

Wrapped up in the Bible:

The Multifaceted Ritual on a Late Antique Amulet

(P. Oxy. VIII 1077)

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Abstract: This essay offers the first sustained interpretation of the poetics of P. Oxy. VIII 1077 – a sixth- or seventh-century C.E. healing amulet in which the presumably Christian practitioner constructs efficacy through scriptural citation, visual features, material peculiarities, and performative action. Drawing on literary and material evidence and utilizing insights from diverse disciplines, this paper argues that the practitioner attempted to heal the client by ritually wrapping him or her (through the amulet’s drawing) in the power of Jesus’ healing ministry, his crucifixion, and his resurrection. The paper also highlights how “magical” objects might contribute to the history of the book.

Over the past several decades, scholarship on the cluster of ancient Mediterranean texts, practices, and artifacts deemed “magical” has blossomed.¹ The last half of the twentieth century and the first part of the twenty-first century have witnessed the proliferation of scholarly editions of magical artifacts,² general surveys of ancient magic,³ and edited volumes devoted to magic in antiquity.⁴

During this period, various aspects of ancient Mediterranean magic have received considerable attention. Four stand out as among the most prominent. First, a growing body of scholarship has highlighted the magical use of the “Christian scriptures.” Numerous studies have catalogued and analyzed the use of biblical texts on amulets.⁵ At

the same time, some of these same studies (along with others) have examined amulets and other ritual objects as part of the reception history of the Bible or for textual criticism.⁶ Second, many scholars have highlighted the importance of images in magical texts. This scholarship has shed light on the intersection of visual and verbal elements within and across the overlapping domains of so-called Pagan,⁷ Jewish,⁸ and Christian⁹ magical traditions. Third, there has been recent interest in the materiality of magic. Such scholarship has stressed *inter alia* the importance of assessing the material traits and depositional contexts of objects in order to identify and interpret their magical functions.¹⁰ Finally, scholarship has engaged frontally with the performative dimension of magical rituals. Accordingly, many scholars have underscored the social and ritual functions of exorcism and other ostensibly magical rites in antiquity.¹¹

Despite the growing interest in these four overlapping domains, individual studies tend to focus on only one dimension of ancient magic.¹² Yet, these dimensions coalesce on several magical objects.

This article examines an exemplary case of such coalescence: P. Oxy. VIII 1077 (= PGM P4), a sixth- or seventh-century C.E. healing amulet that constructs efficacy by juxtaposing scriptural text, visualization, material oddities, and ritual performance (see Plate 1). Although there are several useful scholarly analyses of P. Oxy. VIII 1077, such discussions have tended either to focus on one aspect of its text or have been primarily descriptive in nature.¹³ Accordingly, prior scholarship has yielded only limited insight into the totality of the amulet's so-called "poetics."¹⁴

In this essay, I analyze all of P. Oxy. VIII 1077's primary features with the goal of moving beyond description to interpretation. I then identify a few ways in which this

amulet and others might help illuminate the history of the late antique book. Of course, it should go without saying that, like many exegetical endeavors pertaining to antiquity, the conclusions in this essay rely on some conjecture and are necessarily tentative.

On a more general level, it is my hope that this study will help promote practitioners from mere “magicians” to full-fledged “authors.” This project is firmly grounded in the view that ostensibly Christian magical objects are worthy of study in their own right as late antique artifacts. In other words, they are not simply textual witnesses useful for reconstructing the original biblical text or other origin-oriented tasks.¹⁵ Amulets and other magical objects in fact provide important insight into the broader world of early Christianity and late antiquity.¹⁶ Nevertheless, as this essay illustrates, the use of “magical” objects for illuminating many historical and textual aspects of Christian antiquity can only go forward on solid ground by first rigorously interpreting their individual rituals *in toto* – analogous to how scholars approach the historical and textual significance of “literary” texts more deeply entrenched in the study of antiquity.

TEXT AND TRANSLATION OF P. OXY. VIII 1077¹⁷

Col. 1	Col. 2	Col. 3	Col. 4	Col. 5
ια	δά	ων	λα	προσ
μα	σκω(ν)	πᾶ	κία(ν)	ήνευ
τικὸν εὐ	καὶ κη	σαν νόσον	ἐν τῷ λα	καν αὐ
αγγέλιο(ν)	ρύσ	{καὶ	ῶ χ	τῷ

κα	σω(ν)	πᾶ	α	τούς
τὰ				
Ματ	τὸ	IMAGE	πῆλ	κα
θαῖ	εὐ	IMAGE	θεν	κῶς
ον ἄ περι	αγγελί	IMAGE	ή ἀκοή	ἔχοντας
ἦγεν	ον	IMAGE	αὐ	καί
ὁ ἰϛ ¹⁸	τῆς	IMAGE	τοῦ	έθε
ὄλη(ν)	βα	σαν	εἰς	ρά
τῆ(ν)	σει	νό	ὄλη(ν)	πευ
Γαλιλέ	λείας ἄ	σον} ἄ πᾶ	τὴν Συρί	σεν αὐτούς
αν ¹⁹	θερα	σαν	αν	ὁ ἰϛ
δι	πέυ	μα	καί	

Col. 1: 1. 9 ἄ = καί; 1. 11 ἰϛ = Ἰησοῦς; 11. 14-15 Γαλιλαίαν | Col. 2: 1. 13: ἄ = καί | Col. 3:

1. 13 ἄ = καί | Col. 4: 1. 4 ἄ = καί | Col. 5: 11. 1-3 προσήνεγκαν; 1. 14 ἰϛ = Ἰησοῦς

Translation: “The Healing Gospel according to Matthew. And Jesus went about all of Galilee, teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease {and every [IMAGE] disease} and every infirmity among the people. And his fame spread into all of Syria, and they brought to him those who were ill, and Jesus healed them.”

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF P. OXY. VIII 1077

P. Oxy. VIII 1077 is a parchment amulet, which has been dated by its original editor, Arthur Hunt, to the sixth century C.E.²⁰ More recently, Brice Jones has persuasively argued that the “Coptic Uncial” script, which it deploys, makes a date of the sixth or seventh century C.E. more likely.²¹ This parchment manuscript measures 11.1 cm (wide) x 6 cm (long) and has been folded at least four times horizontally and two times vertically.²²

The unique format of P. Oxy. VIII 1077 arguably constitutes its most interesting feature. It has been cut into fifteen octagons. The practitioner then divided the amulet’s text (i.e., the title “The Healing Gospel according to Matthew” followed by a citation of Matt 4.23-24) into all but one of these octagons (on the flesh side only). On each of the textual octagons, a portion of the title or biblical passage was written in a cross-shape pattern. He or she reinforced the cross-shaped pattern by outlining each of the textual crosses on the first and last vertical columns. Despite the author’s consistent arrangement of the text into crosses, the specific dimensions of the crosses vary considerably. The number of lines per cross-formation range from 4 to 6. Moreover, the number of letters per cross-formation range from 14 to 22. Instead of Matthean language, the practitioner drew in the central octagon an image of an individual, whose identity I will treat below. The amulet was then (re)folded, presumably in a performative ritual action.

Given the modification made to the Matthean title (“The Healing Gospel according to Matthew”)²³ and the passage cited, which summarizes Jesus’ healing ministry, it is most likely that this amulet was created for healing.²⁴ In addition, while one must always exercise caution in identifying the religious affiliations of the figures behind

amulets, the cumulative evidence suggests that both the practitioner and the client behind P. Oxy. VIII 1077 were self-identifying Christians of one kind or another.²⁵

The atypical, yet interesting, way the Christian author formatted the amulet requires explanation. In the discussion that follows, I address this issue, focusing on the intersection of visual, verbal, material, and performative domains.

THE HUMAN IMAGE

One of the most notable elements of P. Oxy. VIII 1077 is the human image in the central octagon. The drawing consists of a bust, with head (including facial features [e.g., hair, eyes, ears, and nose]) and an upper torso (with arms folded). Scholarly discussions of this drawing have either been descriptive in nature²⁶ or focused on identifying the individual depicted, with most scholars contending – though sometimes tentatively – that the figure is the client.²⁷ This explanation is indeed reasonable since the image does not correspond to contemporary depictions of any known figure – much less to one relevant to the text or concerns of the amulet (esp. Jesus and Saint Matthew).²⁸ While many commentators have maintained that the drawing portrays a female,²⁹ Jitse Dijkstra has recently argued that the depicted client is most likely male.³⁰

In this essay, I follow the widely accepted position that the figure ought to be identified as the client. Although I think that there is merit to Dijkstra's claim that the image depicts a male, the conclusions in this essay do not rely on that specific identification. Instead, I focus on the ritual semantics of visually depicting the client rather than writing his or her name (with matronym), which was the typical way of incorporating clients into ritual texts during late antiquity.

DRAWING AND NAMING CLIENTS

It is worth pondering at the outset of this discussion the order in which the textual elements on P. Oxy. VIII 1077 were inscribed. The lack of smearing on the amulet may suggest that the scribe wrote the entire text in sequence (with the picture also drawn immediately after *καὶ πα̃*-).³¹ I find it more likely, however, that he or she first wrote the biblical text. Then, after the ink had dried, the practitioner drew the picture.

Unfortunately, we must rely on inference and external evidence in determining whether the image of the client was created immediately after inscribing the biblical text – and, hence, was intended for marketing purposes – or was drawn after payment. Since the manuscript was almost certainly tailored to either a male or a female client, it is most likely that the picture was drawn subsequent to payment. After all, why would a practitioner limit his or her possible clientele to women or men before selling the object when the extant record suggests that both genders came to ritual experts for healing?³²

Of course, personalizing material objects after payment was an established aspect of ancient business practice more generally.³³ For example, Janet Huskinson has demonstrated that sarcophagi for children were probably first crafted in generic fashion and then stored for instances of unexpected death, at which time personalized information would be added.³⁴ The realm of magic in antiquity also seems to have operated according to a similar “business model” of personalization. The formularies in the so-called “Greek Magical Papyri” typically include the Greek word *δεῖνα* as a placeholder for the name of the client or victim – presumably to be placed in the applied artifact once payment was received. Often, the client’s name – and, where appropriate, the name of the to-be-cursed

individual – would be accompanied by the name of his or her mother, most likely because the mother (unlike the father) could be determined with certainty.³⁵

That this practice continued into Christian Egypt is evident from several Coptic spells that utilize placeholders, such as $\Delta\lambda\Delta\zeta$,³⁶ and from applied artifacts (predominantly in Greek) that insert specific names in their ritual texts in accordance with some version of the “name-son/daughter-of-X” formula.³⁷ The prevalence of this ancient approach to incorporating (potential) clients into ritual texts in Egypt and elsewhere brings an important question to the fore: why did the author of P. Oxy. VIII 1077 deviate from this well-established magical tradition by personalizing the amulet with an image?³⁸

In order to address this question, we need to reflect upon the significance and associations of facial images. Cognitive linguists have long noticed the practice of identifying the face with a person. In their classic volume on metaphor, for instance, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson argued that “THE-FACE-FOR-THE-PERSON” metonymy is not simply a convention of language, but it fundamentally structures how westerners understand personhood.³⁹ More recently, cognitive linguists Günter Radden and Zoltán Kövecses have ratified Lakoff and Johnson’s work on this association, stressing the conceptual and cognitive nature of THE-FACE-FOR-THE-PERSON relation as well as phenomena (e.g., portraits and photography) that derive from it.⁴⁰ Although one must be sensitive to the social and temporal varieties of particular metonymic relationships, I think we can say with confidence that the basic cognitive association between face and person contributed to the ancient Mediterranean uses of masks, facial drawings, and busts, to name a few widespread phenomena.⁴¹ In short, both

in contemporary societies and in the ancient Mediterranean world, faces have been inextricably linked with personhood.

Alongside this insight from cognitive linguistics, scholarship in the field of ancient magic has stressed that the distinction between representation and reality, which most contemporary westerners take for granted, was often blurred on amulets and formularies. For instance, in the Greek Magical Papyri, there are formularies that call for the creation of figurines. In the famous “wondrous spell for binding a lover” (φίλτροκατάδεσμος θαυμαστός) (PGM IV. 296-466), the ritual instructs the prospective client to make a female “voodoo doll,” which the client is then ordered to bind with thirteen needles. That the practitioner and presumably his potential client understood there to be an analogical relationship between the figurine and the victim is demonstrated by the formulary’s text (ll. 321-328):⁴²

And make her [i.e., the female figurine] with her arms behind her back and down on her knees. And you are to fasten the magical material on her head or neck...And take thirteen copper needles and stick 1 in the brain while saying, “I am piercing your brain, NN”; and stick 2 in the ears and 2 in the eyes and 1 in the mouth and 2 in the midriff and 1 in the hands and 2 in the pudenda and 1 in the soles, saying each time, “I am piercing such and such a member of her, NN, so that she may remember no one but me, NN, alone.”⁴³

This formulary clearly presupposes a direct connection between the binding of the figurine and the binding of the victim.⁴⁴ Andrew T. Wilburn has, therefore, appropriately concluded that such ancient magical objects had the capacity to mimic an “ideal reality”

and, as a consequence, reflect the conceptual porosity between a representation and the entity represented.⁴⁵

With these respective insights from cognitive linguistics and magical studies in mind, I contend that the picture on P. Oxy. VIII 1077 was a kind of proxy for the client. In this regard, the drawing on the amulet allowed the practitioner to create a client-object relationship that differed from many other amulets. Although most amulets do not offer clues about their assumed client-object relations, a few amulets from late antique Egypt inadvertently mark this relation with the phrase “the one who wears this amulet” (τοῦ φοροῦντος τὸ φυλακτήριον τοῦτο) or equivalent – sometimes with and other times without the name of the client.⁴⁶ By all accounts, the primary function of this phrase was to identify the client and connect him or her to the incantation. Nevertheless, the phrase also bears witness to how their practitioners perceived the relationship between the client and the ritual object. In these cases at least, the amulets (and the words contained therein) were viewed as external to their clients.

P. Oxy. VIII 1077 appears to have operated on one level in an external relationship with the client since the object was likely suspended around his or her body. But, at the same time, it seems that this amulet also worked on an additional level. In particular, the drawing allowed the scribe to construct an “ideal reality” – to use Wilburn’s language – in which the client was placed *in the amulet*. Consequently, like the “voodoo doll” in PGM IV. 296-466 (mentioned above), what happened to the image on the artifact, happened to the client via metonymic association. With this point in the background, we can consider the other prominent features of this amulet.

MATT 4.23-24 IN CROSS FORMATION

As has already been noted, the balance of the text of P. Oxy. VIII 1077 consists of a citation of Matt 4.23-24. In Christian antiquity, Matt 4.23 (9.35) served as a useful summary statement of the healing ministry of Jesus. For many ecclesiastical authors, including Justin Martyr (*1 Apol.* 31.7), Eusebius (*Dem. evang.* 6.21.3), and Athanasius (*Inc.* 18.4), this passage epitomized Jesus' role as healer.

Many practitioners also cited this passage for ritual efficacy.⁴⁷ In most amulets, the reference to Matt 4.23 occurs in abbreviated form (e.g., *πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν*) and is incorporated into a larger ritual text. For instance, in ll. 43-46 of P. Köln 340, a fifth- or sixth-century C.E. amulet, the Matthean phrase is used as the object of a request for protection: “Chase away from him every disease and every infirmity” (*ἀποδιώξης* [read *ἀποδιώξεως*] *ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ πᾶσαν νό[σον κ]αὶ πᾶ[σαν] μαλα[κίαν]*).⁴⁸ Nevertheless, some amulets cite longer versions of this passage. Thus, ll. 17-21 of BKT VI 7.1 (= ACM 9), a sixth- or seventh-century C.E. amulet, read, “The lord Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity.”

Like BKT VI 7.1, P. Oxy. VIII 1077 includes an extended Matthean passage (Matt 4.23-24). In fact, P. Oxy. VIII 1077 records the longest citation of this Matthean formula in the extant amuletic record. Despite citing directly from the Gospel of Matthew, the scribe has deployed several scribal strategies – including textual modification – in order to preserve the cross-shaped pattern.⁴⁹ For instance, the practitioner uses the so-called “kai-compendium” (ϫ) in cases where the cross pattern demands fewer letters (Col. 1: 1. 9; Col. 2: 1. 13; Col. 3: 1. 13; Col. 4: 1. 4). Yet, when the

preservation of the pattern requires more letters, he or she uses the unabbreviated version (Col. 2: 1. 3; Col. 3: 1. 4; Col. 4: 1. 15; Col. 5: 1. 9).

In addition to different symbolic representations of the conjunction καί, the scribe omits portions of the Matthean passage. For instance, the phrase “in their synagogues” (ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν), which ought to come immediately after διδάσκων (Col. 2: 1. 2), is missing. It is interesting that the practitioner has omitted this reference to the setting of the synagogue when he or she preserves the geographical references to Galilee (Col. 1: ll. 12-14) and Syria (Col. 4: ll. 4-14). In other words, the practitioner was not opposed to including contextual information from the Gospels. Like the phrase, ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν, the phrase “all of Galilee” (ὅλην τὴν Γαλιλέαν [read Γαλιλαίαν]) consists of fifteen letters in Greek. By contrast, the phrase, “his fame spread into all of Syria” (ἀπῆλθεν ἡ ἀκοὴ αὐτοῦ εἰς ὅλην τὴν Συρίαν) consists of thirty-three Greek letters.

In addition to omitting “in their synagogues,” the scribe also leaves out the extended phrase, “those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, [and] paralytics” (ποικίλαις νόσοις καὶ βασάνοις συνεχομένους [καὶ] δαιμονιζομένους καὶ σεληνιαζομένους καὶ παραλυτικούς), which consists of approximately 90 Greek letters. Instead the scribe goes immediately to the end of what we would identify as verse 24 and concludes with the phrase, “and Jesus healed them” (καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς).⁵⁰

Adding another layer of intrigue is the fact that the author repeats the phrase, “καὶ πᾶσαν νόσον” (Col. 3: ll. 3-13), which consists of thirteen letters. This manifest textual practice raises an important question: why did the scribe repeat this phrase, yet omit completely the reference to the synagogues and the details about the afflicted?

One might be tempted to speculate that the scribe was relying on another manuscript or manuscript tradition; however, P. Oxy. VIII 1077 preserves a singular reading of this passage.⁵¹ It is highly unlikely, therefore, that the omissions or the repetition were based on another manuscript or manuscript tradition. Moreover, the omissions at least are not easily explained away in reference to typical scribal errors.⁵² Thus, Jones thinks that the ritual expert intentionally omitted the reference to the synagogues because it was not considered relevant.⁵³ This is certainly a reasonable conclusion. Of course, it should be noted that at least certain practitioners thought that the synagogue reference was relevant for – or, at the very least, not a hindrance to – ritual efficacy, as is evident from the inclusion of this phrase on BKT VI 7.1 (cited above).

It is possible that, in the eyes of the practitioner, the association between synagogues and Jews might have even rendered this phrase detrimental. Several amulets from late antique Egypt, including at least one from Oxyrhynchus (P. Oxy. LXV 4469),⁵⁴ deploy anti-Jewish invective in their ritual texts.⁵⁵ Thus, the author of P. Oxy. VIII 1077 might have sympathized with this broader magical “anti-Judaism” that influenced at least one other practitioner from Oxyrhynchus. According to this reading, he or she would have sought to disassociate Jesus and the client from the Jews by omitting the reference to the synagogues in Matt 4.23. Of course, it must be conceded that the inclusion of this phrase in BKT VI 7.1 indicates that not every Egyptian ritual expert had a problem with such language.

Whatever the specific reason or reasons for the omission of ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν, the preference for the Galilean and Syrian contextual details seems to follow a certain logic. Such references highlight in this ritual text the broad geographical space

over which Jesus demonstrated his preternatural power. These geographical references thus exponentially increased the tacit events behind the claim that Jesus healed every disease and infirmity among the people.⁵⁶ We can thus account for why a practitioner might have preferred the geographical details over against the phrase recalling Jesus' teaching ministry in local synagogues. To that end, when the preservation of the cross formation required the editorial decision to exclude certain words, the reference to the synagogues was omitted.

But it is much more difficult to explain away as irrelevant the phrase, "those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, [and] paralytics." Indeed, assuming the consensus position that P. Oxy. VIII 1077 was created for healing, this portion of the passage would be directly related to the client's concerns. In my estimation, it is more likely that the length of this phrase played a role in its omission. As I mentioned above, these words correspond to approximately ninety Greek letters. Within the current format of the amulet, this phrase would take up nearly two columns. Furthermore, despite the relevance of these words to the concerns of the client, the specific details listed in the omitted material are implicitly included within the phrase "every disease and every infirmity." Thus, by citing the short, but all-encompassing reference to Jesus' healing ministry, the practitioner could omit the longer, more specific phrase without forfeiting any relevant precedents.

The importance of these broadly applicable words to the overall efficacy of the ritual might also help explain why the practitioner repeated "and every disease" (καὶ πᾶσαν νόσον). Hunt and Jones argue that the repetition of καὶ πᾶσαν νόσον reflects the common scribal error of dittography.⁵⁷ While this explanation is sensible, it should be

stressed that the manufacturing of the amulet required a significant amount of planning and followed a step-by-step program. The creation of the octagons almost certainly preceded the composition of the text. What is more, as I discussed above, the composition of the text most likely preceded the drawing of the picture. Finally, the text does not conclude in the middle of a sentence (which might be expected had he or she not considered in advance the words to use). Of course, it is certainly possible that, despite his or her plans, the practitioner made an error along the way in the execution of the plan. Nevertheless, I think that one should first seek an explanation that accounts for intentional modifications before dismissing the repetition as mere scribal folly.

The intentional repetition of the highly relevant phrase *καὶ πᾶσαν νόσον* is in fact explicable within the context of late antique amuletic practice. Ritual experts often highlighted relevant portions of biblical citations via textual modifications. For instance, on BGU III 954 (= PGM P9), P. Duk. inv. 778,⁵⁸ and Athens Nat. Mus. nr. 12 227 (= PGM O4), the ritual specialists draw particular attention to the final petition of the Lord's Prayer ("deliver us from [the] evil [one]") by inserting the vocative *κύριε* immediately before this petition.⁵⁹ In addition, several amulets, including P. Princ. II 107 (= Suppl. Mag. 29) and PSI VII 759,⁶⁰ insert the phrase "my helper" (*βοηθός μου*) in different ways into LXX Ps 90: 2 ("He will say to the Lord, "My supporter you are and my refuge; my God, I will hope in him"), presumably in order to appeal to the protective power of God.⁶¹ It is my judgment, therefore, that, while dittography must be taken seriously as a viable possibility, the explanation that the practitioner intentionally repeated the phrase *καὶ πᾶσαν νόσον* because of its relevance for the amulet's occasion is preferable.

What can we conclude from this analysis of the citation of Matt 4:23-24 on P. Oxy. VIII 1077? Most important, the formal arrangement of the artifact and text placed considerable restrictions on the practitioner's citational practices. Had he or she followed the layout of most amulets – and not this anomalous layout with cross-shaped patterns arranged into octagonal units – there would have been more than enough space to cite the entire text of Matt 4:23-24. These self-imposed limitations suggest that the practitioner was at least as concerned about the cross-shape patterns – and presumably also the octagons – as reproducing a complete or “pure” biblical text.

Implicit in the scribe's procedure is a challenge to the strict distinction between what we would identify as “visual form” and “verbal content.” All indications in this text suggest that efficacy was not predicated on a preferential treatment of biblical text over against artistic form. By contrast, the evidence implies that the arrangement of the crosses was itself imbued with relevant content and, accordingly, was at least as important – if not more important – to this practitioner than the biblical words. This blurring of form and content comports with recent work in the history of ancient art, which has demonstrated that the strict bifurcation of these categories does not reflect the assumptions of antiquity, but stems from the theology of the Protestant Reformation.⁶² It is, therefore, imperative for our analysis to consider the significance and meanings of crosses on late antique amulets.

CROSSES AND THE CRUCIFIXION IN LATE ANTIQUE MAGIC

As might be expected, crosses, christograms, stauograms, and the like were ubiquitous on Greek and Coptic magical objects from late antiquity.⁶³ These “symbols” were often used to mark off important elements in the text. Several artifacts included

crosses at the beginning of their texts or before invocations.⁶⁴ Crosses were also utilized to mark off biblical citations on several artifacts.⁶⁵ Other objects place a cross between the alpha-omega formulation (Α † Ω)⁶⁶ or between repetitions of the ΧΜΓ- formula.⁶⁷

It is important to stress that crosses – like other elements on ostensibly magical artifacts – did not operate on an abstract or generic level (i.e., as simply “magically powerful”) or within a cultural vacuum. Instead, these symbols were selected precisely because they embodied or were associated with traditions, texts, artifacts, and/or institutions that were perceived to carry some kind of relevant precedent or paradigm for the concerns of the client.⁶⁸ In other words, crosses and related symbols operated in dialogue with other textual and non-textual elements in order to bridge appropriate mythic contexts with situations in the “here-and-now.”⁶⁹

Although the cross became a prominent symbol in early Christianity and, consequently, probably carried a wide range of associations for practitioners, we can presume that in many cases practitioners inscribed this symbol in order to apply the paradigmatic power of the crucifixion event to the needs of their clients.⁷⁰ Many late antique ritual experts clearly thought that the crucifixion of Jesus was relevant for their rituals. Some practitioners highlighted the crucifixion by drawing the scene itself. For instance, Brit. Lib. Or. 6796(4), 6796 (= ACM 132) – a seventh-century C.E. spell for exorcism – includes a drawing of the crucified Jesus along with the criminals, who are identified as Gêstas and Dêmas (cf. *Gos. Nic.* 9:5; 10:2).⁷¹ Beyond drawings of the cross, practitioners occasionally highlighted the crucifixion in their textual formulae. For instance, the *historiola* on P. Heid. 1101 (= Suppl. Mag. 32), a fifth- or sixth-century C.E.

amulet, identifies Jesus in relation to his crucifixion: “Also you, discharge (ῥεῦμα), stand still from head to toe-nails in the name of our Lord, who was crucified... (l. 10).”

Other artifacts emphasize specific elements of the crucifixion, especially the words of Jesus on the cross (“Eli, Eli, Lema Sabachthani”). Alberto Camplani has argued that these words were cited because of the perceived foreignness of the Aramaic expression.⁷² Whatever reason or reasons practitioners had for using this passage – which probably changed over time and from practitioner to practitioner – several Greek and Coptic objects deployed these words.⁷³ For instance, P. Heid. 1359 (= PGM P14), a third-or fourth-century C.E. amulet, cites the phrase “Ἡλι Ἡλι <λεμα> σαζαχθανι” (with Greek translation) in conjunction with other biblical names and phrases. The practitioner behind the Robert Nahman Coptic Amulet (= ACM 62) even grounds his or her adjuration in the authority of the words of the crucified Jesus: “I adjure you by the three words that Jesus spoke on the cross, *‘Elôî, Elôî Elema Sabakhani, that is, god, my god, why have you forsaken me?’* (ελωϊ ελωϊ ελεμα σαβακθανι ετε παϊ πε πνουτε πανουτε ετβε ου ακκαατ ησωκ).”⁷⁴ In sum, the crucifixion of Jesus was a significant event for many ritual experts in late antique Egypt.

I contend that the arrangement of the text on P. Oxy. VIII 1077 into a series of crosses in fact drew upon the paradigmatic power of the crucifixion, the nature of which I will discuss below. Such an emphasis not only resonates with an extensive corpus of amulets and spells that manifestly highlight the crucifixion, but it also helps to explain why the preservation of the cross-shape was at least as important to the practitioner as the citation of the biblical text. Moreover, it accounts for his or her decision to outline the textual crosses in the first and last columns. In the following discussion, I suggest that

this crucifixion motif worked in conjunction with the symbolic meaning of the octagons into which the cross-shaped texts were written.

THE OCTAGONS AND THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Ever since Arthur Hunt published this amulet, scholars have drawn particular attention to the unusual shape of the material artifact.⁷⁵ Hunt had the following to say about the manuscript: “A further attempt at ornament has been made by cutting out small rectangles between the columns and by notching the edges in such a way that the spaces on which the crosses stand are given on [sic] octagonal shape.”⁷⁶ The unprecedented octagonal design suggests that the practitioner attributed special meaning to this eight-sided polygon. In this vein, it is unlikely that the octagons merely served a decorative function, as Hunt and others seem to imply.⁷⁷ Such a view is implicitly predicated on the assumption that ancient practitioners drew clear distinctions between visual form and verbal content. By contrast, we have already seen that the particular coordination of crosses, octagons, and text on P. Oxy. VIII 1077 exemplifies the art-historical contention that such a strict dichotomy does not apply to antiquity.

Furthermore, rituals in general have the tendency of imbuing even incidental details with meaning. Scholarship in ritual theory has shown that one of the principle features of ritual behavior is the focusing of attention.⁷⁸ Concerning the ritual experience of entering a temple, for instance, Jonathan Z. Smith writes the following:

When one enters a temple, one enters marked-off space...*in which, at least in principle, nothing is accidental; everything, at least potentially,*

demands attention. This serves as a focusing lens, establishing the possibility of significance by directing attention...⁷⁹

There is evidence that this ritual focusing may be even more intense in the case of ancient amulets. For instance, the spatial limitations of artifacts, such as P. Oxy. VIII 1077 (again, only 11.1 cm x 6 cm), permitted relatively few details for the practitioners to compose and for the clients to observe. To that end, while practitioners were keen on drawing upon as many sources of power as possible for ritual efficacy, most extant amulets have a limited number of prominent features.⁸⁰ Indeed, there are only four striking elements on P. Oxy. VIII 1077: the scriptural words; the cross-shape pattern; the octagons; and the picture of the client. This limitation in the number of features would have facilitated greater attention to each of them. Moreover, it must be stressed that the client's health was at stake. The object, therefore, was not designed or used primarily – or perhaps at all – for aesthetic purposes. In short, the material, conceptual, ritual, and occasional evidences are sufficient to shift the burden of proof onto the shoulders of those who would claim that the octagonal shape – or any of the elements in this amulet, for that matter – were intended to serve a purely decorative function. Until such a burden is met, therefore, we must go forward under the assumption that the octagons were meaningful in some way for ritual efficacy. But what then was the meaning of the octagons?

One possible hermeneutical dimension to consider is the symbolic significance of the number eight in late antiquity. Indeed, ancient Mediterraneans often attributed tremendous significance to select numbers. The number eight was on occasion one of the numbers impregnated with meaning. Thus, groups, such as the Pythagoreans, used eight to symbolize justice.⁸¹

Given the use of cross-shapes on P. Oxy. VIII 1077, it is worth stressing that, in many Christian texts and contexts, the number eight signified the resurrection of Jesus.⁸² This association was connected to the belief that Jesus rose from the dead on the eighth day. For example, the Epistle of Barnabas reads, “...we celebrate the eighth day with gladness, for on it Jesus arose from the dead, and appeared, and ascended into heaven” (*Barn.* 15.9).⁸³ Augustine of Hippo integrates this association into his eschatological framework: “But this seventh [age] will be our Sabbath, and its end will not be an evening, but the Lord’s Day, an eighth eternal day, sanctified by the resurrection of Christ, which prefigures the eternal rest of both spirit and body” (Augustine, *ciu.* 22.30).⁸⁴

The symbolic association between the number eight, the resurrection, and even octagons was mapped onto architectural structures in the late antique Mediterranean world. Baptisteries, which were often octagonal in shape, were one of the primary contexts in which these items merged.⁸⁵ It should be noted that, although octagonal baptisteries were more common in the Christian west, the fifth- or sixth-century C.E. baptistery of the Martyr Church at the popular pilgrimage complex of Abū Mīnā (outside of Alexandria) was octagonal in shape.⁸⁶

At least some early Christians explicitly drew symbolic connections between the octagonal shape of the baptistery, the number eight, and the resurrection of Jesus. For instance, an inscription attributed to St. Ambrose that was originally written on the baptistery of the church of Milan clearly draws a connection between the octagonal architecture of the baptistery and the resurrection:

The eight-sided temple has risen for sacred purposes, the eight-sided font is worthy for this task. It is seemly that the baptismal hall should arise in this number by which true health has returned to the people by the light of the resurrected Christ, who loosens the bonds of death and revives the lifeless from the tombs.⁸⁷

It is important to stress that many art historians and archeologists have questioned the claim that ancient baptisteries were designed specifically with such symbolism in mind.⁸⁸

It is thus wise to follow Gerard Lukken and Mark Searle, who argue that one must distinguish between the original reason for constructing an octagonal baptistery and its subsequent interpretation.⁸⁹ Thus, one cannot be sure whether the inscription on the baptistery of the church of Milan reflects an original architectural symbolism or only a later interpretation of the structure. In either case, however, the “Ambrosian” inscription participated in a symbolic discourse that unequivocally connected the octagonal shape to the resurrection of Jesus.⁹⁰

This broader symbolic connection between the number eight and the resurrection of Jesus in literary and archaeological sources might offer a useful paradigm for interpreting the visual and material juxtapositions of crosses and octagons on P. Oxy. VIII 1077. Most important, the pairing of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus for ritual power was common on amulets from late antique Egypt – albeit typically among those that utilize creedal formulae. P. Haun. III 51 (= Suppl.Mag. 23), a fifth-century C.E. Greek amulet for healing fever with shivering (ῥιγοπύρετον), exemplifies how the death and resurrection motifs could be integrated into an otherwise unknown creed: “Christ was born, amen. *Christ was crucified, amen* (Χριστὸς ἐσταυρόθη [read

ἔσταυρώθη], ἀμήν). Christ was buried, amen. *Christ arose, amen* (Χριστὸς ἀνέστη, ἀμή<v>).”

Likewise, the author of P. Lugd.-Bat. XIX 20 (= Suppl.Mag. 35), a sixth-century C.E. healing amulet, highlights the death and resurrection through the use of another unknown creed (ll. 4-5). He or she also inscribes crosses before and after the text as well as staurograms before each creedal element. Thus, the practitioner behind P. Lugd.-Bat. XIX 20 repeatedly draws attention to the crucifixion motif on a visual level – analogous to P. Oxy. VIII 1077 – while he or she simultaneously references the resurrection in textual form.

P. Turner 49 (= Suppl.Mag. 31), a fifth-or sixth-century C.E. Greek amulet for healing, references the crucifixion and resurrection as part of its citation of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed (or related tradition).⁹¹ Interestingly, after citing this creedal formula, P. Turner 49 then uses language from Matt 4.23 – albeit in an abbreviated and slightly modified formulation. In line 3, the text proclaims, “We believe (?), Jesus, that you were healing then *every infirmity of the people and every disease* (πᾶσαν μαλακίαν τοῦ λαοῦ κ[αί] πᾶσαν νόσον).” This scribe, therefore, integrated the crucifixion of Jesus, his resurrection, and his healing ministry (via Matt 4.23) into a single amuletic ritual.⁹²

Although P. Oxy. VIII 1077 does not organize its text into a creedal-like structure, these exemplars from the amuletic record provide useful evidence for understanding its visual, material, and textual characteristics. In particular, they clearly demonstrate that practitioners appropriated traditions in which the crucifixion of Jesus operated *in conjunction with* his resurrection – and, in at least one case, also with language derived from Matt 4.23. Furthermore, there is amuletic evidence for the pairing of Jesus’

crucifixion and resurrection without the use of a creed. P. Heid. 1359, which I mentioned above, not only draws attention to the crucifixion with the “Aramaic” phrase “Ἡλι Ἡλι <λεμα> σαζαχθανι” (with translation), but it also highlights the resurrection by translating the name “[I]akin” ([I]ακιν) with the phrase, “Iaô resurrection” (Ἰάω ἀνάστασις) (l. 20). Thus, at least on occasion, the pairing of these motifs on amulets was more than a byproduct of the authority that practitioners invested in the creedal genre.

I argue that the ritual expert formatted P. Oxy. VIII 1077 so that it would stress the crucifixion, resurrection, and healing ministry of Jesus repeatedly in each textual octagon. In so doing, this amulet goes one step beyond P. Lugd.-Bat. XIX 20 in visually highlighting *both* the crucifixion *and* the resurrection of Jesus throughout the artifact. But the amulet’s unusual way of presenting the biblical traditions also invites us to situate P. Oxy. VIII 1077 within the history of the ancient book and concomitant reading and compositional habits. After all, the practitioner invokes the biblical traditions according to different textual, visual, and material strategies. How does the format of this amulet orient the suggested reading of these traditions, presumably with an eye toward the interpretations of the divinity invoked and, perhaps to a lesser extent, of the client?

BOOK FORM AND THE MESSAGE OF P. OXY. VIII 1077

Historians of the book have increasingly highlighted the inextricable link between materiality and textual layout, on the one hand, and conceptions of textuality and reading, on the other hand. As Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier stress, “a text is invested with a new meaning and a different status with every change in the support that makes it

available to reading.”⁹³ It is, therefore, incumbent upon historians to examine together both the words on the page and the physical layout of the manuscript.⁹⁴

With this methodological dictum in mind, it is worth thinking about the relationship between material support and implicit conceptions of text, composition, and reading on P. Oxy. VIII 1077. To be sure, in the case of amulets the author-reader relationship is complicated. Amulets and other applied magical objects differ from traditional scrolls and books in that their primary “readers” were the divinities and other supernatural agents invoked. To that end, while we cannot know the specific skills of the client behind P. Oxy. VIII 1077, the limited extent of reading abilities in antiquity make it unlikely that he or she was able to read the text for herself or himself.⁹⁵ Of course, even if he or she was unable to read, the client may not have been completely ignorant of the amulet’s text or significance. It is likely that the practitioner explained the contents of the amulet to the client and even more likely that he or she showed the client the image in the central octagon before folding it. Moreover, within a culture, such as late antique Egypt, in which writing played a major role, the inability to read did not necessarily translate into a lack of familiarity with traditions or even texts.⁹⁶ In this vein, the client may have had some knowledge of Jesus’ miracles – from stories told or read at church or in another venue – and might, therefore, have been able to understand the significance of the textual, visual, and material elements of the amulet for healing. Nevertheless, the folds extant in the amulet suggest that the text was probably obscured from the client’s eyes once suspended around his or her neck. At least at that point, the text was meant solely for the divine reader. Inevitably, therefore, we are left with an author-oriented situation in which we must primarily investigate the reader *as envisioned by the practitioner*. In order to

understand the implied heavenly reader – a task that is virtually indistinguishable from assessing authorial intent – we must take into consideration the amulet’s material support.

The specific layout of this amulet seems to have been designed so that the implied divine reader would understand the biblical elements in light of one another. Thus, while P. Oxy. VIII 1077 and P. Turner 49 both reference the crucifixion, resurrection, and Matt 4.23(-24), there is an important difference between these two artifacts: P. Turner 49 is formatted like most texts. Thus, the reader engages with these elements *sequentially* and in textual form. By contrast, the layout of P. Oxy. VIII 1077 requires the reader to confront these elements *simultaneously* across textual, visual, and material registers. The anomalous layout of P. Oxy. VIII 1077 raises an important question: what does it mean to read Matt 4.23-24 in dialogue with the crucifixion and resurrection stories?

One can only speculate on the precise hermeneutical relationship between these biblical traditions. One possibility would be that, while Matt 4.23-24 provides an implicit series of precedents for the healing act that is desired, the crucifixion and resurrection motifs ground those precedents in a broader manifestation of divine power, which included the authority over death itself.

Beyond situating healing within this all-encompassing framework, there may even be an additional soteriological dimension to this amulet. As Roy Kotansky has appropriately underscored, many amulets blur the conceptual boundaries between eternal and “worldly” salvation.⁹⁷ For example, P. Cairo 10263 (= PGM P13), a fourth- or fifth-century C.E. amulet, not only contains requests for healing, but also expresses an interest in the forgiveness of sins, presumably for eternal salvation: “the heavens were blessed and the earth was glad that the enemy withdrew from them and that you gave freedom to

the creature who prayed to the lord Jesus, *the voice that absolved of sins all of us who call upon your holy name* (ἡ φωνὴ ἡ παραφήσασα τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν, ὅσοι ἐπικαλούμεθα τὸ ἅγιόν σου ὄνομα).⁹⁸ Consequently, the curative and soteriological themes embedded in the layout of P. Oxy. VIII 1077 may have functioned as a plea to the divine reader both for the temporal healing of the client's ailment and for his or her eternal reward once death eventually came. But the unusual arrangement of the textual, visual, and material features of this amulet ought to make us think even more deeply about the perceived relation between layout and ritual efficacy.

RITUAL EFFICACY AND PERFORMATIVE ACTION

It should be recalled that the picture of the client, which was metonymically linked to the client himself/herself, was placed in the central octagon. Such an arrangement meant that, when folded, the pictographic octagon was covered by all of the other octagons. We must take seriously, therefore, Don Skemer's suggestion that folding contributed to the efficacy of amulets in the pre-modern world.⁹⁹

There is in fact evidence that folding and related actions played roles in attaining ritual efficacy in late antique Egypt. Aside from the ritual use of knots in the Greek *Magical Papyri*,¹⁰⁰ the folding of P. Mich. inv. 6213 – a Sahidic Coptic amulet that may date as early as the seventh century C.E. – seems to have worked in conjunction with its text, which consists of the final ten lines of Jesus' Letter to Abgar.¹⁰¹ As Kevin Sullivan and Terry Wilfong have argued, this amulet was folded to resemble a Coptic documentary letter.¹⁰² According to their reading, therefore, P. Mich. 6213 “became” the

original letter of Christ and thus derived its ritual power, at least in part, based on this material resemblance.

I put forth the thesis that ritual efficacy on P. Oxy. VIII 1077 was applied to the client – at least in part – through the performative action of folding the amulet. In particular, by placing the drawing of the client – and, by metonymic association, the client himself or herself – *in* the central octagon, the practitioner was literally able to wrap the client in the biblical text of Matt 4.23-24 and in the biblical traditions of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus to his or her temporary and perhaps eternal benefit.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

I have utilized insights from various sources, disciplines, and methods in order to understand the poetics of P. Oxy. VIII 1077. While many of the issues addressed in this essay have broader implications for the study of late antiquity, the relationship between amulets and the history of the book opens up particularly promising avenues of research. Despite the useful penetration of materiality into the history of textuality and reading, much of this scholarship has focused on scrolls and codices. Although it is difficult to overestimate the importance of these scribal technologies in the history of the western book, it is time that “marginalized” Mediterranean book forms figure into this discussion.

Amulets and other applied “magical” objects represent a book technology that is particularly suitable for expanding our historical portrait of books and scribal practices. For instance, as highlighted above, amulets were designed primarily for divine readers. It would be worth investigating how such an implied readership informed compositional practices and material layouts. One possible way of tracing the impact of this divine

readership would be to compare the incantations in these *applied* artifacts with the formularies and recipes found in the Greek Magical Papyri and Coptic handbooks, which were directed toward human readers.

In addition, amulets constitute an interesting site for considering how material support impacts compositional practices as well as conceptions of textuality and textual authority. To take just one example, the citation of biblical texts for apotropaic, curative, and exorcistic purposes during late antiquity was probably shaped by the physical limitations of the media used (e.g., papyrus, parchment, ostraka, bowls, bracelets).¹⁰³ Often by necessity, biblical citations on such magical objects were short and sometimes even fragmentary.¹⁰⁴ As a result, the physical limitations of amulets and the like both reflected and contributed to a vision of the Bible as a collection of disparate thematic units.¹⁰⁵ It would be interesting to trace how material supports on amulets, on the one hand, and authoritative traditions, on the other hand, intersected within various religious communities and cultures and in different historical periods.

Moreover, amulets, such as P. Oxy. VIII 1077, not only reinforce the scholarly contention that material supports helped shape the ways in which texts were read and interpreted, but these objects also demonstrate that at times such supports could *themselves* convey content relevant to the overall interpretations of the words on the page. P. Oxy. VIII 1077 offers an interesting glimpse into how authors – and perhaps even human readers – could configure the conceptual relationship between medium and text during late antiquity.

But magical objects offer more than a unique contribution to the history of the book from the perspectives of materiality, compositional practices, and implied

readership. They also shed light on uses and conceptions of texts in so-called “lived religion” and among individuals traditionally left out of the historical narrative of books. Indeed, for many people who lived during late antiquity, amulets may have been the primary – or only – “books” that they ever encountered up close.

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¹ On the problems associated with the term “magic,” see, for instance, Bernd-Christian Otto, “Towards Historicizing ‘Magic’ in Antiquity,” *Numen* 60 (2013): 308-47.

² E.g., K. Preisendanz, ed., *Papyri Graecae magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1973) (hereafter PGM); John G. Gager, *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992) (hereafter CTB); Marvin W. Meyer and Richard Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) (hereafter ACM); Franco Maltomini and Robert Daniel, eds., *Supplementum Magicum (Suppl. Mag.)*, 2 vols. (Opladen: Westdt. Verl., 1990) (hereafter Suppl.Mag.).

³ E.g., Fritz Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, trans. Franklin Philip (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Derek Collins, *Magic in the Ancient Greek World*

(Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008); Gideon Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

⁴ E.g., Marvin W. Meyer and Paul A. Mirecki, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 129 (Leiden: Brill, 2001); Paul Mirecki and Marvin Meyer, *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2002); Gideon Bohak, Yuval Harari, and Shaul Shaked, eds., *Continuity and Innovation in the Magical Tradition*, Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture 15 (Leiden: Brill, 2011); Kimberly B. Stratton and Dayna S. Kalleres, *Daughters of Hecate: Women and Magic in the Ancient World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

⁵ E.g., Alessandro Biondi, “Le citazioni bibliche nei papiri magici cristiani greci,” *Studia Papyrologica* 20 (1979): 93-127; Theodore S. De Bruyn, “Papyri, Parchments, Ostraca, and Tablets Written with Biblical Texts in Greek and Used as Amulets: A Preliminary List,” in *Early Christian Manuscripts: Examples of Applied Method and Approach*, ed. Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas, Texts and Editions for New Testament Study 5 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 145-89; Joseph E. Sanzo, *Scriptural Incipits on Amulets from Late Antique Egypt: Text, Typology, and Theory*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 84 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

⁶ E.g., Biondi, “citazioni bibliche”; De Bruyn, “Papyri”; Theodore S. De Bruyn, “Appeals to Jesus and the One ‘Who Heals Every Illness and Every Infirmity’ (Matt 4:23, 9:35) in Amulets in Late Antiquity,” in *Reception and Interpretation of the Bible in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. DiTommaso and L. Turcescu, The Bible in Ancient Christianity 6 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 65-81; Thomas J. Kraus, “Manuscripts with the Lord’s Prayer--

They Are More Than Simply Witnesses to That Text Itself,” in *New Testament Manuscripts: Their Texts and Their Worlds*, ed. Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas, Texts and Editions for New Testament Study 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 227-66; Joseph Sanzo, “The Innovative Use of Biblical Traditions for Ritual Power: The Crucifixion of Jesus on a Coptic Exorcistic Spell (Brit. Lib. Or. 6796[4], 6796) as a Test Case,” *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 16 (2015): 67-98; Brice C. Jones, *New Testament Texts on Greek Amulets from Late Antiquity*, Library of New Testament Studies 554 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016).

⁷ See especially, David Frankfurter, “The Magic of Writing and the Writing of Magic: The Power of the Word in Egyptian and Greek Traditions,” *Helios* 21 (1994): 189-221; Raquel Martín Hernández, “Reading Magical Drawings in the Greek Magical Papyri,” in *Actes du 26e congrès international de papyrologie, Genève, 16-21 août 2010*, ed. Paul Schubert (Genève: Bibliothèque de Genève, 2012), 491-98; Richard Gordon, “Shaping the Text: Innovation and Authority in Graeco-Egyptian Malign Magic.,” in *Kykeon: Studies in Honour of H. S. Versnel*, ed. H. F. J. Horstmanshoff et al., *Religions in the Graeco-Roman World* 142 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 69-111.

⁸ Michael D. Swartz, “The Aesthetics of Blessing and Cursing: Literary and Iconographic Dimensions of Hebrew and Aramaic Blessing and Cursing Texts,” *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 5 (2005): 187-211; Naama Vilozy, “The Art of the Aramaic Incantation Bowls,” in *Aramaic Bowl Spells: Jewish Babylonian Aramaic Bowls*, ed. Shaul Shaked, Siam Bhayro, and James Nathan Ford, vol. 1, *Magical and Religious Literature of Late Antiquity* 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 29-37.

⁹ Jitse H. F. Dijkstra, “The Interplay between Image and Text on Greek Amulets Containing Christian Elements from Late Antique Egypt,” in *The Materiality of Magic*, ed. Dietrich Boschung and Jan N. Bremmer, *Morphomata* 20 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2015), 271-92; Sanzo, “Innovative Use.”

¹⁰ See, most recently, Andrew T. Wilburn, *Materia Magica: The Archaeology of Magic in Roman Egypt, Cyprus, and Spain* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2013); Dietrich Boschung and Jan N. Bremmer, eds., *The Materiality of Magic* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2015).

¹¹ E.g., Stanley Tambiah, “Form and Meaning of Magical Acts: A Point of View,” in *Modes of Thought*, ed. R. Horton and R. Finnegan (London: Faber, 1973), 199-229; Stanley Tambiah, “The Magical Power of Words,” *Man* 3 (1968): 175-208; Peter Brown, “The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity,” *JRS* 61 (1971): 80-101; Wilburn, *Materia Magica*; David Frankfurter, “Narrating Power: The Theory and Practice of the Magical Historiola in Ritual Spells,” in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, ed. Marvin W Meyer and Paul A. Mirecki, *Religions in the Graeco-Roman World* 129 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 457-76.

¹² Of course, there are very useful studies that engage with several of these dimensions. See, for instance, Frankfurter, “Narrating Power”; H. S. Versnel, “The Poetics of the Magical Charm: An Essay in the Power of Words,” in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, ed. Paul Mirecki and Marvin Meyer, *Religions in the Graeco-Roman World* 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 105-58; Wilburn, *Materia Magica*.

¹³ Arthur S. Hunt, “1077. Amulet: St. Matthew’s Gospel IV,” in *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, ed. Arthur S. Hunt, vol. 8 (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1911), 10-11;

Joseph van Haelst, *Catalogue des papyrus littéraires juifs et chrétiens* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1976), 127; Ulrike Horak, ed., *Illuminierte Papyri, Pergamente und Papiere I* (Wien: Verlag A. Holzhausens Nfg., 1992), 247; De Bruyn, “Appeals to Jesus,” 66; Sanzo, *Scriptural Incipits*, 96-97; Dijkstra, “Interplay,” 285-86; Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 60-65.

¹⁴ See Versnel, “Poetics.”

¹⁵ For a useful articulation of this point, see, for instance, Kraus, “Manuscripts with the Lord’s Prayer,” 227-32.

¹⁶ For the use of magical objects to illuminate issues of gender in late antiquity, see the various essays in Stratton and Kalleres, *Daughters of Hecate*. For the intersection of ancient magic and early Jewish–Christian relations, see Joseph Sanzo, “‘For Our Lord Was Pursued by the Jews...’: The (Ab)Use of the Motif of ‘Jewish’ Violence against Jesus on a Greek Amulet (P. Heid. 1101),” in *One in Christ Jesus: Essays on Early Christianity and “All That Jazz,” in Honor of S. Scott Bartchy*, ed. David Matson and K.C. Richardson (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 86-98.

¹⁷ The text is a slightly modified version of the edition in Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 60. See also the original edition in Hunt, “1077. Amulet,” 10-11. The translation is a modified version of the one provided by Marvin Meyer in Meyer and Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic*, 33.

¹⁸ The practitioner added the name Jesus to the biblical text, presumably for clarification (see also Col. 5: 1. 14). It should be noted that several other early New Testament manuscripts include the name Jesus here (e.g., \aleph^* , C^3 , f^{13} , D). For discussion, see Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 64-65.

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- ¹⁹ The practitioner has changed the case of this phrase from dative to accusative. For discussion, see Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 64.
- ²⁰ Hunt, “1077. Amulet,” 10.
- ²¹ Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 62.
- ²² Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 62.
- ²³ P. Oxy. VIII 1077 and P. Iand. I.6 (= PGM P17) are the only two extant amulets from late antiquity in which the title of Matthew occurs without any other Gospel titles or *incipits*. Jones claims that the opening words of P. Oxy. VIII 1077 do not constitute a Matthean title “in the strict sense,” but rather “should probably be understood as ‘the good news *about* healing according to Matthew’” (Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 62). On the use of titles and opening lines in amuletic texts, see Sanzo, *Scriptural Incipits*.
- ²⁴ That P. Oxy. VIII 1077 was created for healing is recognized by most scholars (e.g., Meyer and Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic*, 33; Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 61; De Bruyn, “Appeals to Jesus,” 66).
- ²⁵ On the problems with identifying the religious affiliation of practitioners, see Sanzo, *Scriptural Incipits*, 10-14; Theodore S. De Bruyn and Jitse H. F. Dijkstra, “Greek Amulets and Formularies from Egypt Containing Christian Elements: A Checklist of Papyri, Parchments, Ostraka, and Tablets,” *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 48 (2011): 170-71.
- ²⁶ C. Wessely, “Les plus anciens monuments du christianisme écrits sur papyrus (II),” in *Patrologia Orientalis* 18, ed. R. Graffin and F. Nau (Paris: Firmin-Didot et Cie, Imprimeurs-Éditeurs, 1924), 414.

²⁷ De Bruyn, “Appeals to Jesus,” 66; Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 63; Dijkstra, “Interplay,” 286; Sanzo, *Scriptural Incipits*, 97.

²⁸ Jitse Dijkstra notes that, while the Berlin “Chronicle” or *Consularia* (P. Berol. 13296) includes an image of St. Laurence that has some affinities to the image found on P. Oxy. VIII 1077, the figure depicted on the amulet was most likely the client (Dijkstra, “Interplay,” 286). An image of P. Berol. 13296 is available online through the Berliner Papyrusdatenbank (http://ww2.smb.museum/berlpap/Original/P_13296_R_4.jpg).

²⁹ Horak, *Illuminierte Papyri*, 247; Bruce E. Nielsen and Klaas Anthony Worp, eds., *Papyri from the New York University Collection II (P. NYU II)*, vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 17; Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 63.

³⁰ Dijkstra, “Interplay,” 286.

³¹ For a magical object with smear marks, see e.g., P. Berol. 22235 (Sanzo, *Scriptural Incipits*, 83-84.).

³² For female clients, see e.g., P. Oxy. VI 924 (= PGM P5a), P. Oxy. VIII 1151 (= PGM P5b), and PSI inv. 365 (= PGM P18). For male clients, see e.g., P. Oxy. LXV 4469, BGU III 954 (= PGM P9), and P. Berol. 21911 (= Suppl.Mag. 26).

³³ My use of terms, such as “personalize,” ought not imply that the practitioner’s drawing captured (or intended to capture) the client’s specific physical features. In my opinion, such a determination cannot be made on the available evidence. For an analysis of the various strategies of depiction in the so-called “mummy portraits” from Roman Egypt, see e.g., Joyce M. Filer, “If the Face Fits...A Comparison of Mummies and their Accompanying Portraits Using Computerised Axial Tomography,” in *Portraits and*

Masks: Burial Custom in Roman Egypt, ed. M. L. Bierbrier (London: British Museum Press, 1997), 121-26.

³⁴ Janet Huskinson, “Constructing Childhood on Roman Funerary Memorials,” in *Constructions of Childhood in Ancient Greece and Italy*, ed. Ada Cohen and Jeremy B. Rutter, Hesperia Supplement 41 (Princeton: ASCSA, 2007), 335.

³⁵ Jacco Dieleman, “What’s in a Sign? Translating Filiation in the Demotic Magical Papyri,” in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the ‘Abbāsids*, ed. Arietta Papaconstantinou (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), 130.

³⁶ See, for example, the list of Coptic spells under the Greek heading δεῑνα δεῑνος in Angelicus Kropp, ed., *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, 3 vols. (Bruxelles: Édition de la Fondation Égyptologique, 1930-1931), 1:90.

³⁷ E.g., P. Oxy. VIII 1151 and P. Oxy. LXV 4469. Of course, many ostensibly “Christian” amulets do not specify the name of the client (e.g., Brit. Lib. Or. 4919[2]) or use the client’s name without matrilineal qualification (e.g., P. Köln 2861 [= Suppl. Mag. 20]).

³⁸ P. Köln 340 also seems to have incorporated the client into the amulet through a drawing (Dijkstra, “Interplay,” 284).

³⁹ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live by* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 37.

⁴⁰ Günter Radden and Zoltán Kövecses, “Towards a Theory of Metonymy,” in *Metonymy in Language and Thought*, ed. Klaus-Uwe Panther and Günter Radden (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1999), 18-19.

⁴¹ Marcel Mauss, “A Category of the Human Mind: The Notion of Person; The Notion of Self,” in *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, Steven Lukes, trans. W. D. Halls (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 1-25.

⁴² On the principle of “persuasive analogy,” see Tambiah, “Form and Meaning of Magical Acts,” 2-3, 7; Christopher A. Faraone, “The Agonistic Context of Early Greek Binding Spells,” in *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic & Religion*, ed. Christopher A. Faraone and Dirk Obbink (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 3-32, at 8.

⁴³ Translation by E. N. O’Neil in Hans Dieter Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation: Including the Demotic Spells* (University of Chicago Press, 1986), 44.

⁴⁴ For an applied version of this formulary, see CTB, 94-97, no. 27.

⁴⁵ Wilburn, *Materia Magica*, 77.

⁴⁶ E.g., P. Haun. III 51 (= Suppl.Mag. 23); P.Coll. Youtie II 91 (= Suppl.Mag. 30); P. Turner 49 (= Suppl.Mag. 31); P. Köln inv. 851 (= Suppl.Mag. 34).

⁴⁷ For a useful survey of both the patristic and amuletic use of Matt 4:23/935, see De Bruyn, “Appeals to Jesus.” As de Bruyn notes, Origen cites this passage in reference to healing of souls (De Bruyn, “Appeals to Jesus,” 73).

⁴⁸ Franco Maltomini, “340. Amuleto con NT Ev. Jo. 1, 1-11,” in *Kölner Papyri (P. Köln)*, vol. 8, ed. Michael Gronewald, Klaus Maresch, and Cornelia Römer (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1997), 82-95.

⁴⁹ While in some cases it is difficult to determine whether a practitioner is directly citing the text of Matt 4:23 – as opposed to citing this passage indirectly via another amulet or through the liturgical formula – it is clear that the practitioner behind P. Oxy. VIII 1077

was in fact citing the Gospel of Matthew. On the possibility that the practitioner cited this passage from memory, see Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 65.

⁵⁰ As in Col. 1: 1. 11, the practitioner here has inserted the personal name Jesus (Ἰησους), presumably for clarification. The addition of Jesus here constitutes a singular reading (Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 65).

⁵¹ Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 64.

⁵² For a convenient summary of unintentional scribal errors, see Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 251-58.

⁵³ Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 64.

⁵⁴ See also P. Heid. 1101 and P. Anastasy 9 (= ACM 134).

⁵⁵ On the use of anti-Jewish invective on amulets, see Ra'anan Boustan and Joseph E. Sanzo, "Christian Magicians, Jewish Magical Idioms, and the Shared Magical Culture of Late Antiquity," *HTR* (forthcoming).

⁵⁶ On the importance of precedents to ritual efficacy, see the discussion below.

⁵⁷ Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 64. Hunt also attributed the repetition of this phrase to dittography, adding that it was "no doubt due to the recurrence of πασαν (sic)" (Hunt, "1077. Amulet," 11).

⁵⁸ C. A. La'da and A. Papatomas, "A Greek Papyrus Amulet from the Duke Collection with Biblical Excerpts," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 41 (2004): 93-113.

⁵⁹ De Bruyn, "Papyri," 160-61.

⁶⁰ G. D. Kilpatrick, "Ps 90: 1-4 (LXX)," *ZAW* 78 (1966): 224.

⁶¹ Translation by Albert Pietersma in *The International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies*, trans., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included Under That Title* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 593.

⁶² See Michael Squire, *Image and Text in Graeco-Roman Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁶³ These symbols were so common on amulets that in their checklist of Greek amulets and formularies with “Christian elements,” Theodore de Bruyn and Jitse Dijkstra devote an entire column to them (De Bruyn and Dijkstra, “Greek Amulets,” 184-215.).

⁶⁴ See also, for instance, Egger collection ostrakon (= ACM 6); PSI inv. 365; P. Oxy. VIII 1151; BGU III: 954; P. Iand. I 6; Zereteli-Tiflis collection, 24 (= ACM 23); London amulet from the Edward collection, University College (= ACM 24); P. Vienna G 19929 (= ACM 28); Brit. Lib. Or. 6794 (= ACM 129); P. Prag. I 6 (= Suppl. Mag. 25 [reconstructed]); P. Princ. II 107. The use of crosses to mark off beginnings of texts was certainly not confined to amulets, but was a well-established scribal practice in Egypt more generally (Lincoln H. Blumell, *Lettered Christians: Christians, Letters, and Late Antique Oxyrhynchus*, *New Testament Tools, Studies and Documents* 39 [Leiden: Brill, 2012], 43-46).

⁶⁵ E.g., BKT VI.7.1; P. Oxy. VIII 1151.

⁶⁶ E.g., Amsterdam 173 (= ACM 12); P. Oxy. VI 924; P. Oslo 1.5 (= PGM P3).

⁶⁷ E.g., P. Oxy. XVI 1926 (= ACM 32); Harris 54 (= ACM 33). On the phrase $\text{X}\text{M}\Gamma$, see Jan-Olof Tjäder, “Christ, Our Lord, Born of the Virgin Mary ($\text{X}\text{M}\Gamma$ and VDN),” *Eranos* 68 (1970): 148-90; S. R. Llewelyn, “The Christian Symbol $\text{X}\text{M}\Gamma$, an Acrostic or an

Isosephism?,” in *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity*, ed. S. R. Llewelyn, 8, A Review of the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri Published 1984-85 (Grand Rapids, MI: William E. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 156-68; Brent Nongbri, “The Lord’s Prayer and XMF: Two Christian Papyrus Amulets,” *HTR* 104 (2011): 59-68.

⁶⁸ On the importance of analogy, precedent, and paradigm in “magical” contexts, see especially Frankfurter, “Narrating Power”; Thomas Schneider, “Die Waffe der Analogie: Altägyptische Magie als System,” in *Analogiedenke: Vorstöße in ein neues Gebiet der Rationalitätstheorie*, ed. M. Bachmann and K. Gloy (Freiburg: Verlag K. Alber, 2000), 37-85; Sanzo, *Scriptural Incipits*, 65-69.

⁶⁹ Frankfurter, “Narrating Power,” 461-66.

⁷⁰ On the various associations with crosses, see, for instance, Robin M. Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 148-50. Of course, the likely cultural associations of a cross on a given amulet must be made on a case-by-case basis.

⁷¹ Kropp, *Zaubertexte*, 1:47-50. For a discussion of the relationship between word and image on this spell, see Sanzo, “Innovative Use.”

⁷² Alberto Camplani, “‘Eli, Eli, Lema Sabachthani’. Pluralità dei linguaggi religiosi e loro rielaborazione rituale in alcune preghiere magiche copte,” *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* 76 (2010): 139-50.

⁷³ E.g., Brit. Lib. Or. 6796(4), 6796; P. Heid. I.5 (= PGM P14); the Robert Nahman Coptic amulet (= ACM 62); P. Berol. 11347 (= ACM 63); Brit. Lib. Or. 5987 (= ACM 70); Rossi’s ‘Gnostic’ Tractate (= ACM 71); and Brit. Lib. Or. 6796(2, 3v.) (= ACM 131).

⁷⁴ This amulet has been dated between the fifth and tenth centuries C.E. (see James Drescher, “A Coptic Amulet,” in *Coptic Studies in Honor of Walter Ewing Crum*, ed. Thomas Whittemore [Boston: The Byzantine Institute, Inc., 1950], 265-70, at 266).

⁷⁵ E.g., De Bruyn, “Appeals to Jesus,” 66; Dijkstra, “Interplay,” 286; Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 61-62; Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae magicae*, 231-32; Horak, *Illuminierte Papyri*, 247; Sanzo, *Scriptural Incipits*, 97.

⁷⁶ Hunt, “1077. Amulet,” 10. Hunt’s claim that the octagons were made “by cutting out small rectangles between the columns and...notching the edges” is not the only possible explanation. It is perhaps more likely that the parchment manuscript was first formed into an uneven square by folding it four times horizontally and two times vertically. The practitioner would have then created the octagons by diagonally shearing each of the edges of this square. This action would have transformed the folded square into an octagon. Once unfolded, the manuscript would then consist of fifteen “ready-made” octagons that could be used to organize the cross-shaped text of the Matthean title and Matt 4.23-24. I am indebted to Ann Marie Yasin for this latter explanation of the format of P. Oxy. VIII 1077. Unfortunately, the manuscript has deteriorated considerably since its initial publication, thus precluding a definitive answer to this puzzle.

⁷⁷ For the view that the design of this amulet served a decorative function, see Hunt, “1077. Amulet,” 10; Jones, *New Testament Texts*, 62; Horak, *Illuminierte Papyri*, 247; Dijkstra, “Interplay,” 286. By contrast, Kenneth W. Clark claims that P. Oxy. VIII 1077 was composed in “mystical forms” (Kenneth W. Clark, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Greek New Testament Manuscripts in America* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1937], 139).

⁷⁸ Douglas A. Marshall, “Behavior, Belonging, and Belief: A Theory of Ritual Practice,” *Sociological Theory* 20 (2002): 360-80.; Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 103-17.

⁷⁹ Smith, *To Take Place*, 104 (emphasis mine).

⁸⁰ On the ancient ritual expert as a kind of “bricoleur,” see David Frankfurter, “Dynamics of Ritual Expertise in Antiquity and Beyond: Towards a New Taxonomy of ‘Magicians,’” in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, ed. Paul Mirecki and Marvin W Meyer, *Religions in the Graeco-Roman World* 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 159-78, at 171.

⁸¹ Christiane Joost-Gaugier, *Measuring Heaven: Pythagoras and His Influence on Thought and Art in Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), 174.

⁸² See, for instance, Franz Jos Dölger, “Zur Symbolik des altchristlichen Taufhauses: Das Oktogon und die Symbolik der Achtzahl,” *Antike und Christentum* 4 (1934): 153-87; Reinhart Staats, “Ogdoas als ein Symbol für die Auferstehung,” *VC* 26 (1972): 29-52.

⁸³ Translation taken from Bart D. Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, vol. 2, The Loeb Classical Library 25 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 71.

⁸⁴ Translation taken from William M. Green, ed., *Saint Augustine, The City of God against the Pagans*, vol. 7, The Loeb Classical Library 417 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), 385.

⁸⁵ See Olof Brandt, “Understanding the Structures of Early Christian Baptisteries,” in *Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism: Late Antiquity, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity*, ed. David Hellholm et al., *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 176 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 1599-1602; Robin M. Jensen, *Living Water: Images*,

Symbols, and Settings of Early Christian Baptism, *Vigiliae Christianae*, Supplements 105 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 233-81. The connection between baptism, the number eight, and the resurrection has precedent in 1 Pet 3:18b-21. In this text, the eight individuals on the ark symbolized Christian baptism, which the author believed served a soteriological function vis-à-vis the resurrection of Jesus.

⁸⁶ For discussion, see W. Godlewski, "Architectural Elements of Churches: Baptistery," in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. Aziz S. Atiya, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1991), 197-200.

⁸⁷ Translation taken from Jensen, *Living Water*, 197. For a description of this inscription, see Jensen, *Living Water*, 197-98, 244. On the Ambrosian authorship of this inscription, see Dölger, "Zur Symbolik des altchristlichen Taufhauses," 153-60; Othmar Perler, "L'inscription du baptistère de Sainte-Thècle à Milan et le 'De Sacramentis' de Saint Ambroise," *Rivista di archeologica cristiana* 27 (1951): 145-66; Paul A. Underwood, "The Fountain of Life and the Manuscripts of the Gospels," *DOP* 5 (1950): 81-82.

⁸⁸ E.g., Brandt, "Understanding the Structures," 1600.

⁸⁹ See Gerard Lukken and Mark Searle, *Semiotics and Church Architecture* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1993), 13.

⁹⁰ These resurrection associations in baptismal contexts may have direct significance for understanding P. Oxy. VIII 1077. For instance, ancient baptismal rituals, like many amulets, included exorcisms (see e.g., Henry A. Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism: Ritual, Theology and Drama* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985]; Annabel J. Wharton, "Baptisteries," in *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Postclassical World*, ed. G. W. Bowersock, Peter Brown, and Oleg Grabar [Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press Harvard

University Press, 1999], 332-34, at 332). What is more, at least one late antique Egyptian amulet (P. Ryl. III.471) utilized an eastern pre-baptismal formula as part of its text (Theodore S. De Bruyn, “P. Ryl. III.471: A Baptismal Anointing Formula Used as an Amulet,” *JTS* 57 [2006]: 94-109).

⁹¹ Despite its name, the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed was first officially recognized at three separate sessions of the Council of Chalcedon in 451 C.E. (J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* [London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1950], 297).

⁹² Following the formula of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed (or shared tradition), P. Turner 49 specifies that Jesus rose “on the third day” (ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ). This text, therefore, provides a reminder that, within certain creedal traditions that practitioners appropriated, Jesus’ resurrection was dated according to the third-day scheme. For ritual objects that specify the third day for the resurrection, see e.g., P. Cairo 10263 (= PGM P13), P. Berol. 21230 (= Suppl.Mag. 35), P. Anastasy 9. For objects that do not specify a resurrection day, see e.g., P. Haun. III 51, P. Lugd. Bat. XIX 20, and Brit. Lib. Or. 5987.

⁹³ Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier, “Introduction,” in *A History of Reading in the West*, ed. Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier, trans. L. G. Cochrane (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 2.

⁹⁴ Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in Early Christianity: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 42.

⁹⁵ See, for example, the classic treatments of literary in William Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989); Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 1-41.

⁹⁶ Gamble, *Books and Readers*, 8. See also Roger Bagnall, *Everyday Writing in the Graeco-Roman East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

⁹⁷ Roy Kotansky, “Incantations and Prayers for Salvation on Inscribed Greek Amulets,” in *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic & Religion*, ed. Christopher A. Faraone and Dirk Obbink (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 119-22.

⁹⁸ Translation by Marvin Meyer in Meyer and Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic*, 36.

⁹⁹ Don Skemer, *Binding Words: Textual Amulets in the Middle Ages* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State Press, 2006), 141.

¹⁰⁰ E.g., PGM VII. 209-210; PGM XIII. 250-252. I am grateful to Christopher Faraone for drawing my attention to these texts.

¹⁰¹ Kevin P. Sullivan and Terry Wilfong, “The Reply of Jesus to King Abgar: A Coptic New Testament Apocryphon Reconsidered (P. Mich. Inv. 6213),” *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 42 (2005): 107-23.

¹⁰² Sullivan and Wilfong, “Reply of Jesus to King Abgar,” 112.

¹⁰³ Sanzo, *Scriptural Incipits*, 39.

¹⁰⁴ See the excellent survey of the uses of biblical texts on Greek amulets in de Bruyn, “Papyri.”

¹⁰⁵ Sanzo, *Scriptural Incipits*, 54-69.