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The Transformation of the Daimon as a Spirit Entity from Ancient Greece to Early Christianity, and Beyond

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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE DAIMON AS A SPIRIT ENTITY FROM
ANCIENT GREECE TO EARLY CHRISTIANITY, AND BEYOND

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

by

Christopher Alan Mekus

2022

To: Dean John F. Stack, Jr.
Green School of International and Public Affairs

This thesis, written by Christopher A Mekus, and entitled The Transformation of the Daimon as a Spirit Entity from Ancient Greece to Early Christianity, and Beyond, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this thesis and recommend that it be approved.

Gwyn Davies

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The thesis of Christopher A. Mekus is approved.

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Florida International University, 2022

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DEDICATION

To Bob Bends and old Momma Inaha who have both passed into spirit.

May you two continue to guide and love me.

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I would like to thank the following people who assisted me with this thesis.

Thank you, Professor Larson, for being open-minded enough in allowing this thesis. The subject of this work touches upon the timeless use and value of clairvoyance which has always been a deep interest of mine. I also thank Professor Akhtar for having Buddha nature and humility. Your humbleness and insights are unmatched. Your actions allowed other's needs to be fulfilled before your own. The product of your thoughtfulness is this thesis. To Professor Davies, I am eternally grateful to have found you. I can only conclude that our daimons have been hard at work. Thank you for all the assistance you have rendered. To my friends Mario who has been so understanding.

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE DAIMON AS A SPIRIT ENTITY FROM ANCIENT GREECE TO EARLY CHRISTIANITY, AND BEYOND

by

Christopher Alan Mekus

Florida International University, 2022

Miami, Florida

Professor Erik Larson, Major Professor

Cultural diffusion of the Graeco-Egyptian daimon-entity was based upon the combination of ancient Egyptian and Greek magic. This syncretic system of magic was marked by the Greek daimon as a spirit-like entity in ritual application and framework with the Egyptian ouroboros symbol and circumambulation, which represented safe spiritual communication and unity with the fickle daimon, as a magical assistant to help obtain ritual goals. Contrary to some opinions, the accumulative evidence indicates that the daimon transformed and endured into Gnosticism, and early orthodox Christianity. The ongoing concept of spiritual unity within the western tradition was of paramount importance, as well as fundamentally expressed as clairvoyance. The purpose of this thesis is to reveal a new perspective on the subject. The primary problem is the challenging of traditional views with an incomplete record of evidence. The methods for this research are the comparison of archeological and interpretive textual evidence, from a pagan convert's perspective. This new synthesis of facts and probabilities favors a continued transformation of the daimon-spirit. Thus, the daimon transcended as a concept of ritual symbolism in application for spiritual unity, from ancient to modern times.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

The Graeco-Egyptian daimon as a spirit-entity was directly associated with ritual circumambulation in magical spell work, as well as being invoked to achieve spiritual unity through clairvoyance, thus aiding magicians to secure their magical objectives. This ritual formula was considered a standard practice in magic during its era from the 1st- 5th century CE. The daimon entity, with its ritual symbolism in application was based upon the combination of Greek and Egyptian magic. Therefore, this unique form of syncretism is culturally identifiable during its later cultural adaptations. After the daimon's rejection, transformation, and assimilation to early Christianity in 392 CE the record then became colored, and harder to trace in later literature. As a result, the daimon's continued cultural survival and influence was also discredited. Consequentially, ongoing cultural influences with this entity's metamorphosis were credited to other belief systems. This thesis offers a fresh perspective on conflicting opinions thus revealing new conclusions. The literature and related evidence in question represents a notable shift from traditional opinions on the subject. There is no single work that offers an objective comparison of sources in clarification of current misperceptions of the daimon entity. As a result, this thesis fulfils a gap in the current literature.

This alternative perspective of the daimon entity is revealed through an analysis and summary of the most relevant primary and secondary sources: Betz (1996) is a refined translation of "*The Greek Magical Papyri*". This is a rare and ancient text that represents an advanced magician's handbook of the Graeco-Egyptian magical tradition. This work gives us detailed insights of ancient spell work regarding the invocation of the daimon entity, and its associated ritual element of circumambulation, towards spiritual unity to obtain magical goals. It

also shows us when and how the encroachment of Jewish and Christian influences took place in later paganism. However, the text does not show us anything beyond the golden era of magic. Ritner (2008) effectively establishes the ritual use, and application of the Egyptian ouroboros symbol as indigenously unique. He makes the important distinction from other cultural uses of similar images. Ciruolo, in Marvin and Mirecki (2001) aids us in establishing the Graeco-Egyptian daimon as a magical assistant, termed the “Good Daimon.” This source in combination with Skinner (2017) points out that not all daimons in Graeco-Egyptian magic were evil, until later defined as such by Christianity in 392 CE. Pachoumi (2017) offers an in-depth analysis of Graeco-Egyptian spell work. Its primary relevance to this thesis is the establishment of the term Aion, as a flexible and adaptive concept in Graeco-Egyptian magic, as well as a select category of a daimon. However, all these sources except for Skinner (2017), are limited to a specialized scope of information concerning the daimon in its classical state of being. Skinner (2017) also offers a broad range of information as well as a balanced and diachronic view of the daimon. Unfortunately, his perspective of the entity’s assimilation to Gnosticism falls short of being insightful. Roblee (2018) and Fowden (1993), both establish a related transition of the Graeco-Egyptian daimon from Betz (1996). This ritual transition is traced from the ouroboros symbol, related ritual circumambulation, and spirit communication through the application of spiritual unity. In late antiquity, the relationship of spiritual unity transcended from the magician uniting with the daimon to involving one’s soul with God. Therefore, this implies a continued influence of one aspect of the daimon in cultural transition, through its associated ritual symbolism. Yet, this milestone falls short for the objective of this thesis. There are other sources that complement Freke and Gandy (1999) and Geertz (1973) that reveal surviving cultural patterns of spiritual unity through the transformation of symbolism, such as oneness and unity with all things.

Consequently, the pre-existing theme of spiritual unity as communication with daimon entities was assimilated into early Christianity through pagan converts. A further synthesis of sources reveals a related continuance of this theme that reinforces facts and probabilities in support of this thesis. The accumulative evidence also indicates the reoccurrence, and survival of daimons as spirit-like entities, had continued after their official disappearance. For instance, Luck (2006), Guiley (1991), Bletzer (1986), and *Spiritualist Manual* (2004) all reveal a timeless ritual application of clairvoyance identified through a higher level of mental vibration (receptive mental sensitivity), for union with spirit. Moreover, Bohak (2011), Bonner (1950), Skinner (2017), and Roblee (2018) furthers our understanding of the origin and continued influence of the daimon with the ouroboros symbol, as an inherited ritual pattern. This ritual pattern is then chronologically compared with later Jewish and Arabian sources, to reveal that they were not the origin for achieving unity with spirit, as a ritual pattern transcending from daimons to demons. Perhaps, one traditional source of confusion among scholars was the late acknowledgment of, how and why the daimon did not disappear, but was transformed by early Christianity. Chin and Vidas (2015) and Troeltsch (1960) make it clear that the daimon underwent a metamorphosis, and thereafter was assimilated into early orthodox Christianity. In addition, Brakke (2010), Williams (1996), Jonas (1963) with updates from Fowden (1993), and Salzman (2018) all show us how and why the Gnostics absorbed paganism. This combination of sources reveals facts and probabilities that Gnosticism was a syncretic belief system. Gnosticism also retained recycled elements of paganism reflected within its cosmology. In contrast and comparison, *The New Testament* reveals how the orthodox Christian system was focused upon the purging of the daimon in a one-dimensional manner (*The Holy Bible* 1989, Matthew 8:31, Mark 5:12, and Luke 8:29-32). Consequentially, in review of these sources, this thesis offers a more objective

perspective on the continuance of the Graeco-Egyptian daimon, thus closing a gap in the current literature. In summary, all these sources ultimately viewed from a pagan convert's perspective reveals a more objective legacy of the daimon never considered before. Terms that are commonly used within this thesis can be found in the Glossary at the end of this paper.

INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

It is believed by various scholar's pre-Islamic Arabian astral beliefs influenced early Egyptian and Greek magic through the indigenous Greek concept of spirit known as the daimon, while ritually assimilating the Egyptian ouroboros symbol to further spiritual unity with the daimon entity, through clairvoyant communication accomplished through a higher level of mental vibration, also defined as receptive mental sensitivity. The concept of the daimon was indigenously Greek that developed from the conceptualization of astral entities, as well as the human soul, which was inevitably transformed by the Gnostics, and in turn absorbed by orthodox Christians (Ritner 2008, 57-60, Luck 2006, 216-217, Roblee 2018, 141-145, Bremmer 1986, 1-35, Jonas 1963, 116-119, Williams 1996, 9-15, 204, 260-261, Troeltsch, 1960, 104-107, 110). It was also believed that daimon entity's offered clairvoyant communication as a spiritual agent, that is often referenced within this thesis by Luck (2006, 216-217). Luck's assertions are based upon the ancient Greek Plutarch who was a priest at Delphi for 30 years. Plutarch defines communication with daimons in terms of clairvoyance, by stating: "*it is no hard or hopeless task to understand by what manner of impact, and suggestion the soul receives a thought and thereby with its movements draws after it the corporeal mass. But if the body is moved with so little trouble by the notion that enters the understanding without the help of the spoken language, it cannot be hard, I think, to believe that the understanding may be guided by a higher*

understanding and a diviner soul, that lays hold of it from without by a touch, which is the way in which it is the nature of thought to impinge on thought, just as light produces a reflection. For in very truth our recognition of one another's thoughts through the medium of the spoken word is like groping in the dark; whereas the thoughts of daemons (daimons) are luminous and shed their light on the daemonic (daimon) man. Their thoughts have no need of verbs or nouns, which men use as symbols in their intercourse, and thereby behold more counterfeits and likeness of what is present in thought but are unaware of the original except for those persons who are illuminated, as I have said, by some special and daemonic (daimon) radiance”

(Henderson, 1959, 455). As a result, daimons as spirit-like entities were often communicated with in the syncretic Greco-Egyptian system through spell work, usually associated with the ouroboros symbol (Betz 1996, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, 311). This early concept of the daimon was also perceived as divine. Therefore, it was assimilated towards the meaning of theos-god (s) during the classical Greek era. The Graeco-Egyptian system held the invoking of the daimon with the ouroboros symbolism or circumambulation, as a common ritual feature. In contrast, Mesopotamian and Babylonian rituals were used for divination (Betz 1996, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, 311, Thompson 1900, vii-xci). Greco-Egyptian spiritual unity, represented by the ouroboros's, in part correlates with various literary sub-texts. One example is *The Hermetica* which in sum emphasizes harmonious unity with all things, including a higher entity (Freke and Gandy 1999, 35). These shared and ongoing ritual concepts of spiritual unity with the daimon entity were procedurally invoked through a hierarchy. For example, daimons were sub-divided in an echelon of gods, demi-gods as arch daimons, and restless human spirits as residual energies (Ciraolo 2001, 279-293, Betz 1996, 17, 64-65). Gods and arch-daimons were derived from star constellations, specific stars, the first five visible

planets, as well as the sun, and moon (Skinner 2017, 53-68). Restless human spirits were entrapped energies located upon and limited to the earth plane (Skinner 2017, 70). As a result, the Greco-Egyptian system was a unique and distinct system of magic. For instance, the ritual pinnacle of Graeco-Egyptian invocations involved their magical assistants the daimon (Ciraolo 2001, 279-293). The basic principle of clairvoyance that was associated with daimons, as a phenomenon and cognitive technique, passed throughout the western tradition, which still exists on the modern level (Betz 1996, Luck 2006, 217, Bletzer 1986, 112-114, *Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 26). This practice of clairvoyance goes beyond the ancient era (Luck 2006, 1-474, Bletzer 1986, 112-114, *Spiritualist Manual* 56-60). Plutarch's definition of communicating with daimons can be further understood through the sub-divisions of clairvoyance, as in the practice of mediumship or ones sixth sense, as follows: *clair-visual or clairvoyance* as the ability to see, *clair-audio or clairaudient* as the ability to hear, and *clairsentience* as the ability to innately sense or know something (Bletzer 1986, 112-114, *Spiritualists Manual* 2004, 56-60). These sub-divisions of clairvoyance, understood through, a higher level of mental sensitivity was a ritual prerequisite, as when dealing with daimons, or in modern mediumship (Betz 1996, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, 311, Luck 217, Bletzer 1986, 112-114, *Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 56-60). The accumulated evidence suggests that these modern and fundamental ritual elements of spirit communication were in part based upon Graeco-Egyptian magic. In support of this, as Egyptian and Greco-Egyptian magic culturally diffused to other religions, it was considered *par-excellence* in magic, throughout the Mediterranean (Fowden 1993, 24). In addition, the Graeco-Egyptian ouroboros emphasized spiritual unity with the daimon, which was later found in an inverted manner among the Gnostics. In this context, it was believed to represent the acquisition of knowledge among other related meanings (Betz 1996, xlii, Skinner

2017, 89, 155-156, Jonas 1963, 116-119, Roblee 2018, 141-145). Thereafter, the concept of spirit found among the Gnostics and other Christians retained influences from Graeco-Egyptian magic. Furthermore, there are similar related parallels of spiritual unity, and clairvoyance also found within *The Holy Bible* as well as modern spiritualist (Freke and Gandy 1999, xix-xxiv, 35, Troeltsch 1960, 104-106, 110, 117, Chin and Vidas, 2015, 277 Jonas 1963, 116-119, Bletzer 112-114, *Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 56-60, Betz 1996, 62, 1989, Matthew 8:31, Mark 5:12, and Luke 8:29-32). Therefore, the known and probable influences that Graeco-Egyptian magic had upon other religions may start with its inception.

THE FORMATION OF GRAECO-EGYPTIAN MAGIC AND THE DAIMON

Graeco-Egyptian magic was formulated as a system when Greek immigrants within the Egyptian city of Alexandria combined Egyptian and Greek magic, via the Greek god Hermes and the Egyptian god Thoth, as both deities possessed similar magical attributes. This resulted in the creation of the Hermes-Trismegistus concept that was central to Graeco-Egyptian magic, and later known as Hermetics. This belief system possessed a unique ritual formula for invoking daimons as magical helpers (Fowden 1993, 1-30, Skinner 2017, 29-31, 288-290, Ciruolo 2001, 279-293). Graeco-Egyptian magic was exemplified through the invocation of the daimon, as an evolved astral-spirit entity, a medium between the gods and men, and often used in spell work involving circumambulation. Ritual precautions were also implemented by the magician when dealing with such immense spiritual power (Betz 1996, 17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, Skinner 2017, 195-205). The Egyptians already possessed the belief of the Ka (as spirit) and the Ba (body or mummy) which would have lent itself easily to the Greek concept of the soul and the daimon. As a result, Graeco-Egyptian magicians eagerly sought to

invoke and establish a long-term relationship with daimon entities, to help obtain their magical goals (Bremmer 1986, 3-135, Smith 2007, xx-xxii, Skinner 2017, 53-54, 288-290, Ciruolo 2001, 279-293). As a standard precaution, all magicians invoked daimons with protective measures to avoid potential harm or possession. For example, it was common for a spell caster to wear a protective ritual amulet made of parchment known as a phylactery, often worn upon one's chest. Surviving examples contained an ouroboros symbol with magical letters, in spell form involving circumambulation (Betz 1996, 7, 74, 77, 134, Skinner 2017, 79-90, 195-206). This preliminary use of circle symbolism also suggests the importance of a safe spiritual union and communication with the targeted entity. Daimons held a spectrum of alignments ranging from good, bad, and neutral (Kittel and Bromiley, 1971, Skinner 2017, 70-74, 82-88, 196-197, Ritner 2008, 57-72, Betz 1996, 7, 16-17, 23, 74-75, 134-135, 145, 273, Guiley 1991, 108). Graeco-Egyptian magic also continued to share correlations with Mesopotamian and Babylonian beliefs which offers a contrasting view of the hierarchal divisions of Greco-Egyptian daimons.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DAIMON-SPIRIT AND ITS HIERARCHY IN SPELL CASTING

Graeco-Egyptian magic and Mesopotamian-Babylonian divination and sorcery shared common ritual elements and goals while simultaneously displaying sharp differences. The invocation of the Graeco-Egyptian daimon as "*the art of harnessing the power of the stars*", involved the more powerful celestial class of daimons that shared common ritual traits with invoked pre-Islamic entities, as both possessed astronomical origins. However, the invocation of astral entities was still contrasted by ritual goals. For example, the idea of the daimon as a former human spirit was not present within the Mesopotamian-Babylonian system in any

comparable manner (Reiner 1995, 2, Fowden 1993, 91-94, Skinner 2017, 53-54, 70, Betz 1996, 64-65, 72-73, 75-76, Pachoumi 2017, 100-109, Greenbaum 2019, 4-6, Ciraolo 1995, 279-293). The basic concept of Babylonian astral empowerment only remained synonymous with the Graeco-Egyptian system on a rudimentary level, as both systems respective astral entities were derived from the stars (Evans 1998, 39-41, Reiner 1995, 2-3). These two systems of divination and magic also differed in ritual approach, goals, and complexity. Graeco-Egyptian magic maintained an assortment of daimons as astral entities, including gods, demi-gods, and lesser human spirits invoked to obtain magical goals (Ciraolo 1995, 279-293, Betz 1996, 64-65, 72-76, Ritner 1995, Skinner 2017, 67, 70). In contrast, the Mesopotamian-Babylonian's ritual objectives were divination and sorcery. Their goals were to predict, protect, and harm based upon the stars, constellations, and gods. For instance, the security of the Babylonian kingdom was derived from astronomical divination and omens. In contrast, the Graeco-Egyptian system was magically aimed towards invoking and establishing a relationship with a daimon to obtain personal gains (Evans, 1998, 39-41, Reiner 1995, 2-3, Thompson 1900, vii-xci). The primary difference being "*divination seeks to foretell the future, while magic seeks to change the future*" (Skinner 2017, 19). Furthermore, Graeco-Egyptian's magical ritual objectives stressed a communicative unity with daimons on all levels for ritual success (Betz 1996, Ciraolo 1995, 279-293, Pachoumi 2017, 37-39, Skinner 70, 288-290, Luck 2006, 216-217). A relationship with a daimon was established to aid the magician in matters of love, to win conflicts, maintain health, and access to material gains (Betz 1996, 4-329). According to *The Greek Magical Papyri*, the invoking of daimons was accomplished through various methods, occasionally dictated by the category of the daimon in question. For instance, residual energies from those who died a traumatic or early death became restless human spirits. These entities were approached at

specific locations such as grave sites and gladiatorial arenas. The theory behind such a method was that these trapped entities were restricted to a specific place but not a time or direction. Human skulls were also used in a similar manner but as enslaved spirits by the magician (Betz 1996, 64-66, 72-76, Skinner 2017, 70, 295-298). This is one reason why restless human spirits were considered lesser daimons that required a different method for their invocation. Spells involving restless human spirits usually played upon the sympathies of the dead through a theme of common suffering, or in direct command of them. One of various techniques in dealing with a restless human spirit was to arouse their anger through a mutual theme with the spell caster. This shared malice was then directed towards the intended target (Luck 2006, 209-210, 215). There were other spells for invoking daimon-spirits as residual energies. These lesser daimon-spirits were often obtained through contagious magic-the magical law of contact. This was contrasted with the invoking of higher caliber daimons from the constellations (Betz 1996, 64-68, 72-75, 106-107, Skinner 2017, 53-68, 70, 288, Ciruolo 1995, 279-293).

A comparison and contrast of lesser daimons as residual human spirits that were invoked by means of contagious magic, to higher level daimons termed gods and demi-gods that were summoned from their respective constellations, yields further insights into these sub-divisions of entities, by defining their differences through spell work. Acquiring and establishing a long-term relationship with a daimon entity was a ritual necessity and a fundamental step in every magician's career. As explained above, daimons were used by magicians as magical conduits to commune with gods or demi-gods to accomplish magical goals. Daimons in this context can be further summarized by Socrates as "*interpreters and ferrymen, carrying divine things to mortals and mortal things to gods*" (Skinner 2017, 54). Luck paraphrase's Plutarch by defining daimons as: "*spiritual beings who think so intensely that they produce vibrations in the air that enable*

other spiritual beings (i.e. other daemons), as well as highly sensitive men and women to “receive” their thoughts, as through antennae or vibrations like those coming from a lyre. Thus the phenomena of clairvoyance, prophecy, and the like can be explained” (2006, 217). Hence forth, this explanation of communication with daimons is referenced as a higher level of mental vibration, synonymous with ones heightened mental sensitivity. Plutarch also confirms and adds the fact that daimons were mediums between men and gods that could perform acts of divine intervention. These entities’ alignments could be good or bad, yet even the best of them, when angry, could bring great harm to the magician. After one established a relationship with a daimon, the entity was then considered a spiritual servant that could reveal covert knowledge, and act as a personal guardian for the practitioner. In short, daimons offered supernatural aid in human affairs (Skinner 2017, 53-54, 209-210, 288-289, Ciraolo 1995, 279-293, Luck 2006, 71). Lesser daimons as restless human spirits, were more readily available and easily obtained in comparison to arch daimons, or gods derived from the constellations. Therefore, lesser daimons are addressed first, as in Love Spell IV 1390-1495 found within *The Greek Magical Papyri*. This spell invokes residual energies of heroes or gladiators who suffered an early or tragic death, and were therefore deprived of the joys of life. This spell was based upon contagious magic that required the saving of bread from the practitioners table to establish a physical and spiritual connection. The bread was then broken into seven pieces and tossed upon the place of death. Thereafter, the spell was recited as soil was removed from the site of expiration. The soil was then placed in the house of the desired person. The spell itself makes it known that the bread is a sacrifice to the dead as well as the language being complementary to the spirit of the deceased. As a result, a common relationship of suffering and denial was established between the daimon and the practitioner. The logic was that the dead had been denied similar enjoyments in life, in

comparison to the petitioner who was being denied their desired love. Therefore, the practitioner assumed the cooperation and sympathy of the invoked spirit (Betz 1996, 64-66). Another example is a binding spell written on parchment in a circle stating what the practitioner's expectations were. It was written in an enclosed ring representing the ouroboros and therefore drawing upon the qualities and power of this symbol. The spell also stated who was to be magically bound and how. The focus of binding spells would target one's enemy to experience ill-luck in business or the inability to obtain marriage. This ritual material was to be buried four-fingers deep during a waning moon in a grave of someone unrelated who had died an untimely death (Betz 1996, 106-107). In comparison and contrast, the category of higher and more aloof daimons were temporarily drawn down from specific stars, constellations, planets, the sun and moon through earthly air currents (Ciraolo 1995, 280). These astronomical bodies were the proper residence of higher level daimons. In further contrast, earth-bound spirits were believed to permanently reside within the air currents thus known as *aerial spirits* (Ciraolo 1995, 285-286). This was not the case regarding astronomical bodies where the gods and arch daimons or demi-gods resided (Pachoumi 2017, 100-109, 106-107, Fowden 1993, 78). The astronomical methods of invoking these entities from the constellations were a parallel development among the Babylonians, Egyptians, and Greeks. It was held among all these people that select constellations retained great astral and ritual empowerment, especially the Orion and Ursa Major (Evans 1998, 39-41, Reiner 1995, 9, Betz 1996, 3, Ciraolo 1995, 284-285, Pachoumi 2017, 11-48, 56-57, 60-61, Skinner 2017, 53-56, 60-61). In Graeco-Egyptian magic, the goal was to draw down high level daimons from the stars and constellations. This ritual formula required precise astronomical timing for success. The exact astronomical timing was an Egyptian carry over to the Graeco-Egyptian system for invoking this class of daimons (Skinner 2017, 54-58, 65-69).

This gave the magician quick and direct access to select gods. Daimons that were derived from constellations were procedurally hard to secure, thus eagerly sought after (Pachoumi 2017, 11-48, 56-57, 60-61, Betz 1996, 3).

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF SPELL CASTING WITH DAIMONS

The constellations of Orion and Ursa Major held paramount importance within Graeco-Egyptian magic, as they represented access and empowerment to important gods and arch-daimons, also termed demi-gods, as these higher caliber daimons were eagerly sought after by magicians, yet lesser daimons and former human spirits were more readily available and therefore quickly accepted. Ritual success in communicating with any daimon was arduous with no guarantee of success. These conditions resulted in sharp procedural differences that involved various ritual strategies (Skinner 2017, 53, Ciraolo 1995, 279-293, Pachoumi 2017, 37-39). Communication with these entities often required acts of ritual unity with the entity expressed in spell form, found within *The Greek Magical Papyri*. Therefore, many spells conveyed acts of circumambulation obviously based upon the ouroboros symbol as an Egyptian carryover (Betz 1996, 17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, Ritner 2008, 57-63). This was one ritual strategy used during spell casting sometimes involving select constellations. The northern constellation of Orion, known among the Graeco-Egyptians as the Holy Orion, contained one specific star (unpreserved in the record) which was deemed completely sacred. It was believed that any magical act could be achieved with the aid of this constellation (Ciraolo 1995, 285). The Egyptians associated Orion with life, the fertility of the Nile River, the sacred fig tree of Heliopolis, and *Atum-RE*'s sexuality, all which were considered central to their creation myth and cosmology (Pachoumi 2017, 37, Ciraolo 2001, 285). This

constellation was also the home and the origin of many daimons drawn down by Graeco-Egyptian magicians to the earth via air currents. These invoked higher caliber daimons would temporarily reside within the air to hear the magician's commands. These gods and arch-daimons were anxious to return to their resident constellation once their task was complete (Ciraolo 1995, 285, Betz 1996, 4, 60, 64). Graeco-Egyptian magicians did not directly approach gods as a matter of routine but only on occasions through specific spells, at precise astronomical moments. The Graeco-Egyptian system in contrast to the Egyptians considered the gods too dangerous to approach at any given time. Therefore, arch-daimons who had direct access to the gods were often preferred as mediators. Arch-daimons were much sought after but were elusive and scant. They were comparable to Judio-Christian angels and the equivalent of demi-gods in power and abilities (Fowden 1993, 209-210, Skinner 2017, 53-54). They were also defined as: "*directors of the infinite, servants in the chasm, bringers of compulsion, guardians of Tartarus, spirit givers, joiners together of death, and revelers of angels*" (Pachoumi 2017, 39). The magician would call upon certain daimons and gods but had no way of knowing what class of daimon may or may not fulfil the requested task. When invoking daimons from a constellation the possibilities were long, complex, and not completely preserved in record. A god was usually invoked in spells as a ritual preliminary and would occasionally respond directly. When this occurred, the god might replicate themselves as a carbon copy. This duplicate lacked a personality and essence yet remained functional. The gods did this to avoid magical enslavement from a magician. However, the higher level daimon's were often aloof and prone to ignore such invocations. As a result, magicians were usually satisfied with obtaining lesser daimons which were easier to obtain. In reiteration and comparison, these lesser daimons as earth-bound spirits permanently dwelt within the air currents. Regardless of what daimon

answered the magician's invocation, the ritual objective was the drawing down and harnessing of the desired entity via air currents, from the respective constellation. As a result, these daimons were also known as "*aerial spirits or air transversers*". The acquisition and use of such daimons were also based upon other ritual strategies (Ciraolo 2001, 291, 285-286, Betz 1996, 64-65, 72-77).

At times when invoking daimons, Graeco-Egyptian magicians used covert knowledge to gain their cooperation and obedience based upon a ritual strategy originating from Egyptian magicians. A magician casting this type of spell could use a superior god's secret and true name as a threatening command to an arch daimon (demi-god), in conjunction with promises of praise to their superior god. This ritual strategy was believed to obtain the entity's obedience. This knowledge held great power and therefore was used as leverage over demi-gods, and in turn all daimons below them. Most daimons were controlled by superior gods associated with the constellations (Ciraolo 2001, 282-284, Pachoumi 2017, 37-39, Skinner 2017, 53-54). The names and titles of daimons were also relevant. For example, the name Aion, was that of a superior-transformative god as well as a concept of eternity commonly, found in many Graeco-Egyptian spells. It is likely, the later Gnostic concept of a transformative class of entities suggests a connection with select daimons such as Aion (Ciraolo 2001, 280-281, 284, Betz 1996, 10-11, Jonas 1963, 53-54, Willaims 1996, 9-15, 204). Another example was the secret yet often generic name of Aeoth which was invoked as a superior god. This is exemplified by spell 1,1-42 in *The Greek Magical Papyri* that was pronounced in a series of vowels and when written, formed a triangle within it (Ciraolo 2001, 280-281, Skinner 2017, 53-54, Betz 1996, 3). After a magician had established a long-term relationship with a daimon, the entity became a trusted magical assistant or guardian, and thereafter given the title "Good Daimon" (Ciraolo 1995, 279-293, 280,

Luck 2006, 210-218). The name and concept of the “Good Daimon” was rooted in the classical Greek understanding as a protector of an individual or family (Pachoumi 2017, 37, Ciralo 2001, 280-281). The invocation of these daimons were often derived from the Holy Orion or Ursa Major constellations, that are exemplified through spell IV 1331-1389 found within *The Greek Magical Papyri*. This spell invokes the great god Typhon whose soul is connected to the Ursa Major constellation. Egyptian priests maintained that the souls of gods such as Typhon shined as stars in the heavens after their expiration. The spell itself calls upon powerful arch-daimons who were assistants to Typhon. The spell was written with the god’s name in one hundred letters in the shape of a curved star. An offering of fat from a black ass was then given to the god. A protective phylactery (amulet) was made from hairs of the same black ass which was worn during the casting of the spell. This protection was needed due to the negative energy associated with the invoked Egyptian god *Seth* (Pachoumi 2017, 38-39, Ritner 2008, 84-87). There are other underpinning ritual elements that establish spirit communication within *The Greek Magical Papyri*. These spells emphasized ritual unity with daimons as an early form of spirit communication known today as mediumship (Betz 1996, 17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, 311, Bletzter, 1986, 386-387, Guiley 1991, 358-360). This pattern illustrates a long-term and ongoing concept of spiritual unity within the western tradition, in part derived from the origin of the ouroboros symbol and applied circumambulation, discussed further below (Betz 1996, 17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 145, 163, 172-175, 190-191, 311, Ritner 2008, 57-60, Skinner 2017, 82-83).

EGYPTIAN ENCIRCLEMENT AND THE OUROBOROS

The ritual construction of Graeco-Egyptian magic stressed spiritual unity in conjunction with circumambulation often exemplified by the ouroboros symbol, which was Egyptian in origin. The Egyptian system of circle symbolism maintained a long history of fundamental importance in all rituals and spells before being culturally diffused to the Graeco-Egyptian system. This indigenous ritual element of encirclement was foundational to ancient Egyptian society. Egyptian circumambulation was also a ritual pre-requisite representing cosmological unity, magical empowerment, cleansing, and protection (Ritner 2008, 57-59, Skinner 2017, 82-85). To magically encircle in ancient Egypt was termed *Phr.t* (or as a verb context *Phr*) and may be defined as “*that which circles/contains /controls – that which enchants /protects/potion*” (Ritner 2008, 57). This ritual tradition maintained a long and intricate history in ancient Egyptian society. To ritually encircle in ancient Egypt was also reflective of that society’s daily social fabric as well as fundamentally important in all social events and rituals, both public and private (Ritner 2008, 58). For instance, ancient Egyptian boundaries such as walls, from kingdoms to personal homes, were encircled to create sacred-protective space and boundaries (Ritner 2008, 57-59). Further examples entail, various elaborate encirclement rituals that would often include the phrasing “*encirclement as boundary to the ouroboros encirclement as protection*” (Ritner 2008, 60). This phrase was used for virtually all occasions in one representative context or another as well invoking the divine. Ritner further inform us that such encirclement in ritual phrasing was a prototype for Egyptian ritual construction, as he states:” *It is the protection of him who bends the knee in the Great Mansion, who goes about (phr) Surrounded (dbn) in his protective serpent*”--the ouroboros (2008, 60). Moreover, the ouroboros symbol in the context of ritual encirclement also represented the creator’s “sacred cosmic space”,

which protected its contents from malevolent energies. It was common for kings and priests alike to ritually encircle and purify temples and other structures during these ritual events (Ritner 2008, 61). The ritual origin of Egyptian encirclement was associated with the ouroboros as well as the sun god *Re* found within *the Egyptian Demotic text*, the predecessor of *The Greek Magical Papyri*. Furthermore, the Egyptian mortuary texts also represented magical unity through the sun god *Re* and his cosmic path, known as *Re's bark* (sic) as well as the breaking of dawn. This aspect of Egyptian cosmology represented the origin of ritual encirclement and unity as a cultural carryover to the Graeco-Egyptian system. This concept of circumambulation involved magicians uniting with heaven, earth, and the spiritual world below while the sun passed through all these cosmic spheres. Dawn was a time of spiritual unity within this cosmic cycle (Ritner 2008, 53-63, Betz 1996, 3-329). As shown by Betz (1996), the Egyptian concept of encirclement exemplified by the ouroboros not only represented unity with cosmic astral powers, but also the empowerment and control of these forces (17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, 311). For instance, *coffin spell 114* aids a deceased Ka spirit in escape from malevolent spiritual forces, by repeating the phrase "*I am not encircled*", thus preventing the Ka from being entrapped (Ritner 2008, 64, Faulkner 2015, 107-108). Ritner effectively ends his stance on the matter by maintaining that encirclement is found in many cultures, yet these ritual elements are uniquely identifiable as Egyptian magic. Ultimately, Egyptian ritual encirclement was so indigenously unique it can be considered a cultural identifier. For example, Ritner states from an emic perspective: "*it is the viewpoint of the Egyptian practitioner, and not that of the comparative historian, which determines the significance of the rite. That the rite was of fundamental significance to the success of the Egyptian magic*" (2008, 68). Egyptian magic's emphasis on encirclement through the ritual use of the ouroboros was then naturally integrated

and culturally diffused to the combined art of Graeco-Egyptian magic. Consequentially, the symbol retained overt and subtle importance regarding protection, spiritual unity, and communication with daimons expressed as Graeco-Egyptian spell work, found within *The Greek Magical Papyri* (Skinner 2017, 71-88, 195-202, Betz 1996, 7, 16, 23, 74-75, 77, 107, 134-135, 145).

THE OUROBOROS AND THE DAIMON: SPELLWORK EQUATING TO SPIRITUAL UNITY

Ritual circumambulation associated with the ouroboros symbol that culturally diffused from the Egyptians to the Graeco-Egyptians as *the Hermes-Thoth concept*, formed a large portion of Graeco-Egyptian's magical ritual framework. It enhanced spiritual unity, protection, and communication with daimons while spell casting. This syncretic form of spirit communication was conveyed through an evolution of magical spells (Skinner 2017, 29, 71-74, 82-88, 195-206, Ritner 2008, 57-67, Betz 1996, 17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 145, 163, 172-175, 190-191, Fowden 1993, 22-30, Luck 2006, 216-217, Roblee 2018, 141-145). The Egyptian ouroboros symbol represented astral and spiritual unity, while the daimon represented virtually the same for the Greeks. This fusion of ritual elements during Greco-Egyptian magic's inception in the Egyptian city of Alexandria led to a syncretic concept of spiritual unity. The combination of these two ritual elements became a fundamental aspect of Graeco-Egyptian magic's ritual framework, which was central to the Hermes-Thoth concept (Skinner 2017, 54, Ritner 2008, 57-60, Betz 1996, 17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 145, 163, 172-175, 190-191, Fowden 1993, 25-30). The first known literary products of Graeco-Egyptian magic were the Demotic spells later found in refined form within *The Greek Magical Papyri*. The latter

more advanced spells represent the Graeco-Egyptian system's maturity. It is then only natural, that many of these spells emphasized spiritual unity and communication with daimons, in association with circumambulation. These spells in question, derived from *The Greek Magical Papyri* are identified as following: *Spell PGM II 64-183* is a greeting spell that calls for encirclement. *Spell PGM III 165-86* calls upon a high level daimon to grant the practitioner their prayer or wish, accomplished as a ritual offering as an ouroboros symbol drawn out in Myrrh ink, on a piece of papyrus. *Spell PGM IV 2006-2125*, invokes a lesser daimon, as an enslaved human spirit in this case, from a skull cup. The spell is written in a circle on a hide of an ass. A second variation of this spell was written on the skull in a circle. These rituals invocations and offerings were tasks given to the daimon with the hope of obtaining the desired person's affections. *Spell PGM IV 2125-39*, is a seal for restraining unsuitable skulls (an enslaved daimon-spirit) that was accomplished by packing the skull's mouth with earth, from the temple doors of Osiris and a grave of an untimely death. Thereafter, an iron ring is fashioned with intricate animal symbolism, with all ritual contents encircled. *Spell PGM V 304-69* calls for a detailed construction of a magical ring to be temporarily buried in a grave of one who had died an untimely death. In addition, two spells are then written, one in a circle and another surrounding the previous spell, to form a circle within a circle. *Spell PGM VII 579-90*, instructs one how to make a placatory that guards one from harmful daimons and associated illnesses during spell casting. The spell was written inside an ouroboros symbol with magical symbols encircling it. A different version of this spell was entitled "*instruction to heptagram and to which the god gives attention*". This spell calls upon the N.S.E.W directions to create a magical circle around the ritual space, accomplished through a series of vowels spoken to the four directions. The practitioner's ritual framework emphasized unity through circle symbolism with

daimon entities, as *Axis Mundi*. For instance, within the for mentioned spell the phrase “*For you are I and I you*” was used. This phrasing illustrates a unified centrality of the practitioner and the invoked daimon by means of ritual circumambulation (Betz 1999, 7, 15-16, 22-23, 73-75, 106-107, 134, 190-194). This powerful and lengthy spell clearly echoes the sub-text of *The Hermetica* as all things are interconnected and one with man, as the concept of spiritual unity (Freke and Gandy 1999, 35). This enduring Graeco-Egyptian work also emphasized circle symbolism and spiritual unity with the cosmos and man, on a higher level of mental vibration, understood as a heightened receptive mental-sensitivity (Freke and Grandy 1999, 35, Luck 2006, 216-217, 443-447). Luck concurs with this deduction as the ouroboros in ancient magic represented “*the unity of all forces and the process of the cosmos*” (2006, 216-217, 443-447). At this point it is important to note, the concept of close unity and encirclement with daimons to accomplish ritual objectives became standard magical procedure (Skinner 2017, 195-206).

Consequently, these magicians’ powers of cosmological unity often hinged upon their successful communication with a daimon to accomplish most ritual objectives, which often involved circumambulation (Betz 1996, 17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, 311). Skinner (2017) maintains that Graeco-Egyptian magicians probably did encircle themselves during spell casting which suggests a protective measurement beyond the provision of these magical amulets (79-88). Indeed, circle symbolism is consistently found within *The Greek Magical Papyri* and therefore would have been innately understood as a basic ritual necessity (Betz 1996, 7, 16, 23, 74-75, 77, 107, 134-135). Interpretively conveyed, the functional symbolism of the ouroboros and ritual encirclement also represented union with spirit as in daimon entities. Therefore, this applied logic on one level of thought may be further understood as an aspect of clairvoyance, and mediumship (Freke and Gandy 1999, 35, Guiley

1991, 358-360, Skinner 2017, 79-90, 195, Betz 1996, 7, 16, 22-23, 72-75, 77, 245, Luck 2006, 216-217, 443-447, Bletzer 1986, 112-114, 133, 386-387). As a result, the invoking of the upper and lower echelon of daimons often required the aid of circle symbolism. However, the invoking of upper level daimons were specifically directed towards select planets, constellations, and other astronomical bodies, which then transcended to earthly empowerments.

PLANETARY EMPOWERMENT AMONG THE GRAECO-EGYPTIANS

The Graeco-Egyptian system held the first five visible planets of Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, as well as the sun, moon and related constellations as ritual foci and sources of celestial daimons as invoked energies. In astronomical rituals, these planets were associated with specific gods and demi-gods as upper level daimons. These planets, at their most optimum times, were ritually connected through their representative entities and their perceived dwelling places. The higher-level arch daimons were considered assistants to these gods (Evans 1998, 39-43, Skinner 2017, 55-69, Ciruolo 1995, 279-293, Pachoumi 2017, 100-109). A few examples of how and why the true nature of these celestial bodies were invoked for their representative energies, are as follows. Venus, being the first morning and evening star, was invoked for aid in romantic relationships. At dawn, a ritual ceremony and prayer was undertaken to repair poor romantic relations by both men and women, but predominately by men (Ritner 1995, 23-24). Mars was invoked as an entity when conflict was the ritual theme. The sun's most prominent time for rituals was dawn, thus requiring the practitioner to face east, towards the rising sun. Sun rituals were also accomplished at noon and dusk, but dawn was a favored time. When the sun and moon were simultaneously visible, especially during a solar-lunar eclipse, a dual energy was available to accomplish more difficult tasks. This dual-open ended energy empowered one in

matters of life and death, as well as to rid one of plaguing spirits (Skinner 2017, 58, 68-70, Betz 1996, 124, Reiner 1995, 24, 109, 134-136). Many spells in such astronomical rituals were directed to specific gods and arch daimons at precise times, and exact astronomical alignments (Skinner 2017, 55-69, 122-127). For instance, spell casting had to be done at a specific hour, day and position of the sun or lunar cycle within a specific constellation, for a specific ritual objective to succeed. This was part of the basic ritual structure for many spells found within *The Greek Magical Papyri*. For example, in *Spell VII 284-99*, the orbit of the moon needed to be in a specific constellation when performing a specific magical task, to obtain union with the desired entity: “*in Virgo: anything is rendered obtainable, In Libra: Necromancy. In Scorpio: anything inflicting evil. In Sagittarius; an invocation or incantations/to the sun and moon. In Capricorn: say whatever you wish for best results. In Aquarius: for a love charm. Pisces: foreknowledge. In Aries: fire divination or love charm. In Taurus; incantation to a lamp. Gemini: spell for winning favor. In Cancer (making) phylacteries. Leo (making or using) rings or binding spells*” (Betz 1996, 124). One example of specific dates and times for an invocation or spell to meet a god (Apollo in one version) was cast during the 13th day on the 7th hour of a waxing moon. A full moon was required for bowl or vessel *skrying* that was one magical technique to obtain foresight and covert knowledge (Skinner 2017, 65-68). The moon and lunar cycles were also of comparable importance to the Holy Orion constellation as both were used for general astronomical invocations. The moon took precedence over sun rituals in Egyptian and Greek magic (Skinner 2017, 65-68, Evans 1998, 39-41, Ciruolo 1995, 279-293, Phillips 2015, 378-386). As a result, the moon was a major feature in Graeco-Egyptian spell casting.

SPELL CASTING WITH LUNAR CYCLES AND DAIMONS

For the Graeco-Egyptians, the moon's lunar phases were considered mystical gateways to a host of gods, daimons, and energies to be invoked and ritually conjured as night was a time when daimon-spirits were more communicative, especially with the aid of the moon (Reiner 1995, 133). This syncretic ritual theme was derived from the combination of Greek and Egyptian nocturnal magic. The moon as a ritual focus held a long magical tradition of witchcraft in Greek Thessaly, as being indigenously Greek. In Homer's *Odyssey* (Book II), Odysseus contacts dead relatives while being held captive by a witch named Circe. Regardless of the alleged location, this event exemplifies early Greek beliefs in witches and their practice of necromancy (Dimock 1911, 358-446). Witches of Thessaly were known to practice the occult art of drawing down the moon which was one dimension of invoking daimons (Phillips 2015, 378-386). Drawing down the moon meant to temporarily bring down daimons (astral energies) from sub-lunar regions where they dwelt or could pass through to the earth via air currents. In the Greek and Graeco-Egyptian system, it was the moon goddess Selene who presided over such rituals. This goddess would replicate herself as a functioning carbon copy to avoid magical enslavement by the magician (Ciraolo 2001, 279-293). The Graeco-Egyptian goddess Selene is a key figure worth noting for her transformative abilities. This moon goddess reappears much later among the Gnostics (Skinner 2017, 58-74, 120, Betz 1996, 28-29). The drawing down the moon to ritually communicate with daimons would have naturally created a receptive mental sensitivity in allowance for such a needed mind-set. This created mind-set is also comparable to spirit communication, mediumship, and clairvoyance (Luck 2006, 217, *Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 2-8, 56-60, Bletzer 1986, 112-115, 386-387, 500). The Greco-Egyptian system required precise lunar times to draw down and communicate with these entities. These exact times and

days for this ritual construction were Greek in origin. Yet, it was an Egyptian and Greek tradition to coordinate with the phases of the moon when spell casting, as both systems considered this the correct way to practice magic (Skinner 2017, 55-68). Night rituals were shorter in opportunity in comparison to sun rituals due to astronomical patterns and movements. Therefore, nocturnal rituals required precise timing and precision for success. As a result, the development of specific lunar hours for the invocation of entities and gods were hallmarks for specific ritual tasks. For instance, one ritual for meeting a god was conducted over the course of two weeks that started on a waxing moon, and potentially climaxed on a full moon, known as the full eye of Horus. The spell was to be repeated until the god communicated with the practitioner or when the full moon occurred, whichever came first (Skinner 2017, 58, 66-67). The notion of correct days to practice magic was designated by 12 segregated hours, which officially divided night and day rituals. This ritual formula was also Egyptian in origin. Further Egyptian influences upon Graeco-Egyptian spell work was the occasional strategy of using threatening commands over gods and daimons to obtain ritual objectives (Skinner 2017, 53, 55-59, 64, 126-127). As a result, Egyptian astronomical precision enhanced the assimilated concept of drawing down daimons nocturnally from astronomical realms. The combined ritual systems of Egyptian and Greek magic maintained syncretic ritual techniques while focusing upon the invocation of daimons (Skinner 2017, 53-57). The concept of lunar rituals, focusing upon communication with daimons was unique therefore established early within the western tradition (Phillips 2015, 378-386, Reiner 1995, 98, 133, Ciruolo 1995, 29, 285-286, 279-295, Betz 1996, 4, 64-65, 72-73). Consequentially, this syncretic assimilation of ritual conjuring to communicate with a higher power yields a cultural signature expressed as Graeco-Egyptian magic. This cultural characteristic can also be identified among later religious groups that express similar ritual

beliefs, as in symbolic unity with the concept of spirit (Ciraolo 1995, 279-293, 280, Jonas 1963, 41, 52-54, Skinner 2017, 53-54, 96-97, 344-355, Betz 1996, 4, 60, 64). Another example of ritual communication with gods and daimon-spirits is referred to by Skinner (2017) as lamp or bowl “*skrying*” (246-258).

LAMP AND BOWL SKRYING TO COMMUNICATE WITH GODS AND DAIMONS

The practice of bowl or lamp *skrying* was another method used by the Graeco-Egyptians for communicating with daimons that shared Greek and Egyptian origins. The Graeco-Egyptian method of *skrying* by bowl or lamp was a form of meditation justifiably comparable to self-hypnosis, or a self-induced trance to communicate with daimons. This altered state of consciousness was expected to yield foresight and knowledge through interpretive visions or dreams, perceived as a form of spirit communication. The technique of bowl or lamp *skrying* was one method to create a state of mind to gain covert knowledge through a higher level of mental vibration. This was believed to be one means for communicating with daimons as spirits and gods (Bletzer 1986, 112-115, 133, 205, Luck 2006, 210-217, Skinner 2017, 254-255, Ghalioungui 1973, 24-25). Skinner correctly maintains that *skrying* within *The Greek Magical Papyri* is divination, not magic. However, *Skrying* is associated with the evocation of spirits, daimons and gods within the western tradition. He also makes the point that this technique of communicating with daimons continued among early Christians, as spirit communication with daimons (Skinner 2017, 19, 38, 76). Thus, the origins of Graeco-Egyptian *skrying* are as follows. In the Greek tradition, the practitioner would gaze into a basin or tripod filled with olive oil or water until a vision or dream occurred for interpretation. This practice was derived from the renowned Greek visionary priestesses at Delphi who would gaze into a tripod basin

before giving advice to kings and commoners alike. The message itself was often given in the form of a riddle uttered by the priestess that in turn, was interpreted by her temple aide. At this point, the priestess was in an altered state of consciousness from inhaling a narcotic vapor. These prophesies were considered a form of mediumship as well as another way to communicate with daimons. This spirit-like communication was believed to be conveyed directly from the gods or arch-daimons (Skinner 2017, 76, Grosvenor 1961, 216-217, Luck 2006, 216-217). In comparison and contrast to the above, the Egyptian art of lamp *skrying* yielded similar results for communicating with the gods. Its method utilized virgin lamps instead of basin bowls as a ritual hypnotic symbol. Egyptian patients and pilgrims would accomplish their *skrying* at healing temples which were considered meeting places to “establish contact with the gods by means of magical formula”. At these temples a patient or pilgrim would engage in a ritual bath from water that had passed over statues of gods etched with magical spells, which lined their walkways. This enchanted water was funneled along the stone pathways and thereafter into respective baths, depending upon the spell and statue it came from. It was believed that the water retained the power of the spell and therefore was passed on to the bather. After one’s bath, one would then retire for a therapeutic dream known as incubation (Ghalioungui 1973, 24-25, Nunn 1996, 111, Cockitt and Rosalie 2010, 7). Ghalioungui notes, “*we know from the London–Leyden papyrus, that isolation, silence and virgin lamps were the means to put the patients into a state of receptivity*” as this suggests a form of hypnosis (1973, 24). This hypnotic state was no doubt induced by the lamp as it was the only cognitive stimulus within the chamber. The patient’s dream or vision was then interpreted by a resident priest at an on-site library where additional materials could be purchased (Ghalioungui 1973, 24-25, Thompson 1974, 51–54). Early forms of *skrying* can be found within *The Demotic Papyri* that predated *The Greek Magical Papyri*. In

the latter, one spell uses a virgin boy as an interpreter for *skrying*. The whole notion of physical-ritual purity was Egyptian in origin. It was believed by the practitioner that the gods would refuse any physically impure person in ritual as it caused these higher entities pain (Skinner 2017, 76-77). However, the Egyptians as well as the Greeks commonly believed that communicating with higher entities required a heightened, sensitive, or altered state of consciousness. In support of the above, Plutarch who was a Delphic priest for 30 years held the same opinion. He also believed the practitioner required a heightened state of mental awareness to succeed in communicating with daimons. This is correct and applicable for *skrying* and general spell work in the Graeco-Egyptian context (Luck 2006, 216-217, Bletzer 1986, 112-115, Skinner 2017, 254, Henderson 1936). As a result, *skrying* was only one of several techniques used for the practice of mediumship and clairvoyance found within the western tradition (Betz 1996, 62, Skinner 2017, 242-263, Luck 2006, 210-217, 443-472, *Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 2-8, 24, 56-60, Bletzer 1986, 102-115, 205, Guiley 1991, 108-113, 357-360).

It is unfortunate that our surviving knowledge on Graeco-Egyptian lamp *skrying* is limited. Therefore, one must draw upon *The Demotic Spells* and *The Greek Magical Papyri* to obtain a further understanding of this practice, through surviving remnants of ritual invocations such as the daimon BOEL. For instance, to *skry* by bowl for meeting a god was performed during the day, from sunrise to sunset. However, on another occasion this was done on the third hour of the day presumably after sunrise. This is also contradicted by instructing one to also meet a god (Apollo) when scrying on “*the 7th hour of the day, which begins 7 hours after sunrise at midday*”. There is no surviving explanation for this contradiction as the record is incomplete. There were also select days to invoke gods based upon their schedule or one’s ritual was doomed to fail (Skinner 2017, 58-62). One example of a daimon spirit that was invoked for spell work

for Graeco-Egyptian lamp or bowl *skrying*, was known as BOEL. This name reoccurs much later in similar magical practices. He was known as “*the companion of the flame*” and “*the first servant to the great god*”. His invocation repetitiously states: “*bring in BOEL*”, as well as the two phrases, “*TAGR TAT he of eternity*” and “*Beytsi o great god*”, followed again by “*bring in Boel*”, stated repetitiously. His invocation also implies a hypnotic rhythm in coordination with the flame. He was also considered a daimon and an assistant spirit (Skinner 2017, 253). BOEL as other remnants of Greco-Egyptian magic are believed to have survived after the magical systems collapse, which is further explored.

THE QUESTIONABLE CONTINUUM OF SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS

It is generally believed that Graeco-Egyptian magic did not survive past late antiquity and that western magic was predominately derived from Arabian, Jewish, and indigenous European sources. This view overlooks the continuing metamorphosis of the daimon entity in association with spiritual unity and circumambulation, as these ritual elements were assimilated into early Christianity. This thesis argues that the concept of the daimon did not disappear in late antiquity, but rather, was transformed into the concept of the Christian demon. Therefore, the Christian demon in this context, chronologically preceded Arabian and Jewish influences upon early Christianity. This thesis further asserts that the metamorphosis of this entity may be re-discovered by considering ritual elements from late antiquity to early Christianity, from a different perspective. Graeco-Egyptian magic and the concept of the daimon began to wane after 363 CE with the death of the last pagan emperor, Julian. In 391 CE, the last magical pagan library, the Serapeum, containing choice materials rescued from Alexandria’s great library fire, was looted and burned. An edict in 392 CE reclassified all the ancient gods and daimons as

malevolent forces. These occurrences, in conjunction with the torture and murder of the last head of the Neoplatonic school of magic in Alexandria Egypt in 415 CE, marked the official end of paganism (Skinner 2017, 30-31, Freke and Gandy 1999, xvii). It appears in late antiquity the practice of magic was relocated from closed cultic temples to private homes of practitioners. Luck asserts that magical concepts and practices were still secretly practiced after 1000 A.D. (Skinner 2017, 74, 2006, 457, 465). Consequentially, magic from the Graeco-Egyptian system was culturally absorbed and thus transcended into the European Middle Ages, to a greater or lesser degree. Moreover, during the first few centuries of early Christianity there were layman and priests alike still secretly practicing magic involving daimons (daemons). During this cultural transition, many people still believed in the power of the old pagan gods and daimons, but many did not hold them superior to Christianity. Despite the early Catholic church's assumptions that pagan religions had been suppressed, by this time termed deviant practices of witchcraft, nevertheless continued (Luck 2006, 457, 465). Magic never really disappeared as a practice as it went underground and transformed (Skinner, 217-218).

In contrast to the above, Kieckhefer (1990) gives us a traditional view of the earliest sources of magic post antiquity within the western tradition. He asserts that Arabian, Jewish, and indigenous European cultures were starting points for western occultism. This classical view is limited as it takes little account of cultural influences derived from preceding Graeco-Egyptian magic. There are other earlier influences within early Christianity's formation to consider. A chronology of cultural diffusion shows us that Kieckhefer has put the cart before the horse (1990, Skinner 2017, 83, Betz 1996, 17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 145, 163, 172-175, 190-191, Jonas 1963, 116-119, Brakke 2010, 15-25, Williams 1996, 9-11, 204, 260-261). For example, Kieckhefer discusses a rare book of magic from the European Middle Ages, known as, *The*

Magical Munich Handbook, to conclude that Arabian and Jewish influences were primarily responsible for the text. This text showed unusual proficiency in Latin that was highly restricted in instruction during the era of its creation. As a result, Kieckhefer suspects a Catholic clergyman as the author of this magical handbook (Kieckhefer 1990, 6). His position seems reasonable since many early Christian fathers had known associations with magic, dabbled with it, and had access to magical texts before their destruction (Skinner 2017, 30-31, 41, Betz 1996, xlii). However, Kieckhefer's interpretation of the text fails to make the connection that the invoked demons entering the magical circles were once pagan gods and daimons, transformed into a Christian context (Skinner 2017, 54). These magical circles found within the text in question are attributed to an Arabian-pre-Islamic influence. In fact, pre-Islamic Arabians utilized magical circles to keep invoked entities at a distance. Yet, the text states that the demons were expected to enter these magical circles with no objection from the author-practitioner. According to Kieckhefer, the admission of the demons in close quarters by the practitioner was explained as demonology, as in devil worship. However, this contradicts traditional pre-Islamic-Arabian use of magical circles. These same circles were implemented to protect oneself against danger from conjured entities by keeping them outside of magical circles. In comparison, in the Graeco-Egyptian system the ouroboros symbol, circumambulation in spell work, and at times a protective amulet allowed them union, and communication with daimons at close quarters. One should note that this is the same entity that was later termed the demon. Thus, daimons were traditionally communicated with by magicians in intimate proximity, as were the demons in *The Magical Munich Handbook*. Skinner (2017) maintains that the Graeco-Egyptian ritual-practice of magical encirclement was a parallel development to pre-Islamic magical circles. He goes on to assert that Graeco-Egyptian magicians probably did encircle themselves in magical rituals

(2017, 82-83). This would further explain Kieckhefer 1990's views as an understandable misinterpretation (Skinner 2017, 80-83, 195-202, Betz 1996, 17, 64-65, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, Luck 2006, 210-2017, 443-447). Daimons were traditionally viewed as potentially dangerous entities but not necessarily evil, as in contrast to orthodox Christian views of demons, as devil worship. All this is consistent with a pagan convert's perspective towards an early Christian assimilation. Therefore, these entities within *The Magical Munich Handbook* were likely to have been, in part, a cultural-carry over from the Graeco-Egyptian system (Skinner 2017, 79-83). The transformation of spiritual traditions from late antiquity through early Christianity would have been a slow and shadowy process of cultural diffusion. A re-examination of how the daimon-spirit, and syncretic elements of Graeco-Egyptian magic had contributed to Arabian and Jewish magic demands a detailed discussion. This will prepare us for a more objective consideration of the Gnostic concept of spirit, and in turn its influence upon orthodox Catholicism. Let us start by tracing surviving remnants of the occult art of *skying* before proceeding to examine syncretic elements of Graeco-Egyptian magic, found in the Arabian and Jewish traditions.

SHADOWS OF DOUBT AND CULTURAL DIFFUSION

Further examples of the probable survival of the concept of daimons in the European Middle Ages may be linked to the ancient method of *skrying* (Kieckhefer 1990, 151, Skinner 2017, 38, 61, 76). For example, the invocation of a daimon named BOEL used for Skrying reappears much later with a magician named Jean Michael Menuisier who learned magic, in Toledo Spain in 1623, when he bought an antique veil in Vienna. The veil contained a small scroll with the name of a helping spirit named BOEL, which he used to serve his clients (Skinner

2017, 253). This of course is the same spirit's name used for *skrying* within *The Greek Magical Papyri*. This is a minor but clear example of the probability that Graeco-Egyptian magic and the daimon did not completely disappear after its official rejection, and negative assimilation to Christianity (Betz 1996, Troeltsch 1960, 104-107, Chin and Vidas 2015, 277, Skinner 2017, 30-31). As a result, the survival and metamorphosis of magic or the daimon did not start in the European Middle Ages. This cultural transition occurred at some point from late antiquity to early Christianity. For instance, the early Christian Gnostics had retained examples of entities resembling inverted daimons within their belief system. These examples are addressed later. At this point, we must acknowledge other examples of cultural diffusion. Graeco-Egyptian magicians fled to Arabia from early Christian persecutions where they were allowed to continue to practice their occult arts (Freke and Grandy 1993, xvii-xviii, Skinner 2017, 30-31).

It is not widely known or acknowledged that Graeco-Egyptian magicians continued to practice magic in Asia Minor (i.e. Turkey) after their official disappearance, which would have naturally included the surviving concept of the daimon (Freke and Grandy 1993, xvii-xviii, Skinner 2017, 31). The loss of the Alexandrian-Egyptian base for Graeco-Egyptian magicians, to early Christians and later Islam, resulted in many Greco-Egyptian magicians taking refuge in Asia Minor. The Byzantine ruler Heraclitus had shown great favoritism and hospitality towards these magicians, who migrated to this geography in waves, before and during the years 610-641 CE. He gave them a standing invitation and high court appointment that enabled them to continue their occult arts (Skinner 2017, 31). These cultural elements would then have naturally recirculated synchronically back to medieval Europe through Arabian magic, to an unknown degree (Skinner 2017, 30-31, Freke and Gandy 1999, xvii-xviii). This point then casts further doubt upon the purity of the cultural origins of Arabian magic arriving in Europe during the later

Middle Ages. This explanation also offers another logical explanation why demons were allowed to enter magical circles within *The Magical Munich Handbook*. It also appears that it was Graeco-Egyptian magic that influenced Jewish magic in the first place. Therefore, to assert that Jewish magic influenced occult arts in the Middle Ages, is to equally assert the survival of proceeding fundamental elements of Egyptian, and Graeco-Egyptian magic. Furthermore, the Graeco-Egyptian system concerning magical circles predated any later Arabian cultural diffusion within the western tradition. For instance, ritual elements of the daimon-spirit and the ouroboros symbol had other direct, and lasting influences upon western magic. The relevance of the Gnostic understanding of the transformed daimon is one example (Skinner 2017, 37-39, 47, Jonas 1963, 52-54). It is Jewish magic and the Gnostics thereafter that we must now consider.

THE ORIGIN AND INFLUENCE OF JEWISH MAGIC AMONG THE GRAECO-EGYPTIANS AND GNOSTICS

To assess the extent of Jewish magic as a potential influence upon the Gnostics and other early competing Christian groups, we must understand to what extent Egyptian and Graeco-Egyptian magic had upon Jewish magic. The Jews certainly made contributions to Graeco-Egyptian magic but did not create its techniques or foundational concepts, such as spiritual unity and the daimon (Skinner 2017, 37-39, 47, Luck 2006, 57). Jewish magic should not be viewed as the original source of all western magic nor as the Gnostic's primary benefactor (Troelstch 1960, 104-105, 110, Chin and Vidas 2015, 277). In addition, the Jewish concept of the soul was not comparable in understanding to the daimon entity in any manner. The Jewish soul resembled a shadow of its former living self that dwelt in a bleak afterlife where it remained inactive (Skinner 2017, 30, 36-39, 47, Smith 2007, xxiv). In contrast, the Graeco-Egyptian daimon-spirit

was complex, interactive in human affairs, ongoing in its cultural evolution, and maintained an emphasis as a liaison for spiritual unity with a higher power. Therefore, any Jewish influence of magic or the assimilated daimon upon the later Gnostics would have been based upon an Egyptian, and Graeco-Egyptian system. For instance, according to *The Talmud* confirmed by Skinner (2017) and Bohak (2011), Jewish magic was originally derived from ancient Egypt. In addition, Bohak further confirms the Jews adopted the ouroboros symbol (circumambulation) and various magical spells from Graeco-Egyptian magicians to an unknown degree (2011, 274, 276, 281-285). It is further asserted by Skinner and other scholars, this symbol's chronology in magical evolution concerning spiritual unity, would have been Egyptian or Graeco-Egyptian in origin, not Jewish. He concludes Jewish magic had little to no influence upon *Graeco-Egyptian magical techniques* (2017, 37, 47, Ritner 2008, 57-60). Skinner (2017) concurs with Bohak who states: "that there was no tradition at all (and therefore no surviving documents) of Jewish scribal magic, apart from general esoteric hymns, before the 3rd century CE" (Skinner 2017, 37, Bohak 2011, 70-142). In comparison, *The Greek Magical Papyri* (the Graeco-Egyptian system) represents a fully mature syncretic stage of magic involving the concept of spiritual unity, spanning from the 1st– 5th century CE. *The Demotic Texts* and the individual Egyptian and Greek systems are far older still (Skinner 2017, 29, 35-39, 44-45, Betz 1996, xlii). However, Jewish and Graeco-Egyptian magical systems did have associations and cultural exchanges. For example, the Jews contributed various points of diction and select names of angels to *The Greek Magical Papyri* (Skinner 2017, 47). Indeed, some of these angels may have been Babylonian in origin. The Jews also provided *The Old Testament* to the early Christians. But again, they did not contribute a methodology or basis of magical techniques such as the invocation of daimons and circumambulation found within the Graeco-Egyptian system. Consequently, this is one

reason why the Jews were unlikely to be the source or origin of similar entities, and concepts comparable to the daimon and the ouroboros symbol. Moreover, there is no evidence that the Jews contributed the ouroboros to any culture after appropriating it from the Graeco-Egyptians (Betz 1996, xlii, 17, 64-65, 71-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 145, 163, 172-175, 190-191, Ritner 2008, 57-63, Skinner 2017, 30, 35-40, 47, 71-74, Bohak 2011, 274, 276, 281-285, Troeltsch 1960, 104-107, 110, Smith 2007, xxiv-xxv, Jonas 1963, 116-119, Williams 1996, 15-25, 204, Luck 2006, 443-445). The Gnostics also adopted and transformed the ouroboros symbol that probably represented the acquisition of esoteric knowledge, in one context (Jonas 1963, 116-119, Skinner 2017, 89). As a result, the ouroboros symbol and the daimon entity in cultural metamorphosis are diachronically found in an ongoing, and expansive context representing spiritual unity among the Gnostics (Bohak 2011, 274, 276, 281-285, Betz 1996, xlii, 17, 64-65, 71-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 145, 163, 172-175, 190-191, 311, Ritner 2008, 57-63, Skinner 2017, 89, 54, 155-156, 195-201, Bonner 1950, 1-394, Jonas 1963, 116-119, Fowden 1993, 151, 153, Roblee 2018, 141-145, Luck 2006, 443-445).

The continued influence of spiritual unity and the inverted ouroboros symbol among the later Gnostics could not have been an indigenous development, as their founders were users but not creators of magic, while they possessed elements of the supernatural within their belief system (Skinner 2017, 89, Jonas 1963, xvi, 34, 36, Guiley 1991, 237-238). The Gnostics also maintained a different concept of spirit in comparison to orthodox Christianity (Williams, 1996, 9-11, Brakke 2010, 15-25, Troeltsch 1960, 104-107, 110). At this point, we must consider the potential influences of Judaism and the source for 4th-century Christian hermits who practiced meditation in the Egyptian deserts for spiritual unity with God (Guiley 1991, 357). Furthermore, Graeco-Egyptian converts would have possessed this knowledge of meditative techniques in one

form or another, as daimons were reached through a higher state of mental receptiveness, as in mediation (Luck 2006, 210-217, 443-447, Skinner 2017, 89). This avenue of inquiry is warranted, as Williams 1996 hints at the notion that 4th-century Christians were a key to reinterpreting Gnosticism (261-262). We must further consider a Jewish influence of spiritual unity upon early Christianity.

FROM PHILO TO THE Gnostics, MEDITATION AND SPIRIT AMONG CHRISTIAN HERMITS

Jewish contributions to the concept of uniting with spirit in comparison to invoking and communicating with daimons at any stage of their existence and metamorphosis, would have been filtered through a preceding Graeco-Egyptian source, thus revealing a Hermetic-Christian synthesis of beliefs as its ultimate product. We must also consider evidence that the later Gnostics culturally absorbed ritual elements from the Graeco-Egyptian system with Christ as a liaison, which appears to be linked to 4th-century Christian hermits who practiced meditative techniques for union with spirit and God, possibly learned through the processes of cultural diffusion (Smith 2007 xvii, Troeltsch 1960, 104-107, 110, 114, Chin and Vidas 2015, 277, Betz 1996, xlii, 64-65, 72-73, Skinner 2017, 89, 155-156, Jonas 1963, 34, 36, 54-55, 108-109, 116-117, 131, Fowden 1993, 142-153, Roblee 2018, 141-143, Guiley 1991, 357, Freke and Gandy 1993, xxx, 35). The Jewish philosopher Philo was inspired by Hermetic Platonism in first century Alexandria to reinterpret his faith as a Jew. It is said Philo reexamined “*stories from the book of Moses using Platonic categories, including soul, (and) spirit*” (Smith 2007, xxix). Smith (2007) also asserts that Philo’s reinterpretations of the human spirit or soul went on to influence early Christians. He also believes this aided early Christians to find deeper meanings in their

literature (Smith 2007, xxix). However, Philo's source of inspiration does not predate the concept of unification with the daimon-spirit, as it was based upon it in a later, and broader manner. Furthermore, Philo did not create this concept as he was inspired by a Hermetic-Graeco-Egyptian source that empathized spiritual unity with daimons. The ritual centrality of spiritual unity with daimons as former human spirits and gods, used as ritual liaisons, was still a mainstream religious concept before and during 1st-century Alexandria (Luck 2006, 207-281). This ancient city was a cultural blending pot of many cultures, beliefs, and the birthplace of Graeco-Egyptian magic (Fowden 1993, 1-30, Betz 1996, xlii, Ciruolo 1995, 279-293, Smith 1997, xvi-xvii, Pachoumi 2017, 100-109, Mumford 2012, 14-23, Skinner 2017, 29, Luck 2006, 16). Pagans who converted to Christian-Gnosticism would have accepted spiritual unity with Christ, through a former pagan perspective (Skinner 2017, 30-31, 41-42, 96-97, Troeltsch 1960, 104-107, 110, 114-117, 150, Chin and Vidas 2015, 277, Pachoumi 2017, 100-109, Williams, 1996, 9-11, 247, Brakke 2010, 15-25, Jonas 1963, 109).

In consideration of this additional information above, we may now ask where Christian monks in the Egyptian deserts learned their mediative techniques synonymous, with a higher level of mental vibration, bearing in mind that such a technique echoes communication with daimons. Williams (1996) in *Rethinking Gnosticism* felt the Gnostics retained recycled elements of paganism within their literature, as he states: "*everything, it seems to me, points to fourth century Christian monks*", although he expressed no further opinion (247, 261). Guiley (1991) speculates that meditative techniques practiced among early Christian hermits for asceticism and purification to unite with God, probably learned them from an eastern influence or on their own. Guiley never considers the fundamental concept of communicating with daimons as a direct cultural predecessor that was culturally absorbed and transformed within early Christianity

(Troeltsch 1960, 104-107, 110, Chin and Vidas 2015, 277). Guiley also implies that such a process of purification to unite with God was an early Catholic tradition that correlates with repetitious prayers done in Mantras. Indeed, repetition in rituals is a common cross-cultural occurrence, and therefore does not constitute a correlation with another specific culture. In addition, he never acknowledges the practice of spiritual purification through a meditative mind set also found among the Gnostics (Guiley 1991, 357, Jonas 1963, 156-167). The probable source for this cultural diffusion is likely to have come from pagan converts which would have naturally provided a cultural model for communicating with entities. For example, as practiced among Christian hermits, meditation is the hall mark of mediumship, spirit communication, and clairvoyance which is a fundamental basis for communicating with daimons (Betz 1996, 17, 62, 72-75, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 145, 163, 172-175, 190-191, Luck 2006, 210-217, Bletzer 1986, 112-115, 133, 386-387, *Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 2-8, 24, 56-60, Guiley 1991, 357). This correlation can be further revealed through the processes of elimination and backed by archeological evidence. The Graeco-Egyptian ouroboros symbol is one ongoing example in support of this assertion (Skinner 2017, 89, 155-156, Bonner 1950, 1-394, Jonas 1963, 116-119, Roblee 2018, 141-145). The source for early Christian meditation used for spiritual unity may be revealed through the process of eliminating Asiatic candidates, as suggested by Guiley (1991, 357). Thereafter, a brief discussion of the archaeological evidence that supports the idea of cultural diffusion from pagan-Christian converts is warranted.

The Graeco-Egyptian daimon and its associated ouroboros symbol represented spiritual unity achieved through a higher level of mental vibration, synonymous with the product of mediation, which is the most likely candidate as an influence for early 4th century Christian Hermit's, learned meditative practices. At this point the western tradition already possessed

longstanding techniques for obtaining a higher level of mental vibration for spiritual unity, and communication with the human soul as with daimon-spirits, and thereafter Jesus Christ found within *The New Testament* (Betz 1996, 17, 64-65, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, Luck 2006, 78-84, 210-217, *Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 56-60). In further support of this view, we can eliminate any Asiatic contributions of meditative techniques used by Christian hermits in 4th-century Egypt. The Buddhists have never believed in the concept of the soul, also termed spirit among the Christians, that is comparable to the preceding idea of daimon-spirits. As a result, we may discount Buddhism as a cultural influence for early meditative Christian techniques, to achieve spiritual unity with man's soul and God. In addition, there is no historical, archaeological, or literary evidence to support a case of cultural diffusion, for meditative techniques, to have culturally diffused from Buddhism to early Christianity (Betz 1996, 64-65, 72-75, Smith 2007, xxxii). There is also no historical, archaeological, or literary evidence to support any timely Hindu influence either. The chronological dates alone do not support the theory of any such eastern culture, in a timely manner for such cultural diffusion to have taken place (Skinner 2017, Smith 2007, Guiley 1991, 357). East Indian and Tibetan religions may have made themselves known in late-medieval Europe but not to early Christians before or during late antiquity (Smith 2007, xxxvii, Betz 1996, Guiley 1991, 357). Regardless, when such Asiatic religions did arrive in Europe, they would have been confronted by a pre-existing and well-entrenched tradition of spirit communication, already in the process of cultural transformation. At this point, we must echo Plutarch and Socrates' statements about reaching daimons on a higher cognitive level as a ritual pre-requisite (Skinner 2017, 54, Luck 2006, 216-217).

During early Christianity conversion was neither spontaneous nor always initially complete. Pagans converting to early Christianity would have naturally assimilated their views of union with spirit to similar Christian thoughts that are exemplified through historical, and archeological evidence. For example, historical letters reveal that there were still practicing Graeco-Egyptian priests belonging to the cult of Hermes during the 4th-century, traveling to meet at Rome via Alexandria (Fowden 1993, 175-176). Archeological evidence indicates the Christian-Gnostic system reflects elements of paganism that were assimilated during their early formation through syncretism (Jonas 1963, xvi, 34, 36, 108-109, 116-119, Williams 1996, 9-11, 247, 261-262, Brakke 2010, 15-25, Fowden 1993, 173-176, Guiley 1991, 237-238). This evidence illustrates the merging of Christian and pagan beliefs for the common goal of spiritual unity. One example of an amulet contained an engraving of a tripod used for *skrying* while an archer combated snakes. This symbolism conveys the struggle for knowledge that was traditionally acquired through a mediative state of mind. Yet another amulet possessed by early Christians, illustrates a pagan ouroboros symbol being used as a shield, held by a figure with serpent legs, known as the Abraxas-Chnubis. Since the serpent legs were a portion of the amulet, that was worn as a protective measurement, further conveys a Greco-Egyptian origin (Betz 1996, 17, 64-65, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, Skinner 2017, 74, 89, 155-156). In addition, one such version of these amulets contained a seal of Jesus Christ. This archeological evidence is distinct and illustrative of an ongoing record of a syncretic ritual pattern of spiritual unity, which supports a related Hermetic-Christian transition (Skinner 2017, 74, 89, 155-156, Bonner 1950, 1-394). The merging of pagan and Christian beliefs also leaves us a unique cultural signature for a continued practice of meditative-spiritual union transcending from daimons to God. Considering this comparison and contrast of evidence, a

theory of other eastern influences for meditative techniques practiced among 4th-century Christian hermits now seems unlikely. Consequentially, such meditative techniques among early Christians were likely to have been obtained from a Graeco-Egyptian origin, or as a lesser possibility from self-discovery. The above Hermetic-Christian amulets are just one of several ongoing examples that suggest how Graeco-Egyptian influences were absorbed by early Christianity, through the shared concept of spiritual unity (Fowden 1993, 75-91, Roblee 2018, 141-145). As a result, it is the Gnostics we must now examine to further reveal inspired Graeco-Egyptian carry overs of spiritual unity within early Christianity. A further understanding of the influence of pagan beliefs within Gnosticism is revealed through one of their founders Simon Magus. The overall evidence indicates his knowledge of magic, in combination with early Christian thought, helped create Gnostic fundamentals. Gnosticism as a syncretic system of beliefs also furthers our understanding of the continuance of spiritual unity derived from Graeco-Egyptian beliefs.

THE GNOSTICS

In late antiquity the survival and transformation of the daimon-spirit in various forms can be traced to the alleged founder of Gnosticism Simon Magus, through select sub-categories of former daimons such as Selene, Sophia, and Aeons found within Gnostic cosmology resembling former daimons with reversed roles. Christian Gnosticism also integrated and inverted former pagan beliefs through astronomical values, the ouroboros symbol, and literature with sub-textual pagan themes. The inverted daimon in early-orthodox Christianity was perceived as purely malevolent. The Gnostics were less absolute in their assimilation of daimons. They were split into positive and negative cosmological roles. Christ's role in Gnostic cosmology served as a

liaison for union with God, and aid for bypassing Aeon entities that acted as earthly suppressors, which appears to be defeated and assimilated pagan beliefs. In short, Jesus Christ's role was seen as offering resolution in ideological conflict by acting as a pivotal lesion for resolution, between old pagan gods and Christianity, reflected through a cosmological relationship. In contrast, the orthodox Christians only sought to purge the former daimon entity altogether, characterizing its simplicity as a possessing demonic entity, while focusing their full attention on Jesus Christ. However, it is Simon Magus that is the key to initially understanding Gnosticism.

SIMON MAGUS

A re-examination of Simon Magus as the alleged primary founder of Gnosticism reveals that he influenced the movements early fundamental thinking by combining magic and early Christian beliefs. This was achieved through accepting baptism by means of *The Holy Spirit* which influenced the later formation of Gnosticism. Soon after the death of Jesus Christ, the magician Simon Magus held a prominent reputation among his native Samaritans as a man of supernatural power. After encountering Christ's apostles, he continued to reinforce his reputation through his knowledge of magic. He was also commonly known as a magician, showman, healer, and wise counselor. Unlike the apostles, he as any magician charged a fee for his services (Klauck 2003, 15, Jonas 1963, 110). It is further implied Simon may also have been the head of an influential school of magic. Nevertheless, it is generally held that Gnosticism's inception was influenced by the early disciples of Simon Magus (Brakke 2010, 2, 20, 36, Klauck 2003, 16). There are other alleged Gnostic founders, but their potential contributions are not relevant to this thesis, and therefore are not addressed (Papandrea, 2012, 231). Regardless, all Gnostic lineages were at odds with orthodox Christianity. Therefore, Gnosticism was naturally

labeled a perversion of Christ's message and thereafter deemed heretical within orthodox groups, and Catholicism. This type of slander was normal among competing groups for converts, which no doubt left us a somewhat prejudicial record of Simon, and the Gnostics (Klauck 2003, 16-17). When the apostle Philip met Simon at Samaria and preached about Christ and *The Holy Spirit*, he offered Simon baptism. In turn, Simon offered to pay for his baptism as any magician would have done (Brakke 2010, 2). Simon's partaking of a Christian baptism, his quick conversion to Christianity, and his continued practice of magic was interpreted as an obvious contradiction. For example, Simon's source of magic allegedly came from a self-professed source of personal power while incorporating Jesus Christ, and *The Holy Spirit* to his magical arsenal. As a result, early orthodox Christians termed him the prototype of hypocrisy (Klauck 2003, 18). From an orthodox perspective of conversion, this event of baptism between Philip and Simon was interpreted as Simon's new faith simply not being strong enough. However, this paper interprets Simon's actions differently. Simon offered to pay for his baptism as any magician would have done in acquiring a new spell. Therefore, his later statements of possessing the incarnation, embodiment, and power of Christ would then be consistent to his earlier established character. One would surmise his baptism was motivated to further empower himself and maintain his established following. This would also have been a logical course of action for any magician acting in a strategic manner. From a pagan convert's perspective, his actions were syncretic in nature. This strategy appears to have been implemented later in Rome to unsuccessfully compete against the Apostle Peter (Klauck 2003, 17-23, Jonas 1963, 103, 107-111). As a result, Simon was an early competing Christian-pagan magician who combined elements of magic with early Christian beliefs. Further details concerning Simon's knowledge of magical practices and beliefs reveal pagan carryovers to early developing Gnosticism, as explored below.

SIMON AND HELENA AS PAGAN-CHRISTIAN GODS

A further reinterpretation of the personal history of Simon Magus indicates that he retained, and probably passed on elements of Graeco-Egyptian magic to the early Gnostic movement, by exhibiting knowledge of nocturnal occult practices found within *The Greek Magical Papyri*, specifically concerning the moon goddess Selene. Simon's knowledge of magic can be revealed through his concubine Helena, a prostitute liberated from a brothel in Tyre, also referenced as Selene the Graeco-Egyptian moon goddess. According to Simon his Helena became synonymous with the goddess Selene in meaning, therefore retaining her magical attributes (Jonas 1963, 103-104). In addition, the goddess Selene also become magically and cosmologically interchangeable in meaning with the goddess Sophia. This was in part, due to Selene's true and secret magical name being that of Sophia, as the two goddesses were interchangeable for this reason alone (Jonas 1863, 108-109). As an Egyptian and Graeco-Egyptian magical practice, a god or goddesses' true and secret name gave the practitioner access to their *spiritual assistant* (Ciraolo 2001, 281). This covert knowledge in turn gave them the ability to summon and control the invoked god or goddess. The origin of this magical technique was an Egyptian carryover to the Graeco-Egyptian system for invoking daimons (Skinner 2017, 33, Ciraolo 2001, 281). This resulted in Sophia being found within Gnostic cosmology as well as associated with Aeon entities-resembling former daimons. For example, Jonas states: "*Simons Helena was also called Selene (moon), which suggests the mythological derivation of the figure from the ancient moon goddess. The number of Simon magus's thirty disciples also mentioned in the recognitions likewise suggests a lunar origin. This feature as we shall see has persisted into the pleroma speculation of the Valentinians, where the Sophia and her consort are the last two of the Thirty Aeons*" (1963, 108-109). Simon's Helena being the incarnation of Selene the moon

goddess, a high level daimon, must be chronologically addressed first. The goddess Selene also possessed an interchangeable meaning with the superior god Helios during invocations found within *The Greek Magical Papyri*. This allowed her to take on “*all forms*” (Pachoumi 2017, 52-54, 71). This additional information expands the Gnostic Sophia in her ultimate meaning. The accumulative evidence indicates these flexible pagan entities later received inverted Christian roles among the Gnostics, with their syncretic fusion of beliefs (Ciraolo 2001, 283-286, Betz 1996, 7, 72-73, Pachoumi 2017, 52-56, 60-61, 71, 100-109, Troeltsch 1960, 104-107, Jonas 1963, 34, 36, 52-56, 60-61, 71, 107-111, Williams, 1996, 9-11, 247). The invocation of Selene as a lunar entity revolved around the phases of the moon and other astronomical values. One such invocation involving Helios and the cycles of the moon (Selene) started a week before a full moon. The spell would climax when the invoked deity made its communication, or until a full moon appeared known as the full eye of Horus, whichever came first (Skinner 2017, 65-67). The lunar cycles of the waning and waxing of the moon during pagan-invocations of Selene also represented her rape and recovery (Skinner 2017, 65-67, Jonas 1963, 108-109). Considering Simon’s Helena was liberated from a brothel further corroborates Simon’s knowledge on Greco-Egyptian magic, and how and why he equated her to the daimon goddess Selene. This information concerning Selene as Sophia, reappears later in Gnostic cosmology with the integration of other pagan, and Christian beliefs (Jonas 1963, 104, 107-109, 185, Pachoumi 2017, 52-56, 60-61, 71, 100-109). The evidence indicates that the merging of pagan and Gnostic practices originated from the daimon-spirit and planetary gods, as they were denied, altered, recycled, and thereafter assimilated into Gnosticism.

The key figures involving cultural diffusion that resulted in Gnostic cosmology were Simon Magus and his consort Helena, the goddesses Selene-Sophia, and Jesus Christ. According

to Simon, his Helena being the incarnation of Selene the moon goddess, allowed her to assimilate the goddess's transformative attributes, as the ability to take on all forms. In turn, Simon being her consort was also entitled to subsume such abilities. Indeed, Simon later professed to be the embodiment of Jesus Christ and *The Holy Spirit*. Based upon this association, Simon further asserted he was able to lead worthy souls out of earthly servitude (Jonas 1963, 108-109). This enabled him to bypass the earthly angels and Aeons (aeons) who were viewed as earthly suppressors. This same scenario appears later in Gnostic cosmology as a reoccurring theme (Schmidt 1978, xv-xvii, Jonas 1963, 131, 179-185, 204-205, Williams 1996, 9-11). As a result, Simon and Helena, as interchangeable consorts, are said to be linked with the Gnostic cosmological figure of Sophia through her associated name of Selene; the two being interchangeable. Sophia in the Gnostic context existed on two cosmological levels, stemming from her rape and recovery, and thereafter her purification within the Christian trinity (Schmidt 1978, Jonas 1963, 107-109, 179-185, Pachoumi 2017, 71). Perhaps most importantly, Sophia in Gnostic cosmology also gave birth to the lower earthly God of wisdom, as well as assimilating herself with the last 2 out of 30 Gnostic Aeons *paired with Jesus*. It appears that this lower earthly "God" was no doubt a former pagan god based upon known pagan convert's influences. To the contrary, Williams 1996, asserted the origin of the Gnostic's lower creator god may have been derived from *The Old Testament*, while offering no evidence of cultural diffusion. However, the overall evidence on the matter, favors a Greco-Egyptian god, for a Gnostic prototype for their lower earthly god. Regardless, these select points are obviously key cultural intersections resulting in syncretism (9-15, Jonas 1963, 181, 185, Pachoumi 2017, 52-56). These fundamental concepts are discussed further at length under the Gnostic cosmological section of this thesis (Jonas 1963, 52-54, 107-109, 179-185, Williams 1996, 9-11). At this point, it is the

concept of Selene transforming from a pagan daimon-(Aion) to a Gnostic Aeon that warrants further consideration.

WHY THE BLENDING OF BELIEFS? A TRANSITION OF CONCEPTS

The transition of pagan to Gnostic beliefs and entities appears to have merged at some cultural intersection that expresses a conflict and subsequent resolution within Gnostic cosmology and literature. This resolution conveys a complex relationship between former pagan and Gnostic gods, that were facilitated through the Graeco-Egyptian moon goddess Selene, synonymously known as the Gnostic Sophia. In addition, the superior daimon Aion also possessed transformative and adaptive abilities. Sophia was one of an echelon of Gnostic entities that resembled a former daimon privileged with a transformative relationship with the Gnostic Jesus, and *The Holy Spirit*. This syncretic relationship resulted in shared attributes, subsumed and overlapping roles, that no doubt aided the pagan converts' transition to Gnosticism, through the continued concept of spiritual unity (Pachoumi 2017, 52-54, 56, 60-61, 71, 100-109, Jonas 1963, 34, 36, 53-54, 108-111, 179-185, 199-205). In paganism, Helios served as the head of the cosmos who presided over sub-lunar entities. Therefore, he retained interchangeable rights and roles with Selene the moon goddess, Heke the god of magic, and the alleged superior daimon-Aion who also had rare transformative abilities (Pachoumi, 2017, 103, 107). In turn, the moon goddess Selene as a shape changer and leader of the night traditionally held sway over an echelon of lesser daimons in the Egyptian and Graeco-Egyptian context (Pachoumi 2017, 52). As Selene's true magical name equates to Sophia, it is Sophia's multiple assimilated roles as a magical shape-changer that allowed her to easily transcend into Gnostic cosmology. She became directly associated with Aeons, specifically the last 2 out of 30 in

Gnostic cosmology paired with Jesus and *the Holy Spirit* (Williams 1996, 15, Jonas 1963, 181, 184-185). Aion in this context also lent itself as a synonymous creator and master of the cosmos with Selene (Pachoumi 2017, 52, 103, 107). Consequentially all these associated deities, pagan and Christian, were linked with each other in Gnosticism. It then appears likely that these deities were formed through the shared concept of “*the one as the many*”, as a ritual theme of spiritual unity (Pachoumi, 2017, 60-61, 64, 67, 103, 107, Fowden, 1993, 150-153). This admixture of early pagan-Gnostic beliefs appears to have been assimilated within Gnosticism, given that: “*the Gnostic Jesus as a likeness with multiple (said) forms*” was a shape-changer who went on to “*create unity out of apparent diversity*” and fulfilled the role of “*the one and the many*”, as promised in Gnostic literature (Pachoumi, 2017, 60-61). These attributes of the Gnostic Jesus are reflective of the thematic meaning of the Graeco-Egyptian literary work *The Hermetica*. This literary work was known to be read by the Gnostics thus a common theme arises concerning spiritual unification with all things (Freke and Gandy 1999, xxx, 35). This cultural assimilation also resulted in a shadowy process of the pagan gods Helios, Selene, Sophia, and other daimons that became inverted earthly-evil suppressors, or liaisons within Gnostic cosmology (Pachoumi 2017, 50, 52-54, 56, 60-61, 71, 100-109, Williams, 1996, 9-15, Jonas 1963, 51-54, 131, Chin and Vidas 2015, 277, Troeltsch 1960, 104-107, 110). The argument will now turn to the relationship between the Graeco-Egyptian Aion and the term Aeon in Gnostic literature.

THE PAGAN DAIMON-AIONS TO GNOSTIC AEONS

Gnosticism as a syncretic system of beliefs can be further comprehended by examining the pagan daimon beyond its transformed orthodox state by focusing upon the Gnostic system’s view of the transformed daimon. The Gnostic view of the metamorphosis of the daimon to the

demon can be clearly discovered in its transformation from the Graeco-Egyptian Aion-daimon in relationship to the Gnostic Aeon (aeon), expressed within Gnostic cosmology (Jonas 1963, 51-54, Skinner 2017, 30, Pachoumi 2017, 54-56, 60-61, 71, 100-109). It appears aspects of this daimon-spirit were culturally diffused to the Gnostics and assimilated on a new subservient cosmological level. For example, the term Aion as a specific category of a superior daimon held various meanings that are akin to Gnostic Aeons. Aion unlike other daimons, held rare, transformable, and inclusive qualities beyond Selene's transformative attributes. In *The Greek Magical Papyri* Aion could "transform into all gods" or goddesses, as well as possessing the ability to take on any form (Pachoumi 2017, 103, 107, 109). The concept of Aion at its pagan zenith not only took on multiple forms but numerous roles simultaneously. Aion is also justified in comparison to Gnostic Aeons, as it was far more suitable of a candidate in comparison to any other class of daimon. Perhaps most important, the Gnostic Aeon held demonic qualities thus the equivalent of the demon alleged by Jonas, as expressed in their cosmology (Williams 1996, 204, Chin and Vidas 2015, 277, Troeltsch 1960, 104-107, 110, 1963, 51-54). Jonas further implied Aeons held a Graeco-Egyptian origin based upon the assimilated Egyptian ouroboros symbol, with an inverted malevolent meaning (Jonas 1963, 116-119). This closely aligned ritual symbolism of the daimon further corresponds with its inverted Christian meaning of demons, thus giving us an effective link of cultural diffusion. Daimons were viewed far more malevolent among orthodox Christians than Gnostic groups. This fact further supports a Gnostic transformation of the Greco-Egyptian Aion to Gnostic Aeons. Aion(s) as Aeons (aeons) consistently took on multiple and flexible roles (Pachoumi 2017, 52-56, 60-61, 71, 100-109, Betz 1996, 62, Williams, 1996, 2014, Brakke 2010, Skinner 2017, 30, Troeltsch 1960, 104-107, 110, Jonas 1963, 51-54). Furthermore, Pachoumi effectively explains how and why the Graeco-

Egyptian gods Helios, Selene, Aion(s), and the Gnostic Jesus were related through cultural diffusion. Their shared diversity and unity, as the one and the many with all, would have naturally included the Aion. The concept of Aion was not only the most flexible of these figures but also the most common daimon found throughout *The Greek Magical Papyri*. In reiteration, we must not forget the Greco-Egyptian Aion(s) could “*transform into all gods*”, therefore transcending to a single or plural value simultaneously (Pachoumi 2017, 54-65, 60-61, 71, 100-109, Skinner 2017, 30, Schmidt 1978, xv-xvii). In addition, Graeco-Egyptian Aion(s) and Gnostic Aeons (aeons) both involved the planets and zodiac constellations with opposites roles, again resembling inverted daimons to demons (Jonas 1963, 51-54, 156-158, 287-288). Gnostic Aeons not only reflected old and new astronomical values but new cosmological myths with recycled, and reformed elements of paganism in Gnostic literature (Pachoumi 2017, 60-61, 100-109, Jonas 1963, 107-109, Williams 1996, 262). The Graeco-Egyptian system of planetary empowerments continued but on an inverted Christian level with transformed daimons as earthly suppressors. This transition would have easily lent itself to pre-existing, adaptive, and interchangeable forms of shared entities such as pagan Aions to Gnostic Aeons (Betz 1996, 3, 7, 124, 137, Ciruolo 2001, 280-286, 292, Pachoumi 2017, 54-56, 60-61, 71, 100-109, Skinner 2017, 30, Chin and Vidas 2015, 277, Salzman 2018, 78, Jonas 1963, 41, 51-54). This process of conversion would not have been spontaneous (Freke and Gandy 1999, xvii). Are we to believe the Gnostics created Aeons without a prior cultural model? As a result, the Graeco-Egyptian Aion was likely to have transcended into the Gnostic term Aeons, as a linked cultural transformation, from the most likely class of daimons. However, this was not the case among orthodox Christians. As expressed in *The New Testament*, the orthodox-Catholic tradition was primary responsible for purging paganism, rather than absorbing it as in Gnosticism (Betz 1996,

77, Jonas 1963, 52-54, 116-119, 108-109, Chin and Vidas, 2015, 277, Skinner 2017, 27, 30, Pachoumi 2017, 52-56, 60-61, 71, 100-109, 116-119, *The Holy Bible* 1989, Matthew 8:31, Mark 5:12, and Luke 8:29-32). Considering all this in sum, transformed elements of the daimon are further understood through the role of Gnostic Aeon(s), and other actors within Gnostic cosmology. As in many people's cosmology, it retains reflective elements of their cultural development, views of themselves, and people they culturally absorbed. Therefore, it is the Gnostic's cosmological hierarchy of entities that demands further examination.

GNOSTIC COSMOLOGY AND AEONS

Gnostic cosmology is a reflection of Christian and pagan beliefs expressed through an assimilated hierarchy of old and new entities and the concept of spirit as: the upper creator god or invisible spirit as father, Christ, Aeons (alleged former daimons) all in association with the lower creator god which was probably based upon a former superior daimon, and or god (Jonas 1963, 52-54, Williams, 1996, 9-15, Brakke 2010, 55, Pachoumi 2017, 52-54, 60-61, 71, 100-109, Betz 1996, 3-4, 7, 60, 62, 64, 66, 77, Skinner 2017, 27, Troeltsch 1960, 104-107, 110, Chin and Vidas 2015, 277). All deities within Gnostic cosmology were associated with Jesus Christ in some way. For instance, Christ served as a liaison between *the invisible spirit* (the father) and the Aeons that existed on different realms (astral planes). Aeons were also considered lesser liaisons responsible for the existence of select cosmic-astral planes (dimensions) for entities and humans to exist upon (Brakke 2010, 56). In their Gnostic roles, Aeons can be further understood as specific time periods and opportunities as they “*are simultaneously actors, places, extents of time, and modes of thought*” (Brakke 2010, 54). They also retained attributes of former daimons in function. For example, daimons as entrapped human spirits, and Gnostic Aeons, were not

limited to a specific direction in time (Skinner 2017, 70). In addition, both types of entities required a higher level of mental vibration for communication, as in modes of thought (Luck 2006, 216-217, Brake 2010, 58, Jonas 1963, 42). Gnostic Aeons also took on a reversed role in comparison to reclassified daimons as demons. Aeons were then naturally viewed as earthly suppressors to humans (Brakke 2010, 54, 58, Betz 1996, 3-4, 7, 60, 62, 77, Pachoumi 2017, 100-109, Skinner 2017, 27, 30, 70, Troeltsch 1960, 104- 110, 114, Toorn et al. 1999, 244-249, Chin and Vidas 2015, 277, Jonas 1963, 53-54). From a Gnostic perspective a spiritual reality was preferred over earthly endeavors. Gnostic cosmology possessed a *heavenly Father* known as the invisible spirit recognized as their highest deity. His intelligence was expressed through an echelon of Aeons. However, he had no power over earthly affairs (Brakke 2010, 53-54, Williams 1996, 9-15). Salvation was inevitably achieved through a transmigration of the soul through a series of repeated lives. This resulted in spiritual evolution and the eventual reunification with God (Jonas 1963, 44-45, 156-159, 161). As a result, one was repeatedly subjected to the Aeons as they were responsible for the recycling of human souls on earth. The invisible spirit may further be defined as an androgenous *Mother-Father and child* entity of the divine generating itself, while being surrounded by a host of Aeons. The invisible spirit also bestowed its characteristics upon all living things including its associated Aeons (Williams 1996, 10-11, Jonas 1963, 51-54, 44-45, 156-159, 161). Early Gnostics as other Christian groups did not necessarily believe in a strict monotheistic system, at least not in the modern definition. Many believed that “*a single high God stood atop a hierarchy of the gods, daemons (daimons), and other spiritual beings*”, exemplified through Gnostic cosmology (Brakke 2010, 61, Williams 1996, 9-17). This shows the initial acceptance of the concept of daimons during its assimilation to early Gnosticism. It was the Gnostic Aeon (aeon) of wisdom, 3rd generation of *The Holy*

Spirit that furthered this cosmological scenario, by retaining a higher receptive mental sensitivity. Communicating with this entity was accomplished in the same way, as with communicating with daimons. In short, one was expected to obtain a higher state of mental vibration to practice the more skilled levels of Gnosticism (Jonas 1963, 36). As a result, this shared attribute of the alleged daimon-Aeon became a ritual act of higher spiritual union with the Gnostic God-*the invisible spirit* (Williams 1996, 11, 14-15, Betz 1996, 77, Luck 2006, 216-217, Skinner 2017, 27, Pachoumi 2017, 100-109). In Gnostic cosmology, there were a total of 30 Aeons within the external and internal astral realms of the divine creation. The last Aeon of wisdom was derived from the cognitive impatience of man's mind that created Christ and *The Holy Spirit* (Williams 1996, 15). It was Jesus Christ who collected the Aeons (aeons) in a harmonious cosmological order, to allow select worthy souls to circumnavigate them. In this scenario Christ was a pivotal liaison. For instance, the Gnostic book of Jeu informs us that it was Christ when called upon, who petitioned his father who neutralized the 12 Aeons of men's fate. Jesus overcomes the Aeons through God's light by means of baptism (water and fire-incense) for those who were deemed worthy. This then breaks the cycle of one's earthly rebirths in transmigration required for spiritual evolution, and eventual reunion with God (Schmidt 1978, xv-xvii, Jonas 1963, 44-45, 53-54, 156-159, 161, 165, 181-185). The ultimate influence of Simon Magus's Christian baptism and his assimilation with Selene as Sophia now becomes clear. The Aeons in this context are comparable to minor troublesome spirits. They are no longer gods or invoked entities. The cultural metamorphosis of this entity resulted in its attribute of negative and restraining power over humans but confined to the earth plane (Schmidt 1978, xv-xvii, Williams 1996, 9-11). This cosmological explanation illustrates Christ's new role as a

primary liaison, while incorporating old pagan gods, and daimons as lesser entities within a new belief system.

Gnostic beliefs were deeply entrenched within their cosmological myths that contained a recurring theme of old gods being demoted to lesser roles, as new incoming Christian entities displaced older pagan gods and daimons. This comparative scenario is found in many other “*polytheistic mythological texts*” in various cultures, which is of comparative value (Salzman et al. 2018, 63-64, 78). This explanation is also applicable to the shared cosmological relationship between paganism and Gnosticism (Salzman et al. 2018, 63-64, 78, Williams 1996, 9-15, Betz 1996, 1-330). Salzman informs us that this is a common cross-cultural occurrence reflected in most people’s cosmologies, as new incoming religions, cultures, and old beliefs and entities being recycled. He uses the cosmological myth of Timat and Marduck as a comparative generic model for the evolution of other cosmologies. This scenario follows a line of cosmologies and gods such as: Timat (Sumerian) vs Marduck (Babylonian) and thereafter Marduck vs Assur-Assyrian (et al. 2018, 63-64, 78). This chronology of cosmologies shows how new gods and cultures displaced and assimilated older ones. This type of cultural assimilation no doubt was also the case among pagans and the Christian Gnostics. In further consideration of this point, it is the Aeon of wisdom and the lower creator god that allows us to better perceive Gnosticism’s cosmological synthesis. This relationship involved the ongoing ouroboros symbol in its pagan-Christian transformation. It is Gnostic cosmology that expresses reconciliation of conflict with paganism and early Christianity. This eventual harmony was no doubt accomplished through the shared concept of spiritual unity, as a continued ritual theme.

PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN GODS IN GNOSTIC COSMOLOGY

The origin of the lower-creator god in Gnostic cosmology reveals recycled elements of the Graeco-Egyptian ouroboros symbol in association with a former daimon entity, expressed as spirit communication and unity with Christ acting as a liaison between the earthly pagan domain, and the heavenly Christian one. The Gnostic's lower creator god also exhibits functional attributes of former daimons at their point of disruption with early Christianity. Arguably, this represents conflict and resolution between the two systems through combining Christian and pagan beliefs, in a new hierarchy. Williams 1996 felt that the Gnostic lower creator god held its origin from a god in *The Old Testament* based upon a similarity in attributes, with no further evidence (11). In contrast, the accumulative evidence favors a Greco-Egyptian origin for the Gnostic's lower creator god, as follows. The conflict in question within the Gnostic's cosmological order originates from the offspring of their god Sophia, Selene's true name, thus echoing Simon Magus's Helena. Sophia was part of the Gnostics self-generating trinity of the invisible spirit-father, mother, and child. This cosmological harmony was broken when the mother element, Sophia, produced her offspring "Wisdom" (Aeon of wisdom). This offspring resembled a lion headed serpent (Ialdabaoth-Wisdom). As a result, she hid Wisdom on earth where he becomes a tyrant proclaiming himself as the only God. However, he is the lower creator god limited to the non-spiritual earth plane. This symbol of the lion-headed serpent as the entity of Wisdom and the Greek Sophia may effectively be interpreted as another representation of the Graeco-Egyptian ouroboros symbol in associated transformation, as the Abraxas-ouroboros. For instance, the latter reappears in the context of the acquisition of ancient covert knowledge, among early Christian converts (Pachoumi, 2017, 102, Skinner 2017, 89, 155-156). Furthering this view, the lower creator god as a former pagan entity, born from Sophia,

explains new pagan roles within Gnosticism as understandably linked and inferior. In addition, the Gnostic appropriation of the ouroboros symbol would have also resulted in group cohesion, thus symbolizing the need to unify Christians with new pagan converts (Geertz 1973, 86-99). As established the lion-headed serpent, as the Abraxas ouroboros, served as a protective amulet for Christians and Graeco-Egyptian magicians. This is comparable to its pagan counterpart as safe communication with daimon-spirits (Bonner 1950, 1-394, Skinner 2017, 89, 155-156, 195-202, Betz 1996, xlii, 7, 17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 145, 163, 172-175, 190-191). These associated arguments support the assertion that Graeco-Egyptian symbolism was culturally diffused to Gnosticism, and therefore would have helped facilitate early pagan conversion, through the shared concept of spiritual unity. As a result, this constitutes a pagan-Christian based foundation for Gnostic spiritual unity (Williams 1996, 9-11, Bonner 1950, 1-394, Skinner 2017, 89, 155-156, 195-202, Jonas 1963, 108-109, 116-119, Betz 1996, xlii, 7, 17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 145, 163, 172-175, 190-191, Geertz 1973, 86-98, Pachoumi 2017, 103). It was the lower creator god *Ialdabaoth* (wisdom) and his lackey deities (Aeons) who produced the concept of human fate. This earthly cosmic stratum was controlled by the lower creator god not the superior *Father God-the invisible spirit*. This cosmological level may also be considered “a lower tier of heavenly powers called the gods, angels, demons, and humans” (Williams 1996, 204). The lower creator god was also termed “the great demon” arguably once the “Good daimon”. Again, it appears Gnostic cosmology absorbed pagan gods and former daimons, who became lower subservient entities as Aeons, in a new order of Christian superiority. The assimilation of the more flexible superior daimons (Aions) as the Gnostic Aeons, now seems even more plausible. This cosmological arrangement also explains human suffering on earth at the expense of the absorbed pagan gods. As a result, these assimilations ultimately represent

conflict and resolution of pagan conversion within early Christianity (Jonas 1963, Williams, 1996, 9-15, 261-262, Betz 1996, 77, Skinner 2017, 27, 30, Pachoumi 2017, 100-109, Troeltsch 1960, 104-106, 110, 114, Chin and Vidas 2015, 277, Ciruolo 2001, 280). Despite this sharp cosmological division, we must remember it was Christ who enjoyed a dual access to both the earthly pagan domain, and the heavenly Christian one. This further illustrates a dual synthesis of pagan-Christian beliefs echoing Simon Magus once more (Williams 1996, 204, 233, Brakke 2010, 61, Betz 1996, 64, Pachoumi 2017, 61). Therefore, pagans becoming early Gnostics would have diffused their views regarding spiritual unity during conversion. This would have facilitated pagan converts to be more receptive of Jesus Christ in return, as a necessary liaison (Jonas 1963, xvi, 51-54, 56, 184-185, Ciruolo 2001, 280, Betz 1996, 64, Skinner 2017, 89, 155-156).

The Gnostic concept of spirit retained fundamental aspects of the daimon as well as the continuance of clairvoyant practices for achieving spiritual unity. It is claimed that early Gnosticism retained elements of the supernatural with an overt Christian doctrine. For example, the Gnostic union with the invisible spirit by means of one's mind correlates with the traditional practice of communicating with daimons. In support of this, it is stated some Gnostic sects "*interjected magical formula into their teachings*" and to have embraced spiritual endeavors towards "*psychic dimensions*" (Guiley 1991, 237-238). Perhaps most important, according to Jonas and others this spiritual endeavor on a *supernatural* level was also considered a higher level of Gnostic practice (1963, xvi, 34, 36, Williams 1996, 260-264, Bletzer, 1986, 110-115, 500-501). In addition, the *psychic dimension* in the Gnostic context correlates as the same principle of communicating with daimons or Aeons in terms of clairvoyance (Guiley 1991, 237-238, 357-358, Luck 2006, 78-84, 217, Bletzer 1986, 110-115, 500-505). However, a clear

distinction existed between the concept of spirit within Graeco-Egyptian magic, Gnosticism, and competing orthodox Christianity. In Graeco-Egyptian magic the objective was to establish a safe union with the daimon-spirit to obtain magical objectives. In Gnosticism, the concept of spirit was focused upon the reunification with God (the invisible spirit) through the soul's transmigration, or for bypassing the Aeons through Jesus (Jonas 1963, 157, Schmidt 1978, xv-xvii). In contrast and comparison to the above, orthodox Christianity was concerned with the salvation of the soul through union with Christ, and *The Holy Spirit*. In *The New Testament* orthodox Christians also focused upon the purging of unwonted and unclean demonic forces, as former pagan spirits (*The Holy Bible* 1989, Matthew 8:31, Mark 5:12, and Luke 8:29-32). Considering these clarifications, it is the Gnostic doctrine of transmigration of the human soul or spirit that demands further explanation, before proceeding to early orthodox Christianity, and their adaptation of exorcism.

THE SPIRIT AND SOUL WITHIN GNOSTIC COSMOLOGY

The Gnostics believed the fate of the soul was predetermined through its need to reunite with God, as both contained divine matter. In part, this was accomplished through the transmigration of the human spirit or soul involving recycled elements of the Graeco-Egyptian's planetary empowerments, conveyed through literary sources. The Gnostic transmigration of the soul involved a series of repeated lives ultimately destined to achieve reunification with God through the invisible spirit. However, the soul had to pass through seven spheres (astral planes) as explained by the Gnostic *Treaty of Poimandres*. This is foundationally based upon the Graeco-Egyptian *Hermes-Thoth* concept. It's believed to be purely Graeco-Egyptian in its foundational origin, despite a later veneer of Jewish influence (Williams 1996, 27, 263-264,

Jonas 1963, 147-148, Fowden 1993). This work also contained correlations between the daimon-spirit and the ouroboros symbol as previously shown (Jonas 1963, 116-119). This further suggests a shared and continued syncretic relationship towards the concept of spiritual unity. It is stated: “*The extant corpus first published in the sixteenth century is the remnant of an Egyptian Hellenistic literature of revelation, called Hermetic because of the syncretic identification of the Egyptian god Thoth with the Greek Hermes. A number of references and functions in late classical writers, both pagan and Christian, add to the sources for Hermetic thought. This literature, not as a whole but in certain portions, reflects the Gnostic spirit. The same goes on for the closely related alchemistic literature (Zosimos’s ouroboros) and some of the Greek and Coptic magical papyri, which show an admixture of Gnostic ideas. The Hermetic Poimandres Treatise itself, despite some signs of Jewish influence, is to be regarded as a prime document of independent pagan Gnosticism*” (Jonas 1963, 41). Contemporary scholars concur with these traditional interpretations and have since expanded upon them. For instance, Luck and Fowden assert there are other parallels between *The Greek Magical Papyri* and early Christian literature (2006, 17, 1993, 116-155). This seeking of spiritual reunion with God, representing the development and thereafter union of man’s inner divine spark, was considered intrinsic to the cosmic restoration (Jonas 1963, 45, 51). Contrary to orthodox Christians, the Gnostics did not view angels as Godly liaisons but agents that imposed enslavement upon man, as entrapped souls on earth (Jonas 1963, 131). This was deemed necessary for one’s spiritual development. For example, in Gnostic belief the soul had to pass through a series of lives to be refined until it was fit to reunite with God. However, when the soul ascended into its new body for rebirth, it acquired its earthly corruptions when passing through the astrological planetary powers, and stars (Jonas 1963, 157-159, 273). These astronomical bodies were prior pagan

beliefs thus considered tainted energy in the Christian-Gnostic context. In addition, one's spiritual light, as in spirit form, was contrasted with the earthly darkness below (Jonas 1963, 156-161). According to Jonas, this doctrine was hermetically-Graeco-Egyptian based that ultimately transformed into a new Christian-Gnostic doctrine (1963, 161). Therefore, the soul was endlessly recycled through various rebirths furthering its evolution until it was fit to be reunited with God (Williams 1996, 11, 14-15, Jonas 1963, 272-273, Smith 2007, xvi). As a result, man was at the mercy of demonic forces on earth once termed daimons expressed through the role of Aeons (Jonas 1963, 53-54). The liberation of the soul was the acquisition of pagan based spiritual knowledge (Jonas 1963, 282-283). As an initial paradox, the Gnostic Hymns as prayers were hermetically based upon the pagan zodiac and planetary powers. Yet, these Hymns were aimed towards the liberation of the soul from the same planetary powers, not union with them as in paganism. In Gnosticism, the planetary powers being former pagan entities naturally held a demonic influence. Thus, the Gnostics sought to free the soul, spirit, or astral body from being recycled through transmigration. Again, this correlation coincides with the inverted meaning of the daimon, from a positive to negative context as an inverted metamorphosis of the entity. It was the Gnostic's goal to obtain divine union with God, not the daimon (Jonas 1963, 156-157, 282-283, 286-287, Skinner 2017, 30). As Williams observes: "*gnostic texts are supposed to teach that all humans have within them a divine spark or spirit that has come from the highest divine realm and is destined to return to its original home*" (Williams 1996, 27). Consequently, the divine spark within man required development from an inward spiritual journey, not through earthly endeavors, or by obtaining magical objectives (Smith 2007, xxxiv, Betz 1996). There are other examples of Gnostic literature that conveys spiritual unity through the transformation of the ouroboros symbol.

THE OUROBOROS AND SPIRITUAL UNITY IN ANCIENT AND GNOSTIC LITERATURE

The ouroboros was assimilated and transformed in late antiquity by being culturally split into positive and negative aspects, while retaining its functional role in symbolizing spiritual unification as it was adopted, altered, and recycled among the Gnostics. This merging and reforming of old and new beliefs would have helped facilitate a Christian conversion also expressed through various examples of literature. This evidence of cultural diffusion further supports the assimilation of this symbols value as a continued ritual theme. In one context, the Gnostic ouroboros was illustrated as a dark dragon that symbolically encircled the earth, as an engulfing spiritual darkness (Roblee 2018, 141-145, Jonas 1963, 116-119). In this view the symbol's meaning, it then transcended to an entrapping earthly-evil power. This is consistent with the inverted meaning of the "Good Daimon" that was transformed to the Christian demon (Ciraolo 1995, 279-281, Skinner 2017, 30). However, this dark- sided split of the daimon could be contrasted with its surviving secondary counterpart as the communicative, and protective abraxas-ouroboros. This symbol was found among the Gnostics and formerly associated with communicating with daimons through spell work (Skinner 2017, 89, 155-156, 195-202, Troelstch 1960, 104-107, 110, Chin and Vidas, 2015, 277, Betz 1996, 17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, 311). Therefore, the subsumed role of the good vs demonic daimon appears to have survived on a dual dimension, with its associated symbolism. The positive and negative attributes of the daimon were kept, yet split in contrasting roles, which I refer to as the demonic split. The continued relevance of this symbolism would have reinforced pagan conversion in Gnosticism, since this existing belief continued to be perpetuated, in some facet or form. In addition, this contrast in symbolism also emphasized the abandoning of earthly pursuits in the search of spiritual reunification with God-the invisible spirit, rather than with the

daimon (Jonas 1963, 112-119, 118-121). The continuance of the concept of spirit and the ouroboros in a positive context is also reflected within the Gnostic literary work “*The Hymn of the Pearl*”. This work possesses a related pagan allegory in its emphasis on the retrieval of one’s Christian soul and therefore achieving union with God through spirit. This work’s sub-text also conveys a comparative allegory of a pagan based concept of spiritual unification. As one retrieves a valuable pearl from the engulfing ocean, one may also retrieve one’s soul from an engulfing evil world, through embracing spiritual unity. This would have been accomplished in part by the daimon’s demonic split, as explained prior. This comparison is justified from known communication with daimons and their influence upon early Christian conversion and thought. In further support of this view, scholars concur that “*The Hymn of the pearl*” contains elements of the supernatural that could only have been derived from a Graeco-Egyptian source. The consideration of other influences for this theme are chronologically improbable (Jonas 1963, 125, Betz 1996, xlii). There are other cultures that possess the ouroboros symbol or similar in comparison (Marinus et al. 2009). Yet, no other people or culture compares to the unique cultural diffusion of the ouroboros symbol, derived from the indigenous Egyptian, and Graeco-Egyptian sources. This evidence of cultural diffusion conveys ideas of circumambulation, spiritual unity, and the known Christian inversion of its associated entity and symbolism, as the daimon and the ouroboros were passed on to the Gnostics (Jonas 1963, 52-54, 116-119). The ongoing usage of the ouroboros as a cultural marker has shown itself to be consistently unique in acting as a communicative, functional, and adaptive representation of spiritual unity (Ritner 2008, 57-63, 68, Skinner 2017, 89, 155-156, Betz 1996, 7, 17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, Jonas 1963, 116-119, Freke and Gandy 1999, 35). The symbolic and literary correlation of the ouroboros for spiritual unity is also found within the subtext of *The*

Hermetica, an ancient Graeco-Egyptian work. This text is another example of ongoing cultural diffusion that indicates how the transformation of the daimon-spirit and the ouroboros symbol took place, in cognitive application.

The ouroboros symbol continued to be assimilated to spiritual matters from late paganism to early Christianity that is exemplified by referencing the work of an early alchemist named Zosimos (Zosimus) who wrote in the early 4th-century, to show us a frozen frame in time of cultural diffusion. This author's syncretic theme also coincides sub-textually with the earlier existence of the Graeco-Egyptian text *The Hermetica*, known to be possessed by the early Gnostics. These two intersecting themes expressed a related continuance of spiritual unity with all things, in ritual application. The theme of his ouroboros symbol, all is one or nothing, coincides with its associated predecessor the daimon, as well as reaching daimons through a higher mental sensitivity (Roblee 2018, 141-145, Fowden 1993, 116-153, Jonas 1963, 116-119, 124, Freke and Gandy 1999, xxx, 12-13, 18, 31, 35, 41, 43, 105, Luck 2006, 217). Perhaps most important, Zosimos as a cultural link illustrates the ouroboros symbol during a moment of cultural transition from paganism to early Christianity. His one-page manuscript also emphasizes the Christian-alchemic perfection of one's soul through spiritual unity exemplified by this symbol. In paraphrase, a statement below his illustrated ouroboros emphasized the theme of, all is one or nothing, surrounded by alchemic symbols (Roblee 2018, 141-145, Luck 2006, 443). Fowden asserts Zosimos's ouroboros also clearly conveyed the assimilation of pagan and Christian philosophy in conjunction with *The Hermetica*. He goes on to reference Zosimos as "the man of spirit" as well as "a vital link" for a pagan-Christian transition in late antiquity (1993, 151-153). Jonas comments on the matter by stating: "*The alchemist Zosimos has our Pneuma (spirit), the inner pneumatic man ect. In some of the Christian Gnostics it is called also*

the spark and seed of light" (1963, 124). This further supports one of two proposed dimensions of the daimon's assimilation referenced earlier as, the demonic split. Thus, this represents the positive and negative pagan attributes of the daimon assimilated to early Christianity. In reiteration, the daimon became the evil demon while its ritual aspect of the ouroboros for spiritual unity was obviously kept and assimilated to early Christianity. In this case the ouroboros symbol was transformed and absorbed within early Christianity in a positive context for spiritual unity. This shows us one dimension of cultural diffusion during late antiquity from a pagan converts perspective and understanding. For instance, in early alchemy and Gnosticism man's soul was destined to re unite with God as both contained divine matter. A higher consciousness is also implied to accomplish this divine union with a higher entity in a related pagan and Christian context. We must remember how the ouroboros and daimon were used in conjunction for spirit communication, and unity in Greco-Egyptian magic (Jonas 1963, 282-283, 286-287, Roblee 2018, 141-145, Freke and Gandy 1999, 35, Betz 1996, 17, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, 311). This shared ritual theme synonymous with the sub-text of *The Hermetica* (all is one or nothing) was known and ritually applied in pre-Christian and Christian times during their ongoing associations (Fowden 1993, 151, 153, Freke and Gandy 1993, xxx). Therefore, this revered Greco-Egyptian text would have been known and available to Zosimos during his lifetime, and certainly known among the Gnostics (Roblee 2018, 141-145, Freke and Gandy 1999, xxx, Fowden 1993, 142-156). Fowden asserts Zosimos's ouroboros held a syncretic Graeco-Egyptian origin. In sum, a fundamental source for Zosimos' ideas appears to be *The Hermetica*. This probability alone is due to the shared emphasis on the overarching concept of "all is one or nothing".

These accumulative facts and probabilities clearly place's the symbols association with daimons that transcended through ongoing pagan literature in early Christianity. In conjunction with this, Zosimos was also known as "*the man of spirit*" and the perfect example of the divine man in late paganism, which was ideally strived for through "*contemplation*"- a mediative process. This is comparable to obtaining a higher level of mental sensitivity, as in reaching daimons (1993, 151, 153, Luck 2006, 216-217). Perhaps most important according to Freke and Gandy, "*the central idea of the Hermetica (Hermes) is about focusing the mind in deep meditation on Atum*", an ancient Egyptian name for God (1999, 1). This spiritual unity of man and daimon transcending to man and God with the primordial cosmic vibration, were both accomplished through meditative instinct. This shared ritual technique suggests the deployment of clairvoyant practices to achieve its ends in literature and in practice (Freke and Gandy 1999, 14, 35, Bletzer 1986, 112-114). This meditative union may also be described as a "*harmony with all things*" through reaching God's universal consciousness, as in possessing a mental sensitivity, as when one communicated with daimons (Freke and Gandy 1999, 12-13, Luck 2006, 216-217, Fowden 1993, 151, 153). Furthermore, *The Hermetica* states: "*Atum (God) is the whole which contains everything. He is the one, not two. He is all, not many. The all is not many separate things, but the oneness that subsumes the parts. The all and the one are identical*". As a further example it is stated: "*the cosmos is one as the sun is one, the moon is one and the earth as one*" (21). Therefore, "*unity with God's mind is oneness with all things*" as the one and the many (Freke and Gandy 1999, 18, 35, Roblee 2018, 141-145). As a result, the practitioner through a meditative state of mind becomes cognitively united with the primordial vibration, also known as the cosmic vibration. Freke and Gandy go on to state, "*the influence of the Hermetica on early Christianity is beyond doubt. In 1945 works of Hermes were discovered amongst scriptures*

belonging to Gnostic Christians of the first centuries CE.” (1999, xxx). This archeological site further informs us that many copies of *The Hermetica* existed among them. This same area was also used by early Christian hermits who maintained monastic communities there (Freke and Gandy 1999, xxx). These facts also make a clear connection with 4th-century monks who practiced meditation in the Egyptian deserts, synonymous with a higher level of mental sensitivity. Therefore, *The Hermetica* is thematically interchangeable with the ritual symbolism of Zosimos’s ouroboros, beyond a comparative literary theme. This same inherited concept was applied for mediative spiritual unity with the soul and God (Freke and Gandy 1999, xxx, 35, 105, Roblee 2018, 141-145, Fowden 1993, 150-153). In further support of this, Geertz maintains that the long-term sharing of ritual symbolism (as the ouroboros) is known to progressively retain its power as a cultural continuance, as self-identity transcending to group identity, in an ongoing manner (1973, 86-99). As a result, this inherited theme in ritual symbolism would have facilitated pagan-Christian conversions towards integrating and transforming old beliefs into new ones. The inverted Gnostic ouroboros and the integration of Jesus are minor examples (Geertz 1973, 86-99, Jonas 1963, 116-119). It is a fact that not all scholars agree that the Gnostics inherited ritual elements of paganism from the Greco-Egyptian system. Regardless, the accumulative evidence favors Gnosticism retaining elements of “*the Graeco-Egyptian god Hermes Trismegistus*” through *The Hermetica*. However, the accumulative evidence suggests that Graeco-Egyptian beliefs influenced Gnostic views on spiritual unification, within a reasonable degree of certainty (Roblee 2018, 141-145, Freke and Gandy 1999, xxx, Fowden 1993, 150-153, Betz 1996, xlii, Jonas 1963, 124, Skinner 2017, 42).

The transformation of spiritual unity from late antiquity to early Christianity was no longer a union between man and the daimon entity, but between man and God in the Gnostic

understanding of spirit. All these works and applied concepts are indicative of cultural diffusion in known and unknown ways, ultimately integrated within Gnosticism, and thereafter absorbed into orthodox Christianity. Meyer and Smith 1999 effectively assert, the transition from Graeco-Egyptian magic to early Christian magic, conveys the ritual themes of spiritual protection, healing, and cleansing from demonic forces; once termed daimons. Gnosticism and orthodox Christianity were a part of this transition which was expressed through a shared ritual framework (35-37, 40-41, 43-44, 49-50, 63-64, 66-68, Betz 1996, 3, 18, 49, 62, *The Holy Bible* 1989, Mathew 8:31, Mark 5: 12, Luke 8: 29-32, Luke 8: 29-32, Troeltsch 1960, 104-107, 110, Ciralo 2001, 285-286, Jonas 1963, 41-45, 51-54, 116-119, 156-159, 161). The key concept of spirit that integrated paganism and Gnosticism furthers our understanding of the orthodox concept of *The Holy Spirit*. According to Troeltsch, it was competing orthodox Christianity that absorbed the Gnostic's concept of spirit, to vanquish them as competitors for converts (1960, 104-107, 110, 114). The Gnostic and orthodox systems interpreted the former daimon in a negative or demonic context but with sharp differences. The term Aion, originally a pagan concept of time transcending from a superior daimon god, did not hold a sacred or malevolent status within orthodox Christianity. Furthermore, Gnostic Aeons had no role to play within Christian-orthodox beliefs, other than examples encountered within *The New Testament* (Pachoumi 2017, 100-109, Ciralo 2001, 280-286, Toorn et al. 1999, 13-14). Therefore, a close examination of this contrast of spirit found within *The New Testament* is warranted.

DAIMONS AND DEMONS IN ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY AND THE QUESTION OF CLAIRVOYANCE

During the transition from paganism to early orthodox Christianity, daimons were transformed into malevolent entities that had to be driven out of people, via the power obtained from a sincere understanding of Jesus Christ and *The Holy Spirit*. The technique of exorcism was deemed useful among Egyptians, Greeks, and Christians. This shared understanding of spirit can be traced back to *The Greek Magical Papyri* in spell form. In addition, this shared cultural element no doubt would have furthered a pagan convert's understanding, and acceptance of their Christian conversion. As a result, this practice was applied to daimons as well as demons. This mutual relationship of ritual exorcism of related entities lends further credibility to other prevailing parallels regarding the assimilation of daimons to demons, found within *The New Testament* (Skinner 2017, 30, 195-202, 288, 292-294, Betz 1996, 4-7, 60, 62, 64-66, 72-73, 106, 125, 134, Ciruolo 2001, 280-286, Toorn et al. 1999, 235-240, Luck 2006, 207-208, 218, Chin and Vidas, 2015, 277, Troeltsch 1960, 104-105, 107, 110, 114, Danker 2000, 210-211, Meyer and Smith 1999, 35-37, 40-41, 43-44, 49-50, 63-64, 66-68, *The Holy Bible* 1989). For example, within *The Greek Magical Papyri*, spell IV. 1227-64, entitled “*Excellent rite for driving out daimons*” purges and keeps away an unclean daimon named Satan. The spell praises Jesus Christ's lineage as well as Christ himself, as *Jesus Chrestos* (Betz 1996, 62). The concept of daimons being assimilated as demonic entities is quite clear with its cultural intersection with early Christianity. Yet, we must also acknowledge that orthodox Christianity possessed its own trajectory of history, traditions, and beliefs. Therefore, this entity in its orthodox Christian context, is best understood by looking at a famous example of exorcism found within *The New Testament* conducted by Jesus Christ, while he was in route ministering with his disciples. This

incident of the exorcism of possessing demonic spirits is described in Matthew 8:31, Mark 5:12, and Luke 8:29-32, that demonstrate that these demonic entities, became powerless in the presence of Christ. Prior to the demonic spirits being forced out of their human host they pleaded with Christ to allow them to possess a nearby herd of swine. Demons as daimons chose to maintain themselves as parasites within their human hosts, as both related entities liked warm places, and detested sun light. Therefore, they enjoyed possessing humans as well as taking control of them to directly work their will. This type of spiritual possession was believed to create mental or physical illness to the possessed. As a result, when Jesus granted the demons requests it resulted in the demoniac's flight and spiritual possession of a nearby herd of swine, which went into a frenzy and ran off a cliff. This illustrates the dark one-dimensional view of daimons that had become demons. According to the book of Leviticus 11: 1-47, in the Jewish context swine were considered an unclean animal which further establishes the demons in a negative context (Danker 2000, 210-211, Luck 2006, 215, 465-466, *The Holy Bible* 1989). In Luke 8: 29-31 the demonic spirits also begged Jesus not to return them to the Abyss (*The Holy Bible* 1989). The Abyss in this context is probably referencing a confinement to a desert-like prison, or a Christian hell, until called upon or released by God. The orthodox Christians sought to control demons as pagan magicians sought to control daimons, but for different ends (Toorn et al. 1999, 237, 240, Skinner 2017 30, 100, 195-202, 288-299, Betz 1996, 62, 125, 134, Danker 2000, 210-211). More congruence on the subject can be found in Revelation 8:12 and 16: 14. These passages describe entities reminiscent of daimons that could be unleashed and invoked in Gods service (Betz 1996, 64). As one possible interpretation of these passages, God unleashes demonic forces upon the earth. This results in one third of the heavens and astronomical realms being retracted as light and darkness. The contrast and control of cosmic light shows us in the

end God's ultimate control of good and evil in its full spectrum, as a reversed scenario of Genesis. This idea reflects the practices of Graeco-Egyptian magicians who had once invoked daimons to achieve their destructive goals through spell work, but on a far greater scale (Toorn et al. 1999, 240-245). This is not to claim that orthodox Christianity did not exercise a clear distinction between pagan daimons, and the orthodox Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, the above interpretation may well shed light as to how the metamorphosis of the daimon proceeded.

Further scrutiny of *The New Testament* yields evidence of daimon spirits transforming to *The Holy Spirit*, that would have furthered a pagan-Christian conversion, through the fundamentals of orthodox Christianity. For instance, in Ephesians 1:13-14 Paul addresses the faithful as he reassures them “*the seal of the promised Holy Spirit*” through Jesus Christ (*The Holy Bible*, 1989). This book within *The New Testament* goes on to make the distinction of the old pagan spirits as daimons, that have become demons, and a new life that Christ offers in comparison (Betz 1996, 4-7, 60, 62-64, 125, Ciruolo 2001, 283-286, 291-292). The Christian transition of former pagan daimon spirits, once known as *arial spirits*, as well as an unclean daimon named Satan in *The Greek Magical Papyri*, culturally diffused to early Christianity (Ciruolo 2001, 286, Betz 1996, 62). Arguably, this transformation of the daimon entity is found within *The New Testament*, as Ephesians 2:2-3, referencing *arial spirits* as Satan, and mentioning how people: “*once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient*” (*The Holy Bible* 1989). This would have united pagan converts and Christians alike but towards a concept of Christian spiritual unity. In further correlation to the transition of paganism and Christian concepts of spirit, Genesis 1:26 informs us that man was created in Gods image (*The Holy Bible* 1989). This emphasis of man and God sharing divine matter echo's a parallel with the alchemist Zosimos, the

concept of spiritual unity, and the absorbed orthodox-Gnostic belief of spirit, from a pagan converts perspective (Freke and Gandy 1999, 35, Roblee 2018, 141-145, Fowden 1993, 150-153, Troeltsch 1960, 104-107, 110, Williams 1996, 27, Jonas 1963, 44, 124). Further evidence for the transition of spiritual unification in early Christianity can also be found Ephesians 2:9. This passage emphasizes how salvation is a gift from God that is obtained by Gods mercy, and not through human acts (*The Holy Bible* 1989). It may then be said that this scripture also refutes the agency of the magician's daimons that were secured for material gains, also through spiritual unity. Perhaps, this was one basis for Christ's power through the father and *The Holy Spirit*, as others successfully followed, such as Paul. This contrast of Christs power through spiritual goodness vs earthly objectives sought by pagan magicians, also contrasts the transformation of daimons to demons. As a result, spiritual unity with Christ was emphasized to comprehend his power through a Christian conversion. In further support of this, in Acts 19: 11-20 Paul in Ephesus is granted extraordinary power by God, through *The Holy Spirit*, to drives out evil spirits from people, and cures diseases as Jesus once did (*The Holy Bible* 1989). A Christian salvation was not available to those who did not embrace Christ message fully, nor did it transfer to those who did not convert to Christianity properly. In addition, this passage as others also further defines the dichotomy of black and white or good and bad spirits as daimons vs. demons. For instance, Acts 19: 13-16 further informs us that sons of a high-ranking Jewish priest attempted an exorcism of evil spirits in the name of Jesus and Paul. Yet they failed as these malevolent forces wounded and overpowered them. The demonic spirits acknowledged Christ and Paul but would not acknowledge them. Subsequently thereafter, many Jews and Greeks in Ephesus burned their magical books and were moved towards a full Christian conversion (*The Holy Bible* 1989, Acts 19: 17-20). The social stage in early Christianity was then set. Pagan

magic and the invocation of Christ's power were worthless without a sincere conversion and understanding of orthodox fundamentals.

By comparing Christ's role as a magician, who exorcised demons via the promised seal of *The Holy Spirit*, with Graeco-Egyptian magicians who invoked daimons, it is then possible to distinguish the two approaches. Graeco-Egyptian magicians hoped to conjure and establish a relationship with a "Good Daimon" or god, yet they often settled for a lesser restless human spirits. These restless spirits were often fickle, good when they were sympathetic or simply bad in alignment. At times these magician's failures could be spiritually neutralized. In sum, they hoped for the highest and best during their spirit communication and dealt with the potential consequences (Ciraolo 2001, 280, Betz 1996, 4-7, 42, 62, 64-66, 72-73, 75, 106, Luck 2006, 210-217). Christ was a direct part of his highest and best mental vibration (receptive mental sensitivity) by communing with his spirit entity's true nature. He also had the ability to immediately recognize the difference. He did not seek earthly based objectives nor magical goals, but pure spiritual ones which materialized on earth, with a like receptive mental sensitivity, of goodness and love. This attribute exhibited by Christ may also be interpreted as a sub-division of clairvoyance termed, *clairsentience*, as the ability to innately know or sense something (Bletzer 1986, 112-115). The early orthodox and later Catholic doctrines have never recognized clairvoyance. Yet, notwithstanding this reluctance, modern spiritualists, and clairvoyant researchers, have pointed out various examples of clairvoyance that can be found within ancient history, *The Holy Bible*, and in earlier sources (*Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 2-8, 26, 56-60, Bletzer 1986, 112-115, Shepard 1984, 82-84, Luck 2006, 1-474, *The Holy Bible* 1989).

THE QUESTION OF CLAIRVOYANCE

According to modern spiritualist doctrine, *The Holy Bible* contains numerous examples of clairvoyance accomplished through a higher level of receptive mental sensitivity, as when communicating with spirit entities, thus establishing a parallel with Plutarch's rational of communicating with daimons as former human spirits, angels, and other entities for support, and protection in human affairs. It is commonly understood in paganism, Christianity, and modern spiritualism that there is a physical body and an astral or spiritual one. This shared concept is an underpinning and related factor between these belief systems, as occult art of communicating with such spirit-like entities. For example, daimons as spiritual beings shared a ritual component that links the aspect of spiritual unity and communication with such entities, as an ongoing factor within this thesis (*Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 2-8, 26, 56-60, Shepard 1984, 82-84, Bletzer 1986, 112-114, 133, 386-387, Luck 2006, 217, Betz 1996, 17, 64-65, 72-75, 77, 106-107, 124-125, 134, 163, 172-175, 190-191, Freke and Gandy 1999, 35). For instance, in reiterating Luck's interpretation of Plutarch's commentary on daimons, they were spiritual beings that aired their vibrations, and therefore were potentially receptive to "*highly sensitive men and women*" in their thoughts, "*thus the phenomena of clairvoyance, prophecy, and the like mind can be explained*" (2006, 217). Luck goes on to note numerous incidents in ancient literature that support the existence of extrasensory perception in ancient and modern times, despite some cases of fraud. One of many examples may be summarized by a sorcerer named Albicerius, who was said to have thought read lines of Virgil derived from a Roman proconsul's mind (2006, 75). In contemporary terminology this is known as telepathy (Bletzer 1986, 620-621). Luck (2006) also asserts Jesus and other spiritualist icons were clairvoyantly gifted, even though he does not find the spiritualist religion, and doctrine credible (78-82). Yet, spiritualists assert that their faith is

partially based upon evidence of communication with former personalities of the deceased that reveal themselves through the occult art of mediumship. According to spiritualist beliefs some people are born with clairvoyant abilities, as Christ, while others develop it during their lifetime. Biblical events seem to support the phenomena of clairvoyance through figures such as Jesus Christ, Paul, the apostles, and others. This gives us another effective link between daimons, demons and modern religions. These people and events are clear examples of the sub-divisions of clairvoyance such as *clairaudient*- the ability to hear and *clairavorance*- the ability to see, as in a psychic manner (Luck 2006, 216-217, Skinner 2017, 54, *Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 2-8, 26, 56-60, Bletzer 1986, 112-114, 133, 386-387).

The National Association of Spiritualist Churches, as well as Luck (2006) maintains Jesus Christ was clairvoyant, as he exhibited such abilities within *The New Testament*. In addition, modern spiritualism also believes other figures in *The Holy Bible* exhibited clairvoyant abilities, which is comparable to communicating with daimons in principle (*Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 56-60, Luck 2006, 217, Bletzer 1986, 112-114). For instance, Jesus in John 4:16-29 once relayed a person's entire life events to them, while never knowing him prior. This is a clear example of mediumship (*The Holy Bible*, *Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 59, Bletzer 1986, 386-387). Yet, another example of mediumship in *The Holy Bible* is when "*Samuel is consulted as a seer by (king) Saul*" who thereafter offers him a mediumship-message (*Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 59, *The Holy Bible*, 1Samuel 9:19, 25). According to modern spiritualism the Apostle "*Paul was clairvoyant*" as Christ was (*Spiritualist Manual* 2004, 59). Paul experienced and displayed acts of clairvoyant abilities such as *clairavorance* and *clairaudient*- -the ability to see and hear clairvoyantly. For example, Paul once known by his Greek name Saul, is confronted by a disembodied voice of a higher entity, also heard by fellow travelers. It is stated: "*and he fell to*

the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him: Saul why persecutes thou me? And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, as hearing a voice but seeing no man”- (The Holy Bible 1989, Acts 9: 4-7, Spiritualist Manual 2004, 59, Bletzer 1986, 112-114). Another example of Paul experiencing clairaudient and clairavorance was when a male spirit appeared to him and stated: “come over to Macedonia and help us” (The Holy Bible 1989, Acts 16: 9, Spiritualist Manual 2004, 58, Bletzer 1986, 112-114). It is also stated “Paul had a clear understanding of spiritual agencies” (Spiritualist Manual 2004, 57-58). In addition, the Apostle Peter experienced unexplained phenomenon while in prison as well as the apostles who experienced clairaudient, as in hearing the voice of Moses (Spiritualist Manual 2004, 57, 59, The Holy Bible 1989, Mathew 17: 3-5, Bletzer 1986, 112-114). Considering the accumulated evidence, it is a small step in effectively connecting the commonly shared principles, and elements of cultural diffusion from: Graeco-Egyptian magicians communicating with daimon spirits and entities, their transformative assimilation to Gnosticism, and their assimilation of the concept of spirit to orthodox Christianity, which in turn is practiced and viewed among modern spiritualist, as a professed science and religion.

In conclusion, it has been shown that ancient Mesopotamian and Babylonian astral beliefs influenced early Egyptian, Greek, and later Jewish beliefs. However, the Egyptian and Greek systems developed early and independent enough to have created and maintained their own rituals and beliefs. The Egyptian and Greek magical belief systems merged as one to become known as Graeco-Egyptian magic. These beliefs were chronologically traced as cultural identifiers which have yielded new clarifications and insights never considered before, such as the continuance of spiritual unity. To achieve spiritual unity, this syncretic system hinged upon a ritual framework of clairvoyant communication with the Greek daimon entity, as well as

circumambulation with the Egyptian ouroboros symbol. The daimon entity was invoked for magical purposes in spell work and was subdivided into various classes of entities, ranging from gods to human spirits. It also has been shown how and why Jewish and Arabian magic were not responsible for the source of magical techniques of Graeco-Egyptian magicians. After the rise and establishment of Christianity as the new mainstream religion, the daimon entity became displaced, transformed, and culturally absorbed among competing Gnostic and orthodox groups. During the 4th and 5th centuries there was an intermingling of influences such as the alchemist Zosimos, pagans converting to early Christianity, the forming Gnostic groups, and other Christians, all who maintained an emphasis on spiritual unity, which showed a significant retention of the ouroboros symbol. From antiquity to early Christianity, the ouroboros symbol remained a ritual theme that transcended into a concept for pure application in spiritual unity, and communication with entities. This may have also been the case among Christian hermits who practiced meditation. It also has been suggested that positive and negative aspects of the daimon and the associated ouroboros symbol culturally diffused to the Gnostics, which was ultimately expressed through their cosmology and literature. These cultural carryovers were inverted and split by the negative and positive aspects of the daimon entity, and its ritual symbolism, during its cultural metamorphosis. The concept of spiritual unity was inherited by the Gnostics, to a greater or lesser degree, that became a direct influence upon their perception of spirit. Indeed, it was the Gnostic concept of spirit that was absorbed by the orthodox Christians, who are the predecessors of modern Catholicism. Furthermore, the concept of spiritual unity and oneness expressed in the ancient Graeco-Egyptian text, *The Hermetica*, was known and practiced among the Gnostics, which no doubt further influenced their view of spirit. In addition, the known practice of magic in the European Middle Ages should not be viewed without proper

consideration of surviving remnants of the Graeco-Egyptian daimon. Ancient and modern practices of clairvoyant communication with spirit entities, comparable to communicating with daimons, are linked in an inherit concept still practiced today as mediumship. Perhaps most important, modern Catholicism may owe a great debt to the legacy of the daimon entity, later termed the demon or anti-Christ. Can one have sacred space without the contrast of its' counterpart in the realm of the profane? This new perspective of facts and probabilities concerning the daimon entity, based upon a pagan and pagan converts perspective, sets the stage for a more balanced interpretation for the discovery of future evidence on the subject, when and if this ever occurs.

GLOSSARY

Abraxes – An early Christian amulet used for personal protection. One example contained an illustrated lion headed figure with serpent legs holding an ouroboros shield. Such amulets are considered archeological evidence to support the transition and blending of pagan-Christian beliefs among early Christian.

Abraxes Chunubis – Another version of the Abraxes.

Aeon (s) – A spirit like entity in Gnostic cosmology that can exist on multiple dimensions. This entity imprisons one's soul on earth in a series of repeated lives for spiritual evolution. Its overall qualities resemble an inverted form of the daimon entity. Jonas 1963 capitalizes Aeons which is reflected within this text.

Aion- In the Graeco-Egyptian context, this term is a specific daimon that can transform into any form. It was also a common term in phrasing during the invocation of daimons in Graeco-Egyptian spell work. In contrast, Aion in *The New Testament* was a common reference to a long span of time.

Arch Daimon – An intermediately ranked daimon entity within the hierarchy of daimons. A daimon who had direct access to the gods (higher level daimons) as well as a potential medium to and from the gods and the invoking magician.

Axis Mundi – A concept in ritual where the practitioner becomes the center of all universal-cosmic dimensions.

Clairvoyance – This term is often referred to as one's sixth sense. A mediumship skill that one is born with or is developed during one's life. See sub-divisions of clairvoyance below.

Clair-audio- A subcategory of clairvoyance. The ability to hear clairvoyant as a duplicate term.

Clair-audient- A subcategory of clairvoyance. The ability to hear clairvoyant.

Clair-sentience- A subcategory of clairvoyance. To spontaneously or innately sense or know something.

Clair-visual- A subcategory of clairvoyance. The ability to see clairvoyantly.

Clair-avorance - A duplicate term for clair-visual.

Circumambulation- To encircle something in a ritual. In this text's concept it is directly associated in action and symbolism with the ouroboros symbol.

Cultural Diffusion- The social-cultural processes of one people or cultural passing on their beliefs, traditions, and values to another culture or group of people.

Daimon- Originally this astral entity was based upon the Greek concept of the soul, as a disembodied human spirit, and guardian. The meaning of this entity during its assimilation to Graeco-Egyptian magic became an invoked spirit like entity, as a magical helper to the magician during spell work to aid them in their magical goals. The Graeco-Egyptian daimon ranged in sub-categories from a god to a restless human spirit.

Demon- The Christian belief in an evil possessing spirit entity. In its pre-Christian context it was originally the pagan gods and daimons (good, bad and neutral) which became inverted in meaning after an edit 392CE, which reclassified all daimons as evil entities.

Higher level of mental vibration – A term associated with mediumship, and meditation. The mental state of sensitivity and cognitive awareness in receipt of clairvoyant communications. Highly sensitive people are believed to be very receptive of other energies and mental thoughts of others. A term for one's sixth sense. See Plutarch's explanation for this term within this text.

Invoke / Invocation / Invoking- To conjure, raise, or summon an energy or entity for the magician's benefit. A summon for an entity to participate in in a ritual, usually to help obtain a magical goal, or obtain esoteric information.

Lesser Daimon- A restless human spirit that is entrapped upon the earth plane due to an early or violent death. A low level daimon used as a magical helper and often easier to invoke than an arch daimon or god, as any daimon a potential magical assistant.

Lower Creator God- Probability, a transformed version of a pagan god in Gnostic cosmology who rules over the non-spiritual earth plane. Its mother is the former pagan goddess, Sophia.

Ouroboros- This symbol is usually illustrated as a snake swallowing its own tail. It is a symbol often associated with unity and *the one as the many*. An ancient Egyptian ritual symbol that was used avidly for protection and empowerment in virtually all rituals. It merged with Greek magic when the combined Graeco-Egyptian magical system came into being. It also became a prominent feature associated with invoking daimons in spell work through circle symbolism, as well as a protective amulet. See placatory, and circumambulation.

Phylactery – A protective amulet worn by a Graeco-Egyptian magician while spell casting. Surviving evidence shows that they were made of parchment with a drawn ouroboros, usually with magical letters encircling the symbol.

Telepathy- The ability of a psychic person to read another person's thought through a higher level of mental vibration, a sub-division of clairvoyance.

The Demotic Texts – The textual predecessor of the *Greek Magical Papyri*. An early Hermetic combination of Egyptian and Greek magic which contained predominate elements of Egyptian magic.

The Greek Magical Papyri- A rare surviving advanced magicians' book of Graeco-Egyptian magic from the belief systems mature stage of development.

The Hermetica- A sacred ancient Graeco-Egyptian text that was used by the Gnostics and reappeared in late Medieval Europe. Its text and subtext emphasized unity and harmony with all things, as well as suggesting the obtaining of a higher level of mental vibration to achieve such.

The Magical Munich Handbook- An extremely rare book of magic from the European Middle Ages. It's a product of various religions involving the invocation of demons and therefore a point of academic dispute within this thesis.

The Holy Spirit- The Orthodox Christian concept of their sacred spirit entity, associated with Jesus Christ and his Father, in combination also known as the trinity.

The Invisible Spirit- This entity is comparable to the orthodox-Christian concept of *The Holy Spirit*. This Christian Gnostic entity is formed from a concept of the mother-father-child entity regenerating itself from the divine-upper creator god in Gnostic cosmology.

Selene- A Graeco-Egyptian moon goddess with Transformative abilities.

Skrying- This term is also spelled "scrying" outside of Skinner 2017's text. One of several ways to communicate with daimons, spirits, and gods. An act of meditation, self-hypnosis, and or induced by drugs. This act does not fall within the category of spell casting but is an act of divination that overlaps with magic and the invocation of daimons.

Syncretic- The blending of one or more religious beliefs as one new religion as its product.

Sophia- The moon goddess Selene's true and correct name. True and secret names of gods and entities was valuable covert information to control them as a magician. The relevance of Sophia in this text is her continued appearance from *The Greek Magical Papyri* to Gnostic writings.

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