

Hephaestus the Magician and Near Eastern Parallels for Alcinous' Watchdogs

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AS ODYSSEUS enters the palace of the Phaeacian king he stops to marvel at its richly decorated façade and the gold and silver dogs that stand before it (*Od.* 7.91–94):

χρῦσειοι δ' ἐκάτερθε καὶ ἀργύρεοι κύνες ἦσαν,
οὓς Ἥφαιστος ἔτευξεν ἰδυίησι πρᾶπίδεσσι
δῶμα φυλασσέμεναι μεγαλήτορος Ἀλκινόοιο,
ἀθανάτους ὄντας καὶ ἀγήρωσ ἤματα πάντα.

On either side [*sc.* of the door] there were golden and silver dogs, immortal and unaging forever, which Hephaestus had fashioned with cunning skill to protect the home of Alcinous the great-hearted.

All the scholiasts give the same euhemerizing interpretation: the dogs were statues fashioned so true to life that they seemed to be alive and were therefore able to frighten away any who might attempt evil. Eustathius goes on to suggest that the adjectives ‘undying’ and ‘unaging’ refer not literally to biological life, but rather to the durability of the rust-proof metals from which they were fashioned, and that the dogs were alleged to be the work of Hephaestus solely on account of their excellent workmanship.¹ Although similarly animated works of Hephaestus appear elsewhere in Homer, such as the golden servant girls at *Il.* 18.417–20, modern commentators have also been reluctant to take Homer’s description of these dogs at face value. Despite attempts by earlier editors to athetize line 94 (on account of the allegedly Attic form ὄντας),² most scholars have resigned themselves to following the ancient exegetes in rationalizing the line into a tribute to Hephaestus’ great artistry.³ The combination ‘deathless and unaging’

¹ He does, however, imply that he knows of other testimonia to these hounds when he refers to a certain “silly story” that they were a present from Hera to Poseidon for his help in some attack against Zeus in the *Iliad* (probably that described at 1.396–406), and that Poseidon gave them in turn to Alcinous.

² J. Van Leeuwen, ed., *Homeri Odyssea* (1890) *ad loc.* lists G. Hermann, P. Knight, Nitzsch, Bekker, Kirchoff, and Fick.

³ *E.g.* W. W. Merry, J. Riddell, edd., *Homer's Odyssey*² (Oxford 1886) *ad loc.*, who

is, of course, a standard description of divine beings in epic,⁴ and I will argue that this passage is our earliest testimony to a very old mythographic tradition, according to which Hephaestus forged a series of theriomorphic statues from precious metals and animated⁵ them in some manner for the protection of palaces, temples, or (as a recently edited papyrus reveals) an entire island. The Greeks had many tales about the bones of heroes, rocks, or other common objects that came to be revered as fetishes or talismans on which the safety of a city or royal house depended,⁶ but stories in which a statue is built

follow Nitzsch and refer to Homer's tendency to use "hyperbolic expressions about works of imitative or mechanical art" that are intended as a tribute to the skill of the artist. This seems to be based on the notion that certain statues were regarded as animated simply because they were quite realistic: *i.e.*, lifelike='living'. C. Clerc, *Les théories relatives au culte des images chez les auteurs grecs du II^{me} siècle* (Paris 1915) 22, corrects this view (of Nägelsbach and others) by pointing out that in Pausanias' descriptions of statues it is the simplest rough-hewn idols that are most often believed to be alive or magical, usually on account of their great antiquity and the mystery surrounding their origin. E. Griset, "I cani del palazzo di Alcino nelle moderni traduzioni," *RivStCl* 13 (1965) 180–82, notes the obvious parallels to the golden maidservants (*Il.* 18.417–20) and the automatic tripods (*Il.* 18.373–77).

⁴ For the antiquity of the formula see R. Janko, "ἈΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΓΗΡΟΣ," *Mnemosyne* SER. IV 34 (1981) 382–84. Nearly the same line appears at *Hymn. Hom. Cer.* 260 and *Hes. Theog.* 955. For the standard pairing of the two adjectives in the descriptions of divine creatures see *Il.* 2.447, 8.539, 12.323, 17.444; *Od.* 5.136, 5.218 (Odysseus contrasts Penelope and Calypso: ἡ μὲν γὰρ βροτός ἐστι, σὺ δ' ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρως), 7.257, 23.336; *Hymn. Hom. Cer.* 242; *Hymn. Ven.* 214 (ὡς ἔοι ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρως ἴσα θεοῖσι); *Hes. Theog.* 277 (ἡ μὲν ἔην θνητή, αἱ δ' ἀθάνατοι καὶ ἀγήρω), 305, 949; fr.25.28 M.-W. (νῦν δ' ἦδε θεός ἐστι . . . ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρως). For discussion see West *ad Theog.* 277. On the incorporation of these epithets into philosophic discourse see G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven, M. Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers*² (Cambridge 1983) 117.

⁵ I will use this word in its root sense of putting *anima* into something (ἐντιθέναι ψυχὴν), without implying that the object is caused to move, a common secondary meaning in English. The Greeks had a number of ways of referring to these special statues. They were sometimes conceived of as the end product of some ritual process, *i.e.*, 'consecrated' or 'divinized' (τετελεσμένος, the root *via* Arabic and Turkish of the English word 'talisman'), while at other times they were described in terms of an analogy to human life, *i.e.*, as something with breath (ἔμπνοος) or soul within it (ἔμψυχος; cf. Aristotle's analogy of a human slave to a κτήμα ἔμψυχον [*Pol.* 1.4], where he cites Hephaestus' servant girls and moving tripods as mythical *exempla*). It is this last term that is used most frequently in descriptions of Hephaestus' talismans.

⁶ Bones of heroes such as Pelops (*Paus.* 5.13.5; Dionysius Samius *FGrHist* 15F3, Σ *ad Il.* 4.92), Orestes (*Hdt.* 1.67), Laomedon (*Serv. ad Aen.* 2.241), and Alexander the Great (*Ael. VH* 12.64) had great talismanic power. Oedipus (*Soph. OC* 1524–33) claims that his grave will be a better protection than any number of shields or mercenaries. See F. Pfister, *Der Reliquienkult in Altertum* (Giessen 1909), for a thorough survey and discussion. Other objects include a stone of fiery color at Cyzicus (*Lydus, De ost.* 7 p.281 [Bekker]), a tripod given by Apollo to the people of Hylle in Illyria (*Ap. Rhod.* 4.527–36 with Σ), and the *teletai* of the Great Goddess inscribed on tin and buried in a bronze hydria (*Paus.* 4.20.4 and 26.7f). For general discussion see J. G. Frazer, *Pausanias's Description of Greece* IV (London 1898) *ad* 8.47.5 on the brazen lock of the Gorgon.

and animated by a specially skilled person for the purpose of protection seem to place Hephaestus in the category of magician or theurgist.

In a broad survey of the myths associated with Hephaestus, M. Delcourt suggested that the god seemed to perform two of the most important functions of a magician: the binding of his enemies with unbreakable and often invisible bonds⁷ and the protection of his friends with a wide variety of prophylactic devices, including the dogs mentioned above.⁸ Delcourt's discussions were imaginative and her conclusions illuminating, but if in the end they did not fully persuade,⁹ it was because she depended almost entirely on a fine web of mythological parallels and failed to consider the ample body of evidence for the use of similar magical practices throughout the eastern Mediterranean basin, practices that offer substantial confirmation of some of her theories. Although much work remains to be done on the myths of Hephaestus 'the Binder' in light of the corpus of Greek *defixiones* and other related phenomena,¹⁰ it is my object in this paper to take up another, smaller part of Delcourt's thesis—the question of prophylactic statues—and to examine some striking parallels between Hephaestus' magical talismans and those popular in the Near East from the ninth century to the sixth B.C.

⁷ E.g. Aphrodite and Ares caught in adultery (*Od.* 8.296–99); Hera held captive by a magic throne (Pind. fr.282 Sn.-M., Pl. *Resp.* 378D, Liban. *Narr.* 30.1 [Foerster I 38]); and Prometheus nailed to the Caucasian mountains (Aesch. *PV* 3–6). For detailed discussion see M. Delcourt, *Héphaistos ou la légende du magicien* (=BLiège [Paris 1957, 1982²]) 65–109.

⁸ Delcourt (*supra* n.7) 48–55. Among these: (1) actual defensive armor (e.g. the armor and shield of Achilles [*Il.* 18.609–13], the cuirasses for Heracles [Apollod. 2.71] and Diomedes [*Il.* 2.426]); (2) apotropaic devices (e.g. the bronze castanets used by Heracles to frighten away the Stymphalian birds [Apollod. 2.93] or the aegis of Zeus [*Il.* 15.308–10]); and (3) specially-fashioned buildings such as Hera's bed-chamber, with the secret lock that no other god could open (*Il.* 14.166–68).

⁹ The reviews were generally negative: H. J. Rose, *CR* n.s. 9 (1959) 55–57; F. Vian, *RPhil* 33 (1959) 74–77; M. P. Nilsson, *AntCl* 21 (1958) 526–28. But see M. Detienne, "Le phoque, le crabe et le forgeron," *Hommages à Marie Delcourt* (=CollLatomus 114 [1970] 219–33=[with some revision] "The Feet of Hephaestus," in M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*, tr. J. Lloyd [Atlantic Highlands, N.J., 1978] 259–75), who has successfully revived and expanded Delcourt's arguments on the *magicien infirme*.

¹⁰ Delcourt (*supra* n.7) 23f with n.2. See C. A. Faraone, "Aeschylus' ὕμνος δέσμιος (*Eum.* 306) and Attic Judicial Curse Tablets," *JHS* 105 (1985) 150–54, for a discussion of a 'magical' binding ritual in the *Oresteia*. For the most recent work on the use of *defixiones* in Athens and elsewhere see D. R. Jordan, "Fourteen *Defixiones* from a Well near the Southeast Corner of the Athenian Agora," *Hesperia* 44 (1985) 205–55, and "A Survey of Greek *Defixiones* Not Included in the Special Corpora," *GRBS* 26 (1985) 151–97; C. A. Faraone, "The Agonistic Context of Early Greek *Defixiones*," in *Ancient Greek Magic and Religion*, edd. C. A. Faraone and D. Obbink (Oxford 1988, forthcoming).

Homer does not tell us how Hephaestus animated the gold and silver dogs of Alcinous, nor does he reveal the manner in which they protected the palace. There are, however, a number of testimonia to other theriomorphic statues that Hephaestus fashioned and animated. A gloss on the name of Pandareus, for example, gives us the story (also attested in a sixth-century Rhodian vase painting) of another golden dog built by Hephaestus:¹¹ Pandareus “stole from Zeus’ temple on Crete the golden animated dog Hephaestus had made (κύνα . . . χρυσοῦν ἠφαιστότευκτον ἔμψυχον) and gave it to Tantalus.” When Tantalus falsely swore to Zeus that he did not have the dog, Zeus punished his perjury by burying him under Mt Sipylus. Hermes retrieved the dog for Zeus, and Pandareus fled to Athens. A scholiast to Pind. *Ol.* 1.91 notes the prophylactic purpose the dog served within the *temenos* of Zeus’ sanctuary on Crete: κύνα . . . ὃν ὁ Ζεὺς φύλακα τοῦ ἱεροῦ κατέστησε.

Pollux, discussing the virtues of different breeds of hunting dogs, quotes a story from the Hellenistic poet Nicander of Colophon (*Onom.* 5.38f=Nic. fr.97 Gow/Scholfield): the excellence of Chaonian and Molossian dogs was attributable to their descent from another in this case brazen dog Hephaestus had made: ἀπογόνους εἶναί φησι κυνὸς ὃν ἠφαιστος ἐκ χαλκοῦ Δημονησίου χαλκευσάμενος, ψυχὴν ἐνθείς, δῶρον ἔδωκε Διὶ κακέϊνος Εὐρώπῃ. . . . Pollux then explains how the dog was passed as a gift from Europa to Minos to Procris to Cephalus, until Zeus finally turned it into stone as it pursued the Teumasian fox.¹²

Minos and Crete were the recipients of still another of Hephaestus’ animated statues: Talos the bronze man (or in one version known to Apollodorus, a bronze bull). The story of the guardian of Crete is well attested in both the mythographers and paroemiographers. According to the former it was the statue’s custom to walk around the periphery of Crete thrice daily, pelting with rocks anyone who approached the island. He is said to have died as a result of Medea’s magic spell when he attempted to stop the Argonauts from landing on the shore of Crete (Ap. Rhod. 4.1639–93, Apollod. 1.140–42). According to this tradition he was either the sole survivor of the race of brazen men or a gift

¹¹ Σ *ad Od.* 19.518 and Ant. Lib. 36. For discussion and illustration of a sixth-century B.C. black-figure kylix from Camirus (*CVA Louvre* inv. A478), depicting Hermes reaching for a larger-than-man-sized dog statue, see L. D. Barnett, “Der goldene Hund des Zeus und der Hochzeit des Laertes auf griechischen Vasen,” *Hermes* 33 (1898) 638–40, and J. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*³ (London 1922) 226–28.

¹² Apollod. 3.197f. Ov. *Met.* 7.754f gives another version, in which the dog is a gift from Artemis to Procris.

from Hephaestus to Minos (Apollod. 1.140). The paroemiographical tradition, in discussing the origin of the expression ‘sardonic grin’, reports that (according to both Simonides and Sophocles) Talos prevented intruders from attacking Crete by consuming them with a fiery heat.¹³ A Platonic scholion (*ad Resp.* 337A) paraphrases Simonides’ portrayal of Talos, ὄν “Ἡφαιστος ἐδημιούργησε Μίνω φύλακα τῆς νήσου ποιήσασθαι ἔμψυχον ὄντα (Hermann: MSS. ὄν).

A recently edited Oxyrhynchus papyrus, dated palaeographically to the second century, gives three versions of a previously unknown story about another Hephaestean statue, a bronze lion hidden or buried somewhere on Lesbos.¹⁴

Ἄλκαῖος δ’ ὁ τῶν ἐπῶν
 ca 7] φησιν ὅτι “Ἡφαιστος λέ-
 οντα κατασκευάσας χαλκοῦν εἰς
 τοῦτον φάρμακα ἔθηκε βοηθοῦν-
 τα τοῖς ἀνθρώπ[ο]ις· Μάκαρ δ’ αὐτὸν
 ἐκ τῆς Φολόης ἐκόμισεν εἰς Λέσ-
 β]ον καὶ ἔκρυψεν· οὐ[τ]ως γὰρ ἔμ[ε]λ-
 λε .]. εἶσθαι τὴν ν[ῆ]σον. Μυρτί-
 λος δὲ] κεκρύφθαι τὸ[ν λ]έοντά φη-
 σιν] πρὸς τοῖς Μηθυμναίων πε.
 ca 4]. δ’ ἐν χρησμῶι Σιβύλλης ὅτ[ι]
 ca 5] ὁ λέων εἶη ἔργον Ἡφαίστου
 ca 5] ε γράμματα εἰς φυλακὴν τῆς
 νήσου, κ]ρύψαι δὲ τοῦτον Μάκαρα α-
 ca 6] γὰρ αὐτοῦ γενομένου Ἴωνας
 ca 11] . . . τ . ν τὴν νήσον

According to Alcaeus, the [?] of the epics, Hephaestus made a bronze lion and into this put *pharmaka* beneficial to mankind; and

¹³ Σ *ad Pl. Resp.* 337A=Simon. fr.202a (Bergk)=Soph. fr.160 Radt. According to this explanation the phrase refers to the grimaces of the scorched victims. For similar accounts see Zenobius *Cent.* 5.85; Eust. 1893 *ad Od.* 20.302; *Suda s.v. σαρδάμιος γέλως*; Phot. *Bibl.* 443b. A. C. Pearson, *The Fragments of Sophocles I* (Cambridge 1917) 110–13, gives a detailed discussion of both traditions.

¹⁴ *P.Oxy.* LIII 3711 col. 1.14–32. The papyrus preserves two columns on Lesbian lore. A lemma in ecthesis at col. 2.32f, quoting a previously known poem of Alcaeus (fr.130.24–26 L.-P.) and a fragmentary discussion of Dionysus Omestes (*cf.* Alc. fr. 129.9) suggest that we have part of an extremely selective commentary on the poems of Alcaeus, or a collection of Lesbian *problemata* that repeatedly (if not exclusively) used the poetry of Alcaeus as a starting point. The translation is that of M. Haslam from the *editio princeps*. I wish to thank Professor Haslam for kindly sharing his work with the Stanford papyrology seminar in the winter of 1984 and for providing an advance copy of his edition.

Makar took it from Pholoe to Lesbos and hid it, for in this way he was to safeguard(?) the island. But according to Myrtilus(?) the lion had been hidden hard by the border(?) of the Methymnaeans, and . . . in a Sibylline oracle that this lion was Hephaestus' work (and had?) writing for the guarding of the island, but Makar hid it, for once it had (disappeared?) the Ionians . . . the island. . .

Apparently a commentary on the phrase *λέοντα τὸν νόμον* in a poem of Alcaeus, the papyrus gives us the testimony of three different sources: (1) a hitherto unheard-of Alcaeus who wrote (?) in hexameters of some sort; (2) a Myrtilus, who the editor suggests is the third-century chronicler Myrsilus of Methymna (*FGrHist* 477); and (3) the Sibylline Oracle. The testimony of this other Alcaeus (most likely an early local epic poet cited by Myrsilus)¹⁵ gives a clear description of the two-step process by which Hephaestus built a statue and then put *pharmaka* into it. Although the last few lines are badly damaged, it seems most probable that the lion was used to protect the island against attacks from the mainland (Haslam *ad loc.*).

The close parallels between the Lesbian lion and the four other Hephaestean works described above are unmistakable, although only two accounts (Talos and the golden dog) preserve all the features in one story: (1) Hephaestus forges a metal statue, usually of an animal; (2) the statue is animated; (3) he gives this statue as a gift to a god or mortal king; and (4) the statue is used as a phylactery for a building or a kingdom. This underlying scheme can be outlined by comparing the five statues (see *Figure 1*). The most detailed description of Hephaestus' technique (col. 1) is the two-step recipe for the bronze lion. Pollux, in his paraphrase of Nicander's account of the creation of the bronze dog, perhaps implies a two-step process by using two separate aorist participles (*χαλκευσάμενος* and *ψυχὴν ἐνθείς*, *Onom.* 5.38) to describe Hephaestus' work. All the statues are said to be alive (col. 2), with the notable exception of the bronze lion: both Talos and the golden dog are described as *ἔμψυχος*; Hephaestus gives life (*ψυχὴν ἐνθείς*) to the bronze dog; and the Homeric adjectives *ἀθανάτους* and *ἀγήρω*s used of Alcinous' dogs presuppose an animate, even immortal state. As we have seen (*supra* n.5), animation does not necessarily

¹⁵ Haslam (*supra* n.14) *ad loc.* The term can also refer to elegiac poetry. E. L. Bowie, "Early Greek Elegy, Symposium and Public Festival," *JHS* 106 (1986) 27–34, has recently suggested an archaic genre of longer elegiac poems that celebrated the foundations of cities (*e.g.* Mimnermus' *Smyrneis*, Semonides' so-called 'archaeology' of Samos, and Xenophanes' poem about the foundation of Colophon). All his examples date to the sixth or fifth century and some (*e.g.* the poem by Xenophanes) are explicitly referred to as *ἔπαια*.

imply movement; Talos and the bronze dog were, in fact, able to move, but our sources do not reveal whether Zeus' golden dog and Alcinous' hounds could. All but one of the statues are used as phylacteries, and indeed the verb *φυλάσσειν*, or a related word, figures in every description (col. 3). Whenever the location of the prophylactic statue is specified, it seems to be along the perimeter of the place to be protected: the placing of the gold and silver dogs at the threshold of Alcinous' palace; Talos' thrice-daily circumambulation of the island of Crete; and (following the editor's suggestion here) the burial of the Lesbian lion "hard by the borders of the Methymnaeans."

	<i>Technique</i>	<i>Animated Status</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Placement</i>
Alcinous' dogs	—	undying, unaging	<i>φυλασσόμεναι</i>	palace threshold
golden dog	—	<i>ἔμψυχος</i>	<i>φύλαξ</i>	<i>temenos</i> of a sanctuary
bronze dog	Two steps: (1) casting (2) animating	<i>ψυχὴν ἐνθείς</i>	—	—
Talos	—	<i>ἔμψυχος</i>	<i>φύλαξ</i>	periphery of Crete
bronze lion	Two steps: (1) casting (2) inserting <i>pharmaka</i>	—	<i>εἰς φυλακὴν</i>	borders (?) of the Methymnians

Figure 1.

Zeus' anger at Tantalus and his insistence on the return of the golden dog to his temple on Crete seem to imply that its presence at the temple was of great importance. Stories of theft (Pandareus' of the golden dog or Makar making off with the bronze lion from Pholoe) are commonly part of the mythology of Greek talismans; the Palladium upon whose presence the safety of Troy depended was stolen by Odysseus and Diomedes. In some versions of the story it too was said to display signs of animation.¹⁶ The golden ram of Atreus, the emblem

¹⁶ Virg. *Aen.* 2.170–75 and Serv. *ad loc.*; Conon *FGrHist* 28F34; Apollod. 3.143. In his *Iliupersis*, Arctinus (*apud* Dion. Hal. 69.3) claimed that the Achaeans stole a decoy; the real Palladium had been buried or hidden (*κεκρυμμένον*) in the sanctuary.

of his mandate to rule the island of his father Pelops,¹⁷ was stolen by his brother Thyestes. Finally the repeated motif of the prophylactic statue as a hand-me-down gift passing from divine to human ownership reminds one of the “silly story” scoffed at by Eustathius (*supra* n.1), according to which the gold and silver dogs of Alcinous had been given as a gift by Hera to Poseidon, who in turn gave them to the Phaeacian king.

It is of great interest that the early epic or perhaps elegiac poet Alcaeus quoted in *P.Oxy.* 3711 reports that Hephaestus placed “*pharmaka* beneficial to mankind” into the bronze lion that Makar subsequently buried on Lesbos as a phylactery. The practice of putting *pharmaka* (*i.e.* special powerful material, not necessarily herbal) into hollow statues in order to animate them is well attested among the theurgists¹⁸ and magicians¹⁹ of the imperial period, when it was often traditionally linked with ‘Chaldaean’, *i.e.*, Near Eastern lore.²⁰ A

¹⁷ Σ *ad Il.* 2.105: δειν τὴν βασιλείαν ἔχειν τὸν τὴν χρυσοῦν ἄρνα ἔχοντα; Sen. *Thyestes* 223: *specimen antiquum imperi.*

¹⁸ Proclus (*apud* Psellus *Ep.* 187 [Sathas]), tells us that the theurgist “filled the hollow parts of statues with matter suitable to their powers, *i.e.*, with animal matter, plants, herbs, roots, gems, inscribed objects and sometimes even scents that are sympathetic in nature,” a process that “inspires the statue and moves it with unspeakable strength.” For a good discussion of this text and rituals of the theurgists see T. Hopfner, *RE* 6A.1 (1936) 258–70 *s.v.* “Theurgie,” and E. R. Dodds, “Theurgy and Its Relationship to Neo-platonism,” *JRS* 37 (1947) 55–69 (reprinted with minor revisions in *The Greeks and the Irrational* [Berkeley 1951] 283–311).

¹⁹ Among the Greek magical papyri edited by K. Preisendanz and re-edited by A. Henrichs, *Papyri graecae magicae: die griechischen Zauberpapyri*² (Stuttgart 1973–74) are several recipes for the construction of figurines that seem to come alive at some point in the process; some of these recipes prescribe the insertion of some special material into a hollow part of the statue: *e.g.* a hieratic papyrus inscribed with a *logos* (?) is inserted into a statue in order to animate it (V 385f); a papyrus inscribed with the name of Hermes is inserted into a hollow cylinder attached to the back of a statue used to bring good luck to a house or workshop (VIII 55f); a hieratic papyrus inscribed with names and commands is inserted into a hollow-based statue of Hermes similarly intended as a good luck charm (IV 2362); and a magnet and a *pittakion* inscribed with names and commands are placed into the hollow of the statue used as a phylactery for a temple (IV 3142f).

²⁰ The putative inventor of Greco-Roman theurgy, a charismatic philosopher known as Julian the Theurge, was thought to have put together (or forged) a collection of oracles known in late antiquity as the ‘Chaldaean Oracles’; his father and teacher was known by the epithet ‘the Chaldaean’. See *Suda s.v.* Ἰουλιανός, and Psellus in *Scripta Minora*, ed. E. Kurtz/F. Drexel, I (Milan 1941) 446.29–447.3. For discussion see W. Kroll, *De oraculis chaldaicis* (= *Breslauer philologische Abh.* 7.1 [1894]); J. Bidez, *Vie de l'empereur Julien* (Paris 1920) 73–81; Dodds (*supra* n.18). For the most recent scholarship see E. Des Places’ text and translation (= *Sources Chrétiennes* 262 [Paris 1974]), and his review article “Les oracles chaldaïques,” *ANRW* II.17.4 (1984) 2299–2335. For the Greco-Roman use of the epithet ‘Chaldaean’ see E. Reiner, “La magie babylonienne,” in *Le monde du sorcier* (= *Sources Orientales* 7 [Paris 1966]) 69.

Hellenistic mythographer attributes this same practice to the eastern sorceress Medea, who secretly builds a hollow *eidolon* of Artemis/Hecate and fills it with “every kind of *pharmaka*.” In an elaborate ruse she convinces the Iolcans that the statue thus animated will serve as a talisman for the health and prosperity of their royal family and city.²¹ The locations of Hephaestus’ talismans may also suggest some eastern influence. The Phaeacian island of Scheria is a utopian Greek *polis* impossible to place on a map,²² but the other mythological talismans have been specifically situated on Lesbos and Crete, locations with easy access to the Hittites in Anatolia and the Mediterranean trading ports in north-western Syria.²³ This is true of two other animated phylacteries: the Palladium, which originated in either Samothrace or Troy,²⁴ and the apotropaic brazen bulls on Mt Atabyrius that bel-
lowed loudly to warn the Rhodians of the approach of enemies.²⁵

²¹ Dionysius Scytobrachion *FGrHist* 32F14 (=Diod. 4.51f) has been re-edited by J. F. Rusten, *Dionysius Scytobrachion* (=Papyrologica Coloniensia 10 [1982]), as his fr.36. Hyg. *Fab.* 24 tells a similar story but makes no mention of the statue.

²² Despite energetic debate in the first half of this century, all attempts at locating the ‘historical’ Scheria have been unsuccessful. For the traditional view that Corcyra is the home of the Phaeacians see V. Bérard, *Les Phéniciens et l’Odyssée* I (Paris 1902) 574–76. For a detailed review of the arguments for Crete (W. Leaf/K. T. Frost), Tunisia (A. Hermann), and Tartessus beyond the Straits of Gibraltar (R. Henning/E. Björkman) see A. D. Frazer, “Scheria and the Phaeacians,” *TAPA* 60 (1929) 155–78, who adds his own choice, Cyprus. It is best to abandon the search for a particular locale and accept the view of C. Segal, “The Phaeacians and the Return of Odysseus,” *Arion* 1 (1962) 17–64, who points out that the land of the Phaeacians has remained what the poet probably always meant it to be, a fairytale utopia at the edge (both figuratively and geographically) of the known world. It is interesting to note that on account of the description of the palace façade and its canine statues some scholars suggested that the poet’s vision of Scheria was inspired by contact with Near Eastern architecture. The arguments are summarized in H. L. Lorimer, *Homer and the Monuments* (London 1950) 97, 429, who tentatively suggests the fourteenth century B.C. temple of Amenophis III at Egyptian Thebes (with its metal-plated walls and doors, and an avenue of ram statues before it) as a distant forbear of Alcinous’ palace. T. B. L. Webster, *From Mycenae to Homer* (London 1958) 32, thought that the description of Alcinous’ dogs was reminiscent of the Hittite lions before the royal palace at Boghazköy.

²³ W. Burkert, *Die orientalisierende Epoche in der griechischen Religion und Literature* (=SBHeid [1984] 1–36), gives the best synthesis of recent work on the commercial and cultural contacts between the Greeks and both the Hittites and the Assyrians.

²⁴ For the many and sometimes conflicting testimonia to the origins of the Palladium see F. Chavannes, *De Palladii raptu* (diss. Berlin 1891) 27–29, 74–76. See *supra* n.16 for the reports that it was animated. W. Burkert, “Rešep-Figuren, Apollon von Amyklai und die ‘Erfindung’ des Opfers auf Cypern,” *GrazBeitr* 4 (1975) 51–79, discusses the Near Eastern prototypes for the early Greek manifestations of male and female ‘armed deities’ such as the Palladium.

²⁵ Timaeus *FGrHist* 566F39. Cf. D. Morelli, *I culti in Rodi* (=Studi classici e orientali 8 [1959]) 48f. These bulls are probably the model for the bronze bull erected near the temple of Zeus Atabyrius on the acropolis of Acragas, a Rhodian colony; in

Actual statues, similar to the animal-shaped talismans built by Hephaestus, seem to have been in regular use in ninth- and eighth-century Anatolia and North Syria, where a great abundance of archaeological and literary evidence testifies to a relative explosion in the popularity of rituals aimed at the protection of thresholds and doorways from daemonic influences and other ills.²⁶ Although there are much earlier, isolated Hittite and Assyrian examples of these ‘portal’ or ‘guardian’ figures, it is at the palace of the Assyrian king Assurnasirpal II (883–859) in Nimrud that we find the first fully-developed example of the use of colossal stone figures in complicated groups at entrances; fantastic winged creatures, human-headed bulls, lions, mermen, ‘scorpion-men’, sphinxes, griffins, ‘griffin daemons’, and many other grotesque shapes crowd the thresholds of palaces and temples in increasing numbers throughout the next two centuries and represent a strange flowering of traditional Mesopotamian, Hittite, and local North Syrian traditions.²⁷ The building inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian kings suggest, moreover, that the large number of extant stone statues was equaled if not exceeded by those rendered (like Alcinous’ dogs) in bronze, silver, and other precious metals.²⁸

The function of these ‘portal’ or ‘guardian’ figures was clearly apotropaic.²⁹ The royal building inscriptions describe their power in a variety of ways. King Esarhaddon (680–669)³⁰ refers simply to a statue’s “form” as the operative force in the animals deployed, like Alcinous’ dogs, on either side of the door: “Protecting colossoi of stone, which by virtue of their form ward off evil, guarding the footfall, protecting the path of the king, their maker, I put them right

later times this bull was attached to the stories about the notorious tyrant Phalaris and transformed into a macabre torture device (see T. J. Dunbabin, *The Western Greeks* [Oxford 1948] 320 n.7).

²⁶ Reiner (*supra* n.20) 93–96 and D. Kolbe, *Die religiös-mythologischen Charaktere in neu-assyrischen Palästen* (Frankfurt/Main 1981).

²⁷ H. Frankfort, *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient*⁴ (New York 1970) 279–322; T. A. Madhloum, *The Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art* (London 1970) 94–117.

²⁸ D. D. LUCKENBILL, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia* (Chicago 1927 [hereafter ‘Luckenbill’]), includes the following guardian statues made of metal: bronze: nos. 367 (8 lions), 391 (12 lions, 12 bulls, 22 cows), 392 (*colossoi*), 431 (“female protective deities”); copper: nos. 454 (fishmen and *suhur*-fish), 761d (2 wild oxen, 2 *suhur*-fish); silver: no. 915 (2 wild oxen, 2 *lahme*); silver and copper: no. 367 (4 mountain sheep); silver and bronze: 761b (colossal lions, *Anzû*-bird creatures and *lahme*); gold: 711 (“creatures of the deep”).

²⁹ J. E. Reade, “Assyrian Architectural Decoration: Techniques and Subject Matter,” *BaghMitt* 10 (1979) 17ff; Kolbe (*supra* n.26).

³⁰ For the orthography of Assyrian proper names and for the regnal years I follow J. A. Brinkman in A. L. Oppenheim, *Ancient Mesopotamia: A Portrait of a Dead Civilization*² (Chicago 1977) 335–48.

and left of the (palace's) threshold" (Luckenbill nos. 693, 700). When his father Sennacherib (688–681) boasts that he had "protecting colossoi" carved from a precious stone normally used only for making neck amulets, one suspects that the medium could also be an important factor.³¹ Assurbanipal (668–627) credits his theriomorphic guardians with the power of doing physical harm to his enemies,³² while Nergalsarosser (559–656) is more ambiguous when he boasts of setting up "eight talismanic figures of solid bronze," which were to "keep all wicked and antagonistic people at a distance by fear of death."³³

Both in the myths about Hephaestus discussed above and in the archaeological record it is the less fantastic animal shapes that seem to have had most appeal for the Greeks. In the archaic period, for example, we find monumental guardian lions in Greece and Etruria for the first time.³⁴ Although the original settings for the archaic Greek lions are generally problematic,³⁵ the row of lions at the Letoön on Delos, as well as several extant pairs of 'identical twin' lions, seems to suggest that they were often used in symmetrical architectural groupings at points of entrance.³⁶ The many stone lions discovered at Sardis are probably to be connected in some way with Herodotus' story (1.85) about the lion cub carried along the circuit of the defen-

³¹ No. 430. The inscription describes the amulets in detail as "amulets for commanding favor, for bringing on rain and for keeping disease from approaching a man."

³² Nos. 886 ("silver wild-oxen who gore my enemies") and 915 ("two wild-oxen of silver, to knock down my foes and trample my enemies").

³³ F. Lenormant, *Chaldaean Magic: its Origins and Development* (London 1878) 47. Unfortunately the size and shape of these talismans are not mentioned.

³⁴ For discussion of the popularity of the lion in Greece from the seventh century to the end of the classical period see O. Broneer, *The Lion Monument at Amphipolis* (Cambridge 1941) 42–47, and C. C. Vermeule/P. von Kersberg, "Appendix: Lions, Attic and related," *AJA* 72 (1968) 99–101. A. Wilhelm, "Fünf Epigramme aus Lindos," *SymbOslo* 26 (1948) 78f, discusses the genre of tombstone epigrams in which a stone lion perching atop the monument speaks or is alluded to as the guardian of the grave, e.g. Simon. 141 (Diehl)=83 (Page, *PMG*) and *IG* XII.2 285.

³⁵ Probably because they were readily reusable; more often than not they seem to have been moved from their original setting. See e.g. T. L. Shear, "The Lion Group at Sardis," *ArtB* 13 (1931) 127–37, for an eclectic grouping of an undatable eagle statue and two lions (dated on stylistic grounds to the archaic period) arranged on a mound containing fourth-century B.C. debris. A similar problem occurs with the Near Eastern lions; see Frankfort (*supra* n.27) 281f for the lions at Alalakh and Malatya, which are older than the gates they guard, and T. S. Kawani, "Greek Art and Persian Taste: Some Animal Sculptures at Persepolis," *AJA* 90 (1986) 260, for the difficulty of discovering the original settings and dates for the pairs of dogs, wild goats, and bulls found at Persepolis.

³⁶ B. S. Ridgway, *The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture* (Princeton 1977) 153–55, mentions two pairs from Delos, one from Didyma, and one from Miletus. The last mentioned were discovered *in situ* standing guard on either side of the entrance to a tomb. G. M. A. Hanfman and N. H. Ramage, *Sculpture from Sardis: the Finds through 1975* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1978) 21, suggest that a colossal lion (no. 31) found

sive walls of that city as part of a ritual to ensure its protection.³⁷ The iconography and placement of these Greek, Etruscan, and Sardinian lions can in most cases be traced to the guardian lions that line the gateways of Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Hittite cities and palaces.³⁸

Monumental stone dogs begin to appear in Egypt in the eighth century B.C.³⁹ and in Persia in the mid-sixth century.⁴⁰ Pairs of monu-

along the main avenue of Sardis was one of a pair of lions (nos. 32 and 33 are fragments of a second statue, a mirror image of the first) that guarded a city gate. W. L. Brown, *The Etruscan Lion* (Oxford 1960) 66–72, stresses that most of the stone Etruscan lions from Vulci (which imitate East Greek lions stylistically) were found in pairs guarding the entrances of tombs, and it would not be imprudent to suggest that the Vulcians imitated the placement of the Greek lions as well as their iconography. The heraldic lions over the Lion Gate at Mycenae come from a different Near Eastern iconographical tradition and need not be discussed here, although they too most likely served an apotropaic function: see E. T. Vermeule, *Götterkult* (= *ArchHom* III.5 [Göttingen 1974]) 50.

³⁷ Hanfman/Ramage (*supra* n.36) rightly disagree with Shear's hypothesis (*supra* n.35) that the lion became the heraldic image for the Lydian royal house because of its mythological connection with Heracles, who wore a lion skin. They suggest that the lion-as-guardian comes from a much deeper stratum of religious thought, perhaps one that considered lions as the attendants of Cybele. They also believe that the lion in Herodotus' story may have been a statue and mention (unfortunately without citing the source) the existence of Hittite rituals for the circumambulation of prophylactic statues. G. Bunnens, "Les présages orientaux et la prise de Sardes," *Hommages à Marcel Renard II* (= *CollLatomus* 102 [Brussels 1968]) 130–34, discusses the story in light of a Babylonian omen text and a remarkably similar passage in Cicero's *De divinatione* (1.53); he suggests a strong Babylonian influence here. Cf. Paus. 9.22.1 for the story of Hermes averting plague from Tanagra by carrying a ram around the city walls.

³⁸ E. Akurgal, *The Art of Greece: its Origin in the Mediterranean and the Near East* (New York 1966) 60–63, 105–08. Portal or guardian lions were popular in early Mesopotamian art and then again in the very late periods. Here too it is the products of the late Hittite/late Assyrian/North Syrian period (roughly tenth through sixth centuries—scholars agree on the time-frame; the debate is over how to characterize the period in ethnic terms) that interest us most; the Lion Gate at Malatya and numerous examples at Zinjirli date to the tenth and ninth centuries, while eighth-century lions appear quite frequently again at Zinjirli, as well as Tell Halaf, Sajegözü, Tell Tayanet, Til Barsip, and Marash. For discussion see L. Delaporte, *Malatya: la porte des lions* (Paris 1940); Madhloum (*supra* n.27) 100f. For the Near Eastern prototypes of the Greek lions see Brown (*supra* n.36) 66–72, who argues an ultimate Egyptian ancestor for the East Greek type found at Smyrna and Miletus, which then becomes the model for the stone lions of Vulci; cf. H. Gabelman, *Studien zum frühgriechischen Löwenbild* (Berlin 1965) 11–61, who gives a detailed study of the pervasive influences of late Babylonian and late Hittite art on the representations of lions in archaic Greece, excepting those from Miletus. Hanfman/Ramage (*supra* n.36) 65f no. 26 argue that the earliest completely preserved lion statue at Sardis was based on a late Hittite model.

³⁹ H. G. Fischer in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*³, edd. W. Helck/E. Otto (Wiesbaden 1980) 79f s.v. "Hund." The great majority of the surviving examples, however, belong to the Ptolemaic or Roman period.

⁴⁰ Kawani (*supra* n.35) discusses the pairs of dogs, bulls, and wild goats found at entrances and stairways in the royal compound at Persepolis.

mental dog statues are attested in archaic Greece in the late sixth century, when they appear to have been stationed as guardians of public places⁴¹ and tombs.⁴² Although there are no surviving examples of monumental dog figures in Mesopotamia, literary evidence points to their use in pairs at the threshold during the Neo-Assyrian period, along with the other figures mentioned above. A building inscription of Sennacherib (688–681) describes a temple entrance that includes guardian dog figures, probably of life- or monumental size.⁴³ There is, moreover, abundant testimony to the use of smaller statuettes of dogs in special rituals to protect the doors and gateways in the Near East. A Hittite tablet speaks of the ritual of placing a figurine of a dog on the royal threshold at night to drive away the nocturnal daemons:⁴⁴ “they make a little dog of tallow and place it on the threshold of the house and say ‘You are the little dog of the table of the royal pair. Just as by day you do not allow other men into the courtyard, so too do not let in the Evil Thing during the night.’”

The Assyrian practice seems to have involved pairs of dogs, which were buried beneath the threshold on either side of the door. Nebuchadnezzar (604–562) is said to have buried two golden, two silver, and two bronze dogs at the entrance to a temple of the goddess Gula.⁴⁵

⁴¹ See H. Payne/G. M. Young, *Archaic Marble Sculptures from the Acropolis* (London 1936) 51, for a pair of fragmentary stone dogs found on the Athenian acropolis; they are life-size and date to the late sixth century. Cf. Ridgway (*supra* n.36) 142.

⁴² For the popularity of dogs in archaic Greek funerary sculpture see M. Collignon, “Un monument funéraire de Pergame,” *RA* 2 (1904) 48–51; P. Ohly, “Kerameikos-Grabung: Tätigkeitsbericht 1956–61,” *AA* (1965) 322–27; C. C. Vermeule, “The Basil Dog: A Vindication,” *AJA* 72 (1968) 95–99. For a more general discussion see D. Kurtz and J. Boardman, *Greek Burial Customs* (Ithaca 1971) 111, 135f.

⁴³ *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur historischen Inhalts*, ed. L. Messerschmidt *et al.*, II (Leipzig 1922) no. 124=Luckenbill no. 454: “(To) the rooms right and left of the gate, fierce dogs and scorpion-men supported the entrances.” The pairing of the dogs with “scorpion-men,” which are extant in monumental form, suggests that the dogs were also rather large. For a full discussion and reconstruction of this entranceway see H. D. Galter, “Die Bautätigkeit Sanheribs am Assurtempel,” *Orientalia* 53 (1984) 433–41.

⁴⁴ *Ritual of Huwarli* (= *Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi* IV [Leipzig 1923] no. 2=*Catalogue des textes hittites*, ed. E. Laroche [Paris 1971] 398) I 23–26. For this translation and brief discussion see O. R. Gurney, *The Hittites*² (Harmondsworth 1954) 163. H. Kronasser, “Das hethitische Ritual *KBo* iv 2,” *Die Sprache* 8 (1962) 89–107, provides the most recent text and commentary.

⁴⁵ S. Langdon, *Neubabylonische Königsinschriften* (= *Vorderasiatische Bibliothek* 4 [Leipzig 1912]) 164f no. 19 col. 6.20–24. Six small bronze dog statuettes were found at Nineveh in the mid-nineteenth century, but their exact provenance is lost to us. A small bronze dog was found under the floor of room 7 of the temple of Ningal. See E. D. Van Buren, *Foundation Figures and Offerings* (Berlin 1931) 56f.

A section of an elaborate ‘Ersatzkönig’ ritual prescribes the placement of apotropaic figurines in and around the palace, beginning with two dogs:⁴⁶

Fashion two howling hounds out of tamarisk wood holding a crescent moon in their paws. On their left flank write the following: “Get out, evil spirits! Come in, good spirits of the palace!” Inscribe them like this and bury them at the door to the palace.

For many years five roughly-modeled terracotta dogs in the British Museum (BM 30,001–5) were mistakenly thought to be models of the hunting dogs of Assurbanipal (668–627), in whose ruined palace they were discovered; each bore inscriptions that seemed to record their individual names. The subsequent discovery of a clay tablet with a long series of priestly recipes set the record straight; it described the manufacture and deployment of a large number of apotropaic statuettes, including a set of dogs:⁴⁷

17. [Figure] of a dog which is covered in gypsum, “Don’t take counsel, open your mouth.” The name of the second, “Don’t take counsel, bite.”

18. [Figure] of a black dog, “Quick of his breath.” The name of the second is “Strong of his bark.”

19. [Figure of a] red [dog], “Driver away of the *asakku* daemon.” The name of the second, “Conqueror of the unfriendly.”

20. [Figure of a] green [dog], “Overthrower of the enemy’s breast.” The name of the second, “Biter of his foe.”

21. [Figure of a] spotted [dog], “Introducer of the good ones.” The name of the second dog, “Expeller of the wicked ones.”

22. Bury [figures] of ten clay dogs in the *kamû* gate. Recite before them the incantation “White dogs.”

All five of the extant terracotta dogs in London were originally painted in different colors and inscribed with names that match the descriptions on this tablet.⁴⁸ A recent review of the archaeological

⁴⁶ I translate the German version of D. Rittig, *Assyrisch-babylonische Kleinplastik magischer Bedeutung* (Munich 1977) 174–79.

⁴⁷ *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts*, ed. E. Ebeling (Leipzig 1915 [KAR]) 298 Reverse 17–22. For this translation see S. Smith in C. L. Wooley, “Babylonian Prophylactic Figures,” *JRAS* 1926, 700. O. R. Gurney, “Babylonian Prophylactic Figures and their Rituals,” *AnnLiv* 22 (1935) 31–96, reprints Smith’s translation together with two additional texts. For the most recent translation see Rittig (*supra* n.46) 163–70, esp.168. F. A. M. Wiggermann’s *Babylonian Prophylactic Figures: the Ritual Texts* (Amsterdam 1986), reportedly containing new texts and translations of this and related texts, was unavailable to me.

⁴⁸ B. Meissner, “Magische Hunde,” *ZDMG* 73 (1919) 176, first suggested that these dogs had some magical use as talismans; for his reaction to the discovery of KAR 298, see “Apotropäische Hunde,” *OLZ* 25 (1922) 202. C. J. Gadd, “Forms and Colours,” *RAssyr* 19 (1922) 158f, discusses the colors of the dogs and points out that two of

reports indicates that Assurbanipal's putative pets were discovered in a rectangular cavity at the base of a bas-relief standing in the entrance to the west wing of the palace, and suggests that there was undoubtedly a matching cache of five dogs, now lost, secreted in the wall directly across the way.⁴⁹ Three clay dogs (dated by archaeological context to the sixth century), which were also painted and inscribed according to the instructions quoted above, have been found in a room of the library at Kish.⁵⁰

These buried figurines fashioned and deployed by specially trained priests serve the same purpose as the larger monumental portal statues discussed above.⁵¹ This is made clear by occasional similarities in the inscriptions they bear. The first of a pair of monumental stone lions, for example, that guarded the palace of an Assyrian governor (770–760) at Til Barsnip on the upper Euphrates bears the inscription: “The impetuous storm, irresistible in attack, crushing rebels, procuring that which satisfies the heart”; and the second: “He who pounces on rebellion, scours the enemy, drives out evil and lets the good in.” These elaborate names are similar to those given to the buried canine statuettes, especially the terms that refer to the general magical function of barring the approach of evil and encouraging that of good.⁵² Even more revealing is the large relief of a lion-centaur on an entranceway to Assurbanipal's North Palace that bears an inscription identical to that prescribed for a miniature talisman (also in the

them (BM 30,001 and 30,004) closely resemble two out of three dogs depicted on a Mycenaean wall painting in the ‘Later Palace’ at Tiryns. Meissner (*ZDMG* 179–81) adduces two other texts that preserve rituals involving the manufacture of a dog statuette, one for healing a sick man by driving out the daemon causing the disease (*KAR* 26 Rev. 9–12), and another to avert an evil omen occasioned by contact with a real dog (*KAR* 64.14–23), often the source of ritual pollution.

⁴⁹ A. Green, *BaghMitt* 17 (1986) 202 nos. 95f.

⁵⁰ S. Langdon, *Excavations at Kish I* (Paris 1924) 91. They are now in the Ashmolean Museum (inv. nos. Kish 1924.301–03). See Van Buren (*supra* n.45) for photographs of one of Assurbanipal's dogs (fig. 36) and all three from Kish (fig. 40). Rittig (*supra* n.46: 116–21) discusses a number of other contemporary seventh-century dogs (both bronze and clay) that have come to light in recent years at Nippur, Assur, and elsewhere. Three of her bronze examples (nos. 16.126–28) are from Nimrud (Kalhu) and bear the inscription “Don't take counsel, bite,” identical to line 17 of *KAR* 298 Rev., quoted above.

⁵¹ See also Kolbe (*supra* n.26) and Rittig (*supra* n.46) 14.

⁵² For this translation and discussion see Frankfort (*supra* n.27) 300. The twofold function of barring the approach of evil and encouraging that of good is discussed in greater detail below; *cf.* also the inscription of Assurbanipal (Luckenbill no. 886): “Two *lahme* . . . who guard my royal step (and) who let in the products of the mountains and the seas, I set up in my gate.”

shape of a lion-centaur) intended for burial in the foundation of a building.⁵³

These Near Eastern guardian figures (both openly displayed at the threshold or buried beneath it) are a complicated cultural phenomenon and therefore raise some difficulties when we try to compare them to early Greek beliefs and practices.⁵⁴ The *lamassu* and the *shêdu* (two different types of winged human-headed figures) are the best documented and give a good idea of the range of beliefs connected with the whole group of guardian figures. They seem to have been daemons originally, a small segment of that legion of minor deities which informs so much of Near Eastern culture in the later periods. From the start they were regarded as temple servants to the major gods and goddesses, who employed them as their escorts or intermediaries in their dealings with humans—figures perhaps modeled on the viziers in Near Eastern royal courts. It is this rôle as intercessors that increased their importance to humankind, and it may provide a link to their subsequent function at the doors of temples where, standing on either side of the threshold, they were thought to expedite the entrance of some petitioners and hinder the transit of others. It seems, moreover, that each god or goddess had his or her own specific set of such guardians, and that when the habit of erecting portal figures was extended into the secular field, the *lamassu* and *schêdu* at the threshold of the palace evolved still further into the

⁵³ C. J. Gadd in R. D. Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace of Assurbanipal* (London 1976) 40, discusses the inscription in his commentary to Pl. XX, and translates: "You shall bar out the supporter of the evil head," the latter part apparently a designation for an evil daemon. This inscription is identical to that prescribed at line 15 of *KAR* 298 Rev. (two lines above the recipe for the apotropaic dogs quoted above) for a small unbaked clay statuette of a lion-centaur. E. Klengel-Brandt, "Apotropäische Tonfiguren aus Assur," *FuB* 10 (1968) 16, discusses an example of precisely this type of inscribed statuette which was discovered at Assur (=Rittig [*supra* n.46] no. 14.1.1). I should like to thank Dr Anthony Green for these references. Recent scholarship provides additional parallels between the colossal figures and their buried miniature counterparts: T. S. Kawani, "The Date of the Fish-Garbed Men from Assur," *FuB* 16 (1974) 9–13; R. E. Ellis, "'Lion-Men' in Assyria," in M. Ellis, ed., *Essays on the Ancient Near East in Memory of Jacob Joel Finkelstein* (=Mem.Conn.Ac.Arts and Sciences 19 [Hamden 1977]) 67–78; A. Green, "Neo-Assyrian Apotropaic Figures: Figurines, Rituals and Monumental Art," *Iraq* 45 (1983) 87–96, and "A Note on the 'Scorpion-Man' and the Pazuzu," *Iraq* 47 (1985) 75–82.

⁵⁴ For most of what follows, I am indebted to W. von Soden, "Die Schutzgenien Lamassu und Schedu in der babylonisch-assyrischen Literatur," *BaghMitt* 3 (1958) 148–56, and D. Foxvog, W. Heimpel, and A. D. Kilmer in *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* 6 (Berlin 1980–83) 447–53 s.v. "Lamma/Lamassu." See also Madhloum 94f and Frankfort 146–48 (both *supra* n.27), who discuss a relief at the palace at Khorsabad depicting the transportation of lumber (destined for the new palace) across the sea; amidst the ships and the waves, the figure of a *lamassu* bull appears overseeing and protecting the operation.

personal ‘guardian angels’ of the king who lived there.⁵⁵ Although their function in the later, Neo-Assyrian period becomes primarily an apotropaic one, the wording of the building inscriptions and the related incantations reveals some traces of their earlier functions, for they were thought to ward off evil and encourage good luck to enter.

Such is the rich layering of meanings that confronts us when we attempt to interpret the colossal *lamassu* and *shêdu* figures that tower over the entranceways of palaces and temples in the later periods. Esarhaddon (680–669 B.C.), for example, alludes to the “guardian angel” aspect of the figures he erected before his palace at Ninevah: “In the palace may the good *shêdu* and the good *lamassu*, who guard my footsteps and gladden my liver, ever be mighty and never depart from its sides.” Modern readers looking for logical consistency here and elsewhere in these texts might be struck by the apparent contradiction that these statues are to guard the person (“footsteps”) of the king, while simultaneously being fixed as a stone image at the palace door. This ambiguity is inherent in all Mesopotamian religious thought (and that of many other cultures as well) and stems from the inseparably close relationship between a deity and its statue.⁵⁶ In the case of the guardian statues (both large and small) there is sufficient evidence for their divinity. One text (*UrExT* 6) refers to some colossal bulls as “on the right and left . . . the gods guarding the gate,” and in two different building inscriptions Sennacherib (688–681) refers to the divine nature of the portal statues he has erected.⁵⁷ A few texts explicitly state that sacrifices and other cult practices are accorded the monumental figures at the threshold, and many of the miniature figures were found *in situ* buried in small brick boxes that also contained miniature plates and other appurtenances of cult offerings.⁵⁸ In both miniature and colossal form these guardians appear to be deities (albeit minor ones) who receive ritual attention and offerings compar-

⁵⁵ Oppenheim (*supra* n.30: 198–206) has pressed this still further and suggested that these guardian angels become a sort of external soul of the king.

⁵⁶ Oppenheim’s chapter “On the care and feeding of the gods,” (*supra* n.30: 183–98) remains the classic treatment for Mesopotamia. For similar popular Greek beliefs see Clerc (*supra* n.3) and R. L. Gordon, “The Real and the Imaginary: Production and Religion in the Graeco-Roman World,” *ArtH* 2 (1979) 5–34.

⁵⁷ He mentions four silver and copper mountain sheep as “protecting deities” (Luckenbill no. 367) and closes another building inscription with the wish, “May the bull colossos, guardian of life, the god who keeps (things) safe by day and night, not leave its [*sc.* the palace’s] side” (no. 433).

⁵⁸ Lenormant (*supra* n.33: 46–50) translates texts from Khorsabad (Rawlinson, *WAI* 4.2.1 and 4.17) that refer to guardian gods who must be fed and tended. *Cf.* also Van Buren (*supra* n.45) nos. 980 and 984. Woolley (*supra* n.47) 692 describes the figures discovered in clay boxes at Ur: “In each box there were found the remains of foodstuffs such as grains and the bones of pigeons and other small birds.” See M. E. L. Mallowan, “The Excavations at Nimrud (Kahlu) 1953,” *Iraq* 16 (1954) 85ff, and

able, on a much smaller scale, to those given to the more important cult statues of the major deities.

The rather wide spectrum of functions associated with these Near Eastern talismans, ranging from simple apotropaic magic to the symbolic projection of the king's 'luck' into the community in the form of his 'guardian angel', is impossible to separate into neat categorical bands of 'magic', 'religion', and 'politics'. Taken together, however, as a complex system of beliefs it can provide some interesting parallels to the early Greek talismans described above. Hephaestus' theriomorphic figures were fashioned of precious metals and either buried near a boundary or openly displayed at the threshold. Alcinous' dogs, moreover, were believed to be living deities capable of guarding a specific place. Although the very few extant Assyrian and Hittite ritual texts that deal with apotropaic figurines make no mention of the popular 'Chaldean' procedure (used by Hephaestus on the Lesbian lion) of putting *pharmaka* inside statues, the widely attested practice of inscribing powerful magical names or phrases on the sides of Assyrian talismanic figures finds a parallel in the testimony of the Sibylline oracle (quoted above) that the Lesbian lion also held inscriptions of an apotropaic nature ("for the protection of the island"). Some of the Greek myths involving talismanic statues reveal layers of belief comparable to their Near Eastern counterparts. The myth of Talos (upon which both Simonides and Sophocles drew) depicts a completely ambulatory bronze man who could be sent out against the king's enemies. This terrifying aspect of the guardian of the king is attested in the earliest Egyptian depictions of the sphinx, who is seen trampling the king's enemies.⁵⁹ The *lamassu* and several other Babylonian guardian figures, as well as the Hebrew *terâphim*, were also able to leave their defensive posts and to perform hostile acts; when seen from the victim's point of view this leads in many cases to a popular negative perception of these guardians as purely evil daemons.⁶⁰ This might help explain why Talos (at least in the Greek paroemiographi-

Klengel-Brandt (*supra* n.53) 19ff, for descriptions of the two other large caches of talismans found *in situ* in brick boxes.

⁵⁹ H. Frankfort, "Notes on the Cretan Griffin," *BSA* 37 (1936/7) 106–22 figs. 11f. A. Dessenne, "La sphinx, d'après l'iconographie jusqu'à l'archaïsme grec," in *Éléments orientaux dans la religion grecque ancienne* (=Trav.Centre d'ét.sup. d'hist.rél. Strasbourg [Paris 1960]) 159, shows how this early aspect of the sphinx is picked up and developed by the Phoenicians.

⁶⁰ Foxvog *et al.* and von Soden (both *supra* n.54) discuss the negative aspects of the *shêdu*, an analysis that H. A. Hoffner, "Hittite *Tarpiš* and Hebrew *Terâphim*," *JNES* 27 (1968) 61–68, extends to the Hittite daemon/guardian figure known as *tarpish* and the Hebrew *terâphim*.

cal tradition) is often portrayed in an awful, nearly diabolical manner, and why the horrible tales about the notorious bronze bull of Phalaris can most likely be traced to a harmless apotropaic talisman modeled on the brazen bulls that protected Rhodes, the mother city of Acragas.⁶¹

The data collected here raise some deeper questions about cultural borrowing and the relations between myth and ritual. Recent scholarship has demonstrated that Bronze Age Greeks held many aspects of their cultural and religious life in common with their Near Eastern neighbors, and that the Mediterranean provided such easy access for continual contact from that period onwards that one might speak of a cultural substratum shared by all eastern Mediterranean civilizations.⁶² Accordingly one might suggest that the Greek and Near Eastern talismanic statues under discussion spring independently from the same roots. On the other hand, the nearly overwhelming influence of oriental art on the graphic and plastic arts of eighth-century Greece points to a special period of heavy cultural borrowing, and there is mounting evidence that a similar trend occurred in the literary and hieratic arts.⁶³ Archaeological and linguistic evidence has shown, for example, that the use of incense, purificatory rituals, hepatoscopy, and foundation deposits in temples—all well-documented Near Eastern practices—begin to appear in Greece and Etruria in the eighth and seventh centuries.⁶⁴ The archaic date of the Rhodian vase painting depicting the golden dog of Zeus and the similar dates for the extant stone lions and dogs in Greece and Etruria suggest that these Greek talismans were also copies from Near Eastern models during the so-called 'renaissance' of the eighth century.

⁶¹ Both talismans are connected with tales of torture and human sacrifice. For this negative side of Talos see *supra* n.13 for the primary sources and discussion. For the identification of the bull of Phalaris as a prophylactic statue see Dunbabin (*supra* n.25), who credits the later myths about the bull to anti-tyrannical sentiment in Sicily after the downfall of the tyrants.

⁶² For the most recent discussion and bibliography see B. Dietrich, *The Origins of Greek Religion* (Berlin 1974) and *Tradition in Greek Religion* (Berlin 1986).

⁶³ For the continuing discussion of the effect of the orientaling period on the Hesiodic and Homeric poems and early Greek religion and literature in general see: Webster (*supra* n.22) 64–90; R. D. Barnett, "Some Contacts between Greek and Oriental Religions," in *Éléments orientaux* (*supra* n.59) 143–55; M. L. West, ed., *Hesiod: Theogony* (Oxford 1966) 18–21; G. K. Gresseth, "The Gilgamesh Epic and Homer," *CJ* 70 (1975) 1–18; W. Burkert, "Oriental Myth and Literature in the *Iliad*," in R. Hägg, ed., *The Greek Renaissance of the Eighth Century B.C.* (=SkrAthen 70 [1983]) 51–56, and *supra* n.23.

⁶⁴ Burkert (*supra* n.23) 43–80.

There are, however, arguments against any absolute claim that Near Eastern talismans were historically prior to and therefore the prototypes for the Greek statues surveyed above. To begin with, the dating of the popularity of the North Assyrian statues (ninth and eighth centuries) is at best only roughly contemporaneous with the formation of the Homeric *epos* in which we find the oldest testimony to the Greek practice, Alcinous' dogs. The lines of influence and transmission, moreover, of talismanic figures even from one Near Eastern country to the next are often confused and contaminated; similar figures (or at least literary testimonia to them) seem to appear simultaneously at different points in the eastern Mediterranean. Linguistic evidence links the fantastic Cherubim (best known for their rôle in protecting the Garden of Eden)⁶⁵ and the strange idols known in biblical texts as *terâphîm*⁶⁶ with the Assyrian guardian figures discussed above, suggesting that the belief in apotropaic statues was probably a widespread phenomenon throughout Palestine, Syria, and Anatolia. Unfortunately the actual statues have rarely survived outside Syria and Mesopotamia. Further, in some cases talismanic figures like the sphinx, the griffin, and the dog turn up in Minoan and Mycenaean iconography and can be traced back to even more ancient Egyptian prototypes that have in turn been altered at some intervening period by Phoenician, North Syrian, or perhaps even Aegean craftsmen.⁶⁷ Although the reappearance of these figures in Greek monumental art (where they are placed as guardian figures of temples, palaces, cult statues, tripods, shields, and tombs) can be traced on stylistic grounds to Neo-Assyrian or Phoenician productions,⁶⁸ it is

⁶⁵ Gen. 3.24. The word is cognate with the Akkadian terms *kârabu* and *kurîbu*, daemonic guardians similar to the *lamassu*; see R. H. Pfeiffer, "Cherubim," *JBL* 41 (1922) 249f.

⁶⁶ Gen. 31.19; I Sam. 19.13, 16; Ezek. 21.26. The word is cognate with the Hittite *tarpiš*, which, in turn, appears in ancient lexica as the Hittite equivalent of *lamassu* and *schêdu*. See S. Smith, "What are the Teraphim?" *JTS* 33 (1932) 333–36; Hoffner (*supra* n.60) 61–68.

⁶⁷ Frankfort (*supra* n.59) and J. N. Coldstream, *Geometric Greece* (New York 1977) 360–66, discuss the complicated relationships between the Minoan griffin and its later manifestations in the Geometric and Archaic periods. See A. Dessenne (*supra* n.59) 155–61, and Vermeule (*supra* n.36) 49f and *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry* (Berkeley 1979) 68–70, 171–73, for similar discussions on the earliest Greek sphinxes. B. Schweitzer, "Hunde auf dem Dach," *AM* 55 (1930) 107–18, discusses a wooden box with crouching ivory dogs attached to the sides, found in Shaft Grave V at Mycenae and probably representing a building or treasury. He rightly interprets the dogs as apotropaic statues and compares them to contemporary representations of Seth in the form of a jackal that guarded Egyptian *mastabas* from above. For parallels between the Assyrian prophylactic dog figurines and a wall painting at Tiryns see Gadd (*supra* n.48).

⁶⁸ See Coldstream (*supra* n.67) and Roscher, *Lex.* 2.2 (1886–90) s.v. "Gryps" (A. Furtwängler) and IV (1909–15) s.v. "Sphinx, der griechische" (J. Ilberg). Herodotus

not clear whether the idea itself of talismanic statues has been re-introduced, or only their new iconography and more grandiose scale.

There is also some limited evidence that magical rituals were being imported in an easterly direction (by the Hittites at least) from the nascent Greek culture in the eastern Aegean and along the Anatolian shore.⁶⁹ Of particular interest is the reference to the statues of gods brought from Ahhijawâ (a powerful Mycenaean sea power in the west) and Lazpas (usually equated with Lesbos) to cure the fourteenth-century king Mursilis II when his own priests were unable to heal him by their traditional purificatory rituals.⁷⁰ In short it seems more prudent to suggest that the use of magically animated statues at the threshold and elsewhere is a cultural phenomenon shared by all eastern Mediterranean cultures; but that building them in monumental size and of durable stone is a separate practice that indeed seems to have been transmitted to Greece in the eighth century—a phenomenon dependent not on any new-found belief in prophylactic magic, but rather on political and economic factors that would encourage large-scale building, as well as on the acquisition of the technical skills necessary for producing them. Indeed, the very existence in the Near East of simple wax or clay figurines to perform an identical prophy-

gives us a tantalizing bit of information about a group of sphinxes and griffins guarding a palace, albeit one located at the very edge of the Greek world (4.79.2): the sixth-century Scythian king Skylas was accustomed to spend long periods in the Greek city of Olbia on the Black Sea; once within the walls of the city and out of the sight of his countrymen, he would change into Greek dress and indulge himself in all the refinements of Greek culture. He also married a Greek woman and built a large and ostentatious palace for himself, “about which stood sphinxes and griffins of white stone” (4.79.2). It is probably safe to assume that since the house stood within the sphere of Skylas’ fantasy life as a Greek, Herodotus expects the reader to understand it as a Greek custom, albeit performed in a far-flung locale. For still more information on archaic sphinxes and griffins see Mazon’s note *ad loc.* (Budé).

⁶⁹ O. R. Gurney, *Some Aspects of Hittite Religion* (Oxford 1977) 44–47, notes that the Hittite magical texts usually give the name, profession, and nationality of the spell’s creator, and that a large proportion of these practitioners come from ‘the provinces’, most notably Kizzuwadna (Cilicia) and Arzawa (probably Lycia and Pisidia: see D. L. Page, *History and the Homeric Iliad* [Berkeley 1966] 8–10; A. Goetze, *Kleinasien* [Munich 1957] map facing p.228, would limit Arzawa to Pisidia alone).

⁷⁰ *Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi* V (Berlin 1921) 6=G. L. Huxley, *Achaean and Hittites* (Belfast 1960) 5 no. 10. The tablet does not refer explicitly to statues but only to the “Gottheit” of Ahhijawâ and Lazpas; Page (*supra* n.69: 26 n.18) must be right, however, in adducing the parallel in the account given in a Tel el-Amarna tablet in which a statue of Ishtar is sent from Nineveh to Egypt to heal the Pharaoh. For a similar Greek example compare the summoning of the images of the Aeacidae from Aegina on the eve of the battle of Salamis (Hdt. 8.64.2, 83.2, 84.2; *cf.* 5.80.2). The great debate over the equation Ahhijawâ=Achaea has swung from the extreme skepticism of Sommer to Page’s narrower reassessment (*i.e.*, Rhodes settled by Achaeans) and most recently to a public call for a further reappraisal of the original hypothesis (Achaeans both in mainland Greece and in Ionia), for which see H. J. Güterbock/M.

lactic function shows quite clearly that the size and durability of the talismans were not factors significant to their efficacy.

An obvious discontinuity between the Greek and Near Eastern statues can perhaps be best discussed in terms of the relationship between myth and ritual. In the Neo-Hittite and Neo-Assyrian cultures there were elaborate sets of rituals for protecting buildings by means of theriomorphic talismans both large and small. There are not, however, to my knowledge any myths or legends about the creation of these statues by a magician god or about their subsequent theft and retrieval. On the other hand, although there are indeed several extant examples of Greek portal lions and dogs, the most eloquent testimony to Greek talismanic statues is to be found largely in just these sorts of legends, which refer to animals wrought by Hephaestus and given as presents to gods and men. In most of these stories the theft of the talisman becomes a central theme, sometimes connected with a foundation myth. The peculiar crossover between myth and ritual that results in the portrayal of a Greek god as the performer of an ostensibly human ritual seems to have been a particularly Greek phenomenon, and it is somehow linked with the popular perception (later exploited by Hecataeus, Prodicus, and various philosophical schools) of certain gods as ‘culture heroes’ or *protoi heuretai* who invented many if not all human activities, including—perhaps paradoxically—various forms of ritual and cult.⁷¹ The most notorious example is of course the ‘invention’ of animal sacrifice by Prometheus at Mecone, with Hesiod’s elaborate aetiology for the various details of the rite (*Theog.* 535–60). Mystery cults were also thought to be the invention of gods or demi-gods such as Erechtheus or Orpheus.⁷²

A similarly divine origin is regularly attributed to traditional folk or magical practices. Pindar portrays Asclepius as the discoverer of magical *epodai* and *pharmaka*, as well as the more mundane art of surgery.⁷³ The Erinyes seem to perform a ‘magical’ ritual when they

J. Mellink, *AJA* 86 (1982) 268. It is generally agreed that Ahhijawā lies to the west of the Hittite empire and is a great seapower. The identification of Lesbos with Lazpas, which is mentioned only once again in the entire corpus of Hittite texts, rests solely on the very close verbal similarity.

⁷¹ A. Kleingünther, *Πρῶτος Εὐρετής* (= *Philologus* Suppl. 36.1 [Leipzig 1933]). For the later philosophical tradition of Euhemerus and others see W. Spoerri, *Späthellenistische Berichte über Welt, Kultur und Götter* (= *Schw. Beitr. zur Altertumswiss.* 9 [Basel 1959]); T. Cole, *Democritus and the Sources of Greek Anthropology* (= *APA Monograph* 25 [1967]) 1–25, 153–63.

⁷² F. Graf, *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung Athens in vorhellenistischer Zeit* (Berlin 1974) 22–40, discusses the old popular tradition of Orpheus as founder of the Eleusinian mysteries and adduces similar myths from Samothrace and elsewhere.

⁷³ *Pyth.* 3.52f. L. Edelstein, “Greek Medicine in its Relation to Religion and Magic,” in O. Temkin and C. C. Temkin, edd., *Ancient Medicine: Selected Papers of*

are depicted on the Attic stage singing their *hymnos desmios* (Aesch. *Eum.* 306ff), a “binding spell” strikingly similar in form and intent to judicial binding curses popular in classical Athens. It is therefore not surprising that Aeschylus, in his story of the ‘invention’ of Athenian jurisprudence, should also include a cursing procedure that often accompanied legal proceedings.⁷⁴ In that very play Apollo is said to have purified Orestes by the blood of a piglet (283). Contemporary vase paintings of this story (and of the myth of the similar purification of the Proetides) have been linked to actual procedures used in Attica in historical times,⁷⁵ as well as to the *Asakki marsuti* ritual of Assyrian purification priests.⁷⁶

Even in his rôle as the creator of animated statues, Hephaestus does not stand alone in Greek mythology: Pindar refers to singing statues in the pediment of Apollo’s brazen temple at Delphi, built by Athena and Hephaestus; and along the streets of Rhodes there were automata made by the aboriginal Rhodians under Athena’s direction. In neither case is it clear what purpose these statues served.⁷⁷ The Telchines of Rhodes and the Idaean Dactyls are described as wizards who invented statues and amulets.⁷⁸ Daedalus, another putative inventor of statues,

Ludwig Edelstein (Baltimore 1967) 226 with nn.69 and 103, wrongly interprets the meaning of *epodai* here as music or melody (*i.e.*, *modulis lenibus* at Gell. 4.13.2), which he tries to connect to a theory of musical therapy allegedly invented by Democritus or Pythagoras. The *epodai* are surely the same kind of magical incantation as that used by Autolycus to heal the wounded Odysseus (*Od.* 19.457f) and the *carmen* prescribed by Cato (*Agr.* 160) as part of the treatment for a dislocated bone. For a thorough discussion see P. Laín Entralgo, *The Therapy of the Word in Classical Antiquity*, tr. L. J. Rather and J. M. Sharp (New Haven 1970) 45–47.

⁷⁴ Faraone (*supra* n.10).

⁷⁵ See R. R. Dyer, “The Evidence for Apolline Purification Rituals at Delphi and Athens,” *JHS* 89 (1969) 38–56.

⁷⁶ Burkert (*supra* n.23) 58f.

⁷⁷ Aside from the stories about the creation of mankind from clay (which do not concern us here), Athena is the only other Olympian deity who seems to be involved in the creation of animated statues. Pindar (fr.52i=*Pae.* 8.71f Sn.-M.=Page, *GLP* no. 83a) described the third temple of Apollo at Delphi, with its six golden *keledones* gifted with the ability to sing; for discussion see C. M. Bowra, *Pindar* (Oxford 1964) 373f; despite their position on the façade of the temple, there is no hint of any apotropaic power here. See Pind. *Ol.* 7.95 and scholia for Athena’s assistance in building the Rhodian automata. She also helped Epeius build the Trojan horse, which appears as an animated statue in Arctinus’ account; see S. Timpanaro, “Una testimonianza finora inosservata del poema ciclico Ἰλίου πέρις in uno scolio Virgiliano,” *StUrb* SER.B 31 (1957) 156–71; R. G. Austin, “Virgil and the Wooden Horse,” *JRS* 49 (1959) 17 n.4.

⁷⁸ For the Telchines as magicians and the inventors of metal-working and statues, see Σ *ad* Pind. *Ol.* 7.95, Diod. 5.55.2=Zeno of Rhodes *FGrHist* 523F1 (with Jacoby’s comments). The Idaean Dactyls (including Hercules) knew how to make protective amulets for women (Diod. 5.64.4–7). Detienne (*supra* n.9) points out that both groups were originally conceived of as priests and/or devotees of a more powerful

was also said to have built automata, but these statues were so energetic that they had to be bound to prevent them from running off.⁷⁹ The portrayal of Hephaestus in Greek myth as a 'magician' or 'theurgist' fits squarely into this kind of mythmaking: he is the mythological prototype of those experts of traditional lore who created animated theriomorphic statues that protect buildings and islands, and which (like the Apolline purification rituals mentioned above) have clear parallels in Near Eastern ritual.⁸⁰

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deity (like the Curetes of Zeus), and that they took on more sinister traits in later tradition, when they were associated with black magic.

⁷⁹ Paus. 2.4.5; Σ *ad* Pind. *Ol.* 7.95; Pl. *Meno* 79B, *Euthphr.* 15B; Arist. *Pol.* 1253b33, *De an.* 406b18f. Here too both ancient and modern commentators wrongly rationalize these accounts into praise for the 'liveliness' of a realistic statue, which is mistakenly perceived as moving; thus Diodorus at his euhemerizing best reports (4.76–79) that Daedalus' statues were mistaken as living beings because, unlike his predecessors, he made statues with open eyes, striding feet, and extended hands, that seemed to be about to walk off their pedestals. Most modern scholars (*e.g.* R. S. Bluck, ed., *Plato, Meno* [Cambridge 1964] *ad* 97D1f) follow suit, ignoring the work of Clerc and others (*supra* n.3).

⁸⁰ I should like to thank J. Winkler, W. Burkert, M. Edwards, M. Gleason, M. Jameson, M. Munn, D. Obbink, S. Stephens, and the anonymous referees for their comments on earlier drafts of this paper; I should like to give special thanks to A. Green and R. Moorey for their kindness in giving much-needed advice on matters of Near Eastern archaeology and philology. I should jealously claim as my own, however, any and all defects that may remain in spite of their advice.