

HUNGARIAN POLIS STUDIES Nr. 20

György Németh

SUPPLEMENTUM AUDOLLENTIANUM



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Abbreviations

AE	<i>L'Année épigraphique</i>
ACD	<i>Acta Classica Universitatis Scientiarum Debreceniensis</i>
BCH	<i>Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique</i>
BCTH	<i>Bulletin archéologique du Comité des travaux historiques</i>
BHSA	<i>Bulletin historique et scientifique de la haute Auvergne</i>
CHL	<i>Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum</i>
CIG	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum</i>
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i>
CRAI	<i>Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres</i>
DTAud	See Audollent 1904.
DTWü	See Wünsch 1897.
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies</i>
IG	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i>
IGCVO	Wessel, C.: <i>Inscriptiones Graecae Christianae Veteres Occidentis</i> , Halle, 1936.
IGR	<i>Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanas pertinentes</i> , ed. René Cagnat et al. 3 vols. Paris 1911–1927. Vol. I, 1911.
ILCV	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae veteres</i> , Berlin, 1925–1931.
MEFRA	<i>Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome: Antiquité</i>
PGM	<i>Papyri Graecae Magicae</i> , see Preisendanz 1973–1974
REA	<i>Revue des études anciennes</i>
RHDFE	<i>Revue historique de droit français et étranger</i>
SEG	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i>
SGD	Jordan, David R.: A Survey of Greek Defixiones Not Included in the Special Corpora. <i>GRBS</i> 26, 1985, 151–197.
SVR	Wünsch, R.: <i>Sethianische Verfluchungstafeln aus Rom</i> . Teubner, Leipzig, 1898.
Tremel	Tremel, J.: <i>Magica agonistica. Fluchtafeln im antiken Sport</i> . Nikephoros Beihefte 10. Hildesheim, 2004.
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

1. Introduction: About the genesis and the purpose of this book

In March 2009 I arrived as a visiting professor to the Institute of History at Université Blaise Pascal in Clermont-Ferrand, yet I could hold only four of my lectures due to the strike of students who even occupied the university building. To take advantage of an unexpected amount free time, first I visited the Musée Bargoin, the archaeological department of which contains former director A. Audollent's private collection of *defixiones*. The conservateur of the collection, Mme Chantal Lamesch, kindly allowed me to spend the remaining time examining the tablets day by day. She informed me that the documents of Audollent's bequest are kept not in the museum but in the county archive (Archives Départementales du Puy-de-Dôme). In the archive I found a folder with all drawings and photos produced by Audollent during the editing of his *Defixiones Tabellae*.¹ Since an overwhelming majority of these tablets have never been published with drawings and only rarely with photos, whereas many *defixiones* have been lost by now or have become illegible due to corrosion, I immediately recognized the significance of the drawings. Several items were very dim or sketched onto blue photos, which hampered their examination, however, I resolved to disclose the entire corpus for researchers of the magical tradition as soon as possible. *En route* I decided to collect not only Audollent's sketches but also all available drawings of *defixiones* that have been published. By converging drawings of various background (Roman curse tablets by R. Wünsch, *defixiones* published in hardly accessible journals or in volumes of CIL) and my own sketches of photos or of lead lamellae found in the Archive, the concept of this magical picture book finally took shape.²

I visited the Musée Bargoin and the Archive two more times, in 2010 and in 2011, to answer all questions raised during the collection of the material. The most difficult job was to identify drawings with items published in DTAud or in various journals since Audollent wrote inventory numbers only onto some drawings or photos. Finally I completed this task in two years. It is a great pleasure for me to hand over to colleagues whatever I found and comprehended during these three years. I might not have been able to locate one or two drawings, and I might even have misidentified certain items (which I hope I did

1 Archives Départementales du Puy de Dôme, 19 J 12.

2 Own drawings: DTAud 72; 196; 238; 263; 276; 280; 292; BCTH 1905.1; BCTH 1906.1; BCTH 1906.2; BCTH 1910.1; BCTH 1910.2.

not), still, I gladly take the responsibility of all failures to make this corpus of public property open to further investigations with the least possible delay.

György Németh

Zaragoza–Budapest, 25 June 2013

2. Audollent and the *defixiones*

Auguste Audollent was born in Paris on 14 July 1864.³ His father was a clerk in the Ministère des Finances. Audollent learnt Latin and ancient Greek as a secondary school student, thus he applied to the Sorbonne and later graduated in classical philology. Simultaneously, in 1887–1888 he studied Latin epigraphy at the École Pratique des Hautes Études under the direction of Héron de Villefosse, a famous epigrapher of his time.⁴ He received his university degree in 1888, and from that autumn he was working as a researcher at the École française de Rome for two years. From October 1889 until February 1890 he took part in an epigraphical research expedition in Algeria. From 1893 till his retirement he worked as a teacher of Latin language, literature and epigraphy at the Faculty of Humanities in Clermont-Ferrand. In early 1893 he visited Carthage again, and encouraged by René Cagnat and Antoine Héron de Villefosse he started examining curse tablets uncovered in increasing numbers at the excavations of Carthage and Hadrumetum. He intended to write his Latin dissertation on this subject. As it was customary those days, he had to submit two treatises: one in Latin and another one in French.⁵ He returned to Tunis in 1901 at the request of Rev. Alfred Louis Delattre, director of the Musée Lavigerie de Saint-Louis (today Musée National de Carthage) to process curse tablets kept in the museum:

*“Je n'en ai point déchiffré ni fait déchiffré depuis longtemps. Beaucoup de ces lamelles de plomb sont encore roulées. Vous devriez venir passer quelques jours à Carthage pour les développer et les lire. Le musée Lavigerie en renferme plus de 100. Vous voyez que vous auriez de quoi vous amuser.”*⁶

Paul Gauckler, director of the Bardo Museum in Tunis also invited Audollent to examine their tablets that were found in Carthage and Hadrumetum and opened with new technology.⁷ During his journey to Tunisia, Audollent also visited Sousse to publish local

3 Biographical data acquired from the following references: Dupont-Ferrier 1943; Diès 1953; Fabre 2010; Archives Départementales du Puy-de-Dôme. Audollent's detailed autograph autobiography is also kept in the Archive. Audollent published his own bibliography until 1921 in *Revue d'Auvergne* 38, 1921, 86–91.

4 Diès 1953, 334.

5 This latter was the monumental *Carthage romaine, 146 avant Jésus-Christ-698 après Jésus-Christ* published in 1901.

6 Letter from Alfred Delattre to Audollent, 29 April 1901. Archives Départementales du Puy-de-Dôme, n° 19 J 10.

7 Date of the letter: 8 August 1901.

defixiones. In his first studies about this subject (in the volumes of *Musées de Sousse*) he published four curse tablets from Hadrumetum, and another lamella was published in a journal titled *BCTH*.⁸ In 1903 he published a theoretical survey arguing against labelling curse tablets as *devotiones*, and he proposed to call them *defixiones* consistently.⁹

*“La devotio se fait a ciel ouvert, plus d'une fois même dans l'intérêt public; la defixio aime les ténèbres ; celui qui y a recours se dissimule et enfuit presque toujours la tablette où il a inscrit ses malédictions dans un tombeau, dans un puits, dans les eaux d'une source.”*¹⁰

Audollent was not the first scholar insisting on the term *defixio*, since R. Wünsch used the same term for his corpus of Attic tablets published in 1897;¹¹ still, Audollent's article had a tremendous effect on French literature (which was paramount in the field of *defixiones* due to contemporary excavations in North Africa), and the term *devotio* was shortly abandoned in French scholarship.

He accomplished his *opus magnum* in an incredibly short period of time: the *Defixionum Tabellae* was completed by 1904, containing the texts of 305 curse tablets on 568 pages with commentaries and indices (142 pages) enumerating not only human names, horse names, and curse formularies, but also grammatical and orthographic details both in Latin and in Greek texts. He dealt with various problems of *defixiones* in the introduction (128 pages): edition history, category definition (including differentiation from seemingly similar phenomena), technology (material, inscribing, tools), possible purposes and uses of cursing. This survey was the first comprehensive study ever written on the subject, dealing with all problems involved and taking into consideration not only the 305 lamellae edited in his volume, but also all other known curse tablets (mainly from Attica): altogether 488 *defixiones*.¹² Audollent did not translate the texts and provided drawings

8 Audollent 1902b, 84–85. These items correspond to DTAud. 272; 273; 274, and 267. The fifth item (Audollent 1902a, 417–425) corresponds to DTAud 275.

9 Audollent 1903, 37–43.

10 Audollent 1903, 42. Alain Blomart has argued recently that *devotio* was more common in peaceful periods than in wartime (e.g. the self-sacrifice of Decius Mus on the battlefield), and even more common on curse tablets, too (tab. Sulis, Kropp 3.2/10: *Suli devoveo eum*). His conclusion is as follows: “À travers toutes les attestations mentionnées ici, nous constatons donc que la frontière entre religion et magie et loin d'être imperméable, même chez nos ancêtres les Romains.” Cf. Religion ou magie? Les textes oubliés sur l'evocatio et la devotio Romaines. Suárez de la Torre, E. – Pérez Jiménez, A. (edd.): *Mito y Magia en Grecia y Roma*, Barcelona, 2013, 295.

11 Wünsch 1897.

12 DTAud xxx.

of only three items, all from the edition of Héron de Villefosse.¹³ Normally he did not include sketches of charaktères, the only exception being the charaktêr sequences from Hadrumetum.¹⁴ However, this was not his fault only. Charaktères were poorly neglected until the early 2000s. Hardly anybody had known about the drawings he made of most tablets that he studied until the rediscovery of these documents in his bequest in Clermont-Ferrand, and no-one has ever thought of making them public.¹⁵

After the release of his volume, Audollent became the most recognized scholar in this field beside Richard Wünsch, and since French excavations in North Africa revealed new curse tablets year by year, these finds were sent to Audollent to publish them. He issued two other *defixiones* from Hadrumetum in 1905 and a summary in French about the language, onomastics, and other characteristics of North African curse tablets in 1906. In 1907 he published two lamellae, currently kept in Clermont-Ferrand, which were sent to him by the Ministère de l'Instruction Publique, as it is written on the envelope still kept in the Archive. In 1908 he disclosed several new *defixiones* in two articles, and in 1909 he issued a short comprehensive study on the language of curse tablets. In 1910 he disclosed two new *defixiones* (from Hammam Lif and Sousse) and republished DTAud 299 (from Ammaedara, today Haïdra), which he had edited in his volume following the erroneous reading of Paul Henri Goetschy. In 1912 he published a short Greek fragment found in Souk-el-Abiod, then next year he wrote a discussion paper on the *defixio* from Mentana, followed by a gap of an entire decade. In 1922 he published a Latin love spell from Feriana (I found its manuscript in Clermont-Ferrand), and in 1925 he reported on four *defixiones* from Carthage found in the 'Fontaine aux Mille Amphores' and promised to have them published in the near future, however, he actually issued them eight years later.¹⁶ In 1930 he provided a profound publication of a love spell from Hadrumetum (kept in the Louvre) in the *Mélanges* in honour of Paul Thomas. The aim of the spell is to win the love of Lucifera's daughter to Optatus.¹⁷ In the

13 DTAud 266 (only the drawing of the charaktères), DTAud 286 side A and B, DTAud 287. All three drawings are made by Héron de Villefosse.

14 DTAud 272; 275; 276; 278.

15 David Jordan had also visited the archive, as I found a scribbled note of his on an envelope, yet as I know he never intended to publish the drawings.

16 Audollent 1925, c: "La lecture, parfois laborieuse, est aujourd'hui terminée. Je suis en train de rédiger un commentaire explicatif, qui ne tardera guère à être au point." Two of the four *defixiones* were transferred from Audollent's bequest to the Musée Bargoin, inv. nr. 72.1.275 and 72.1.276.

17 Audollent 1930c, 16–28.

same year he interpreted a snake-headed demon from Carthage as a curse tablet. There is only the name beneath the demon's legs: Harpokratiôn, also called Neilos. As I argue for it in the chapter on iconography, this item is more probably an amulet.¹⁸

The promised *defixiones* were finally disclosed in 1933 with thorough commentaries.¹⁹ Audollent provided drawings of the letters, which highlight the frame structure of the texts. The frame and the curse itself are both in Greek on the circus *defixio*, whereas only the frame is in Greek and the curse itself is in Latin in the case of the two items against a bath:

“Domini dei tenete detinete Falernas nequis illoc accedere possit obligate perobligate Falernaru(m) ba lineu(m) ab hac die nequis homo illoc accedat.”

In 1933 he also published a lead container from his own collection in *Mélanges Nicolas Iorga*. There were three fragments of a Latin curse tablet and a bronze stylus placed in the container.²⁰ He did not even attempt to provide a reading of the tablet – the short article was obviously written upon request to honour a historian of a different field of interest in a volume hardly accessible to scholars of ancient magic, thus this study became a typical “*Mélanges* item”.

The last contribution of Audollent in the field of magic is also difficult to access. It was written in 1933, disclosing the inscription of a Christian spell against hailstorm found in Tunisia inscribed onto a lead cross (Double inscription prophylactique contre la grêle, sur une croix de plomb trouvée en Tunisie).²¹ The exemplary and systematic examination of this inscription (from Aïn Founa) can be a fundamental reading for scholars of vulgar Latin as well. The fate of this article was determined by the history of the 20th century. The first part of volume 43 of *Mémoires de l'Institut National de France Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* was printed in 1943. Audollent's writing was submitted to the second part, which however was printed in 1951 – almost two decades after its composition. The editing of the volume must have been postponed for years and ultimately stopped during the German occupation. The material was

18 Audollent 1930a, 303–309; Jordan 1985, 185, Nr 142. See chapter 5.2. below (“The snake-headed demon”).

19 Audollent 1933a, 120–140; Jordan 1985, 184–185. It is curious that in Jordan's view Nr. 140–141 are written “against horses”, though the two tablets are against “Falernarum balineum”, i.e. against a bath.

20 Audollent 1933b, 31–39.

21 Audollent 1951, 45–75.

printed only in 1951, after the consolidation of the political and economic situation. Audollent, however, did not live to see it finished.

Having reviewed the studies of this excellent epigrapher in the field of ancient magic, it is conspicuous that while he sometimes published several papers a year on curse tablets between 1902 and 1913, it was followed by a pause of nine years, and his previous activity never revived in this area. After 1913 he prepared only two thorough studies on magic: the finds of the 'Fontaine aux mille amphores' and the posthumously published phylactery. I found numerous unpublished (though publishable) *defixiones* and amulets in his bequest. What happened to Audollent after 1913?

Having settled in Clermont-Ferrand, Audollent got married, had eight children and 36 grandchildren, whereas beside his teaching career at the university he started excavations in the temple of Mercury in the hillside of Puy de Dôme above Clermont in the summer of 1901. From 1903 until 1939 he was the director of the Musée Municipal de Clermont-Ferrand (today Musée Bargoin). In 1902 and 1906 he lead excavations again on the top of Puy de Dôme, a difficult archaeological terrain. In 1905 he became professor at the Faculty of Humanities in Clermont-Ferrand, where he retired only in 1937. In 1907 he returned to Algeria and Tunisia to investigate further inscriptions, yet his position as dean of faculty from 1914 to 1937 (!) and the excavations in the Roman cemetery of Martres-de-Veyre (1922–1923) consumed all his time. The emphasis of his academic interest was shifted towards the archaeological finds of Auvergne. Several curse tablets were sent to him to have them deciphered, but he did not have time to deal with those. The internationally acclaimed scholar of ancient magic gradually became the leading archaeologist and epigrapher of Auvergne and Clermont-Ferrand. His renown was somewhat overshadowed by the scandal around the inscriptions found in Glozel, which he considered Neolithic (!) but turned out to be hardly legible vulgar Latin texts.²² In spite of this, his national reputation did not diminish significantly, and he became a corresponding member of the Institut de France in 1917, and a regular member of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres in 1932.

During the German occupation of France, Clermont-Ferrand belonged to the territory of the Vichy Government between 1940 and August 1944. When Audollent died in 7 April 1943 (following his wife to the grave, who got ill while working for the Red Cross), only a short obituary was published in Paris. A eulogy more worthy of his character

22 Audollent, A.: *L'énigme de Glozel*. Paris, 1927.

was published only ten years later, in 1953.²³ Though a street is named after him in Clermont-Ferrand, his life achievement (especially the part relating to ancient magic) still awaits rediscovery. I hope this book can contribute to it.

²³ Diès 1953.