A Syriac-Arabic Dream-Request and Its Jewish Tradition

Michael Zellmann-Rohrer, *University of Oxford**

Introduction

This article presents a text and interpretation of a fragment of an early modern Syriac text (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, cod. Vat. sir. 469, f. 155r–v) whose content belongs to the genre of what is conventionally termed "magic."[1] The fragment has survived in the binding of a later codex. The text, of which an edition with translation and commentary follows this introduction, is a guide for a procedure to summon up a mantic dream. The instructions are in Syriac (both language and script), but the central invocation addresses several supernatural powers in Arabic, here rendered in Syriac script (*Garšūnī*),[2] before concluding in Syriac. As the discussion following the edition will be concerned to show, its makeup is yet more complex than its linguistic composition, as it participates in a tradition of such recipes for compelling significant dreams attested from the late ancient ritual papyri of Roman Egypt, and well-represented in late ancient and medieval Jewish magical treatises and handbooks.

* I am grateful to Alessia Bellusci, Gideon Bohak, and Alexandre Roberts for discussion of the text and comments on earlier drafts, and to the anonymous reviewers of the journal for further helpful criticisms; all remaining errors are my own.

[1] Although the term "magic" is now generally recognized as inadequate, it is maintained here as a convenient shorthand for instrumental religion deployed in the private sphere, following the convention of R. L. Gordon, "Charaktêres Between Antiquity and the Renaissance: Transmission and Re-Invention," in *Les savoirs magiques et leur transmission de l'Antiquité à la Renaissance*, ed. Véronique Dasen and J.-M. Spieser (Florence, 2014), 253 n. 1. G. Veltri prefers a definition as "a hermeneutic effort to interpret and change reality" relying on relationships between actor and audience: *A Mirror of Rabbinic Hermeneutics: Studies in Religion, Magic, and Language Theory in Ancient Judaism* (Berlin, 2015), 125. As the present study is concerned with the tradition and transmission of the lore itself, rather than contemporary or modern perceptions thereof, the debate over the category of magic is outside of its scope, and the internal terminology will be maintained whenever possible.

[2] On Garšūnī orthography, see A. Mengozzi, "The History of Garshuni as a Writing System: Evidence from the Rabbula Codex," in *CAMSEMUD 2007. Proceedings of the 13th Italian Meeting of Afro-Asiatic Linguistics Held in Udine, May 21st–24th, 2007*, ed. F. M. Fales and G. F. Grassi (Padua, 2010), 297–304; G. A. Kiraz, Tūrrāṣ Mamllā: *A Grammar of the Syriac Language. Volume 1. Orthography* (Piscataway, NJ, 2012), 289–352; E. Balicka-Witakowski et al., *The Hidden Pearl*. 2. *The Heirs of the Ancient Aramaic Heritage* (Rome, 2001), 261–62. On Arabic written in Syriac script ("Syro-Arabic"), which can be found as early as the tenth century, see most recently M. R. Zammit, "British Library Add. 14,493: A Very Early Garšūnī Text," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 59 (2014); Kiraz, Tūrrāṣ, 294–98; J. Assfalg, "Arabische Handschriften in syrischer Schrift (Karšūnī)," in *Grundriss der arabischen Philologie. Band I: Sprachwissenschaft*, ed. W. Fischer (Wiesbaden, 1982), 297–302.

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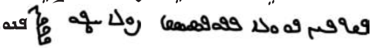
Edition of the fragment Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, cod. Vat. sir. 469, f. 155r–v3

[. . .]

ܒܪܙܟܘܡ ܠܝ ܒܓܝܢ. ܐܠܗܘܡ: {ܡܘ:} ܡܘܟܪܘܓܘܢ ܒܡܡܐ ܟܢܬܡ
ܬܟܬܡܘܢ .. ܒܝܢܘ ܠܝ ܐܠܚܦܝܬ ܘܠܕܦܝܢ ܘܐܠܚܙܝܢ. ܐܠܕܝ ܡܟܦܝ ܦܝ
ܗܕܐ ܐܠܡܟܢ. ܒܚܚܩ ܐܗܝܗ ܐܫܪܐܗܝܗ ܐܠ[ܫ]ܕܝ ܐܕܘܢܝ ܡܪܝܐ ܨܒܐܘܬ ܣܢܐ
ܣܢܐ ܘܚܚܝܠ ܘܚܚܝܠ ܥܓܓܝܠ ܥܓܓܝܠ ܒܪܟ ܐܠܠܗ ܦܝܟܘܡ ܘܥܠܝܓܘܡ..
ܗܟܢܐ ܘܐܙܕܗܪ ܒܗܘܢ ܐܝܢ ܘܐܡܝܢ.. ܟܬܘܒ ܟܠ ܚܕ ܡܢܗܘܢ ܥܠ ܩܪܛܝܣܐ
ܐܢܗܪ {ܓ} ܬܠܬܐ ܫܪܓܝܢ ܐܘܟܝܬ ܠܡܦܝܕܐ ܘܛܦܐ ܗܠܝܢ ܩܪܛܝܣܐ ܥܠ
ܢܗܝܪܐ ܘܐܣܘܪ ܐܢܘܢ ܒܡܢܐ ܕܪܫܟ ܐܘ ܕܕܩܢܟ ܠܐܫܬܐ ܕܩܪܛܝܣܐ ܘܣܝܡ
ܢܗܝܪܐ ܬܚܝܬ ܐܓܢܐ | ܘܣܚܝ ܘܚܠܦ ܡܐܢܝܟ ܘܠܒܫ ܠܒܘܫܐ ܚܘܪܐ. ܘܠܐ
ܬܡܠܠ ܥܡ ܟܠ ܟܠܗ ܘܫܡܫ ܕܘܝܕ ܟܡܐ ܕܡܫܟܚ ܘܕܡܟ ܘܓܠܝܢ
ܠܟ ܟܠܡܐ ܕܨܒܐ * ܘܠܒܘܟ ܒܐܝܕܟ ܕܝܡܝܢܐ ܘܫܡܫ ܕܘܝܕ ܘܐܘܡܝ
ܠܟܠܢܫ ܕܚܙܐ ܬܬ ܘܓܠܐ ܠܟ ܟܡܐ ܕܨܒܐ * ܦ  ܡܘܒܠܘܢ
 ܦܢܘܝܐܠ ܐܢܩܛܦ ܦܘܒܝܢ
ܒܘܠܐ ܐܣܦܐܩܝܢ ܩܙܙ ܚܦܘܣ ܘܢܝܠܐܘܣ ܘܣܦܘܠܘܣ: ܘܫܪܝܪ ܘܡܢܣܝ.
ܫܡܗܐ ܕܡܠܐܟܐ * ܓܒܪܐܝܠ * ܡܝܟܐܝܠ * ܘܪܦܐܝܠ * ܘܐܕܝܐܝܠ *
ܘܚܣܕܝܐܝܠ * ܩܕܝܫܐܝܠ * ܡܪܦܝܐܝܠ * ܒܪܝܐܝܠ * ܐܒܪܗܝܠ * ܡܪܓܝܐܠ

[. . .]

Transliteration[4]

bərzākûm lay baggayn ʾellahôm mwkrwǧwn bemmâ kentem tektemôn baynô lî alḥapyāt wldpyn wa-ʾlḥazzīn ʾelladī mekpī pī hādê ʾlmakn baḥḥaq ʾāhyāh ʾāšrāhyāh ʾēlšadday ʾadônay māryâ ṣəbāʾôt sannâ sannâ waḥḥîl waḥḥîl ʿaǧǧîl ʿaǧǧîl BRK ʾLLH pīkôm waʿlǧôm. hākannâ w-ezdhar bhôn ʾên w-ʾāmên. ktôb koll ḥad menhôn ʿal qarṭaysâ ʾanhar tlātâ šrāgīn ʾāwkêt lampêdê wə-ṭappâ hālên qarṭaysê ʿal nahhîrê w-ʾasôr-ennôn bə-mennâ də-rēšāk āw də-daqnāk l-ʾeštâ də-qarṭaysê wə-sîm nahhîrê tḥêt aggānê wa-sḥî wə-ḥalleph mânāyk wa-lbeš lbûšê ḥewwārê wə-lā təmallel ʿam koll kolleh wə-šammeš Dāwîd kəmā də-meškaḥ wə-dāmēk wə-gallāyn lāk kollmâ də-ṣābê wa-lbôk b-ʾîdāk də-yammīnâ wə-šammeš Dāwîd wə-ʾāwmī lə-koll-nāš də-ḥāzê-tt wə-gālê lāk kəmâ də-ṣābê-t: P . . . MWBLWN . . . PNWYʾL ʾNQṬP PWBYN BWLʾ ʾSPʾQYN QZZ ḤPWS WNYLʾWS WSPWLWS: wə-šarrîr wa-mnassay. šmāhê də-malʾākê: Gabrêl Mîkāʾêl wə-RPʾYL wə-ʾDYʾYL wə-ḤSDYʾYL QDYŠʾYL MRPYʾYL BRYʾYL ʾBRHYL MRGYʾL [. . .]

Translation

(f. 155v) "[. . .] (Arabic) may he make you manifest to me via jinn—by God!—(you) (pl.) being brought forth along with what you (pl.) have been concealing. Make appear the suppressed and the concealed and the treasured-up (or, secret), that which is hidden in this place, by *āhyāh āšrāhyāh ēlšadday adonay* (Syriac) Lord of Hosts—(Arabic) swiftly, swiftly(?), in haste, in haste, quickly, quickly. May God bless you—(Syriac) so too watch over them, yes, amen." Write each one of them[5] on paper, light three lamps (*šrāgîn*), that is, lamps (*lampîdê*), and fasten these papers upon the lights and bind them with the hairs of your head or of your beard—at the bottom part of the paper—and place the lights under bowls (f. 155r), and bathe and change your clothing and put on white garments, and do not speak with anyone at all, and perform the liturgy of David (i.e., recite the Psalter), as much as possible, and go to sleep, and whatever you wish will be revealed to you. Grasp with your right hand and perform the liturgy of David and adjure whomever you see, and he will reveal to you whatever you wish. P . . . *signs* . . . MWBLWN . . . *signs* . . . PNWYʾL ʾNQṬP PWBYN BWLʾ ʾSPʾQYN QZZ ḤPWS WNYLʾWS WSPWLWS. True and tested.

The names of the angels: Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael, and ʾDYʾYL and ḤSDYʾYL, QDYŠʾYL, MRPYʾYL, BRYʾYL, ʾBRHYL, MRGYʾL [. . .]

Notes

F. 155v. The Arabic text in the invocation underlying the Syriac transliteration may be reconstructed as follows:

برزكم لي بجن اللهم مخرجون بما كنتم تكتمون. بينوا لي الخفيت والدفين
والخزين الذى مخفى فى هذا المكان بحق

. . .

سعى سعى (؟) وحى وحى (؟) عجل عجل. بارك الله فيكم وعليكم

birzkum lī biğinn – allāhuma – muḫriğūn bimā kuntum taktumūn bayyanū lī al-ḫafīt wa-ldafīn wa-lḫazīn allaḏī muḫfī fī haḏā-lmakān biḥaqq . . . saʿā saʿā (?), waḥī waḥī (?), ʿağil ʿağil

ܐܠܚܦܝܬ (الخفيت): for the sense of the phrase, proper to lowering or silencing of the voice, see Lane, *Lexicon*,

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[3] The fragment is currently bound in the wrong orientation: as confirmed by the catchword at end of f. 155v, f. 155r should follow it; the page-break is marked here by |. Read from the digital facsimile available through DVL – DigiVatLib <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.sir.469>.

[4] Here the vocalization of the manuscript is reproduced as closely as possible, with only consonants in capitals when a word is left unvocalized; for a reconstruction of the underlying Arabic, see further below.

[5] The antecedent remains unclear due to the loss of the beginning of the recipe, but is most likely the list of angels following on f. 155r.

771c–72a s.v.[6] The dotted ܬ in the Syriac presumably serves to distinguish /t/ from /t̲/, which would be expected under ordinary Syriac phonetical rules, i.e. Arabic ت from ث.

ܡܟܒܦ (والدفين): for ܡܢܟܒܦ, the Arabic alif being omitted after the prefixed consonant; for the frequent occurence of this kind of omission in Syriac orthography, see E. Littmann's *Syriac Inscriptions*.[7] The root دفن might more specifically suggest burial, such that the Arabic invocation, at least, could be seen to target buried treasure: for the common hope of finding buried treasure by the divinatory conjuration of spirits, see below.

ܒܟܚ: despite the absence of a marked long a-vowel, the context guarantees a transcription of Arabic مكان rather than a form of the root مكن.

ܒܚܩ: for Arabic بِحَقّ. On the vocalization, compare ܟ ܒܓܝ above, for standard Arabic لِي بِجِنّ; for the construction, governing the entity by whom an oath is made, see J. Blau, *A Dictionary of Medieval Judaeo-Arabic Texts* (Jerusalem, 2006), 137a s.v. حَقّ.

ܐܗܝܐ ܕܐܫܪ ܐܗܝܐ ܐ[ܒ]ܓ ܒܕܘܟ ܫܕܝ ܐܬܝ ܐܗܝܐ: drawn from Exodus 3:14. The Hebrew text of this verse can be found in Greek transliteration in the Roman period on a metal apotropaic amulet discovered in Wales,[8] and later diffused in Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, and Arabic magical texts.[9] The core phrase from Exodus is found in two dream request procedures in New York, Jewish Theological Seminary MS 8128,[10] in both cases accompanied by the recitation of select Psalms. A handbook from the Cairo Geniza[11] gives formulae for two dream-requests (שאילת חלום), both of which involve ritual purification and ritual text. The second formula includes Psalm 23, while the first gives a longer invocation to be written on the left hand, including שדי שדי אהיה אשר אהיה; the Hebrew portion of the Greek treasure-hunting invocation discussed below also contains a variant of this phrase (בשם אהיה אשר אהיה ובשם יה יהיה צבאות; perhaps preceded by בשם אל שדי if that is the correct expansion of the abbreviation בֵּאשׁ). In Syriac, the full combination is found in e.g. the apotropaic invocations edited by H. Gollancz, *Book of Protection* rec. A §4, ܐܗܝܐ ܕܐܫܪ ܐܗܝܐ ܐܠܗ ܐܒܪܗܡ ܐܠܗ ܐܝܣܚܩ ܐܠܗ ܝܥܩܘܒ ܐܠܗ ܡܫܐ ܐܠܗ ܐܗܪܘܢ.[12]

ܫܥܬܐ ܫܥܬܐ, for Arabic سعى سعى (saʿā saʿā, see Lane, *Lexicon*, 1366a–b s.v.)? As it stands, the phrase might refer to the Arabic سن in the sense of "to move briskly," form VIII with the derived سنن, "running, hastening": Lane, *Lexicon*, 1437a, 1439a s.vv.; or سنو, "brightly," "easily," Lane, *Lexicon*, 1448b–49c s.v. This and the following two repeated adverbs are comparable to the closing ἤδη ἤδη, ταχὺ ταχύ, "now, now, quickly, quickly," ubiquitous at the close of invocations in the Greek texts from ritual handbooks from Roman Egypt. A similar tricolon with doubtless the same derivation is found in a small Arabic handbook of uncertain date copied by a correspondent of Enno Littmann in 1911, gathering practices employed with the help of a female specialist by women in Cairo to manipulate the affections of men (شبشبة): the close of one incantation for erotic purposes runs الوحا الوحا العجل العجل الساعة الساعة.[13] In a Judaeo-Arabic text from the Cairo Geniza, *MTKG* I, T.-S. K 1.56 f. 2b.11, a comparable אלסאעה אלסאעה אלעגלה אלעגלה is found (abbreviated, see the commentary in MTKG, p. 45); an invocation of the planet Mars for fulfillment of general-purpose requests in the *Aim of the Sage* (*Ghāyat al-ḥakīm*) 3.7,[14] ends with الساعة الساعة آمين آمين. The Syriac script of the present text clearly has ܗܕܢ, not ܗܕܐ, but an emendation to the latter, supposing a simple graphic error by the scribe, who may have been reading without comprehending his exemplar, is attractive.

ܘܫܒܝ ܘܫܒܝ: apparently for Arabic وحى وحى (waḥī waḥī: see Lane, *Lexicon*, 3050c s.v.), suggested by the parallel

[6] References below to Lane, *Lexicon*, refer to E. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (London, 1863–83).

[7] E. Littmann, *Syriac Inscriptions*. Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological Expeditions to Syria in 1905–1905 and 1909, Division IV. Semitic Inscriptions, Section B (Leiden, 1934), x.

[8] R. Kotansky, *Greek Magical Amulets. The Inscribed Gold, Silver, Copper, and Bronze Lamellae. Part I: Published Texts of Known Provenance* (Opladen, 1994), text no. 2.

[9] G. Bohak, "Hebrew, Hebrew Everywhere? Notes on the Interpretation of *Voces Magicae*," in *Prayer, Magic, and the Stars in the Ancient and Late Antique World*, ed. S. Noegel, J. Walker, and B. Wheeler (University Park, PA, 2003), 74–76.

[10] Edited by P. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (Tübingen, 1981), §§502–507 and §517.

[11] P. Schäfer and S. Shaked, *Magische Texte aus der Kairoer Geniza*, 3 vols. (Tübingen, 1994–), T.-S. K 1.28, f. 1a.11–1b16 [henceforth, *MTKG*].

[12] H. Gollancz, *The Book of Protection, Being a Collection of Charms* (London, 1912). For a garbled transliteration from Arabic into Mandaic, see M. Morgenstern and T. Alfia, "Arabic Magic Texts in Mandaic Script: A Forgotten Chapter in Near-Eastern Magic," in *„Durch Dein Wort ward jegliches Ding!" / "Through Thy Word All Things Were Made!" II. Mandäistische und Samaritanistische Tagung / 2nd International Conference of Mandaic and Samaritan Studies*, ed. R. Voigt (Wiesbaden, 2013), 174.

[13] E. Littmann, "Arabischer Liebeszauber aus Aegypten," in *Mélanges Louis Massignon* (Damascus, 1957), 88.

[14] H. Ritter, ed. *Ghāyat al-ḥakīm wa-aḥaqq al-natījatayn bi-aītaqdīm. Das Ziel des Weisen* (Berlin, 1933), ed. 214 (tr. p. 226).

in the text published by Littmann, and miscopied by the scribe along similar lines as the preceding phrase in that formula (see the preceding note).

F. 155v. *Signs*: for the *charaktēres*, see also among the Syriac bowls e.g. Moriggi, *Corpus* nos. 14, line 10, and 28, line 9;[15] and Gignoux, *Incantations*, Planche 1;[16] and for the interspersed "magical" words, e.g. Moriggi, *Corpus* no. 15, lines 10–13, and Naveh, "Syriac Amulet."[17] On comparable signs in Arabic magical texts, see Winkler, *Siegel*;[18] in Mandaean texts, see e.g. an amulet to cast out a demon, to be inscribed on a metal sheet and worn about the neck;[19] they are also common in Jewish texts.[20] For the development of the signs in the Greek tradition: Gordon, "Charaktêres," with *P.Oxy.* LXXXII 5304 ii 32 and the commentary there.[21]

ܦܢܝܐ: a similar פניאל is attested in the Jewish handbook New York Public Library, cod. Heb. 190, ed. Bohak, *Fifteenth-Century Manuscript*, MS pp. 72.12, 20 and 84.18; see also פנואל in e.g. *MTKG* II no. 22 f. 4a.6; פניאל in the dream-request ed. Schäfer, *Hekhalot* §505; and the Greek Φανουήλ, who is particularly associated with fire,[22] and hence perhaps thought specially appropriate for the use of lamps here, as would an etymological association with the verb φαίνω, "reveal," and in the passive, "appear" (as suggested by Gideon Bohak).

ܢܒܢܐ: the angel is not otherwise known.

ܚܣܕܝܐ: the angel חסדיאל is well attested in the Jewish tradition, see e.g. *MTKG* I, T.-S. K 1.37, f. 2a.7, and several places in New York Public Library, cod. Heb. 190, where he is said to be the angel "who rained grace (*ḥesed*) on Joseph in Egypt" (דהטיף חסד על יוסף בארץ מצרים).[23]

ܩܕܫܝܐ: the angel קדשיאל is among those invoked in a dream request in a fifteenth-century Jewish magical handbook in Geneva, Bibliothèque de Genève cod. Comites Latentes 145 (ex-cod. Sassoon 290), p. 474 no. 1295, alongside חסדיאל as also in the present text (see above), and ספלכוס, compare ܣܦܠܟܘܣ in the present text. The related קדושאל is called "prince of dreams" (שר החלום) in dream-request procedures ibid. p. 330 no. 914, as is קדושיאל, ibid. p. 461 no. 1202. For קדשיאל elsewhere see also New York Public Library cod. Heb. 190, ed. Bohak, *Fifteenth-Century Manuscript*, pp. 73.9 and 110.23; Michl, "Engel," 227 no. 174.

ܡܪܟܦܝܐ: not known from elsewhere, perhaps based on the same root as the well-known Raphael; see also Schwab, *Vocabulaire*, 180 s.v. מרכפיאל, "du heurt divine,"[24] one of two angels assigned to inflict the penalty of death.

ܒܪܝܐ: the angel בריאל is attested several times in New York Public Library cod. Heb. 190, ed. Bohak, *Fifteenth-Century Manuscript*, e.g. p. 73.7, whose name probably underlies the Bariēl attested in a Coptic invocation (the so-called Rossi Gnostic treatise, p. 12.11, ed. Kropp, *Zaubertexte*, 1:72[25] with Michl, "Engel," 208 no. 52).

ܐܒܪܗܠ: compare the Ἀβραήλ attested in Byzantine angelology: Michl, "Engel," 201 no. 3.

ܡܪܓܝܐ: compare מרגיאל in New York Public Library cod. Heb. 190, ed. Bohak, *Fifteenth-Century Manuscript*, p. 234.27.

Syriac Magic

Along the way, the fragment edited here complicates and diversifies our picture of popular ritual practices transmitted in Syriac in the medieval and early modern East. Much of the scholarship thus far, corresponding to the material known thus far, has concentrated on amuletic prayers, conventionally termed "charms" in

[15] M. Moriggi, *A Corpus of Syriac Incantation Bowls: Syriac Magical Texts from Late-Antique Mesopotamia* (Leiden, 2014), with photographs on pp. 83 and 142–43, respectively.

[16] P. Gignoux, *Incantations magiques syriaques* (Louvain, 1987).

[17] J. Naveh, "A Syriac Amulet on Leather," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 42 (1997).

[18] H. A. Winkler, *Siegel und Charaktere in der Muhammedanischen Zauberei* (Berlin, 1930).

[19] E. S. Drower, *The Book of the Zodiac (Sfar Malwašia)* (London, 1949), 78 (Drower Collection no. 31, p. 122), similarly 83–84 (ibid., pp. 129–30).

[20] G. Bohak, "The *Charaktêres* in Ancient and Medieval Jewish Magic," *Acta Classica Universitatis Scientiarum Debreceniensis* 47 (2011), and Saar, *Jewish Love Magic*, 197–206.

[21] N. Gonis et al., *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* vol. LXXXII, Graeco-Roman Memoirs 103 (London, 2016).

[22] See J. Michl, "Engel I–IX," *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 5 (Stuttgart, 1962), 225 no. 167.

[23] G. Bohak, ed., *A Fifteenth-Century Manuscript of Jewish Magic: MS New York Public Library, Heb. 190 (Formerly Sassoon 56)*, 2 vols. (Los Angeles, 2014) [in Hebrew], at p. 76.13; similarly 192.4–5; see also O.-P. Saar, *Jewish Love Magic: From Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2017), 168–69.

[24] M. Schwab, *Vocabulaire de l'angélologie d'après les manuscrits hébreux de la Bibliothèque nationale* (Paris, 1897).

[25] A. Kropp, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, 3 vols. (Brussels, 1930–31).

the modern literature but internally titled "protections" (*nûṭārâ*), "bans" (*ḥermâ*), or simply "prayers" (*ṣlôṭâ*). These are attested both in applied form as long, narrow scrolls produced for individual use,[26] and in prescriptions in larger handbooks, the full and accurate publication of which remains a desideratum, even as the study of their contents has advanced.[27] Most of the surviving texts of this kind are relatively late, dating from the 18th century onward. To their general restriction to prayers for protection from malign supernatural powers, illness, and human opponents, some noteworthy exceptions are found in the book of "charms" acquired by George Percy Badger in the region of Mosul in the 1840s, unfortunately reported only as excerpts in English translation. This collection included several aggressive procedures: "charm to excite love in a woman towards a man," with an invocation "[i]n the name of the talismans, Hazo, Tof, Miseeteeso, Mar Dileetos, Partos Isteepis, Mar Yesus, Diotaros, and Maximus," to derange the female target until she comes to the male client; a "charm to excite love in a man towards a woman," and a "charm to destroy love and excite hatred."[28]

Two interesting recent additions are paper amulets found in a controlled archaeological context, a 13th-century burial of a woman and a child in a cave near modern Tripoli (Lebanon), with short but broadly comparable texts.[29] From earlier centuries, dating to the late ancient or early medieval period, four amulets with apotropaic texts on leather rolls are known. These are of uncertain provenance, but likely from Mesopotamia or western Persia, and owe much of their substance to borrowings from Mandaic and Jewish Babylonian Aramaic texts.[30] One amulet on a silver sheet, purchased at Beirut, offers an adjuration of "Bar-Theon (son of the gods?), mighty lord, holy god," with a clearly demonological intent: the "release" of a particular demon with an Iranian-sounding name (ṬRPSDK) is requested, but the exact goal, beyond most likely general protection, is unclear; some sort of divination, otherwise perhaps suggested by a request to "illuminate your desire," is otherwise unparalleled among such metal amulets.[31] In relation to these, a Syriac reflex of the well-known Aramaic "magic

[26] See recently G. Abousamra, "Two Syriac Amulets from Hadath Grotto (Qadisha)," in *Actes du 11e Symposium Syriacum (La Valette, Malte, juillet 2012)*, Parole de l'Orient 38 (Kaslik, 2013). For an ancient text on a silver lamella thought to be an amulet, but perhaps instead an inscribed invocation for use in a mantic conjuration, see the discussion below.

[27] The most complete publication so far is Gollancz, *Book of Protection*. Some more cursory treatments are: F. Macler, "Formules magiques de l'Orient Chrétien," *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 58 (1908) (description of a "charms" manuscript in the author's collection, copied in Urmiah in 1792, with translation of select passages; no text); E. N. Mescherskaya, "The Syrian Manuscripts of Protection in Matenadaran," *Palestinskii Sbornik* n.s. 27 (1981) (in Russian; description of four manuscripts in the Matenadaran Institute, Yerevan, Armenia, nos. 10, 19, 72a, 72b); J. P. M. van der Ploeg, *The Christians of St. Thomas in South India and their Syriac Manuscripts* (Bangalore, 1983), 223–24 (description of two "charms" in Cambridge, UL MS Add. 1167, ff. 7v–8r); A. Harrak, *Catalogue of Syriac and Garshuni Manuscripts: Manuscripts Owned by the Iraqi Department of Antiquities and Heritage* (Leuven, 2011), 86–87 (description of an East Syriac paper manuscript in the Iraq Museum, cod. 30535, of the 19th century; in the "Prayer of Saint Paul" quoted in the catalogue as a sample of the contents, the incipit ܒܪܟ ܡܪܝ ܦܘܠܘܣ ܥܡ ܟܬܒ̈ܐ ܗ̈ܠܝܢ ܕܐܢ ܒܢ̈ܝ ܐܬܘܢ ܕܐܢ ܒܢ̈ܝ ܐܬܘܢ should be translated "May the prayers of Mar Paul be with the bearers of these texts," not "the Jewish children"). Another charm against "Edhre and boils," is unfortunately presented only in English translation in R. J. H. Gottheil, "References to Zoroaster in Syriac and Arabic Literature," in *Classical Studies in Honor of Henry Drisler* (New York, 1894), 31–32, from "a MS. fragment containing Syriac prayers for various occasions and charms against all manner of sicknesses" in a private collection, with an interesting reference to Zardosht (i.e. Zoroaster) prophecying the birth of Christ, and an expanded version of the adoration of the magi in which the latter, now twelve in number, take the swaddling clothes of the infant and cast them on a sacred fire at home in Persia, which is then extiguished. On the contents more generally: J. Perkins, *A Residence of Eight Years in Persia among the Nestorian Christians, with Notices of the Muhammedans* (Andover, 1843), 456; on studies of the contents see most recently E. C. D. Hunter, "Magic and Medicine amongst the Christians of Kurdistan," in *The Christian Heritage of Iraq: Collected Papers from the Christianity of Iraq I–V Seminar Days*, ed. E. C. D. Hunter (Piscataway, NJ, 2009).

[28] Badger, *Nestorians*, 1:238–40.

[29] On the texts, see most recently Abousamra, "Two Syriac Amulets."

[30] Naveh, "Syriac Amulet." Three further texts, produced for a single client, are published by Gignoux, *Incantations magiques syriaques*. For the dependence of the latter on Mandaic and Jewish Aramaic in particular, see the review of J. W. Weselius, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 48 (1991): 706–709. In his review, S. P. Brock, *Journal of Jewish Studies* 40 (1989): 122, suggests against Gignoux that the client and producer were more likely Christian than Jewish, and we may point particularly to the use of a trinitarian formula at the opening and closing of text II and the opening of text III. On the texts edited by Gignoux, see most recently N. H. Korsvoll and L. I. Lied, "Enoch and Baruch: Unusual Suspects in a Syriac Amulet," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 75 (2016), who propose some new readings in one of them (Syr 400/3) and argue for a less confessionally-specific situation of "a wider apotropaic tradition" in the Near East.

[31] J. Naveh and S. Shaked, eds., *Amulets and Magic Bowls: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity*, 3rd ed. (Jerusalem, 1998), 62–69 no. 6: addressing ܡܠܟܐ ܪܒܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܐܠܗܐ ܚܝ ܘܩܝܡܐ, and referring

bowls" may be mentioned: with the same Mesopotamian provenance as the leather amulets, these have an apotropaic goal and proceed by the invocation of beneficent angels and the exorcism of harmful supernatural powers. Dated approximately from the third to ninth centuries, the Syriac texts number forty-nine in the most recent corpus.[32]

The other main source for Syriac magic previously known is a medical miscellany surviving in a late-nineteenth century codex, which once contained among an extensive and eclectic gathering of texts at least three incantations, one of which appears in fact to have been adapted from the Greek agricultural compendium known as the *Geoponika*, alongside some recipes for popular forms of divination. The codex was copied in 1894 in the village of Alqōš, from an earlier exemplar, for the private collection of E. A. W. Budge.[33] As the incantations have received little attention thus far, they are worth a closer look here. All three occur in a section of the manuscript devoted to collections of anonymous medical recipes.

The first offers protection against drunkenness, by the following means: "For one who wishes not to get drunk from wine. Holding under his tongue the gum of the *salâmâ* tree and cabbage seed, he will not become drunk. Or let him say over the first cup, 'O merciful one,' and he will not become drunk."[34] The second part of this prescription seems to match one given among the late ancient agricultural material collected in the Byzantine *Geoponika*, "A drinker would not become drunk . . . if he says over the first cup this Homeric verse, 'And thrice from the peaks of Ida thundered the counsellor Zeus',"[35] with the replacement of the Homeric verse by a Christian invocation. In light of this derivation, it may be possible to see the beginning of another section in the Syriac collection, entitled "remedies having to do with the land," as also reflecting dependence on a related compendium in the genre of the Greek γεωπονικά (literally, "[writings] on the working of the land"), although the generally accepted rendering of Budge as "medicines of the country (i.e. native medicines)"[36] has firm support for its part in the Syriac lexicon. At least one abridged translation of the *Geoponika*, or more precisely of the agricultural treatise of Anatolios that served in turn as a source for the *Geoponika*, was made into Syriac, preserved in a codex of the eighth or ninth century, though it does not include this section; dependence on Greek sources, above all Galen, in other parts of the later Syriac collection has been well-observed.[37] The second incantation falls in fact in the same broad genre of popular divination as the present text. The recipe runs, "If you wish to know what is in the heart of your friend: take the heart [i.e. pith] of a barren fig tree and say to yourself, 'You are wholly bound to

to ܥܠܝܐ ܐܬܩܛܪ ܚܕ (line 9); "illuminate your desire:" ܐܠܗ ܕܫܡܝܐ (line 10).

[32] Moriggi, *Corpus of Syriac Incantation Bowls*, noting at p. 1 five more examples that could not be included for various reasons. See also M. Moriggi, *La lingua delle coppe magiche siriache* (Florence, 2004).

[33] E. A. W. Budge, *Syrian Anatomy, or 'The Book of Medicines,'* 2 vols. (London, 1913). The exemplar was examined but not acquired by Budge, who dated it to the twelfth century and thought it to have been originally copied in a monastery in the vicinity of the Tigris (1:xl). On this text, see S. Bhayro, "The Reception of Galen's *Art of Medicine* in the Syriac *Book of Medicines*," in *Medical Books in the Byzantine World*, ed. B. Zipser (Bologna, 2013), and "Theory and Practice in the Syriac *Book of Medicines*," in *In the Wake of the Compendia: Infrastructural Contexts and the Licensing of Empiricism in Ancient and Medieval Mesopotamia*, ed. J. Cale Johnson (Berlin, 2015) (in the remedy title from f. 25a discussed at p. 153, ܐܠܗܝܐ should be understood as an epithet of the medicine itself, "The God-given [remedy]," a well paralleled usage in Greek medical texts, see LSJ s.v. θεοδώρητος). A useful survey of scholarship is offered by P. Gignoux, "Le traité syriaque anonyme sur les médications," *Symposium Syriacum VII: Uppsala University, Department of Asian and African Languages, 11–14 August 1996*, ed. R. Lavenant, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 256 (Rome, 1998). Similar content can be found in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, cod. syr. 424–25, see F. Briquel-Chatonnet, *Manuscrits syriaques de la Bibliothèque nationale de France (nos 356–435 entrés depuis 1911), de la Bibliothèque Méjanes d'Aix-en-Provence, de la Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon et de la Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire de Strasbourg* (Paris, 1997), 164–66; and the manuscript described by J.-M. Vosté, "Catalogue de la bibliothèque syro-chaldéenne du couvent de Notre-Dame-des-Semences près d'Alqoš," *Angelicum* 5 (1928): 496, no. 327.

[34] Ff. 278a–b, ed. Budge, *Syrian Anatomy* 1:587.11–14 (with tr. 2:700),

ܠܡܢ ܕܒܥܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܬܥܪܒ ܒܚܡܪܐ. ܢܫܕܐ ܒܬܚܘܬ ܠܫܢܗ ܡܢ ܥܩܬܐ ܕܫܠܡܐ ܘܙܪܥ ܟܪܒܬܐ ܘܢܐܡܪ ܠܢܦܫܗ ܐܢܬ ܡܫܬܥܒܕ ܠܟ ܒܟܠ ܟܘܣܐ ܘܠܐ ܢܬܥܪܒ. ܐܘ ܢܐܡܪ ܒܟܣܐ ܩܕܡܝܐ ܐܠܗ ܚܢܢ ܘܠܐ ܢܬܥܪܒ.

[35] *Geoponika* 7.31.2, οὐκ ἂν δὲ μεθυσθείη ὁ πίνων . . . εἰς πρῶτον ποτήριον λέγων τὸν Ὁμηρικὸν στίχον τοῦτον· τρὶς δ' ἄρ' ἀπ' Ἰδαίων ὀρέων κτύπε μητίετα Ζεύς.

[36] F. 261b, ed. Budge, *Syrian Anatomy* 1:553, tr. 2:656, ܒܥܣܒܐ ܒܕܟܝܐ. For a recent articulation of the view of this portion as representing "indigenous" medical lore, see Bhayro, "Theory and Practice."

[37] Abridged translation: London, British Library Add. MS 14662, ed. P. Lagarde, *Geoponicon in sermonem Syriacum versorum quae supersunt* (Leipzig, 1860); C. Guignard, "L'agriculture en syriaque: l'Anatolius Syriacus ('*Géoponiques syriaques*')," in *Les sciences en syriaque*, ed. É. Villey (Paris, 2014). Greek sources: K. Brockelmann, review of Budge's edition, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morganlandischen Gesellschaft* 68 (1914).

me, o my friend!' That friend of yours will tell you all that is in his heart without knowing it."[38] The third is of medical scope, but unfortunately effaced in the exemplar.[39]

Text and Context: A Syriac-Arabic Dream-Request

The scribe of the later manuscript in whose binding the fragment has been preserved was one Gabriel bar Ḥadbešabbâ of Alqōš, a village in the Bahdīnān region to the north of Mosul, in modern Iraq.[40] At the time of the visit of George Percy Badger in the 1840s, the village counted 250 Christian families, two churches, and four priests.[41] The colophon also gives a date corresponding to AD 1804.[42] The script of the fragment of interest, a small East Syriac hand with extensive vocalization, could place it as much as a century or two earlier.[43] The plain but proficient script suits the genre of technical literature. The fragment consists of a page of rag paper now discolored to brown in places, written in black ink in a single tall column c. 14 cm high and 8 cm broad. Faint, regularly-spaced laid lines are discernible. The scribe left margins, but these are now obscured by the binding. Leaf-catchwords are present on both sides, entered diagonally in the lower left corner.

The amuletic prayers surveyed above, of which Syriac magic as attested so far mainly consists, seek protection against supernatural forces among other ills. The new text seeks instead to compel the assistance of such forces for the benefit of the user, in the apparition of a mantic dream. The central invocation refers to the mediation of jinn (ܒܓܰܝܢ, *baggayn*; Arabic بجن, *biǧinn*), while a closing direction gives the names of ten angels, which are perhaps to be inscribed as part of the accompanying ritual. The procedure may be outlined as follows.

An opening heading, and probably the beginning of the central invocation, are now lost. The text appears to open in the midst of an Arabic invocation of multiple supernatural beings, likely angels, subservient to the single monotheist divinity, whose blessing is invoked at the close of the Arabic portion. The linguistic register is colloquial, most notably omitting the case endings. The invocation requests the revelation, via jinn, of "the suppressed and the concealed and that which is treasured-up (or, secret), that which is hidden in this place," which suggests a sort of divination by incubation at a particular place where treasure is thought to be buried, grafted into a procedure of more general scope. The invocation ends with a single clause exclusively in Syriac, which seems to ask for protection, perhaps for those performing the ritual against any harmful side effects from the powers invoked.

The invocation is followed by instructions, which prescribe the writing of "each one of them," most likely a list of ritual words, signs, and angels appended to the procedure, on pieces of paper. The papers are then to be affixed to burning lamps by means of some of the hairs of the user, then set beneath bowls. The user must then bathe, put on clean white garments, avoid speaking to anyone, and recite as much of the Psalter as possible before bed. In the dream, it is promised, the user will see a supernatural being who must be grasped by the hand, adjured, apparently with the prefixed invocation, and subjected to further recitation of the Psalter. This being will then reveal whatever the user wishes. An appendix gives a list of ritual words and signs, and after an assertion that the procedure is "true and tested," there follows a list of

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[38] F. 272b, ed. Budge, *Syrian Anatomy* 1:576.16–19, tr. 2:685, ܐܶܢ ܒܳܥܶܐ ܐܰܢ̄ܬ ܕܬܶܕܰܥ ܡܳܐ ܕܒܠܶܒܶܗ ܕܚܰܒܪܳܟ. ܟܬܘܒ ܥܠ ܓܪܐ ܕܒܗܬܐ ܥܩܰܪ̈ܬܳܐ ܘܐܶܡܰܪ ܒܠܶܒܳܟ. ܐܰܣܝܪܰܬ ܠܝ ܟܠ ܟܠܟ ܐܘ ܠܚܰܒܪܝ. ܘܗܘ ܚܰܒܪܳܟ ܐܳܡܰܪ ܠܳܟ ܟܠ ܡܶܕܶܡ ܕܐܝܬ ܒܠܶܒܶܗ ܟܕ ܠܐ ܝܳܕܰܥ.

Budge's rendering of the incantation, "Art thou wholly tied to me or to my neighbour?" is indefensible. On ܥܩܰܪ̈ܬܐ, "barren," omitted from the translation of Budge, see M. Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin, Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's Lexicon Syriacum* (Winona Lake, IN, 2009), 496b s.v. 3 ܥܩܪ. The aim of finding out what is in the heart of a friend is similarly expressed in an adjuration in a divinatory recipe in the Sefer ha-Razim: see A. Bellusci, "A Genizah Finished Product for She'elat Halom Based on Sefer Ha-Razim," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 67 (2016): 318–19 (שתודיעני מה בלב פלו בן פלו, "that you cause me to know what is in the heart of so-and-so, son of so-and-so;" I thank the author for this reference).

[39] Ff. 216b–17a, ed. Budge, *Syrian Anatomy*, 1:453–54, tr. 2:532–33: its first word apparently was ܪܘܚܐ, "wind" or "spirit."

[40] He is perhaps to be identified with the Gabriel bar Kawšaba bar Yusif of the same village, active in the first quarter of the nineteenth century: D. V. Proverbio, "Spicilegi di storia locale dall'Iraq nestoriano: l'assedio di Mossul del 1508 nella testimonianza di un codice ritrovato," *Miscellanea Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae* 9, ed. L. E. Boyle (Vatican, 2002), 276 n. 5; on the known scribe, see ibid. 276–78.

[41] Badger, *Nestorians*, 1:104–105 with 174.

[42] Ff. 123r–124r, 29 Nisan, year 2115 (Seleucid Era).

[43] Useful comparanda are two East Syriac liturgical manuscripts, London, British Library Add. MS 7178 (AD 1544–45, Gazarta), W. H. P. Hatch, *An Album of Dated Syriac Manuscripts* (Boston, 1946), 232, Pl. CLXXXI; London, BL Add. MS 7175 (AD 1574, region of Gazarta de-Beth-Zabdai), Hatch, *Album*, 233, Pl. CLXXXII.

angel names, the last of which is written in the same diagonal orientation as the catchword on the previous page, suggesting that the text continued on a following page, now lost.

Dream Requests

As such, the new text participates in a long tradition of procedures designed to compel the apparition of mantic dreams. The genre is first attested in the Greek and Demotic Egyptian ritual handbooks preserved on papyri from Roman Egypt.[44] The Greek procedures in particular, entitled ὀνειραιτητόν, "dream-request," or similar, include the use of lamps and the injunction of ritual purity, and make the claim to be proven by experience,[45] as does the Syriac text. The related means of divination by lychnomancy attested in texts of this genre, to produce an apparition of a god in the shadow cast by a lamp's flame, also give some noteworthy parallels: ritual purity, the avoidance of speech with anyone immediately before the procedure,[46] and the inscription of magical words and signs on the wick of the lamp or the lamp itself.[47]

Contemporaneously, or soon after, comparable procedures circulated also in the Jewish tradition.[48] In the Hekhalot manuscripts of the so-called *Sword of Moses*, the general-purpose prayer on which the treatise is based is applied among other things to a dream-request (שאילת חלום).[49] The user is to write (either the prayer, or perhaps the request) with balsam-oil, speak the prayer in front of a lamp, strike the lamp with a stick of olive-wood, and sleep beside it. That the writing is to be done on "hieratic papyrus," described with two Greek loanwords (קרטיס אירטיקון, χάρτης ἱερατικόν for ἱερατικός), strongly suggests contiguity with the Graeco-Egyptian tradition, and further that the adaptation was made in the late ancient or early medieval period, not long after the peak popularity of those ritual handbooks.[50] The *Sefer ha-Razim* adds two procedures invoking angels, requiring ritual purity and specifically white clothing, as well as burnt offerings, the second adding a prohibition of speaking with anyone.[51] The Cairo Geniza also attests procedures of this sort: a collection of miscellaneous *segullot* pairs two recipes, the first in the genre of *shimmush tehillim*, or "(ritual) use of the Psalms," and indeed included in

[44] On these sources, see J. Gee, "The Structure of Lamp Divination," in *Acts of the Seventh International Congress of Demotic Studies*, ed. K. Ryholt (Copenhagen, 2002), and most recently R. Martín Hernández, "Two Requests for a Dream Oracle: Two Different Kinds of Magical Handbook," in *Écrire la magie dans l'antiquité. Actes du colloque international (Liège, 13–15 octobre 2011)*, ed. M. De Haro Sanchez (Liège, 2015); E. O. D. Love, *Code-switching with the Gods: The Bilingual (Old Coptic-Greek) Spells of PGM IV (P. Bibliothèque nationale supplément grec 574) and Their Linguistic, Religious, and Socio-cultural Context in Late Roman Egypt* (Berlin, 2016), 136–42.

[45] See in particular K. Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, revised by A. Henrichs, 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1973–74), P II.20–183; IV.3172–208; VII.222–49, 250–54, 255–59, 703–26.

[46] The conjunction of strictures on purity and speech may suggest a relation to the apologetic *ezib* statements prescribed in Assyrian divination rituals to precede the query itself, which show a concern with ritual purity as well as avoiding inappropriate speech: see in general I. Starr, *Queries to the Sungod: Divination and Politics in Sargonid Assyria*, State Archives of Assyria 4 (Helsinki, 1990), xxii–xxvii (I thank Seth Richardson for this reference).

[47] The so-called London-Leiden Magical Papyrus, recto col. v 1–34, ed. F. L. Griffith and H. Thompson, *The Demotic Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden*, 3 vols. (London, 1904–1909); see also ibid. col. vi–vii, with further words and designs to be written on the lamp itself (vi 25–26); for a single "name" to be written on the wick, as part of lamp divination with a boy as medium, ibid. col. xxvii 31–36. For writing on cloth probably, to be used as a wick in erotic magic in the Jewish tradition, see Saar, *Jewish Love Magic*, 22–23.

[48] On this tradition, see A. Bellusci, *The History of the She'elat Halom in the Middle East, from the Medieval Era Back to Late Antiquity* (PhD Diss., Tel Aviv University, 2016; I thank the author for sharing a copy of the text, a revised version to be published as *Dream Requests in the Middle East: The History of the She'elat Ḥalom from the Medieval Era Back to Late Antiquity* [Leiden, forthcoming]), and "Genizah Finished Product": 305–26. The Jewish tradition remained active into the modern period particularly in Kabbalist discourse, as exemplified by the writings of Abraham Ḥamuy, who discussed dream requests extensively and included detailed, regimented instructions for preparations: see N. Hamawy, *Rabbi Avraham Hamuy (1838–1886) and His Place in Modern Jewish Magic* (PhD diss., Tel Aviv University, 2014) (I thank Alessia Bellusci once again for this reference and for sharing with me her English summary of this dissertation).

[49] Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur,* §613 (the treatise is distinct from the "standard" *Sword of Moses*, for which see M. Gaster, *The Sword of Moses: An Ancient Book of Magic* [London, 1896] and more recently Y. Harari, "The Sword of Moses [*Ḥarba de-Moshe*]: A New Translation and Introduction," *Magic, Ritual and Witchcraft* 7 [2012]); the prayer itself is at §§598–605. On dream-requests in Hekhalot literature in general see R. Lesses, *Ritual Practices to Gain Power: Angels, Incantations, and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Harrisburg, 1998), 66–68, 230–54, 329–36, 395–411.

[50] On this dating for the *Sword of Moses*, with particular reference to the hieratic papyrus loanwords, see P. S. Alexander, "Incantations and Books of Magic," in *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* 3.1, ed. E. Schürer et al. (London, 1973), 350–52.

[51] *Sefer ha-Razim*, ed. B. Rebiger and P. Schäfer, *Sefer ha-Razim I und II: Das Buch der Geheimnisse I und II*, 2 vols. (Tübingen, 2009), I §§108–11; II §§372–74.

the later medieval *Sefer Shimmush Tehillim*, centered on Psalm 23, while the second gives a longer invocation to be written on the user's hand, again in a state of ritual purity.[52] Fragments of the *Sefer Shimmush Tehillim* already found in the Geniza again attest the use of Psalm 23 under similar conditions (ritual purity and fasting), along with Psalm 42 (purity and fasting, avoidance of speech).[53] Two procedures known from a recension of the *Hekhalot Zuṭarti* in an Ashkenazic manuscript of the late 15th or early 16th century combine verses from Psalms 5, 6, 17, 22, and 31 in one case, along with fasting, and Psalm 29 in full in the other, accompanying a prayer before the Torah-shrine.[54] Psalms figured also among the biblical texts borrowed for amuletic bowls in the Jewish tradition,[55] as they also came to do in Christian amuletic texts.[56]

Recitation of the Psalter as a whole is a central element in the new Syriac text.

The later medieval Jewish tradition, in addition to the *Sefer Shimmush Tehillim* already mentioned, offers a still richer variety of procedures for dream requests.[57] A fifteenth-century ritual handbook, recently edited by Gideon Bohak, includes no fewer than thirteen such texts.[58] The closest comparandum to the present text gives instructions, notably in Judaeo-Arabic, for fasting, prayer, and prostration at the Torah-shrine, and recommends the use of ritual text from scripture, in this case Ezekiel 1.[59]

A comparandum of particular note from this later stage comes in another fifteenth-century codex produced in the Ottoman Empire, now in Geneva, Bibliothèque de Genève cod. Comites Latentes 145 (ex-cod. Sassoon 290). Over sixty of its procedures concern dream-requests, most commonly pursued via the recitation and inscription of invocations and scripture.[60] For one of special interest at p. 122 no. 255, I take this opportunity to provide a text and translation. The instructions, uniquely to my knowledge among the later Jewish dream-requests, require a new lamp, for

[52] *MTKG*, I, T.-S. K 1.28 f. 1a.11–b.16, שאילת חלום. On the "Traumbitte" genre in the *Sefer Shimmush Tehillim* proper, see B. Rebiger, *Sefer Shimmush Tehillim: Buch vom magischen Gebrauch der Psalmen* (Tübingen, 2010), 223–24; Bellusci, *History of the She'elat Halom*, 122–24; for a comparable textual genre in Byzantium see M. Zellmann-Rohrer, "'Psalms Useful for Everything': Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Manuals for the Amuletic Use of the Psalter," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 72 (2018). At *MTKG* III:375 is mentioned another set of instructions for a dream-request, University of Pennsylvania, MS Halper 457, f. 1a.1–10, planned for inclusion in *MTKG* IV. Inspection of a digital image reveals no particularly close connection to the Syriac text: an invocation, which seeks an indication of whether a particular course of action is beneficial to the user or not via specific images in the dream, is to be written and placed under the pillow (for a comparable procedure, see J. Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic: A Study in Folk Religion*, 2nd ed. [Philadelphia, 2004], 243).

[53] Psalm 23: *MTKG* III no. 79, f. 1a.2–5 and no. 81, f. 1b.17–19; Psalm 42: *MTKG* III no. 79, f. 2b.3–7, and no. 81, f. 2a.14–17.

[54] New York, Jewish Theological Seminary MS 8128, ed. Schäfer, *Synopse* §§502–507 and 517.

[55] C. Mueller-Kessler, "The Use of Biblical Quotations in Jewish Aramaic Incantation Bowls," in *Studies on Magic and Divination in the Biblical World*, ed. H. R. Jacobus, A. K. de Hemmer Gudme, and P. Guillaume (Piscataway, NJ, 2013), 241–45.

[56] For amuletic application of the Psalms in Byzantium, see Zellmann-Rohrer, "'Psalms Useful for Everything'"; for the great popularity of Psalm 90(91) as an apotropaic device already in late antiquity, T. J. Kraus, "Septuaginta-Psalm 90 in apotropäischer Verwendung: Vorüberlegungen für eine kritische Edition und (bisheriges) Datenmaterial," *Biblische Notizen* n.F. 125 (2005); for the Psalms among other scripture in late ancient amulets, see T. de Bruyn, *Making Amulets Christian: Artefacts, Scribes, and Contexts* (Oxford, 2017), 139–83. A possible adaptation of a New Testament passage in an earlier Syriac amuletic bowl is discussed by J. E. Sanzo and N. H. Korsvoll, "A New Testament Text on a Syriac Incantation Bowl: Eph. 6: 10–17 on IBC 3," *Vigiliae Christianae* 71 (2017).

[57] For western medieval Judaism: Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic*, 241–43; M. Idel, "On Sheelat Ḥalom in Hasidei Ashkenaz: Sources and Influences," *Materia Giudaica* 10 (2005); G. Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History* (Cambridge, 2008), 43 n. 76, remarks on the large amount of material left out of consideration by the latter study.

[58] New York Public Library cod. Heb. 190, pp. 88 no. 48, 98 nos. 64 and 66, 105 no. 96, 106 no. 101, 111 no. 122, 109 no. 115, 113 no. 128, 176 no. 359, 177 no. 366, 178 nos. 367 and 370, and 258.5–9 (unnumbered), ed. Bohak, *Fifteenth-Century Manuscript*.

[59] New York Public Library cod. Heb. 190, p. 111 no. 122, ed. Bohak, *Fifteenth-Century Manuscript*. No thorough collection of such recipes from the rest of the later medieval tradition has yet been published. For the history of the genre, see Bellusci, *History of the She'elat Halom*, esp. 94–95, 203–204 for the use of Ezekiel 1:1. For further comparanda, see e.g. *Sefer ha-Razim* II (also known as the *Sefer Adam*) §§372–74, which centers on a sacrifice of doves; another recipe attributed to Yehuda he-Hasid in at least three western medieval manuscripts includes the wearing of white clothes and a brief invocation of angels whose names are also written on the left hand, see Idel, "Sheelat Ḥalom": 104–105.

[60] See the index in M. Benayahu, "The Book 'Shushan Yeshod Olam' by Rabbi Joseph Tirshom," *Temirin* 1 (1972): 187–269 [in Hebrew]; also Lesses, *Ritual Practices*, 67 n. 17; the recension of the *Sword of Moses* in this manuscript (pp. 60–84) has been edited by Y. Harari, *The Sword of Moses: A New Edition and Study* (Jerusalem, 1997) [in Hebrew]. A facsimile is available via e-codices: http://e-codices.unifr.ch/en/list/one/bge/cl0145 (accessed Dec. 2018).

which in fact the same Aramaic word is used as in the new Syriac text; the familiar fasting and purity recur, as do magical words. Also comparable to the Syriac text is the claim that the invocation will bring an apparition which may be directly questioned by the user. The use of the conjunction אי (if) suggests that the Aramaic text is ultimately of Babylonian origin.[61]

שׁח בדיק לית כותיה. צום יומא חד ונקי גרמך מן מאכל ויין וטומאה ותשמיש וכוין דאת בעי למיעבד יתיה.. סב שרגא חדתא ומלי יתיה משח ופתילה חדתא ואדליק קמיה תרעא ואמ׳ לקבל שרגא כ׳א זמנין ואשבע לקבליה. אי בעית ייתי לך גברא דנן אפין לאפין שאל ליה שאלתך והוא אמ׳ לך.. ואי בעית חלום אמור ייתי לי בעותי ואלין שמהתא מורא זמי מום מפתן אפרכני רחמי לי על צבותא בגין מלתא בכוס בר מדי באמת. אא׳א ס

Dream-request. Tested, there is none like it. Fast for one day and cleanse your body of food and wine and impurity and sexual intercourse, and when you wish to do it,[62] take a new lamp and fill it with oil and a new wick and light (it) in front of the door and speak[63] in front of the lamp twenty-one times and make the adjuration before it. If you seek (it), this very man (whom you seek) will come to you face to face:[64] make your request to him and he will tell you. If you seek a dream, say, "Let what I seek come to me," and these names: "MWRʾ ZMY MWM MPTN ʾPRKNY RḤMY LY ʿL ṢBWTʾ BGYN MLTʾ BKWS BR MDY,[65] in truth, amen amen amen, selah."

The presence of the lamp may indicate a fusion of the Jewish tradition (dream request via simple adjuration) with the Graeco-Egyptian (lamp divination by inspection of the flame), though as seen already the former does have a more limited role for lamps. A connection between the medieval Jewish tradition and the new Syriac text is also suggested by parallels in the names of the angels invoked, for which see the Notes above.

From the more immediate vicinity of the present codex, the town of Alqōš in modern Iraq north of Mosul (see further above), come two procedures in a Hebrew manuscript acquired in 1904–1905 in Mosul itself by Reginald Campbell Thompson.[66] The manuscript was said to be "bought through an old Hebrew *hakîm*," but unfortunately not described in any further detail. For convenience, the texts are reprinted here. The first seeks a dream revelation by the relatively straightforward method of writing divine names on the user's hand before bed:[67]

שאלת חלום תכתוב ביום ראשון על ידו השמלית אלו השמות וישים ידו תחת ראשו ויישן וכל מה ששואל ישיבו לך בלילה כל שאלתו על האמת כמו ששאל בחלום וזה בדוק ומנוסה אבל צריך קדושה הרבה ע׳כ:

The names, omitted by the editor but shown in an accompanying drawing, may be transcribed as follows:[68]

אַפְנַם וִימַשְׁפְּלַה אַתְמִיָאל סִינְפַט טִיוַא

Request for a dream: you should write on the first day on his left hand these names, and let him place his hand under his head and go to sleep, and all that he asks will be reported to you [*sic*] at night, everything in his request, in truth, just as he has requested, in a dream. This is proven and tested; it requires, however, great holiness. The end. [Names:] Aphnam Vîmashpelah Athmiyâl Sînpaṭ Ṭîvvah.

The second, printed by Campbell Thompson but omitted from his translation, turns the same method to a more specific purpose, namely the provocation of a dream by a suitor, for both himself and his intended, of their future coupling.[69]

למי שרוצה שיחלום אי זה אשה שירצה שוכבת עמו והוא שוכב עמה ויחלמו שניהם שהם נזקקים יכתוב אלו השמות על ידו בשעת שכיבה ויכתוב שמו ושמה תחת שמו יכתוב בראבן ותחת שמה טפאטן וישן ויחלום: ע׳כ

[61] See M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods* (Ramat-Gan, 2002), 108–109 s.v.; J. N. Epstein, *A Grammar of Babylonian Aramaic* (Jerusalem, 1960), 141 [in Hebrew].

[62] Read וכוין for וכוין (I thank Gideon Bohak for this suggestion).

[63] אמ׳ for אמר.

[64] For the popularity of similar locutions for "face to face" communication in the Jewish tradition of dream-requests, based on Numbers 12:8, see Bellusci, *History of the She'elat Halom*, 203, 209.

[65] The names, from RḤMY through MLTʾ, might also give syntactic Aramaic as, "Have mercy for me concerning the thing, because of the word," namely the following BKWS BR MDY.

[66] R. Campbell Thompson, "The Folklore of Mossoul," *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* 28 (1906) and 29 (1907).

[67] Campbell Thompson's MS 2, no. 16 ("Folklore of Mosul": 167, with tr. p. 171).

[68] See pl. I no. 2.

[69] MS 2, no. 86 ("Folklore of Mossoul": 325). For the sending of dreams to influence the behavior of third parties as part of "aggressive oneiric ritual" in the Jewish tradition, see A. Bellusci, "Oneiric Aggressive Magic: Sleep Disorders in Late Antique Jewish Tradition," in *Demons and Illness from Antiquity to the Early-Modern Period*, ed. S. Bhayro and C. Rider (Leiden, 2017), 160–63.

> For whoever wishes to dream (about) whichever woman whom he wishes to sleep with him, and he sleep with her, and they both dream that they are coupled, let him write these names on his hand at bedtime, and let him write his name and her name; below his name let him write "BRʾBN," and below her name, "ṬPʾṬN," and let him go to sleep, and he will dream. The end.

Within the Syriac tradition itself, the only relevant material known to me comes from the late copy of a medical miscellany published by Budge, introduced above. Among the many forms of divination offered therein, oneiromancy cannot be said to be a prominent concern, and no direct parallels for the present procedure are to be found. In a treatise on the properties of a miraculous plant attributed to Dioskoros, however, with directions for prayers and other ritual to accompany its gathering,[70] one of the various uses for the root so gathered, ritually activated, and set under the pillow, is the production of a dream revelation.[71] A treatise on the medicinal properties of parts of the bodies of animals recommends that the tail of a bird be hung over the bed for the same purpose,[72] and another with astrological advice for the lunar calendar contains indications about whether dreams seen on particular days are true or false.[73]

From Arabic sources, which have likely contributed at least a significant portion of the central invocation, no particularly close parallels emerge, but it can nevertheless be seen that oneiromancy more broadly speaking was of interest especially in popular divination. A dream-request comes in the well-known treatise on the occult sciences, *The Aim of the Sage* (*Ghāyat al-ḥakīm*), but involves solely the utterance of five magical words before sleep, and concentration on the object of the divination; there is likely a reference to a comparable procedure in Ibn Ḫaldūn.[74] The practice is to be distinguished, above all in the role of the divine in its execution, from the widespread *istiḫāra*, an appeal for divine arbitration on decisions, applied via oneiromancy in the form of a prayer said immediately before sleep.[75] From early twentieth-century Iran, the ethnographical research of Bess Allen Donaldson documents the use of Quʾrānic verses to induce significant dreams. Recorded examples include sura 4:14–15 written on deer- or wolf-skin, dissolved in water, over which a prayer is also repeated, before the liquid is sprinkled in an area where treasure is said to be buried, for a dream revealing the location of the treasure, and sura 6:59–63 on linen, placed under the pillow for a revelation about a particular plan, or bound on the arm for more general advice and instruction.[76] Another modern comparandum is the *palītā* ("lamp charm") described in use among Muslims in India by

[70] MS ff. 282r–83v, ed. Budge, *Syrian Anatomy*, 1:594–97, with tr. 2:708–10. This Dioskoros is perhaps a distortion of Dioskorides, well-known author on the medicinal applications of plants (*De materia medica*).

[71] MS f. 283r; ed. Budge, *Syrian Anatomy*, 1:597.3–6, with tr. 2:710,

ܝ ܫܝܢܐ ܡܝܕ ܕܚܫܝ ܒܝ ܗܘ ܕܢܫܟܒ ܥܡܗ ܘܢܫܟܒ ܗܝ ܥܡܗ ܘܚܠܡ ܬܪܝܗܘܢ ܕܒܚܕ ܒܗ ܡܝܕ ܒܝܕܗ ܗܟܝ ܢܟܬܘܒ ܫܡܗ ܘܫܡ ܐܡܗ ܒܝܕ ܫܡܗ ܘܒܬܚܬ ܗܘ ܫܡ ܐܡܗ ܢܟܬܘܒ ܠܗ ܛܦܛܢ ܘܢܫܟܒ ܘܢܚܠܡ ܗܟܝ ܢܥܒܕ.

[72] The treatise is at MS ff. 278v–81v; ed. Budge, *Syrian Anatomy*, 1:588–94, with tr. 700–7. The recipe in question is at f. 280v, ed. 1:591.22–23, tr. 2:705,

ܒܟܝܬ ܗܒ ܚܒܝܒ ܗܘ ܕܒܝܬ ܟܝ ܢܬܐ ܠܗ ܘܢܫܟܒ.

[73] MS ff. 227r–29v, ed. Budge, *Syrian Anatomy*, 1:476–80, with tr. 2:560–65.

[74] On both see T. Fahd, *La divination arabe. Études religieuses, sociologiques et folkloriques sur le milieu natif de l'Islam* (Leiden, 1966), 364–65. In the *Ghāyat al-ḥakīm* there is further an invocation for enlightenment via supernatural powers (الارواح القوية الروحانية المتعالية) broadly comparable in content to the present text, made after offerings of aromatic substances (3.6, ed. Ritter, *Ghāyat al-ḥakīm*, 189–90, with the translation of H. Ritter and M. Plessner, *"Picatrix": Das Ziel des Weisen, von Pseudo-Maǧrīṭī* [London, 1962], 200–201; on the text, see recently J.-P. Boudet, A. Caiozzo, and N. Weill-Parot, eds., *Images et magie:* Picatrix *entre Orient et Occident* [Paris, 2011], with the review of J.-C. Coulon, *Arabica* 61 [2014]), as well as general-purpose invocations of the planets, or the angels set over them, to carry out unspecified requests (3.7, ed. pp. 203–28; tr. pp. 214–41), in one of which Jupiter is addressed as lord of "dream-interpretation" (عبارة الرؤيا, ed. p. 207; tr. p. 218), while elsewhere an invocation of the same planet is recommended to send "prosperous dreams" (اصلاح الرؤيا, at 4.4.5, ed. p. 320, tr. p. 333). Ritual offerings to and general-purpose invocations of the moon are accompanied by an anecdote describing their use by an acquaintance of the author to find buried treasure (4.2, ed. p. 303, tr. p. 316). In regard to lamps, finally, a "lamp talisman" (طلسم سراجى) involving the preparation of a special oil for burning in a copper lamp seeks the blinding of the one who holds it (at 4.9, ed. p. 409, tr. p. 416); another "lamp talisman" for quieting frogs with a lamp with a wick made of crocodile-fat and wax (ed. pp. 413–14, tr. p. 420) is comparable to a recipe found in the Byzantine *Geoponika* (13.18.1, attributed to Africanus); there is also a preparation of a liquid for burning in a lamp to make the insides of the house shine with ruby-colored light, 4.9 (ed. p. 411, tr. pp. 417–18).

[75] Fahd, *La divination*, 364; A. Schimmel, *Die Träume des Kalifen: Traüme und ihre Deutung in der islamischen Kultur* (Munich, 1998), 38–41; Winkler, *Siegel und Charaktere*, 24 n. 4.

[76] *The Wild Rue: A Study of Muhammadan Magic and Folklore in Iran* (London, 1938), 176.

Jaʿfar Sharīf.[77] The procedure has a broadly demonological scope, primarily for compelling the withdrawal of demons in the case of possession, but is also said to allow their command for other purposes. Several invocations and designs, to be copied on paper and used as the wick in a lamp burned during the conjuration, are included in facsimile in the translation of Herklots, unfortunately only in an English version, but the presence of jinn (rendered "Genii") and commands to act "quickly" and "immediately," as in the new Syriac text, may be noted.[78] Intense interest in the Islamic world in dream interpretation is also attested,[79] which, in conjunction with the more general parallels noted here, makes it at least plausible that closer relatives of this text did exist, but either do not survive in written documentation or have not yet come to light.

The Composition of the New Text

It is now time to consider the process by which the new Syriac text arrived at its present form. As has been noted already, it is clearly a composite of Syriac (both language and script), in the entirety of the instructions and the closing of the invocation, and Arabic in Syriac transliteration (*Garšūnī*). The latter is generally comprehensible, and bears only a few signs of the distortion expected by successive cycles of copying by uncomprehending scribes. It is uncertain how much of the non-standard vocalization in the *Garšūnī* portions, such as ܠܝ ܒܓܓܝܢ (*lay baggayn*) where the underlying, standard Middle Arabic would be *lī biǧǧinn*, should be considered authentic to the colloquial Arabic of a local dialect, as opposed to the error, or improvisation, of a scribe who was instead a neo-Aramaic speaker with an imperfect understanding of Arabic syntax and phonology. In general, the phonetic character of the Arabic portion as it stands suggests a text arising outside of a local context, then colored by the local dialect, which likely belongs to northern Mesopotamia, without a precise match to any known area, but consistent with the northern environs of Mosul from which the later manuscript came.[80] Noteworthy features here are the merging of /u/ and /i/ to /ə/, as in, e.g., *kentem* for *kuntum*, which form (in -m rather than -n), and the auxiliary use of *kāna*, are particularly consistent with the town of Beḥzānī, north of Mosul,[81] as is the maintenance of *pī* (i.e., *fī*) against *fə*;[82] the lack of change of /r/ to /ġ/ could suggest the area of Mardin,[83] while the development of /k/ to /č/ and /q/ to /g/, characteristic of the Euphrates-group,[84] is perhaps reflected here in *waʿlǧóm*. The change of /ū/ to /ō/ (e.g. *baynó*) is found across the region.[85] In general, the article in the northern Mesopotamian dialects is *əl-*, but here *alḥapyāt* and *waʾlḥazzīn* are found alongside *ʾelladī*.[86]

In support of a relatively recent borrowing from a source in Arabic by a copyist who had not yet fully mastered the language, it may be recalled that the Arabic invocation bears no specific relation to dreams, the focus of the Syriac instructions. Rather, it seeks revelation of something concealed, literally buried, in a particular place. Hence it may have been grafted in from another source, a procedure designed for treasure-hunting. As already mentioned, Bess Allen Donaldson has documented the use of the Quʾrān, sura 4:14–15, in early twentieth-century Iran in a

[77] Tr. G. A. Herklots and rev. W. Crooke, *Islam in India, or, The Qānūn-i-Islām, the Customs of the Musalmāns of India, Comprising a Full and Exact Account of Their Various Rites and Ceremonies from the Moment of Birth to the Hour of Death* (Oxford, 1921).

[78] The six designs for the "lamp charms" to cast out demons, each entitled "Puleeta (or Lamp Charm) for commanding the Devil's presence," are given in English translation following pp. 238 (adjuration "by the Assistance of . . . Genii"), 240 (includes the closing "quickly, quickly"), 242, 244, and 248 (invokes the "king of Genii Abd-ool Ladir;" closing command "immediately, directly, instantly"), 250 (invokes the "king of Genii, Buktanoos," perhaps a corruption of the Babylonian Nebuchadnezzar via medieval Arabic Buḫtnaṣr [I thank Seth Richardson for this suggestion]); for the invocation of jinn in magical practice, ibid. 228–46; an accompanying ritual for the use of a "lamp lighted with a charmed wick (*palītā*)" in exorcisms, 236; a recipe for making the charmed wick is given at 240–41, in which the "lamp charm" is written on paper, rolled up, and burned in the presence of a demoniac, by which the demon is cast out; at p. 241 it is said that this *palītā* may also be used for "commanding the presence of the demons." The numerological design of the figure after p. 238 is discussed by Winkler, *Siegel und Charaktere*, 47–48.

[79] See M. Mavroudi, *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation: The* Oneirocriticon *of Achmet and Its Arabic Sources* (Leiden, 2002).

[80] On the Arabic dialects of this area, see A. Socin, "Der arabische dialekt von Mōṣul und Mardīn," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morganlandischen Gesellschaft* 36 (1882); O. Jastrow, *Die mesopotamisch-arabischen Qəltu-Dialekte* 1 (Wiesbaden, 1978), and "Zur arabischen Mundart von Mossul," *Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik* 2 (1979).

[81] Jastrow, *Qəltu-Dialekte*, 221–23, 304.

[82] Jastrow, "Mundart": 53.

[83] Ibid.: 50–51.

[84] Jastrow, *Qəltu-Dialekte*, 42–43.

[85] Ibid., 62–63.

[86] A relative which in turn is not used in the northern Mesopotamian dialects: ibid., 123.

comparable procedure to incite a dream revealing the location of buried treasure. There is an even more diverse array of procedures of this kind in Byzantine and later Greek texts, including invocations and amulets, the latter related to the conception that supernatural powers presided over buried treasure, from whom the treasure-seekers must seek protection.[87]

In this regard, the best parallels known to me are in two Greek ritual recipes, found in a well-known occult compendium compiled by one Georgios Midiates ca. 1461–62.[88] The longer of the two, attributed to Apollonios, likely the famous thaumaturge of Tyana, prescribes two long invocations, the first of angels, the second of a planet of the user's choice, and ritual procedures including the wearing of white clothing, but proceeds from signs requested during the day (earthquake, lightning, storm, clouds, smoke), not dreams.[89] A final addition, in case the treasure is hidden where "neither man nor star" can reach, involves a bronze lamp inscribed with divine names, but its method of use is not explained. More apposite is a shorter procedure prescribing both a written and a spoken invocation before bed, to produce a revelation in a dream. Like the first procedure, it has been twice published, by Karl Preisendanz and Armand Delatte, but as neither of their presentations is fully satisfactory, the text is worth re-printing.[90] In fact, the written invocation is given in Hebrew, which has likely been copied directly from a Jewish source; the instructions, as elsewhere in the codex, use a system of cryptography involving Hebrew letters and Tiberian vowel-points.[91]

בשם גדל גדול וגבריאל והדרניאל[92] בֹּאשׁ בשם אהיה אשר אהיה ובשם יה יהוה[93] צבאות קדוש קדוש קדוש שבאט[94]

ταῦτα γράφε ἐν δέρματι κεμάδος καὶ ὅταν βούλει ὑπνῶσαι,[95] προάγνισε ἑαυτὸν καὶ στήκων ὀρθῶς λέγε οὕτως· ἅγια ὀνόματα τῶν ἁγίων ἀγγέλων ὅπου ἐγράφητε[96] ἐδῶ, ἐσεῖς ἔλθατε καὶ ἐπαγγείλατέ μοι τόπον ἔνθα κεῖται θησαυρὸς[97] τὴν νύκταν ταύτην, τὸ ζήτημαν τὸ ζητῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου, ὅτι νὰ εὕρω εὕρεμαν νὰ ζήσω, καὶ ἐγὼ καὶ τὸ σπέρμα μου. ὁρκίζω ὑμᾶς κατὰ τοῦ θεοῦ νὰ μηδέν με βλάψητε εἰς τὸ[98] νῦν διὰ νά με λάθῃ ὁ τόπος[99] τόν με θέλετε εἰπεῖν. καὶ ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ ἀποκαλυφθήσεταί σοι ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ τόπῳ ὃ ὑποπτεύεις εἰ ἔστιν τι ἢ οὔ.

(Hebrew)[100] "In the name of the twice-great (lit., great and great) one and Gabriel and HDRNY'L,[101] B.'.Š,[102] in the name of I am that am,

[87] A. Delatte, *Anecdota Atheniensia* 1 (Liège, 1927), 686a, index s.v. θησαυρὸν κεκρυμμένον εὑρεῖν; amulet: ibid. e.g. 40.4–5, an amulet for use "so that you will not be harmed by the spirit (*stoicheion*) that has the treasure in its power, to make it so that you will not die" (διὰ νὰ μήν σε βλάψῃ τὸ στοιχεῖον ὅπου κρατεῖ τὸν θησαυρόν, νὰ κάμῃς νὰ μὴν ἀποθάνῃς).

[88] On this manuscript, Paris, BnF cod. gr. 2419, see recently P. Magdalino and M. Mavroudi, "Introduction," in *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*, ed. P. Magdalino and M. Mavroudi (Geneva, 2006), 24–25; for a detailed account of its contents bearing on the occult, F. Cumont, *Catalogus codicum astrologorum Graecorum* VIII.1 (Brussels, 1929), 20–63 no. 4. A facsimile is available via Gallica: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10723563z/> and <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10723580f/>.

[89] Paris, BnF cod. gr. 2419, ff. 341v–42r, ed. K. Preisendanz, "Zwei griechische Schatzzauber," *Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher* 3 (1922): 273–81, and Delatte, *Anecdota*, 507–509.

[90] Paris, BnF cod. gr. 2419, f. 341v, ed. Preisendanz, "Schatzzauber," who failed to understand the Hebrew cryptography (the type-setting of the first four lines in Hebrew at 274 is faulty but more correct in the commentary at 275), and Delatte, *Anecdota*, 507, omitting the initial four lines of Hebrew characters and presenting the cryptographic portions only in their Greek resolution.

[91] For the Hebrew element, note also the inclusion of Hebrew scripture, transliterated into Greek, in ritual texts in contemporary Byzantine handbooks, as outlined by G. Bohak, "Greek-Hebrew Linguistic Contacts in Late Antique and Medieval Magical Texts," in *The Jewish-Greek Tradition in Antiquity and the Byzantine Empire: A Festschrift for Nicholas de Lange*, ed. J. Aitken and J. Carleton-Paget (Cambridge, 2014), 257–59.

[92] ו???יאל, Preisendanz, "Schatzzauber."

[93] ויהוה, ibid.

[94] שבאש, ibid.

[95] פנרשֶ-ὐ, MS; ὑπνῶσαι, Delatte; εὑρεῖν θησαυρούς? Preisendanz, "Schatzzauber."

[96] ἐγράφετο, ibid.

[97] תישורש, MS; ἀποκεκρυμμένος θησαυρός, Preisendanz, "Schatzzauber."

[98] βλάψητε πέλεκυς τό, ibid.

[99] או טופוש, MS; ὁ θησαυρός, ibid.

[100] Preceding the text is a three-by-three square grid with nine signs, which seem to be somewhat distorted versions of the Arabic numerals, in the well-known amuletic tradition of the so-called magic squares (the sum of each row, column, and diagonal will have been fifteen): see ibid., 274.

[101] This possibility was already tentatively acknowledged by Preisendanz, "Schatzzauber": 275, with reference to Schwab, *Vocabulaire de l'angélologie*, 109; Preisendanz also considered הדריאל, קרניאל, קדריאל.

[102] Marked as an abbreviation in the Hebrew with supralinear points, perhaps for בשם אל שדי, "in the name of El Shaddai;" the points prohibit the otherwise unlikely interpretation of Preisendanz, "im Feuer," repeated in his misreading of the final word of the Hebrew text.

and in the name of Yah, Yahweh of Hosts, holy, holy, holy, šb'ṭ."[103]

(Greek) Write this on the skin of a young doe, and when you are going to go to sleep, purify yourself beforehand, and stand upright and say as follows, "Holy names of the holy angels who have been written here, you go and announce to me the place where the treasure lies tonight, the request that I make of God the most high, that I may make a discovery whereupon I and my seed may live. I adjure you by God that you do no harm to me now, that I not forget the place that you will tell me." At night will be revealed to you in that place what you suspect, whether something is there or not.

The Arabic source, perhaps related in some way to the text in the Midiates manuscript or its Jewish source,[104] awaits identification. It may in turn derive ultimately from a Greek source: witness the invocation formula بكيبد بكيبد فسبد فسبد هقتا هقتا,[105] paralleled by the ἤδη ἤδη, ταχὺ ταχύ ("now, now, quickly, quickly") common in invocations in the Greek ritual handbooks from late Roman Egypt, and also taken up in medieval Coptic, Jewish, and Islamic texts from Egypt.[106] As a more general analogy for the linguistic side of this grafting, we might look to the ritual recipes in the Greek tradition of horse medicine (*hippiatrika*) and related veterinary treatises.[107] In one such collection, likely formed in medieval southern Italy, two medicinal incantations amounting to Greek transcriptions of medieval Latin prayers are transmitted under Greek headings and accompanied by Greek instructions for their use.[108] From medieval Egypt, a comparable bilingual ritual text using a single script, Coptic, is known. It is a curse written on a sheet of paper, to bind the tongue of an enemy, and opens with an invocation in Arabic in Coptic transliteration, giving the *bismillah* and a brief docket of the curse, i.e., the name of the target and the intended effect. The substance of the curse, in Bohairic Coptic, occupies the rest of the paper.[109] As Maria Mavroudi has pointed out for the use of Greek script to transcribe Arabic,[110] a pertinent motivation may also be the prestige of Syriac as a medium for Christian scripture.

If the Arabic invocation represents a relatively recent grafting,[111] the Syriac text of the dream-request

[103] The final name is likely the Hebrew צְבָאוֹת (*ṣəḇā'ôṯ*), as a portion of the divine name, re-transliterated from Greek Σαβαωθ (as suggested by Gideon Bohak).

[104] For a recently published Geniza fragment attesting the application of a list of angelic names from the *Sefer ha-Razim* in a dream-request procedure for the finding of hidden gold coins, see Bellusci, "Genizah Finished Product;" for a cryptographic adjuration of "holy names and excellent letters" to reveal buried gold coins in a dream in another Geniza text, see G. Bohak, "Cracking the Code and Finding the Gold: A Dream Request from the Cairo Genizah," in *Edición de Textos Mágicos de la Antigüedad y de la Edad Media*, ed. J. A. Álvarez-Pedrosa Núñez and S. Torallas Tovar (Madrid, 2010); for the angel Metatron in this role in yet another Geniza fragment, see Y. Harari, "Metatron and the Treasure of Gold: Notes on a Dream Inquiry Text from the Cairo Genizah," in *Continuity and Innovation in the Magical Tradition*, ed. G. Bohak, Y. Harari, and S. Shaked (Leiden, 2011) (a re-edition and re-interpretation of a Geniza fragment in Washington, DC, Freer Gallery of Art, MS F1908.440). Treasure-hunting proves to be the most common aim among the Geniza finished products in general: Bellusci, *History of the She'elat Halom*, 289–99. Note also *MTKG* III no. 84, f. 2a.9–13, a recipe for an inscribed invocation of angels on deerskin for a dream-revelation of something hidden.

[105] For the Arabic underlying this distorted version, see the notes above following the text.

[106] For Coptic, see e.g. P.Schmidt 1.25, ed. Kropp, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*), 1:11–12 (with translation 2:3–6; on the formula, 3:217); for Jewish texts, see the commentary to *MTKG* I, T.-S. K 1.56 f. 2b.11 (p. 45); for Islamic texts, see the notes to the present text above.

[107] On this genre, see A.-M. Doyen-Higuet, *L'Épitomé de la 'Collection d'hippiatrie grecque:' Histoire du texte, édition critique, traduction et notes* (Leuven, 2006); A. McCabe, *A Byzantine Encyclopaedia of Horse Medicine: The Sources, Compilation, and Transmission of the* Hippiatrica (Oxford, 2007).

[108] Leiden, UB cod. VGQ 50 (dated to 1470), ff. 143v–44r (ed. E. Oder and K. Hoppe, *Corpus hippiatricorum Graecorum*, 2 vols. [Leipzig, 1924–27], Excerpta Lugdunensia no. 61), 160v–61r (ed. ibid. no. 104).

[109] Cambridge, University Library, Geniza Research Unit, T.-S. 12.207, ed. W. E. Crum, "A Bilingual Charm," *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* 24 (1902), with the additional note of B. Moritz, *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* 25 (1903); Kropp, *Zaubertexte*, 2:242–43; and J. Blau, "Some Observations on a Middle Arabic Egyptian Text in Coptic Characters," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 1 (1979): 259–60.

[110] "Arabic Words in Greek Letters: The Violet Fragment and More," in *Moyen arabe et variétés mixtes de l'arabe à travers l'histoire. Actes du Premier Colloque International (Louvain-la-Neuve, 10–14 mai 2004)*, ed. J. Lentin and J. Grand'Henry (Louvain-la-Neuve, 2008), 328.

[111] The possibility cannot be excluded, as Gideon Bohak points out to me, that the text represents a single translation from an Arabic source in which the translator left the invocation in its original language to preserve its supposed ritual efficacy. There remains, however, the intrusion of some content exclusively in Syriac into the Arabic portion, as well as some disparity between the specific goal of the Arabic invocation and the more general one of the Syriac instructions; at the very least, the translator will have felt the need to update or reframe the source.

procedure itself fits into a longer tradition, as shown already. It is very likely that this frame passed in its transmission exclusively through Aramaic, that is, perhaps after translation from a Greek original (via an Egyptian precursor?), it circulated in some now lost Jewish Aramaic treatise in Babylonia,[112] and then was eventually translated into Syriac. The date of the translation remains uncertain. Alqōš, site of the copying of the manuscript in which the present fragment was bound, and the home of scribes who had at hand both the exemplar of Budge's *Book of Medicines* and a version of the "book of charms,"[113] was a place of cultural contact between Christians and Jews into the modern period, in particular on the occasion of a pilgrimage of the Jewish community of Mosul to venerate the supposed tomb of the prophet Nahum.[114]

This hypothetical process of translation from Jewish Aramaic into Syriac finds a probable analogue in the amuletic texts of the so-called "magic bowls." The Syriac bowl texts, for example, make frequent reference to a well-known precedent often cited in the Jewish Aramaic ones, of Rab Joshua bar Peraḥia's deed of divorce against demons.[115] A continued tradition of handbooks of this sort on the Jewish side is suggested by Campbell Thompson's Hebrew manuscripts from Mosul, adduced above. Noteworthy in this connection is the prescription of recitation of the Psalms at two points in the Syriac procedure. The Psalter, of course, occupies a central place in the liturgy of the Church of the East, as in other Christian traditions. Its amuletic use, however, is a particularly Jewish one, the subject of a dedicated treatise (*Sefer Shimmush Tehillim*) attested already in the Cairo Geniza, itself indeed adapted in a Syriac version.[116]

Unanswered questions remain about the identity of the intended practitioners and clients of the treatise to which this page once belonged. The addition of the Arabic invocation, with invocation formulae (ܒܪܟ ܐܠܗ ܦܝܟܡ ܘܥܠܝܟܡ, for Arabic بارك الله فيكم وعليكم)[117] and supernatural concepts (in particular the jinn) more at home in the Islamic than the Christian tradition, occupying the majority of the portion actually spoken out loud, might suggest an addition for the benefit of clients speaking Arabic, the dominant language in the region.[118] A parallel could be adduced from a bilingual Coptic-Arabic ritual handbook from medieval Egypt, which presupposes the interaction of a practitioner with both Coptic and Islamic clients.[119] Or was the invocation simply material of interest picked out by a compiler who happened to have access to Arabic ritual texts himself, circulating in written or oral form? We may compare also two Mandaean magical formularies studied by Ethel S. Drower, one copied by a priest in Baghdad, in which many of the incantations

[112] No such handbooks survive for comparison, but a distant ancestor may be the Hebrew codices from Mosul edited by Campbell Thompson. There is an analogue in a Christian Palestinian Aramaic text, dated to the sixth or seventh century AD and found in the Judaean desert, a miniature parchment codex of 10 pages with rubrics for incantations: M. Baillet, "Un livret magique en christo-palestinien à l'Université de Louvain," *Le Muséon* 76 (1963).

[113] Manuscript B in the edition of Gollancz (from his collection) was copied by a Daniel of Alqōš, son of the priest Kûšabbâ (ܕܢܝܐܝܠ ܕܒ ܫܒܐ ܕܩܘܫܒܐ ܩܫܝܫܐ ܕܐܠܩܘܫ): *Book of Protection*, 76.122–26; a family relation to the Gabriel bar Ḥadbešabbâ, copyist of the codex in which the present fragment was bound, is possible.

[114] Described by Badger, *Nestorians*, 1:104–105.

[115] E.g. Moriggi, *Corpus* no. 4, lines 3 and following, with commentary pp. 36–37, to which is to be added M. Moriggi, "Jewish Divorce Formulae in Syriac Incantation Bowls," *Aramaic Studies* 13 (2015). On the Jewish tradition of this motif, see S. Shaked, "The Poetic of Spells: Language and Structure in Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity: 1: The Divorce Formula and Its Ramifications," in *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical, and Interpretative Perspectives*, ed. T. Abusch and K. van der Toorn (Groningen, 1999); D. Levene, *A Corpus of Magic Bowls: Incantation Texts in Jewish Aramaic from Late Antiquity* (London, 2009), 31–39; S. Shaked, J. N. Ford, and S. Bhayro, *Aramaic Bowl Spells: Jewish Babylonian Aramaic Bowls* (Leiden, 2013), 103–54.

[116] Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin cod. Sachau 218, ed. C. Kayser, "Gebrauch von Psalmen zur Zauberei," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morganlandischen Gesellschaft* 42 (1888): 456–62, with D. Simonsen, "Ein Nachtrag zu der Abhandlung über 'Gebrauch von Psalmen zur Zauberei,'" *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morganlandischen Gesellschaft* 42 (1888): 693–94. For the Jewish treatise and its tradition see Rebiger, *Sefer*; for Christian adaptations, Zellmann-Rohrer, "'Psalms.'"

[117] On the blessing formula, see E. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (London, 1863–83), 193a–b s.v. برك.

[118] Badger, *Nestorians*, 1:82–83, notes that Arabic was in general use in Mosul and its vicinity by the 1840s, while peasants in the countryside knew "the *Fellehi*, or vulgar Syriac," but classical Syriac was "very little known" outside the clergy. A Jewish dream-request from the Cairo Geniza with the goal of finding hidden treasure appears to invoke a jinn, although addressed as כומר ("[idolatrous] priest"): Bohak, "Cracking the Code," 16 (Cambridge T.-S. K 24.19, line 9); a procedure for dream divination to find treasure in a late medieval Latin recipe via invocation with request for the sending of "Haram, the kindly spirit" (*Haram, spiritus benignus*: ed. R. Kieckhefer, *Forbidden Rites: A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century* [Stroud, 1997], 342–43 no. 41), may be owed to a similarly mixed Judaeo-Arabic tradition (I thank Alessia Bellusci for this reference).

[119] P.Heid. inv. Kopt. 500/501 (*P.Bad.* V 123), which gives, for example, separate ritual instructions based on whether the client is a Copt or a Muslim.

themselves prove to be Arabic transliterated into the Mandaean script.[120] The implication of clergy in the copying and application of texts on divination and astrology is documented for the late ancient Near East, including no less a figure than the bishop Sophronios of Tella in the mid-fifth century AD, while a contemporary sermon decries the provision by priests and deacons of divination alongside incantations and amulets, including the invocation of the non-canonical angels RWPʾYL and RPWPʾYL.[121] In Byzantium, where comparable recipes circulated, an analogous role for clergy is amply attested.[122] The dismemberment of the original codex in this case restricts conclusions based on codicological context, but it is nevertheless noteworthy that the page was not only close at hand, but also taken up, not rejected out of any scruples over superstition in its contents, by the binder of a later theological codex. Indeed, at a slightly later period, clergy were active in the provision of such ritual services in the same region.[123]

Conclusion

The Syriac-Arabic fragment published here illustrates the transmission of knowledge in the realm of ritual practices in the Near East, contiguous with those conventionally termed magical, from antiquity through the Middle Ages and into the early modern period. This transmission depends on a diverse array of linguistic and cultic traditions. Close analogues for the ritual are first attested in circulation in ritual formularies in Demotic Egyptian and Greek. At the same time, or not long thereafter, comparable procedures entered the tradition of Jewish ritual texts in Hebrew and Aramaic, taking on specific features of Jewish religious practice as well, including the use of scripture. Handbooks for such divination continued to circulate in that tradition in medieval Mesopotamia, and it is probably by that route that a version of the procedure was translated and adapted into Syriac in a Christian context, in time to appear in the present early modern codex fragment. A further adaptation involves the in-grafting of an Arabic text to constitute the central invocation for the apparition, which was probably drawn in turn from contemporary ritual lore in the Islamic tradition, itself informed by earlier texts in the medieval Jewish and Graeco-Roman traditions. In any case, the new text complements the primary sources for the study of ritual practice and intellectual history in Syriac Christianity, where such dream-request procedures had not previously been attested. A possible context is the private initiative of priests, putting their literacy to work in reading, copying, and applying texts for the benefit of clients, outside of their ordained duties of pastoral care.

[120] Oxford, Bodleian Library, Drower Collection nos. 45–46, ed. E. S. Drower, "A Mandaean Book of Black Magic," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 75 (1943). The Arabic is described at pp. 149 and 156, but unfortunately omitted from the edition; more recently it has been studied by Morgenstern and T. Alfia, "Arabic Magical Texts," who identify borrowings from the Qu'rān and *aḥadīṯ*, and announce that a full publication is in progress.

[121] E. Peterson, "Die Zauber-Praktiken eines syrischen Bischofs," *Lateranum* 14 (1948), discussing the *acta* of the Synod of Ephesos of 449 on Sophronios (ed. J. Flemming, *Akten der Ephesinischen Synode vom Jahre 449. Syrisch* [Berlin, 1917], 80–85) and an anonymous sermon, variously attributed to Ephraem Syrus but probably of Isaak of Antioch, on heathen practices among clergy and laity (ed. T. Lamy, *Sancti Ephraem Syri hymni et sermones* 2 [Mechelen, 1886], 393–426; and E. Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Sermones* 3. Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 321 [Louvain, 1972], 12–27); the latter is more extensively treated by M. Moriggi, "'And the Impure and Abominable Priests Fled for Help to the Names of the Devils:' Amulets and Magical Practices in Syriac Christian Culture between Late Antiquity and the Modern World," *Hugoye. Journal of Syriac Studies* 19 (2016): 378 n. 14, who points out that the comparable RWPYʾYL is attested among Syriac amuletic bowls.

[122] M. Mavroudi, "Occult Science and Society in Byzantium: Considerations for Future Research," in *Occult Sciences*, ed. Magdalino and Mavroudi, 81–83.

[123] Badger, in his discussion of the "book of charms" acquired by him (see above), notes with displeasure that "the clergy are generally the authors of these absurd and profane effusions," including one presbyter whom he observed at Lizan in 1850 "in the practice of drawing up and transcribing similar charms, which he sells to the people in the surrounding villages" (*Nestorians*, 1:240). A comparable situation can be identified among the Mandaeans of the same region: for the activity of a Mandaean priest in 20th-century Baghdad, copying talismans for clients, for healing and protection, but also aggressive aims including erotic magic, see Drower, "Mandaean Book": 150–51.