

THE REVELATION OF THE CORPSE. POETRY, FICTION, AND MAGIC

1. Necromancy, that is the evocation and questioning of a dead person in order to gain knowledge otherwise unattainable by the living, was a widespread practice from the remotest antiquity. It is well attested in the ancient Mesopotamian civilizations, and it also appears in the Bible, in which the best-known case is the evocation of Samuel's soul by Saul through the agency of the witch of Endor¹.

In the Greek and the Roman world necromancy is already attested in Homer – the famous Νέκυια of the eleventh book of the *Odyssey* – and its actual practice is documented down to the end of antiquity, though a social stigma was often attached to it, especially at Rome².

Hopfner, in his great work on Egyptian revelation magic, distinguished three types of necromancy, which he terms Greek-Homeric, 'oriental', and mixed³. According to him, the first and the third type are documented by the literary tradition. The first is represented by the necromancies we find in Homer, Aeschylus (in the *Persians*), Virgil (in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*), Seneca (in his *Oedipus*), and Silius Italicus (in the thirteenth book of the *Punica*). The mixed type is exemplified by the three necromancies we are going to examine, found in Lucan, Apuleius, and Heliodorus, and also by those appearing in Horace (in the eighth satire of the first book), Statius (in the fourth book of the *Thebaid*), and by several works of Lucian's. Finally, the purely 'oriental' type is represented by the Greek magical papyri found in Egypt and collected by Preisendanz, and also by the *defixiones*, the curses and spells preserved on engraved sheets of metal⁴.

¹ Sam. 28.7-14; cf. Ios. Flav. *ant. Iud.* 6.329-339. There is a huge bibliography on this episode. I will only hint at a few treatments related to our area of research: Hopfner 1924, II §§ 363-364; Stramaglia 1990, 190 and n. 125; Bowersock 1994, 101-102; Ogden 2001, 254. Paoletti 1963, 15 n. 11, rejects the derivation of Lucan's necromancy scene we are going to discuss from the Biblical episode; Baldini Moscadi 1976, 187-189 (cf. 2005, 75-77), believes the derivation to be possible. As we shall see, she also believes that the 'supergod' hinted at by Erichtho in Lucan may be the Jewish god.

² According to Cicero, it was practiced by Appius Claudius Pulcher (*div.* 1.132; *Tusc.* 1.37) and, murderously, by Vatinius (*in Vat.* 14). Nero too is reported not to have refrained from murder in order to practice necromancy (Plin. *NH* 30.16; cf. Suet. *Nero* 34). That nevertheless it was a widespread practice is attested by two mimes by Laberius: *Necyomantēa* and *Lacus Avernus*. In Heliodorus' novel, as we shall see, Calasiris rejects necromancy in favor of the true σοφία: Heliod. 6.16.7; cf. 3.16.3.

³ Hopfner 1924, II § 331.

⁴ A useful outline of the necromancies found in the Greek and Roman literary tradition as well as in the magical papyri classed according to Hopfner's types is offered by Scippacercola 2009, 218-219.

According to Hopfner the Greek-Homeric type may have largely reproduced the real magical practices of Homer's time⁵, but later on the writers who chose to stick as closely as possible to this prestigious literary model moved inevitably away from the actual procedures followed by contemporary necromancers. These were partially portrayed in the literary necromancies of the mixed type, which constitute interesting instances of various degrees of integration of literary tradition and actual necromantic practices.

According to Hopfner⁶, necromancy belongs in the fields of both divination and magic, in that it seeks knowledge of the future attained by means of magical constraint affecting the souls of the dead. This outlook may be accepted, provided the goal of necromancy is more broadly defined as the attainment of knowledge otherwise unobtainable by the living. We shall see that in Apuleius, for example, the necromancer's goal is not to get foreknowledge of the future, but to learn something that happened in the dead man's own past, during his lifetime, namely the cause of his death. And Apuleius is not the only instance of this. Clearly, however, necromancy is generally based on the assumption that the dead possess some sort of superior knowledge, though this is not true in every case. In the *Odyssey*, for example, only the shadow of Tiresias can predict Ulysses' future, and only because he was a soothsayer already in his lifetime; also, as we shall see, Lucan's witch Erichtho must resort to a further spell in order to give the corpse she has reanimated the power to answer the questions posed to him – even though, in this case, one may suspect a rhetorical redundancy on the part of Lucan. What we intend to investigate is precisely the type of necromancy entailing not the mere evocation of a soul, but the reanimation of a corpse, which then provides the requested revelation.

There are only a few instances of this, and, as was to be expected, they occur in literature, and therefore belong in the mixed type, though, as we shall see, correspondences in the purely 'oriental' type, mainly represented by the magical papyri, can also be detected⁷. This theme actually seems to be typical of the ancient novel, though its first appearance and perhaps its most striking literary development is to be found, at least for us, in the epic of Lucan – though there may be reasons to believe that he was drawing on an already well-established tradition.

⁵ Hopfner 1924, II § 331.

⁶ Hopfner 1935, 2218.

⁷ Isidorus of Seville, *etym.* 8.9.11 states that necromancers seemed to raise the dead: *necromantii sunt, quorum praecantationibus videntur resuscitati mortui divinare, et ad interrogata respondere*. According to Lact. Plac. *ad Stat. Theb.* 3.141, Virgil's Moeris (*ecl.* 8.98) forced dead men's souls to reenter human bodies.

Obviously, this procedure actually entails a veritable resurrection of a dead body, albeit for a short time – though in this Lucan seems to go his own way, as we shall presently see.

According to A. Oepke, the author of the entry “Auferstehung II (des Menschen)” in the *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*⁸, the concept of resurrection was originally foreign to the Greeks’ way of thinking, though it progressively became more and more familiar. Actually, however, cases of return from the afterlife are not all that rare in Greek mythology: suffice it to refer, among others, to the stories of Alcestis and Protesilaus, or to the closely related case of the rejuvenation of Jason’s father, Aeson, by Medea. Bowersock remarks that from the second half of the first century A.D. onward the Greeks and the Romans acquired a lively interest in resurrection⁹. In the lost novel by Antonius Diogenes, *The Wonders beyond Thule*, the two siblings Mantinias and Dercyllis were dead during the day and came alive at night, as the result of a spell cast upon them by the evil Egyptian priest Paapis¹⁰; besides, Dercyllis’ maid servant Myrto had come back from the realm of the dead to instruct her mistress. Unfortunately Photius’ summary only gives us a vague idea of this novel; but from the second part of the first century A.D. onward we do find numerous claims, either made by literary characters, or attributed to supposedly real persons, concerning the purported ability to raise the dead¹¹. We shall mention a few cases in connection with the necromancies described by Lucan, Apuleius, and Heliodorus. For the moment we shall only point out a detail in another novel known to us only through Photius’ summary. In Iamblichus’ *Babyloniaka* an old man from Chaldaea stops the funeral of a young girl, claiming she is still alive; and, as it turns out, she really is¹². In this case, however, the reviving of the girl is not explicitly presented as miraculous¹³. The situation is closely reminiscent of the reviving of a young bride during her funeral by

⁸ Oepke 1950, 931.

⁹ Bowersock 1994, 103.

¹⁰ Cf., for example, Scippacerola 2011, 107.

¹¹ A similar claim, as the result of the magical effect of φάρμακα, does indeed appear as early as Empedocles 31 B 111.9 DK ἄξει δ’ ἐξ Ἰδαίου καταφθιμένου μένος ἀνδρός, unless this merely refers to the evocation of the soul. Empedocles, however, is reported to have actually raised a dead woman: Diog. L. 8.67. According to Plat. *Charm.* 156d, the Thracian physicians followers of Zalmoxis were believed to have the power of making people immortal.

¹² Cf. e.g. Scippacerola 2011, 108.

¹³ In Apuleius’ *Florida* (19), the reviving of a man during his funeral is expressly attributed to the ability of a doctor (the famous Asclepiades) to detect hidden signs of life in what appeared to be a corpse.

Apollonius of Tyana, as reported by Philostratus¹⁴, a text we shall later come back to.

Many cases of spontaneous coming back to life are also reported: the most famous example is of course that of Plato's Er, which prompts Proclus to collect numerous comparable cases in his commentary on the *Republic*¹⁵; but similar stories are certainly not wanting in the Roman world either¹⁶. We shall dwell a little longer, later on, on some that exhibit some points in common with our three necromancies, and particularly on those in which the reanimation of the corpse is followed by spontaneous necromantic prophecies¹⁷.

2. We may now turn to the first instance of necromancy entailing the reanimation of the corpse: the one we find in Lucan.

The necromancy proper is preceded by a long description, first of Thesaly, traditionally a center of magic in the ancient world, and then of Erichtho, the witch chosen by Sextus Pompey, the son of Pompey the Great, to perform the necromancy from which he hopes to learn the outcome of the civil war. Erichtho is portrayed with ghoulish traits, as a sort of 'superwitch', who believes the horrible and sacrilegious deeds of her colleagues to be too respectful of piety. A special emphasis is laid on a detail that, although widespread in literature at least from the end of the republic, brings us a long way from Homer's necromancy and those of the later representatives of Hopfner's Greek-Homeric type. Erichtho gets hold of all the cadaverous remains she can lay her hands on, to use them for her spells, and particularly for necromantic purposes. This is an eminently 'oriental' element, ubiquitous in the magical papyri, but missing in the Greek-Homeric tradition. This material – which, if a corpse is not at hand, may include objects that have been in close contact with it – goes by the name of οὐσία in the Greek magical texts¹⁸. Here, where the object is the reanimation of a dead body, the οὐσία can only be the whole corpse, as it will be in Apuleius and Heliodorus too.

The breach with the traditional Greek-Homeric representation of necromancy is so conspicuous and so many traits of magical procedures finding confirmation in the Greek magical papyri appear prominently in Lucan's description, that scholars generally agree on the poet's use of magical

¹⁴ Philostr. VA 4.45.

¹⁵ Procl. in remp. II 113.6-116.18 Kroll.

¹⁶ Cf. e.g. Cels. 2.6.13; Plin NH 7.173-179.

¹⁷ Such as the stories of Gabienus (Plin. NH 7.178), Buplagus (Phlegon mir. 3.3-7), and of one general Publius not further identified (Phlegon mir. 3.8-15).

¹⁸ Hopfner 1921, I §§ 645-679; Hopfner 1935, 2219.

manuals actually employed in real-life magic¹⁹. This is a plausible assumption, though it is easy to go too far in this direction, if Lucan is turned into an enthusiastic adherent of magical practices in real life²⁰.

Lucan, the nephew of Seneca, was of course a Stoic, though he had lost faith in the providence that according to his philosophical school ruled the universe²¹. Important traces of Stoic doctrines do in fact remain in his necromantic episode, and, in general, philosophical ideas are more in the foreground in Lucan's scene than in the corresponding ones in the novels. His 'superwitch' Erichtho avows that, though she has the power to change the lot of single individuals, she is unable to alter the preordained *causarum series*, the chain of causes controlling the general course of human history²² – a clear allusion to the Stoic doctrine of fate, the εἰμαρμένη²³.

Further philosophical traces in the episode point to the well-attested syncretism by which Platonic elements had been incorporated into Stoicism. When Erichtho tries to reanimate the corpse she has chosen for necromancy, the soul she has evoked refuses at first to reenter its former body, which it sees as the prison from which it has just escaped²⁴. The body as the prison of the soul is a well-known Pythagoric and Platonic idea that became widely popular even in texts not consistently influenced by Platonism. But in this scene there is perhaps also a trace of a more specific doctrine of the soul, which at Rome was already present in Ennius²⁵. What appears at Erichtho's

¹⁹ As remarked by Hopfner 1924, II § 348, cf. Hopfner 1935, 2223, this had already been recognized by such scholars as Friedländer and Richter. I will refer to just a fraction of more recent scholarship: Fauth 1975, 331; Baldini Moscardi 1976, 154; 173-174 (cf. 2005, 32-33; 57); Volpilhac 1978 (though she goes beyond the mark when she turns Erichtho into an Egyptian witch performing the ritual of embalming corpses); Korenjak 1996, 30-31; 185; Luck 1997, 574; Hömke 1998, 120-121.

²⁰ As done, for example, by Bourguery 1928; see the sobering assessment of Paoletti 1963, 18.

²¹ Cf. Narducci 1979; Narducci 2002.

²² Lucan. 6.611-612.

²³ It should be noticed that Erichtho identifies the *causarum series* with *Fortuna* (6.615), though probably in this case the unforeseeable aspect of fate is meant by this term. Cf. Korenjak 1996, 167. At 5.105-106, more in line with orthodox Stoicism, prophecy can only reveal future events, but these cannot be altered. In Heliodorus the priest Calasiris says the same (Heliod. 2.24.6-9). The *innumeri mundi* of Erichtho's invocation (6.696) sound Epicurean, but may in fact refer to the successive cosmic cycles of Stoicism, entailing innumerable destructions and revivals of the universe (cf. Korenjak 1996, 197).

²⁴ Lucan 6.721-722 *invisaque claustra timentem / carceris antiqui*. There is surely a poetic influence of Verg. *Aen.* 6.733 *clausae tenebris et carcere caeco*.

²⁵ As attested by Lucr. 1.120-123 *etsi praeterea tamen esse Acherusia templa / Ennius aeternis exponit versibus edens, / quo neque permaneant animae neque corpora nostra, / sed quaedam simulacra modis pallentia miris*.

command is the shadow (*umbra*) of the dead man²⁶, and when it refuses to reenter the body, the witch sternly scolds the Furies for not pursuing his soul (*anima*) in Hades with their whips²⁷. The shadow, then, is near the dead body, the soul is still in the lower world²⁸. We have no time to discuss the doctrine of the tripartition of man into body, soul, and shadow, to which I have devoted a whole chapter in one of my books²⁹. But though the idea has left no further traces in the rest of the *Pharasalia*, one is nevertheless justified in assuming a middle-Platonic influence in this episode.

In spite of the philosophical background, however, the magic element is the most prominent in the whole scene, and it is difficult to reconcile it with Stoicism³⁰.

Lucan accepts the widespread idea that magic can compel the gods. He does pose the question of whether the gods comply with the magicians' command through constraint or by free choice³¹; but this question is clearly answered by Erichtho, with her threats to the infernal deities, when her spell is not immediately successful, and by the mere hint at an appeal to a 'supergod' who has the power to compel all the others³²; and the poet himself had already intimated the gods' submission to magic, when he said that they comply with Erichtho's wishes as soon as they are expressed, for fear of her second spell³³. He actually attributes the power to upset the physical laws ruling the cosmos not merely to Erichtho, but to all Thessalian witches³⁴. Though these claims were commonly attributed to sorceresses in literature³⁵, they were not a usual element of traditional epos, and the emphasis laid on magic may help explain why Lucan did away with the

²⁶ Lucan. 6. 720 *astantem proiacti corporis umbram*.

²⁷ Lucan. 6.731-732 *non agitis saevis Erebi per inane flagellis / infelicem animam?*

²⁸ Cf. Korenjak 1996, 207-208; Ogden 2001, 225.

²⁹ Setaioli 1995 (Ch. V: *L'umbra e il simulacrum*, pp. 145-156). In Latin terminology it is usually the shadow (*umbra* or *simulacrum*) that remains in the nether world. In Lucan, instead, it rises up, while the *anima* remains in Hades. But, as Korenjak 1996, 208, remarks, Lucan hardly ever distinguishes between terms like *umbra*, *anima*, and *manes* (cf. 9.1-9).

³⁰ The conflict is well perceived, but left unsolved, by Martindale 1977, 379.

³¹ Lucan. 6.494-495 *parere necesse est / an iuvat?*

³² Lucan. 6. 730-749.

³³ Lucan. 6.527-528. Here the gods are oddly enough referred to as *superi*. In her necromancy Erichtho will not need to resort to a second spell; her threats to the lower gods will suffice to achieve her goal.

³⁴ They are capable of compelling the gods (Lucan. 6.441 *vim factura deis*; 446 *verbaque ad invitum perfert cogentia numen*) and of upsetting the natural laws (6.641 *cessavere vices rerum eqs.*), and even Jupiter watches helpless and astonished the heavens being stopped by the witches' spells (6.463-465).

³⁵ See, for example, Setaioli 2011, 285-301.

mythological gods that had played such an important role in this poetic genre, but were now helpless before sorcery³⁶.

We have mentioned Erichtho's appeal to a 'supergod', whose power is so great that he can compel all other gods³⁷. But, as Lucan has already intimated, even this deity is compelled by the witches' spells, and then, in turn, compels the cosmos and the other gods³⁸.

This detail, as well as Lucan's whole necromancy scene, caught the imagination of Statius, who, in his *Thebaid*, has his Tiresias hint, with a striking aposiopesis, at this god³⁹, during a necromantic ritual which, however, does not proceed so far as raising the dead, and is pointedly opposed to Erichtho's impious ceremony – which is nevertheless hinted at in another part of the *Thebaid*⁴⁰.

Like the invocation to the lower gods⁴¹, this 'supergod' is a striking 'oriental' element. Several scholars have pointed out that a similar deity, capable of compelling the other gods for magical purposes, is a constant presence in the magical papyri⁴².

Several identifications have been proposed⁴³. Some scholars associate him with the god of the Jews, who frequently appears in the magical papyri with the names Iao (Yahweh), Adonai, or Sabaoth⁴⁴. Though Lucan does

³⁶ As rightly remarked by Hömke 1998, 128-129.

³⁷ Lucan. 6.744-749 *paretis, an ille / compellendus erit, quo numquam terra vocato / non concussa tremit, qui Gorgona cernit apertam / verberibusque suis trepidam castigat Erinyn, / indespecta tenet vobis qui Tartara, cuius / vos estis superi, Stygias qui peterat undas?*

³⁸ Lucan. 6.469-499 *an habent haec carmina certum / imperiosa deum, qui mundum cogere, quidquid / cogitur ipse potest?* Cf. Korenjak 1996, 132.

³⁹ Stat. *Theb.* 4.516-517 *triplicis mundi summum, quem scire nefastum. / Illum – sed taceo: prohibet tranquilla senectus.* Cf. Hopfner 1924, II § 341.

⁴⁰ Stat. *Theb.* 3.140-146. An old woman, looking for her dead sons in the battlefield (we shall encounter a similar situation in Heliodorus) is compared to a Thessalian witch, who, like Erichtho, looks for a suitable corpse to reanimate for necromantic purposes (v. 141 *cui gentile nefas hominem renovare canendo* leaves no doubt about her intent). Cf. Hopfner 1924, II § 341; Ogden 2001, 14; 145; 202; 225.

⁴¹ At *PGM* IV 1460-1470 there is an invocation in hexameters close to the one in Lucan. 6.690-705, as pointed out by Volpilhac 1978, 284. The object of the spell in the papyrus is erotic attraction, but it is to be achieved with the help of the souls of the dead. Baldini Moscadi 1976, 177 (cf. 2005, 61), remarks that Lucan's invocation follows the pattern of the Roman *precatio*.

⁴² Cf., for example, *PGM* IV 356-361; 1007-1047; 2194-2196; XII 117.121; 139-141; 239-266; XIII 761-794; 842-847; also PColon inv. 359, published by Wortmann 1968, 85-102, lines 36-39 (English translation as *PGM* CI in Betz 1992², 307-309).

⁴³ A summary is provided by Baldini Moscadi 1976, 181-182 (cf. 2005, 67-68); cf. Korenjak 1996, 210; Hömke 1998, 134.

⁴⁴ This identification was already suggested by Ettig 1891, 369 n. 1. Among more recent scholars, it is strongly supported by Baldini Moscadi 1976, 182-184 (cf. 2005, 68-70).

refer once to the Jewish god⁴⁵, the weak point of this identification is the unquestionable dwelling of this deity in the Tartarus, *under* the gods of the lower world⁴⁶. Other scholars have thought of the demiurge or of an alleged supreme god of magic named Demogorgon⁴⁷. Other candidates have been Hermes Trismegistos, with his Egyptian counterpart Thoth, and the Persian Ahriman; but Lucan's acceptance of this typically magical – and 'oriental' – trait is more important than a precise identification. Even in the magical papyri, by the way, this 'supergod' is often nameless⁴⁸.

Before we turn to the procedures followed by Erichtho in order to raise a dead soldier for necromantic purposes, we should remark that the episode does not fit smoothly at all in the context of Lucan's narrative. At the request of Sextus Pompey, Erichtho searches a battlefield strewn with corpses, in order to find a suitable one for her purpose. She even states that there are plenty of recently dead bodies around⁴⁹. The two opposing armies, however, have just arrived in the plain of Pharsalus, and there has been no clash yet. A few lines before, Sextus Pompey meets Erichtho while she is performing magic rituals to prevent the impending battle from taking place somewhere else, thus depriving her of a plentiful supply of cadaverous remains to use as οὐσία in her spells⁵⁰. There have been various attempts to heal this contradiction. Some have thought of skirmishes preceding the main battle⁵¹; others maintain that presenting as already dead soldiers that would die only the following day poetically fits the 'prophetic' mood of the episode⁵² – an idea

⁴⁵ Lucan. 2.592-593 *dedita sacris / incerti Iudaea dei*.

⁴⁶ Lucan 6.748-749 *indespecta tenet vobis qui Tartara, cuius / vos estis superi*. Baldini Moscadi's interpretation of the final words as meaning "in whose power, you gods, are", with the reference to Tartarus as a hint at this god's power extending to the lower as well as to the upper parts of the cosmos (Baldini Moscadi 1976, 181-184: cf. 2005, 66-70), fails to carry conviction.

⁴⁷ According to the reading chosen in a scholion to Statius (Lact. Plac. *ad Stat. Theb.* 4.516-517), where both names, or faulty readings suggesting derivation from either one, are found in the manuscript tradition. *Demogorgon* may be the actual corruption of δημιουργός. In the proem to the first book of his *geneal. deor. gent.* Boccaccio describes the god Demogorgon, referring – besides his mysterious source Theodotus – to the passages of Lucan and Statius we have quoted above, notes 37 and 39 (Lucan. 6.774-779; Stat. *Theb.* 4.516-517), and, for the name, to Lactantius Placidus. Cf. Solomon 2012. The demiurge is favored by Hopfner 1921, I § 701; 1924, II § 350; then by Fauth 1975, 337; for Demogorgon see Fauth 1987. Demogorgon is favored by Ogden 2001, 177.

⁴⁸ Cf. Hömke 1998, 134. Korenjak 1996, 210.

⁴⁹ Lucan. 6. 619 *cum tanta novae sit copia mortis*.

⁵⁰ Lucan. 6.579-588.

⁵¹ Cf. Brena 1997, 405.

⁵² O' Higgins 1988, 218-219; 226; Korenjak 1996, 405.

more in keeping with modern than with ancient literary techniques⁵³. In Lucan it is very clear that no Roman blood has been shed in Thessaly up to that moment; he will say in the next book, when the battle begins, that Crastinus' spear was the first to drench the Thessalian soil with Roman blood⁵⁴.

There are some more minor incongruities in the episode, too. To revive the corpse, Erichtho pumps hot blood into it⁵⁵ – with a whole lot of magic ingredients. Some lines before, Lucan had let the reader know that, when hot blood was needed, Erichtho did not refrain from murder⁵⁶. Here, however, she seems to have it at her disposal without killing anybody – and it should be noted that *fervens sanguis*, literally “boiling hot blood”, could hardly be stored for later use. A further incongruity stems from the fact that in Lucan the dead know the future because they can watch it being spun by the three Fates in Hades, as we learn from the corpse itself. It adds that it has not had the chance to do so, since its *umbra* has been recalled by Erichtho from the bank of the infernal river it had hardly touched⁵⁷. It is able, however, to report what it has learned from the other souls⁵⁸, and it goes on to describe the dejection of the heroes of the Roman republic and the elation of its enemies for the imminent victory of Caesar, as though it had already passed the Acheron⁵⁹.

With all due allowances for poetic freedom, it is then not completely unjustified, in my opinion, to assume that Lucan, though for us he is the first witness of this type of necromancy, may have simply inserted an already existing theme into his epic, naturally with all the poetical and rhetorical developments typical of his style – but with no great concern for the way it fits the context. Such an assumption receives some support from the parallel scene in Heliodorus, where, as we shall see, the dead body to be revived is found on a battlefield in which a clash has really taken place, and hot blood is not missing either, though it is used for a different purpose: it comes from a self-inflicted wound in the sorceress' arm.

Once Erichtho has selected a corpse suitable for her necromancy, she drags it to a cave, which is described as a typical *locus horridus*, but – more important – is located half way between this and the lower world⁶⁰: a place where summoning shadows may be seen as either an evocation or a cata-

⁵³ As correctly remarked by Narducci 2002, 127 n. 82.

⁵⁴ Lucan 7.473 *primum Thessaliam Romano sanguine tinxit*.

⁵⁵ Lucan. 6.667 *pectora tunc primum ferventi sanguine supplet*.

⁵⁶ Lucan. 6.554-555 *nec cessant a caede manus, si sanguine vivo / est opus*.

⁵⁷ Lucan. 6.777-778; Cf. also 3.18-20.

⁵⁸ Lucan. 6.779.

⁵⁹ This incongruity is well emphasized by Korenjak 1996, 220.

⁶⁰ Lucan. 6.649-650 *maestum mundi confine latentis / ac nostri*.

basis⁶¹. With this, we are back on Greek-Homeric ground. Already Homer's νέκυια took place half way between the two worlds⁶². Erichtho will therefore be able to claim that she is not totally subverting the laws of nature, also in view of the fact that the soul she summons to reenter the dead body has just left it, so that it may be said that it will not die twice⁶³. This is hardly in keeping with the previous description of Erichtho's and her colleagues' power to upset the physical laws and with the poet's statement that she could revive whole armies, if she wished⁶⁴, and that she has indeed raised the dead before⁶⁵; besides, it will be refuted by what happens later: Erichtho will have to perform another spell, so that the reanimated corpse may die again⁶⁶, and the witch herself will avow that what she has given the corpse is indeed a second life: *sit tanti vixisse iterum*⁶⁷. It is, however, paralleled in Apuleius, where the reviving of the corpse for a brief necromancy is claimed not to infringe on the laws of nature⁶⁸.

We have mentioned Erichtho's threats at the infernal gods, when the shadow she has summoned refuses at first to reenter the dead body. This is another typical 'oriental' element, ubiquitous in the magical papyri, where it can be directed either at the infernal gods, as in Lucan, or at the soul of the dead (the νεκυδαίμων), as we'll find in Apuleius. The parallels are too numerous to quote⁶⁹. We will only point out a striking correspondence with Lucan's already mentioned remark that the gods fear Erichtho so much that they do not wait for a second spell to comply⁷⁰. In a magical papyrus not included in Preisendanz's collection⁷¹, the magician warns the souls of the dead (νεκυδαίμονες) he wants to fetch him his beloved, not to force him to utter the spell again. As it turns out, Erichtho does not need to repeat the spell; her threats suffice to attain her goal.

⁶¹ Lucan. 6.652-653 *dubium est, quod traxerit illuc, / aspiciat Stygias, an quod descenderit, umbras*.

⁶² A comparable location was also typical of νεκυομαντεῖα, the places where it was allegedly possible to receive the oracles of the dead. Cf. Hopfner 1924, II § 335; Hopfner 1935, 2232; Ogden 2001, 27.

⁶³ Lucan. 6.712-716.

⁶⁴ Lucan. 6. 635-636.

⁶⁵ Lucan. 6.531-532.

⁶⁶ Lucan. 6.422-824.

⁶⁷ Lucan. 6.768.

⁶⁸ Apul. *met.* 2.28.5 *non obnitimur nec terrae rem suam denegamus*.

⁶⁹ See Hopfner 1921, I §§ 204; 787 ff.; 1924, II §§ 189; 210; 224; 260; 294-295; 342; 346; 351; 367; also the bibliography quoted by Stramaglia 1990, 189 n. 18; and Baldini Moscadi 1976, 154 (cf. 2005, 32); Hömke 1998, 133-134.

⁷⁰ Lucan. 6.527-528 *omne nefas superi prima iam voce precantis / concedunt carmenque timent audire secundum*. Cf. above, note 33.

⁷¹ The one we have quoted in note 42 (*PGM CI* in Betz 1992², 307-309, lines 28-29).

We have no time to analyze all the threats Erichtho addresses to the infernal gods. We shall single out one, for the significance that, as we shall see, is attached to a closely related element in Apuleius' necromancy scene.

Erichtho threatens the Furies to draw them up out of Hades by calling them by their true names, if they do not comply⁷². We shall come back to the importance of the name – the real name – in magic, as a means to gain power over someone. Even the city of Rome kept its real name hidden to avert damaging spells by its enemies⁷³, not to mention the secret name of Christ in the *Revelation*⁷⁴. The idea is of course ever-present in the magical papyri⁷⁵. But the closest parallel is found, perhaps, in a Christian writer: Lactantius⁷⁶. According to him the evil demons succeeded in having men worship them under the names of gods, but sorcerers can compel them by calling their real names. This also throws light on the other element of Erichtho's threats: the menace to reveal the real, ungodly nature of those who pass themselves off as the gods of the deep.

The reanimation ritual itself is a spectacular display of Lucan's rhetorical and imaginative prowess; the list of Erichtho's magical ingredients, for example, is possibly the most detailed that has come down from antiquity⁷⁷. The ceremony features several elements paralleled in other related descriptions, such as the non-human sounds⁷⁸ reminiscent of the *incognita verba*, the unknown, ununderstandable words⁷⁹ Erichtho is uttering as Sextus Pompey meets her. Both also appear in the magical papyri and in literary texts. We shall come back to them in our treatment of the necromancy scene in Heliodorus.

From other points of view, however, Lucan seems to go his own, individual way. We have mentioned the spell Erichtho must perform so that the reanimated corpse may die again; but a further spell must also be carried out to give it the ability to answer the questions addressed to it⁸⁰. As we have already remarked, this seems to contradict the general belief of the superior knowledge of the dead, although, as we also have seen, Lucan is particularly

⁷² Lucan. 6.732-734 *iam ego nomine vero / eliciam Stygiasque canes in luce superna / destituam*.

⁷³ Cf. Plin. *NH* 3.6; Macr. *Sat.* 2.9.2-3; Serv. *ad Aen.* 6.732-733.

⁷⁴ *Apoc.* 19.12.

⁷⁵ For example *PGM* IV 244-248. For the secret, 'real' names and their importance in magic cf. Hopfner 1921, I §§ 695 ff.; Hopfner 1928, 335-340.

⁷⁶ Lact. *div. inst.* 2.16.3-4.

⁷⁷ Cf. Korenjak 1996, 185.

⁷⁸ Lucan. 6.685-692.

⁷⁹ Lucan. 6.577. For non-human sounds and ununderstandable words in magic cf. Baldini Moscadi 2005, 165-174.

⁸⁰ Lucan. 6.775-776.

confusing concerning the source of the information the revived corpse relays to Sextus Pompey.

3. As already hinted, Apuleius' necromantic scene in his *Metamorphoses* differs from most others, in that its object is not to gain insights into the future, but to learn something that has happened in the past: what caused the death of the very person whose corpse will be reanimated for this purpose.

The scene is part of the story told by Thelyphron, one of the guests at Byrrhena's house at Hypata, in Thessaly, though the locale of the story is a different Thessalian city: Larissa⁸¹. Here Thelyphron accepts to watch the dead body of a prominent citizen during the night preceding the funeral, to prevent the local witches from snatching parts of the corpse to use as οὐσία for magic purposes. After meeting the widow, Thelyphron is left alone with the body. He chases away a weasel – obviously a transformed witch – that had somehow sneaked into the room, but immediately after he is overcome by an irresistible urge to sleep. In the morning the corpse is found to be intact and the funeral takes place. The dead man's uncle suddenly appears, accusing the widow of his nephew's murder. At her denial, he summons Zatchlas, an Egyptian priest who was in Larissa at the time, and had promised to reanimate the corpse, if paid a large reward. Zatchlas does raise the dead body, and the revived man confirms his uncle's charges against the widow. As some of the people present at the scene do not believe him, he relates how Thelyphron watched over his dead body and reveals that during his guardian's sleep the witches called his, i.e. the dead man's, name. Only now do we learn that his name was the same as his guardian's: Thelyphron. So, before the corpse, which was sluggishly beginning to move, could rise and go towards the witches, the sleeping, but alive Thelyphron preceded him, and the witches cut out his nose and ears, replacing them with false ones made of wax. Hearing this, the living Thelyphron, who is present in the crowd, brings his hands to his nose and ears, which immediately fall off.

The theme of a ghost, or even a soul evoked in necromancy, revealing a crime is not at all unusual in antiquity. It appears in ancient Egypt and in Greco-Roman times⁸². In many cases the spirit of the dead man will disclose

⁸¹ Apul. *met.* 2.21-30. Nothing useful for our purposes in Frangoulidis 2008, 85-107 (Ch. 4: *Lucius versus Thelyphron*), where Thelyphron's story is idiosyncratically paired with Lucius' fight with the wineskins, his mock trial at the Laughter festival, and, more cursorily, with his later adventures down to his meeting with Isis. The same largely applies to the bibliography on Thelyphron's story quoted by Frangoulidis 2008, 86 n. 178.

⁸² Cf. Morenz 1948; Stramaglia 1990, 179 and n. 73. In a demotic spell (*PDM* lvi, 79-94; English translation in Betz 1992², 288-289) the corpse of a drowned man, after an elaborate magical preparation, will expose a thief. Cf. Ogden 2001, 213.

the name of the one who killed him⁸³, just as here in Apuleius. The theme even returns twice in the *Metamorphoses*. The dead Tlepolemus appears in a dream to Charite, his very widow, to reveal that he has been killed by her suitor Thrasyllus; and the ghost of the miller in the ninth-book tale does the same with his daughter, telling her he has been killed through the wiles of her stepmother⁸⁴.

There are, however, several points in which Apuleius' description is at variance with the usual pattern. Whereas in Lucan and Heliodorus the necromancy takes place at night – traditionally the proper time for rituals of this type⁸⁵ –, it is not so in Apuleius. The reanimation of the dead Thelyphron is carried out neither in the nighttime nor at noon, another time favorable for ghosts and revenants⁸⁶, but at dawn, and not only at dawn, but in the market square, in the middle of a crowd – a far cry from Erichtho's hidden cave or Heliodorus' lonely battlefield. In the latter's description, significantly enough, when the witch learns that her secret ritual has been furtively observed by two witnesses – Calasiris and Charikleia –, she springs up in a fury, intending to kill them.

Again, though the corpse in Apuleius appears reluctant like in Lucan and Heliodorus⁸⁷, and the necromancer must threaten it with punishments reminiscent of those found in the magical papyri, it speaks as soon as it is raised, whereas it is not so either in Lucan or in Heliodorus⁸⁸.

However, the main incongruity in Apuleius' necromancy is apparent in its very agent. Zatchlas⁸⁹ does have some typical traits of the saintly Egyptian priest, in which capacity he is introduced by the dead man's uncle – however the latter's words (*propheta primarius*) should be understood: high priest in the Egyptian sacerdotal hierarchy, or, as it seems more probable, simply 'first-class prophet', in a more general sense⁹⁰. He is clad in linen, has

⁸³ So, for example, Laius, in Sen. *Oed.* 642-646; Sychaeus, in Verg. *Aen.* 1.353.359; Cynthia, in Prop. 4.7.35-46. Cf. also Aristot. *part. anim.* 3, 673a 18-22 (the killer is revealed by the head of the decapitated man itself); Cic. *div.* 1.57 (parallel passages collected in Pease 1920, 195). Cf. Ogden 2001, 234-235; van Mal-Maeder 2001, 367.

⁸⁴ Apul. *met.* 8.8 and 9.31 respectively.

⁸⁵ Cf. Hopfner 1924, II § 357; Ogden 2001, 166. The ideal time is when the moon is full. Cf. e.g. Lucian. *philops.* 14. In Heliod. 6.14.2 it is the third night after the full moon.

⁸⁶ Buplagus, though fallen on the battlefield hit with twelve wounds, rises at midday to utter an ominous prophecy for the Romans (Phlegon *mir.* 3.4). Cf. Lucian. *philops.* 22; Philostr. *heroic.* 8.16; 11.7; Procl. *in remp.* II 119, 20-27 Kroll. Cf. Drexler 1894-1897.

⁸⁷ Cf. van Mal-Maeder 2001, 379.

⁸⁸ Cf. Lucan 6.760-761 and Heliod. 6.14.6 respectively.

⁸⁹ For this name see Hopfner 1924, II § 351; Stramaglia 1990, 170-172; van Mal-Maeder 2001, 368.

⁹⁰ Cf. Stramaglia 1990, 173-176.

a shaven head, and wears palm-leaf sandals⁹¹; but there are several features that hardly fit the picture.

In the first place, he does not refrain from practicing necromancy, which his Egyptian colleague, Heliodorus' Calasiris, firmly rejects and sternly condemns, as we shall presently see. Secondly, he expects to be generously paid for his services (*grandi praemio*, as the dead man's uncle says)⁹². As remarked by Stramaglia, he is surely not the first wonder-worker to ask for a reward; the parallels are plentiful, and occur in Apuleius himself⁹³; but this is typical of low-class magic practitioners (the γόητες) rather than of a dignified Egyptian priest. Not to mention that being an Egyptian priest does not automatically guarantee moral excellence: the evil Paapis of *The Wonders beyond Thule* was an Egyptian priest too. Finally, Zatchlas is young (Thelyphron describes him as *iuvenem quempiam*)⁹⁴, whereas Egyptian priests are constantly portrayed as old in literature⁹⁵.

Stramaglia has rightly pointed out that these details throw an ambiguous light on Zatchlas, who can hardly be taken, then, as an anticipation of the salvific picture of Isis at the end of Apuleius' novel, as he has often been regarded in scholarship. Stramaglia's conclusions have been accepted by van Mal-Maeder⁹⁶, and in my opinion can hardly be called in doubt.

Zatchlas' reanimation procedure is extremely simple, if compared to Erichtho's elaborate ceremony in Lucan. He merely places an herb on the dead man's mouth and chest, and addresses a silent prayer to the rising sun⁹⁷. Both actions are amply paralleled in magical descriptions. Herbs endowed with magical powers are an ubiquitous element in such texts; and invocations to the rising sun are anything but uncommon in the magical papyri⁹⁸. Silent prayer, however, may be another touch adding to the ambiguity of Zatchlas' figure. It was considered to be typical of low-class magic, and

⁹¹ The first two features are well-known and are fully exemplified in Apuleius himself (cf. especially the eleventh book of the *Metamorphoses*). Cf. Hopfner 1921, I § 855. The palm-leaf sandals are a less pointedly emphasized trait. They do appear in the eleventh book of the *Metamorphoses* (11.4.3), worn by Isis herself (cf. Griffiths 1975, 136-137); but they are also worn by magicians (*PGM* IV 934).

⁹² *Apul. met.* 2.28.1.

⁹³ *Apul. met.* 9.29.2; 2.12.3; 2.13.4; 2.14.4. Elsewhere, for example, in Lucian. *philops.* 14; 16.

⁹⁴ *Apul. met.* 2.28.2.

⁹⁵ Cf. Stramaglia 1990, 179-182.

⁹⁶ van Mal-Maeder 2001, 367.

⁹⁷ *Apul. met.* 2.28.6-7.

⁹⁸ E.g. *PGM* III 325; 343; IV 261; 1928-2005; cf. XXXVII 211-230. Cf. Stramaglia 1990, 185; van Mal-Maeder 2001, 374. Cf. also Lucian. *necyom.* 7 and Hopfner 1924, II § 352.

Apuleius himself was accused of being a *magus* on this account⁹⁹. Probably, then, this is a further trait making Zatchlas more akin to a commonplace charlatan than to the typical figure of the Egyptian priest.

This should also warn us against unreservedly accepting the interpretation associating Zatchlas' placing a magical herb on the corpse's mouth – obviously in order to enable it to speak – with the well-known ancient Egyptian ceremony of the 'opening of the mouth'¹⁰⁰. The only point in common can be perceived in the touching of the dead man's mouth¹⁰¹. Zatchlas' necromancy actually seems to be closer to some rituals described in the magical papyri. In a 'spell for questioning corpses' in the great Paris magical papyrus we shall get back to, the corpse is reanimated by placing in its mouth a flax leaf inscribed with magical words¹⁰².

In Apuleius' description, however, only an unspecified herb is mentioned, with absolutely no reference to magical words inscribed on it, and it is the sole magical ingredient employed. What may stand behind this picture, then, is perhaps a folkloric element that has left many traces in ancient as well as in modern traditions: stories about herbs capable of restoring dead people to life. We know from Pliny¹⁰³ that the Greek historian Xanthus (V century B.C.) already handed down the story of a man being brought back to life by an herb that had been previously used by a snake to revive its young. The theme is then widely attested, either in reference to Tylo – the name found in Xanthus, according to Pliny – or to Polyidus reviving Glaucus¹⁰⁴. It survived in modern times too, as testified by a Sicilian fairytale collected in the nineteenth century by Giuseppe Pitrè¹⁰⁵.

⁹⁹ See Hopfner 1924, II § 40; Stramaglia 1990, 185-186; van Mal-Maeder 2001, 375. Cf. Apul. *mag. 54 tacitas preces in templo deis allegasti: ideo magus es*.

¹⁰⁰ This interpretation was first suggested by Budge 1980, 19-22 (originally published in 1901), and later gained some support, though only a loose parallel can be perceived.

¹⁰¹ As correctly pointed out by Stramaglia 1990, 182-186; cf. van Mal-Maeder 2001, 374.

¹⁰² PGM IV 2140-2144. Cf. Hopfner 1924, II § 365.

¹⁰³ Plin. *NH* 25.14 *Xanthus* (FGrHist 765 F 3) *historiarum auctor in primo earum tradit, occisum draconis catulum revocatum ad vitam a parente herba, quam balim nominat, eademque Tylonem, quem draco occiderat, restitutum saluti. Et Iuba in Arabia herba revocatum ad vitam hominem tradit*. Cf. Hopfner 1924, II § 352.

¹⁰⁴ Nonn. 25.451-552 (where the form of the name is Tylus); Apollod. *bibl.* 3.3.1; Hygin. *fab.* 136 (Polyidus/Glaucus). See the bibliography on this legend in Agosti 2004, 124-125.

¹⁰⁵ No. 11 of G. Pitè's *Fiabe, novelle e racconti popolari siciliani* (first published in 1875): after watching a snake revive its three dead sons with an herb, a girl uses it to reanimate the three sons of the empress. In Giambattista Basile's *Pentamerone* (*Lo cunto de li cunti*), published in Naples between 1634 and 1636, the seventh tale of the first day presents a closely related theme. After killing a seven-headed dragon, which used an herb to reattach its heads that had been cut off, a young man uses it to bring back to life his own brother, whom he had beheaded in a fit of unjustified rage.

In Greek mythology its most conspicuous occurrence is found in the story of the fisherman Glaucus, who, having noticed that his dead fishes came back to life when they came in contact with an herb, tasted it himself, and became a god. The same herb, according to Ovid, was picked by Medea too, in order to rejuvenate Jason's father, Aeson¹⁰⁶. Relying on some ancient sources, we can even venture an identification of this legendary herb. Athenaeus and Tzetzes suggest that it was the ἀείζωον, the houseleek (*sempervivum tectorum*)¹⁰⁷, whose name might by itself suggest resurrection and immortality. Significantly, the juice from this herb is an ingredient in the ink used to write the magic words on the flax leaf to be inserted in the corpse's mouth in the reanimation spell of the Paris papyrus we have just mentioned¹⁰⁸. But an older tradition, going back to the iambic poet Aischrion of Samos (IV century B.C.) identifies this herb with the ἄγρωστις, the dog's tooth (*cynodon dactylon*)¹⁰⁹.

An interesting detail in Apuleius' story is that not everybody believes the accusation of the reanimated corpse, which the widow strongly denies: *mendacio cadaveris fidem non habendam*, they say: one should not give credit to the lies of a corpse¹¹⁰. Though it was generally assumed that the dead acquired knowledge unattainable by the living, no unconditional credit was given to their revelations¹¹¹. The philosopher Iamblichus warns against the unreliable and deceptive knowledge gained through rituals of this type¹¹². Surely false prophecies occur in some reports of spontaneous necromancies given by dead people who rose again to an appearance of temporary life, which we have already hinted at¹¹³. A story told by Pliny, which has been regarded by many as the original nucleus of Lucan's necromantic scene, in that it concerns Sextus Pompey¹¹⁴, has the dead Gabienus rise and predict the

¹⁰⁶ Ov. *met.* 7.232-237.

¹⁰⁷ Athen. 15, 679a and Tzetzes in *Lycophr. Alex.* 754 respectively.

¹⁰⁸ PGM IV 2143 χυλὸς ἀρτεμισίας καὶ ἀειζώου.

¹⁰⁹ Aischrion is quoted by Athen. 7, 296ef. Cf. Eustath. *ad Il.* 2.508, pp. 415, 29-416, 1 van der Valk. Possibly, however, ἄγρωστις is to be taken in a more general sense: Aischrion's expression reported by Athenaeus (θεῶν ἄγρωστιν) may simply mean 'the gods' weed', though Eusthatus, who draws on Athenaeus, thought Aischrion meant the specific herb ἄγρωστις.

¹¹⁰ Apul. *met.* 2.29.6. It is worth noting that not everybody believes the famous physician Asclepiades either, in the story told by Apuleius in *flor.* 19 (cf. above, note 13), when he says that the man being brought to the grave is not dead.

¹¹¹ See the clear outline offered by Stramaglia 1990, 191-195. Cf. also Hopfner 1921, I §§ 242-243; Hopfner 1935, 2228; Ogden 2001, 232.

¹¹² Iambl. *de myst.* 3.31.

¹¹³ Cf. above, text to note 17.

¹¹⁴ Stramaglia 1999, 394, believes the problem of Lucan's supposed derivation from Gabienus' story to remain unsolved.

latter's victory in the war against Octavian, which of course never came to pass. Similarly, in the stories of Buplagus and of one general Publius told by Phlegon of Tralles¹¹⁵, the first rises from the dead to utter a verse oracle portending disaster for the Romans; the other does the same in a fit of frenzy, and continues after his death, when only his head is left. In both cases their predictions proved untrue. These two stories, related to the war waged by the Romans against king Antiochus of Syria, probably originated in anti-Roman circles¹¹⁶, while the story of Gabienus was conceivably concocted in pro-Pompeian ones¹¹⁷; but the fact that they continued to be told after their predictions had proved untrue shows that false prophecies by the dead were considered commonplace.

A further interesting detail is that both Gabienus and Publius allege as proof of their veracity the prediction of their death soon after. Gabienus, who had risen from the dead, does die again; Publius is torn to pieces by a wolf, just as he had said it would happen. This, of course, is hardly a proof, based as it is on a false inference; the truth of one statement does not necessarily imply the truth of another, unrelated one. In Apuleius, however, we find something similar¹¹⁸. The revived corpse emphatically presents as a proof of the truth of his accusation the detailed report of what happened during the night in which the living Thelyphron kept vigil over it: *dabo, inquam, dabo vobis intemeratae veritatis documenta perlucida* ('I will, yes, I will give you the clearest proof of my faultless veracity')¹¹⁹. True as its accusation may be, this alleged 'proof' has obviously nothing to do with the way it was killed.

We shall now briefly draw attention to Apuleius' literary treatment of the episode, before we go on to point out an important element in the story that has hardly received the attention it deserved.

As pointed out by Graverini¹²⁰, the whole of Thelyphron's tale, and the necromancy scene in particular, is full of Virgilian reminiscences. We shall only remark that constantly echoing Virgil has led Apuleius to a conceptual inconsistency. The revived corpse says that it was already sailing the Stygian swamp (*Stygiis paludibus innatantem*, which is an obvious echo of Virgil's

¹¹⁵ Phleg, *mir.* 3.3-7 and 3.8-15 respectively.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Ogden 2001, 207; 232.

¹¹⁷ Stramaglia 1999, 396, thinks that in this story Gabienus purposely deceives Sextus Pompey. Cf. already Hopfner 1921, I § 266. Another 'living corpse' whose final death similarly takes place at the end of the story is Apuleius' Socrates in the tale recounted by Aristomenes at *met.* 1.5-19; but there is no connection with prophecy or necromancy.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Drake 1977, 10; Stramaglia 1990, 194-195; Stramaglia 1999, 297-398; van Mal-Maeder 2001, 385.

¹¹⁹ *Apul. met.* 2.30.1.

¹²⁰ Graverini 1998, 125-140.

Stygiamque innare paludem)¹²¹; not only that: it has already drunk the water of Lethe – another clear Virgilian reminiscence¹²². But the still unburied Thelyphron, like all unburied dead, could not have passed the Stygian swamp; nor could he have drunk the oblivious water of Lethe; and even admitting he did, he could not, then, remember how he was killed.

As we have just hinted, there is a detail in the story of Thelyphron that has hardly received due attention. As we learn from the revived corpse itself, it had come close to being revived, though for different purposes, even before the ritual performed by Zatchlas. The witches, who considered the corpse as a quarry of οὐσία for their magic ceremonies, repeatedly called its name, after casting a spell on its namesake guardian, the living Thelyphron, to make him fall asleep. There is no mistaking the witches' purpose: they wanted the corpse to rise and come to them. Indeed, the corpse had already begun to react, though in a slow and sluggish way¹²³. The reanimation is not completed only because the sleeping, but alive Thelyphron is naturally prompter to respond, so that the witches believe they have already attained their purpose. It should not escape us that the reanimation of the dead Thelyphron, had it been completed, would have produced a sort of insensible zombie, witness the fact that the living Thelyphron, who takes his place, does not feel pain when his nose and ears are cut off.

The only magical device employed by the witches is the calling of the dead man's name. We have already emphasized the importance of the name in acquiring power over someone. In this connection, I would like to point out some cases in which the name is an indispensable element in rituals entailing the reviving of the dead¹²⁴.

¹²¹ Apul. *met.* 2.29.3 and Verg. *Aen.* 6.134.

¹²² Apul. *met.* 2.29.3 *post Lethaea pocula*; Verg. *Aen.* 6.714-715; 716; 7.748-751.

¹²³ Apul. *met.* 2.30.3 *hebetes artus et membra frigida pigris conatibus ad artis magicae nituntur obsequia*. Cf. Slater 2007, 64. The theme of the witches trying to steal the corpse of a recently deceased person, or parts thereof, also appears in the other Latin novelist: Petronius (*sat.* 63).

¹²⁴ I will only mention in this note a few further cases not related to the reviving of a dead person in which the knowledge of the name is essential. In a IV century B.C. inscription from Cyrene, attacking ghosts are exorcized by calling their names for three days (*SEG IX* 72, lines 111-115). This is closely paralleled in the Gospel, when Jesus exorcizes the evil spirits tormenting a man from Gerasa, but not before asking them their collective name: 'Legion'; the story is told by both Mark (5.1-14) and Luke (8.26-34). In Plautus' *Mostellaria* 515-521 the slave Tranio has his master Theopropides believe that the voice calling his name from inside the house is a ghost's. In one of Lucian's *Dialogi meretricii* the sorceress utters the name of two lovers to be reconciled (*dial. mer.* 4.5).

In Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius* the latter revives a young bride when she was about to be buried¹²⁵. He first asks the girl's name, then secretly utters some words. It is not far-fetched to assume that he is calling her name. In the *Suda* we learn that magicians (γόητες) brought up a dead person through the invocation of his name¹²⁶. Finally, a mock performance of this ritual is found in Chariton's novel, where Mithridates solemnly addresses by name Chaereas, who was supposed to be dead, but was not, in order to make him suddenly appear, present and alive¹²⁷.

It seems plausible, then, that Apuleius wished to present two ways of, and two purposes for, reviving a dead person in Thelyphron's story.

4. At the end of the sixth book of Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* the heroine of the novel, Charikleia, and the Egyptian priest Calasiris are looking for Theagenes disguised as beggars. When they arrive near the Egyptian village of Bessa they find a battlefield strewn with corpses. They see an old woman crying as she embraces one of them. She tells Calasiris and Charikleia about the recent battle between Persian soldiers and the local people, who have chosen robbery as a way of life. One of her two sons has fallen in the clash, the other is away on a military expedition. She offers to accompany Calasiris and Charikleia to the village, after she has accomplished what she terms nocturnal purification ceremonies (νυκτερινούς ἐναγισμούς) for her dead son. The two step aside, and Calasiris falls asleep, but Charikleia witnesses what Heliodorus calls a sacrilegious deed, which nevertheless Egyptian women commonly performed¹²⁸. The old woman, thinking nobody is watching her, first digs a ditch, into which, after lighting two fires on either side and dragging her son's corpse between them, she pours honey, milk, wine, and a doll made of dough and shaped like a man, crowned with laurel and fennel. She then addresses to the moon many incomprehensible words, cuts her arm with a sword, and sprinkles her own blood on the fire with a laurel branch. After performing other, unspecified acts, she says something to the ear of the dead man and forces him to stand up by magic. At this point Charikleia wakes Calasiris up, and they hear the old woman ask the reanimated corpse about her other son's fate. The corpse, however, does not speak, but only nods, and then falls flat on its face. The woman utters stronger magical formulas to its ear, forcing it to rise again and speak. Charikleia would like to ask the corpse about Theagenes too, but Calasiris

¹²⁵ Philostr. VA 4.45.

¹²⁶ *Sud.* I, p. 534, 13 Adler ἐπὶ τῷ ἀνάγειν νεκρὸν δι' ἐπικλήσεως.

¹²⁷ Charit. 5.7.10. Cf. Ach. Tat. 3.17.5, where Menelaus "resurrects" Leucippe by calling her by name.

¹²⁸ Heliod. 6.14.2.

forbids her to take part in such a sacrilegious ritual. The dead man curses his mother, tells her that her other son will not return from the war, predicts her imminent death, and lets her know that her ritual has been watched by Calasiris and Charikleia, whose happy future with Theagenes he also predicts. He then falls down again. The old woman looks for Calasiris and Charikleia with her sword drawn, intending to kill them, but impales herself on a spear stub stuck in the ground, and dies.

As remarked by Hopfner¹²⁹, Heliodorus is particularly interesting for the mixture of Greek-Homeric and ‘oriental’ elements in his necromancy scene¹³⁰. Unquestionably, it presents more features in common with the eleventh book of the *Odyssey* than either Lucan or Apuleius¹³¹. The Greek-Homeric elements are the ditch, the fire, the libations, and the sword. There is no blood sacrifice – a Greek-Homeric element appearing in other texts in which a connection with the world of the dead is established¹³² –, but blood is nonetheless present, coming from the sorceress’ self-inflicted wound¹³³. This is already a new element inserted in the Homeric framework¹³⁴; but there are several more. The libations are the same as in Homer, except for the addition of milk and the lack of water and flour. These two, however, are the materials from which a new, and typically ‘oriental’, element is molded: the doll made of dough, that the sorceress throws into the ditch. Though Hopfner takes it to be made of tallow¹³⁵, this doll is surely made of dough – that is of water and flour mixed together – that has been baked (πέμμα στεάτινον), and in this way it represents the link between the Greek-Homeric and the ‘oriental’ elements concurring in Heliodorus.

¹²⁹ Hopfner 1924, II § 353; see also Ogden 2001, 168-171; Scippacercola 2009, 228-233.

¹³⁰ As Scippacercola 2009, 228, correctly remarks, the Homeric connection is emphasized by Heliodorus himself, when he, at the beginning of the following book, refers to the necromantic scene he has just described with the term νέκυντα (7.1.1), a word that at his time was surely currently used to indicate the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*.

¹³¹ The mixing of Greek-Homeric and ‘oriental’ elements in Heliodorus may be better understood through the comparison with a magical papyrus preserving the end of book 18 of the Κεστοί of Julius Africanus (III century A.D.). Here a verse invocation to Anubis and other foreign deities, including the god of the Jews, is inserted in a series of Homeric lines largely coming from the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*. This addition fills in the missing invocation in Homer’s necromancy through a strong ‘oriental’ element well represented in the magical papyri. See *PGM* XXIII 1-70. Cf., for example, Hopfner 1935, 2221; Ogden 2002, 183-184.

¹³² E.g. Lucian. *nekyom.* 9.

¹³³ Cf. Hopfner 1924, II § 354.

¹³⁴ Cf. Ogden 2002, 201.

¹³⁵ Hopfner 1924, II §§ 353-354; Hopfner 1935, 2225. More recently Ruiz-Montero 2007, 42 (“a human figure made of lard”).

Dolls had been employed for magic purposes in Greece for a very long time, though¹³⁶, as testified both by archaeology and by inscriptions, such as a IV century B.C. one from Cyrene. There, to exorcize attacking ghosts, one must not only call their names for three days, but also fashion male and female dolls of clay or wood (κολοσοί), offer them a meal, and deposit them in an untilled forest¹³⁷.

Couples of dolls like these ones are paralleled in our first literary document: Horace's eighth satire of the first book, and also in the magical papyri. In Horace there is a larger doll made of wool in the act of menacing a smaller one of wax¹³⁸; in the great Paris magical papyrus a male doll, in the from of Ares, threatens a female one bent on her knees with her arms behind her back¹³⁹. These are obviously cases of erotic magic, and there is no need to say that the dolls symbolize the people involved; but in both the assistance of the infernal powers and the souls of the dead is requested.

The presence of images (*effigies*) in magic ceremonies is mentioned in Virgil too, in the eighth eclogue¹⁴⁰ and in the magical scene in the fourth book of the *Aeneid*¹⁴¹. It is even possible that in the eclogue two dolls may be burned in the fire, like the one made of wax in Horace¹⁴², if the clay and the wax mentioned there¹⁴³ are to be taken as dolls made with these materials, as, possibly, the wax burned by Simaetha in Theocritus' second *Idyll*¹⁴⁴.

Dolls in the form of people, gods, or animals are frequently found in the magical papyri – made of wood, wax, or even dough, like the doll in Heliodorus¹⁴⁵. Another doll of dough is perhaps found in the evocation scene of the *Orphic Argonautica*¹⁴⁶, if the term οὔλοπλάσματα is derived from οὔλαί ('barley groats') rather than from οὔλος ('woolly'), in which case the

¹³⁶ Bibliography on magic dolls in Ogden 2001, 185 n. 65; cf. also Scippacercola 2009, 229-230.

¹³⁷ *SEG* IX 72, lines 117-121 (the same inscription we have already referred to in note 124).

¹³⁸ Hor. *sat.* 1.8.30-33.

¹³⁹ *PGM* IV 296-303.

¹⁴⁰ Verg. *eccl.* 8.75.

¹⁴¹ Verg. *Aen.* 4.508.

¹⁴² Hor. *sat.* 1.8.43-44.

¹⁴³ Verg. *eccl.* 8.80. The *imago* (obviously Aeneas') placed on the funeral pyre in *Aen.* 4.508 is going to be burned too.

¹⁴⁴ Theocr. 2.28. Cf. Ogden 2002, 112.

¹⁴⁵ *PGM* III 296 (a wooden hollow image of Apollo); IV 1880-1881 (a dog made of pitch and wax); 2360-2361 (a Hermes made of wax and herbs); XII 18-21 (Eros and Psyche made of wax and herbs); IV 2945 (a puppy made of wax or dough). For *PGM* IV 296-303 see above, text to note 139.

¹⁴⁶ *Argon. Orph.* 957. Ogden 2001, 185, wrongly takes the same term (οὔλος) to mean both 'wool' and 'barley'.

doll would be made of wool, like in Horace. A further magic doll in literature is found in Lucian: a clay figure of Eros¹⁴⁷.

According to Hopfner¹⁴⁸ the soul of the sorceress' dead son will be first forced to enter the doll, and from there the corpse. There is nothing in Heliodorus' text, however, to support this view, though the doll is certainly the double of the dead person. It should rather be emphasized that a further 'oriental' element is closely connected with the doll: the use of magic herbs. In the magical papyri herbs are sometimes mixed in the material from which the doll is made¹⁴⁹, the corpse itself in one instance is crowned with black ivy¹⁵⁰, as Heliodorus' doll with laurel (δάφνη) and fennel (μάραθρον)¹⁵¹, and a crown of laurel also appears¹⁵².

In Apuleius herbs very similar to these (*laurus* and *anethum*) are used by the sorceress Pamphile¹⁵³. Apuleius' *laurus* (laurel or bay) is the same as Heliodorus' δάφνη; and his *anethum* (dill) is very close to Heliodorus' μάραθρον (fennel). Pamphile uses an infusion of bay and dill to resume her identity and features after a transformation. The comparison with Apuleius shows that in Heliodorus the two herbs aim to identify the doll with the person to be reanimated.

The most obvious 'oriental' element is of course the οὐσία, which in this, as in all necromancies entailing reanimation, must be the whole corpse itself. Another obvious one are the incomprehensible words¹⁵⁴ the sorceress addresses to the moon – which must probably be taken as Hecate. Barbaric and apparently meaningless words in magic ceremonies are often attested in literature too¹⁵⁵; and we have seen that Erichtho used both these and non-human sounds. But the best document for this are of course the magical papyri, full as they are of the names of foreign gods and incomprehensible magic words. Finally, a last typically 'oriental' element is the method the sorceress repeatedly employs to reanimate the corpse: whispering in its ear¹⁵⁶. This is perfectly paralleled in a magical papyrus, in which the magician is instructed to attach an iron plate engraved with three Homeric verses to the corpse of an executed criminal (so both an ἄωρος and a

¹⁴⁷ Lucian. *philops.* 14.

¹⁴⁸ Hopfner 1924, II § 354.

¹⁴⁹ See above, note 145.

¹⁵⁰ *PGM* IV 2049-2050.

¹⁵¹ Cf. Hopfner 1921, I § 476.

¹⁵² *PGM* III 207.

¹⁵³ Apul. *met.* 3.23.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Hopfner 1921, I §§ 706 ff.; 716 ff.; Hopfner 1928, 340-342. Cf. also above, n. 79.

¹⁵⁵ Cf., for instance, Lucian. *nekyom.* 9; *philops.* 12; *dial. mer.* 4.5; etc.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Hopfner 1921, I § 700; 1924, II §§ 40; 354; Hopfner 1935, 2225.

βιαιοθάνατος – that is one who died both untimely and by violence), and to speak the verses in its ear, in order to have the corpse tell him everything he wishes¹⁵⁷.

The way Heliodorus presents his sorceress is very different from Erichtho's presentation in Lucan. Whereas the latter is introduced as a superwitch outdoing all her colleagues in her grisly deeds, Heliodorus' sorceress first appears as a mother mourning her dead son in a battlefield. Her real nature will only be revealed later on – first as she performs her horrid ceremony, then in her murderous pursuit of Calasiris and Charikleia¹⁵⁸. Even then, however, she is different from Erichtho: whereas the latter proudly flaunts her magic prowess, she seeks to do away with the witnesses of the necromancy she performed. Finally, Heliodorus' sorceress performs her ritual for herself, not at somebody else's request like Lucan's Erichtho and Apuleius' Zatchlas.

We have seen that both in Lucan and Apuleius the dead show some degree of unwillingness to comply with the magician's command. In Heliodorus we witness the dead person's reluctance at its highest pitch. Though the dead son must obey his mother's spell, he will curse her and predict her death, which promptly follows.

Calasiris and Charikleia, unlike Sextus Pompey in Lucan, are only unwilling witnesses of the necromancy. Charikleia, however, would fain take advantage of it to ask the reanimated corpse about Theagenes, whom she is seeking to be reunited with, but Calasiris forbids her. He tells her that even witnessing such a scene is a sacrilege, though in their situation they could not help it, and explains that for a priest like he is the fitting way of divination is the one performed through lawful sacrifices and pure prayers, not through unholy contact with dead people's bodies. Here Calasiris is restating what he had already told Theagenes in the third book, where he had distinguished two types of Egyptian wisdom (σοφία is the term he employs). He condemns the first, working with herbs and dead bodies, and extols the second, which turns its gaze to the heavens and predicts the future from the movements of the celestial bodies¹⁵⁹. There are even precise textual correspondences between the two passages¹⁶⁰. According to Calasiris, any

¹⁵⁷ *PGM* IV 2164-2166; cf. Hopfner 1924, II § 371; Ogden 2001, 212-213; Scippacercola 2009, 232-233.

¹⁵⁸ She is exposed as a perfect example of 'old woman as the incarnation of evil'. Cf. Billault 1980.

¹⁵⁹ Heliod. 3.16.2-4. Cf. Jones 2004. For the importance of astrology in Heliodorus cf. Liviabella 1979; also Futre Pinheiro 1991, 376-377.

¹⁶⁰ Heliod. 3.16.3 περὶ σώματα νεκρῶν εἰλουμένη ~ 6.14.7 περὶ γῆν... καὶ σώματα νεκρῶν εἰλουμένοις.

way, divination cannot alter the course of future events¹⁶¹. In this he is in agreement with Stocism, and – strangely – with Erichtho, except for the fact that for Calasiris this is true even for individual fates, whereas Erichtho is ready to admit that only the general course of history escapes her magic power¹⁶².

Calasiris firmly rejects and sternly condemns the use of cadaverous οὐσία for magic purposes, as also done by Tiresias in Statius' necromantic scene in the *Thebaid*¹⁶³. The dead man, however, will prove as gracious to Charikleia as he is stern with his own mother, and will reveal her happy future with her beloved Theagenes, even though – or perhaps just because – he has not been formally asked.

5. Though the three necromancies we have examined differ very much from one another, they exhibit nevertheless several common features. In the first place they are associated either with Thessaly or with Egypt, two lands traditionally regarded as home to sorcerers and witches. In Lucan the necromancy is performed in Thessaly by the Thessalian witch Erichtho¹⁶⁴, and in Heliodorus it takes place in Egypt at the hands of an Egyptian sorceress. Apuleius seems to provide the missing link: his necromancy is performed at Larissa, in Thessaly, by a priest that comes from Egypt: Zatchlas.

The link between Thessaly and Egypt is emphasized even where we should least expect it: in the magical papyri, which, though written in Greek, have been found – and surely mostly composed – in Egypt. In connection with necromancy – and once, interestingly enough, with necromancy entailing the reanimation of a corpse – a prominent figure in the magical papyri is king Pitys of Thessaly¹⁶⁵, to whom a number of magical recipes of this type are attributed. In one the object is to question a corpse¹⁶⁶, which obviously necessarily presupposes its coming back to life.

All the reanimations in our three necromancies require both magical ingredients and the uttering of magical formulas or invocations. These two

¹⁶¹ Heliod. 2.24.6-7.

¹⁶² See above, text to notes 22-23.

¹⁶³ Stat. *Theb.* 507-511. Cf. Hopfner 1924, II § 341.

¹⁶⁴ Though, as Scippacercola 2009, 227, observes, some of Erichtho's magical ingredients are normally associated with Egypt.

¹⁶⁵ For Pitys see Hopfner 1924, II §§ 36-36; 247-249; 365; 367-368; 370; Hopfner 1935, 2229-2230; Preisendanz 1950; Ogden 2001, 211-213. He may be the Greco-Egyptian transformation of the Egyptian prophet Bitys (cf. Iambl. *de myst.* 8.5); but, significantly enough, he has become king of Thessaly.

¹⁶⁶ PGM IV 2140-2144.

elements are developed in greatest detail by Lucan: his Erichtho uses an enormous amount of ingredients and addresses extended invocations – and threats – to the lower gods; most sober is Apuleius, whose Zatchlas only uses an herb and silently prays to the rising sun. Heliodorus' sorceress follows a middle course in her mixing Greek-Homeric and 'oriental' elements and ingredients, in addressing understandable words to the moon, and in whispering spells in her dead son's ear.

All the dead being reanimated in the three necromancies are ἄωροι, having died untimely, βιαιοθάνατοι, as they have been killed by violence, and ἄταφοι, that is not buried yet, though in Apuleius the funeral is in progress. These are precisely the classes of dead most suitable for necromancies. The parallels are so numerous that detailed references are hardly necessary¹⁶⁷.

Not only are the dead raised in our three necromancies 'unquiet souls' of the type we have just pointed out; all three have also recently died. This is strongly emphasized in Lucan, where the corpse is still 'lukewarm' (*tepidum*)¹⁶⁸, and has not been exposed to the sun yet¹⁶⁹. Some magicians did indeed boast to be able to raise people long dead, or even their burned ashes, as Horace's Canidia¹⁷⁰. Claudian's Megaera too boasts to have raised already buried dead¹⁷¹. In Lucian¹⁷² a physician reports that a dead man resurrected after twenty days. The immediate objection is that the corpse should have decayed in the meantime¹⁷³: exactly the same raised by the Epicurean philosopher Colotes to Plato's story of the resurrection of Er after twelve days¹⁷⁴. These are boasts (of a sorceress like Canidia or a goddess like Megaera), or mere hearsay (like in the case of Lucian's physician). However,

¹⁶⁷ Suffice it to refer to Hopfner 1921, I §§ 643 ff.; Hopfner 1935, 2219; Baldini Moscati 1976, 162-164 (cf. 2005, 42-46); Scippacercola 2009, 217; 223.

¹⁶⁸ Lucan 6.621 – though there is already pus in it (6.668).

¹⁶⁹ Lucan. 6.622-623.

¹⁷⁰ Hor. *epod.* 17.79 *possim crematos excitare mortuos*.

¹⁷¹ Claudian. *in Rufin.* 1.155-156 *condita funera traxi / carminibus victura meis*.

¹⁷² Lucian. *philops.* 25.

¹⁷³ Lucian. *philops.* 26.

¹⁷⁴ Procl. *in remp.* II 116, 19-21 Kroll. Cf. Stramaglia 1999, 242. The case of Philinnion (Phlegon *mir.* 1; Procl. *in remp.* 116.2-17; cf. Stramaglia 1999, 231-257) is different. She had been dead for six months, when she came to visit the young Machates, who was a guest in her parents' home, and made love to him for several nights. When discovered, she died again, and her corpse remained in the house. When the tomb she had been buried in was opened, it was found empty, but the presents Machates had given her were there. Clearly, she was a 'revenante': her body stayed in the tomb during the day and came out at night, like in the case of modern 'vampires'.

though many magicians and wonder-workers, including Erichtho¹⁷⁵, claimed they could raise the dead as a matter of course¹⁷⁶, all the actual descriptions of such a feat, both in fiction and in allegedly ‘historical’ writings, are related to fresh, undecayed corpses: not only our three necromancies, but also the miracles worked by Apollonius of Tyana¹⁷⁷, or by Jesus himself¹⁷⁸, except in the case of Lazarus, who had been in the grave for three days¹⁷⁹. This is a further point Lucan, Apuleius, and Heliodorus have in common.

As we have seen, in all three cases, though in different ways, the dead person is reluctant to comply, and threats or a second spell (in Heliodorus) are needed to attain the goal¹⁸⁰.

There are other, minor details common to all three necromancies or to two of them. For example, the three corpses stand up – though in Apuleius it may be implied that just the torso is raised from the bier¹⁸¹. In Lucan the corpse stands up suddenly¹⁸²; in Heliodorus it falls down twice in the same way¹⁸³; in both cases they seem to move like marionettes worked by strings.

All the three reanimated corpses die again immediately after uttering their prophecy, though in Lucan, as we have seen, a further spell is needed to make the reanimated soldier die again. We should recall that the same happened at the end of the spontaneous necromancies by Gabienus and Buplagus.

Actually, what happens to the revived corpse in Apuleius is not explicitly reported; the writer’s interest is focused on Thelyphron, and after the loss of his nose and ears is revealed, the tale to all purposes is over. Hardly any doubt, however, can be entertained about the second and final death of the reanimated corpse. The old uncle repeatedly says that his nephew’s return to life will be brief¹⁸⁴, and the confirmation comes from the words used by the reanimated corpse itself: *momentariae vitae*¹⁸⁵, a moment’s life.

¹⁷⁵ Lucan. 6.531-532; she could even resuscitate whole armies: 6.632-636. These are actually statements of the poet himself.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. e.g. Lucian. *pseudomant.* 24 (Alexander of Abonoteichos); Arnob. 1.52 (the Persian μάγοι); etc.

¹⁷⁷ Philostr. VA 4.45. See above, text to note 125.

¹⁷⁸ Luc. 7.11-17; 8.49-56.

¹⁷⁹ Ioh. 11.39-44.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Stramaglia 1990, 188-191.

¹⁸¹ Apul. *met.* 2.29.2 *adsurgit cadaver*. Cf. Ogden 2001, 205.

¹⁸² Lucan. 6.755-757.

¹⁸³ Heliod. 6.14.6 κατηνέχθη τε ἄθρόον καὶ ἔκειτο ἐπὶ πρόσωπον; 6.15.5 ἔκειτο καταπραγείς.

¹⁸⁴ Apul. 2.28.1 *reducere paulisper ab inferis spiritum*; 28.4 *brevem solis usuram... modicam lucem*; 28.5 *exiguam vitae spatium*.

¹⁸⁵ Apul. 2.29.3.

Of course the main common point of the three necromancies is the reanimation of the corpse. They are actually the only instances of this in literature. We have already met, however, some parallel cases in the magical papyri, such as king Pitys' spell for questioning corpses¹⁸⁶, or the procedure for making a corpse utter responses by speaking in his ear¹⁸⁷. But there are further cases. One is the spell for the resurrection of a dead body given in magical papyrus XIII¹⁸⁸, which Stramaglia believes, mistakenly in my opinion, to be the only relevant instance¹⁸⁹. Elsewhere, an inscribed tin plaque is to be buried for three days in the grave of an ἄωρος, one who died untimely; the dead person will then come to life for as long as it stays there¹⁹⁰. In these last two cases the purpose for which the reanimation of the corpse is carried out is not specified; but from the two former cases we may safely assume that at least one of the reasons must have been the wish to question the dead, in other words, necromancy.

We will not venture any hypotheses as to what originated the belief that the dead could be reanimated for necromantic purposes. We shall only remind that spells and techniques to obtain the assistance of the spirits of the dead are commonplace in the magical papyri and that ceremonies to be performed with the use of cadaverous οὐσία, such as cups fashioned from human skulls, or even whole corpses, are frequently attested in the magical papyri, and, to a lesser extent, in literature. What I do wish to stress is that the three necromancies we have analyzed, though adapted to the three authors' literary purposes, are far from being entirely the product of their imagination, and are not at all detached from the beliefs and practices of contemporary magic¹⁹¹.

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¹⁸⁶ PGM IV 2140-2144. Cf. above, text to note 166.

¹⁸⁷ PGM IV 2164-2166. Cf. above, text to note 157.

¹⁸⁸ PGM XIII 277-282.

¹⁸⁹ Stramaglia 1990, 188 n. 113.

¹⁹⁰ PGM IV 2211-2218.

¹⁹¹ Though most magical papyri are more recent even than Heliodorus, it is well known that magic tends to preserve for centuries the folkloric heritage of previous ages. We have seen that a theme attested since the V century B.C. reappears in a Sicilian fairytail in Pitre's collection: cf. above, text to note 105.

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ABSTRACT.

The practice of necromancy is attested both in literature (since Homer) and in 'technical' sources, such as the Greek magical papyri. The actual reanimation of a dead body, however, occurs rather rarely. The only instances in literature appear in Lucan (VI book), in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, and in Heliodorus' novel. Though differing in many ways, these three necromancies exhibit several common features.

KEYWORDS. Necromancy; literary and magical sources; reanimation of a corpse; Lucan; Apuleius; Heliodorus.