, Brit Mus., Pl. 97, 28
Barb, Seth or Anubis, Pl. 38a

Manufacture/Use: not tightly composed composition, loose/sloppy carving. Beveled reverse edge possibly for setting in a ring

Physical State: small chips around edges, scratches on bottom left of reverse. Set's sword off the edge of the field possibly due to later recutting of the stone

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis

Other Obverse: Uterine vase has wing like extensions, similar to those described by Peiresc and Rubens

Reverse Scene: Seth as an ass-headed armed warrior holds an upraised sword and an ankh or other item in his lowered hand.

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: IAW

ZAI/ZAΦ

ΛΥ

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Yahweh

Obverse Notes: Obverse covered in characters. Difficult at points to distinguish between a letter and a character. Bonner suggests that to the right there may be the letters zai or zaf followed by lu but he is not completely sure

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: Reverse has three characters.

Function:

Magical Formulae:

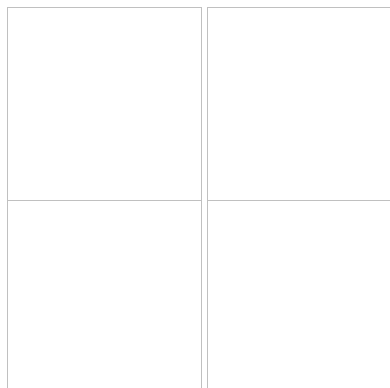
Amuletic Links?: c. 37

Other Notes: The shape of the ligaments look like wings. One wonders if this is what Rubens' amulet looked like.

Corpus ID: 37
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with an ass headed warrior above
Height: 3.63

Reverse Subject: Inscription
Width: 2.3

Provenance: unknown
Depth:

Past Locations: Haemetite

Current Location: Lubowksi collection 254

Publications: Michel 2001a 358, 72.1, 54.5.b

Images: Michel 2001a, pl. 72.1

Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse edge. Odd representation of fallopian tubes

Physical State: chip on top right edge of bevel/ field on reverse. Does not effect field

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: An ass headed, scepter (or caduceus) and sword bearing warrior standing on the uterine vase

Other Obverse: 3 stars, a snake (on the scepter) and a Z character without crossbar. Uterus is "winged" and has an odd, elongated neck

Reverse Scene: no

Other Reverse: A crescent moon and two stars are above the inscription while a barred triple sigma is below it

Ob.Transcription: IAA

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: The field has many stars and a Z character and possible an iota and two alphas, although these may also be stars, or rhos

Rv. Transcription: ABPA
CAΞ

Rv. Emended: Αβρασαξ

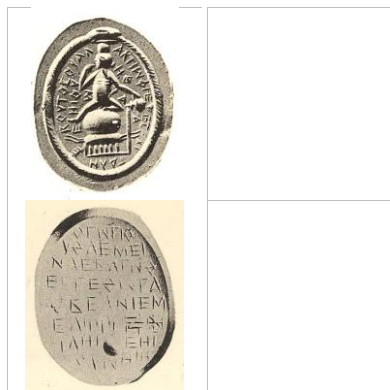
Rv. Translations: Abrasax

Corpus ID: 38

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Ouroboros circling Harpocrates sitting on the uterine pot with his hand on the key

Height: 2.9

Reverse Subject: inscription

Width: 2.3

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .4

Past Locations: Bonner #19

Carnelian

Current Location: Michigan, A. Alfred Taubman Medical Library # 141

Red clouded with white

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 275 # 141
Hanson 2004, p. 265, n.1
Bonner, 1946, p. 54 description of figures 4 & 5

Images: Bonner SMA, D 141
Bonner, 1946, Figures 4 & 5

A. Alfred Taubman Library Rare Book Room (online resource)

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/hsl/resources/rare/amulets/group3.html>

Manufacture/Use: smoothly drilled depression in the middle of the inscription on reverse

Physical State: well preserved, no major chips or scratches

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Harpocrates with a disc above him and his right hand to his mouth

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse: η η η Ζ*

Ob.Transcription: ΑΚΤΙΩΦΙΕΡΕCΧΙΓΑΛΝΕΒΟΥΤΟCΟΥΑΛΗΘ

ΙΑΑΕΗΙΟΥΨ

Ob. Emended: ΑΚΤΙΩΦΙ ΕΡΕCΧΙΓΑΛ ΝΕΒΟΥΤΟCΟΥΑΛΗΘ
Ακτιωφι Ερεσχιγαλ Νεβουτοσουαληθ

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: The longer inscription begins at the top right and circles clockwise inside the Ouroboros with the last two letters starting a new row under the first two of the inscription. The vowels start at the right side of Harpokrates and circle clockwise around to his left side. The names in the first inscription are all known on other magical gems and Papyri. Ereschigal is the Babylonian underworld goddess and is assimilated to the Greek Persephone or Hecate. Neboutosoualeth may be related to the Babylonian god Nebo or be from the Egyptian for "Lady of Uto." She is known as a moon goddess in two magical papyri and is found in combination with Aktiofi on at least two gems. Aktiofi is also found on a gem with Eros. See Bonner SMA, p. 197 for more details.

Rv. Transcription: OPWPPIO
YΘAEMEI
NAEBAPWΘ
EPPEΘWPA
- BEANIEM
EA -----
IAHI-EHI
OYWHIH

Rv. Emended: OPWPPIOYΘ
AEMEINAEBAPWΘEPPEΘWPA- BEANIEMEA

IAHI-EHI
OYWHIH

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Aemeinabar palindrome

Characters

Vowels

Reverse Notes: The first dash is where there is a flaw in the stone which forced the engraver to start the line further to the right than the other lines. The next five dashes are three characters that look like reverse "N" (𐤍) with extended down strokes followed by a cross-bar Z (Ζ) and a "star" that has eight points and a cross bar on the end of each. The final dash is the divot which was drilled into the reverse. The second part of the inscription is a palindrome linked to Set in the PGM

Function:

Magical Formulae: Aemeinabar palindrome

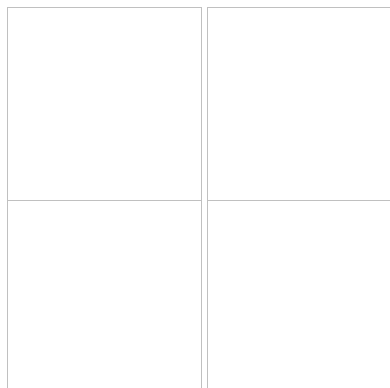
Amuletic Links?: c.68, the three characters are the same and both are followed by a string of vowels, c. 113 has a similar divot

Corpus ID: 39

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with Bes

Height:

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width:

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations:

Haematite

Current Location: Staatliche Museum Preussischer Kulturbesitz
(Zazoff 1983)

Publications: Zazoff 1983, XLIII, 117.5

Images: Zazoff 1983, pl. 117.5

Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse edge. Stone almost certainly a forgery. Rounded, clean letter forms being one indicator of that.

Physical State: In very good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Bes

Other Obverse: The uterine vase is not overturned and Bes does not stand on the Fallopian tubes, which are stunted knobs at the bottom of the field, but on the key itself. The star characters are also not typically carved so small or neat.

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: COPOPCICIFEPMOYXNOYWPABPACAΞ

Ob. Emended: COPOPCICIFEPMOYXNOYWP ABPACAΞ

Ob. translation: partial Soroor formula ending in Abrasax

Obverse Notes: 7 star characters are also within the field circling Bes. The Soroor formula is found outside the Ouroboros on the edge of the stone circling clockwise

Rv. Transcription: IACXE

ΛΙΔΟΝ
ΨΙΡΙΨΑΩ
ΑΒΡΑΧΑΞ

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: -

-

-

Abrasax

Reverse Notes: Abrasax, while a common inscription on magical gems, is rarely found on genuine stones. The other words are not found on any other uterine amulet of which I am aware

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula on obverse edge

Amuletic Links?:

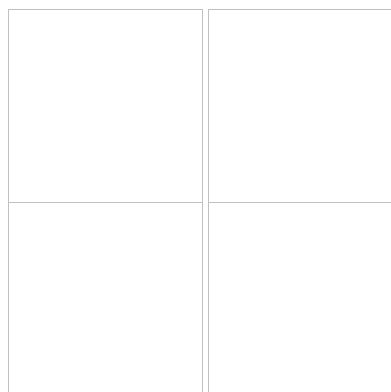
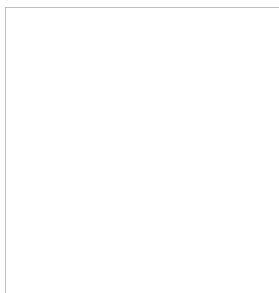
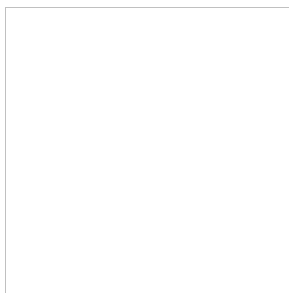
Other Notes: I believe that this is a modern forgery of an ancient gem for the following reasons: 1. Pot right side up, shape and tubes 2. Form of stars 3. Form of letters 4. Content of inscription on reverse 5. Ending of Soroor formula in Abrasax 6. Overall feels "wrong"

Corpus ID: 40

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with one figure

Height: 1.7

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.5

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Rostowitz

Jasper

Current Location:

black

Publications: Delatte 1914, p.76, #34

Images: Delatte 1914

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State:

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Bes on a vase with a key beneath.

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: APACIΘWPAΛEWBAPWCIA

ΨAMMCYNNIOYMMAYT

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIOY
 ΘIAWCAB
 AWΘNNN
 ZCTAΛH
 TI

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ Ιαω Σαβαωθ NNNZ στάλητι

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: # 121 of this corpus, Bonner's 140, Forbes 141 has a nearly identical but expanded reverse inscription including ψαμμ part

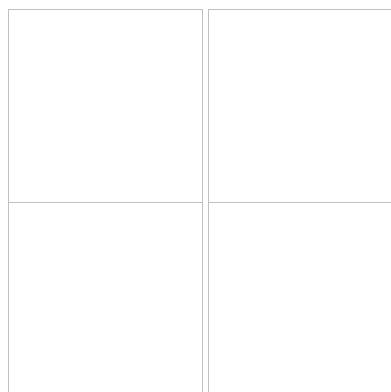
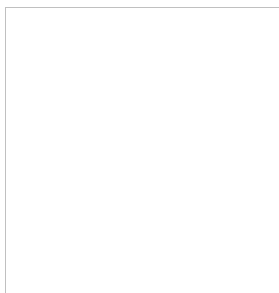
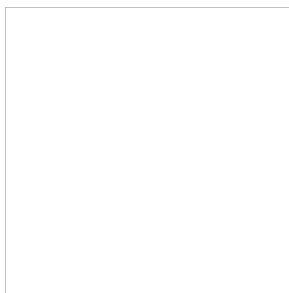
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 41

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with Anubis

Height:

Reverse Subject: unknown

Width:

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Library of St. Genevieve, Paris; Prince Radziwill

Haemetite

Current Location: unknown

Publications: Bonner 1950 SMA p. 81-82
 Molinet 1692, plate 29,1. p 126
 Koehler 1836, 11-13, 18-24

Images: Molinet 1692, plate 29,1. p 126
 Koehler 1836. plate 19

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: Abraded near edges, poorly transcribed inscriptions on plates

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Anubis mummy or Duamoutef stands above the uterine vase

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: TACCON THN MHTRAN THS ΔEINA EIC TON IDION TO PONO TON K
 YKΛONTYOHΛEIOY

Rv. Emended: TACCON THN MHTRAN THS ΔEINA EIC TON IDION TO PONO
 TON KYKΛON TYO HΛEIOY

Τάσσον τὴν μήτραν τῆς δεινᾶ εἰς τὸν ἴδιον τόπον ὁ τὸν κύκλον τοῦ

ἡλείου

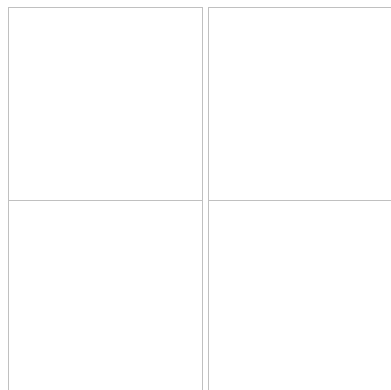
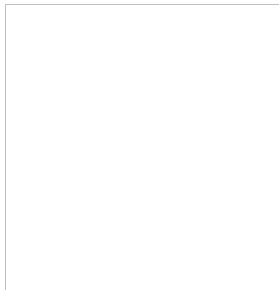
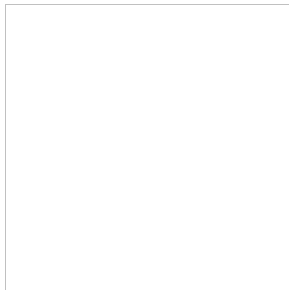
- Rv. Translations: Place the womb of that lady in its own place, you who [are?] the disc of the sun
- Reverse Notes: Bonner says that τάσσον is a popular form of τάξον. Τῆς δεῖνα indicates that it would have been a stock, not custom piece. He would also add ἐξάιρων after ὁ since the phrase ὁ ἐξαιρών τον κύκλον του ἡλείου is found three times in the Papyri Magicae Graecae, (IV 1324-1326, and VII 300 & 367-368)
- Function: to "rid the woman who wore the amulet of the suffering incident to uterine displacement." - SMA, p. 82
- Magical Formulae:
- Amuletic Links?: Longer but similar charm in London PGM VII 260-270 to be written on tin lamella, tied with 7 colored threads
- Other Notes: Often dismissed as fake early on but only because not familiar with peculiarities of late antique Greek. Fits well with Magical papyri.

Corpus ID: 42

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject:

Height:

Reverse Subject:

Width:

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Cairo #4, Bonner says actually #3 in Barry Ann. Du. Serv.

Current Location:

Publications: Delatte 1914, p. 80
 Bonner SMA, p. 84
 Barry, Ann Du Serv., 1906, p. 246, # 3

Images:

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State:

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Barry thought Anubis stood on Pot, Bonner says Set (seems likely)

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: ΑΤΑΛΑΧΟΡΩΠΡΙΟΥΘΙΜΗΤΙΜΗΓΑΜΗΙΣΕΤΥΦΩΝ

ΣΤΑΛΗΤΙΜΗΤΡΑΜΗΙΣΕΤΥΦΩΝΚΑΤΑΛΑΒΗΟΡΩΠΡΙΟΥΘ

Ob. Emended: ΣΤΑΛΗΤΙΜΗΤΡΑΜΗΙΣΕΤΥΦΩΝΚΑΤΑΛΑΒΗΟΡΩΠΡΙΟΥΘ

στάλητι μήτρα μή σε Τυφών καταλάβη Ορωριουθ

Ob. translation: Contract, womb, lest Typhon snatch you.

Obverse Notes: Bonner says Barry read backwards - 2 spiral lines should be read:
 σταλητι μητρα μη σε τυφων καταλαβη Ορωριουθ. Bonner tried to check text, but the stone was missing at the time; kappa of katalabh missed by Barry and Delatte - in plate, everything that comes after is in

the inner spiral

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: Bonner SMA D140 - Brummer Stone confirms Bonner's reading

Other Notes: Says that he examines the epigraphy via a photograph and compares to gems in Athens (without IDs given). No other details.

Corpus ID: 43
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with one figure

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Schlumberger 344

Current Location: C.D.M. S 344

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 248, # 342

Images: Delatte & Derchain 1964, p. 248, # 342

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: Amulet seems worn but otherwise in good condition

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: A radiate headed mummy. It is not possible to identify the figure definitively.

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: I I
A A
W W

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Yahweh, Yahweh

Obverse Notes: The inscription is found within the field and vertically flanks both sides of the central figure, almost taking the places of the divinities one often sees carved in those spots

Rv. Transcription: XYX

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Height: 1.4

Width: 1.0

Depth:

Haemetite

Dark Brown/ graphite

Corpus ID: 44

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Herakles throttling the Nemean lion above a uterine scene

Height: 2.29

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.92

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .33

Past Locations:

Jasper

Current Location: Skoluda collection M1116

Red

Publications: Michel 2001a, 81-82, # 86
Sternberg Auktion 29, Nov. 1994, 792
Michel 1995, 382 f.
Michel 2004, 23.1.a

Images: Michel 2001a, pl. 15, # 86
Sternberg Auktion 29, Nov. 1994, 792, pl. 40
Michel 1995, 382 f. figure 11 a and b
Michel 2004, pl 77.2

Manufacture/Use: Michel calls it a ring stone carved out of the most fine material

Physical State: in remarkably good shape. Not one scratch.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Herakles throttling the Nemean lion standing on the Ouroboros as a baseline

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: K K

Ob. Emended: KKK

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: The three kappas surround the uterine vase

Rv. Transcription: ΕΡΚΟΛ
ΟΦΟΣ
ΕΙΡ

Rv. Emended: Κολοκερκολοφοσειρ

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: Michel suggests that this might be the name of the Kolik demon

Function: cramps and colic of the abdomen

Magical Formulae: ΚΚΚ and expanded version

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 45

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:



Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterus and a semi nude person

Height: 2.8

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 2.2

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Froehner 2966

Chalcedony

Current Location: C.D.M. Fr 2966

Yellow

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 257, # 363
Froehner Cahier XIV 159

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 257, # 363

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: only a fragment - missing left half

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Half naked person holding clothing up with left hand and extending right toward a uterus bigger than himself - uterus broken in middle, can't id symbol on top but two teeth of the key remain

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene: Ouroboros on reverse - could be a rope, herring bone pattern to, if had a head it is in the part which is broken off

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: ΦΥΛΑΞΟΝ CΕΛΕΥΚΙΑΝ --- ΑΝΤΟC ΜΗΤΕΙΚΟΥ

Ob. Emended: ΦΥΛΑΞΟΝ CΕΛΕΥΚΙΑΝ [ΑΠΟΠ]ΑΝΤΟC ΜΗΤΕΙΚΟΥ

Φύλαξον Σελευκίαν [ἀπὸ π]αντὸς μητρικῶ [πάθους or κακοῦ]

Ob. translation: Protect Seleukia from all uterine pains/woes

Obverse Notes: The inscription starts at the bottom left and spirals clockwise around the edge, when it reaches the starting point it begins a new line with the omicron of pantos. At least half of each line is missing.

Rv. Transcription: ...HIOVHI

...HΛOϞO
...HΛ

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: beta in line 3 looks like it could be a kappa. Above the inscription are at least 2 Ζ characters, possibly more but the stone is broken

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: D&D # 358 for similar inscription,

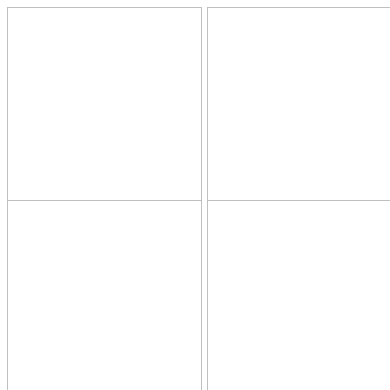
Other Notes: Seleukia see Le Blant

Corpus ID: 46

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with two figures (and a possible third with little detail)

Height: 1.1

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.5

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Gift of Mr. Joseph Van Vleck Jr. In memory of his wife

Haematite

Current Location: Art Museum, Princeton University, Inv. # 70-81

Black/ graphite

Publications: Forbes 1978, p. 153 # 143

Images: Forbes 1978, pl. 34 # 143

Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse edge suggests possible use in a ring or pendant setting

Physical State: badly damaged edges

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Duamoutef facing right, Isis-Tyche facing left (possible third behind Isis?)

Other Obverse: Isis holds a cornucopia in her left hand and a scepter in her right hand. Ouroboros circles all.

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOYΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

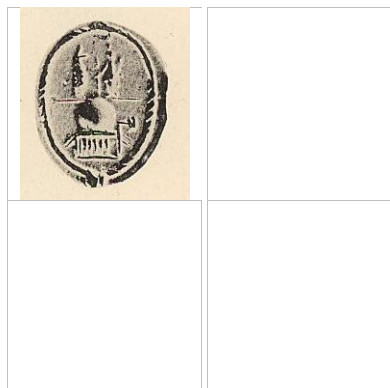
Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Corpus ID: 47

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene

Height: 1.5

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.2

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .2

Past Locations:

Haemetite

Current Location: Michigan, Kelsey Museum #0000.02.6056

Dark grey/ dark brown

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 273, #129

Images: Bonner SMA, D 129

Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse edge

Physical State: Upright Oval

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Isis-Tyche at right and Bonner speculates Anubis as a mummy or possibly Thueris (due to thick body) at left (probably Duamoutef)

Other Obverse: cornucopia held by Isis

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
 IOYΘ
 OPWP
 IWOYΘ
 κκκΖ

Rv. Emended: OPWP IOYΘ OPWP IWOYΘ
 κκκΖ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth, Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 48

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with two remaining deities, probably three originally

Height: 2.0

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.1

Provenance: Syrian coast (?)

Depth: .15

Past Locations: Rev. Greville J. Chester until 1866

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1866, G 216, EA 56216

Black/ dark grey

Publications: Michel 2001b, 371

Images: Michel 2001b, 371

Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse edge may indicate use in a ring

Physical State: Diagonal cut across right third of obverse/left of reverse removes at least one figure from the field as well as the edge of the piece

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: Duamoutef and a robed figure, probably Isis

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: ΠΩΡ
ΟΥΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

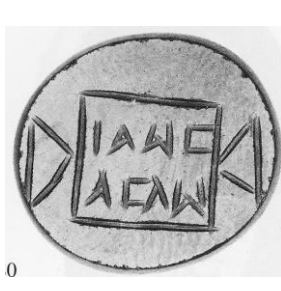
Reverse Notes:

Function:

Corpus ID: 49
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with upright pot and two figures Height: 1.6
 Reverse Subject: Inscription on a "tablet" Width: 1.4
 Provenance: unknown Depth: .3
 Past Locations: Gift of Rev. Greville J. Chester in 1874 Haematite
 Current Location: B.M. since 1874, G 294, EA 56294 Black/ dark brown
 Publications: Michel 2001b, 380
 Goodenough II p. 280 n. 534 (?)
 Images: Michel 2001b, 380
 Manufacture/Use: Stone edges do not appear to be beveled at an angle, rather the edge forms a vertical collar of sorts, perhaps indicating setting in a ring or other piece of jewelry
 Physical State: In good condition
 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key
 Deities Obverse: Two figures, both facing center and each touching a central rod at the same spot. The both appear to be ass headed, and indeed look like the mirror images of each other.
 Other Obverse: The two figures are holding a possible ankh? In their outer hands. A possible sistrum is to the left of the uterine vase.
 Reverse Scene:
 Other Reverse: The inscription is written in the center of a symmetrical figure. Michel calls it a representation of a writing tablet. Square center enclosing inscription flanked by 2 triangles that touch the square with their tips
 Ob.Transcription: CAB AW
 Ob. Emended: CABAW<Θ>
 Ob. translation: Sabaoth
 Obverse Notes: First three letters on the top left of obverse, to left of figures head. Last two to the right of the right figures head.

Rv. Transcription: ACAW

Rv. Emended: Ιαω Cα<β>α<οθ> ?

Rv. Translations: Iaw, Sabaoth

Reverse Notes: Michel tentatively suggests emending the second half of the inscription to Sabaoth.

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

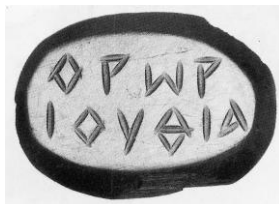
Other Notes: The uterine vase on the obverse is unusually upright. The two figures, possible Set, stand on the key rather than the fallopian tubes or ligament, as is typical.

Corpus ID: 50

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine Scene with three figures

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Gift of Claude Stewart, Esq. in 1841

Current Location: B.M. since 1841, G 78, EA 56078

Publications: Michel 2001b, 363

Goodenough II p. 280 n. 530, Goodenough III p. 1175

Images: Michel 2001b, 363

Manufacture/Use: Less detailed than most, but silhouettes clear enough to understand pictures. Reverse beveled possibly for use as a ring stone

Physical State: Obverse left bottom gashed through inscription, top chipped through inscription, bottom right chipped inscription

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis center facing left, Isis (?) with upraised arm and headdress to left facing right, Duamoutef right facing left

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: IAW

...WCAB...WAEH...WAEHIO

Ob. Emended: IAW

W CAB[AOΘ] WAE[HIO] WAEHIO

Ob. translation: law

law Sabaoth WAEHIO WAEHIO

Height: 1.6

Width: 1.2

Depth: .2

Haematite

Black/ graphite

Obverse Notes: counterclockwise from bottom. Circling inscription badly damaged.

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOYΘIA

Rv. Emended: OPWP
IOYΘIA[W]

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth law

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

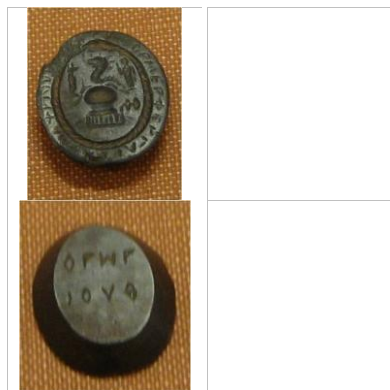
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 51

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 1.8

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.5

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .4

Past Locations: Bonner 21

Haemetite

Current Location: Michigan, A. Alfred Taubman Medical Library # 132

Dark grey/black with flecks of red

Publications: Bonner SMA, p.274, # 132

Images: Bonner SMA, D 132

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled suggesting possible use in a ring or other setting

Physical State: Upper left obverse of amulet chipped away, lower left obverse rubbed away, left obverse is generally worn more than right. Reverse in good condition.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Duamoutef, Chnoubis, Isis

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: C...OPMEPΦEPΓAP...MAΦPIQY---

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Soroor formula

Obverse Notes: Soroor formula starts top right obverse edge outside of the Ouroboros and circles clockwise

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWP IOVΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes: Clean inscription, diamond like "o" and "θ"

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula circles obverse edge

Amuletic Links?:

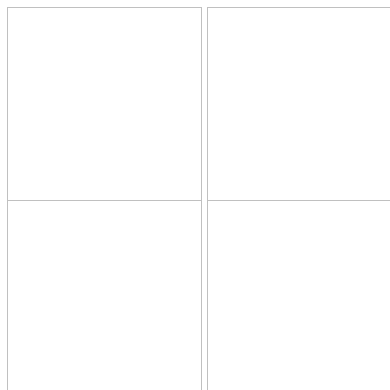
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 52

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three deities

Height: 2.18

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.65

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .28

Past Locations:

haemetite

Current Location: Skoluda collection, M074

grey/black

Publications: Michel 2001a, 76-77 # 79
 Michel 1995, 383 f. figure 12a and b
 Michel 2004 MG 54.2.d

Images: Michel 2001a, pl. 14 # 79
 Michel 1995, 383 f. figure 12a and b
 Michel 2004, 54.2.d, pl. 70.2

Manufacture/Use: Michel calls it a ring stone or a medallion. Reverse edge is beveled

Physical State: Gash in top obverse through the head of the Ouroboros. Bottom obverse center is badly abraded, inscriptions there worn away. Scratches on reverse left - do not affect inscription, chip on right reverse bevel

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: L-R: Duamoutef, Chnoubis, Isis (?)

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: ..PQ̄Q̄PMERΦEPΓA..PBAPΦPIQ̄VP̄IGEN̄..

Ob. Emended: COPOOPM̄EPΦEPΓAPBAPΦPIOVPIΓE

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: Soroor formula. The first surviving omicrons look like modern "H"s, and it may be that their bottom crossbars were carved too high and their top bars were left off

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 53
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Blanchet # 14

Current Location: C.D.M. Bl 14

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 249, # 345
Vikan 1984, p. 77, figure 16, n. 76

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 249, # 345
Vikan 1984, pl. 3 # 16

Height: 2.4

Width: 2.0

Depth:

Jasper

Black

Manufacture/Use: Beveled Reverse edge indicating possible use in a ring or other setting

Physical State: Obverse left has a large chip missing that grazes the Ouroboros. Other chips on left obverse edge as well

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Isis with scepter and cornucopia, Chnoubis, Duamoutef

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: OPWPIOYΘ

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: Inscription circles the edge of the field, immediately interior to the Ouroboros.

Rv. Transcription: AΘEPN
ENKΛHCI
AΘEPNEBOY
NIAYΘMHA
NOYYΦOY
MΦΦMEOY

- ΟΥΟΥΟΥΑΟ
 ΥΑΟΥΑΟΥΟ
 ΟΟΟΑΥΤ
 ΡΟΜ
 Rv. Emended: ΑΘΕΡΝ
 ΕΝΚΛΗCΙ

 ΑΘΕΡ
 ΝΕΒΟΥ
 ΝΙΑΥΘΜΗΑ
 ΝΟΥΥΦΟΥ
 ΜΦΦΜΕΟΥ
 ΟΥΟΥΟΥΑΟ
 ΥΑΟΥΑΟΥΟ
 ΟΟΟΑΥΤ
 ΡΟΜ

 Rv. Translations: Hathor?
 Reverse Notes: Unusually, this inscription has upsilons with a central stem extending down, rather than the simple V form seen in almost all inscriptions. In regards to Αθερνεβουνι - see note in Barry ASAE 7 p. 246, PGM Index p 214a and K.W. Fr Schmidt "Hathor la Dame de Dendera."
 Function:
 Magical Formulae:
 Amuletic Links?: # 335 Delatte & Derchain, Collection Blanchet CRAIBLE 1923 p. 222. - Aphrodite chaining Ares circled by the word ΑΘΕΡΝΕΗΚΛΙCΙΝ.
 Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 54
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations:

Current Location: C.D.M. 2200

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 249, # 344

Images: Delatte & Derchain 1964, p. 249, # 344

Manufacture/Use: Reverse has a beveled edge indicating possible use in a ring or other setting

Physical State: Worn but otherwise in good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Center is a coiling snake (maybe radiate headed), Duamoutef right, and possibly a small female to the left. Snake with lion head and legs turning left under right fallopian tube

Other Obverse: There is also what D&D call a lion headed snake to the right of the uterine vase under the tubes turned to the left. While it is clear that there is a figure or character there, its identity is difficult to confirm what exactly it is

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPW
PIOYΘ
OPWPI

Height: 1.5

Width: 1.0

Depth:

Haemetite

Black/ graphite

OYΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWPIOYΘ OPWPIYΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth, Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 55
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 1.6

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.2

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Blanchet # 25

Haemetite

Current Location: C.D.M. Bl 25

Graphite/ Black

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 250-251, # 348

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 250, # 348

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled suggesting possible use in a ring or other setting

Physical State: Badly gouged on top left of obverse through outer inscription and chipped throughout that inscription. Obverse and reverse both worn

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Isis with left arm down, right arm up, Chnoubis, Duamoutef

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: ΑΕΙΗΗΟ

ΑΔΑΙΑΜΤΙ.....ΑΓΜΗ...

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Vowels

Now senseless letter combinations

Obverse Notes: Vowels are dispersed throughout the field with the second inscription running around the obverse edge outside of the Ouroboros

Rv. Transcription: ΟΡΩΡ
ΙΟΥΘ

Rv. Emended: ΟΡΩΡΙΟΥΘ

Corpus ID: 56
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 1.6

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.2

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Schlumberger # 347

Haemetite

Current Location: C.D.M. S 347

Black/ Grey

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 250, # 347

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 250, # 347

Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse edge suggests use in a ring or other setting

Physical State: Drilled (?) divot on obverse right through outer inscription. Scratched patch on reverse bottom left.

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Isis, Chnoubis, Duamoutef

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: WAENAEYIAYEIA...HTYWEIAYA...

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Vowels and senseless syllables

Obverse Notes: Inscription runs around the outer edge of the obverse, presumably clockwise, although this is not certain based on the photo

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
PIOYΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWP{P}IOYΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Corpus ID: 57
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Schlumberger #346

Current Location: C.D.M. S 346

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 250, # 346

Images: Delatte & Derchain 1964, p. 250, # 346

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: gash across center of obverse, possible break and repair. Seen as a crack across bottom 1/3 of reverse

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Isis with right hand lifted and left hand down, Chnoubis and Duamoutef

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: COPOOPMEPΓEPΓAPBAPMAΦPIOYHPICE

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Soroor formula

Obverse Notes: Inscription circles the outer obverse edge beginning at the top right/ center and moving clockwise. There is extra space at the end which indicates that this is probably the whole formula, a fact which is not clear on all stones

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOYΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWP IOYΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Height: 2.1

Width: 1.5

Depth:

Haemetite

Graphite/ Black

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor outside ouroboros on obverse

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 58
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterus Scene with 3 figures

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Blacas Collection (?)

Current Location: B.M. G 440, EA 56440

Publications: Michel 2001b, 362

Images: Michel 2001b, 362

Manufacture/Use: Reverse beveled so possibly used in a ring

Physical State: Obverse: left edge cut away, abrasion top right, gash bottom left.
Reverse: Left and Right Bevel and face chipped away

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formulae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis center, Duamoutef left facing to middle and Isis (?) right facing middle with headdress and upraised arm

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: COPOOPMEPΦEPΓAPBAPMAΦ...VHPHΓΞ

Ob. Emended: COPOOPMEPΦEPΓAPBAPMAΦ...VHPHΓΞ

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: Soroor formula

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Height: 2.1

Width: 1.6

Depth: .3

Haematite

Graphite/ Black

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula

Amuletic Links?:

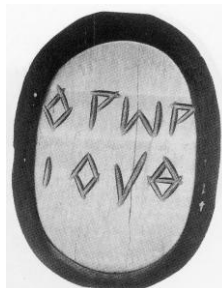
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 59

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine Scene with 3 figures surrounded by text

Height: 2.0

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.5

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Gift of Kyticas in 1909

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1909, G 546, EA 48984

Graphite/ Black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 361
Barb, Diva Matrix, Plate 31h, p. 196, 216 n 47

Images: Michel 2001b, 361
Barb, Diva Matrix, Plate 31h

Manufacture/Use: Well carved with good detail, reverse beveled so possibly a ring-stone

Physical State: In good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis, Isis? And Duamoutef

Other Obverse: Well cut Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AEHIOVW

COPOOPMEPΦEPΓAPBAPMAΦPIOVHPICEI

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: vowel row
Soroor formula

Obverse Notes: the vowels are grouped so AEH are at the top of the field within the Ouroboros, I and O are to the right and left of the figures, U is below the leftmost figure and W Is at the bottom. Unclear if the Ξ in the Soroor formula circling outside the Ouroboros is a C or two z stacked on top of each other.

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula, cleanly cut and legible throughout. Obverse outside of
Ouroboros

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 60

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine Scene with three figures

Height: 1.5

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.1

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .2

Past Locations: From the Blacas Collection

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1867, G 338, EA 56338

Dark Brown/ Black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 364

Images: Michel 2001b, 364

Manufacture/Use: Not very details or worn smooth. Beveled reverse edge suggest that it may have been set in a ring.

Physical State: scratches on obverse but no major damage

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis center facing left, Isis(?) with upraised hand on left facing right and Duamoutef on right facing left

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

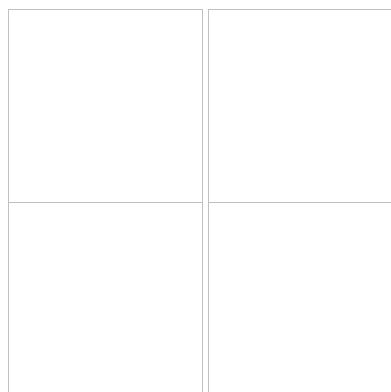
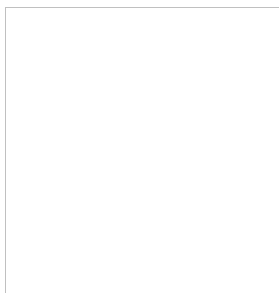
Other Notes: Quality of carving on obverse low. The ligaments or fallopian tubes are carved as a horizontal line (normally wavy) and go through the middle of the vase. The key is only etched in and is barely visible

Corpus ID: 61

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 2.26

Reverse Subject: blank

Width: 1.51

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .31

Past Locations: from the collection of F.S. Matouk

Haematite

Current Location: University of Koln, no inventory # given

black with a metallic sheen

Publications: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992, p. 89, # 24

Images: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992, pl. 16 # 24

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: in very good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Duamoutef, Chnoubis, Isis

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: COPOOPMEPΦEPΓAPMAPBAPΦPIOYPIΓΞ

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Soroor formula

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function: The key was intended to promote strong conception and development of the child within.

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

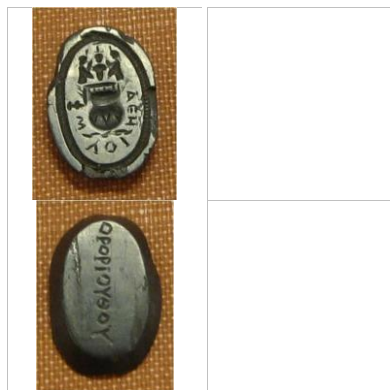
Other Notes: She mentions that Delatte and Derchain would see the jackal headed mummy as Duamoutef but she thinks that since this figure is shown with a scepter on some amulets that recognition as Anubis is more probable.

Corpus ID: 62

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 1.7

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.1

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Bonner # 24

Haemetite

Current Location: Michigan, A. Alfred Taubman Medical Library # 135

Dark Brown/Grey

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 274, # 135

Images: Bonner SMA, D 135 (obverse only)

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled suggesting possible use in a ring or other setting. Poor quality crude carving, uterine symbol and key are upside down

Physical State: Badly chipped and gouged in several spots. Obverse lower right bevel, bottom bevel, top left and top right chipped. Reverse has a large scratch under the inscription and several others in the field

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Osiris schematically represented in the center flanked by two goddesses shown from the waist up each with one upraised hand facing him. Bonner speculates Isis and Nephthys.

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AEHIOYW

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: Writing is angular and w is angular lowercase but as large as other letters. Inscription is shaped like a semicircular (horseshoe) from middle right through bottom ascending to middle left moving in order, clockwise

Rv. Transcription: OPOPIOYΘOY

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Of Ororiouth (?)

Reverse Notes: the inscription is one solid word running top to bottom (in relation to the obverse motif). The last two letters are anomalous but may represent a genitive of the deity's name.

Function: The pot rests on a ground line of some sort and has either writing or a decorative design carved into its side. The former is known, the latter is not. If writing, individual letters cannot be made out in the photo, but one likely candidate for the word due to length and precedent would be "IAW"

Magical Formulae:

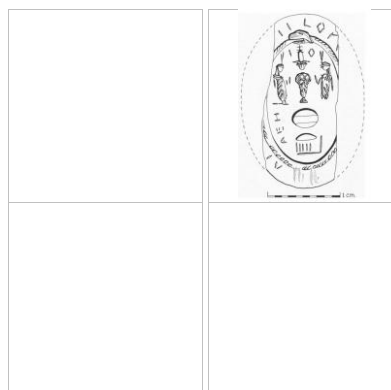
Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 63
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 2.215

Reverse Subject: inscription

Width: .98

Provenance: Said to have been acquired in Palestine

Depth: .275

Past Locations: Bernard Moritz Collection

Haematite

Current Location: Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, A.6832

Publications: Ritner 1984, p. 209-221

Images: Ritner 1984, Figures 1, 2 and 3, p. 211

Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse edge indicating possible use in a ring or pendant setting

Physical State: Right and left quarters of the stone are missing, having been broken away rather cleanly. Gouge at the bottom obverse through Ouroboros. Obverse badly worn. Reverse is scratched but still legible

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: Ritner identifies the Osiris mummy flanked by Isis and Nephtys

Other Obverse: The vase is shaped in two parts, the mouth and the belly, lacking a neck. The form of the belly is strange and all Fallopian tubes and ligaments are missing. Osiris wears what looks like a "modern" 10 gallon hat and Isis and Nephtys both have two feathers on their headdresses.

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AEHIO

COPO --- AI---II

Ob. Emended: AEHIOYW

COPOOP...

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: The vowels are within the field starting at the lower left and circling clockwise with the final omicron between the heads of the two right

figures. Presumably the epsilon and omega were present but have worn off. The inscription circling clockwise the edge of the obverse was presumably the Soroor formula based on the first four letters, however I do not see the $\text{M}\overset{\wedge}{\text{A}}\Phi$ that Ritner claims to have read in either the photos or the drawing of the piece.

Rv. Transcription: OPWP $\overset{\wedge}{\text{I}}$ OV Θ

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Ororoiuth

Reverse Notes: o

Function: Ritner suggests that these amulets were used to control the opening and closing of the uterus and thereby control various biological functions.

Magical Formulae: The Soroor formula seems to have circled the obverse edge

Amuletic Links?:

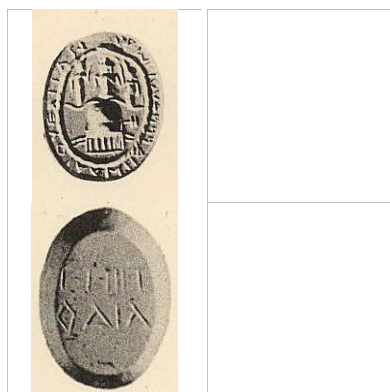
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 64

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 1.3

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.0

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Wyndham Cook #252 [594]; Bonner # 26

Jasper

Current Location: Michigan, A. Alfred Taubman Medical Library # 134

Red

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 274 # 134

Catalogue of the Wyndham Cook Collection p. 55, # 252

Hanson, 2004, n. 1, p. 266

Bonner, 1946, p. 48

Images: Bonner SMA, D 134

no illustration in Wyndham Cook

A. Alfred Taubman Library Rare Book Room (online resource)

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/hsl/resources/rare/amulets/group3.html>

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled suggesting possible use in a ring or other setting

Physical State: Well preserved. Small chip on reverse bottom bevel that doesn't affect the inscription

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Right to Left: Isis/Nephtys, Osiris (?), Isis/Nephtys. Bonner suggests Osiris in center and two females with raised hands turned toward him. The body of "Osiris" however looks uncannily like the uterine pot itself - perhaps this is Pandora symbolized by her voracious pot like gaster?

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: OPWPIOYΘ ΗΗΗ ΑΗWΑΙΟΥΕΑΙΙΑW

Ob. Emended: Ορωριουθ ΗΗΗ ΑΗWΑΙΟΥΕΑΙΙΑW

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: Inscription circles the outer edge of the amulet beyond the Ouroboros. There are three characters which follow the Ororiouth that look like a reverse N with an added elongated down stroke on their right sides

Rv. Transcription: ΕΠΙΠ
ΟΔΙΑ

Rv. Emended: επι ποδία (Hanson 2004)

ἑπι ποδία (Bonner SMA 274)

ἐμπόδια ("obstacles" Smith 1908)

Rv. Translations: "Onto your little feet" Hanson 2004, 268 i.e. Come out and be born

Bonner suggests it is like the σχίων amulets without the genitive. He suggests it means something more general as in "for the feet" or "for/ of the feet" (Bonner SMA p 274).

Reverse Notes:

Function: quick birthing amulet (Hanson 2004)

Magical Formulae:

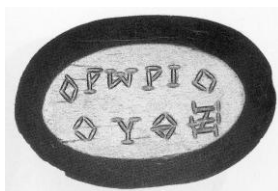
Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 65
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 1.8

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.2

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Towneley Collection # 323/324

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1805, G 77, EA 56077

Dark Grey/ brown

Publications: Michel 2001b, 359

Koehler, Memoires de l'Academie imperiale des sciences de St. Petersburg 6 Aug. 3, 1836 Nr. 13

Images: Michel 2001b, 359

Manufacture/Use: finely worked, though figures only outlines; beveled reverse so possibly a ring-stone

Physical State: Gouge on obverse - top center through head of Ouroboros, gash on bottom left obverse.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis in center flanked by two figures facing him with upraised inner arms and headdresses. Michel identifies as Isis and Nephthys

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

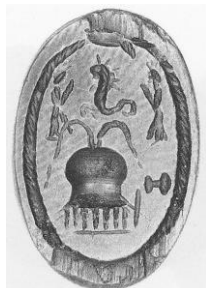
Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIO
OYΘZ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ Ζ

Corpus ID: 66
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Simple uterine scene with three figures
Reverse Subject: Inscription
Provenance: unknown
Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden (1986)
Current Location: B.M. since 1986, G 1986,5-1,24
Publications: Michel 2001b, 360
Images: Michel 2001b, 360
Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse suggests that it may have been a ring stone; many striations on reverse - possibly from rough polishing
Physical State: On the obverse - gashes that cut into the Ouroboros on top and bottom center

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis center flanked by inward facing figures with headdresses and raised inner arms

Other Obverse:
Reverse Scene:
Other Reverse:
Ob.Transcription:
Ob. Emended:
Ob. translation:
Obverse Notes:
Rv. Transcription: ΠΩΡ
 ΙΟΥΘ
Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ
Rv. Translations: Ororiouth
Reverse Notes: Initial letters in both lines polished off of stone. Iota of second line still

Height: 1.65
Width: 1.1
Depth: .3
Haematite
Black/ dark grey

partially present.

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: Michel in particular calls it a poor copy of c. 65

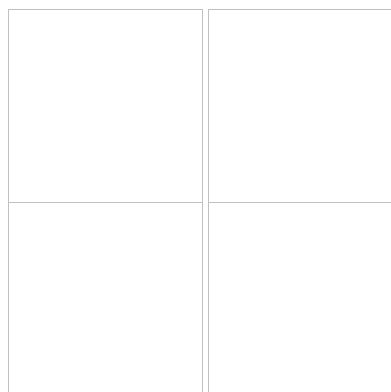
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 67

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three deities

Height: 2.0

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.46

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations:

Haemetite

Current Location: Getty 83.AN.437.59 (Michel 2004 MG, 552)

Publications: Michel 2004, 357, 70.3, 54.2.b

Images: Michel 2004 pl. 70.3

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled. Letters have serifs

Physical State: Large chip extending into Ouroboros on obverse bottom left. Gash through head of Ouroboros. Scratch on reverse.

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: Isis and Nephys with wings flanking the Chnoubis

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

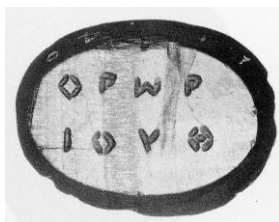
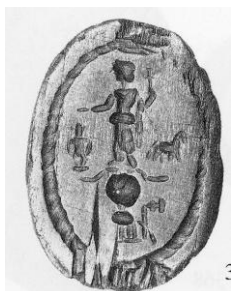
Function:

Corpus ID: 68

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine Scene with one figure flanked by a miniature Bes and a ram (?)

Height: 1.3

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: .9

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .2

Past Locations: From the Castellani Collection, Nr. 1418.
Acquired in 1872

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1872, G 400, EA 56400

Graphite/ dark brown

Publications: Michel 2001b, 374

Images: Michel 2001b, 374

Manufacture/Use: Roughly carved, only silhouettes. Inscription on reverse is small. Very clear that a drill was used for all carving. Beveled reverse suggests use in a ring setting.

Physical State: Chips on the top and bottom of the obverse extend through the Ouroboros and into the field in one place. Edge chipped.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Probable Isis in center flanked by a miniature Bes on the left and a crudely carved ram or other quadruped on the right.

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Corpus ID: 69

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 1.74

Reverse Subject: Scarab and octopus uterus

Width: 1.35

Provenance: Dicket Mead, Lockleys, Welwyn. Unearthed
April 1963

Depth: .24

Past Locations: Verulamium Museum

Haematite

Current Location: Institute of Archaeology, Oxford

Red

Publications: Wilson and Wright, 1964, p. 180-181
Wright, 1964, p. 143-146
Jackson, 1988, p. 106
Hanson, 2004, p. 265, n. 4
Cruse, 2004, p. 54-55Images: Wilson and Wright, 1964, p. 180-181, Pl. XV, 3 & 4
Wright, 1964, pl. XLII
Cruse 2004, p. 54, figure 21, pl. 10

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled indicating possible setting in a ring or pendant. No trace of setting recovered.

Physical State: Extremely soft when found. Had to be reconsolidated with 5% maranyl nylon in methyl alcohol by the B.M. Research lab. Softening has caused the blurring of some details and incomplete cleaning.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Isis center with a sistrum(?) in outstretched left hand and upright uterine vase in right (her left). Ram to the right and Bes to the left

Other Obverse: Z character to left of uterine vase

Reverse Scene: Scarab center with octopus uterus below it and an unidentified symbol above.

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AE.IOYW

AEM.INAE.....ΘEPEΘWPABEAENIEMEA

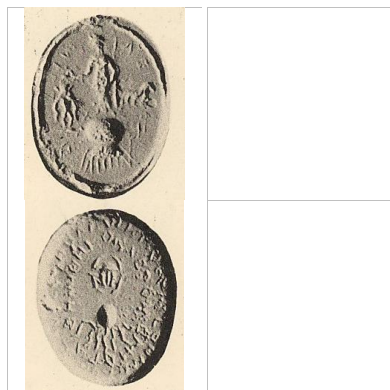
- Ob. Emended: AE[H]IOYW
AEM[E]INAE[BAPW]ΘEPEΘWPABEAENIEMEA
- Ob. translation: vowels
Aemeinabar formula
- Obverse Notes: Letters that are missing have been destroyed by softening of the haematite. Vowels start the center top inside the ouroboros and run clockwise. Aemeinabar formula is external to the ouroboros and runs clockwise around the edge of the obverse
- Rv. Transcription: OPWPIOYΘIAHWIAWAWI
- Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ ιαηω ιαω αωι
- Rv. Translations: Ororiouth, Yahweh, Yahweh, Yahweh
- Reverse Notes: law repeated thrice (although in various forms) to ensure magical efficacy
- Function: Wright suggests that this type of amulet may be the same or similar to the amulets described by Dioscorides that were tied to the thigh to hasten the process of childbirth
- Magical Formulae: Aemeinabar formula circles outside obverse edge. Delatte, 1914, linked this formula to Set-Typhon. Note the palindromic nature of formula
- Amuletic Links?:
- Other Notes: The amulet was found not far from a coin of Gratian in a sealed layer. The coin has the formula "Gloria Novi Saeculi" and comes from the Arelate mint between 367-375 (Wilson and Wright, note 18). It is unclear when the amulet was manufactured and arrived in England, Wright suggesting that it may have arrived up to 50 years or more before it was deposited. Also note the Greek inscription in the western, Latin speaking empire. The Greek language was intimately connected to this type of amulet.

Corpus ID: 70

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 2.1

Reverse Subject: Scarab and octopus uterus with spiral inscription

Width: 1.7

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Bonner # 20

Iron-zinc alloy
(probably). Metal

Current Location: Michigan, A. Alfred Taubman Medical Library # 139

Metallic grey

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 275, # 139

Images: Bonner SMA, D 139

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled suggesting possible use in a ring or other setting.

Physical State: Badly scratched and abraded. Condition makes difficult to read inscription

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Goddess in center facing left raising right hand with staff in left. Bonner speculates Isis. To left and slightly below is a crude dwarf/Bes figure. To the right of the goddess is a lion or ram facing to the right.

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene: scarab with an octopus uterus below it

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AEOIW

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: Bonner says all seven vowels are present, however I see only five in the photo, understanding the possible eta as the handle for the key. Alpha is top right with epsilon to its right. Omicron is at the bottom left of the field and iota is next to omega at the top left of the field

Rv. Transcription: CΘOMBΑΟΛ.ΒΑΥΛΕCΘΟΜΒΑΡΟΛΑΒΘΟΜΒΛΗΘΡΑΛΘΗΜΙΘΝΙ

Rv. Emended: ΟΡΩΡΙΟΥΘ ΙΗCΘΟΜΒΑΟΛ .
ΒΑΥΛΕCΘΟΜΒΑΡΟΛΑΒΘΟΜΒΛΗΘΡΑΛΘΗΜΙΘΝΙ

ορορουθ ιη σθομβαολ.βαυλεσθομβαρολαβθομβληθ ραλθημιθνι

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth, Sthombaole formula

Reverse Notes: Found spiraling on the edge of reverse in two lines. Very abraded and hard to read. Bonner's transcription.

Function:

Magical Formulae: Sthombaole formula is often found with solar designs (Bonner)

Amuletic Links?: c.. 79 shares ραλθεμιθ inscription

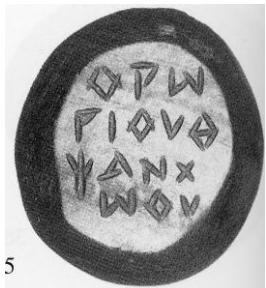
Other Notes: Bonner notes this is the only amulet of this type that he knows of that is made out of metal.

Corpus ID: 71

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 1.1

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.1

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .2

Past Locations:

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. G 89, EA 56089

Dark Brown/ grey

Publications: Michel 2001b, 375

Images: Michel 2001b, 375

Manufacture/Use: Crude carving - figures barely recognizable. Beveled reverse may indicate use in a ring.

Physical State: Abraded obverse but still partially legible.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Bes left, Duamoutef (?) or Isis (?) center, ram right (?)

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: H
W
A
I

A...IAYW.WOIWAY

Ob. Emended: Ιαωη

Ob. translation: Yahweh

A...law followed by other vowel combinations

Obverse Notes: There is a IAW with a possible eta on the end inscribed bottom to top on the left of the field. The other inscription is found on the obverse edge which is badly damaged but still legible in places

Rv. Transcription: ΠΙΟΥΘ
ΨΑΝΧ
ΩΟΥ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ
Ψανχωου

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth...psanxoou

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

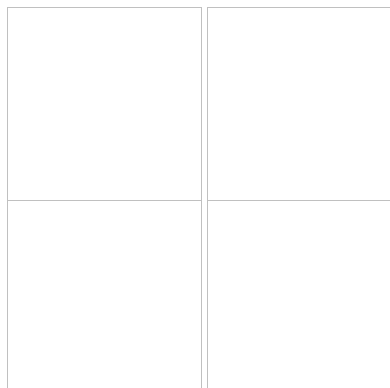
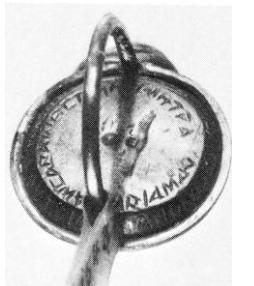
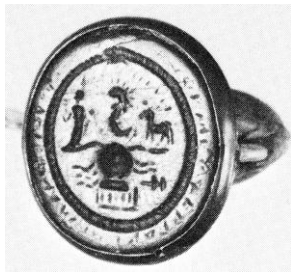
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 72

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height:

Reverse Subject: winged scarab above an octopus uterus?

Width:

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: unknown

Haematite

Current Location: Staatliche Museum Preussischer Kulturbesitz
(Zazoff 1983)

Publications: Zazoff 1983, XLIII 117.4

Images: Zazoff 1983, pl. 117.4

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge is beveled. Currently set in a ring.

Physical State: obverse worn to the point that some of the inscription has been erased

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Right to Left: Isis (?), Chnoubis, Ram or Lion

Other Obverse: The lines of the side of the uterus are odd but not unknown.

Reverse Scene: A winged scarab or uterus? No details are clear beyond the wings, an attribute not known to me to be on any other uterine amulet.

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: The photo was not of a quality to allow me to venture a transcription though from a few letters it seems likely that the Soroor formula surrounds the outer edge of the obverse

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIOY..AWCABAWΘCT..HTIMHTPA

Rv. Emended: OPWPIOYΘ IAW CABAWΘ CTAΛHTI MHTPA

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth, law, Sabaoth, contract womb

Reverse Notes: obscure the inscription, and are not due to any damage to the actual inscription. The photo makes it clear that there is another inscription on the bevel, however this one is not legible in the current photo

Function:

Magical Formulae: Probably Soroor formula on the obverse

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes: Overall this is a plausible genuine stone, however, given the stones with which it was published and a few of its unique features one might also question whether or not this stone is ancient

Corpus ID: 73

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine Scene with three figures

Reverse Subject: Ibis bound to an altar

Provenance: Alexandria

Past Locations: From Rev. Greville J. Chester, 1886

Current Location: B.M. since 1886, G 465, EA 56465

Height: 5.0

Width: 3.1

Depth: .9

Serpentine

Black with red in the cuts

Publications: Michel 2001b, 410

Images: Michel 2001b, 410

Manufacture/Use: Has an eye from which to be suspended. Carving of figures is poor

Physical State: Obverse has a chip right bottom side which cuts into the Ouroboros as well as chips on bottom left and eye. Reverse is abraded

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis in center between two unidentifiable figures - possibly the two mummies Duamoutef and Osiris?

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene: Ibis bound to altar flanked by two "S" characters and surmounted by two star characters

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: IAW S

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: IAW starts left of figures and rotates counterclockwise. Opposite to the I in IAW is an S-like character seen on this type of amulet as well as elsewhere.

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIO
YΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Corpus ID: 74

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 5.2

Reverse Subject: Ibis chained to an altar

Width: 3.4

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .9

Past Locations:

Serpentine (Jasper says Bonner)

Current Location: B.M. G 479, EA 56479

Black with red in the cuts

Publications: Michel 2001b, 409
 Budge, *The Mummy* (2, 1925), p. 335
 Bonner, *Brit Mus.*, p. 327, # 26

Images: Michel 2001b, 409
 Budge, *The Mummy* (2, 1925), pl. 24
 Bonner, *Brit Mus.*, Pl. 97 # 26

Manufacture/Use: Carved eye suggests that the amulet would have been strung as a pendant. Carving fairly fine.

Physical State: Many small chips and abrasions. Overall no major damage, just use-wear

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Duamoutef, Chnoubis and Osiris as mummy

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene: Ibis tied to an altar with three plants on it, snake like characters to either side and star character above

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: IAW

AEHIOYWAWIOYWAEHIOYWIA

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: AW of IAW clear with A to left of uterine vase and W to the right. Two

possible iotas, one to left and one to right of figures, neither which is in scale with the AW. Although Michel thinks this is IAW, perhaps it is really AW as in the Christian way of describing god as both The Alpha and The Omega

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIO
YΘIAW

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ Ιαω

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: Inscription is in two lines beneath the figural scene

Function: Bonner says that it served two purposes "to cure [the]ills peculiar to women...[and for]...the relief of digestive troubles. I second him.

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: Ibis amulets for digestion, which Michel (2001) suggests have a latent uterine message as well, since haemorrhage can be understood metaphorically as the Nile bursting its banks and flooding. The hieroglyph for this inundation is apparently the three plants seen on the altar. The connection seems tenuous at best. Bonner cites Southesk # 42 pl. 14 as a parallel and SMA # 126 meant to cure sciatica and uterine problems.

Other Notes: The uterine vase has lost its neck and is merely an ovoid disc. Likewise, the key has lost its handle seems more a grill than a key

Corpus ID: 75
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Reverse Subject: inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden, 1986

Current Location: B.M. since 1986, G 1986,5-1,25

Height: 3.2

Width: 2.6

Depth: 1.0

Serpentine

Brown-Black; Highly mottled

Publications: Michel 2001b, 412

Images: Michel 2001b, 412

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: Badly damaged. Both obverse and reverse almost totally erased in parts. Very difficult to read/ understand

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis in center flanked by two damaged figures, probably Osiris on the left and Duamoutef on the right based on what remains

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: WIAEHIOYWIAWHIIO

Ob. Emended: WIAEHIOYWIAWHIIO — — —

Ob. translation: Vowels, law, vowels

Obverse Notes: Michel probably correctly suggests that there was once an inscription within the field, now destroyed. The remaining inscription runs outside of the Ouroboros at the edge of the stone and is also badly damaged

Rv. Transcription: OPWPI
HOYΘ
IAW

Rv. Emended: OPWPI

{H}OYΘ
IAW

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth, law

Reverse Notes: The reverse is so badly abraded that it is impossible to make out more than the theta of the second line in the photos. I am relying completely on Michel for the transcription.

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

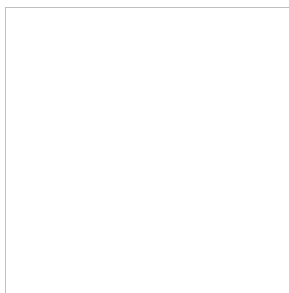
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 76

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 4.3

Reverse Subject: Ibis tied to altar

Width: 2.6

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Froehner 2967

Serpentine

Current Location: C.D.M. Fr 2967

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 147, #190

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 147, #190

Manufacture/Use: cleanly and carefully carved, loop for suspension from a cord

Physical State: In very good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis center, Duamoutef right, another mummy left

Other Obverse: looks like circling line could be an Ouroboros - gets thicker at top, but tail swings down not into mouth

Reverse Scene: Ibis tied to altar looking right, 3 reeds from altar

Other Reverse: Star above reeds, scene bracketed by two reverse "S" on right and left

Ob.Transcription: AEHIOYWAEHIOYWAEHIOYW

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: The seven vowels repeat three times, circling the obverse edge of the stone clockwise starting from the top right

Rv. Transcription: IAW

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Yahweh

Reverse Notes: Inscription is under the baseline for the figural scene

Corpus ID: 77
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 1.3

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: .7

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Schlumberger # 348

Haemetite

Current Location: C.D.M S 348

Black/ dark brown

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 248-249, # 343

Images: Delatte & Derchain 1964, p. 248-249, # 343

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge appears to be beveled suggesting possible use in a ring or other setting

Physical State: Obverse right margin chipped off with remarkably clean break. Only affects Ouroboros on obverse and nothing on reverse

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Human form mummy (Osiris?), Chnoubis, Duamoutef

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AIHEHVW

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Vowels

Obverse Notes: Vowels scattered throughout the field. I see no sense in D&D's order of transcription

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWP IOVΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes: Reverse inscription on cross-wise rather than vertical oval. The last

letters in each line are dotted because of the quality of the photo, not because of any real doubt of their identity

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 78
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Reverse Subject: scarab and uterine vase

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations:

Current Location: C.D.M. 2199

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 256, # 361

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 256, # 361

Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse edge suggesting the intention to mount in a setting of some sort. Reverse scene crudely and shallowly carved - just enough to indicate what is meant to be there, not good detail.

Physical State: Generally in good condition. Perhaps worn, but carving on Khnoum still sharp so it seems more likely that the piece is not very worn, just not deeply engraved

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Khnoum left Isis right, Infant Harpokrates on column in center over uterus

Other Obverse: The edge of the field may be an Ouroboros, but the impression is a bit indistinct

Reverse Scene: uterine pot with winged scarab above possibly with a ram head, surmounted by a solar disc

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: COMEPΦEPΓAPBAPVPIΓEC

Rv. Emended: CO[POOP]MEPΦEPΓAPBAP[MAΦPIO]VPIΓEC

Height: 1.6

Width: 1.3

Depth:

Haemetite

Dark Brown/ Black

Rv. Translations: Soroor formula

Reverse Notes: Inscription circling the edge of the field. Details not distinct enough to comment on where the inscription starts or is worn away

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor on reverse circling field

Amuletic Links?: almost identical to c. 104

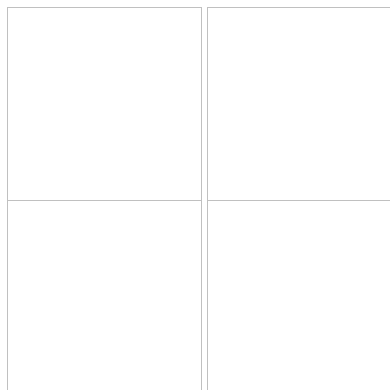
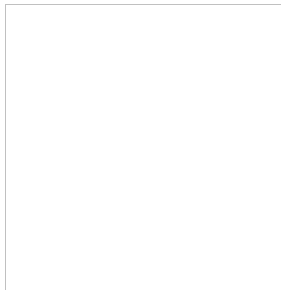
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 79

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine Scene with three figures

Height: 1.8

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.1

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Seyrig #7

Haematite

Current Location: unknown

Publications: Bonner SMA, p.276, # 143
Seyrig # 7

Images: Bonner SMA, D 143 (obverse only)

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: left 1/3 of obverse broken off

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Khnoum holds a uterine pot on which is Harpocrates; unidentified goddess facing both

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AEHIOYW

PAAΘEMIO

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Vowels

Senseless word

Obverse Notes: vowels are above the scene and the other word is below the base line of the scene. Not clear what order the seven vowels are in. The second inscription is found as the last word in SMA #139

Rv. Transcription: IAIAIAHIHIIAWCABAWAWNAI-----COOOPWPPIOYΘ

Rv. Emended: IAW
 CABAW<Θ>
 A<Δ>WNAI

 CO<P>OOP
 OPWPIOYΘ

Rv. Translations: Yahweh Yahweh Yahweh Yahweh Yahweh Yahweh

Sabaoth
 Adonai

 Soroor
 Ororiouth

Reverse Notes: ----- are five characters Bonner does not describe, the last being "an imperfect Chnoubis symbol." The inscription is in seven lines, but again, Bonner provides no photo and does not follow a line by line transcription but breaks the inscription into sense units.

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula only referenced by its first two syllables as others are referenced in the papyri by their first three or four syllables (Bonner 276)

Amuletic Links?: c. 70 shares the ραλθεμιθ inscription

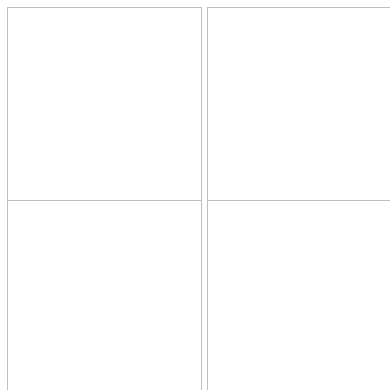
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 80

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: uterine scene with three figures

Height: 1.56

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.13

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .18

Past Locations: from the collection of F.S. Matouk

Haematite

Current Location: University of Koln

black and metallic
with red flecks in the
uterine vase

Publications: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992, p. 92 # 26

Images: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992, pl. 17, 26a & b

Manufacture/Use: Beveled reverse edge indicating possible use within a setting

Physical State: slightly abraded obverse. Chip on top right of reverse that touches the edge of the rho in the first line, also some abrasions.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to right: Chnoubis, Bes, unidentified figure (Isis?)

Other Obverse: there is a scarab carved within the uterus. Ouroboros circles field.

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: COPOOPMEPΦEPΓAPAPMAΦPIOVPI

Ob. Emended: COPOOPMEPΦEPΓAPAPMAΦPIOVPI[ΓΞ]

Ob. translation: Soroor Formula

Obverse Notes: Inscription circles clockwise starting from top center around obverse edge. There may also be a tau to the left of the figures and a chi to their right within the field.

Rv. Transcription: OP
WPI
OVΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula circles the outer obverse edge

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 81
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Schlumberger # 345

Current Location: C.D.M. S 345

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 251, # 349

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 251, # 349

Manufacture/Use: It is possible that there is a vertical bevel between the two sides, although the photos are not very clear on this detail

Physical State: Worn but in good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: To the left is a person with an animal head, long mantle, baton and situla who D & D identify as Anubis; Nude man in center with cornucopia in right hand, to the right is a woman with a cornucopia in left hand serpent in right - Isis?

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: EPITTO
VPBIT
EPBETAI

COPOOPMEPΦEPΓAPBAPMAΦPIOVPIΓNE

Height: 1.9

Width: 1.5

Depth:

Haemetite

Graphite/grey

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Soroor formula

pseudo-Greek syllables

Reverse Notes: Soroor formula circles the edge proceeding in a clockwise fashion

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula circling the reverse edge

Amuletic Links?:

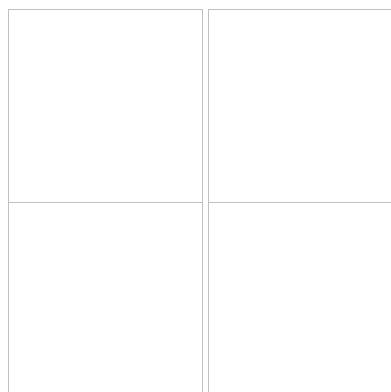
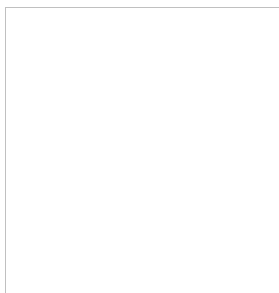
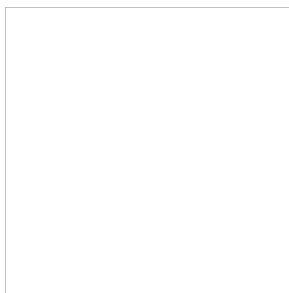
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 82

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine Scene with Isis, Bes and Hawk headed god

Height: 1.8

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.6

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: 3148 Dimitrou

Jasper, Oval

Current Location:

Black with red spots

Publications: Delatte 1914, p. 75, #33
Bonner 1950 SMA p. 84

Images: Delatte 1914

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State:

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: Cynocephalic god with hands on key, Isis in middle crowned with ears of corn with cornucopia, goat (?), Bes is under the inscription, Bonner IDs a possible ram headed rather than hawk headed go near the key. Bonner compares goat to lion SMA 90 n. 49

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AEHIOY
W

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Vowels

Obverse Notes: The vowels appear between Isis and the animal opposite her

Rv. Transcription: OPWPOIYΘ
AHWIAWCABA
WΘYYYYZIAW

ΙΑΕΒΟΘΟΡΟΘΗ
 ΜΙΘΟΛΒΙΑΧΘΙΑ
 ΑΕΜΕΙΝΑΕΒΑΡΡ
 WΘΕΡΡΕΘWΡΑ
 ΒΕΑΝΕΙΕΜΕΑ
 CΤΑΛΗΤΙΜΗ
 ΤΡΑ

Rv. Emended: ΟΡWΡΟΙΥΘ ΑΗW ΙΑW CΑΒΑWΘ ΥΥΥΖ ΙΑW

ΙΑΕΒΟΘΟΡΟΘΗ ΜΙΘΟΛΒΙΑΧΘΙΑ

ΑΕΜΕΙΝΑΕΒΑΡΡWΘΕΡΡΕΘWΡΑΒΕΑΝΕΙΕΜΕΑ

CΤΑΛΗΤΙ ΜΗΤΡΑ

Ορωριουθ, Ιαω Ιαω Σαβαωθ ... Ιαω ... Αεμειναβαρ...
 στάλητι μήτρα

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth, Yahweh, Yahweh, Sabaoth...characters... Yahweh,
 Aemeinabar formula, contract womb.

Reverse Notes: passive of Στέλλω from a colloquial form of στάληθι means to contract,
 return to your former condition as mentioned by Bonner citing
 Dioscorides 5. 135. Bonner also says Delatte's assumption that the word
 derives from "Στάθητι" is unnecessary - 84 (Delatte pg. 82)

Function:

Magical Formulae: Αεμειναβαρ formula/palindrome on the reverse

Amuletic Links?:

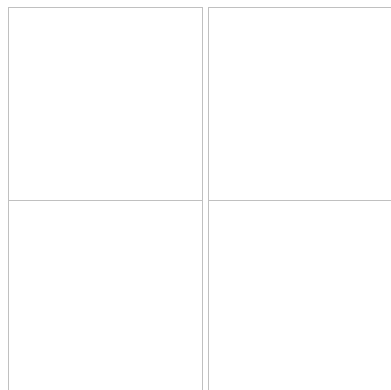
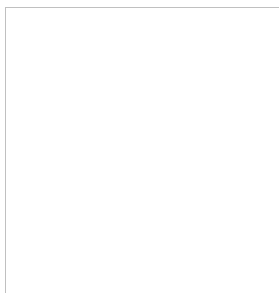
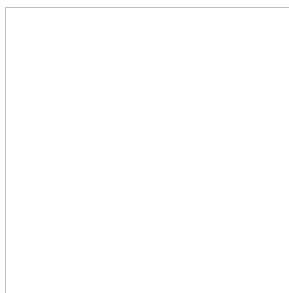
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 83

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height:

Reverse Subject: Scarab with cynocephalous head above an octopus uterus

Width:

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Cairo, Fouquet Collection

Current Location:

Publications: Delatte 1914, p. 80

Images:

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State:

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Bes with infant Horus and either Isis or Sarapis

Other Obverse: Not a vase but a sac or organ with an opening of irregular form. Has key. Ouroboros.

Reverse Scene: cynocephalous scarab above an octopus uterus

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: ΜΗΡΑCΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝΔΑΙΜΩΝΟΜΟΡΟΦΟΜΟΡΟΦΩΤΙC

Ob. Emended: ΜΗ[Τ]ΡΑC ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ ΔΑΙΜΩΝ ΟΜΟΡΟΦΟΜΟΡΟΦΩΤΙC

Μήτρας γυναικῶν δαίμων Ομοροφ Ομοροφωτις

Ob. translation: Daimon of the wombs of women, Omoorof Omoorofotis

Obverse Notes: It is not clear where on the face this is or how the letters are arranged based on Delatte's inscription

Rv. Transcription: ΜΗΡΑCΘΗΛΥΚΗCΘΕΟCΑΒΑΝΒΑΩΜΗΤΡΑCΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝΘΕΟCΙΑ
 ΗΑΙΥΑΙΗΥΟΕΙΗΑΥΙΑΗΥΑΗΑΙΑΜΗΤΡΑCΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝΚΥΡΙΟCΟΡΩ
 ΩΡΙΩΟΥΘΑΥΒΑΧΜΗΤΡΑCΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝΦΥΛΑΙΑΗΙΕΟΥΕΟΑΙΟΙΗΙ

ΟΗΙΑΩΑΙΗΩΙΗΑΙΜΗΤΡΑCΓΥΝΑΙΚΩNCWΤΗΡΑΜΟΥΝΥΟΙΜΑΧ
ΑΚΜΗΞ

Rv. Emended: ΜΗ[Τ]ΡΑC ΘΗΛΥ<Τ>ΗC ΘΕΟC ΑΒΑΝΒΑΩ ΜΗΤΡΑC
ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ ΘΕΟC ΙΑΗ ΑΙΥ ΑΙΗ ΥΟΕ ΙΗΑ ΥΙΑ ΗΥΑ ΗΑΙΑ
ΜΗΤΡΑC ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ ΚΥΡΙΟC ΟΡΩΡΙΩΟΥΘ ΑΥΒΑΧ ΜΗΤΡΑC
ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ ΦΥΛΛΑ[Ξ] ΙΑΗ ΙΕΟ ΥΕΟ ΑΙΟ ΙΗΙ ΟΗΙ ΑΩΑ ΙΗΩ ΙΗΑΙ
ΜΗΤΡΑC ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ CWΤΗΡ ΑΜΟΥΝΥΟ ΙΜΑΧΑΚΜΗΞ

Μήτρας θηλυτῆς θεὸς Ἴβανβάω μήτρας γυναικῶν θεὸς ... μήτρας
γυναικῶν κύριος Ὁρωριωουθ Αὐβαχ μήτρας γυναικῶν φυλαξ ...
μήτρας γυναικῶν σωτὴρ Αμουνο ιμαχακ μηξ

Rv. Translations: God of womanly wombs Abanbaw, god of the wombs of women...,
master of the wombs of women, Orouriouth Aubach, protect the wombs
of women..., saviour of the womb's of women, Amon (?) imachak, mex

Reverse Notes: The last three letters are repeated around the bevel. It is not clear how
the inscription was arranged on the stone based on Delatte's
transcription. It probably spiraled either from the center out or from the
edge toward the center figures as seen on other amulets

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: Similar reverse as Southesk 41 and the Gem of Cassel,

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 84

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Roughly carved uterine scene with only one figure of a possible original total of three remaining

Height: 1.7

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.39

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden in 1986

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1986, G 1986,5-1,27

Black on face; very red in cuts

Publications: Michel 2001b, 372

Images: Michel 2001b, 372

Manufacture/Use: Very rough carving. Uterine pot has odd proportions. Beveled reverse may indicate setting in a ring.

Physical State: Badly damaged. Obverse abraded to remove outer inscription. Top left quarter of obverse chipped off. Many chips on edges. Gash on reverse.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Duamoutef and probably two others which have been chipped off when the stone was damaged

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: It is clear that there was once an inscription circling the obverse edge of the piece, probably a variation of the Soroor formula, but nothing but illegible shadows remain at this point.

Rv. Transcription: OPWP

IOYΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: It is probable that the Soroor formula once circled the obverse edge. It has since been worn off.

Amuletic Links?:

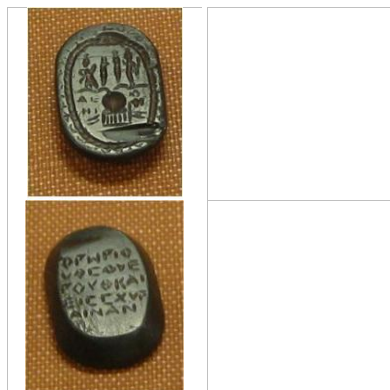
Other Notes: The bottom of the carved areas on this amulet are particularly a bright rusty red color as opposed to the more graphite grey/brown/black of the body of the amulet

Corpus ID: 85

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Height: 1.8

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.2

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .4

Past Locations: Bonner # 22

Haemetite

Current Location: Michigan, A. Alfred Taubman Medical Library # 131

Graphite/ dark brown

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 273-274, #131

Images: Bonner SMA, D 131

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled suggesting possible use in a ring or other setting

Physical State: Large horizontal gash on bottom right of obverse which extends into the field and destroys part of the inscription. The obverse edge is also very worn, to the point of the circling inscription having been destroyed in places

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Nephtys, Duamoutef, Osiris Mummy, Isis

Other Obverse: Isis has a cornucopia

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AE O...
HI

COPOOP . .

Ob. Emended: AEHIOVW

Ob. translation: Vowels...Soroor formula

Obverse Notes: Soroor formula mentioned in Bonner with many letters rubbed out and indistinct, though not actually transcribed. Starts top center right and progresses clockwise around the obverse edge outside of the Ouroboros.

Vowels are under the tubes flanking the uterine vase

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIO
VΘCOYE
POVΘKAI
EICCXP
AINAN

Rv. Emended: OPWPIOVΘ COYEPOVΘ KAI EICCXPAINAN

Ορωριουθ σουερουθ καὶ εισσχυραιναν

Rv. Translations: Ororoiuth, Souerouth and Eiskurainan

Reverse Notes: Bonner notes that the last word εισσχυραιναν resembles the name ἰσχυρίαινα which is found in the papyri, however there is nothing in the current inscription to explain why it should be in the accusative

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula circles the obverse edge

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 86

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Height: 1.6

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: .8

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Froehner 2848

Haemetite in a gold mount

Current Location: C.D.M. F 2848

Black/ dark grey

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 253, # 355

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 253, # 355

Manufacture/Use: Reverse beveled edge visible at times.

Physical State: Stone is very worn and chipped on obverse. Reverse is so worn that the inscription has nearly disappeared

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: There are two goddesses, one on each edge of the group, with two mummiform figures in the center. The goddess on the right has "protecting wings"

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: IAW

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Yahweh

Obverse Notes: The inscription is around the uterine vase

Rv. Transcription: OPW
PIOYΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWPIOYΘ

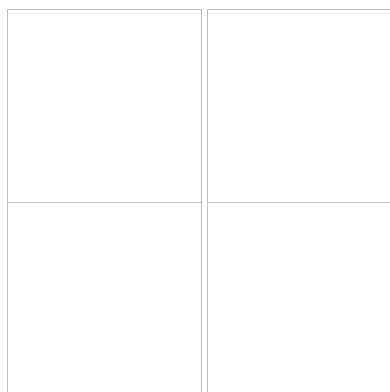
Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Corpus ID: 87

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four deities

Height: 1.96

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.90

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations:

haemetite

Current Location: Skoluda collection M132

Graphite/ black

Publications: Michel 2001a, 74 -75 # 76

Images: Michel 2001a, pl. 13 # 76

Manufacture/Use: Michel calls it a ring stone. Beveled reverse edge. Very narrow, angular letters on reverse, especial omicrons

Physical State: Abrasions on obverse worn down and chips on obverse bottom edge. Inscription on obverse edge partially rubbed off

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: L-R: Female deity, Duamoutef, unknown deity, female deity (Isis or Nephys?)

Other Obverse: Ouroboros is exceptionally well defined. Facing toward the left, which is the reverse of how he is normally found

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: Though the inscription is barely legible Michel identifies it as the Soroor formula without transcribing it

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Corpus ID: 88

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Height: 2.1

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.4

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .25

Past Locations: Gift of Rev. Greville J. Chester in 1880

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1880, G 333, EA 56333

Graphite/ black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 368
Bonner, SMA, p. 168

Images: Michel 2001b, 368

Manufacture/Use: Bevel on reverse may indicate use as a stone in a ring

Physical State: Severely abraded/ worn down obverse. Several scratches on reverse but do not affect inscription

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Nephthys, Duamoutef, Osiris as Mummy, Isis

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: There was clearly an inscription running around the edge of the amulet, but this has since been worn or polished off. Michel claims that CO is still discernable, though the pictures do not bear this out, suggesting the Soroor formula. Likewise she claims that she can read A.OUW in the field, inscriptions which are not visible in her plates.

Rv. Transcription: ΑΗΤΟ
ΟΥΩΠ
ΙΟΥΘ

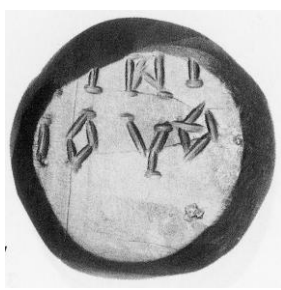
ΕΙΔΕC

- Rv. Emended: Λητοΐδες Ορωριουθ
- Rv. Translations: Son of Leto, Ororiouth
- Reverse Notes: The epithet of Apollo is split by the Ororiouth. Apollo occasionally associated with Harpokrates. Michel sees this as evidence that Apollo was taken as the god of the uterus.
- Function:
- Magical Formulae: It is possible that the obverse edge was circled by the Soroor formula
- Amuletic Links?: Garb of Nephthys is depicted in the same puffy way as on # 89 and 91
- Other Notes: Is it possible that the Letoeides of the reverse could have been meant as "leovtoeides" as seen on an amulet of the "Ophite Gnostics" published by Bonner (1949) and meaning "Lion-faced" as a description for Ouroriouth. Perhaps this deity was envisioned something like Chnoubis, the lion headed snake found on so many of these pieces.

Corpus ID: 89
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Height: 1.1

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.1

Provenance: From the Syrian Coast (?)

Depth: .2

Past Locations: Rev. Greville J. Chester

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1866, G 219, EA 56219

Black/ graphite

Publications: Michel 2001b, 367

Images: Michel 2001b, 367

Manufacture/Use: Fine work, beveled reverse possibly indicating use in a ring

Physical State: Badly damaged and reworked. Originally oval, now round the top third of the obverse is missing as is most of the top line of the reverse inscription.

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Nephtys, Duamoutef, Osiris as a Mummy, Isis with Cornucopia. All face toward center.

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AE
H
I

OVW

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Vowel series
Possible the Soroor formula

Obverse Notes: The first four vowels are to the left of the uterine pot, the last three to

the right. The circling inscription is now mainly illegible, but may have been a rendition of the Soroor formula

Rv. Transcription: .PWP
IOYΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWP
IOYΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: Probably the Soroor formula but nearly illegible now

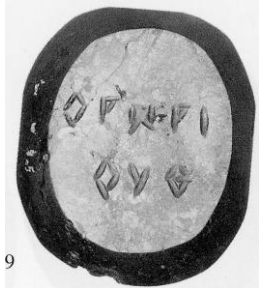
Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 90
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations:

Current Location: B.M. G 492, EA 56492

Publications: Michel 2001b, 369

Images: Michel 2001b, 369

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse suggests possible use in a ring setting. Figures carved as silhouettes.

Physical State: Chip on bottom of obverse/reverse. Damaged inscription along the obverse edge.

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Nephthys, Duamoutef, Osiris, Isis. All face toward the center.

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: I A
W

COPOOPME..

Ob. Emended: IAW

COPOOPMEPΦEPΓAPBAPMAΦPIOVHPIΓEI

Ob. translation: Yahweh

Soroor formula

Height: 1.6

Width: 1.3

Depth: .3

Haematite

Dark brown/ graphite

Obverse Notes: right and the omega below. The circling inscription on the edge is too abraded beyond the 8th letter that is unreadable, but reconstructable based on the first 8 letters as the Soroor formula

Rv. Transcription: OPWPI
OVΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula on obverse edge, badly damaged

Amuletic Links?:

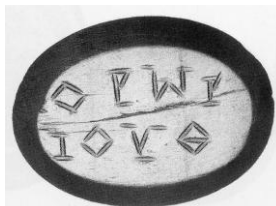
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 91

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine Scene with 4 figures surrounded by text

Height: 1.9

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.4

Provenance: Origin Unknown

Depth: .2

Past Locations:

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. G G 76, EA 56076

Publications: Michel 2001b, 365

Images: Michel 2001b, 365

Manufacture/Use: Well cut and fairly detailed work. beveled reverse suggest use as a stone in a ring.

Physical State: Overall good shape. Abrasion at top left of obverse but does not affect inscription. Scratch through center of reverse.

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: From left to right: Isis/Nepthys, Chnoubis, Duamoutef, Isis/ Nepthys - all face toward the center

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AEHIOVW

VIAW

COPPOPMEPΦEPΓAPBAPMAΦPIOVPPP

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Vowel row

law

Soroor formula

Obverse Notes: Vowel row arranged clockwise around inner field with alpha at the top center. UIAW vertical through the uterine vase. Soroor circling the edge of the amulet.

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula

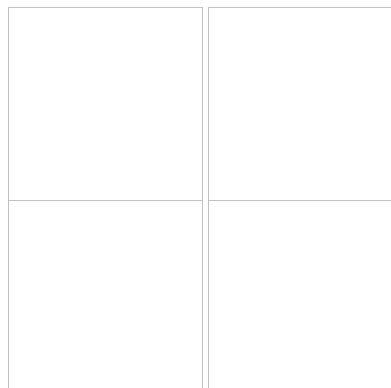
Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 92
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures
 Reverse Subject: Inscription
 Provenance: unknown
 Past Locations: Gift of Mr. Joseph Van Vleck Jr. In memory of his wife
 Current Location: Art Museum, Princeton University, Inv. # 70-79
 Publications: Forbes, 1978, p. 152 # 142
 Images: Forbes, 1978, pl. 33 # 142
 Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse edge indicating possible use in a ring setting or pendant
 Physical State: Chip on top right of obverse, worn on right of obverse; reverse has a gouge
 Height: 2.0
 Width: 1.4
 Depth:
 Haematite
 Graphite/ dark brown

Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: Left to right: Isis or Nephtys, Chnoubis, Duamoutef, Isis or Nephtys. All face center
 Other Obverse: Ouroboros
 Reverse Scene:
 Other Reverse:
 Ob.Transcription: AEHOVW
 COOPMEΦEPΓABAPMAΦOPIVIΓΞ
 Ob. Emended: AEH[I]OVW
 CO[P]OOPMEΦEPΓABAPMAΦOPIVIΓΞ
 Ob. translation: Vowel list
 Soroor formula
 Obverse Notes: Vowels within the field. Soroor formula is outside of Ouroboros circling

the obverse edge
Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ
Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ
Rv. Translations: Ororiouth
Reverse Notes:
Function:
Magical Formulae: Soroor formula
Amuletic Links?:
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 93
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine Scene with 4 figures

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden, 1986

Current Location: B.M. since 1986, G 1986,5-1,17

Publications: Michel 2001b, 366

Images: Michel 2001b, 366

Manufacture/Use: Fairly detailed/ clear. beveled reverse edge suggesting possible use as a ring-stone

Physical State: Badly damaged. Obverse right quarter missing and gash on lower left. Reverse left quarter missing with scratches and cracks through the inscription.

Pot

Ororiouth

Magical Formulae

Ligaments

Overturned

Ouroboros

Medusa/ Octopus Uterus

Tubes

Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Isis/Nephtys, Duamoutef, Chnoubis, Isis/Nephtys. All face toward the center

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: COPO...EPΓ...APMAPΦPIOϸPIΓ

Ob. Emended: COPOOPMEPΦEPΓAPBAPMAΦPIOVHPHPIΓEI

Ob. translation: Soroor formula

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: Opωpιουθ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Height: 1.8

Width: 1.08

Depth: .3

Haematite

Black/ graphite

Reverse Notes: omicron. The omega has a large gash through it.

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 94
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with 4 figures

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations:

Current Location: C.D.M. F 8272

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 252 -253, # 353
Le Blant, # 237

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 252, # 353

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge is beveled suggesting that the stone was meant to be mounted in a setting of some sort

Physical State: generally looks worn and soft around the edges

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Isis and Nephthys on outer edges crowned with diadems, Chnoubis to the left middle Duamoutef to the right middle

Other Obverse: vowels inside of Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: COPOOPMEP...EPIAIBAPM...IE

Ob. Emended: COPOOPMEPΓEPΓAPBAPMAΦPIOVHPHΓE

Ob. translation: Soroor formula

Obverse Notes: Inscription circles outer obverse edge beyond the Ouroboros starting from the top right/center and progressing in a clockwise fashion

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWPPIOVΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Height: 2.1

Width: 1.5

Depth:

Haemetite

Black/ graphite

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor around outside edge of Ouroboros on obverse

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 95
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: found by P. Pedrizet at Touna el Gebel

Past Locations:

Current Location: C.D.M. Y20006

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 253, # 354

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 253, # 354

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse edge suggesting the intention to mount in a setting of some sort

Physical State: Badly worn. Edges chipped in multiple spots

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Isis and Nephys at edges, Chnoubis center left, Duamoutef center right

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: ...APMA...HOVP.....EIO...

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: Inscription circles the obverse edge outside of the Ouroboros. Much of it is worn away

Rv. Transcription: OPW
PIO
VΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWPPIOVΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Height: 1.6

Width: 1.2

Depth:

Haemetite

Grey/ graphite

Corpus ID: 96

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Height: 2.0

Reverse Subject: Cock-Headed scarab and octopus uterus

Width: 1.8

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .4

Past Locations: Gift of Mr. Joseph Van Vleck Jr. In memory of his wife; Previously in the collection of Mr. Joseph Brummer

Haematite

Current Location: Princeton University Art Museum, Inv. # 70-78

Black/ dark brown with red in the cuts

Publications: Bonner, SMA, p. 84, p. 275 #140
Forbes 1978, p. 149 #141
Barb, Seth or Anubis?, p. 370, n. 35Images: Bonner, SMA, Pl. VI #140
Forbes 1978, pl. 33 #141

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse edge suggests mounting in a ring or pendant

Physical State: cracked vertically near center and repaired

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Isis or Nephtys with one arm raised, Duamoutef, Chnoubis snake, Osiris mummy with disc overhead. All face towards center

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene: a cock-headed scarab above an octopus uterus. Bonner thinks it is a falcon head. The legs of the scarab touch the uterus, or as Barb thinks, the Egyptian symbol for sunlight. Delatte and Derchain #360-361 show examples where the scarab has a ram's head.

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AEHIO VW

COPOOPMEPΦEPΓAPBAPMAPΦPIOVPIΓE 𐩧𐩨𐩣 IAW CA

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: First five vowels to the left of the uterine pot, the last two to the right. Soroor formula circles outside the ouroboros on the obverse edge. Three characters follow the Soroor formula which look like modern upside-down Ns with extended final down strokes. Followed by another character, IAW and the first two letters of Sabaoth

Rv. Transcription: ΟΡΩΡΙΟΥΘ ΣΑΒΑΟΘ ΣΤΑΛΗΤΙ ΜΗΤΡΑ ΜΗ ΣΕ ΤΥΦΩΝ
ΚΑΤΑΛΑΒΗ

ΨΑΜΜΟΝΝΙΟΥΜΜΑΥΤ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ Σαβαοθ στάλητι μήτρα μή σε Τυφών καταλάβη

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth, Sabaoth, contract womb, lest Typhon seize you

Reverse Notes: The first inscription runs spiraling inward from the edge of the reverse. The second inscription is senseless and was carved on the bevel of the piece

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 97

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Height: 3.8

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 3.7

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .8

Past Locations: Acquired from Rev. Greville J. Chester in 1876

Serpentine

British Museum: Prehistory and Europe #s:
OA.9798, 1876,1130.23; 56322; G322;

Current Location: B.M. since 1876, G 322, EA 56322

Black with greenish/
yellow color in cuts

Publications:

Michel 2001b, 411
Bonner, SMA, p.274 # 136
Bonner, Brit Mus., p. 327 in entry for # 26
Wortmann, Nilflut, p. 88, n. 176 referred to as Bonners D 136

Images:

Michel 2001b, 411
Bonner, SMA, Pl. 6 # 136

Manufacture/Use: Eye for suspension, roughly carved figural scene

Physical State: abrasions obverse and reverse

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Duamoutef (?), Chnoubis, Osiris, Nephys/Isis

Other Obverse: Ouroboros. Uterine scene with unusual details - ovoid corrugate uterus, handle-less key, triangular bodies of several deities

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: IAW S

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: IAW starts left of figures and rotates counterclockwise. Opposite to the I in IAW is an S-like character seen on this type of amulet as well as elsewhere. In Bonner's picture it looks like the iota may in fact be a cross type character, but upon closer inspection it appears that the cross stroke is just a scratch that continues into and beyond the leftmost figure

Rv. Transcription: AEHIOYW
OPWPLOYΘ
<IAW>

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Vowels
Ororiouth
Yahweh

Reverse Notes: The brackets on either side of IAW are present on the stone. Above the center of the top line of the inscription is a horizontal line flanked by two divots. A mirror line without the divots falls beneath the inscription.

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: Bonner likens to Southesk #42 which he thinks may be a product of the same workshop and draws attention to a comment made by Southesk on the matter

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 98
Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery
Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with 4 figures

Reverse Subject: Ibis chained to an altar

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Schlumberger 350

Current Location: C.D.M. S 350

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 147, # 189

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 147, # 189

Manufacture/Use: Indistinct carving on obverse; loop at top for cord

Physical State: Worn but overall no major damage

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Right to Left: Duamoutef, Chnoubis, Mummy, Isis

Other Obverse: various indistinct marks around the field - characters possibly?

Reverse Scene: Ibis next to an altar facing right. 3 reeds grow from altar with star above

Other Reverse: Scene framed by to reverse "S" to left and right

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIO
VΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWPIOVΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes: Inscription is below the base line of the figures

Function:

Height: 3.2

Width: 2.65

Depth:

Serpentine

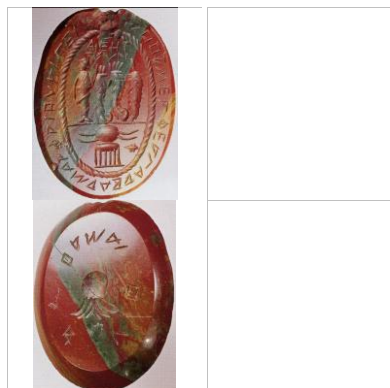
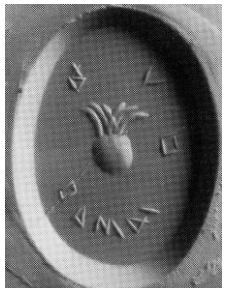
Black

Corpus ID: 99

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Height: 3.28

Reverse Subject:

Width: 2.50

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .45

Past Locations: unknown

Jasper

Current Location: Staatliche Museum Kassel

red with a greenish streak

Publications:

Zazoff 1983, XLIII, 117.3
 Höcker, 1988, p.102, # 104
 Capello, figure 172
 Montfaucon II 2., pl. 173 # 8&9
 Zazoff 1965, 109 figure 18,60
 Zazoff, 1969, 27, # 60, pl. 22, figure 131-133
 Spatantike und Fruhes Christentum, p. 559, # 164
 Michel 2001a, 75, # 77
 Michel 2004, 54.4.c
 Pinder 1873, II. 77
 Volkel 1791, XI 48
 AGD III Kassel # 173

Images:

Zazoff 1983, pl. 117 # 3
 Höcker, 1988, p. 102, # 104, pl. 4 # 104
 Capello, figure 172
 Montfaucon II 2., pl. 173 # 8&9
 Zazoff 1965, 109 figure 18,60
 Michel 2001a, pl. 13 # 77
 AGD III Kassel, pl. 109 Nr. 173

Manufacture/Use: Carving style off. Fallopian tubes doubled and bowed. Flat platform for deities, thin arms of far left all suggest that this may be a modern piece

Physical State: top obverse gouged through Ouroboros and inscription

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to right: female deity with thin arms, dog-headed snake-tailed

mummy, Radiate headed thick bodied snake and a mummy? All face inward

Other Obverse: The handle of the key is not attached to the key. It looks like it has been put there due to convention but the engraver does not know what it is supposed to signify

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AEHI
T QVN

...OOPMEPΦEPΓAPBAPMAPQPIOVΓIGE –

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: The first two lines are at the top center of the field and the omicron is significantly compressed. The other inscription, evidently the Soroor formula circles the edge of the piece, external to the ouroboros

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function: Höcker suggests that the uterus-symbol was meant to "moderate the agony of birth."

Magical Formulae: Soroor

Amuletic Links?:

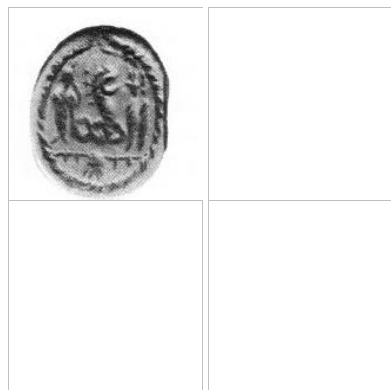
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 100

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Schlumberger # 353

Current Location: C.D.M. S353

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 254-255, # 358

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 254-255, # 358

Manufacture/Use: Indistinct deep but coarse carving. Uterus resembles "notch style" pieces in form, as does the rest of the composition, although more detailed.

Physical State: chip on center of right edge

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Radiate lion headed coiled snake center, two mummies with dog head to the right and a naked person to the left with face turned right with hand in the mouth = Horus?

Other Obverse: The execution of the uterine vase is almost identical to notch style rendering, as is the composition which is here, however, more fleshed out. This places this amulet at the junction of the two styles

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription:

δδ
MHT
PIKO
NΘA

Height: 2.5

Width: 2.0

Depth:

Haemetite

Black/ graphite

ΠΑΤΙΟ
ΑΝ

Rv. Emended: μητρικοῦ πάθους θεραπεία

μητρικοῦ πάθος θεραπεύειν

Rv. Translations: Therapy for the affliction of the uterus - based on D&D's proposed emendations

Reverse Notes: dd Delatte and Derchain say is generally equivalent to "stabilize" or "σταθητι" a word which appears on these pieces and means to "reduce swelling, contract."

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: c. 45 similar wording, perhaps

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 101

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with 4 figures

Height: 2.1

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.8

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .4

Past Locations: From the Towneley Collection. Nr. 331

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1805, G 79, EA 56079

Dark brown/ graphite

Publications: Michel 2001b, 378
 Budge, Guide p. 241
 Barb, Diva Matrix, p. 225 n. 129
 Koehler # 23 of Towneley Collection (or merely identical to?)

Images: Michel 2001b, 378
 Barb, Diva Matrix, plate 31f

Manufacture/Use: Silhouettes. beveled rear edge may suggest the stone having been set in a ring

Physical State: Obverse top right chipped, left chipped and top left edge abraded. Reverse badly worn down. Inscription almost completely erased from the edge

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Isis, Bes with Harpokrates on his head, Khnoum

Other Obverse: Isis is holding a pot (uterine?) in one hand and a brand in the other. Khnoum dangles an Ankh (?) from his hand

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: IAW

AEHIOVW

IAW

CV̄P̄ .VŌ .PMEPΦEPΓA..APMAPAPIOV̄---HIAW

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: law is written in the uterine pot as well as about the heads of Isis, Harpokrates and Khnoum. Vowel row is to left of and beneath key. Long inscription circles the edge of the stone outside the Ouroboros

Rv. Transcription: WPANA---

Rv. Emended: <OV>PAN<I>A ---

Rv. Translations: Michel suggests -Heavenly One, an epithet of Aphrodite

Reverse Notes: The inscription clearly circled the edge of the whole stone and possibly extended further into the main field, however it has long since been destroyed

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 102

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Khnum with uterine pot fashioning people

Height: 1.5

Reverse Subject: Seth on uterine pot

Width: 1.85

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations:

Haemetite

Current Location: C.D.M. # 8001

Graphite/ Black

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 255, # 359
 Barb, Diva Matrix pl 33 c-d
 Barb, Seth or Anubis pl 38c
 Bonner SMA D143

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 255, # 359
 Barb, Diva Matrix pl 33 c-d
 Barb, Seth or Anubis pl 38c
 Bonner SMA D143

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse edge suggesting the intention to mount in a setting of some sort

Physical State:

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Khnum holding octopus-like uterus in right hand star in left solar disc above Bes holds Harpocrates to the right, Isis left with sistrum in right hand and vase in left mimicking Khoum's vase

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene: Set on uterine vase with key facing left with stick in left hand and whip in right

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIOVΘIAEHWEOVIVOWAHIIIOAW

AIWOV

ΘPABBXI

HX

Rv. Emended: OPWPIOVΘ IAEHWEOVIVOWAHIIIOAW

AIWOV

ΘPABBXI

HX

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

senseless syllables

Reverse Notes: The longest inscription circles the outer edge of the reverse starting at the top right and proceeding clockwise. The inscription starting with alpha is immediately inside the outermost inscription on the right part of the field, also circling clockwise. Tharbbxi is on the left o the field circling clockwise from bottom to top, the iota is to the left of the chi. The last eta chi is to the right of the figure again moving clockwise.

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: Almost identical one in Kofler collection of Lucerne see Barry ASAE 7 A,1, 3 p 245-6; Festugiere 1961 p 290; inscription with Set = SMA 84, D 140; # 38, 39 and 68 all have Khnoum as well

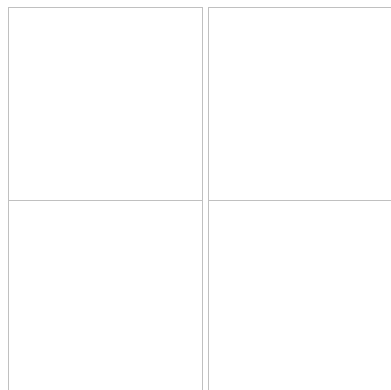
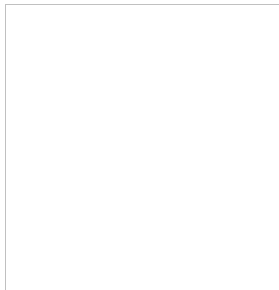
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 103

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Khnum holding uterine vase with three other figures

Height: 2.3

Reverse Subject: blank

Width: 1.74

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .38

Past Locations: from the collection of F.S. Matouk

Haematite

Current Location: University of Koln, no inventory # given

brownish black

Publications: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992, p. 86-88, # 23

Images: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992, pl. 16, # 23

Manufacture/Use: covered in minute letters

Physical State: in fairly good condition, a few chips and gouges on the obverse bottom

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Bes with Harpokrates on his head stands at the left before a seated Ram-headed Khnum who holds out a uterine vase. Behind him to the right Isis stands with the uterine key in her left hand and a situla and horn in her right hand

Other Obverse: An Ouroboros circles an inscription of mixed characters and letters on the bottom half of the stone. It forms the base on which the figures rest.

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: See Zwierlein-Diehl for transcription of obverse. Entire surface covered in letters, none of which seem to spell words

Rv. Transcription:

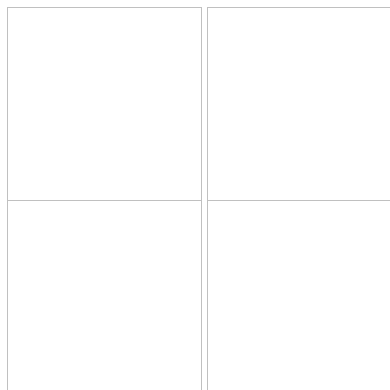
Rv. Emended:

Corpus ID: 104

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Height: 2.1

Reverse Subject: Scarab with wings, ram head and solar disc above uterus

Width: 1.7

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Blanchet Collection not given to the C.D.M.

Haemetite

Current Location: unknown

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 256, # 360

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 256, # 360

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse edge suggesting the intention to mount in a setting of some sort. Shallow carving

Physical State: Obverse edges are irregular, which may be due to the impression and not the actual stone. Otherwise in good condition

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Isis left Khnoum right with was scepter in right hand, Bes on vase in middle holding Harpocrates with hand to the mouth

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene: Ram headed scarab with open wings and solar disc on top above a uterus

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: COPOOPMEPΦEPΓAPBAPMA...

Rv. Emended: COPOOPMEPΦEPΓAPBAPMA[ΦPIOYPINΓE]

Rv. Translations: Soroor formula

Reverse Notes: The photo is such that it is not possible to tell if the rest of the inscription

is not present because it wore off or because it was never carved. The carving on both sides appears shallow, but again this could be because the stone is worn or because the impression was poor

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor on reverse circling field

Amuletic Links?: c. 78

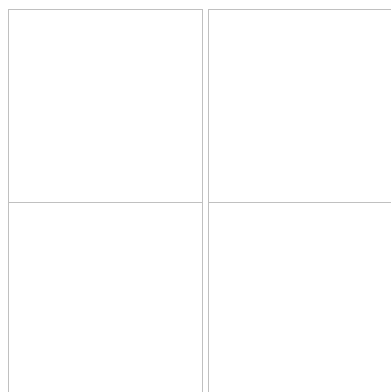
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 105

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three deities and a ram?

Height: 2.08

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.37

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .28

Past Locations:

Haemetite

Current Location: Skoluda collection, M073

black with reddish mottling

Publications: Michel 2001a, 76 # 78

Michel 1995, 384

Michel 2004, 54.2.i

Images: Michel 2001a, pl. 13 # 78

Michel 1995, 384 fig. 13 a & b

Manufacture/Use: Michel calls it a ring stone. Reverse edge beveled. Ouroboros not on edge the whole way. Reverse letters thick and omicron and theta are round, made from a number of strokes. Letters bear serifs

Physical State: obverse badly abraded, especially on top half and around right edge

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: L-R: Harpocrates sitting on top of Bes, Isis holding an upright uterus (?) in her left hand, quadruped (lion? Ram?)

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 106

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Height: 2.3

Reverse Subject: Concentric circling inscription around a scarab and octopus uterus

Width: 2.0

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Gift of Kyticas (?) in 1908

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1908, G 543, EA 48024 (56543)

Publications: Michel 2001b, 376
 Bonner, SMA, p. 90 n.50
 Bonner, Brit Mus., p. 327 # 27
 Barb, Diva Matrix, p. 225, n. 129

Images: Michel 2001b, 376
 Bonner, Brit Mus., # 27

Manufacture/Use: finely cut, hundreds of small letters, even on the bevel of the reverse which may indicate that it was set as a ring. Bonner (Brit Mus.) says that it was mounted as a pendant.

Physical State: In fairly good condition, though in places the inscription is polished away. Bonner 1951 mentions it mounted as a pendant

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Bes with Harpokrates on his shoulders, Isis holding an upright pot, ram. Harpokrates has his hand to his mouth. Bonner thinks the ram may be a lion.

Other Obverse: Pot in Isis's hand is reminiscent of Khnoum holding pots and is a bit self referential to the amulet itself

Reverse Scene: Scarab above an octopus uterus, which Michel rightly mentions resembles a hieroglyph for the sun disc and its rays.

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: WMΦOHIIOTΠOΨOPOΦWTHICΨEEWXWXAI

OCXOVXOCΨ

INMA

ΑΕΕVIAΨΕΙΑWHTVWEIAVWEHEIWΔENIOVWWKHIPAWNINOΦ
 AEHIOV.A

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Many vowel combinations and nonsense syllables

Obverse Notes: The first three inscriptions are all within the field, circling the central figures and are transcribed concentrically. The fourth inscription circles the edge of the obverse, outside the ouroboros. All start at the top and circle clockwise.

Rv. Transcription: ABA...AVHAIVANOPWTOV..CI..IXIWXW

MAPWOVXAXIAXIMOV

EOVHIAWAIM.I

NΨOIW

AΘWPAΛOPWPPIOVEΘWEAPWEIAΑΑΑΑ

Rv. Emended:

—
—
—

AΘWP AΛ OPWPION{E}Θ WEAPWEIAΑΑΑΑ

Rv. Translations: Hathor... Ororiouth...

Reverse Notes: Inscription in four concentric circles starting from the top edge working in and going clockwise. Last inscription comes from reverse bevel

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: c. 107

Other Notes: Michel suggests that it is carved from a now lost pattern based on its similarity to other amulets (c. 106) and the confused nature of its inscriptions.

Corpus ID: 107

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine Scene with four figures surrounded by letters

Height: 2.31

Reverse Subject: Scarab and Octopus uterus surrounded by letters

Width: 1.59

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden in 1986

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1986, G 1986,5-1,28

Black/ graphite

Publications: Michel 2001b, 377

Images: Michel 2001b, 377

Manufacture/Use: Finely carved. beveled reverse edge (with inscription) which may suggest use as a ring-stone.

Physical State: Right edge of obverse has gash which removes inscription. Reverse has gash down the center which damages both inscription and pictorial carving

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Bes with Harpokrates on his head, Isis with pot in her hand, ram.

Other Obverse: Isis has a pot, which may be a reference to the uterine pot on which she stands

Reverse Scene: Scarab on top, octopus uterus below

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: WMΦΟΡΟΦΟΜΦΟΡΟΦWTHCΨEEWXWXAIONXOVX

OCΨWNIOVAMEP

IΦV

EOV

ΑΕΕΥΙΑΨΩ – – – WAENEIOYWWKHIPAWNINOΦΑWHIOYWA

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: WMΦΟΡΟΦ repeated with short "o" twice. KHIRAWNINOF also appears in # 98. First two inscriptions start within the field at the top center and work clockwise. Third to the left of the uterine pot, fourth to the right. 5th is outside of the Ouroboros, on the edge, circling clockwise.

Rv. Transcription: ABAMBAWAHAVHAI.....NAPWTOYEMΨANO

WOVΘMAPWOVXAX

BA

ΨΟΙWEΘWEAPWEIAAXIHEOVO ---- MOVN

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: Michel suggests that MARWOYXAX may be a magic word. Also that the BA between the scarab and octopus uterus might be the Egyptian for "soul". First two inscriptions circling clockwise in concentric circles. The third is between the two figures. The fourth is on the bevel.

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: c. 106

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 108

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations:

Current Location: C.D.M. 2201

Height: 1.75

Width: 1.4

Depth:

Haemetite

Black/ graphite with
red in cuts

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 253-254, # 356

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 253-254, # 356

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse edge suggesting the intention to mount in a setting of some sort. Deeply carved obverse.

Physical State: Worn obverse

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Nephtys and Isis on edges, Duamoutef on right, Bes on left

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWP IOVΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

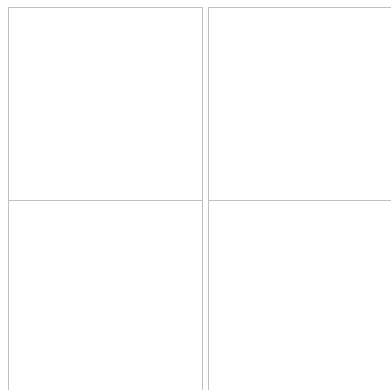
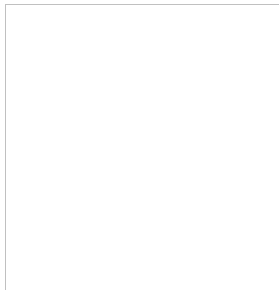
Reverse Notes: Really angular irregular lettering.

Corpus ID: 109

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with 4 deities

Height: 1.9

Reverse Subject: blank? Not shown

Width: 1.4

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations:

Haemetite

Current Location: Kelsey Museum, University of Michigan, 26147

Graphite/ dark brown

Publications: Michel 2004, 357, 70.4, 52.4.j

Images: Michel 2004, pl. 70.4

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: Large chips and abrasions over whole obverse. Remaining surface badly worn.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: 4 deities, possibly including Isis, Duamoutef and Bes. Edges badly worn down, making certain identification impossible

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: Inscription around the edge of the Ouroboros is destroyed with only an omicron in the top left quarter still legible

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

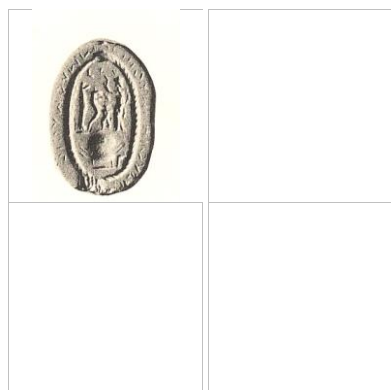
Function:

Corpus ID: 110

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Height: 1.8

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.2

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Ruthven #8

Haemetite

Current Location: Michigan, Kelsey Museum #1963.04.0009

Graphite/ Dark Brown

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 273, #130

Images: Bonner SMA, D130

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: slightly chipped on bottom right obverse

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: L-R: Duamoutef, Chnoubis, Bes, Isis

Other Obverse: Isis has a cornucopia and a raised hand

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: outside of the Ouroboros combinations of vowels excepting A and E. The edge is damaged and worn preventing me from venturing a transcription based on the photo

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOYΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWP IOYΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

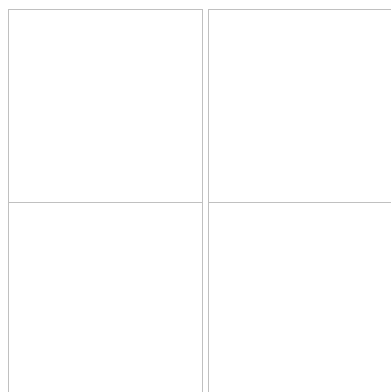
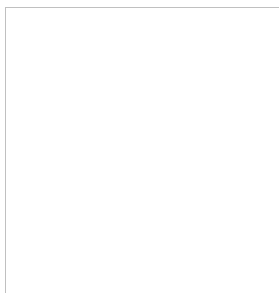
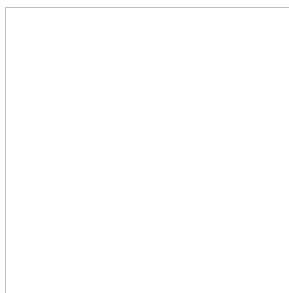
Reverse Notes:

Corpus ID: 111

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Height: 1.7

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.2

Provenance: Pusztaszabolcs, county Fejér, Hungary 1977.
Unclear if the piece was found there or part of a collection and brought to the attention of scholars while there

Depth:

Past Locations: In the possession of Mr. István Gulyás

stone, type not specified

Current Location: István Király Museum in Székesfehérvár

Publications: Kakosy 1987, p. 241-242

Images: Kakosy 1987, p. 241 Figures 1 & 2

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse edge indicating possible use in a ring or pendant setting

Physical State: Some gouges on the obverse

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overtured Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Isis, Osiris (?), Duamoutef, Hermes (?)

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AEHIOYW

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: The vowels are located to the sides of and underneath the uterine vase. Additionally there was an inscription circling the obverse edge outside of the Ouroboros which is so badly damaged as to make it illegible

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOYΘ

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

Function: Menorrhagia as proposed by Kakosy based on the inscription. Purely iconographic interpretation may point to "black magic" and the use of the key to hinder delivery.

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes: Suggests that Anubis is present as "the gatekeeper" and key holder to the netherworld and by simile possibly as the gatekeeper of the uterus - the κλεδοῦχος

Corpus ID: 112

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Reverse Subject: Ibis chained to an altar

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Schlumberger 351

Current Location: C.D.M . S 351

Height: 3.5

Width: 2.5

Depth:

Jasper

Black with red in the cuts

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 146, # 188

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 146, # 188

Manufacture/Use: hole at top for suspension from a cord; carving is crude with inscription on obverse scratched on messily

Physical State: Worn with a chip on the left reverse but on other major damage

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: simple uterine scene

Reverse Scene: Ibis tied to an altar with three stalks growing from

Other Reverse: two "S" backwards surround the scene

Ob.Transcription: OPW
PIOYΘ

Ob. Emended: OPWPLOYΘ

Ob. translation: Ororiouth

Obverse Notes: The inscription is located above the tubes, where figures are typically found. There is also an inscription circling the edge of the obverse which D & D do not transcribe and which the picture does not permit me to transcribe but which is said to be a series of vowels repeated three times

Rv. Transcription: IAW

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Yahweh

Reverse Notes: The inscription is scratched beneath the ground line of the field

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes: D&D think it has to do with the timing of correct cycles (menses or pregnancy perhaps?) with the Ibis representing Thoth who is the master of time having invented the means by which to measure it

Corpus ID: 113

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Height: 2.0

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 2.0

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .25

Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden in 1986

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1986, G 1986,5-1,29

Black/ graphite

Publications: Michel 2001b, 370

Images: Michel 2001b, 370

Manufacture/Use: Figures are only single lines with no characteristics. Rear edge beveled so possibly used as a stone in a ring. Divot possibly representing a drilled out section that was not elaborated on.

Physical State: Front badly abraded/worn. Outer inscription worn off and probably most of original carving on figures. Reverse has a divot at bottom but it does not affect reading

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Four figures, none identifiable.

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: There was clearly an inscription circling the edge of the piece at one point, but it has long since been polished off. It was probably the Soroor formula

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: The Soroor formula probably once circled the obverse edge

Amuletic Links?: c. 38 also has a divot drilled in it.

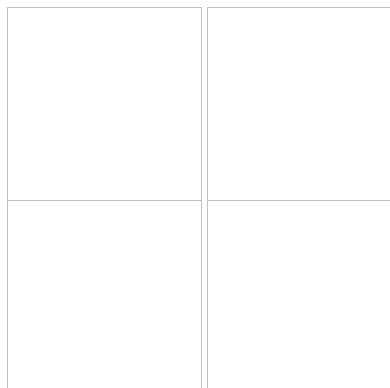
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 114

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: uterine scene with 5 deities

Height: 1.61

Reverse Subject: scarab, octopus uterus and inscription

Width: 1.79

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations:

Haemetite

Current Location: Harvard University Art Gallery, Sackler Museum
1983.26

Publications: Michel 2004, 357 71.2, 54.4.b

Images: Michel 2004, pl. 71.2

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge is beveled

Physical State: Inscription on obverse outside of ouroboros is worn down, otherwise in good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: L-R: Isis (?), Harpokrates on a-cephalic Bes, Chnoubis on the uterine vase, Khnoum sitting next to the vase with his hand on the key

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene: Human headed scarab perched on an octopus uterus

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: ΞΟΡΟΟΡΜΕΡ.....ΒΑ.Μ---

ΑΞΗΙΟVW

Ob. Emended: Ξοροορμερφεργαρβαρ---

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: The inscription is the Soroor formula based on the first few syllables. It is outside of the ouroboros The vowels are inside the field, by the heads of the figures

Rv. Transcription: ΒΨΙΞ ---CTAΛΗΤΙΜΗΤΡΑ

OPWPIOYΘIAWCABAWΘ ---
 ΞΟΡΛΘΗΜΙΘΟΑΚΙΑΧ.ΙΑΑΕΜΙΝΑΕΒΑΡWΘΕΡΡΕΘWΡΑΒΕ

Rv. Emended: ---CTAΛHTI MHTPA

OPWPIOYΘ IAW CABAWΘ --- ΞΟΡΛΘΗΜΙΘΟΑΚΙΑΧ.Ι
 ΑΑΕΜΙΝΑΕΒΑΡ
 WΘΕΡΡΕΘWΡΑΒΕ

Rv. Translations: --- contract womb!

Ororiouth, Yahweh, Sabaoth... Aemeinabar formula ---

Reverse Notes: The first inscription is written on the bevel, all of which is not visible in the photo. The second spirals from the edge of the main field toward the center. Transcription is based on photograph, and contains part of the Aemeinabar formula. Titles of Ororiouth etc. Separated from second half of inscription by three reversed "n" with extended down strokes on the end

Function:

Magical Formulae: Aemeinabar formula at least in part. Associated with Seth

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

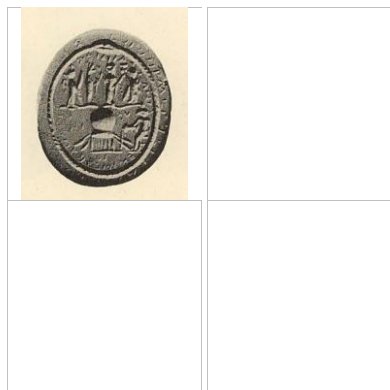
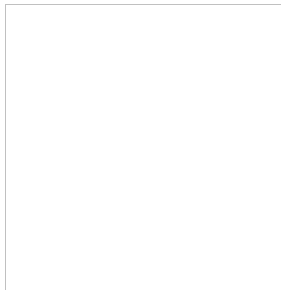
Corpus ID: 115

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:



Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with five figures

Height: 2.0

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.8

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Graphite/grey with red in the cuts

Haemetite

Current Location: Ann Arbor Michigan: Kelsey Museum # 0000.02.6067

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 275-276, # 142

Images: Bonner SMA, D 142 (obverse only)

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: Inscription at edge of obverse badly worn down. No major chips

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Nephthys/Isis, Duamoutef, Contraposto goddess, Isis/Nephthys with wing up and a probable uterine pot resting on it. All four face center. Below a sitting Khnum has his hand on the key

Other Obverse: A scepter (?) in front of Duamoutef ?

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: COPOOPMEP---IΓΞ

IAYIA.IAW.....QWIWCABAW.....

A EY

HI

W

Ob. Emended:

CABAW[Θ]

Ob. translation: Soroor formula

Vowels, Yahweh, Vowels Sabaoth

Vowels

Obverse Notes: vowels in the field in various combinations. Iao at the right, Sabaoth beneath the pot and the Soroor formula outside the Ouroboros

Rv. Transcription: OPWPIOYΘ
 IAH-----
 IAHWIEAI
 BOPBOP
 ΠΑΡ
 ΦΟΡΦΟΡ
 ΒΑΡ
 ΦΟΡΦΟΡ
 ΡΑΙ

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes: Although Bonner says that the inscription is in eight lines he does not provide a line by line transcription and I have no picture of the reverse, I thus followed his breaks in my transcription. The dashes are "four characters" (of unknown shape) and a "Chnoubis symbol"

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

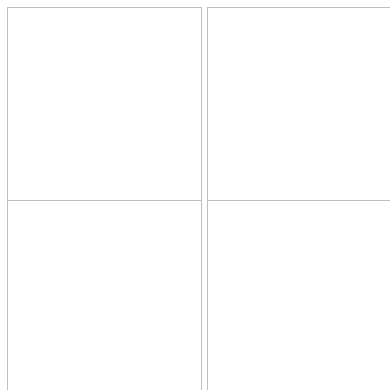
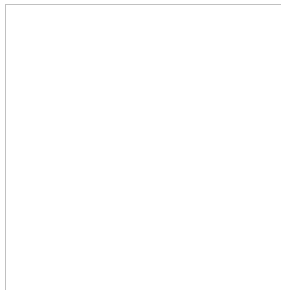
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 116

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with five figures

Height: 1.9

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.7

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Walters Art Gallery # 42.873

Haematite or limonite
(Bonner)

Current Location:

Brown

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 274, # 133

Images: Bonner SMA, D 133

Manufacture/Use: Crowded design but for the most part clean carving

Physical State: In good condition, although the reverse is not shown

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: Left to Right: Bes, Duamoutef, Semi Nude female (Isis or Aphrodite),
Ram with a scarab above its back (Bonner Ids as a scarab - it is unclear in
the photo just what it is)

Other Obverse: Possible sistrum in female's right hand

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AE OV
HI W

COPOOPMEΦEPΓAPBAPMAWΠΓIIΞ

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Vowels

Soroor formula

Obverse Notes: Vowels are beneath the tubes to the right and left of the uterine pot.
Soroor formula circles the obverse edge outside of the Ouroboros in a
clockwise fashion

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ

Rv. Emended: OPWPIOVΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes: It is not clear how the inscription is broken up/ carved on the stone as Bonne does not show it and does not give a line by line transcription but a final version noting that it was originally in two lines. I have provided the most common break as the "transcribed inscription"

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor formula circles the edge of the obverse

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 117

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with four figures

Height: 1.9

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.9

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations:

Haemetite

Current Location: C.D.M 2202 # 3

Black/ graphite

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 254, # 357

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 254, # 357

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse edge suggesting the intention to mount in a setting of some sort.

Physical State: Bottom 1/6th knocked off. Deep gash through bottom line on reverse. Edges generally irregular

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overtured Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Right to left: Radiate lentocephalic serpent to right, Bes middle right, a goddess with a baby in her arms identified as Nephtys by a Calathos on her head and a meat necklace in her right hand, and at the far left is a bearded man naked with a solar disc on head and basket

Other Obverse: vowels and law around the pot

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: COOOPMEPΦEP...NICHΓΞ

Ob. Emended: CO[P]OOPMEPΦEP...NICHΓΞ

COPOOPMEPΓEPΓAPBAPMAΦPIOVHPHΓΞ

Ob. translation: Soroor formula

Obverse Notes: Inscription circles clockwise around outer obverse edge. Badly damaged. There may be a character above the handle in the field but there is a

crack in the stone at that point so it is difficult to be sure

Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘV

Rv. Emended: OPWPIOVΘ

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor on obverse outside of Ouroboros

Amuletic Links?:

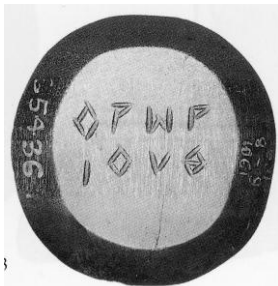
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 118

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Finely wrought uterine scene with 5 deities

Height: 2.1

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 2.1

Provenance: unknown (Alexandria ?)

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Gift of Fa. R.J. Moss & Co. Alexandria

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. G 534, EA 35436

Black/ graphite

Publications: Michel 2001b, 373

Images: Michel 2001b, 373

Manufacture/Use: Finely wrought and carefully detailed. beveled reverse may indicate use in a ring

Physical State: In very good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Left to right: Chnoubis, Duamoutef, Isis, Osiris, Bes. The first to face right, the last three are frontal.

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AE W
H V
I O

COPOOPMEPΦPEΓAPBAMAΦPOYPIΓIEAE

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation: Vowel row

Soroor formula

Obverse Notes: Vowels start with alpha and epsilon next to each other to the left of the uterine pot and then circle counterclockwise under the uterine pot and around to the right. Soroor inscription starts at top right of obverse

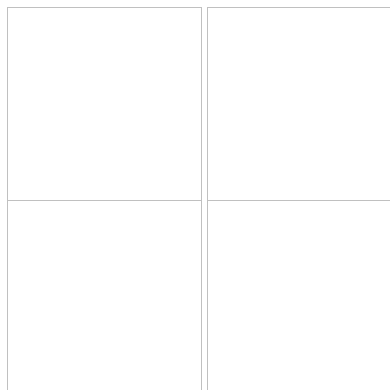
center edge
Rv. Transcription: OPWP
IOVΘ
Rv. Emended: Ορωριουθ
Rv. Translations: Ororiouth
Reverse Notes:
Function:
Magical Formulae: Soroor formula
Amuletic Links?:
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 119

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with six figures

Height: 1.77

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.31

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .22

Past Locations: Acquired in Egypt

Haematite

Current Location: University of Koln, Inv. G 4

Publications: Zwierein-Diehl 1992, p. 90, # 25
Wortmann, Gemmen, p. 71 # 10

Images: Zwierein-Diehl 1992, pl. 17, # 25a & b

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse edge suggesting use in a setting

Physical State: gouges along the bottom obverse. A few scratches on the reverse. Zwierein-Diehl takes the obverse marks as the result of the production of Haematite powder.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overtured Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Duamoutef and Isis (?) stand on the tubes while Khnoum sits next to and has a hand on the main key. Isis and Nephys (?) flank a figure (Osiris? Or Harpocrates? According to Wortmann and Z-D respectively) under the uterine key. Z-D does note that her proposed grouping is seen on no other amulets and has a parallel in and 18th c. Glass paste piece

Other Obverse: The top Isis holds a key in one hand and an upright uterine pot in the other. The Ouroboros circles the whole field.

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: OV

A HI
E

W

- COPOOPMEPΦA --- APMAΦΦPIONPΓA
- Ob. Emended: AEHIOVW
- COPOOPMEΦPA[PΓAPB]APMAΦΦPIONPΓE
- Ob. translation: Vowels
- Soroor Formula
- Obverse Notes: The vowels are found scattered about the face of the piece with the Soroor formula circling the outer edge in a clockwise fashion
- Rv. Transcription: IAIA
IAWI
A ∩∩∩
∩∩∩
- Rv. Emended: IAIA Ιαω Ια . .
- Rv. Translations: vowels, law, characters
- or: Yahweh Yahweh Yawhwh Yahweh if IA is accepted as an alternate form of Yahweh (Z-D p. 91)
- Reverse Notes: The six characters on the bottom of the stone are like an S with up slanting top and bottom slashes. The bottom three have what appears to be a cross stroke extending from the middle of on to the top of the next. See picture
- Function:
- Magical Formulae: Soroor formula on the obverse edge
- Amuletic Links?:
- Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 120

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with seven figures

Height: 2.5

Reverse Subject: Reaper with stalks - typical sciatica motif without inscription

Width: 2.1

Provenance: Said to be from Simbelawin (Bonner 273)

Depth: .5

Past Locations:

Slate like stone

Current Location: Michigan, Kelsey Museum # 0000.02.6022

Grey/ brown

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 273, # 126

Images: Bonner SMA, D 126

Manufacture/Use: projection at top with side to side perforation for cord

Physical State: Heart Shaped

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis is in the center facing left. Immediately to his left is an Anubis mummy or Duamoutef. Behind Chnoubis are three generic figures. Behind Duamoutef there are two generic figures

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene: A reaper cuts three stalks of grain.

Other Reverse: A wineskin hangs from a tree with an Ibis perched above it and a rearing snake on the far side of the tree

Ob.Transcription: OI..IC.A

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: The inscription comes underneath the figures and above the tubes. It appears that there may be a character between the two iotas, or perhaps a mu

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function: Front is for the hips the back is "for ailments of women" (Bonner 273)

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: Σκιων amulets, possible link to pepte amulets with ibis on obverse

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 121

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with 8 figures, 6 of which are totally preserved

Height: 1.5

Reverse Subject: Inscription with figural scene

Width: 2.9

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .2

Past Locations: Gift of Rev. Greville J. Chester in 1886

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1886, G 496, EA 56496

Publications: Michel 2001b, 379
Barb, Diva Matrix, p. 216 n.45; p. 225 n. 128
Barb, Seth or Anubis, p. 367

Images: Michel 2001b, 379
Barb, Diva Matrix, pl. 31 d&e
Barb, Seth or Anubis, pl. 38d

Manufacture/Use: fairly well carved. Remaining letters clear. Reverse edge beveled for possible setting in a ring

Physical State: bottom 1/3 of the stone is missing. Top also chipped off. Large chip on left of obverse. Large chip on top of reverse.

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: On top Left to Right: Scarab, Isis Fortuna (Michel), Bes with Harpokrates on his head, Osiris as Mummy, Nephtys. Below left: Chnoubis, Below right: animal headed god

Other Obverse: Isis holds a cornucopia and scepter. Sun disc above Harpokrates

Reverse Scene: Seth/Typhon with a staff standing on an overturned uterine pot

Other Reverse: Seth holds an ankh and wadjet scepter (?)

Ob.Transcription: IAW

AEH VW
IO

POOP ---- HP11

- Ob. Emended: AEHIOVW
 COPOOPMEPΦEPΓAPBAPMAΦPIOVHPIΓEI
- Ob. translation: Yahweh
 Vowel row
 Soroor formula
- Obverse Notes: Soroor formula circles outside of the Ouroboros, law is between the heads of the gods and may also include an "E" by the hand of the rightmost god. Vowel row is beneath the deities and to the left and right sides of the uterine pot
- Rv. Transcription: TAAH---WΦWNKA---
 ΛABH ---IPIOVΘ
- Rv. Emended: [C]TAAH[TI MHTPA ME CE T]VΦWN KATAΛABH OPWPPIOVΘ
- Rv. Translations: Contract, womb! Lest Typhon seize you! Ororiouth
- Reverse Notes: The inscription is reconstructed based on complete versions of this same inscription found on other stones. The inscription circles continuously from outside to inside in into tow concentric rings
- Function:
- Magical Formulae: The Soroor formula remains in part on the obverse outside of the Ouroboros
- Amuletic Links?:
- Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 122

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene in notch style with three figures

Height: 1.35

Reverse Subject: Pseudo-Inscription

Width: 1.1

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: gift of Jack Ogden in 1986

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1986, G 1986,5-1,37

Black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 417

Images: Michel 2001b, 417

Manufacture/Use: crude quick style Michel terms "Kerbenstil" "notch" style. Suggests mass manufacturing. beveled reverse may indicate that it was meant to be set in a ring

Physical State: in good condition lacking any visible damage

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis in center flanked probably by Duamoutef and the Osiris mummy on the left (?) and Isis (?) on the right

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

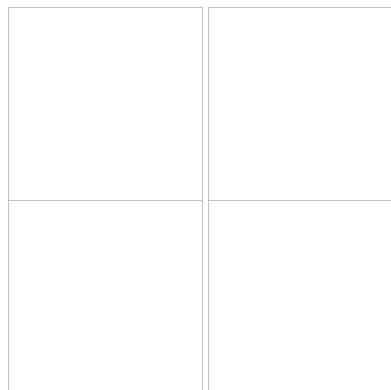
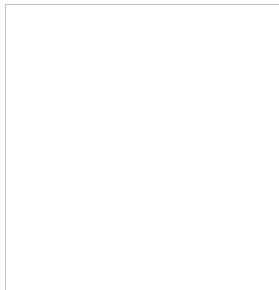
Reverse Notes: The reverse, including the bevel, is covered in what look like letters, but which are actually senseless letter imitations without meaning.

Corpus ID: 123

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with one, possibly four figures

Height: 1.4

Reverse Subject: Pseudo-inscription

Width: 1.0

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .2

Past Locations:

Jasper

Current Location: Römisch-Germanischen Museum, Köln, RGM 8877

Black

Publications: Krug 1980, p. 250, # 449

Images: Krug 1980, pl. 130, # 449

Manufacture/Use: Notch style crude carving

Physical State: Chip at top right of obverse

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Probably Chnoubis is represented by the large radiate headed figure in the middle of the field above the pot. The other possible three figures are represented only by vertical slashes.

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

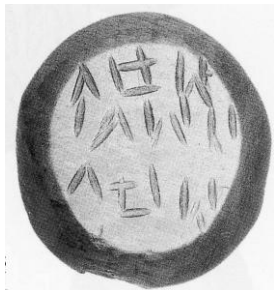
Reverse Notes: The pseudo inscription is in three lines, which unfortunately are not shown in the publication

Corpus ID: 124

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with one figure

Height: 1.2

Reverse Subject: inscription

Width: 1.2

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden in 1986

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1986, G 1986,5-1,36

Black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 418

Images: Michel 2001b, 418

Manufacture/Use: notch-style. Very sparse. Bevel on reverse suggests possible use in a ring. Letters poorly formed

Physical State: Edge of obverse through circling inscription has been partially cut away, destroying the inscription

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis in center. Possibly flanked by three other figures who are represented only by vertical lines.

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: AOW
IAWII
AOW

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Vowels, IAW, vowels

Reverse Notes: rest of the letter which makes it look a bit like a sigma and an iota.
Overall, very poorly formed letters

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: c. 122-129

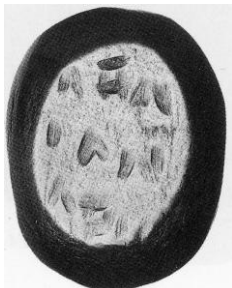
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 125

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with one definite and four possible figures

Height: 1.4

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.0

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .25

Past Locations: From the Blacas collection, 1867

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1867 G 448, EA 56448

Black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 419

Images: Michel 2001b, 419

Manufacture/Use: Notch style, very crude. Ouroboros is series of non-connected depressions, like a pie crust edge. beveled reverse edge indicates possible use in a ring

Physical State: In fairly good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis flanked by three vertical lines, two to the left and one to the right. Possibly meant to be Duamoutef, Osiris and Isis as suggested in # 113

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: AOW
IAW
AOW

Rv. Emended:

Corpus ID: 126

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with one definite and four possible figures

Height: 1.4

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.4

Provenance: Caesarea

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Gift of Rev. Greville J. Chester, 1866

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1866, G 215, EA 56215

Black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 420

Images: Michel 2001b, 420

Manufacture/Use: Notch style. Beveled reverse edge may suggest use in a ring

Physical State: Left obverse, right reverse chip through edge. Does not affect field of either

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis with squared coils flanked by three vertical lines, two to the left and one to the right. Possibly meant to be Duamoutef, Osiris and Isis as suggested in #113

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: AOH
OHH
II

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: Michel transcribes the lambda as an alpha, as it was probably intended given the rest of the vowels in the inscription. However, it is clear from the photo that no cross stroke is present.

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: c. 122-129

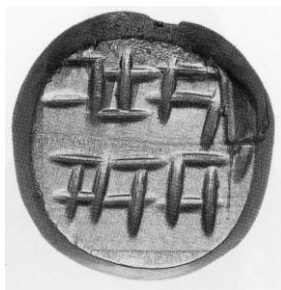
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 127

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with one, probably three figures

Height: 1.3

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.3

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden in 1986

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1986, G 1986,5-1,35

Black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 421

Images: Michel 2001b, 421

Manufacture/Use: Very crude notch style. beveled reverse edge, possibly indicating use within a ring

Physical State: Obverse edge damaged. Inscription to edge but unclear if cut down through or just a pseudo-inscription. Prefer the latter option

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis with squared coils with two figures, represented only by vertical strokes crossed by one horizontal strokes, to his right.

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: OA
AIA

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Vowels

Reverse Notes: Inscription is messy and it is debatable what letters the engraver was

attempting. It is possible that it is only a pseudo inscription. I follow Michel's transcription.

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: c. 122-129

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 128

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene with three figures

Height: 1.1

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: .95

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden, 1986

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1986, G 1986,5-1,34

Black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 422

Images: Michel 2001b, 422

Manufacture/Use: Extremely crude and messy carving. Notch style. Inscription extremely shallow. Reverse edge beveled

Physical State: Obverse left edge cut off. Obverse right edge abraded. Abrasion reverse center

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: No figures are definitely identifiable. Chnoubis is probably on the right given his scale and possible inclusion of coils and there are two vertical strokes to the left which are probably meant to be deities.

Other Obverse: Orouboros as a series of notches

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: IIIII
IIIIY

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: alleged etas and so prefer to read them all as Iota's or vertical strokes

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: c. 122-129

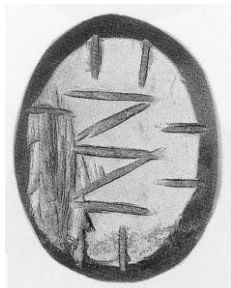
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 129

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Uterine scene surmounted by three characters?

Height: 1.45

Reverse Subject: Inscription (?)

Width: 1.05

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden, 1986

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1986 G 1986,5-1,38

Black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 423

Images: Michel 2001b, 423

Manufacture/Use: Notch style. Reverse edge beveled suggesting possible use in a ring

Physical State: gash on left reverse

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: There are no identifiable deities on the obverse. A triangle is to the left and a star to the right separated by a long vertical stroke with horn like strokes off the top. Michel suggests that this may be meant to symbolize Chnoubis

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse: Two parallel notches are found on the top, bottom and sides of the field extending to the edges

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: Z
Z

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: connecting horizontal stroke. It is unclear if this is a character or if it was meant to be a Z that recalled Zeus or a Chnoubis symbol

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: c. 122-129

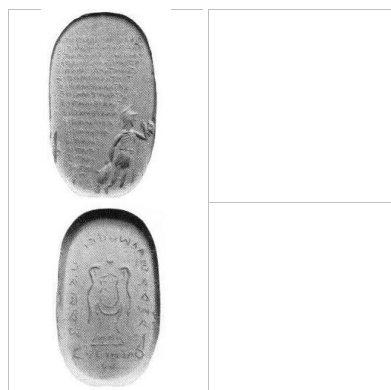
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 130

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Upright Pot on an alter with snakes on either side

Height: 4.1

Reverse Subject: Pterygoma with soldier in lower right

Width: 2.4

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Schlumberger 354

Haemetite

Current Location: C.D.M. S 354

Black/ graphite with greenish sheen

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 258, # 364
Bonner SMA, p. 188

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 258, # 364

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse edge implies that it may have been intended to be set in a ring or other piece

Physical State: Worn and scratch on obverse left but otherwise in good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: 2 snakes next to upturned pot sitting on a horned/ curved altar with a star over it

Reverse Scene: Warrior in the bottom left, shield resting on the ground belted, helmeted, lance leaning on his left arm, left arm lifted, facing right. D&D = Tantalos

Other Reverse: Tropaeion?

Ob.Transcription: Διψασ Τανταλε αιεμα πιε

Ob. Emended: Διψᾶσ Τάνταλ'; αἰ{ε}μα πίε

Ob. translation: Are you thirsty, Tantalos? Drink the blood

Obverse Notes: A Pterygoma that loses one letter each line until bottom - unclear how many letters are left. Emended transcription after D & D

Rv. Transcription: ΙΑΩ

AΔWNOEI

AΔWA

CABAW

AEHIOY
W

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Yahweh
Adonai
Sabaoth
Vowels

Reverse Notes: Yahweh is on the base of the altar and the vowels are underneath the altar. Adonoei is above the altar at the top edge, Sabaw is on the right edge and Adwa on the left edge

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: warrior matches D&D 3 424. An entire class is known of this type. Michel suggests that they are for the liver, and the suggestion seems plausible. One wonders if the form on the altar is not intended to represent the lobed liver or simply the entrails/ uterus of a sacrifice generally

Other Notes: Identical to one in the Kofler and Lucerne collection published by Festugiere; Seyrig links to PGM LXII 103 to provoke haemorrhage. D&D say Bonner's explanation is untenable.

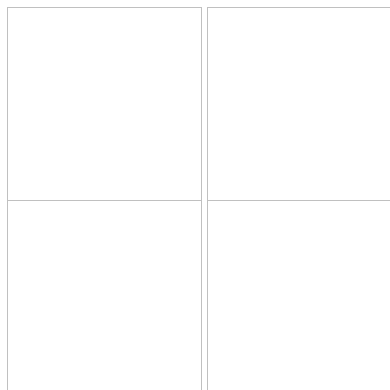
Corpus ID: 131

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:



Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Pterygoma with soldier

Height: 5.4

Reverse Subject: Altar with pot and snakes and inscription

Width: 2.9

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .65

Past Locations: Private Possession, Beirut

haemetite

Current Location: unknown

Publications: Bonner SMA, p. 276 # 144
Seyrig, Berytus 1. 3-4

Images: Bonner SMA, D 144

Manufacture/Use: Carving and inscription on obverse seems finer and deeper than the same on the reverse (altar). beveled reverse edge may indicate the intention to mount the stone in a ring or pendant

Physical State: No major damage

 Pot

Ororiouth

Magical Formualae

Ligaments

 Overturned

Ouroboros

Medusa/ Octopus Uterus

Tubes

Key

Deities Obverse: A warrior armed with a spear and shield, helmet, kilt, chlamys and boots with a thunderbolt above him. Bonner suggests that it may be Ares

Other Obverse: Tropaeion?

Reverse Scene: altar in the shape of a crescent moon on a truncated triangular base. Upturned pot sits on the altar and is flanked by two snakes. Geometrically incised disc above the pot.

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: ΔΙΨΑΚΤΑΝΤΑΛΕΑΙΜΑΤΙΕ

Ob. Emended: διψᾶς Τάνταλε αἶμα πίε (Bonner SMA p. 276)

διψᾶς Τάνταλε; αἶμα πίε (Rose 1951, p. 59-60)

Ob. translation: Tantalus-viper, drink blood. (Bonner SMA p. 276)

Thirsty Tantalos? Drink blood. (Rose)

Obverse Notes: Each line of the inscription drops one letter until one epsilon is left in the last row. Bonner prefers his translation to Rose's because questions are rare on these amulets and he believes the snakes on the reverse are being addressed. Grammatically Rose's makes more sense.

Rv. Transcription: MEAΘAΔW
NOEICABAWΘ
IAW
AEHIOYW

Rv. Emended: MEAΘAΔW
NOEI CABAWΘ
IAW
AEHIOYW

Rv. Translations: Methado
Noei
Sabaoth
Yahweh
Vowels

Reverse Notes: μεθαδωα inscription is top left to middle left down side. Σαβαωθ inscription is top right to middle right down side. law is on the base of the altar and the vowels come under the base line of the scene

Function: to stop haemorrhage. Michel (2001) suggests that this class of amulet is intended to alleviate liver pain, an explanation which is convincing.

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: See other examples of this class in corpus and in Michel 2001

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 132

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Tantalos pterygoma and a warrior

Reverse Subject: Inscription and a figure, a Tropaeion (?)

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations:

Current Location: BM GR 1928,5-20,1

Publications: Michel 2001b, 243 # 383

Images: Michel 2001b, pl. 56 # 383

Manufacture/Use: Bevel on reverse edge

Physical State: Deep gashes on obverse top center and bottom right. Chip on obverse left edge. Bottom of obverse inscription effected.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene: Tropaeion

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended: Διψῶσ Τάνταλ'; αἰξε}μα πίε

Ob. translation: Thirsty Tantalos? Drink blood

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: AΔWNOE
 C I
 A Θ
 B A
 A Δ
 W W

Height: 3.85

Width: 2.5

Depth: .4

Haemetite

A WA
EHIOV

- Rv. Emended: Αδωναι εις θεος Αδωναι Σαβαωθ AEHIOYW
- Rv. Translations: Adonai, to the god Adonai, Sabaoth, vowels (suggested by Michel)
- Reverse Notes: Given the nature of the symbol in the center of the inscription, a tropaeion of warrior's arms, Michel's emendations to the inscription make sense, when the trophy is being dedicated to the deity
- Function:
- Magical Formulae: Tantalos formula
- Amuletic Links?:
- Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 133

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Mars Ultor

Reverse Subject: Pseudo Inscription

Height: 3.5

Width: 2.1

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .5

Past Locations: Collection of Praun and Mertens, Given by George Eastwood, Esq. In 1864

Haematite

Current Location: British Museum G 112, EA 56112

graphite

Publications: Michel 2001b, 244-245, n. 385

Images: Michel 2001b, 244, n. 385, plate 57 n. 385

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse edge, well carved and detailed warrior figure

Physical State: chip on bottom right of obverse which extends into the shield. Chip in left bottom obverse edge. Reverse bottom scratch that extends through the bottom line of the pseudo inscription

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Mars Ultor with shield and javelin

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: ΑΡΕCΕΤΕΜΕΝΤΟVΗΠΑΤΟCΤΟΝΠΟΝΟ

Ob. Emended: ΑΡΕC ΕΤΕΜΕΝ ΤΟV ΗΠΑΤΟC ΤΟΝ ΠΟΝΟ

” ἄρες ἔτεμεν τοῦ ἥπατος τὸν πόνο[ν]

Ob. translation: Ares cut off the pain of the liver

Obverse Notes: (by his feet) to the bottom right of the amulet, ending by his feet. There is also an inscription of 11 pseudo-letters circling closer to the figure but the meaning of these is unknown

Rv. Transcription: ΕΕΦΞΞ
 ΧΘ -- Ο *

 **
 **

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: The inscription has Greek letters in the first two lines but is made up exclusively by pseudo letters in the next three lines, denoted here by *

Function: Liver amulet

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: no. 286 in Michel 2001 BM has a near identical obverse with a different pseudo inscription on its reverse; Same figure as on the Tanatalos amulets

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 134

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Pterygoma with one unidentifiable, animal-headed figure

Height: 3.1

Reverse Subject: Badly damaged, partial inscription and figural scene remain

Width: 1.35

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .35

Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden, 1986

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1986, G 1986,5-1,108

Publications: Michel 2001b, 382

Images: Michel 2001b, 382

Manufacture/Use: Rear edge beveled suggesting possible use in a ring

Physical State: Badly damaged. One half remains of original, split vertically. Reverse has large gash which takes up most of surface, stemming from the original break.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

TTIE
 .TTIE
 ATTIE
 ATTIE
 ATTIE
 ATTIE
 ATTIE
 TTIE
 TTIE
 IE
 E

Ob. Emended: ΨΑCΤΑΝΤΑΛΕΑΙΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΨΑCΤΑΝΤΑΛΕΑΙΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΑCΤΑΝΤΑΛΕΑΙΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 CΤΑΝΤΑΛΕΑΙΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΤΑΝΤΑΛΕΑΙΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΑΝΤΑΛΕΑΙΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΝΤΑΛΕΑΙΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΤΑΛΕΑΙΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΑΛΕΑΙΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΛΕΑΙΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΕΑΙΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΑΙΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΙΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΜΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΑΤΤΙΕ
 ΠΤΙΕ
 ΙΕ
 Ε

Διψᾶσ Τάνταλε, αἶμα πίε

Ob. translation: Thirsty Tantalos? Drink blood.

Obverse Notes: At its greatest extent only the απιε of the inscription is visible, but it is reconstructable based on many parallels

Rv. Transcription: Β
 Α
 W
 Ε
 ΙΗΙ

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Sabaoth? Vowel row?

Reverse Notes: The inscription that remains runs vertically down the left side of the reverse, the last three letter turning horizontally. To the right of the inscription is the remains of a long carved stroke, possibly meant to indicate a scepter originally, like that in many other amulets with Pterygomas.

Function:

Magical Formulae: While perhaps not a "magic formula" this standard Tantalos inscription is repeated often on the stones

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes: The stone has little obvious relation to the class as a whole, lacking the typical uterine imagery and deities. The inclusion of blood in the inscription has traditionally caused this type of amulet to be considered alongside uterine amulets. Michel puts forth a convincing case that most

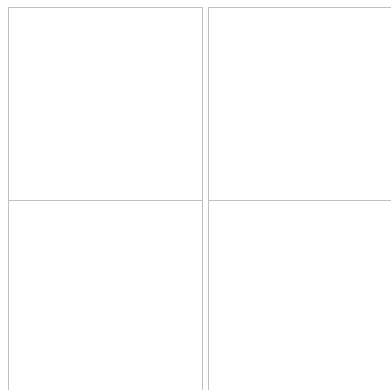
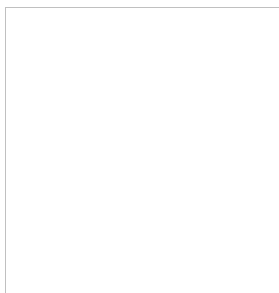
were meant to simply act as blood staunchers.

Corpus ID: 135

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Tantalos pterygoma with a bound demon

Height: 2.7

Reverse Subject: unknown, not shown

Width: 1.0

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .5

Past Locations:

Haemetite

Current Location: Getty 83.AN.437.50 (Michel 2004 MG, 551)

Black

Publications: Michel 2001a, 348 IV.2, 28.12.b

Images: Michel 2001a, pl. IV.2

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: Edges are uneven, seems to have been cut down at a later point in time, setting off part of the inscription. Abrasions at lowest point of figure

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: A demon with breasts and a lion head (?) with her hands bound behind her

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended: Διψᾶσ Τάνταλ'; ἀί{ε}μα πίε

Ob. translation: Thirsty Tantalos? Drink blood.

Obverse Notes: The carving is very uneven, with letters shifting on the stone from line to line

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

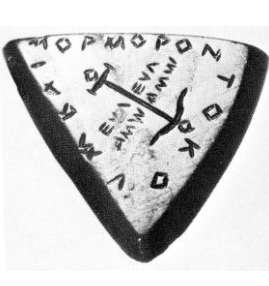
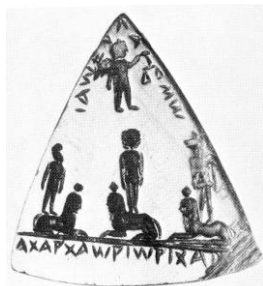
Reverse Notes:

Corpus ID: 136

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Three deities on sphinxes with another god hovering above

Height: 2.5

Reverse Subject: Anchor and inscriptions

Width: 2.5

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: In the possession of a C. Schmidt

Haematite

Current Location: In a Private Collection in Berlin (Lubowski 256) as of 1983 (Zazoff 1983, Michel 2004 MG, 553)

Publications: Michel 2004, 358 79.1
Bonner SMA, p. 89
Bonner, Amuletum Ineditum, 375-378
Preisendanz 1932, p. 101-108
Zazoff 1983, p. 357

Images: Michel 2004, 79.1
Zazoff, 1983, illustration 73f, p. 357, Plate 113 # 4.58

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled suggesting some sort of mounting. Zazoff (1983) suggests that it may have been a pendant

Physical State: Gash on bottom right corner of anchor side

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: A winged male holding scales hovers at the top of the stone above three deities on sphinxes, the right one appears to have a jackal or dog head. The sphinxes have discs over their heads.

Other Obverse: Two other figures to the left have no attributes although the center one is seen face on. Preisendanz suggests that the word from which sphinx is derived, σφιγγειν, to tie or bind may be represented here in the form of the sphinxes, although he concedes that this may not be the case. He sees the sphinxes as binding bleeding. The scales he postulates are not for the weighing of souls but the measuring out the proper amount of blood to be lost.

Reverse Scene: An anchor in the center of the scene. The only other amulet I know with

an anchor has two fish hanging from it and is overwhelmingly Christian with the inscription "EISU[S]" (See Höcker 1988, p. 115 # 128)

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: IAW EYΛAMW

AXAPXAWPIWPIXA..

CTHCONTOAIMA

Ob. Emended: IAW EYΛAMW

AXAPXAWPIWPIXA..

CTHCON TO AIMA

Ob. translation: Yahweh eternally

nonsense syllables

Stop the Blood

Obverse Notes: The first inscription edges the top point of the triangle and is repeated in part on the reverse of the stone. The next inscription runs beneath the three figures at the bottom of the stone. Preisendanz suggests that the repeated "wri" may be related to the middle of "Ororiouth" or perhaps invoke Horus. If the former he suggests that the inscription ties the amulet to the greater class of uterine amulets. The inscription about the blood is on the bottom bevel of the amulet and is only visible in Michel's 2004 photo (not Zazoff's) despite having been attested by Preisendanz

Rv. Transcription: EYΛ EYΛ
AMW AMW

ΜΟΡΜΟΡΟΝ
ΤΟΚΟ
ΥΜΒΑΙ

Rv. Emended: Ευλαμω Ευλαμω

Μορμοροντοκουμβαι
Μορμορον το κουμβαι
Μορμορ ντοκο νβαι
Μορμορ ον το νβαι

Rv. Translations: See Appendix A

Reverse Notes: Many interpretations of the circling inscription. Preisendanz suggests taking both sides an the bevel to get "Ἰαω εὐλαμο εὐλαμο εὐλαμω στῆσον τὸ ἄιμα μορμοροντοκουμβαι"

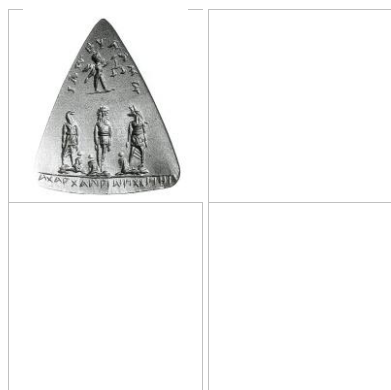
- Function: (1932).
- Magical Formulae: Mormorontokoumbai
- Amuletic Links?: Mormorotokombai is found in various forms on amulets published by Delatte and Petrie (pl 21 135d); B.M. 56024, Montfaucon vol 2.2 pl 146.4
- Other Notes: Bonner takes back interpretation in Byz - neugriech Jahrb. 9 1932 375-78 and says Michel 376 is forgery and B.M 56241 does not have an anchor - doesn't know what is. In Amuletum Ineditum he suggests the shape and presence of three deities suggests a Trinitarian belief of some sort. This seems the most likely explanation to me. In no way does this seem to be a uterine amulet. It is only included because it is often cited as such.

Corpus ID: 137

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Three deities on sphinxes under a cherub with a scale. Inscription above and below main field

Height: 2.59

Reverse Subject: Anchor surrounded by inscription

Width: 2.18

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations:

Haemetite

Current Location: Skoluda collection, 78

Publications: Michel 2004, 358, 79.2, 52.1.a

Images: Michel 2004, pl. 79.2

Manufacture/Use: Fine detail, well carved with angular letters

Physical State: in perfect condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Snake, eagle (?) and Lion/Jackal (?) headed deities on three sphinxes with a cherub (Eros?) above

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse: A large anchor in the middle of the composition

Ob.Transcription: IAWEVΛAMW

AXAPXAWPIWΓXXPIHI

Ob. Emended: IAW EVΛAMW

Ob. translation: Yahweh, eulamo (eternally?)

nonsense syllables

Obverse Notes: The Yahweh inscription covers the Cherub, following the edges of the stone (triangular). The syllables are underneath the base line on which the sphinxes rest

Rv. Transcription:

ΕΥΛ ΕΥΛ
ΑΜΩ ΑΜΩ

Rv. Emended: Μορμροντοκουμβαι

ευλαμω ευλαμω

Rv. Translations: Mormorontokoumbai

eternally, eternally

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: Mormorontokoumbai

Amuletic Links?: almost identical to # - except that there is apparently no inscription on the bevel of this one commanding the blood to stop. Finer workmanship on this stone

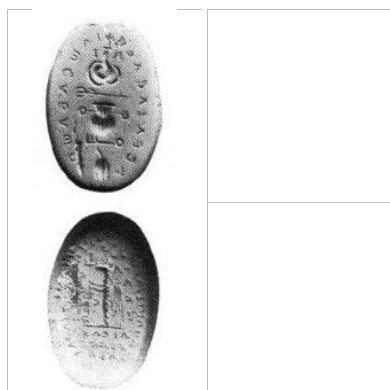
Other Notes: The lack of Sthson to aima on this stone may imply that it was a later addition to c. 136, as in every other detail the two are identical

Corpus ID: 138

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Vertical column of symbols surrounded by inscription

Height: 2.6

Reverse Subject: Winged figure with trident surrounded by inscription

Width: 1.8

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations:

Haemetite

Current Location: C.D.M. 2179

Black/ graphite

Publications: Delatte & Derchain, p. 257, # 362

Images: Delatte & Derchain, p. 257, # 362

Manufacture/Use: beveled edge on reverse suggesting the intention to mount the stone in a ring or other setting

Physical State: Gouge on obverse bottom left through inscription. Chip and scratch obverse top center. Large abrasion down left side of reverse

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Top to Bottom: coiled snake on top, thyrsus sideways, pot that looks like metal hydra face up, key then upside down lotus

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene: A mummy with the head of an ass and wings to the ground turned to the left with both hands on a trident

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: ABPAΞACAΔWNAIIAWCABAWΘ

Ob. Emended: ABPAΞAC AΔWNAI IAW CABAWΘ

Ob. translation: Abraxas, Adonai, Yahweh, Sabaoth

Obverse Notes: Inscription starts bottom left next to lotus/tulip and moves clockwise around the obverse edge to the other side of the lotus/tulip

Rv. Transcription: ABΛAN
AΘANA

ΛΒΑ

ΟΥΡΙΗΛΓΑΒΡΙΗΛΡΑΦΑΗΛΜΙΚΑΗΛΙΣΙΓΑΗΛΙΩΗ

ΑΔΑΜΗΛΜΝΥCOC

Rv. Emended: ΑΒΛΑΝΑΘΑΝΑΛΒΑ

ΟΥΡΙΗΛ ΓΑΒΡΙΗΛ ΡΑΦΑΗΛ ΜΙΚΑΗΛ ΙΣΙΓΑΗΛ ΙΩΗ
 Ούριήλ Γαβριήλ Ραφαήλ Μικαήλ Ίσιγαήλ Ίωη

ΑΔΑΜΗΛ ΜΝΥCOC

Άδαμήλ Μνυσοc

Rv. Translations: Palindrome

U Gabriel, Raphael, Michael, Isisrael, Yahweh

Adamael Mnusos (?)

Reverse Notes: Extremely crowded field almost all with writing - mainly the names of angels. The longest inscription circles the edge of the reverse. The palindrome is either on the bevel or in the field, and the last inscription is possibly beneath the feet of the figure in the center of the field

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

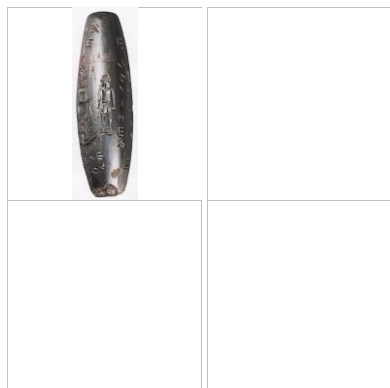
Other Notes: Does not seem to be a uterine amulet, D&D call "aberrant" - pot unlike others seen and right side up. Thick with Judeo-Christian terms and imagery esp. names of the angels.

Corpus ID: 139

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Right side up uterine vase with squatting woman on top and Harpocrates in a boat below, surrounded by inscriptions and two other scenes

Height: 4.61

Reverse Subject: Inscriptions with pictures of a stag, hawk and Seth with scepter and also a kilted man

Width: 1.52

Provenance: unknown

Depth: 1.40

Past Locations:

haematite

Current Location: Skoluda collection M1112

black

Publications: Michel 2001a, 78, # 81
Sternberg, Auktion 27, 1990, 74
Michel 2004 MG, 54.6

Images: Michel 2001a, pl. 14 # 81
Sternberg, Auktion 27, 1990, pl. 27, 461

Manufacture/Use: In the shape of a bulging seal, it is long and cylindrical with engraving on vertical axis. Michel calls it a medallion and does not note if it is a bead, though it looks like no central threading hole was bored

Physical State: part of bottom end is chipped away. Woman above uterine vase is abraded but still recognizable

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Harpocrates

Other Obverse: Squatting woman which Michel suggests is typical of an Incubus amulet

Reverse Scene: Stag above a Hawk above a jackal or dog headed god holding a scepter crowned with a crescent moon and star

Other Reverse: A stalk of wheat? To the right of the hawk. A bearded kilted man on the other side of the uterine scene

Ob.Transcription: ABPA
CAE

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| | CTENE XECOV ΘΙ |
| Ob. Emended: | ABPACAΞ |
| | CΘEN EXE(I)C COVΘΙ |
| Ob. translation: | Abrasax |
| | You are strong, Sothis (?) |
| Obverse Notes: | Emendation and translation as proposed by Michel 2001. Inscriptions located above and below uterine scene |
| Rv. Transcription: | E W O V I H O ZE |
| Rv. Emended: | |
| Rv. Translations: | |
| Reverse Notes: | Inscriptions not noted by Michel - vertical between Anubis and man scene. ZE is below Anubis and Z has a crossbar. |
| Function: | Ward of incubi (Michel) |
| Magical Formulae: | |
| Amuletic Links?: | |
| Other Notes: | |

Corpus ID: 140

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Woman sitting above a uterine vase, possibly giving birth

Height: 1.6

Reverse Subject: Octopus uterus with inscription

Width: 1.35

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Gift of Jack Ogden, 1986

Haematite

Current Location: B.M. since 1986, G 1986,5-1,32

Black/ dark brown

Publications: Michel 2001b, 387

Images: Michel 2001b, 387

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse possibly indicates use in a ring

Physical State: Obverse abraded but not severely. Gash top right of reverse

- Pot
 Ororiouth
 Magical Formualae
 Ligaments
 Overturned
 Ouroboros
 Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
 Tubes
 Key

Deities Obverse: No. Woman with loose hair and arms raised over her head possibly giving birth, supported by a flanking chair.

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene: Octopus uterus with "tentacles" above rather than below it

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: IAW

.IAW

OPWPIOVΘ ---MIPΔI

Ob. Emended: Iαω

Iαω

Ορωριουθ ---μιρδι

Ob. translation: Yahweh

Yahweh

Ororiouth...

Obverse Notes: One IAW in the uterine vase, and Michel says she can see the remains of one beneath as well. Ororiouth runs clockwise up left side of field with her reading of MIRDl running clockwise down the right edge of the field not supported by inspection of the photos

Rv. Transcription: OPWPiOVΘAEHiOVW

Rv. Emended: OPWPiOVΘ AEHiOVW

Rv. Translations: Ororiouth ;vowel row

Reverse Notes: Inscription starts bottom center and circles clockwise three quarters around the edge of the field

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: c. 141

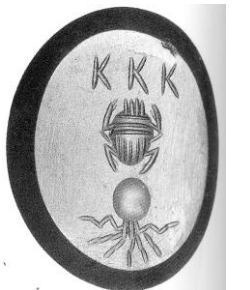
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 141

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Woman giving birth

Height: 1.7

Reverse Subject: KKK above scarab above octopus uterus

Width: 1.5

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .2

Past Locations: From the Towneley Collection. Nr. 198/199.
Acquired 1805

Jasper

Current Location: B.M. since 1805, G 389, EA 56389

Red

Publications: Michel 2001b, 388
Hanson 2004, n. 1
Bonner, SMA, p. 90, n. 50, p. 92, p. 199, p. 276 # 145Images: Michel 2001b, 388
Bonner, SMA, Pl. 7 # 145

Manufacture/Use: Very finely cut. beveled reverse edge indicating possibly use in a ring

Physical State: Excellent condition. One small chip between bevel and field on top right of reverse

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Naked woman on a wide low chair - seems to be a birthing chair - with knees apart, head to right and loose hair, swollen abdomen and gripping arm rests.

Other Obverse: Ouroboros, birthing chair

Reverse Scene: Scarab and octopus uterus

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: AEHIOVWΘOPWPIΦPACIOPOPIOVΘ

Ob. Emended: AEHIOVW Θ<EOC> OPWPIΦPACI<C>
OP<W>PIOVΘ

Ob. translation: Vowel row

God (or goddess)

Aroriphrasis
Ororiouth

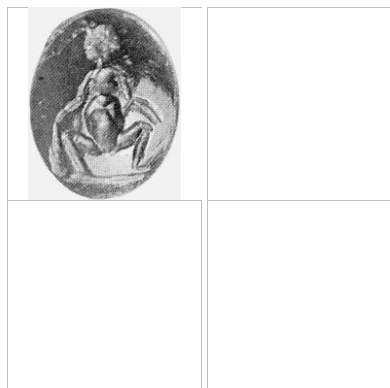
- Obverse Notes: The inscription is continuous outside of the Ouroboros at the edge of the obverse. Aropriphraisis was the "secret" name for Aphrodite and occurs several times as such in the magical papyri
- Rv. Transcription: KKK
- Rv. Emended:
- Rv. Translations: KKK
- Reverse Notes: Inscription above symbols. An inscription seen on many Heracles and Lion amulets which were used to relieve colic. Stood for Koloker Koloposir as seen on the reverse of B.M. G 256, EA 56256. Barb suggests that it may stand for the Hebrew Trishagion where K = Kadosh = Hagios = Holy (as relayed in Michel 2001)
- Function: Birth Amulet - Bonner
- Magical Formulae: KKK
- Amuletic Links?: KKK links it to the colic amulets of Herakles
- Other Notes: Set in a modern gold ring in the BM according to Bonner
Bonner says a popular myth was that no knots on the body hastened birth, orwifraisi inscription is found on other amulets with Aphrodite drying her hair, Bonner says natural to interpret as a birth amulet given Soranus' description of chair and other depictions of birth chair (1940 Guido Calza terracotta)

Corpus ID: 142

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Squatting nude woman with distended abdomen

Height: 1.16

Reverse Subject: Donkey

Width: .9

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .37

Past Locations: Capello Collection

Carnelian

Current Location: Staatliche Museen Kassel, ehem. # 187

Red

Publications: Zazoff 1983, XLIII, 118.4
 AGD III Kassel, # 187
 Pinder 1873, IV 26
 Völkel 1791, X 88

Images: Michel 2001a, plate 14. 82
 Zazoff 1983, pl. 118.4

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled

Physical State: in good condition

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: Woman is portrayed similarly to other stones showing women in birthing chairs. This woman holds a club in her left hand. Hair is bound.

Reverse Scene: Standing Donkey

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: There appear to be three "V" like letters around the donkey but it is unclear if these are letters or symbols or characters

Function: The position of the woman, the holding of a club and a donkey on the reverse point to this being an "incubus" amulet. The position of the woman's arms is reminiscent of those supported by a birthing chair as on other gems of that type like c. 141.

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: c. 139, 143-145

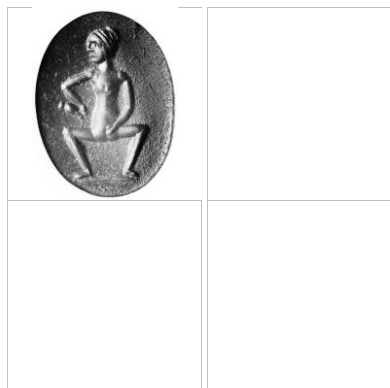
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 143

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Squatting naked woman with hand on her abdomen

Height:

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width:

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Jantzen Collection

Jasper

Current Location: Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg, 1965, 123

Red

Publications: Zazoff 1983, XLIII 118.5
AGD IV, Hamburg, 388 no. 79
Katalog Hamburg 1961, 237 no. 122
Michel 2004, 54.9
Michel 2001a, 80

Images: Michel 2001, plate 14. 85
Zazoff 1983, pl. 118.5
AGD IV Hamburg, plate 266.79

Manufacture/Use: engraving is very fluid and detailed - you can even make out her thumb which is odd for most of these gems

Physical State: in good condition

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse: The woman is portrayed in a similar way to women on amulets showing childbirth or on amulets with naked women and donkeys. She holds something, perhaps a sistrum, in her left hand

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: c. 139, 142, 144-145

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 144

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Woman with distended abdomen squatting

Height: 1.2

Reverse Subject: Inscription and donkey

Width: 1.04

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .34

Past Locations:

Jasper

Current Location: Skoluda collection M090

Red

Publications: Michel 2001a, 79-80 no. 83
 Sternberg, Auktion 23, 1989, 71 no. 246
 Michel 2004, 341, 54.9

Images: Michel 2001a, plate 14. 83
 Michel 2004, plate 78.3

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse edge, fairly fine detail

Physical State: chips on upper left and bottom center of obverse, the latter of which extends into the bevel of the reverse. Chips do not affect scenes.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Woman or Bes with distended stomach

Other Obverse: The figure holds a pot which is typical of this type. In this instance it looks like a footed oil jug as it does in c. 143. In c. 145 it looks like a gravy boat

Reverse Scene: An ithyphallic donkey lays on its back under an inscription of three lines

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: ΟΜΨΑΛΕ

Ob. Emended: Ομφαλε

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: There is writing beneath the ground line of the figure but it is not legible in the picture. The transcription follows Michel 2001a. Omphale is the name of the queen whom Herakles served while hiding as a woman. The name is found on other amulets

Rv. Transcription: XAPZ
AC

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: It is unclear what the word/phrase means but variations on it are found on this "type" of amulet.

Function: Michel classifies this type as an "incubus" amulet, a uterine amulet meant to protect from rape by a daemon.

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: c. 142-145

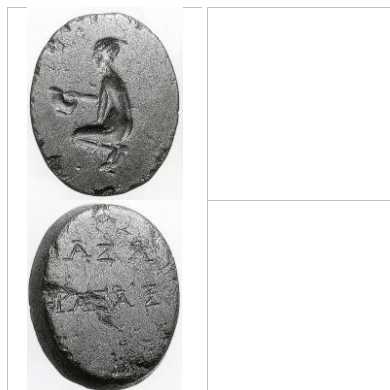
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 145

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Squatting woman with gravy boat

Height: 1.79

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 1.45

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .42

Past Locations:

Magnetite

Current Location: Skoluda Collection M094

Black/ graphite

Publications: Michel 2001a, 80, no. 84
Michel 2004, 54.9Images: Michel 2001a, plate 14. 84
Michel 2004, plate 78.1

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: chips on obverse and generally abraded edge that does not affect the scene. Reverse is badly chipped and abraded with a gash-like chip through the bottom line of the inscription from left to right.

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Squatting woman

Other Obverse: oil flask that resembles a gravy boat

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: AZA
PAΞAEΞ

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: on c. 143 and 144

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: c. 142-144, c. 139

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 146

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Herakles throttling the Nemean Lion

Height: 1.6

Reverse Subject: Squatting, possibly pregnant woman with a club in her right hand and unbound hair flanked by two Kappas

Width: 1.4

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .3

Past Locations: Gift of Rev. Greville J. Chester, 1867

Red Jasper

Current Location: B.M. since 1867, G 364, EA 56364, OA.9836; 1867,0809.9; 56364; G364

Red

Publications: Michel 2001b, 389
 Michel 2004, 341, 54.9
 Bonner, SMA, p. 63, n 92; p. 92, p. 276 # 146
 Barb, Diva Matrix, p. 201, p. 225 n. 137
 Barb, Seth or Anubis?, p. 367

Images: Michel 2001b, 389
 Michel 2004, pl. 77.3
 Bonner, SMA, Pl. 7 # 146
 Barb, Diva Matrix, Pl. 26 d & e
 Barb, Seth or Anubis, Pl. 38e

Manufacture/Use: beveled reverse may indicate use as a ring-stone

Physical State: bottom half of piece broken off. Several large chips on the top of the stone which cut into both obverse and reverse fields

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overtured Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Herakles, Nemean Lion

Other Obverse: Ouroboros

Reverse Scene: Squatting woman beating the figure in the lower half of the stone. From comparable pieces (Barb, Seth or Anubis) and carved hooves which remain on the stone today it is clear that the broken part contained an ithyphallic donkey attempting to penetrate the squatting woman

Other Reverse: Barb and Michel identify the Donkey as the Incubus incarnation of Seth

who, by penetrating pregnant women, could cause miscarriage.

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: K K

Rv. Emended: KKK

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: The third kappa most probably broke off with the lost part of the stone. KKK is often found with Herakles and the Nemean lion, found on the obverse of this stone.

Function: The woman beating the incubus is meant to stave off miscarriage according to Michel. KKK inscription is often used to avert the pain of colic

Magical Formulae: KKK

Amuletic Links?: Barb - Seth or Anubis Plate 38 f - impression of lost intaglio from Arndt Collection, Barb 38g - Syrian gem in the private possession of M. Baelen. Similar to one of Ayvaz collection published by Mouterde in *Mélanges Univ. St. Joseph*. 25, 119 # 40 pl. 8 - similar woman squatting on a uterine pot. Bonner suggests sword is like vase painting with two armed nude women drawing down the moon (Daremberg *Saglio* fig 4785)

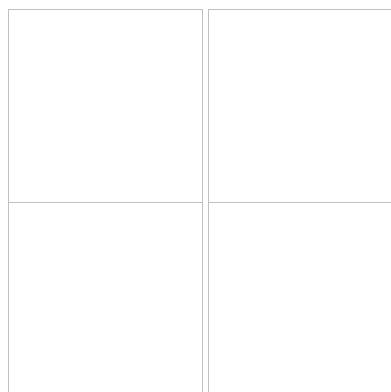
Other Notes: The uterine link is strengthened by Barb's 38e, on which what appears to be a uterine vase with key and ligaments sits next to the tail of the assaulting donkey. Bonner says Herakles plus uterus means that in the minds of the common folk colic remedies may have been effective. "A connection between these disorders, however absurd from a scientific point of view, seems to have been firmly established in various popular superstitions." p.92

Corpus ID: 147

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Woman and Donkey

Height:

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width:

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: The collection of M. Baelen

Jasper

Current Location: unknown

red-brown

Publications: Barb, Seth or Anubis, p. 369

Images: Barb, Seth or Anubis, pl. 38g

Manufacture/Use: Obverse and reverse edges are both beveled suggesting possible use in a setting as a ring or pendant

Physical State: Photo shows chips on obverse bottom and top left, and scratches on the reverse

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Nude squatting woman being penetrated by an ithyphallic donkey who lies beneath her on his back

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: There may be an inscription below the donkey, but as this section of the stone is broken and the photo poor I venture no transcription

Rv. Transcription: ΣΤΑΘΗΤΙ
ΜΗΤΡΑ

Rv. Emended: Στάθητι Μήτρα

Rv. Translations: Be set womb

Reverse Notes: and the form square, it being more common to see a diamond shaped
theta with horizontal haste

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

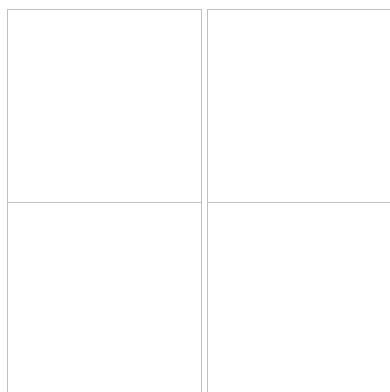
Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 148

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Woman and Donkey with uterine pot

Height:

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width:

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations: Collection of Paul Arndt

unknown stone

Current Location: unknown, impression kept at the Staatliche
Munzsammlungen, Staatlichen
Kunstsammlungen in Munich, # 2356

Publications: Barb, Seth or Anubis, p. 369-370

Images: Barb, Seth or Anubis, pl. 38f

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: Only a sealing wax impression of the stone is known and is housed in the
Staatlichen Munzsammlungen in Munich. It appears from the
impression that the bottom left of the reverse is chipped away Pot

Ororiouth

Magical Formualae

Ligaments

 Overturned

Ouroboros

Medusa/ Octopus Uterus

Tubes

Key

Deities Obverse: A squatting nude woman with one hand up and one on her thigh hovers
above a donkey which lays one its back, phallus erect.Other Obverse: A uterine vase apparently complete with key is placed at the end of the
donkey's tail

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: While there are clearly three to four letters to the left of the head of the
main figure in the field and another three to four to her right and possibly
another under the donkey, the photograph with which I am working is
not of high enough quality to read those letters with any certainty

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes: There is a an inscription in six lines which takes the entire reverse field, the sixth line of which is badly damaged. As with the obverse I am not confident enough in the quality of the photo to venture a transcription

Function: Barb suggests this is a visual representation of a popular Egyptian curse, whereby sexual assault by "the Ass" is wished upon enemies. In this case he proposes that the enemy is an unruly uterus, here represented by the naked woman.

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: This is the same scene which is represented on the broken B.M. Stone # 56364, and is also found on another intaglio of the period which however lacks the uterine vase

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 149

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Chnoubis

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: unknown

Current Location: BM G 18, EA 56018

Publications: Michel 2001b, 201 # 315

Images: Michel 2001b, pl. 47 # 315

Manufacture/Use: highly polished, well carved with slightly convex obverse and cabochon reverse

Physical State: In good condition

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: XNOYBIC

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Chnoubis

Reverse Notes: Inscription starts at top left of reverse and follows the edge of the stone clockwise. In the center of the stone is a triple S with a crossbar, a symbol associated with Chnoubis

Height: 1.7

Width: 1.3

Depth: .5

jasper

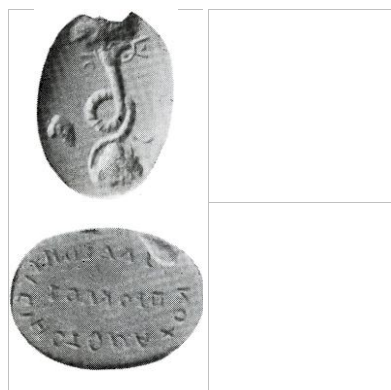
green

Corpus ID: 150

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Chnoubis

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Cabinet of St. Genevieve

Current Location: CDM 2189

Publications: Delatte and Derchain 1964, p. 67 # 80
 Du Molinet, XI-XII, p. 132
 Bonner 1950, p. 59 n. 36

Images: Delatte and Derchain, 1964, p. 67 # 80

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: Large chip on obverse obscures Chnoubis' head, chip in his tail and to the right as well. Chip in fist letter of reverse inscription

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: ΦΙΛΑΞΟΝΥΓΕΙΑΣΤΟΜΑΧΟΝΠΡΟΚΛΟΥ

Rv. Emended: Φίλαξον ὑγειῆ στόμαχον Πρόκλου

Rv. Translations: protect the health Proklos' stomach

Reverse Notes: the name of Proklos is in the center of the field, the rest of the inscription circles the edge clockwise

Height: 2.5

Width: 1.75

Depth:

Jasper

Corpus ID: 151

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Chnoubis

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations:

Current Location: CDM 2186

Publications: Delatte and Derchain 1964, 65 # 75

Images: Delatte and Derchain 1964, 65 # 75

Manufacture/Use: obverse slightly convex, reverse a full cabochon

Physical State: In good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: ΧΝΟΥΒΙC CΟΡΟΟΡΜΕΡΦΕΡΓΑΒΑΡΜΑΦ
ΡΙΟΥΗΡΙΓΞ

Rv. Emended: ΧΝΟΥΒΙC
CΟΡΟΟΡΜΕΡΦΕΡΓΑΒΑΡΜΑΦΡΙΟΥΗΡΙΓΞ

Rv. Translations: Chnoubis

Soroor formula

Height: 1.6

Width: 1.1

Depth:

Prase

green

Reverse Notes: barred triple S in the center of the stone

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 152

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Chnoubis

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Rev. W.J. Rose, M.A. until 1916

Current Location: BM since 1916, G 559, EA 54276

Publications: Michel 2001b, 204-205 # 321

Images: Michel 2001b, pl. 48 # 321

Manufacture/Use: obverse face is slightly convex while reverse is a full cabochon

Physical State: chip on left obverse that does not effect composition. Otherwise, perfect

Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overtured Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Chnoubis

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: XNOV
 MICNAABIC
 COPOORMAPB
 APOVΔEAPOVAC
 ALOWNAITPIECO
 VTIAOFCMICVEH
 VΘΓΓANTOTPHK
 TABATTOΦEI
 TA

Height: 1.3

Width: 1.0

Depth: .4

Chalcedony

Green - mottled

Rv. Emended: NAABIC

COPOOP

ΜΑΡΒΑΡΟΝ ΔΕΑΡΟΝ ΑΣΑΛΩΝΝΑ ΠΠΙΕΣΟΝ
ΠΑΟΦΣΜΙΣΥΕΗΝΘ ΓΙΓΑΝΤΟΠΗΚΤΑ ΒΑΠΟΦΕΙΤΑ

Rv. Translations: Chnoubis, ... Naabis formula, Soroor formula in part... giantslayer

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae: Soroor and Naabis

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 153

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Ibis tied to altar

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Castellani collection until 1972, N. 1415

Current Location: BM since 1872, G 434, EA 56434

Publications: Michel 2001b, 255 # 405

Images: Michel 2001b, 255 # 405, pl. 59 # 405

Manufacture/Use: pitted surface evidently there when manufactured as first line of reverse inscription is displaced to accommodate

Physical State: Surface pitted

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: TECCE
TECCE
TECCE

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: digest, digest, digest

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Height: 1.6

Width: 1.2

Depth: .3

Haemetite

black

Corpus ID: 154

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Ibis tied to altar

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Collection of Rev. G.J. Chester until 1876

Current Location: BM since 1876, G 321, EA 56321

Publications: Michel 2001b, 256 # 407

Images: Michel 2001b, 256 # 407, pl. 60 # 407

Manufacture/Use: Edges of both sides softly rounded. Eye hole carved but broken away. Odd lunate epsilon.

Physical State: Surface is worn but mainly smooth. Eye hole broken and break worn down

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: EYTE
ΠTE

Rv. Emended: ΕΥ ΠΕΠΤΕ

Rv. Translations: digest well

Reverse Notes: Double barred sigma below inscription

Height: 2.7

Width: 1.7

Depth: .4

Steatite

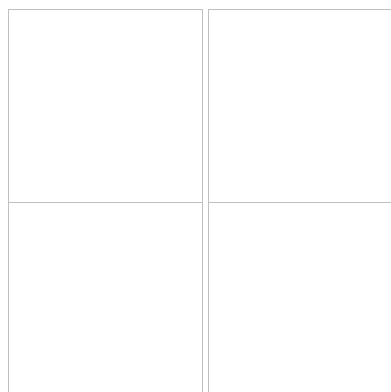
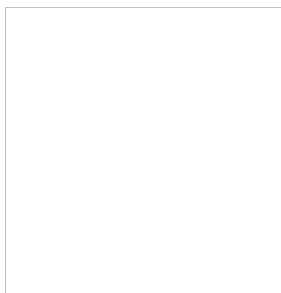
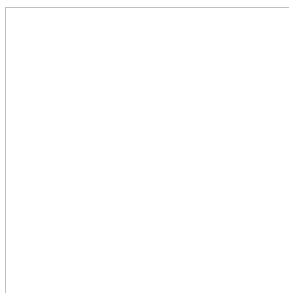
Black

Corpus ID: 155

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Ibis with Inscription

Height:

Reverse Subject: Uterine scene with four deities

Width:

Provenance: unknown

Depth:

Past Locations:

Current Location:

Publications: Southesk # 42
 Delatte 1914, p. 67 in the entry for # 28

Images: Southesk 1908, pl. XIV.42

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State:

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene: L-R: Isis, Osiris, Chnoubis, Duamoutef standing on a slightly corrugated and collapsed uterine vase

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: OPWPIO
 WΘ

Ob. Emended: Ορωριουθ

Ob. translation: Ororiouth

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: IAW

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Yahweh

Corpus ID: 156

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Ibis tied to altar

Reverse Subject: Chnoubis

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Jack Ogden collection until 1986

Current Location: BM since 1986, G 1986,5-1,16

Height: 4.7

Width: 2.7

Depth: .5

Serpentine

Black with red in the cuts

Publications: Michel 2001b, 257 # 408

Images: Michel 2001b, 257 # 408, pl. 60

Manufacture/Use: Surface smooth, eye hole shows some sign of wear

Physical State: slightly worn but otherwise in good condition

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Ibis

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse: Chnoubis

Ob. Transcription: IAW

Ob. Emended: Iαω

Ob. translation: Yahweh

Obverse Notes: Inscription below the ground line for the Ibis

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Corpus ID: 157

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Ibis tied to an altar

Reverse Subject: Chnoubis

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations:

Current Location: Skoluda collection M096

Height: 2.92

Width: 1.59

Depth: .59

Steatite or Serpentine

black with reddish
brown incised lines

Publications: Michel 2004, 358 # 74.2, 27.2.d

Michel 2001a, 113, # 127

Images: Michel 2004, pl. 74.2, 27.2.d

Michel 2001a, pl.21 # 127

Manufacture/Use: Original eye hole broken away (older break), new small hole drilled beneath

Physical State: lines softened with wear and eye hole broken, but otherwise in good condition

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse: Ibis

Other Obverse: Chnoubis

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription:

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations:

Corpus ID: 158

Obverse Image:



Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Chnoubis

Reverse Subject: Ibis tied to an altar

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations:

Current Location: CDM, Bl 16

Publications: Delatte and Derchain, 148 # 191

Images: Delatte and Derchain, 148 # 191

Manufacture/Use:

Physical State: In good condition

- Pot
- Ororiouth
- Magical Formualae
- Ligaments
- Overturned
- Ouroboros
- Medusa/ Octopus Uterus
- Tubes
- Key

Height: 2.3

Width: 1.7

Depth:

Jasper

Green

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: IAW

Rv. Emended:

Rv. Translations: Yahweh

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Corpus ID: 159

Suspected Forgery

Obverse Image:

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Reaper cutting grain

Height: 2.0

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Width: 2.4

Provenance: unknown

Depth: .4

Past Locations: Collection of Rev. G.J. Chester until 1867

haemetite

Current Location: BM since 1867, G 227, EA 56227

black

Publications: Michel 2001b, 266 # 426
Bonner 1950, 272 # 118Images: Michel 2001b, 266 # 426, pl. 63 # 426
Bonner 1950, pl. 6 # 118

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled

Physical State: Left obverse edge chipped or cut down, abrasion top right obverse leading into a scratch, reverse scratched. No damage affects the composition or inscription

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription: CXIWN

Rv. Emended: ἰσχύων

Rv. Translations: (for the) hips

Reverse Notes:

Corpus ID: 160

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject:

Reaper

Reverse Subject:

Inscription

Provenance:

unknown

Past Locations:

Jack Ogden collection until 1986

Current Location:

BM since 1986, G 1986,5-1,52

Publications:

Michel 2001b, 265-266 # 427

Images:

Michel 2001b, pl. 64 # 427

Manufacture/Use:

beveled reverse edge

Physical State:

chip on obverse right top and obverse bottom center - do not affect composition. Softened lines from wear, but still legible

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription:

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes:

Rv. Transcription:

ΠΕΠ
ΤΕ

Rv. Emended:

ΠΕΠΤΕ

Rv. Translations:

digest

Reverse Notes:

Above inscription is a triple barred S and below two characters, one of which looks like an epsilon with cross bar extending backward

Function:

Height: 3.9

Width: 2.4

Depth: .4

Haemetite

black

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?: To Ibis amulets which have similar if not identical inscriptions

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 161

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Heracles throttling the Nemean Lion

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: Fr. Rollin and Feuarent collection until 1869

Current Location: BM since 1869, G256, EA 52656

Height: 2.3

Width: 1.8

Depth: .3

Jasper

Red and black mottled

Publications: Michel 2001b, 248 # 390

Images: Michel 2001b, pl. 57 # 390

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled

Physical State: Obverse is abraded in lower right, reverse has a chip breaking loose or glued back into place on right edge of field and bevel.

- Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments
 Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob. Transcription: CKVΘOVOP

Ob. Emended:

Ob. translation:

Obverse Notes: translation is not certain but Michel suggests it may relate to σκυλευω, meaning to strip an enemy, or the epithet of Herakles, σκυλος, meaning skin or hide and referring to his lion hide. Σκυθρω- in Greek also denotes an angry temperament or visage.

Rv. Transcription: ΚΟΛΟΚΕΥ
ΚΟΛΟΠΟ
ΕΙΡ ΚΚΚ

Rv. Emended: KKK

Rv. Translations: --- represent three reversed and extended final down strokes

Reverse Notes:

Function:

Magical Formulae:

Amuletic Links?:

Other Notes:

Corpus ID: 162

Obverse Image:

Suspected Forgery

Reverse Image:



Obverse Subject: Holy Rider spearing a female

Reverse Subject: Inscription

Provenance: unknown

Past Locations: W.H. Coxe, Esq. Collection until 1866

Current Location: BM since 1866, G 204, EA 56204

Publications: Michel 2001b, 268 # 430

Images: Michel 2001b, pl. 64 # 430

Manufacture/Use: Reverse edge beveled

Physical State: Lines softened by wear, but otherwise in good condition

 Pot Ororiouth Magical Formualae Ligaments Overturned Ouroboros Medusa/ Octopus Uterus Tubes Key

Deities Obverse:

Other Obverse:

Reverse Scene:

Other Reverse:

Ob.Transcription: COΛOMWN

Ob. Emended: Σολομον

Ob. translation: Solomon

Obverse Notes: Inscription starts at left middle and circles the edge of the amulet clockwise

Rv. Transcription: CΦΡ
ΑΓΙ
CΘΕ
ΟΥ

Rv. Emended: Σφραγὶς Θεοῦ

Rv. Translations: Seal of God

Reverse Notes:

Height: 2.8

Width: 1.6

Depth: .25

Haematite

black

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 1
 Obverse Photo: Marino
 Reverse Photo:
 Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 2
 Obverse Photo: Zazoff 1983
 Reverse Photo: Zazoff 1983
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 3
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 4
 Obverse Photo: Marino
 Reverse Photo: Marino
 Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 5
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 6
 Obverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Reverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Obverse Photo 2: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Reverse Photo 2: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 7

Obverse Photo:

Reverse Photo:

Obverse Photo 2:

Reverse Photo 2:

Obverse Drawing :

Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 8

Obverse Photo:

Reverse Photo:

Obverse Photo 2:

Reverse Photo 2:

Obverse Drawing :

Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 9

Obverse Photo: Marino

Reverse Photo: Marino

Obverse Photo 2:

Reverse Photo 2:

Obverse Drawing :

Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 10

Obverse Photo: Marino

Reverse Photo: Marino

Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain

Reverse Photo 2:

Obverse Drawing :

Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 11

Obverse Photo: Marino

Reverse Photo: Marino

Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain

Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain

Obverse Drawing :

Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 12

Obverse Photo: Marino

Reverse Photo: Marino

Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain

Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain

Obverse Drawing :

Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 13
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 14
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 15
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 16
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 17
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 18
Obverse Photo: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992
Reverse Photo: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992
Obverse Photo 2: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992
Reverse Photo 2: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 19

Obverse Photo:

Reverse Photo:

Obverse Photo 2:

Reverse Photo 2:

Obverse Drawing :

Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 20

Obverse Photo: With Permission of the Royal Ontario Museum © ROM

Reverse Photo: With Permission of the Royal Ontario Museum © ROM

Obverse Photo 2: With Permission of the Royal Ontario Museum © ROM

Reverse Photo 2: With Permission of the Royal Ontario Museum © ROM

Obverse Drawing :

Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 21

Obverse Photo: Marino

Reverse Photo: Marino

Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain

Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain

Obverse Drawing :

Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 22

Obverse Photo: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan

Reverse Photo: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan

Obverse Photo 2: Bonner SMA

Reverse Photo 2:

Obverse Drawing :

Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 23

Obverse Photo:

Reverse Photo:

Obverse Photo 2:

Reverse Photo 2:

Obverse Drawing :

Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 24

Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b

Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b

Obverse Photo 2: © Trustees of the British Museum

Reverse Photo 2: Marino

Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b

Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 25
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 26
Obverse Photo: Casal Garcia 1990
Reverse Photo: Casal Garcia 1990
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 27
Obverse Photo: Casal Garcia 1990
Reverse Photo: Casal Garcia 1990
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 28
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 29
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 30
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 31
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 32
Obverse Photo: Bonner, Brit Mus. Hesperia, 1951
Reverse Photo:
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 33
Obverse Photo:
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 34
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 35
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 36
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 37
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 38
 Obverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Reverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Obverse Photo 2: Bonner SMA
 Reverse Photo 2: Bonner SMA
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 39
 Obverse Photo: Zazoff 1983
 Reverse Photo: Zazoff 1983
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 40
 Obverse Photo:
 Reverse Photo:
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 41
 Obverse Photo:
 Reverse Photo:
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 42
 Obverse Photo:
 Reverse Photo:
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 43
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 44
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2004
Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2004
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 45
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 46
Obverse Photo: Princeton University Art Gallery
Reverse Photo: Princeton University Art Gallery
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 47
Obverse Photo: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan
Reverse Photo: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan
Obverse Photo 2: Bonner SMA
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 48
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 49
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 50
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 51
 Obverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Reverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Obverse Photo 2: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Reverse Photo 2: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 52
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 53
 Obverse Photo: Marino
 Reverse Photo: Marino
 Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 54
 Obverse Photo: Marino
 Reverse Photo: Marino
 Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 55
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 56
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 57
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 58
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 59
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 60
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 61
 Obverse Photo: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992
 Reverse Photo: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 62
 Obverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Reverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Obverse Photo 2: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Reverse Photo 2: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 63
 Obverse Photo: Ritner 1984, Oriental Institute, JNES 1984
 Reverse Photo: Ritner 1984, Oriental Institute, JNES 1984
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing : W. Raymond Johnson, Ritner 1984, JNES
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 64
 Obverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Reverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Obverse Photo 2: Bonner SMA
 Reverse Photo 2: Bonner SMA
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 65
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 66
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 67
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2004
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2004
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 68
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 69
 Obverse Photo: Cruse 2004, pl. 10
 Reverse Photo: Cruse 2004, pl. 1010
 Obverse Photo 2: University Library, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, after Wright 1964, pl. 15,3
 Reverse Photo 2: University Library, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, after Wright 1964, pl. 15,4
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 70
 Obverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Reverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Obverse Photo 2: Bonner SMA
 Reverse Photo 2: Bonner SMA
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 71
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 72
 Obverse Photo: Zazoff 1983
 Reverse Photo: Zazoff 1983
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 73
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 74
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 75
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 76
Obverse Photo:
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 77
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 78
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 79
Obverse Photo: Bonner SMA
Reverse Photo:
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 80
Obverse Photo: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992
Reverse Photo: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 81
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 82
Obverse Photo:
Reverse Photo:
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 83
Obverse Photo:
Reverse Photo:
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 84
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 85
 Obverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Reverse Photo: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Obverse Photo 2: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Reverse Photo 2: Bonner Amulet Collection, Alfred Taubman Medical Library, University of Michigan
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 86
 Obverse Photo: Marino
 Reverse Photo: Marino
 Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 87
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 88
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 89
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 90
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 91
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 92
Obverse Photo: Princeton University Art Gallery
Reverse Photo: Princeton University Art Gallery
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 93
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 94
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 95
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 96
Obverse Photo: Princeton University Art Gallery
Reverse Photo: Princeton University Art Gallery
Obverse Photo 2: Bonner, SMA, D 140
Reverse Photo 2: Bonner, SMA, D 140
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 97
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 98
 Obverse Photo: Marino
 Reverse Photo: Marino
 Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 99
 Obverse Photo: Höcker 1988
 Reverse Photo: Höcker 1988
 Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2001a
 Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2001a
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 100
 Obverse Photo: Marino
 Reverse Photo: Marino
 Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 101
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 102
 Obverse Photo: Marino
 Reverse Photo: Marino
 Obverse Photo 2: Delatte & Derchain, 1964
 Reverse Photo 2: Delatte & Derchain, 1964
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 103
Obverse Photo: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992
Reverse Photo: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 104
Obverse Photo: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 105
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 106
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 107
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 108
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 109
Obverse Photo: Michel 2004
Reverse Photo: Michel 2004
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 110
Obverse Photo: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan
Reverse Photo: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan
Obverse Photo 2: Bonner SMA
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 111
Obverse Photo: Kakosy 1987
Reverse Photo: Kakosy 1987
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 112
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 113
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 114
Obverse Photo: Michel 2004
Reverse Photo: Michel 2004
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 115
 Obverse Photo: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan
 Reverse Photo: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan
 Obverse Photo 2: Bonner SMA
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 116
 Obverse Photo: Bonner SMA
 Reverse Photo:
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 117
 Obverse Photo: Marino
 Reverse Photo: Marino
 Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 118
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 119
 Obverse Photo: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992
 Reverse Photo: Zwierlein-Diehl 1992
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 120
 Obverse Photo: Bonner SMA
 Reverse Photo: Bonner SMA
 Obverse Photo 2: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan
 Reverse Photo 2: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 121
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 122
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 123
Obverse Photo: Krug 1980
Reverse Photo:
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 124
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001

Corpus ID: 125
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 126
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 127
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 128
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 129
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 130
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 131
Obverse Photo: Bonner SMA
Reverse Photo: Bonner SMA
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 132
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 133
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 134
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 135
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Reverse Photo:
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 136
Obverse Photo: Zazoff 1983
Reverse Photo: Zazoff 1983
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2004
Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2004
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing: Zazoff 1983

Corpus ID: 137
Obverse Photo: Michel 2004
Reverse Photo: Michel 2004
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2004
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 138
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 139
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2001a
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 140
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 141
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
Obverse Photo 2: Marino
Reverse Photo 2: Marino
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 142
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Obverse Photo 2: Zazoff 1983
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 143
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Obverse Photo 2: Zazoff 1983
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 144
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2004
Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2004
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 145
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
 Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2004
 Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2004
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 146
 Obverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Photo 2: Marino
 Reverse Photo 2: Marino
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 147
 Obverse Photo: Barb, Seth or Anubis, 38g
 Reverse Photo: Barb, Seth or Anubis, 38g
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 148
 Obverse Photo: Barb, Seth or Anubis, 38f
 Reverse Photo: Barb, Seth or Anubis, 38f
 Obverse Photo 2:
 Reverse Photo 2:
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 149
 Obverse Photo: Marino
 Reverse Photo: Marino
 Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
 Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
 Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
 Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 150
 Obverse Photo: Marino 2009
 Reverse Photo: Marino 2009
 Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
 Obverse Drawing :
 Reverse Drawing:

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 151
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 152
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 153
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 154
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 155
Obverse Photo:
Reverse Photo:
Obverse Photo 2:
Reverse Photo 2:
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 156
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Photo Credits:

Corpus ID: 157
Obverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Reverse Photo: Michel 2001a
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2004
Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2004
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 158
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Reverse Photo 2: Delatte and Derchain
Obverse Drawing :
Reverse Drawing:

Corpus ID: 159
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 160
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 161
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b

Corpus ID: 162
Obverse Photo: Marino
Reverse Photo: Marino
Obverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Reverse Photo 2: Michel 2001b
Obverse Drawing : Michel 2001b
Reverse Drawing: Michel 2001b