

Eleni Chronopoulou, Placebo is Magic or Magic is Placebo? The Greco-Roman Iatromagical Texts.

Trends in Classics 13 (2021) pp. 21-43.

Many of the numerous magical recipes and spells from the Greco-Roman world aim to heal or protect the practitioner. The text, however, show great diversity and heterogeneity and many of them seem to be an elaborate amalgam of different religious influences, analogies, and interactions. This variety can, among other things, play into certain aspects of the placebo effect. Presents a systematic categorization of Greco-Roman amulets according to physical support, format, chronology, and purpose, which together with a study of their terminology may point towards different placebo effects. Examines their social context and describes the resources and the *modus operandi* of the magical healing, which will have further strengthened the effect of these amulets. Their reliance on cultural resources and tropes points especially towards conditioning and learned responses.

2021-0639