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Magical text on an Oslo Ostracon

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MAGICAL TEXT ON AN OSLO OSTRACON

BY

Leiv Amundsen

This ostracon was purchased in Egypt in 1928. It comes from Oxyrhynchos (Behnasa). The magician has used a piece of the upper part and rim of a big open bowl as writing material. The maximum measures are in cm. 12.5×8. The writing is very cramped and crowded, especially on the outer side, and may be dated to the IInd cent. A.D.

The charm is an ἀγωγή, but of a peculiar kind, its object being to separate a wife from her husband. Presumably she is then to be filled with love to another person, but this is not accentuated at all.

Outside.

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αιηωυοωυοοωυοουιεουιειειε ιειεοαωαωωβαααααααααα ααααααοοοοουυυυυυυ ຬຬຬຬຬຒຒຒຒຒຒຒຒຒຒ ωωοηωοωο αεηιουω αεηιουω αεηιουω σουμαρταμαξακαρβα μιυχθαν σαλααμ αθιασκιρθο δαβαθααζαασουαχαολμολ φρηζωχραιεζανεκμητσατρα πειν εβλαραθααρναιαυσαια 25 εαε α(ε)ηιουω ηιηηιη οαοαοα ωοαοαωηαω. καύσον πύρωσον την ψυχην Άλλοῦτος, τὸ γυναικίον σῶμα, τὰ μέλη, ἔως ἀποστῆ ἀπὸ τῆς οἰ- 30 κίας 'Απολλωνίου' κα- .

τάκλινον ≪ Αλλου ≫ 'Αλλοῦν πυρετῷ, νόσῷ ἀκαταπαύστῷ
ἀσίτῷ 'Αλλοῦτι
ἀσυνέτῷ
'Άλλοῦτι

Inside.
'Απάλλαξον 'Αλλοῦν ἀπὸ 'Απολλωνίου τοῦ ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς:
δὸς 'Αλλοῦτι ὕβριν, μῖσος, ἀηδίαν, ἔως ἀποστῆ τῆς οἰκίας 'Απολλωνίου' ἄρτι ταχύ.

[This charm that aims at the ἀλλοτρίωσις of the persons in question — an abridged ἀγωγή combined with a διαχοπός — though rather conventional in its composition with its complexes of vowels and well-known formulas, is an interesting supplement to our stock of erotic charms, cp. e.g. Pap. Leid. W = Preis. Nr. XIII, Col. 8,10; the διαχοπός is used in a more physical sense ib. Col. 6, 27. Such charms, well-known to the Roman poets as well as to the Greeks of to-day, are also familiar to medieval erotic magic, cp. e.g. Delatte, Anecd. Ath. I P. 90 and 456 and from Old Norse literature Njáls Saga ch. 7 and Kormaks Saga ch. 6. In the charm printed above we might perhaps conjecture 'Αλλοῦν l. 35, 37, i. e. the name 'Αλλοῦν thrice repeated. S. E.]