

this hypothesis is one of the historical examples of enduring adherence to fallacy based on great authorities. Few other misconceptions, however, can match Melancholia's fertile influence on philosophy, psychology, psychopathology, literature and art.

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THE TESSERAE OF EPHEOS IN THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

MANY cultural historical monuments testify that antique thought on medicine, health and illness in general was influenced by mythology. Antique Greek and Roman coins help to prove this, as they often represent deities influencing health and their symbols. On Greek coins are represented mostly Asklepios and the members of his family, Hygieia, Telesphoros, and Coronis, or only Asklepios' serpent. On Roman coins Salus with Asklepios' serpent is most common. These symbolic signs on antique coins were repeatedly scientifically studied from the viewpoint of the history of medicine, especially recently in Hart's outstanding treatise.¹

Besides the cult of Asklepios, the cult of many other great and minor deities, among them that of the Goddess Artemis, had developed. Artemis was worshipped mainly as the goddess of nature, moon and hunting. She was represented by a deer, a bow eventually with a bunch of arrows, but in Ephesos in Asia Minor she was also worshipped as the goddess of fertility and represented as a polymastic female. Although



The Tesserae of Ephesos.

the cult of Artemis spread all over the whole Greek cultural region, the main centre was Ionic Ephesos in Asia Minor. There stood the Temple of Artemis with the above mentioned statue and its dimensions, and the splendour of its artistic ornaments caused it to be considered as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Its existence extends over nine centuries of which the most glorious was several centuries before Christ.

It is interesting that only in Ephesos was Artemis honoured and invoked as the goddess governing over human health, although according to the myth she was inhumane and rather irreconcilable, hard and revengeful. She was the goddess of birth and therefore women and maidens sacrificed her their chitons, belts and hair to be granted happy childbirth. She therefore also was the protectress of children and young people. Artemis was also the giver of moisture and thus protected the harvest and healing wells. Artemis was believed to provoke on one hand insanity, paralysis and sudden death especially in women, but on the other hand had the power to cure these ailments.

Although the cult of Artemis as the guardian of health is known to the archaeologists, it is never mentioned in the treatises on medicine in Antiquity whereas the cult of Asklepios is always met with. It is therefore likely that few historians of medicine know the material monuments of this cult which have the resemblance to coins or small medals and are called *tesserae*. We therefore consider it important to draw attention to them and put them in their proper place in the material illustrating the history of medicine and medical thought of people in antiquity.

The tessera which we illustrate comes from the early period of the Roman Empire when Ephesos had been under Roman rule as a part of the Pergamon Kingdom since the year 133 B.C. It may be described as follows:

Obverse: Lying deer, looking backwards, at each side of the head are the letters E—Φ Below is the inscription: ΚΚΩΠΠ

Reverse: A bee with folded wings. Round about is the inscription: ΚΗΠΙΛΙΩΔΕΙΤΡΚΤΑΛΛΡΠΝ

Bronze, 17 mm.

The Ephesian tessera which has been conserved in this form is the product of a development of several centuries. Tessera means in Greek and in Latin a small prism of wood or stone, then a dice, or a military square bearing an inscription. The tessera which we are studying here has the form of a small medal but originally it was only a small wooden or leather tablet. It bore a magic inscription called 'Ephesiae litterae' or 'Ephesia' composed of queer incomprehensible syllables. These tesserae were produced near the Temple of Artemis in Ephesos and were worn around the neck as a remedy for diseases and a protection from different evils, or the formulas were quietly recited in case of need.² According to legend, Dactyles of Phrygia was their inventor. Plutarch says that the magicians recommended to those who were under the influence of some demon, very probably mentally diseased, to recite the Ephesian formulas. They were called 'Ephesia' or Ephesian because the first of these were written on the pedestal of the statue of Artemis in the Ephesian Temple. In the course of time their number increased. Their execution in metal in the form of small medals may be considered as the highest degree of their technical development,

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probably in the first century A.D. at the beginning of the Roman Empire. It is probable that later the interest in these amulets gradually decreased, as in the first century a rather important Christian community arose in Ephesos. The gentiles who became Christians renounced the amulets with Ephesian formulas and burned them. This fact proves that together with metallic tesserae wooden and leather tesserae were also used which could be burned. We may suppose that metallic tesserae, because of their durability, could be rather an object of interest of rich people. The development of the Ephesian Artemision during the Empire could not increase because, as is well known, Nero had already bought artistic objects of this Temple which had been ransacked in the year A.D. 262 by the Goths and later destroyed by an earthquake.

The metallic tesserae from Ephesos bearing magic formulas are rare and are not mentioned in great specialized collections of medals relating to medicine as, for example, in Brettauer's, Faludi's and other collections.^{3,4} One specimen, similar to ours, is indicated in the catalogue of the collection of the British Museum⁵ and two other similar specimens may be found in the collection in Copenhagen.⁶ One of them is perforated, which proves that it had been worn as an amulet for protection from different illnesses.

The tesserae of Ephesos bearing magic formulas are of the same value for the history of medicine as Greek coins with symbols of the Asklepios cult reminding us of the existence of numerous Asklepios in antiquity. As far as the protection from certain diseases which the man in antiquity was looking for, the Ephesian Artemision within the range of its action had the same mission as any Asklepios. We have therefore in future to range these Ephesian tesserae among the same material as antique coins and medals with subjects belonging to the cult of Asklepios.

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WILLIAM HILL AND THE ORMSKIRK MEDICINE

THERE are many medicines and preparations named after the people who invented them, but it is unusual for an eponymous title to be employed for a therapeutic agent using the name of a locality or town. Such is the case for a powder that was prescribed in the eighteenth century for the treatment of the bite of a mad dog, and for the prevention of rabies. William Hill of Ormskirk in the county of Lancashire was the