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Divination in Coptic magical texts

The Coptic magical corpus shows many signs of continuity with the older Graeco-Egyptian magical tradition, yet one case of disjuncture is in the near absence of divination rituals. Divination is a concern in about a third of the surviving Graeco-Egyptian recipes, but only about one percent of the Coptic corpus. This creates something of a paradox, since divinatory practices, such as bowl divination, have a prominent role in several of the magical traditions which are apparently dependent upon the Coptic tradition, such as Arabic-language Egyptian and Ge'ez-language Ethiopian magical practice. This paper will explore the evidence for magical divination which does survive in Coptic—recipes for dream, bowl, and thumbnail divination—discussing their relationship to earlier and later practices, and exploring some possible explanations for the marginality of divination in the Coptic language texts.