

Violent Passions? *Nekudaimones* in Greek Erotic Magic
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The explicitly violent and sexual language employed by the authors of Greco-Egyptian erotic magic raises an important question about the relationship between the client and target of the spell. Does the client genuinely desire the extreme subjugation of the target individual, or does this exaggerated language instead reflect the magical context of an *agogē* spell? If the latter, then what specific aspect of erotic magic demands the use of such language for its magical efficacy?

I contend that a close examination of *PGM* IV.296-466 and the related activated spells in the *Supplementum Magicum* reveals that the violent language of *agogē* spells derives from the relationship between the spell-writer/caster and the *nekudaimōn* employed as an agent of the spell. Since the *PGM* spells represent the *nekudaimōn* as an active participant in the magical process, the interaction between the spell-caster and the *nekudaimōn* adds a second dimension to the magical hierarchy of the human actors (author, spell-caster, client, and target). The *nekudaimones* were bound by an asymmetrical double condition frequently expressed through coercive and violent language: obey and be released, disobey and be punished. The exceptionally inferior status of the *nekudaimōn*, compared to the exaggerated magical power and proficiency of the spell-caster, compelled its obedience to the spell-caster's demands.

The violent domination of the *nekudaimōn* by the spell-caster forms a marked mode of discourse appropriate to a specifically magical setting. The spell-caster transfers this aggression to the relationship between the client and target through the instructions dictated to the *nekudaimōn*, creating an implicit analogical relationship between him/herself and the *nekudaimōn* on the one hand, and the client and target on the other. Thus the overtly violent tone and content of these *agogē* spells reflects the specific context of the magical setting rather social attitudes towards erotic passion.