



The papyri of *The Book of Jannes and Jambres* in the context of the lost Greek novels

Los papiros de *El libro de Jannes y Jambres* en el contexto de las novelas griegas perdidas

Els papiris de *The Book of Jannes and Jambres* en el context de les novel·les gregues perdudes

Os papiros de *O Livro de Jannes e Jambres* no contexto dos romances gregos perdidos

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**Abstract:** A revision of some of the Greek novel topics and *loci paralleli* that we can find in a lost work, known as *The Apocryphon of Jannes and Jambres*. The author and the date are unknown but 7 –perhaps 8– testimonies from the original text have been preserved thanks to the papyri and parchments. They correspond to different supports and languages.

**Resumen:** Ese trabajo es una revisión de algunos de los temas novedosos griegos y loci paralelos que podemos encontrar en una obra perdida, conocida como *El apócrifo de Jannes y Jambres*. El autor y la fecha son desconocidos, pero se han conservado 7 –quizás 8– testimonios del texto original gracias a los papiros y pergaminos. Corresponden a diferentes soportes e idiomas.

**Keywords:** *The Book of Jannes and Jambres* – Lost Greek novels – Old Testament apocrypha – Jewish, Egyptian and Christian Literature – Greek literary papyri and parchments – Magician tales.

**Palabras clave:** *El Libro de Jannes y Jambres* – Novelas griegas perdidas – Apócrifos del Antiguo Testamento – Literatura judía, egipcia y cristiana – Papiros y pergaminos literarios griegos – Cuentos de magos.

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## I. Introduction

The author and the date of *The Book of Jannes and Jambres* are unknown but 7 –perhaps 8– testimonies from the original text have been preserved thanks to the papyri and parchments. They correspond to different supports and languages.<sup>2</sup>

### Greek:

1. *P. Chester Beatty XVI*, papyrus codex, III-IV AD, Dublin.
2. *P. Vindob. inv. G 29456v + 29828v + 00180v + 28249v*, papyrus volume, verso, III AD, Vienna.
3. *P. Mich. inv. 4925v*, papyrus volume, verso, IV AD, Michigan.
4. *P. Heid. inv. G 1016*, papyrus codex, IV AD, Heidelberg.
5. *P. Oxy. 82.5290*, papyrus codex, IV AD, Oxford.

### Sahidic Coptic:

6. *P. Lips. inv. 2299*, papyrus codex (with translation into Anglo-Saxon), III-IV AD, Leipzig.

### Latin:

7. MS Cotton Tiberius B V/1, f. 87r-v, codex, XI AD, London.

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<sup>2</sup> Regarding the original in Greek, editions and commentaries by: **1. P. Chester Beatty XVI** (MP3 02640.200, LDAB 5467, TM 64247. PIETERSMA A., *The Apocryphon of Jannes and Jambres the Magicians. P. Chester Beatty XVI (with New Editions of Papyrus Vindobonensis Greek inv. 29456 + 29828 verso and British Library Cotton Tiberius B. v f. 87)*, Leiden: Brill 1994 y ERHO, T.M. & HENRY, B., AfP, 65(2019) pp.176-223); **2. P. Vindob. inv. G 29456v + 29828v + 00180v + 28249v** (MP3 02640.200, LDAB 5467, TM 64247. OELLACHER, Hans, *Miscellanea Giovanni Galbiati II*, Milan: Hoepli, 1951, pp. 179-188; MARAVAL, Pierre, “Fragments grecs du livre de Jannès et Jambré (Pap. Vindob. 29456 et 29828 verso),” *ZPE* 15 (1977), pp. 199–207; PIETERSMA Albert, *The Apocryphon of Jannes and Jambres the Magicians. P. Chester Beatty XVI (with New Editions of Papyrus Vindobonensis Greek inv. 29456 + 29828 verso and British Library Cotton Tiberius B. v f. 87)*, Leiden: Brill 1994 y PIETERSMA Albert, “Two More Fragments of the Vienna Jannes and Jambres”, *BASP* 49(2012), pp. 21–29; **3. P. Mich. inv. 4925v** (MP3 02640.300, LDAB 10307, TM 63854. SCHMELZ, Georg, in Andorlini, I. et alii (eds.), *Atti del XXII Congresso Internazionale di Papirologia. Firenze, 23-29 agosto 1998*, II, Florence 2001, pp. 1199-1212); **4. P. Heid. inv. G 1016** (MP3 02640.310, LDAB 8898, TM 67629. SCHMELZ, Georg, *Pap. Congr. XXII* (Firenze 1998), pp. 1207-1212 and HIRSCHBERGER, Martina, *Jüdisch-hellenistische Literatur i ibrem interkulturellen Kontext* (2012), pp. 229-265); **5. P. Oxy. 82.5290** (LDAB 702420, TM 702420. BERESFORD, S. “5290: Jannes and Jambres,” *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* 82 (2016), 1–6, pl. 1; **6. P. Lips. Inv. 2299** (KRUEGER, Frederic, *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* (AfP) 64 (2018), p. 148-198).



## **Ethiopic:**

8. Fragments of an Ethiopic recension.

**Several other texts containing excerpts.**

## **II. The magicians in the *Exodus***

The most widely known version of the legend goes back to the *Old Testament*, specifically, to the book of *Exodus* where a confrontation between two Egyptian magicians and the brothers Moses and Aaron is related. The Egyptian magicians are also brothers. In the biblical story, the characters are not mentioned by name, but, in other versions, they are called Jannes or Joannes and Jambres or Mambres.<sup>3</sup>

The story is well known: Following the instructions of God, Moses and Aaron visited the Pharaoh to ask him to let the Israelites, enslaved by the Egyptians, leave the country. The Pharaoh responds by asking them to make a demonstration of divine power. Aaron throws his cane onto the floor and it turns into a snake. The Pharaoh orders the Egyptian magicians to come to the palace; they respond with the same trick, but their snakes are devoured by Aaron's serpents.

From this point, the story focuses on a series of demonstrations and the episode becomes a battle of magic powers between two rival sides: the power of God against Egyptian magic. Moses and Aaron are performing wonders, Jannes and Jambres trying to answer, but with less and less success.

The prodigies take the form of a series of plagues that spread over Egypt. The sixth and last one consists of ulcers. Moses and Aaron pick up a handful of ash from an oven and throw it into the air. It turns into dust that expands throughout Egypt, causing people and animals to be covered with purulent ulcers, according to *Exodus*, the magicians among them.

## **III. *The Book of Jannes and Jambres***

There are different versions of the end of this story: Jannes and Jambres leave, afflicted with ulcers, and die crossing the Red Sea, along with the Pharaoh's army. Another version refers to the Egyptians joining Moses, who defies God's command and accepts them.

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<sup>3</sup> Ιάννης / Ιωάννης and Ιάμβρης / Ιωάμβρης.



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Apart from the biblical text, we find testimonies of the legend of Jannes and Jambres throughout the Mediterranean. They are quoted by Numenius, Pliny the Elder, Apuleius, and others.<sup>4</sup> Some sources identify all four rivals, Moses, Aaron, Jannes and Jambres, as Jewish magicians.

Seven texts have been recovered from the original lost work. The fragments cover a wide period from the 3rd to the 11th century AD, from the Classical to the Byzantine period. They are preserved in different libraries in Dublin, Vienna, Michigan, Heidelberg, Oxford and Leipzig.

The texts are written in different languages: Hebrew, Greek, Sahidic Coptic, Latin and Anglo-Saxon. Furthermore, fragments of an Ethiopic translation have been identified, but the edition is still in progress.

In addition, the fragments exemplify both the two principal materials and the two main formats of the book in Antiquity: papyrus and parchment; roll and codex. Moreover, one of the manuscripts includes illustrations.

Therefore, the set of testimonies of this legend constitutes a very rich legacy.

From a material point of view, the circumstances in which *The Book of Jannes and Jambres* has been transmitted are comparable to those that occur in the case of fragmentary novels. For example, from the Greek original of other known as apocryphal, *The Journal of the Trojan War* by Dictys of Crete, we have four papyri of varying sizes, a translation into Latin by Septimius and versions by Byzantine scholars.<sup>5</sup>

Parthenope's novel consists of three papyri, a Persian version in verse by 'Unsourî from the XIth century, a Coptic martyrion of Sta. Batanuba, and references in other literary and iconographic sources from the Empire.<sup>6</sup> In the case of *Incredible things beyond Thule*

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<sup>4</sup> Numenius, *Frs.* 9.2-5, Plin. Nat. XXX.2.11 and Apul., *De Magia* 90.

<sup>5</sup> Edition by GÓMEZ PEINADO, Elisabet, *La Ephemeris Belli Troiani: edición del texty estudio de los aspectos filológicos y literarios*. Tesis Doctoral, Alicante (2015). See also MOVELLÁN LUIS, Mireia, *La crónica troyana de Dictis de Creta. Trama épica y falsa historia*, Tesis Doctoral, Madrid 2015; BRESCIA, Graziana, LENTANO, Mario, SCAFOGLIO, Giampiero y ZANUSSO, Valentina, *Revival and Revision of the Trojan Myth: Studies on Dictys Cretensis and Dares Phrygius*, Hildesheim, Zúrich y Nueva York: Georg Olms Verlag 2018, pp. 53-75.

<sup>6</sup> Editions by STEPHENS, Susan A. y WINKLER, John J., *Ancient Greek Novels. The Fragments. Introduction, Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995, pp. 81-89, LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz, *Fragmentos papiráceos de novela griega*, Alicante: Univesidad de Alicante

by *Antonius Diogenes*, we have at least 5 papyri (they could be 7), a summary by the Byzantine Photius, and extensive references in the *Life of Pythagoras* by Porfirio and in *About the months* by Ioannis Lydus.<sup>7</sup> The materials relating to *Sesonchosis* consist of 5 papyri: four are fragments from volume, one is a page of codex, so they mark the transition period between the roll-format and the codex-format.<sup>8</sup>

Until 1994, the work of reference to know *The Book of Jannes and Jambres* (hereafter *BJJ*) had been that of Pietersma,<sup>9</sup> but for a time now new fragments and new studies have been published.<sup>10</sup> In any case, *Papyrus Chester Beatty* of Dublin is still the main source for approaching the original work as it has preserved the longest text.

#### IV. The plot of *The Book of the Words of Jannes and Jambres*

Taking into account the preserved fragments, the plot of the work can be reconstructed as follows: Following biblical literature and classics sources –Historiography and even Novel, amongst others–, the story starts with a *proemium* that includes a summary that can be considered the *titulus*. The *Incipit*:

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1998, pp. 121–132 and HÄGG, Tomas y UTAS, Bo, *The Virgin and Her Lover. Fragments of an Ancient Greek Novel and a Persian Epic Poem*, Leiden –Boston: Brill 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Edition by SCHMEDIT, Helena, *Antonius Diogenes, “Die unglaublichen Dinge jenseits von Thule»”. Edition, Übersetzung, Kommentar*, Berlín-Nueva York: De Gruyter, 2020. See also STEPHENS, Susan A. y WINKLER, John J., *Ancient Greek Novels. The Fragments. Introduction, Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995, pp. 101-172.

<sup>8</sup> STEPHENS, Susan A. y WINKLER, John J., *Ancient Greek Novels. The Fragments. Introduction, Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995, pp. 246-266 y LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz, *Fragmentos papiráceos de novela griega*, Alicante: Universidad de Alicante 1998, pp. 357-375. Trnka-Amrhein 2016 has edited two new fragments: P. Oxy. 5262 and 5263: Trnka-Amrhein, Yvona, “P. Oxy. 2562. Sesonchosis”, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, 84, London, 2016a, 19–24 and “P. Oxy. 2563. Sesonchosis”, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, 84, London, 2016b, 25–40. See also the studies by TRNKA-AMRHEIN, Y. (2018) “The fantastic four: Alexander, Sesonchosis, Ninus and Semiramis”, en R. Stoneman, K. Nawotka y A. Wojciechowska (eds.) *The Alexander Romance: History and Literature*. Groningen: Barkhuis and Groningen University Library, pp. 23–48 and LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz, “Aportaciones al argumento de la novela Sesonchosis”, en JUFRESA, Montserrat y MESTRE, Francesca (Eds.), *Jornades Internacionals sobre el Món Clàssic en Honor de Carles Miralles*, Barcelona.

<sup>9</sup> PIETERSMA A. *The Apocryphon of Jannes and Jambres the Magicians. P. Chester Beatty XVI (with New Editions of Papyrus Vindobonensis Greek inv. 29456 + 29828 verso and British Library Cotton Tiberius B. v f. 87)*, Leiden: Brill 1994.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. n. 2.



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αὕτη ἡ] βιβλ[ο]ς λόγων Ἰάν[ου] καὶ Ἰαμβ[ρου] τῶν μάγων] ἐν Μέμφι ἐπὶ βασιλέω[ς] Φαράω  
[ἦν ἔγραψεν.... (BJJ, P. Chester Beatty 16)

could be compared to:

Ἡροδότου Ἀλικαρνησέος ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις ἥδε, ὡς μήτε τὰ γενόμενα ἐξ ἀνθρώπων τῷ  
χρόνῳ ἐξίτηλα γένηται... (Hdt. I.1.0)

And

Θουκυδίδης Ἀθηναῖος ξυνέγραψε τὸν πόλεμον τῶν Πελοποννησίων καὶ Ἀθηναίων... (Thuc.  
I.1)

And

Χαρίτων Ἀφροδισιεύς, Ἀθηναγόρου τοῦ ῥήτορος ὑπογραφεύς, πάθος ἐρωτικὸν ἐν  
κυρακούσῃς γερόμενον διηγῆσομαι... (Charit., *De Chaerea et Callirhoe* I)

And

Ἀνεγνώσθη Ἀντωνίου Διογένους τῶν ὑπὲρ Θούλην ἀπίστων λόγοι κδ'. Δραματικὸν οἱ  
λόγοι... (Antonius Diogenes, *De incredibilibus* ap. Photius, *Bibliotheca*, 109a6).

Jannes and Jambres are the sons of Balaam or Petefres, officer and priest of the Egyptian god Apis in Heliopolis. Their mother is anonymous:

... ὃν κύντροφος τοῦ βασι[λ]έως Φα[ρά]ω... ἦ]ν ἱερὸς τοῦ [Καράπιδος καὶ Πετεφ]ρῆς τοῦ  
Ἄπιδος (BJJ, P. Chester Beatty 16 + P. Mich. inv. 4925v).

Could be compared to:

Ἐρμοκράτης, ὁ κυρακούσιων στρατηγός, οὗτος ὁ νικήσας Ἀθηναῖος, εἶχε θυγατέρα  
Καλλιρρόην τοῦνομα, θαυμαστὸν τι χρῆμα παρθένου καὶ ἄγαλμα τῆς ὄλης κυκείας...  
(Charit., *De Chaerea et Callirhoe* I).



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It is mentioned also the protagonist's beauty:

... νεανίε εὐειδῆς [ἔ]χων... (BJJ, P. *Chester Beatty* 16).

And it is similar to:

ἦν γὰρ τὸ κάλλος οὐκ ἀνθρώπινον ἀλλὰ θεῖον... Χαιρέας γὰρ τις ἦν μειράκιον εὖμορφον, πάντων ὑπερέχον, οἶον Ἀχιλλέα καὶ Νιρέα καὶ Ἴππόλυτον καὶ Ἀλκιβιάδην πλάττει καὶ γραφεῖς δεικνύουσι, πατρὸς Ἀρίστωνος, τὰ δεύτερα ἐν κυρακούσαις μετὰ Ἐρμοκράτην φερομένου (Charit., *De Chaerea et Callirhoe* I).

The text continues with the description of a dream: an intruder enters the garden of the house and cuts down a cypress tree. The dream has, in fact, a premonitory meaning: it announces the defeat of Jannes and Jambres against Moses, but the sorcerers are not able to interpret it correctly and only place guardians to protect the garden.

Jannes organizes a meeting in his garden of Memphis with the sages of Egypt and he proposes the abolition of marriage as an institution. When they are quietly sitting under an apple tree, there is suddenly a bolt of lightning and the earth shakes. Jannes runs into his library, where he keeps his magical tools to investigate the meaning of the event, and concludes that it is linked to a threat that looms over Egypt. Then, four men arrive and tell Jannes that he will soon go down to Hades "to serve as a companion to the corpses forever." Jannes returns to the conversation with his friends on the same subject of the institution of marriage.

Next, messengers arrive from the Pharaoh asking him to go to the palace to compete with Moses and Aaron. The Israelites are impressing everyone with their prodigies. Moses and Jannes engage in a magic contest, but the Egyptian becomes ill because of the ulcers described in Exodus or of some other illness caused by their confrontation with Moses. Finally, Jannes leaves the palace and warns the Pharaoh of the divine power that Moses possesses. More meteorological prodigies take place, that Jannes interprets as a prelude to the death of an unjust generation.

The protagonist, already sick and realizing that he is about to die, says goodbye to his mother and friends, makes his last wishes, names his brother Jambres as heir and leaves him in charge of keeping the secret documents, after his death. At this point, the plot reaches its climax and the misfortune advances inexorably: Jannes receives news about the Egyptian disaster in the parting of the Red Sea. Later, he exchanges loving words with his mother and he dies with great suffering (possibly by fire). Soon after, his

mother experiences the same fate, probably when trying to help her son. Other sources, however, suggest that the brothers died under the waters of the Red Sea, along with the Egyptians.

The only one left alive is Jambres, who until now had been left out of the storyline. Jambres decides to open Jannes' spell books under the apple tree in the garden and he performs a ritual of necromancy. Finally, the soul of his brother wakes up. The spell has worked and Jannes' ghost comes out of his grave to inform Jambres of what will happen in the future, to tell him about his own death and describe Hades. The scene is known as Janne's *paenitentia*.

## V. Magic: novel topics and *loci paralleli*

The study and interpretation of this work from the theological point of view is rich and complex. Its moralizing purpose is clear: the sinner who confronts God, using wiles against nature, will not find rest in hell.<sup>11</sup>

However, I am going to dispense with religious issues and I am going to deal, exclusively, with tackling some of the fictional topics and *loci paralleli* that appear in the Greek text of Jannes and Jambres, especially those that we also find in fragmentary novels.<sup>12</sup>

In a recent article, Frederic Krueger demonstrated the dependence of this work on pagan Egyptian tales about priest and magicians and studied a Sahidic-Coptic papyrus that offers a specific Egyptian literary history of the legendary magicians.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> MUÑOZ GALLARTE, Israel, “El paraíso de Janes y Jambres en Historia Monachorum in Aegypto Origen y variantes de una sincrética leyenda mediterránea”, *Ambitos: revista de estudios de ciencias sociales y humanidades*, 34 (2015), pp. 19-28

<sup>12</sup> Regarding lost novel that had been transmitted only by papyrological fragments, see the editions by STEPHENS and WINKLER 1995 and LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ 1998; BARBERO, Marco, *I Babyloniaca di Giamblico. Testimonianze e frammenti*, Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso 2015 and SCHMEDT, Helena, *Antonius Diogenes, “Die ungläublichen Dinge jenseits von Thule»”. Edition, Übersetzung, Kommentar*, Berlin-Nueva York: De Gruyter, 2020. About the transmission of ancient fantastic fiction, STRAMAGLIA, Antonio, “The Textual Transmission of Ancient Fantastic Fiction: Some Case Studies”, in M. BAUMBACH - N. HÖMKE (edd.), *Fremde Wirklichkeiten. Literarische Phantastik und antike Literatur*, Heidelberg, Winter 2006, pp. 289-31.

<sup>13</sup> KRUEGER, F., “A Sahidic Exodus Apocryphon and the Legend of Jannes & Jambres”, *Archiv für Papyrusforschung*, 64 (2018), pp. 148-198.



Other fictional papyri also betray their dependence on Egyptian models. That is the case of the novel about Pharaoh Sesonchosis.<sup>14</sup> Demotic literary papyri containing stories about this Pharaoh were discovered. They are dated to the late 1st century and early 2nd century AD and were found in the library of Tebtunis temple. The heroes of these demotic texts are, in most cases, princes or kings who rebel against the Assyrian domination and we are sure that the origin of these fictions date back to the pharaonic period.<sup>15</sup> I suspect that some episodes of the *Life of Alexander the Great* are also linked to translations into Greek of Demotic texts and I suppose that is also the case of the story of the Egyptian magician Tinouphis.<sup>16</sup>

Common elements to the papyri of Jannes and Jambres and the novel fragments are: the figure of the Egyptian magician, the two brothers who are the protagonists, the *incubatio* or prophetic dream, the magic contest, the book on magic, the scene of necromancy or *nekuia*, ghosts, graves, serpents, deserts, are among those that I think are most recognizable. Of course, magic is very present in Greek literature, it is already present in the founding text of the history of Greek literature, the Queen Circe is a magician and, in the next book XI, we attend a journey to Hades, the famous *Nekuia*.

**1. The Egyptian *mágos*:** *Sapientior eran omniu(m) sapientium magorum* (BJJ, Ms Cotton Tiberius).

The figure of the magos occurs frequently in Ancient novels:<sup>17</sup> the prophets Calasiris and Zatchlas, in Heliodorus;<sup>18</sup> or Diophanes, in Apuleius, although he is not Egyptian

<sup>14</sup> Cf. n. 8.

<sup>15</sup> WIDMER, Ghislaine, “Sésostris, figure de légende dans la littérature”, in FL. MORFOISSE; G. ANDREU-LANOË (edd.), *Catalogue de l'exposition Sésostris III*, Gand: Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Université de Lille, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique 2014.

<sup>16</sup> LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz, “Semejanzas entre el PLeid. U (El sueño de Nectanebo) y el PTurner 8(Tinufis)”, *Lucentum* 19(2000), 221-227 and “New contributions to some papyri labelled as ‘incerta’ in a corpus of novel fragments”, en G. Bastianini, A. Casanova, *I papiri del romanzo antico. Convegno internazionale di studi*, Florence: Istituto Papirologico G. Vitelli 2010, pp. 95-119.

<sup>17</sup> Regarding magic and ancient novel, RUIZ MONTERO, Consuelo “Magic in the Ancient Novel” in Michael PASCHALIS, Stavros FRANGOULIDIS, Stephen HARRISON, Maaïke ZIMMERMAN (eds.), *The Greek and the Roman Novel: Parallel Readings* (= Ancient Narrative Supplements 8), Groningen: Barkhuis 2007, pp. 38-56.

<sup>18</sup> JONES, Meriel, “The Wisdom of Egypt: Base and Heavenly Magic in Heliodoros' Aithiopia”, *Ancient Narrative* 4 (2005), pp. 79–98

but Chaldaean.<sup>19</sup> Iamblichus himself, author of the *Babyloniaka*, claims to have been instructed in magic.<sup>20</sup>

Regarding the fragments, Paapis, the character of *Τὰ ὑπὲρ Θούλην ἄπιστα*, is an Egyptian priest and magician, who plays an antagonist role in this novel.<sup>21</sup> The anthroponym derives from the ox Apis and was popular in Egypt. The Greek form is also attested to in inscriptions and papyri. Greek sources refer to the existence of a famous Egyptian magician, called Amenothos Paapis, who lived during the reign of Pharaoh Amenhotep III, around 1390 BC.<sup>22</sup>

Πάπαις (or Πάπαις) lives in the court of Enesidemo, Tyrant of Leontinos.<sup>23</sup> He does not seem to live in a stable residence, but to be itinerant, so he is very attached to a bag, where he keeps his books and magic herbs. The young protagonists steal it and Paapis, as punishment for having taken his magic tools, casts a spell on them and on their parents, so they will be alive at night and dead by day. Paapis dies murdered by a character who is in love with the protagonist:

... καὶ ὅσα Πάπαις τις ἱερὸς αἰγύπτιος, τῆς πατρίδος αὐτοῦ λεηλατηθείσης καὶ παροικήσας Τύρον καὶ φιλοξενηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν τεκόντων τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς Δερκυλλίδα καὶ Μαντινίαν, καὶ δόξας τὰ πρῶτα εἶναι τοῖς εὐεργέταις καὶ ὄλω τῷ οἴκῳ, μετὰ ταῦτα ὅσα κακὰ τὸν τε οἶκον καὶ αὐτοὺς καὶ αὐτῶν γονέας εἰργάσατο (*Antonius Diogenes, De incredibilibus* ap. Photius, *Bibliotheca*).

<sup>19</sup> Stavros FRANGOULIDIS, *Witches, Isis and Narrative. Approaches to Magic in Apuleius' Metamorphoses*, Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter 2008. Regarding Apuleius is also interesting: COSTANTINI, Leonardo, *Magic in Apuleius' Apologia. Understanding the charges and the forensic strategies in Apuleius' speech*, Berlin and New York: De Gruyter 2019.

<sup>20</sup> CONNORS, Catherine, "Babylonian Stories and the Ancient Novel: Magi and the Limits of Empire in Iamblichus' *Babyloniaka*", in M.P. FUTRE PINHEIRO et al. (edd.), *Cultural Crossroads in the Ancient Novel*, Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter 2018, 39-50.

<sup>21</sup> "8.3. Magie" in SCHMEDIT, Helena, Antonius Diogenes, "*Die ungläublichen Dinge jenseits von Thule*". *Edition, Übersetzung, Kommentar*, Berlin-Nueva York: De Gruyter, 2020, 541-550.

<sup>22</sup> Joseph. *Ap.* I.233. GALAN, José M., "Amenhotep son of Hapu as Intermediary between the People and God", in Z. Hawass (ed.), *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists*, vol. 2, American University in Cairo Press, 2003, pp. 221-229.

<sup>23</sup> Πάπαις following PARSONS, Peter J., "4761. Novel (Antonios Diogenes?)", *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, LXX (2006), pp. 15-22 and Greek accentuation of Egyptian names.

Nectanebo II, Νεκτανεβώς, the last Pharaoh of Egypt, who the Persians expelled from the throne in 343 BC, was also a magician and an astrologist.<sup>24</sup> He is the protagonist of a papyrus known as *Nectanebo's Dream*, which is a Greek translation from a Demotic original. The text takes the form of a letter written by a craftsman called Petesis to the Pharaoh. The fragment provides information on the reason why Nectanebo flees from Egypt to the court of King Philippos.<sup>25</sup>

This subject links directly with the *Historia Alexandri Magni*. The biographical novel begins precisely with an episode known as the *novella* of Nectanebo. In Macedonia, Nectanebo seduces Olympiade, metamorphosed into the God Amun and, as a result of their encounters, the Queen gets pregnant and Nectanebo is Alexander's father:

Οί κοφώτατοι Αἰγύπτιοι... φασι γὰρ τὸν Νεκτανεβῶ, τὸν τελευταῖον τῆς Αἰγύπτου βασιλέα, μεθ' ὃν ἡ Αἴγυπτος ἐξέπεσε τῆς τοιαύτης τιμῆς, τῆ μαγικῆ δυνάμει πάντων περιγενέσθαι. τὰ γὰρ κοσμικὰ στοιχεῖα λόγῳ πάντα αὐτῷ ὑπετάσσεται· εἰ γὰρ αἰφνιδίως πολέμου νέφος ἐπεληλύθει, οὐκ ἔσκυλλε στρατόπεδον οὐδὲ ὄπλων πομπέματα οὐδὲ σιδήρου ἀκονήματα οὐδὲ πολεμικὰ μηχανήματα, ἀλλ' εἰσῆρχετο εἰς τὰ βασιλεια καὶ ἐλάμβανε χαλκῆν λεκάνην καὶ γεμίσας αὐτὴν ὕδατος ὀμβρίου ἔπλαττεν ἐκ κηροῦ πλοιαρίδια μικρὰ καὶ ἀνθρωπάκια καὶ ἐνέβαλλεν αὐτὰ εἰς τὴν λεκάνην καὶ ἔλεγεν αἰοιδῆν, κρατῶν ἐβεννίνην ῥάβδον, καὶ ἐπεκαλεῖτο τοὺς ἀγγέλους καὶ θεὸν Λιβύης Ἄμμωνα. καὶ οὕτω τῆ τοιαύτη λεκανομαντεία τὰ ἐν τῇ λεκάνῃ πλοῖα... τῶν ἐπερχομένων πολεμίων ἀπολλυμένων ἢ ἀνθρώπων περιγενέτο· τὸ δ' αὐτὸ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν διὰ γῆς ἐπερχομένων (*Historia Alexandri Magni Recensio a sive Recensio vetusta* I.1.1).<sup>26</sup>

Tinuphis, Τינוῦφισ, is also an Egyptian magician, who is the protagonist of another papyrus. I have related this fragment to Nectanebo's dream, in some publications.<sup>27</sup>

Tinuphis arrives at the court of a Persian King and thanks to his skills and knowledge, he saves the monarch. However, the magician is condemned to death because he is accused of committing adultery with the Queen. The sentence is to be buried alive in a

<sup>24</sup> FORGEAU, *Annie*, *Nectanébo: la dernière dynastie*, Paris: Éditions Khéops, D.L. 2018.

<sup>25</sup> P. Leid. U. Edition by LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz, *Fragmentos papiráceos de novela griega*, Alicante: Univesidad de Alicante 1998, pp. 20-36. See n. 15.

<sup>26</sup> Edition by KROLL, *Wilhelm*, *Historia Alexandri Magni (Pseudo-Callisthenes)*, Berlin: Weidmannsche, 1926. See also STONEMAN, Richard, NAWOTKA, Krzysztof and WOJCIECHOWSKA, Agnieszka (edd.), *The Alexander Romance: History and Literature*, Groningen: Bakhuis 2018.

<sup>27</sup> LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz, "Semejanzas entre el PLeid. U (El sueño de Nectanebo) y el PTurner 8(Tinufis)", *Lucentum* 19(2000), 221-227 and "New contributions to some papyri labelled as 'incerta' in a corpus of novel fragments", in G. BASTIANINI, A. CASANOVA, *I papiri del romanzo antico. Convegno internazionale di studi*, Florence: Istituto Papirologico G. Vitelli 2010, pp. 95-119

building, but the builder and executioner of Tinuphis, is a Greek slave who, to please the woman he is in love with, saves the prophet by means of a slab. The eunuch in charge of overseeing the execution, surprised by the large size of the building, asks the builder the reason for these dimensions and he replies that this size corresponds to the priestly dignity of Tinuphis:<sup>28</sup>

... ἄσχετον καὶ τις εἶπεν βροτῶν... οὗτος, ὃ θεοί, βασιλέως σωτήρ φανείσ... κα κατακρίθη μοιχάδα... ὁ νόμος, ἂν γυνή μοιχᾶς ἢ ἱερε... καὶ τοῦ κατακριθέντος... βροτῶν οὐκ ἀγρότης... δαιμόνων μοιρῆς γὰρ ἦν... ἐντεῦθεν ἦν πλίνθος μία κώτερρα τοῦ προφήτου [ἀλλ'] οὐδὲ εἶς ἠπίστατο ἦν αὐτόσοφον ὁ τέκτων ἐ[ν]ταῦθα γούν ὁ δῆμιος ἔστῃς τὸν προφήτην, ὁ δῆμιος δ' ὁ δυσσεβῆς, ὁ τοῖς τρόποισι φαῦλος ἔσωσε τ[ῆ] ποθουμένη ζῶντα τὸν Τינוῦφιν πορθοῦ γὰρ ἦν ὑπηρέτης καὶ τῆς πικρᾶς [ἀν]άγκης. ἐπὶ γούν μέγιστον οἶκον παρὰ [τῆν] συνήθειαν οὗτος ἐποίησεν, ἐπύθετο τὸ αἴτιον ὁ Μαγώας καὶ ὁ Σωσίας ἀπεκρίνατο ἔργω τοῦτο ἐπίτηδες π[ε]ποι[η]μέναι διὰ τὸ τὸν Τינוῦφιν μάγον τ[υ]χάνειν· ὁ δ' εὔ λέγειν ὑπολαβῶν τὸν δῆμιον ἀπέστῃ· τελέσας δὲ πά[ν]τα ὁ Σωσίας πρὸς τὴν Ἰσιάδα... (P. Turner 8 *Tinouphis*).

## 2. Siblings

In Iamblichus' *Babyloniaka*, *Τὰ Βαβυλωνιακά*, two brothers, Tigris and Euphrates, and his sister Mesopotamia, are the children of the priestess and priest of the Aphrodite cult. In the Diogenes' *Apista*, *Τὰ ὑπὲρ Θούλην ἄπιστα*, the young protagonists of one of the parallel plots of the novel are a brother and a sister called Derkyllis and Mantinias. The siblings meet the magician Paapis in Leontinos, steal his bag, and take it to Regio and Metaponte:

Ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ Θούλῃ Δεινίας κατ' ἔρωτος νόμον ὁμιλεῖ Δερκυλλίδι τινὶ καλουμένη ἣτις γένει μὲν ὑπῆρχε Τυρία τῶν κατὰ τὴν πόλιν εὐπατριδῶν, ἀδελφῶ δὲ συνῆν ὄνομα Μαντινία... φιλοξενηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν τεκόντων τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς Δερκυλλίδα καὶ Μαντινίαν (Antonius Diogenes, *De incredibilibus* ap. Photius, *Bibliotheca*).

**3. Books on magic and the place where they are preserved:** Jannes' library would be in his house. When Jannes died, Jambres is in charge of and the library and the secret documents:

<sup>28</sup> P. Turner 8, *Tinouphis*. Edition by STEPHENS, Susan A. y WINKLER, John J., *Ancient Greek Novels. The Fragments. Introduction, Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995, pp. 400-408 and LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz, *Fragmentos papiáceos de novela griega*, Alicante: Univesidad de Alicante 1998, 254-265.

[ἐσπέ]ρα δὲ γενομέ[η]ς...<sup>29</sup> ὥστε ἐκ[ρ]ι[ζ]ωθῆναι τινὰ[ς κυπαρι]σσους ἀπὸ το[ῦ] παραδίσου  
ταῦ[τά τε ὁ Ἰάννης] ἔδραμεν εἰς τὴν βιβ[λιο]θήκην ὅπου αἰ δυνάμις... λαβῶ[ν τὴν βιβλον  
εἶπ]εν δ[ὲ τῷ Ἰάμβ]ρη... (BJJ, P. Chester Beatty 16).

In contrast, Paapis has to keep his books with him in a simple bag, because he probably doesn't live in any fixed place:

Ἐπειτα ὡς λαβόντες Μαντινίας καὶ Δερκυλλίς ἐκ Λεοντίων τὸ Παάπιδος πηρίδιον μετὰ  
τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ βιβλίων καὶ τῶν βοτανῶν τὸ κιβώτιον, ἀπαίρουσιν εἰς Ῥήγιον κἀκεῖθεν εἰς  
Μεταπόντιον, ἐν ᾧ αὐτοὺς Ἀστραῖος ἐπικαταλαβὼν μηνύει κατὰ πόδας διώκειν Παάπιν...  
Ἀνοιξαντες οὖν οἱ περὶ Ἀλέξανδρον τὸ κιβώτιον, εὐρίσκουσι τὰς κυπαριτίνους δέλτους, ἅς  
(ὡς ἔοικε) κατέθηκε Δερκυλλίς κατὰ τὰς ἐντολάς Δεινίου (Antonius Diogenes, *De  
incredibilibus* ap. Photius, Bibliotheca)

And

...τὸ δὲ πη[ρίδιον τ]ῶν βιβλίων περι[... αὐτοῦ τῷ<ι> τραχῆ[λωι, ἴνα...]]ν κυγκαταφλεχθεῖη  
[... τὸ δὲ κιβώτιον παρεθῆ[|κατο] (Antonius Diogenes, *De incredibilibus*, P. Oxy. 4760).

**4. A magic contest:** A magic contest is arranged at the Pharaohs' palace, until finally Jannes leaves the competition ill:

[πρ]έσβις παρήσαν [ἀπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως λέ]γοντες· τάχιον ἔλθ[ῶν ἀντιστάθητι τῷ] Μωσῆι τῷ  
Ἐβραίῳ πο[ι]οῦντι σημεῖα] ὥστε πάντας θαυμάζ[ειν... ] εἶπεν [ ... β]ασιλέα [ ... ] . ἄγων ...  
(BJJ, P. Chester Beatty 16).

*P. Mich. inv. 5* and *P. Palau Rib. inv. 152* correspond to a description of the powers of a magician. He or she is able to control meteorological phenomena, to walk on the water and fly. He or she has many powers, except in respect to love, because the earth does not produce pharmakon to combat this plague:<sup>30</sup>

... κτήσεται· κἂν σελήνη<ι> κελεύσω, καταβήσεται· κἂν κωλύσαι θελή[ῃ]ω τὴν ἡμέραν, ἢ  
νύξ μοι μενεῖ· κἂν δεηθῶμεν πάλιν ἡμέρας, το φῶς οὐκ ἀπελεύσεται. κἂν πλεῦσαι θελήσω τὴν  
θάλατταν, οὐ δέομαι νεῶς· κἂν δι' ἀέρος ελθεῖν, κουφισθῆσομ[α]ι. ἐρωτικὸν μόνον οὐχ

<sup>29</sup> Ἐσπέρας δὲ γενομένης ἢ διῶρυξ κέχωστο πᾶσα, Ach. Tat. 3.16.1 5.7.1, 5.14.1, 8.7.2.

<sup>30</sup> Edition by STEPHENS, Susan A. y WINKLER, John J., *Ancient Greek Novels. The Fragments. Introduction, Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995, pp. 173-178 and LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz, *Fragmentos papiráceos de novela griega*, Alicante: Univesidad de Alicante 1998, 254-265.

εὐρίκιω φάρμακον, οὐ ποιῆται δυνάμενον, οὐ παύσαι δυνάμενον; ἡ γῆ γὰρ, φοβουμένη τὸν θεόν, οὐ φέρει. εἰ δέ τις ἔχει καὶ δίδωσιν, αἰτῶ, δέομαι δότε πιεῖν θέλω, χρῆσθαι θέλω. φαίνεσθαι σου τῆ θυγατρὶ καλὸν εἶδωλον λέγεις καὶ τοῦτό σοι παραδόξον εἶναι δοκεῖ. πόσοι δὲ ἄλλοι παραλόγων [ῆ]ρά[σθ]ησ[α]ν σωμαίων... (P. Mich. inv. 5).

The fragment may correspond to a scene from a novel, in which a magician is consulted by the parents of a girl who has fallen in love with an εἶδωλον (a ghost or a dream), but the style of the text is very elaborate so that it could be also a rhetorical exercise.

### 5. Prophetic dreams and *incubatio*:

... ἔλθειν δὲ αὐτὸν ἐπὶ κυπάρ[ισσόν τινα] καὶ ἔπρισεν αὐτήν καὶ καταλ[είπει] σπιθαμὰς τριῶν· ὠρθῶσεν δὲ αὐτήν ... [καὶ ἡ]μέρας ὀκτώ ἢ κυπάρισσο[ς] ... πα[ρ]ακούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰάννης τοῦ ἐν[υπνίου] καὶ ἐπι[θυμήσας] καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτ[οῦ] ἀπο[δραμοῦσαν] παρεκάλεσεν αὐτήν πο[ρ]ρευθῆναι εἰς τὰ ἴδια ... (BJJ P. Chester Beatty 16).

It is not clear where Jannes' unnamed mother is during the *incubatio*, probably in her garden.

In *Nectanebo's Dream*, Onuris, the God of war, protests because his temple is unfinished. The Pharaoh experiences the *incubatio* in the Serapeum at Memphis, the place where the papyrus was found and it is possible that the copyist, a certain Apollonius, belonged to the circle of the Serapeum of Memphis too:

Νεκτοναβῶ τοῦ βασιλέως καταγινόμενου καὶ ἀξιώσαντος τοὺς θεοὺς δηλῶσαι αὐτῶι τὰ ἐνεστηκότα, ἔδοξεν κατ' ἐνύπνιον πλοῖον παπύρινον (*Somnium Nectanebi PLeid. U*).

Occasionally, the situation makes the help of a dream interpreter necessary. In this case, when the Nectanebo wakes up, he calls Onuris' high priest and the prophet. They explain to him that an inscription in hieroglyphic characters is still to be carved. Then, Nectanebo hires the best craftsman to finish the inscription in hieroglyphic as soon as possible and he pays a large amount of money in advance.

However, Petesis is a drunk and does not finish the work. A beautiful girl appears in the last part of the text. Perhaps she complicates the situation even more, but we can't be sure because the papyrus is broken at this point. It is possible that, due to the

negligence of Petesis, the temple was never finished and the god of war abandoned Nectanebo.<sup>31</sup>

At the beginning of *Alexandri Magni Historia*, is Nectanebo who causes Philipos to have a dream in which Olympias will beget the son of a god. With the help of a dream interpreter, Philipos notices that his child is actually the son of the god Ammon of Lybia and that he will become famous:

Καὶ δὴ λαβὼν ἱέρακα πελάγιον καὶ τοῦτον μαγεύσας ὄνειροπομπίαν ποιεῖ τῷ Φιλίππῳ. εἶδε γὰρ θεὸν εὖμορφον πολὺν κερὰν τρόπον Ἄμμωνος συγκοιμώμενον τῇ Ὀλυμπιάδι <καὶ> ἀνιστάμενον τῆς κοίτης λέγειν αὐτῇ· Ἐκτὰ γαστροῦς ἔχεις ἐξ ἐμοῦ παῖδα, καὶ σοῦ καὶ τοῦ πατρὸς Φιλίππου γενόμενον ἔκδικον' (*Historia Alexandri Magni* I.8).

The birth of a new born baby is considered a threat as in the case of Moses and other very well known myths in Classic literature.

Theano, the protagonist of papyrus *P. Oxy.* 417, is a worried mother who begs a goddess to help her. She doesn't know where her son, who has been taken prisoner by the Scythians, is. Finally, the goddess appears in a dream, advising her to go to Athens to recover the boy:

... ἦν δὲ αὐτὴ ἡ Θεανῶ μήτηρ τ[ο]ῦ παιδὸς τοῦ Ἴστ.. ὃν [τῶ]ν Σκυθῶν ὁ ἰππασ[.]C α[.]χ[.]μάλωτον εἰλήφει. ἀρπαγέντος δὲ αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἐνεγκοῦσα τὴν συμφορὰν ἰκέτιC... [κ]ατ' ὄναρ τῆς θεοῦ· [χ]ρόνον δ[.]ε... [.]ενετρῆσαν· τελ[.]ε[.]υταῖον δὲ κελεύει αὐτὴν ἢ θεὸς ἀπαλλάττεσθαι τὴν ἐπ' Ἀθήνα[C] ὡς [δ]ὴ τ[ὸ]ν πα[.]ῖδα ἀπ[.]ο[.]ληψομένη· ἢ δὲ πε[.]ρι[.]αρχῆC οὔσα παραλαβοῦ[.]C τὴν Εὐνίκην ἥει [τὴ]ν ἐπ' Ἀ[.]θ[.]ῆναC· ἐπὶ τε [Ω]ρωπὸν καὶ τὸ τοῦ Ἀμφι[.]αρέω.ἱερ[.]δ[.]ον... (*Theano P. Oxy.* 3.417)<sup>32</sup>

**6. Necromancy, nekuiā, tomb, ghost:**<sup>33</sup> Here, Jambres reads the book and performs a ritual of necromancy:

<sup>31</sup> *P. Leid. U.* Edition by LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz, *Fragmentos papiráceos de novela griega*, Alicante: Univesidad de Alicante 1998, pp. 20-36. See n. 15 and 25.

<sup>32</sup> *POxy.* 417, Theano. Editions by STEPHENS, Susan A. y WINKLER, John J., *Ancient Greek Novels. The Fragments. Introduction, Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Princeton: Princeton Univesity Press 1995, pp. 438-445 y LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz, *Fragmentos papiráceos de novela griega*, Alicante: Univesidad de Alicante 1998, pp. 322–328.

<sup>33</sup> Ogden, Daniel., *Greek and Roman necromancy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.



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ἐπισπλανχνισ[άμενο δὲ οἶ] δύο λευκοφοροῶντες ἔφασα[ν αὐτοῖς]... [ἀ]νιζακ τὰς [βίβλους]  
τῆς μαγίας ἐποίη[σεν] νεκρομαντ[ίαν] καὶ ἄ]νήνεγεν ἐκ τ[οῦ] αἵδου τ[ὸ] εἶδωλον τοῦ  
ἀδ[ελ]φοῦ [α]ὐτοῦ καὶ ἀποκρ[ιθεντος] τοῦ Ἰάννου εἶπεν τῶι ἀ[δελ]φῶι Ἰάμβρωι ... (BJJ  
PChester Beatty 16)

And

... *Ap(er)uit Mambres libros magicos fratris sui Iamnis (et) fecit necromantian...* (BJJ Ms. Cotton  
Tiberius).

Necromancy scenes occur in the novels, for example, in Heliodoros.<sup>34</sup> In *Apollonius King of Tyrus*, a scene of faked necromancy also happens. Apollonius invokes the supposed shadow of her daughter Tharsia before Stranguilio and Dionysiae, the couple to whom Apollonius entrusted her as a child, but they, specially Dionysiae, with the complicity of her husband, order a foreman to kill her.

There are also ghosts that appear without having been summoned by a ritual of necromancy:<sup>35</sup>

Veniens igitur Tyrius Apollonius Antiochiam, ubi regnum reservatum suscepit, pergat inde Tyrum et constituit regem loco suo Athenagoram generum suum. Et cum eo et cum filia sua et cum exercitu regio navigans venit Tharsum. Et iussit statim comprehendi Stranguilionem et Dionysiadem uxorem suam et sedenti sibi adduci. Quibus adductis coram omnibus civibus dixit: “Cives beatissimi Tharsiae, nunquid Apollonio Tyrio exstitit aliquis ingratus vestrum?” At illi omnes una voce dixerunt: “Te regem, te patriae patrem diximus: propter te et mori libenter optavimus, cuius ope periculum famis effugimus. Pro hoc et statua a nobis posita in biga testatur”. Et Apollonius ait: “Commendavi filiam meam Stranguillioni et Dionysiadi uxori eius: hanc mihi reddere nolerunt”. Scelerata mulier ait: “Bone domine, quid?” Tu ipse titulum legisti monumenti!” Apollonius exclamavit: “Domina Tharsia, nata dulcis, si quid tamen apud inferos haeres, relinque Thartaream domum et genitoris tui vocem exaudi”. Puella de post tribunal regio habitu circumdata capite velato processit et revelata facie malae mulieri dixit: “Dionysiadis, saluto te ego ab inferis revocata”. Mulier scelerata ut vidit, toto corpore contremuit (*Apollonius Regis Tyri* RB 50).

<sup>34</sup> HOPFNER, Theodor. “Nekromantie”, RE XVI 2(1935), pp. 2218–2233.

<sup>35</sup> KORTEKAAS, G.A.A., *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri. Prolegomena, text edition of the two principal Latin recensions, bibliography, indices and appendices*, Groningen: Brill 1984; KORTEKAAS, G.A.A., *Commentary on the Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri and The Story of Apollonius, King of Tyre: A Study of Its Greek Origin and an Edition of the Two Oldest Latin Recensions*, Groningen: Brill 2004; and SCHMELING, Gareth, *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri*, Leipzig: Bibliotheca Teubneriana 1988.



In the *Apista*, is Derkyllis who goes and returns from Hades. Once there, she learns things about the underworld from her maid Myrto, who has died long ago. Paapis left Myrto dumb so the ghost is not able to speak. She has to address Derkyllis by means of a message written on a tablet. Paapis has probably also bewitched Derkyllis's nurse:

καὶ ὡς τὰ ἐν Ἴαιδου παρ' αὐτοῖς ἴδοι καὶ πολλὰ τῶν ἐκεῖσε μάθοι, διδασκάλῳ χρωμένη Μύρτῳ θεραπαινίδι οἰκείᾳ, πάλαι τὸν βίον ἀπολιπούσῃ καὶ ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν τὴν δέσποιναν ἀναδιδασκούσῃ... καὶ ὅπως μετὰ τὴν ἐξ Ἴαιδου αὐτῆς ἀναχώρησιν... (Antonius Diogenes, *De incredibilibus* ap. Photius, *Bibliotheca*)

And

... ἐσιώπα γὰρ ἀχρε[ίως· ἄκουσον] οὖν, ὅπερ τότε ἐπὶ νοῦ[ν ἦλθέ μοι· γραμ]ματεῖον διθυρον τῶν [τοιούτων, οἷα ἐς] διδασκάλου ἐπεφερόμεθα, ἀπ[ολαβοῦσα] δίδωμι τῇ Μυρτοῦ. “κεῖ σὺ ἄλλ’ ἔ[τι μοι μὴ] δύνασαι λαλεῖν,” ἔφην, “ἄλλ’ ἐν [γε τοῦτω χά]ραζον ὅσα εἰπεῖν ἐθέλεις. ἐγὼ δ[ὲ ἀναγνοῦ]σα εἴσομαι.” ἦσθη τὸ θεραπαιν[ιδιον· δὴλη] γὰρ διὰ τῆς ὀψεως ὡς αὐτίκα [μάλα ἐκδι]κίας ἐφ’ οἷς πέπονθε καὶ θεραπ[είας τευ]ζομένη. λαβοῦσα οὖν τὸ γραμμα[τεῖον καὶ] τῷ λύχνῳ προσελθοῦσα χαράτ[τει τῷ γρα]φείῳ πάνυ σπουδῆ ὅσα ἠβούλε[το ἐν μι]κροῖς πάνυ γράμμασι τ[ο]ῦ πλέο[ν ἐγγρά]ψαι, καὶ μοι δίδωσιν ἄμ[α] διανεύ[ουσα τῇ χει]ρὶ ἐξίεναι. ἐγὼ δὲ λαβοῦ[σα ἐξῆ]λθ[ον μὲν εὐ]θὺς οὐδαμῶς, πρότε[ρον δὲ ἀν]έγνων αὐτὸ καὶ ἐδήλ[ο]υ τάδε· “ἄπιθι, ὃ δέσπο[ινα, αὐτί]κα πρὸς τὴν τροφόν, καὶ ἀκουού[σης ἀνά]γνωθι τὰ λοιπά, ὡς ἂν κἀκείνη [μάθοι τὰ] ἐαυτῆς κακὰ μηδὲ ἐς τὸν πάντ[α χρόνον] ἀγνοοῦσα ἦδοιτο, ὡς ἂν καὶ τὰ ἐμ[ὰ γνοιή]τε. ἄπιθι, ἦδη, πρὶν φοιτῆσαι π[αρά ...] τὸν συγκοιμώμενον μὴ καὶ αὐτῆ δαίμο]νος ἀπολαύσης χαλεποῦ.” ταῦτα [δὲ ὡς ἀνέ]γνων, ἐβουλόμην μὲν... (Antonius Diogenes, *De incredibilibus*, PSI 10.1177).

Three papyri from the *Phoinikika* by Lollianos have been preserved. One of them narrates the appearance of a ghost, who tells one of the characters, Glauketes, the place where he wants to be buried in the company of a girl killed with him:<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Three papyri from the *Τὰ Φοινικικά* by Lollianos have been preserved (*P. Colon. inv. 3328*, *P. Oxy. 1368* and *P. Oxy. 4945*). Editions by STEPHENS, Susan A. y WINKLER, John J., *Ancient Greek Novels. The Fragments. Introduction, Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995, pp. 314-357 y LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz, *Fragmentos papiráceos de novela griega*, Alicante: Univesidad de Alicante 1998, pp. 163–208, OBBINK, Dirk, “P. Oxy. 4945. Lollianos, Phoinikika”, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri 73* (2009), pp. 103-113. See also: LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz and RUIZ MONTERO, Consuelo, “Magia y erotismo en la novela griega: P. Oxy. 4945 de las Feniciacas de Loliano” in Juan Francisco MARTOS MONTIEL, Cristobal MACÍAS VILLALOBOS, Raúl CABALLERO (edd.), *Plutarco, entre dioses y astros. Homenaje al profesor Aurelio Pérez Jiménez de sus discípulos, colegas y amigos*, vol. II Zaragoza: Libros Pórtico 2019, pp. 1223-1249.

...εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν θαψα[·...] μικρὸν ἀπὸ τῆς ὁδοῦ ἐκ[τρα]πεῖς. κεῖμαι δὴ ὑπὸ τῆ π[λα]τανίστῳ ἐκείνῃ καὶ μετ' ἐμοῦ κόρη καλὴ, ἄμφω ἀνηρημένοι." ὁ δὲ Γλαυκέτης ἐκπλαγεῖς, ὥσπερ εἰκός, ἐφθέγγετο μὲν οὐδὲν πρὸς ταῦτα, ἐπένευεν δὲ μόνον καὶ [ἄμ]α ἤλαυνεν. ὁ δὲ νεάν[ισκος] ἠφανίσθη ἐπινεύσαν[τος, ὁ] δὲ Γλαυκέτης κατὰ κρά[τος] ἤλαυνεν καὶ ἄμα ἐπεστρέφετο, εἶ που αὐτίς ἴδοι ἐκείνον, ἀλλ' οὐκέτι ἐβλεπεν (*Phoinikika* by Lollianos, *P. Oxy.* 1368.II)

And

... μετὰ ταῦτα χιτῶνας ἐνδύονται οἱ μὲν λευκούς, οἱ δὲ μέλα[νας τελ]αμῶσιν ὁμοίως τὰς κεφαλὰς περιειλήσαντες· καὶ τὰ πρόσωπα [οἱ μὲν τὰ] μέλανα ἔχοντες ἀσβόληι, οἱ δὲ [τὰ λε]υκὰ ψιμυθίῳ ἐχρεῖοντο. καὶ οὐ[τως αὐτοῦ]ς κοσμήσαντες ἐξήεσαν ἔξω· καὶ οὐ[τως αὐτοῦ]ς κοσμήσαντες ἐξήεσαν ἔξω. <οἱ> μὲν τὰ λευκὰ ἔχοντες διὰ τῶν ... [..... οἱ δὲ τὰ μ]έλανα διὰ τῆς σελήνης ἐπορεύοντο... (*Phoinikika* by Lollianos, *P. Colon.* inv.3328, B.1 verso).

The protagonist of fragment *P. Mich.* inv. 3378 –probably a fragment from a comic novel– is a ghost who talks in the first–person about another ghost.<sup>37</sup>

[Ἐ]μαυτοῦ [·][·] τὸ ξίφος. Διένευεν [δὲ] κα[ὶ] τὸ εἶδωλον ὠθεῖν κα[ὶ] προτρέποντι ἐφώκει. φα[τ]ιδρὸς οὖν καὶ γεγηθῶς, ὥσπερ πολέμιον κτείνων, ἐμαυτὸν ἀπογράφτω. ἐπεὶ δὲ ἔπεσον καὶ ἀπέθανον, γνωρίζω τὸ εἶδωλον, Σευῆρις ἦν.... (*P. Mich.* inv. 3378).

*P. Oxy.* 416 narrates the consequences of a vision, also in first person. Initially, the vision is pleasant, but suddenly the image becomes lugubrious and terrible. The narrator asks his partners who it is and the image causes the repentance of his sins. The vision could be one of the god Asclepius's epiphanies but there are also other possibilities:<sup>38</sup>

ἀνθ' οὗ εἰς ἡμᾶς χ[ρ]ηστὸς ἐφ[ά]νη [...] νευειν· σώματος μέχρι τέλους ὑμῶν τησδε... διάδοχον τὸν παῖδα καταλέγει· καὶ δη.οι παρα[λ].ιπαρὸν ἐψήφισται γέρας [ἐ]κατὸν καὶ δεκα. [...] μνηνόμενον ἐπ' ἄοριςτον... [Α]κλήπιον προσδοκᾷ ἐπιπέροντα... ἔώρα θεὸν τινα κιοτιαίῳ προῖόντα εἶ[δει] καὶ πενθικὴν καὶ φρικ[ώ]δη ἔχοντα [ῥ]φιν... τρομήσα· “ὦ,” εἶπεν,

<sup>37</sup> *P. Mich.* inv. 3378. Editions by STEPHENS, Susan A. y WINKLER, John J., *Ancient Greek Novels. The Fragments. Introduction, Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995, pp. 422-428 y LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz, *Fragmentos papiáceos de novela griega*, Alicante: Univesidad de Alicante 1998, pp. 223-226.

<sup>38</sup> *P. Oxy.* 416, *Asclepius*. Editions by STEPHENS, Susan A. y WINKLER, John J., *Ancient Greek Novels. The Fragments. Introduction, Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995, pp. 409-415 y LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ, María Paz, *Fragmentos papiáceos de novela griega*, Alicante: Univesidad de Alicante 1998, pp. 347-352.

“ἐταῖροι, τίς ἐσθ’ οὐτός... πενθαλέος ἄμα καὶ κατανηπιτικός...” καὶ δέος εἰσέρχεται εἰπόντων... ὁ χορή· ἀύχηρον δ’ ἐμφαίν[ω]ν ὄψ[ι]ν... εἶναι καταροηζάμενος τῆ[ν] ἐσθῆ[τα]... προσεδραμεν αὐτῷ... “ὧμοὶ τῶν ἀμαρτηθέντων,” εἶπεν, “... [τ]οῦ σώματος αἰκίζομένου... [εὐ]ωχοῦμενος ἐν ᾧ ἔδει με κρεῖττον... τὰς ἴσας ἀναδεδεγμ[έ]νας ὄλω... μαντευτὰ ἡμῖν ἢ φύσις...(P. Oxy. 3.416).

It is very interesting also the text of Apuleius where the father’s ghost is who appears in his daughter’s dreams with the rope tied around his neck and explains her the adultery of his stepmother and the circumstances of his death:

... sed ei per quietem obtulit sese flebilis patris sui facies adhuc nodo revincta cervice eique totum novercae scelus aperuit de adulterio, de maleficio et quem ad modum larvatus ad inferos demeasset... (Apuleius, *Met.* IX.29-31).

Jannes’ and Jambres’ family garden –παράδεισος– is well protected. It is a κηποτάφιον, 'funerary garden'. In the middle, is the tomb –μνήμα– of Janes and his mother, whose construction has been meticulously specified:

[τῆ]ν μη[τέ]ρα αὐτοῦ κα[ὶ] διε[κόμισεν] αὐτήν εἰς τὸ μνημ[η]ῖον τοῦ ἀδ[ελ]φοῦ αὐτοῦ (B/JJ, *PChester Beatty* 16).

In the *Apista*:

καὶ ὅπως μετὰ τὴν ἐξ Ἴτιδος αὐτῆς ἀναχώρησιν σὺν Κηρύλλῳ καὶ Ἀστραίῳ, ἥδη τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ διασπασθεῖσα, ἐπὶ τὸν Σεύρηνης ἀφίκοντο τάφον (Antonius Diogenes, *De incredibilibus* ap. Photius, *Bibliotheca*).

*P. Oxy.* 4944 refers to a scene from the *Ephemeris belli Troiani* by Dictys Cretensis. The text describes Hecuba’s murder and burial. Her tomb is in Maronea in the Chersonese and it is called Cinosema, because the Trojan Queen was known as "Dog tongue":<sup>39</sup>

[Ἐκάβη] ἀτείμως ἀνη(ι)ρέθη. ἐγένετο δ’ αὐτῆς τάφος ἐν Μαρω[ωνείαι] τῆς Χερσονήσου, ὃ Κυν[ὸ]ς Σῆ[μα] λέγεται, ἐπεὶ αὐτῆ[ν] κυ[ν]όγλωσσον ἔλεγον (P. Oxy. 4944, *Ephemeris belli Troiani*, Dictys Cretensis).

The final episode of the *Apista* presents the very well known literary cliché of the manuscript that is found and used as an authenticating strategy by novelists. The author

<sup>39</sup> *P. Oxy.* 4944. Edition by GÓMEZ PEINADO, Elisabet, *La Ephemeris Belli Troiani: edición del texto y estudio de los aspectos filológicos y literarios*. Tesis Doctoral, Alicante, 2015, pp. 85-102.

tells us that the text, written on cypress tablets, was found in a crypt along with six mysteriously inscribed coffins. The crypt was discovered by Alexander the Great after he seized Tyre.

A soldier led Alexander, Hephaestion and Parmenion to a place outside the town. There was a crypt with several stone graves where the names of their occupants and the years they had lived were inscribed. They found a small cypress chest by the wall with a clear inscription:<sup>40</sup> ἼΩ ξένε, ὅστις εἶ, ἄνοιξον, ἵνα μάθῃς ἃ θαυμάζεις, ‘Stranger, whoever you are, open, so that you may learn marvelous things’. When Alexander the Great’s companions opened the chest, they found the cypress tablets that contained the novel:

Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς Ἡφαιστῖωνα καὶ Παρμενῖωνα συμπαραλαβὼν εἶποντο τῷ στρατιώτῃ, καὶ καταλαμβάνουσιν ὑπογείους λιθίνους σοροὺς, ὧν ἡ μὲν ἐπεγέγραπτο· «Λυσίλλα ἐβίω ἔτη πέντε καὶ τριήκοντα», ἡ δὲ· «Μνάσων Μαντινίου ἐβίω ἔτη ζ' καὶ ζ' ἀπὸ ἐνὸς καὶ ο'», ἡ δὲ· «Ἀριστίων Φιλοκλέους ἐβίω ἔτη ζ' καὶ μ' ἀπὸ β' καὶ ν'», ἄλλη δὲ· «Μαντινίας Μνάσωνος ἔτη ἐβίω β' καὶ μ' καὶ νύκτας ζ' καὶ ψ'», ἑτέρα δὲ· «Δερκυλλίς Μνάσωνος ἐβίω ἔτη θ' καὶ λ' καὶ νύκτας ζ' καὶ ψ'», ἡ δὲ ἕκτη σορὸς· «Δεινίας Ἀρχαῶς ἐβίω ἔτη ε' καὶ κ' καὶ ρ'». Τούτοις διαποροῦντες πλὴν τῆς πρώτης σοροῦ (σαφὲς γὰρ τὸ ἐκείνης ἐπίγραμμα) ἐντυγχάνουσι παρὰ τοίχῳ κιβωτίῳ μικρῷ κυπαριττίου πεποιημένῳ ᾧ ἐνεγέγραπτο· «ἼΩ ξένε, ὅστις εἶ, ἄνοιξον, ἵνα μάθῃς ἃ θαυμάζεις». Ἀνοίξαντες οὖν οἱ περὶ Ἀλέξανδρον τὸ κιβώτιον, εὗρισκουσι τὰς κυπαριττίνους δέλτους, αἷς (ὡς εἶοικε) κατέθηκε Δερκυλλίς κατὰ τὰς ἐντολὰς Δεινίου. Ταῦτα Βάλαγρον εἰσάγει τῇ γυναικὶ γράφοντα, καὶ ὅτι τὰς κυπαριττίνους δέλτους μεταγραφάμενος διαπέμψει τῇ γυναικί. Καὶ λοιπὸν εἰσβάλλει ἐντεῦθεν ὁ λόγος εἰς τὴν τῶν κυπαριττίνων δέλτων ἀνάγνωσιν καὶ γραφήν, αἱ πάρεστι Δεινίας Κύμβρα διηγούμενος ἅπερ προείρηται. πλάσις τῷ Ἀντωνίῳ Διογένηι ἐσχημάτισται. (Antonius Diogenes, *De incredibilibus* ap. Photius, *Bibliotheca*).

**7. Other images: Serpent, Desert, cypress tree:** in the famous meeting between Jannes and Moses in the Pharaoh’s palace the sticks magic metamorphoses into snakes.

Due to Philippos' suspicious, Nectanebo turns into a snake when he is in the middle of a banquet:

ὁ γὰρ θεὸς οὗτος ἐρχόμενος πρὸς σὲ γίνεται πρῶτον δράκων ἐπὶ γῆς ἔρπων συρισμὸν πέμπων  
 (*Historia Alexandri Magni* I.6).

<sup>40</sup> The cypress tree is the protagonist of the mother’s dream in Jannes. In the case of *Apista*, the tablets used by Mirto in Hades and the tablets where the text of the novel has been preserved and -τὰς κυπαριττίνους δέλτους- are made of cypress.



Jannes' house is in Memphis, I suppose it would be in a very arid region. In the *Historia Alexandri Magni*, Nectanebo travels to the desert in Pella, although it is difficult to imagine a desert in green and humid Pella:

... ἐπὶ τὴν ἔρημον δραμῶν τίλλει βοτάνας τὰς πρὸς ὄνειρο- πομπίαν ἀρμοζούσας, δι' ὧν μαγεύσας τὸν Ὀλυμπιάδος ὕπνον ὄνειρον ἀναγεννᾷ ἧς ἤθελε πράξεως (*Historia Alexandri Magni* I.6).

## Conclusions

Perhaps it is a mere coincidence but I find curious similarities between the *Book of Jannes and Jambres* and topics from some papyri of ancient fiction:

1. From a material point of view, *The Book* shares characteristics of some fragmentary novels.
2. Part of the original text is a translation into Greek of an original text in Demotic. In this sense, the fragments of *The Book* are similar to the fragments of *Sesonchosis*, *Nectanebo*, and *Tinuphis*.
3. *The Book* starts with an *incipit* like other works in prose, including novels.
4. There are common references to serpents, deserts, cypress, etc.
5. The protagonists are lovers of learning: Isidora, the sister of Diogenes the author of *Wonders beyond Thule*, is a woman φιλομαθῶς ἔχουσα. In the case of Jannes and Jambres, those who have preceded us in the study of the text have already commented on the parallels that can be established between the character of Jannes of the papyri and the legend of Faust, whose origin the specialized critic places in the Middle Ages. Jannes, his alter-ego Jambres and Dr. Johan Fausten are magicians, alchemists and sorcerers. The three responde to the profile of the researcher who delves into the phenomena moved by a great curiosity and the man of science, who does not conform to the explanations available to the common man.<sup>41</sup>
6. Special curiosity about the afterlife is an essential topic: scenes of necromancy, *nekyia* or/and apparitions of ghosts are fundamental.

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<sup>41</sup> KRUEGER, F., "A Sahidic Exodus Apocryphon and the Legend of Jannes & Jambres", *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 64 (2018), pp. 148-198.



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7. The erotic intrigue has a secondary role. In the case of *The Incredible Things beyond Thule* and the *Alexandri Magni Historia*, romantic love is present to a lesser extent than in other canonical works of this genre. The themes of travel and magic predominate.

To finish, I am not claiming that *The Book of Jannes and Jambres* is a novel, but, regardless of its undeniable pious purpose, I believe that its reading could be used as an appropriate entertainment text for the first Christian readers.

In any case, it is an enigmatic work, my conclusions are only provisional and there is still a lot of work to be done with these texts.

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