

Mary, Michael and the Twenty-Four Elders: Saints and Angels in Christian Liturgical and Magical Texts¹

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Abstract

This paper offers an overview of the role of saints and angels in Christian liturgical and magical texts based on the evidence of the papyri. It shows that whereas late antique liturgy had a predilection for the saints and it turned to angels relatively late, magical texts displayed a prominent interest in angels and their names. Among the magical texts, those in Greek were more ready to invoke saints; the Coptic ones preferred holy figures associated with numbers (e.g. the twelve apostles).

Keywords

Saints, Angels, Christian ritual

The cult of saints and angels was omnipresent in Egypt from the fifth century on through cultic buildings, hagiographic narratives, and festivals, inscribed cultic objects and naming practices, and also in Christian rituals. While cultic activities documented by the papyri have been detailed by Arietta Papaconstantinou and hagiographic texts have also been studied, the invocation of saints and angels in ritual texts has received less attention.² In this paper I examine the topic based on corpora of ritual texts preserved on papyrus.³ An exhaustive study is precluded due to restrictions of space; what I venture to present here is a general overview with preliminary observations.⁴

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² For a study of hagiographic texts see Papaconstantinou 2011. Papaconstantinou 2001, 324-348 examines epitaphs, graffiti, oracles, amulets, defixions, and inscribed objects, but she leaves liturgical texts aside. De Bruyn 2015 treats the invocation of Mary in amulets and anaphoras, but not in hymns. In his book (de Bruyn 2018, 214-220) he extends his study to all saints in Greek magical texts.

³ These include the corpus of liturgical papyri compiled in Mihálykó 2019, Appendix (with occasional reference to non-papyrological sources and to liturgical manuscripts from the tenth to twelfth century; on these see Mihálykó 2019, 40-48), moreover the list of Greek magical papyri in de Bruyn and Dijkstra 2011, and the list of Coptic magical papyri by Bélanger Sarrazin 2017, as well as the Kyprianos database produced by the University of Würzburg project *The Coptic Magical Papyri: Vernacular Religion in Late Roman and Early Islamic Egypt*, to which Korshi Dosoo has kindly provided access (version April 2020). Sigla and dates of liturgical papyri are taken from Mihálykó 2019, Appendix.

⁴ For the same reasons footnotes will be kept to the essential.

Christian ritual texts are traditionally, if uneasily, classified in two broad categories, liturgy and magic.⁵ Such a general distinction is artificial and problem-ridden, especially since the two terms do not reflect clear-cut categories within ancient and medieval societies.⁶ Nonetheless, in spite of scholarly criticism of the term «magic», recent contributions have argued to keep the term as a heuristic category.⁷ In support of maintaining the distinction one can point to formal differences between the two types of text, e.g. the presence of *characteres* or *voces magicae* in magical texts, or the stereotyped invocations and doxologies in liturgical prayers.⁸ These formal distinctions are not always neat, but they appear in a manner systematic enough to allow us to recognize these two broad categories. Besides the more straightforward formal distinctions, some less obvious differences can be observed as well between the liturgical and magical texts. One of them is how they address saints and angels, as I will show in this paper.

Liturgical papyri, which will be treated first, bear ample witness to the popularity of the saints' cult in late antique Egypt, but only after the fifth century. In the substantial corpus of papyri and literary sources that witness the liturgy of the preceding period saints are virtually absent.⁹ They are only referred to in passing in the intercession for the departed in the anaphora, but without naming individual saints. Moreover, Mary is prominent in the extant first half of a Latin hymn in the mid-fourth-century P.Monts.Roca, but it treats her story only as part of the history of salvation.¹⁰ The first hymns addressed to saints are dated from the second half of the fifth or early sixth century.¹¹ It is only from the sixth century on that saints make regular appearances in liturgical texts, especially in hymns addressed to them.¹² By contrast, liturgical prayers could only be directed to the Father and the Son; in these texts saints were mentioned only in concluding requests for their intercession. Such requests, though frequent in the Byzantine liturgical tradition, appear only once in the liturgical papyri, in a seventh-century intercession for the congregation (BKT VI 7 2 v), where the request starts with Mary and breaks off afterwards.

In the anaphora, saints appeared first as objects of commemoration together with the ordinary departed, in a vision of the universal church encompassing both heaven and earth.¹³ As the most

⁵ Other categories – «private prayer», «occasional prayer», or «paralitururgical text» – may be added to denote texts that formally align with liturgical prayers but fall outside the main liturgical celebrations of the church. Texts of these categories on papyrus however do not contribute to this discussion and can be disregarded in this survey.

⁶ The literature on the term «magic» is endless, for recent contributions with ample bibliography see Frankfurter 2019. On a working definition of «liturgical texts» in late antique Egypt see Mihálykó 2019, 18-38, especially 23-27.

⁷ E.g. Sanzo 2020.

⁸ A similar approach was taken by Afentoulidou forthcoming.

⁹ For the non-papyrological sources see Mihálykó 2019, 40-45, for the earliest liturgical papyri 92-93. The only exception may be a curious text about martyrs from the late third or fourth century, P.CtYBR inv. 1360 (ed. Stephens 1985), which was identified as a hymn by its editor, though in the absence of textual features typical of hymns her interpretation is uncertain.

¹⁰ Emmett 1975, 98-100.

¹¹ MPER N.S. XVII 60 and 61, P.Heid. inv. G 1616, and P.Vindob. G 2326 v.

¹² For a detailed study of the cult of saints in hymns on papyrus, see Mihálykó forthcoming.

¹³ Budde 2004, 508-509 and 529-534.

prominent member of the church in heaven, the Virgin Mary started to be named explicitly in this context in the fifth century; the innovation is reported to have taken place in Constantinople.¹⁴ In Egypt this clause is attested first in a mid-seventh century copy of the anaphora of St. Basil (Louvain Ms Lefort copt. 28 A), whereas it is still missing in a late fifth or sixth-century redaction of the anaphora of St Mark preserved in the so-called Aksumite collection.¹⁵

The original idea of the congregation interceding for the saints alongside the ordinary dead sat uncomfortably with the developing belief in the saints as intercessors.¹⁶ This friction may be sensed behind the unusual formulation of a sixth-century intercession for the deceased (Pap.Colon. XXVIII 14): it requests the grace (χαρισ[μάτων]) of Mary, the apostles, and the evangelists, but the repose (κυμήσεως, i. κοιμήσεως) of the patriarchs, prophets, martyrs, the clergy, and the laity. The diptychs (long anaphoral enumeration of saints and deceased members of the church pronounced by the deacon), for which the first papyrological witnesses are from the seventh century (P.Berol. 3602 and SB III 6087), also followed the general belief in asking for the saints' intercession rather than commemorating them among the ordinary deceased.

In the anaphora and the diptychs the saints are enumerated in lists, which are lengthy and show considerable variation in the manuscripts of the second millennium. By contrast, in manuscripts of the first millennium only the top of these lists appears, including Mary, John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, and Stephen Protomartyr in various combinations.¹⁷ The catalogue of saints in a Coptic blessing from the early eighth century (P.Baden V 124) on the other hand has little to do with this solidifying hierarchy. It invokes the blessings of seventeen holy persons, including such unexpected notabilities as the emperors Constantine and Theodosius or Horsiesius, the archimandrite of the Pachomian congregation. Each saint is followed by a short statement or a story about him. This remarkable prayer is in need of a new edition and a thorough analysis.

The queen of the lists, the Virgin Mary, is also the saint who was most celebrated in hymns.¹⁸ The first of these theotokia stem from the sixth century (P.Heid. IV 294 and P.Lond. III 1029 v), but Marian hymns proliferate in the papyrological record only when theotokia enter the liturgy of the

¹⁴ De Bruyn 2015, 143.

¹⁵ Fritsch 2016, 48-49.

¹⁶ Budde 2004, 534.

¹⁷ In Lanne 1958, 292, 300, 342, SB III 6087, P.Bad. IV 65, and in a seventh-century prayer against the bite of venomous animals, Pap.Graec.Mag. P12. In lists from the second millennium (see Budde 2004, 487-503) John the Evangelist figures in the list of the apostles.

¹⁸ For a summary of papyrological attestations, see Grassien 2011, 257-261. I thank the author for having shared her unpublished thesis with me.

hours in ca. the eighth century.¹⁹ The other saints received considerably less attention. John the Baptist is honoured in five hymns, but the rest are named only once or twice.²⁰

A number of hymns address saints without mentioning their name. Five of these (P.Heid. inv. G 1616, MPER N.S. XVII 14 and 20, BM EA 5853, and P.Würzburg K 1018) concern a martyred bishop, who can be identified as Peter of Alexandria (mentioned in the title of MPER N.S. XVII 14), a saint otherwise little venerated in the *chora*.²¹ Other hymns contain only general references to the holy man being a martyr or a church father.²² Writing generic hymns was an economic solution for the expanding liturgical calendar; one such hymn could serve several feasts of martyrs. An example to this practice is provided by three sheets from an eleventh-century liturgical collection, BKT VI 65, P.Ryl.Copt. 36 and 37, on which the same hymns were recorded, and the name of the celebrated martyrs was inserted on demand.²³

Besides the saints, angels also appear in various liturgical texts. It is a frequent *topos* of prayers from Egypt to request that God guard the congregation with «angelic powers» or establish an angel as a guide.²⁴ Furthermore, in the part of the anaphora leading to the Sanctus, the priest elaborates on the angelic ranks, which the congregation is about to join in glorifying God by singing the thrice Holy. As a result of the priest's recital, the angels were believed to appear by the altar, invisibly but in their incorporeal reality.²⁵ The various Egyptian anaphoras of late antique origin describe this scene of angelic worship in diverging terms, but most include a list of angelic classes drawing on Eph. 1:21 and Col. 1:16, and an elaboration on the cherubim and the seraphim, including the detail of their six wings from Isa 6:2. How various liturgical texts treated this detail reflected two different exegeses of the Septuagint verse: In the mid-fourth century anaphora of Sarapion, the two seraphim cover the face and feet of God with their wings, whereas in other anaphoras the seraphim and the cherubim cover their own faces and feet.²⁶ A Sahidic anaphora (O.Crum 4+7 and O.Hermitage inv. 1133) specifies that they do this in fear of God's invisible image.

¹⁹ The first certain witness to this practice is an inedited aide-memoire for the hours, P.Duke inv. no. 688 (7th or 8th cent.). For details, see Mihálykó forthcoming.

²⁰ John the Baptist: MPER N.S. XVII 18, P.Mon.Epiph. 598 and 599, P.Vindob. G 2326v, P.Lond.Copt. I 519; Theodore Stratelates: MPER N.S. XVII 62 and P.Ryl. III 466v (?); Antony: MPER N.S. XVII 17; Menas: P.Aphrod.Lit. 48; Apa Anouph: P.Bock; Severus of Antioch: P.Lond.Lit. 327.

²¹ Papaconstantinou 2001, 166-167.

²² BL O 27421, P.Lond.Lit. 238, P.Mon.Epiph. 594, as well as the fragmentary MPER N.S. XVII 23.29-30, 24, 60, 61, and 63, and P.Vindob. G 46064 r. Church father: MPER N.S. XVII 19.

²³ On the collection see Delattre and Vanthieghem 2018.

²⁴ Angels as guardians: e.g. P.Berol. 13918.13, P.Bad. IV 58 2v.4-6, and in the Ethiopic Statutes of the Apostles (Horner 1904, 143 and 222). Angel as a guide: in Sarapion's prayer no. 27 (Johnson 1995, 79, see also 193-194) and Horner 1904, 222.

²⁵ In the Institution of Gabriel, the twenty-four elders, Michael, Gabriel, the cherubim and the seraphim appear by the altar (Müller 1962, 77). In the Bohairic life of Pesynthios of Koptos, the holy bishop explains the death of a priest with the fact that he spat out while reciting the anaphora and his phlegm fell on one of the cherubim present, who hit him to death with his wing (Amélineau 1887, 109-113).

²⁶ Sarapion's interpretation is in close relationship with Origen's exegesis of the passage, who associates the seraphim with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, see Johnson 1995, 205-215.

The image of the angelic worship appears also in hymns, which draw on the language of the anaphora.²⁷ Apart from these descriptions of angelic choirs, the Greek hymns address only Michael and Gabriel. Gabriel appears once, and Michael on five papyri; most of these manuscripts are late, from the eighth and ninth centuries.²⁸ The other angelic beings are not invoked independently. In the tenth to eleventh-century liturgical indices of the White Monastery the incipits of the Greek hymns for the feasts of the twenty-four elders and the four living beings (Rev. 4:4 and 4:6) imply that they were generic hymns on angelic worship.²⁹ Only Coptic hymnography, which emerged in the eighth or ninth century, included hymns on the twenty-four elders.³⁰ In the hymn book of the monastery of S Michael near Hamouli fourteen hymns were grouped under the heading «The Twenty-Four Elders», seven of which focus on the elders and the rest paraphrase various motives from the Book of Revelation.³¹

Saints and especially angels had a prominent role in magical papyri as well. My observations in this case are on a much less firm footing due to still incomplete groundwork, especially for the Coptic magical papyri. The dates that first editors have assigned to these manuscripts are oftentimes vague and imprecise and have not been subjected to systematic revision.³² The dates of Greek magical papyri are more reliable but editorial suggestions can still differ by centuries.³³

In spite of these uncertainties it is apparent that magical texts started to address saints and angels earlier than liturgy. Angels and archangels were frequently invoked in non-Christian magic as well due to Jewish influence, and their popularity continued in Christian texts, as we will see below.³⁴ Saints soon followed suit. A number of Greek amulets imploring saints have been assigned to the fifth and to the fifth or sixth centuries, and a prayer for justice addressing the holy martyrs has been dated to the fourth or fifth centuries.³⁵ These dates, if correct, imply that magical texts were somewhat quicker than liturgy to pick up on the growing devotion to saints.³⁶ The gap is more conspicuous in the case of the Virgin Mary, who holds a prominent position in almost all above-

²⁷ O.Deir el-Gizaz no. 28, O.Evelyn White, P.Berl.Sarisch. 7, Pap.Colon. XXVIII 18.

²⁸ Gabriel: P.David 5 (7th or 8th cent.). Michael: MPER N.S. XVII 58 (8th cent.), P.David 5 (7th or 8th cent.), Pennsylvania University E 16403 (8th cent.), P.Vindob. G 19879 (9th cent.), P.Vindob. G 19880 (9th or 10th cent.). To these P.Mon.Epiph. 610, a fragmentary Greek text naming the cherubim, the seraphim, Michael and Gabriel may be added, but the loss of text precludes certainty concerning the genre of the piece; the ed.pr. suggested «invocation or charm».

²⁹ Four living beings: Manchester JRL Coptic Ms. no. 20 a, f. 2 v (this hymn has the same incipit as Pap.Colon. XXVIII 18 and may be the same text). Twenty-four elders: Paris BnF Copte 129(20) f. 159 v (incipit: ἀρχὴ ἐξουσία καὶ κυριότης). I thank the references to Diliانا Atanassova.

³⁰ On Coptic hymns see Mihálykó 2019, 271-273.

³¹ Cramer and Krause 2008, 128-141.

³² See the blog entry by the Coptic Magical Papyri project [<http://www.coptic-magic.phil.uni-wuerzburg.de/index.php/2019/04/19/looking-at-the-coptic-magical-papyri-iv-time/>] (accessed 14/09/2020).

³³ See de Bruyn and Dijkstra 2011, which lists all the different suggestions.

³⁴ For pre-Christian magic see Dosoo forthcoming (b).

³⁵ Pap.Graec.Mag. P 5 b and Suppl.Mag. I 26 (5th cent.); Pap.Graec.Mag. P 5 c, 15 b, 18 (5th or 6th cent.), P.Mich. inv. 1523, ed. Worrell 1935, 3-4 (4th or 5th cent.).

³⁶ On the chronology of the devotion to saints see Papaconstantinou 2001, 370-371.

mentioned amulets of the fifth and sixth centuries, whereas hymns to her appear on papyrus only in the sixth century and permeate services from the eighth, as we have seen above.³⁷ However, the uncertainties surrounding palaeographical dates require caution. In fact, de Bruyn reasonably suggested that the amulets with formulas invoking Mary's intercessions drew on a devotion that had by that time found a liturgical expression.³⁸

Among the saints, Mary is the most distinguished heavenly intercessor also in magical texts.³⁹ Her role diverges markedly in magical texts in Greek and Coptic.⁴⁰ Greek magical texts invoke her to intercede with God on behalf of the supplicant or they ask her to grant health or protection on her own.⁴¹ By contrast, Coptic magical texts do not request her intercessions with God, they only seek out her immediate help, even in a curse.⁴² Furthermore, the practitioner can self-identify with her in the tradition of the Mary «ad Bartos» prayers, a group of apotropaic texts that claim to be a powerful prayer spoken by the Virgin.⁴³ Though the prayer is mostly attested in Coptic, a Greek version recovered in a twelfth-century bishop's tomb in Nubia shows that it was originally composed in Greek.⁴⁴

Magical papyri invoked other saints as well, mostly those with a widespread cult in Egypt, such as John the Baptist, George, Victor, or Severus of Antioch; each of them figures in one or two texts.⁴⁵ Only a few saints of local importance are attested.⁴⁶ Coptic texts moreover turn to Old Testament figures as well as to groups of saints associated with a number: the twelve apostles, the seven sleepers of Ephesus, the forty martyrs of Sebaste, and the three young men from Dan. 3.⁴⁷

Just like Mary, other saints could be petitioned to intercede with God for the supplicant or also for their personal intervention (even in curses).⁴⁸ Furthermore, they were stated to dwell in the house and played a role in *historiolae*.⁴⁹ In the case of the saints associated with numbers the mere

³⁷ The observation that popular devotion to Mary developed sooner than her official cult has also been made by Shoemaker 2007.

³⁸ De Bruyn 2015, 153-154.

³⁹ For details on Mary's role in Greek magical texts, see de Bruyn 2012, 2015, and 2018, 214-218.

⁴⁰ De Bruyn 2018, 217-218.

⁴¹ De Bruyn 2018, 215-216, de Bruyn 2015, 60.

⁴² Meyer / Smith 1994, no. 101.

⁴³ On this tradition see Meyer 1996, 58 and Łajtar / van der Vliet 2017, 128-142.

⁴⁴ Łajtar / van der Vliet 2017, 80-101 and 135.

⁴⁵ See de Bruyn 2018, 212-214.

⁴⁶ De Bruyn 2018, 213.

⁴⁷ Old Testament figures: e.g., the prophet Zacharias in Meyer / Smith 1994, no. 92 and no. 101. On the apostles see Łajtar / van der Vliet 2017, 220-227. On the Seven Sleepers see Kropp 1930-1931, vol. II 221 as well as the Greek Pap.Graec.Mag. P 5 c. On the forty martyrs of Sebaste see de Bruyn 2018, 218-219, for the most recent list of attestations see Delattre 2010, 364. The attestations are either mere lists of the names or come from Coptic magical texts, but never from Greek ones. For a list of attestations of the three young men, see Mihálykó 2018, 54. Their three set of names (see van der Vliet 1991, 236-239) were widely popular in amulets against fever. Except for Meyer / Smith 1994, no. 81 (dated to the 6th or 7th cent.), all attestations come from the 9th cent. or later.

⁴⁸ Intercessions: e.g. Pap.Graec.Mag. P5b, P12, SB XVIII 13602, and the Coptic P.MoscowCopt. 36. Direct help: e.g. Pap.Graec.Mag. P 5 c, 9, and in Coptic curses (Meyer / Smith 1994, no. 101, Louis 2013, and P.Mich. inv. 1523).

⁴⁹ Dwelling in the house: Pap.Graec.Mag. P 2 and P 2 a. *Historiolae*: e.g. the prophet Elijah in Meyer / Smith 1995, no. 127 ll. 60-64.

listing of their names was considered effective as well.⁵⁰ Moreover, some prayers were attributed to a saint, usually a ritual specialist such as Cyprian the Magician or Gregory the Wonderworker.⁵¹

If we compare Greek and Coptic magical papyri, it is conspicuous that saints are less present in the Coptic ones than in their Greek counterparts, with the exception of the ‘saints with numbers’, who are more important in the Coptic texts, and of Mary, who is prominent in both groups but has a different role in each. A comparable difference can be seen in the case of the angels.⁵² Michael, Gabriel, and the other archangels are addressed by both groups. Michael is the one most often singled out for invocation and heads most lists of archangels.⁵³ Gabriel is an unquestioned second, and Raphael has a stable place as well.⁵⁴ The other archangels appear usually in groups, most often in groups of seven.⁵⁵ The names show variation, sometimes even within one formulary.⁵⁶

The other angels are absent from the Christian Greek magical papyri, whereas they enjoy enormous popularity in the Coptic ones, which contain long lists of angelic names, images of angels, and elaborate presentations of the heavenly worship.⁵⁷ Some of these draw on the liturgical pre-Sanctus, but most contain elements external to the liturgy as well. The cherubim and seraphim, who are most frequently evoked in the biblical attribute of God «who sits on the cherubim», can also be given names.⁵⁸ The four living beings and the twenty-four elders also received secret names. For the twenty-four elders one set of names derive from the Greek alphabet and another from the pre-Christian magical Beth-betha logos.⁵⁹ Two set of names were attributed to the four living beings as well, one of them being the four voces magicae of the widely attested Alpha-Leon square.⁶⁰

Despite the impressionistic nature of the above summary, it highlights some conspicuous tendencies in the invocation of saints and angels in Christian ritual texts. The first is the clear difference between liturgical and magical texts in their selection of saints and angels and the way they approached them. Though liturgy was apparently slower to embrace the growing veneration towards these figures than magical texts, it soon espoused the cult of saints with enthusiasm, whereas it was more reluctant to integrate angels beyond Michael, Gabriel, and biblically inspired images of the heavenly worship. By contrast, magical texts preferred angels to saints, and revelled in long lists of their names. Eirini Afentoulidou found a remarkably similar distinction in the

⁵⁰ E.g. the names of the Seven Sleepers and the Forty Martyrs in a collection of apotropaic texts, Meyer / Smith 1994, no. 134. In Meyer / Smith 1994, no. 49 and 69 Jesus prescribes the names of the apostles for healthy childbirth and for protection.

⁵¹ Cyprian: Meyer / Smith 1994, no. 73. Gregory: Meyer / Smith 1994, no. 134, cf. Łajtar / van der Vliet 2017, 135.

⁵² For a detailed study of angels in the Coptic magical texts see Dosoo forthcoming (b).

⁵³ On his role see Kraus 2007 and Kropp 1930-1931, vol. III 78-81.

⁵⁴ On them see Kropp 1930-1931, vol. III 81-82.

⁵⁵ Kropp 1930-1931, vol. III 72-73 and Müller 1959, 59-61.

⁵⁶ Compare the list in Meyer 1996 7,1-2 and 10, 24-25. For details see Dosoo forthcoming (b), who counted thirty-one possible names for the seven archangels in forty lists.

⁵⁷ On images see Dosoo forthcoming (a).

⁵⁸ See Kropp 1930-1931, vol. III 70-72 and Müller 1959, 81-82.

⁵⁹ See Łajtar / van der Vliet 2017, 152-153 and 181-190.

⁶⁰ Kropp 1930-1931, vol. III 129-130. On the other set of names see Tsakos 2014.

attitude to angels in liturgically phrased occasional prayers *vis-à-vis* magical prayers in medieval Byzantine euchologia.⁶¹ This enduring and cross-cultural distinction implies that for both groups of texts there was a widespread consensus of which beings could be addressed in the given context, potentially shaped by the preferences of their respective authors.⁶² However, the consensus could also change, as illustrated by how the twenty-four elders and their secret names found their way into Coptic hymns.⁶³

A similar tendency of diverging choices can be observed for Greek and Coptic magical texts.⁶⁴ The linguistic divide coincides approximately – though, as the existence of the prayer of Mary «ad Bartos» in both languages reminds us, not absolutely – with two distinct strands of Christianized magic, which differ, among other things, in their approach to saints and angels. How are we to explain the disparity between them? Is this a chronological divide, explained by the fact that few Greek magical texts were produced in the Nile valley beyond the sixth century, the period in which Coptic magical texts take off? Or can the differences be seen in contemporaneous texts as well? If so, are these products of distinct socio-cultural milieus, and how were they different?⁶⁵ Or if chronology is the primary explanation, then why did the ‘Greek’ strand of the Christian magical idiom disappear and give way to something different, instead of being continued in translation? Further research is needed to answer these questions.

Finally, while liturgy clearly informed Christianized magic, among others in the descriptions of angelic worship, this survey also shows that magic preceded liturgy in tapping into the devotion to saints and angels. The delay of liturgy is particularly conspicuous in the case of angels. In this case thus magic did not rely on liturgy. Instead, both drew inspiration from the broader devotional context: from homilies, narratives, and church decoration. Magical texts were apparently quicker to pick up on popular devotion (and might even have inspired literary texts), whereas liturgical texts resisted longer.⁶⁶ However, exploring the relationship between the various forms of cult to saints and angels must be left to future research.

⁶¹ Afentoulidou forthcoming.

⁶² Afentoulidou attributes the absence of angels in the euchologion prayers to the opposition of the church hierarchy to the veneration of angels.

⁶³ Richter forthcoming.

⁶⁴ For some preliminary remarks on the differences between Greek and Coptic magical texts see Mihálykó 2013.

⁶⁵ For this suggestion see de Bruyn 2012, 61.

⁶⁶ Thus Richter (forthcoming) suggests that Ps.-Cyril’s homily picked up one of the concurrent traditions concerning the names of the twenty-four elders that circulated in magical texts, and the patristic authority this text lent to this set of names contributed to their spread and standardization.

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