METATRON AND THE TREASURE OF GOLD: NOTES ON A DREAM INQUIRY TEXT FROM THE CAIRO GENIZAH

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In 1927 some 50 fragments from the Cairo Genizah found in the Freer collection were published by Richard Gottheil and William Worell.[1] Two of them were classified by the authors as "charm." One was rightly identified by them as a charm of protection from various afflictions.[2] The other one was mistakenly understood to be a case of divination through gazing at a crystal.[3] The aim of what follows is to correct their error and expose the real essence of the text—a rare case of the execution of a dream inquiry. But first, here are some introductory words about dreams and dream inquiries among the Jews in Late Antiquity and the Byzantine period.

Dreams and Divination

The peoples in Antiquity shared a view that a dream can be and in many instances is a meaningful message sent to a person from the gods.[4] The dream's advantage and disadvantage derive precisely from that origin. On the one hand, the information conveyed by it was perceived as valuable and credible. On the other hand, this knowledge often happened to be bizarre or vague and thus hard to uncover and understand. As dreams usually combine peculiar, inadequate

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[1] R. Gottheil and W. H. Worrell, *Fragments from the Cairo Genizah in the Freer Collection* (New York, 1972).

[2] Ibid., pp. 106–7. It is of course the evil spirits that inflict harm by causing the diseases (or, differently put, the demonical personification of the diseases) that are addressed in the charm.

[3] Ibid., pp. 76–81 and n. 1.

[4] This common view was one way dreams were perceived in Antiquity, Ancient sources also reveal the view that the dream is a psychobiological phenomenon. See, for example, P. Cox Miller, *Dreams in Late Antiquity—Studies in the Imagination of a Culture* (Princeton, 1994), pp. 39–73.

happenings with normally experienced events and themes, a special expertise was required to decipher and adjust them to the familiar reality of wakefulness. Indeed, such proficiency developed in many, if not all, cultures in Antiquity, as one can learn from the broad textual evidence related to it.[5] However, the interpretation of spontaneous, coincidental dreams did not suffice. The unique quality of the information delivered in dreams and the desire to gain access to it generated practices for the initiated turning to them, or more accurately to their senders. Through these practices certain required knowledge was

[5] For a comparative study of dreams in the ancient world based on Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Hittite, Syro-Phoenician and biblical sources, see Jean-Marie Husser, *Dreams and Dream Narratives in the Biblical World* (Sheffield, 1999). Dreams in these cultures are also studied in the relevant chapters in A. Esnoul et al. (eds.), *Les Songes et Leur Interprétation* (Paris, 1959). The most exhaustive study of the concept of dreams and the methods of their interpretation in Mesopotamia is still A. L. Oppenheim, *The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East* (Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, NS 46/3) (Philadelphia, 1956). See also idem, "New Fragments of The Assyrian Dream Book," *Iraq* 31 (1969), pp. 153–65; R. Gnuse, *The Dream Theophany of Samuel: Its Structure in Relation to Ancient Near Eastern Dreams and Its Theological Significance* (New York, 1984), pp. 11–55. For dreams in ancient Egypt, see A. H. Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum*, 3rd series, vol. 1 (text) (London, 1934), pp. 9–23. On dreams in Mari, see J. M. Sasson, "Mari Dreams," *Journal of American Oriental Studies* 103 (1986), pp. 283–93. Of the ongoing, broad discussion on dreams in the Greco-Roman world the most updated study is Cox Miller, *Dreams in Late Antiquity*. Some further studies of significance are R. G. A. van Lieshout, *Greeks on Dreams* (Utrecht, 1980); A. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire de la Divination dans L'Antiquité* (Bruxelles, 1963 [Paris 1879]), vol. 1, pp. 277–329; E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley, 1959), pp. 102–34; C. A. Behr, *Aelius Aristides and the Sacred Tales* (Chicago, 1968), pp. 171–95; J. H. Hanson, "Dreams and Visions in the Graeco-Roman World and Early Christianity," *ANRW* II.23.2 (1980), pp. 1395–427; G. Luck, *Arcana Mundi, Magic and Occult in the Greek and the Roman Worlds* (Baltimore, 1986), pp. 231–39; M. Berchman, "Arcana Mundi: Magic and Divination in the De Somniis of Philo of Alexandria," in *Mediators of the Divine: Horizons of Prophecy, Divination, Dreams and Theurgy in Mediterranean Antiquity,* ed. G. Luck, (Atlanta, 1998), pp. 115–54 (on pp. 116–32). Of highest significance in this respect is Artemidorus' book of dreams interpretation. See Artemidori Daldiani, *Onirocriticon Libri V*, ed. R. A. Pack (Teubneri, 1963); R. J. White, *The Interpretation of Dreams, by Artemidorus* (Park Ridge, 1975). For studies of this treatise, see Berchman, ibid., pp. 115–16 n. 3. Cf. P. S. Alexander, "Bavli Berakhot 55a–57b: The Talmudic Dreambook in Context," *JJS* 46 (1995), pp. 230–48. For a succinct overview of dreams in early Christianity, see Hanson, ibid., pp. 1421–25. For more detailed considerations see J. Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination*, tr. A. Goldhammer (Chicago 1988), pp. 193–231; G. Stroumsa, "Dreams and Visions in Early Christian Discourse," in *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming*, ed. D. Shulman and G. Stroumsa (Oxford/New York, 1999), pp. 189–212; idem, "Dream and Magic among Pagans and Christians," in *Barbarian Philosophy: The Religious Revolution of Early Christianity*, ed. G. Stroumsa (Tübingen, 1999), pp. 191–203. Cf. Cox Miller, ibid., pp. 129–83, 205–53.

sought that would hopefully be revealed during sleep. In Antiquity dream inquiries were usually performed in the temples, the place where the human and the divine realms met and mingled.[6] However, if one is to judge on the basis of biblical evidence, it seems that this kind of practice was not widespread among the Israelites. Except for the case of King Solomon to whom God appeared in a dream after the king had sacrificed a thousand burnt-offerings at Gibeon "for that was the great high place," apparently a dream-incubation episode, the Bible does not relate cases of dream inquiries in places of worship.[7]

That is not surprising given the biblical view of prophecy, namely, the explicit word of God delivered to man as the major and almost sole legitimate means of divination. This stance lies behind the inner contradiction in the biblical approach to dreams that moves between admiration and consent, on the one hand, and disdain and rejection on

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[6] This practice, known as dream-incubation, is attested to in Mesopotamian, Egyptian and Greco-Roman sources. See R. Fidler, *Dreams Speak Falsely? Dream Theophanies in the Bible: Their Place in Ancient Israelite Faith and Tradition* (Jerusalem, 2005) (Heb.), pp. 17–18 and notes 48–50; Hanson, "Dreams and Visions," pp. 1397–98 and notes 12–17; A. Jeffers, *Magic and Divination in Ancient Palestine and Syria* (Leiden, 1996), pp. 134–39. Some twenty-five years of ongoing incubation dreams in Asclepius' temple in Pergamon (144–171 CE) are broadly attested in Aelius Aristides' *Sacred Tales*. See C. A. Behr, *Aelius Aristides and the Sacred Tales* (Chicago, 1968).

[7] 1 Kings 3:3ff; 2 Chron. 1:3ff. For a comprehensive discussion of this episode see Fidler, *Dream Theophanies*, pp. 252–81. The revelation of God to Samuel at Shiloh (1 Sam. 3:1ff.) might also be—and has sometimes been—considered as a close case. However, in spite of its taking place during the nighttime (or toward morning) at the House of God, not only is it not explicitly associated with a dream, some of its details actually undermine the possibility of its being a dream revelation. Moreover, it seems that the emphasis on Samuel's naiveté and the lack of any ritual preparations on his side, in contrast to God's initiative recurring time after time, is actually aimed at disassociating the scene from the (probably well known) case of dream-incubation. For the debate over the cultural meaning of the episode, see Gnuse, *The Dream Theophany*, pp. 149–52; Fidler, ibid., pp. 288–99; Jeffers, *Magic and Divination*, p. 138; V. Hurowitz, "Eli's Adjuration of Samuel (1 Samuel III 17–18) in the Light of a 'Diviner's Protocol' from Mari (*AEM* I/1, 1)," *Vetus Testamentum* 44 (1994), pp. 483–97. Jacob's dream at Beth-el has also been observed as relating to the practice of dream-incubation. Though no initiation, let alone any ritual practice, is mentioned on Jacob's part, etiologically understood the story might recount the roots of dream-incubation practice that was customary at Beth-el temple. See Fidler, ibid., pp. 152–87 (esp. 166 and notes 185–87); R. Kutscher, "The Mesopotamian God Zaqar and Jacob's *Massebah*," *Be'er-Sheva* 3 (1988), pp. 125–30 (Heb.). Robert Gnuse suggests that the episode of Jaddus' dream told by Josephus (Ant 11:326–328), was actually a case of incubation narrated in the cautious way typical of the Bible concerning this kind of divination. See R. Gnuse, "The Temple Experience of Jaddus in the *Antiquities* of Josephus: A Report of Jewish Dream Incubation," *JQR* 83 (1993): 349–68. It is possible that also Philo's notion of Jacob's dream already involved incubation. See Berchman, "Arcana Mundi," pp. 141–42.

the other.[8] The biblical view seems to (implicitly) distinguish between *theophany dream*s, in which the explicit word of God is given to the dreamer, and *riddle dreams*, which require interpretation. The *theophany dream* was approved as part of the general belief in God's revelation to man. The *riddle dream* was rejected in favor of prophecy. Its mantic interpretation was perceived among other divinatory practices as part of the ways of the nations, prohibited for Israel, even though it was not so decisively condemned as they were. Dreams mentioned in the Bible are thus mostly of the *theophany* type, where God's message is delivered clearly and not through riddles or symbols. If the phenomenon of interpreting *riddle dreams* did gain popularity among the Israelites in biblical times, it went, however, almost unrecorded.[9]

The rabbinic view of dreams is also not homogenous.[10] Polyphonic in its very essence, their literature provides a stage for different, even

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[8] Compare for example Gen. 20:6 or Num. 12:6 (for the approving attitude) with Jer. 29:8, Zech. 10:2, or Eccles. 5:6. For the parallel between "a prophet" (נביא) and "a dreamer of dreams" (חלם חלום) as carriers of a (false) heavenly message, see Deut. 13:2–6.

[9] The most famous example for that kind of practice in the Bible is, of course, the case of Joseph, who began as an annoying interpreter of his own dreams and reached the pinnacle as a most celebrated interpreter at Pharaoh's court (Gen. 37–42). For comprehensive surveys and typology of dreams in the Bible, see Fidler, *Dream Theophanies*, pp. 7–95; Gnuse, *The Dream Theophany*, pp. 57–118. Cf. Jeffers, *Magic and Divination*, pp. 125–39.

[10] For a concise survey of the Sages' attitudes toward dreams, see Y. Harari, "The Sages and the Occult," in *COMPENDIA RERUM IUDAICARUM AD NOVUM TESTAMENTUM II/3b—The Literature of the Sages, Second Part: Midrash and Targum, Liturgy, Poetry, Mysticism, Contracts, Inscriptions, Ancient Science and the Language of Rabbinic Literature*, ed. J. Schwartz, P. Tomson and Z. Safrai (Assen, 2006), pp. 521–64 (on pp. 552–58). For a more detailed version, see Y. Harari, *Early Jewish Magic: Research, Method, Sources* (Jerusalem, 2010), pp. 330–40 (Heb.). The most comprehensive study on the subject is H. Weiss, *The Role of Dreams in Rabbinic Literature: Cultural Aspects* (dissertation, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2006) (Heb.). A comprehensive source book is A. Kristianpoller, *Traum und Traumdeutung* (Monumenta Talmudica 4/2.1), (Wien, 1923). And see further, I. Afik, *Hazal's Perception of the Dream* (dissertation, Bar-Ilan University, 1990) (Heb.); Alexander, "The Talmudic Dreambook"; G. Hasan-Rokem, *Web of Life—Folklore and Midrash in Rabbinic Literature*, tr. Batya Stein (Stanford, 2000), pp. 88–107; idem, "Communication with the Dead in Jewish Dream Culture," in *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming*, ed. D. Shulman and G. Stroumsa (Oxford/New York 1999), pp. 213–232; idem, "'A Dream Amounts to a Sixtieth Part of Prophecy': On Interaction Between Textual Establishment and Popular Context in Dream Interpretation by Jewish Sages," in *Studies in History of Popular Culture*, ed. B. Z. Kedar, pp. 45–54 (Jerusalem, 1996) (Heb.); M. Niehof, "A Dream Which Is Not Interpreted Is Like a Letter Which Is Not Read," *JJS* 43 (1992): 58–84; R. Kalmin, *Sages, Stories, Authors, and Editors in Rabbinic Babylonia* (Atlanta, 1994), pp. 61–80; J. Trachtenberg, *Jewish*

conflicting voices and opinions. Thus, on the one hand, it comprises clear manifestations of the belief in the validity of dreams and in their power to affect the lives of the dreamer and even of those people he or she dreams about. Examples are the saying that "a dream is one-sixtieth of prophecy" (bBer 57b); Rabba's desire to attain the solution of an unsolved halakhic dilemma in a dream (bMen 67b); and the ritual practices for reversing a bad dream (*hatavat ḥalom*).[11] On the other hand, we hear that "the words of dreams have no effect,"[12] or that "one only shows a person [in his dream] his own ponderings."[13] In between is the approach that "all dreams follow the mouth"—that is to say, that they are fulfilled in accordance with their interpretation.[14] By declaring that, the rabbis shifted the core of the connection between the dream and reality from the dreamer and his symbolic dreamed vision to that of the interpreter. The power to foretell reality and to affect it is thus removed from the dream and its message and handed over to the person (preferably a rabbi) who effects it through the very act of declaring its interpretation.

It is no wonder, then, that the Sages' literature includes traditions concerning dream interpretation as well as practices for initiated dreaming. The former is attested to mainly in the talmudic "dream book" and the partial, earlier parallels in *Midrash Rabba* on Lamentations.[15] Dreaming techniques, which bring us closer to our subject, are evidenced in the Tosefta.

Practices of Dream Inquiry

Explicit rabbinic evidence concerning dreaming practices is extremely rare. As far as I can tell it amounts to three methods, all classified

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Magic and Superstition (New York, 1970), pp. 230–48; R. Margalioth, *She'elot u-teshuvot min ha-shamayim le-rabbenu Yaakov mi-Mervege* (Jerusalem, 1957), pp. 3–24 (Heb.).

[11] See for example bSab 11a; bTaan 12b; bNed 8a; ySan 10:2, 28c; bBer 10b, 55a; EccR 5, 4.

[12] See bGit 52a; bSan 30a; bHor 13b; tMS 5:9; yMS 4:12 (The Academy of Hebrew Language); *Midrash Bereshit Rabba* 68:12 (Theodor-Albeck, II, p. 784).

[13] bBer 55b. Cf. the related stories about the dreams of Caesar and King Shapur (bBer 56b).

[14] bBer 55b. Cf. yMS 4:12; *Midrash Bereshit Rabba* 89:8 (Theodor-Albeck, III, p. 1096f).

[15] bBer 55a–57b; *Midrash Eicha Rabba* 1 (Buber, pp. 26a–28a).

under the prohibited "ways of the Amorites"[16]—kissing the coffin of the deceased, turning the garment (inside out), and sitting on a broom:

> Kiss the coffin of the deceased in order to see him at night. Do not kiss the coffin of the deceased in order not to see him at night. Turn your garment in order to dream dreams. Do not turn your garment in order not to dream dreams. Sit on the broom in order to dream dreams. Do not sit on the broom in order not to dream dreams.[17]

In addition, the Babylonian Talmud apparently alludes to the incubation technique performed by gentiles in their temple (bAZ 55a). However no technical dimension of the practice is mentioned.[18]

Magical practices for dream revelation—that is, the application of ritual means of adjurations and gestures to subdue a heavenly being into appearing in a dream and revealing to the dreamer any desired (concealed) matter[19]—were employed in the Greco-Roman world. Some professional manifestations of the technique are recorded in the Greek magical papyri.[20] Jewish evidence of such prescriptions is

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[16] On the rabbinic category "the ways of the Amorites" see Harari, "The Sages," pp. 528–9 (and n. 28 for further bibliography); G. Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic—A History* (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 382–5.

[17] tShab 6:7 (Lieberman, vol. 2, p. 23, MS Erfurt). Cf. S. Lieberman, *Tosefta kifshuta* (New York, 1955–1988), vol. 3, Shabbat, pp. 86–87 (Heb.). Isaac Afik's view concerning the necromantic notion of the turning of the garment is groundless (Afik, *Hazal's Perception*, p. 16, n. 2). Haim Weiss suggested a semiotic interpretation in which the exposing of the hidden side of the garment symbolizes the dreamer's wish that knowledge, hidden throughout the day (the time when the garment is worn properly), will be exposed at night. See Weiss, *The Role of Dreams*, pp. 37–38.

[18] Two sequential and parallel stories in the Babylonian Talmud (MK 28a) tell about the revelation of the deceased in their brother's or student's dream, in fulfillment of the latter's request, expressed before the former's death. The fact that it was a dream revelation is explicitly attested in mss. Oxford 366, Munich 140, Vatican 108. In all the other manuscripts, including Munich 95 and Vatican 104, as well as in the printed version, the word בחלמא (in a dream) is missing. However, there is little doubt that this is indeed the meaning of the text.

[19] This phrasing is by no means a definition of magic, though it might be useful for our purpose here. For my view on the definition of magic in Late Antiquity, see Y. Harari, "What Is a Magical Text?—Methodological Reflections Aimed at Redefining Early Jewish Magic," in *Officina Magica: Essays on the Practice of Magic in Antiquity,* ed. S. Shaked (Leiden, 2005), pp. 91–124.

[20] See K. Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae, Die Griechischen Zauberpapyri,* 2nd rev. ed. by A. Henrichs (Stuttgart, 1973–74), or H. D. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation* (Chicago, 1986), §§ VII/359–369, 478–490, 703–726, XXIIb/27–35. The Greek magical papyri were written in the first half of the first millennium. However, in many cases the origin of the magical traditions recorded in them predates their writing by hundreds of years. For an excellent discussion on this issue, see W. M. Brashear, "The Greek Magical Papyri: An Introduction and Survey; Annotated Bibli-

recorded only in a later period. Actually, we have no "professional" prescriptions for receiving a dream revelation prior to the mystical-magical treatises of the *Hekhalot* and *Merkavah* literature.[21] Broad, detailed instructions for inducing an angel to appear in one's dream are found in a text known as the adjuration of the Prince of Dream. Here is a portion of it:[22]

> Thus do: fast for three days and say {to me}[23] these (scriptural) verses on each and every night and sleep in your clothes. And on the third night take the book in your hand and say these names three times with the verses and afterwards lie on your shoulders for immediately a figure of a man will come to you and will speak to you (about) everything you may ask him, both great and small matters[24] […] And this is what you should say: Blessed are you, our God, king of the world, God the great, mighty, awesome, exalted, wonderful king, who answers at all time of trouble […*here come 12 verses from Psalms*][25]

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ography (1928–1994)," *ANRW* II 18.5 (1995): 3412–20. On Hellenistic dream request adjurations and their relationship to Jewish ones in early Jewish mystical writings, see R. M. Lesses, *Ritual Practices to Gain Power: Angels, Incantations, and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Harrisburg, 1998), pp. 325–36. On visionary dreams in the Greco-Roman world, see Hanson, "Dreams and Visions"; Cox Miller, *Dreams in Late Antiquity*; Berchman, "Arcana Mundi," esp. pp. 115–32; S. Eitrem, "Dreams and Divination in Magical Ritual," in *Magika Hiera*, ed. C. A. Faraone and D. Obbink (Oxford, 1991), pp. 175–87; J. Finamore, "Iamblichean Dream Theory," in *Mediators of the Divine: Horizons of Prophecy, Divination, Dreams and Theurgy in Mediterranean Antiquity*, ed. M. Berchman (Atlanta, 1998), pp. 155–64.

[21] On the scholarly debate over the nature of Hekhalot and Merkavah literature between (visionary) mysticism and (practical) magic, see Harari, *Early Jewish Magic*, ch. 2. Though most of the *Hekhalot* and *Merkavah* texts are found in medieval manuscripts of the Ashkenazi pietists (along with a small portion of fragments in the Cairo Genizah), they no doubt derive from earlier mystical traditions. It is widely accepted that the cultural attitude recorded in these texts developed mainly, but not exclusively, in Palestine during the third to eighth centuries of our era. There is no reason to assume that the quoted text exceeds these lines.

[22] See the full text in P. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (Tübingen, 1981), §§ 502–507. For an English translation, see Lesses, *Ritual Practices*, pp. 395–99. See also Rebecca Lesses' discussion on this and other related texts of adjuration for dream requests and the translation of some of the texts on pp. 230–54, 395–411. I generally follow her translation with some necessary changes.

[23] The word **לי** (to me) does not fit in the context of the adjuration and seems to be superfluous. Nowhere else in the texts is it mentioned that the instructions are given by the angel (or by God). They are always delivered in a neutral manner: "and say these names," "and this is what you should say," "these verses he should say," "on the third [night] he should say," etc.

[24] The Hebrew **מן דבר גדול עם דבר קטן** is grammatically incorrect. Either **עם** is an error of **עד**, or the word **מן** is surplus.

[25] The verses appear in their right order in Psalms starting with 4:2 and ending with 22:20.

Those verses he should say both (first) nights.[26] And on the third (night) he should say these verses with these names three times: In the name of YHWH God of Israel, living Lord of hosts, I am who I am forever and ever YHW YHWY TDYH YḤH YH YḤYH […] Blessed are you, Lord our God, king of the world […] I am the servant son of your maidservant and I have come to cast my plea before you to tell me about this certain matter whether it will happen or not. And may his [i.e. the angel's] coming be in calmness and not in anger so that I will understand his word and will not forget […]

And by your marvelous and glorious name I decree the Prince of Dream to hurry and come to me this very night and to tell me tonight all of my desires. I adjure you RGŠY'L the great, Prince of Dream, in the name of ḤY YHWH ZB'WT 'HYH 'ŠR 'HYH YQW'L YQḤW'L YMW'L […] to come[27] to me this night in calmness, in goodness, and not in anger, and to speak to me and to give me a sign or a wonder or a verse which will be in my hand, and to inform me about a certain matter[28] and about everything concerning it [when we speak] or that will be of its concern in the future whether for good or for something else […] I adjure you in these names to come to me[29] in calmness and goodness and not in anger, and to speak[30] with me about everything I wish [to know] concerning a certain matter. And tell me in my dream whether I should reveal its interpretation or whether I should conceal its interpretation from people, so that I shall not fail in this matter before the One who spoke and the world came into being, blessed is He and blessed is His Name […] And sleep[31] on your shoulders, like we said above. And on that night do not speak a lot with your wife and direct your heart towards heaven. And be careful with yourself for if the prince told you in your dream: "do not reveal a [certain] matter," do not reveal it.[32] If, however, he was silent about that matter[33] and did not tell you to conceal it, but he spoke[34] to you about whatever you needed [to know] and went away from you, do not be afraid to reveal it and to tell everything that

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[26] The ritual lasts for three continuous days and nights. The inquiry is posed on the third night. The Hebrew אילו הפסוקים יאמר כל השנים לילות might also mean that the verses should be recited during the whole (first) two nights.

[27] The Heb. שתבאו (pl.) is a corruption of שתבא (sing.).

[28] At this point, the user of the adjuration is supposed to insert his own matter of concern.

[29] The Heb. אלו is a corruption of אלי.

[30] The Heb. ותבכר is a corruption of ותדבר.

[31] The Heb. ותליו is a corruption of ותלין.

[32] The Heb. שאם אמר לך השר בחלום אל תגלה דבר אל תגלהו can also be translated: For if the prince told you in your dream: "do not reveal a thing" do not reveal it [i.e., the whole matter]. However, the next sentence makes it clear that it is the certain matter discussed that is at stake.

[33] The last seven words are written twice surely because of a scribe error.

[34] The Hebrew יאמרו is a corruption of יאמר.

> you saw whether good or bad. Be careful with yourself not to add to the things and lie and tell more. For if you lied and you have to do [it] another time he will never come to you [again], but if you acted faithfully he will not move from you at any time that you wish.

In this highly complex prescription, only partially quoted here, practical instructions concerning the reciting of a certain formula of adjuration and the way to lie down to sleep are linked with a demand for purity and a magical prayer to God, strictly formulated and fixed, for the sake of enabling the adjurer to induce the Prince of Dream to appear in his dream and to speak to him.[35] This whole set of preconditions is further combined with ethical requirements that relate to the concealing of the heavenly information or the accuracy of its transmission.[36] However, once all these terms are met, the visit of the Prince of Dream is assured time and again, and a broad, indeed unlimited, range of knowledge becomes potentially exposed to the adjurer.

As we all know, knowledge is power and the mastering of concealed knowledge is even more so. One can easily detect this from the self-image of *yordei ha-merkavah* (the "descendants" to the chariot) presented at the opening of *Hekhalot Rabbati* from the mouth of R. Yishma'el, though with no precise connection to the adjuration of the Prince of Dream.[37] As we shall see later it carries not only social advantages (emphasized by R. Yishma'el), but also financial ones.

The old weapon in political-theological struggles, accusations of sorcery (כשפים), also played a role in the anti-Rabbanite argumentation of the Karaites around the turn of the first millennium. Daniel Al-Qumisi, Salmon ben Yeruhim and other Karaite theologists accused the Rabbanites of writing amulets and of using both pure and impure names for various kinds of sorcery.[38] In a fragment of a tractate written

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[35] On the genre of magical prayers see P. Schäfer and S. Shaked, *Magische Texte aus der Kairoer Geniza*, I–III (Tübingen, 1994–1999), vol. II, pp. 1–14. Cf. P. Schäfer, "Jewish Liturgy and Magic," in *Geschichte-Tradition-Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. H. Cancik, H. Lichtenberger and P. Schäfer (Tübingen, 1996), I, pp. 541–57.

[36] For another example of ethical restrictions that condition the effectiveness of a magical practice, see Schäfer and Shaked, *Magische Texte*, II, pp. 120–21 (2a:12–2b:11).

[37] See Schäfer, *Synopse*, §§ 81–91.

[38] On this issue, see Y. Harari, "Leadership, Authority and the 'Other': The Debate over Magic from the Karaites to Maimonides," *Journal for the Study of Sephardic and*

by an uncertain author (Salmon ben Yeruhim or Sahl ben Mazliah) dream inquiry is also mentioned among the Rabbanite's acts of "sin and wickedness."[39] Leaving aside the judgmental value of his claim, it seems to have been grounded. Dream inquiries were undoubtedly performed by Jews at that time as manifested in the famous correspondence between R. Hai Gaon and the rabbis of Kairouan.

In the early eleventh century R. Hai Gaon wrote a long, detailed responsum to the rabbis of Kairouan (today in Tunisia) concerning various matters of wonder that they had asked him about. Both their ponderings (mentioned by R. Hai) and his reply focus on the power of the Ineffable Name and the possibility of putting it into effect.[40] It is clear from R. Hai's words that this is not the first time he had replied to them about these matters. Apparently unsatisfied with his first response, the rabbis of Kairouan emphasized in their second letter the reliability of the evidence underlying their inquiry. And they wrote the following about dream inquiry:[41]

> And also concerning [practices of] dream inquiry—there are (were)[42] some wise and pious old men among us who knew them. And they used to fast for some days not eating meat and not drinking wine and sleeping in a pure place, and praying and saying (certain) known verses and letters in numbers,[43] and (then) to sleep. And they used to see wonderful dreams, like prophecy. And there were some of them who lived in our days and whom we knew. Each one of them had a (certain) known figure—one (had) an old man and the other (had) a youth—who would appear in it [i.e. the dream] and tell him and say verses to him that convey the certain matter he had asked about.

Mizrahi Jewry 2 (2007): 79–101 (on pp. 84–7) (digital only: http://sephardic.fiu.edu/journal/november07/YuvalHarari.pdf).

[39] J. Mann, *Texts and Studies in Jewish History and Literature* (New York, 1972), 2, pp. 82–83.

[40] See Harari, "The Debate," pp. 87–90 and note 26.

[41] See S. Emanuel, *Newly Discovered Geonic Responsa* (Jerusalem, 1995), p. 126 (Heb.). The following translation is slightly different from the one in Lesses, *Ritual Practices*, p. 236.

[42] This version is a hybrid combination of the two versions found in other manuscripts: יש, היו (there are, there were). See ibid., n. 21.

[43] They probably refer to the technique known as Gematria—i.e., the assigning of a numerical value to the letters and the mystical-mathematical calculations that stem from the combinations of words, verses, or the names of God. Moshe Idel assumed that these words (Heb. אותיות במספרים) refer to Ex. 14:19–21. Each of these verses comprises 72 letters and a certain combination of them constructs the famous Name of 72 Letters. This name is first mentioned and described by Rashi (on Suk. 45a) almost a century later. See M. Idel, *Nocturnal Kabbalists* (Jerusalem, 2006), pp. 96–97 (Heb.).

R. Hai's responsum attests that the very practice of dream inquiry was also known in his surroundings (Pumbedita, Babylonia). Yet, he was very skeptical about the figure that appears in the dream:

> And you mentioned [the matter of] dream inquiry in your query and that there are people among you who inquire and see prophecy-like [visions], and this is also far [from being admitted or approved]. And we have heard that also here there were people who used to see true answers to what they had inquired (about),[44] but now we have only seen those who require signs like [the appearance in a dream of] rabbis in case that would happen, or [the appearance in a dream of] non-Jews in case that would happen, and [also] (biblical) verses relating the required matter. And there are (indeed) some people whose dreams are more definite and clear when they set a dream inquiry than other's dreams, and sometimes the answer is clear and sometimes it is obscure and sometimes there is no answer at all, but fear falls upon the inquirer. […] But this [matter] that you mentioned (that) each of them [i.e. those who practiced dream inquiry] (had) a certain figure, a master of the dream (בעל החלום), who would come to him, an old man to one and a youth to the other, we have heard that such (things) happened, but we have not seen it nor has anyone told us that he had seen it. And we have seen versions [of prescriptions] in which it is mentioned [i.e. the appearance of the master of the dream] and people (even) said before us that they had tried them once and twice but they did not work for them.[45]

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[44] The Heb. singular in מי ששואל רואה…מי שרואה תשובות מוכיחות למה ששואל indicates the existence of the phenomenon and not a certain person. Emanuel followed Heschel in taking the words of R. Mazliah, son of Al-Bazak about the revelation of R. Saadia Gaon in R. Hai's dream as evidencing that "even R. Hai himself experienced things alike [i.e. true answers in the dream to pre-set questions]." See ibid., n. 117; A. J. Heschel, "On the Holy Spirit in the Middle Ages (up to Maimonides' Time)," in *Alexander Marx Jubilee Volume on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. S. Lieberman (New York, 1950), Hebrew section, pp. 175–208, on p. 204 n. 168. The article was recently published in English in idem, *Prophetic Inspiration after the Prophets: Maimonides and other Medieval Authorities,* edited by M. M. Faierstein (Hoboken, 1996). See p. 59, n. 171. Interestingly enough, Abraham Heschel on the one hand considers the traditions about dream queries among the *geonim* to be "legend," whereas on the other hand, he asserts, "In these statements R. Hai Gaon hints at the fact that he too was occupied with adducing answers through divinatory dreams. He merely denies that he actually saw the dream-master" (ibid). I believe that we should indeed treat all these *late* traditions as legendary. Accordingly, unless we can historically reinforce the tradition about R. Hai, written in Sicily by one of his students (through the mediation of words by Moses son of Jacob Ibn Ezra written in Spain about a hundred years later), I suggest considering it evidence of R. Hai's image among his disciples rather than indicating biographical fact(s).

[45] Ibid., pp. 137–38.

R. Hai distinguished between two branches of the practice. One strove for information through dreamed signs and biblical verses. The other aspired for a clear, explicit message from the mouth of a dreamed entity. The difference between them lay in the figure of the mediator between the heavenly message and man. In the first case the heavenly message was sent directly into the dream, in a coded form. No heavenly mediator was involved but then a human interpreter was needed, either the dreamer or someone else, in order to turn the message into a meaningful one. Conversely, no human intervention was required in the second case, since the message was delivered explicitly and clearly from the mouth of the heavenly mediator who appeared in the dream. As we can see, R. Hai Gaon admitted that a dream revelation without a figure was a source of true knowledge; but he was very skeptical about the one with a "figure." Even though he was personally familiar with the theoretical aspect of "the master of Dream" praxis, he found no reason to believe in its efficacy.

About two centuries later, in the time and place from which the Cairo Genizah emerged, Maimonides raised his own voice against practices of dream inquiry. Nevertheless, it was not inquiry through an angelic mediator that upset him, but one made through the deceased, as one can see from his discussion on Laws of Idolatry in his *Mishne Torah*:

> What is a necromancer?—One who starves himself and goes and sleeps in a cemetery in order that a deceased will come to him in a dream and will tell him about matters inquired by him. And there are still others who put on certain clothes and utter [certain] words and offer a certain incense and sleep alone so that a particular dead person will come and converse with them[46] in a dream.[47]

The revelation of an angel in a dream is discussed at length in *The Guide of the Perplexed*, where in and of itself it raises no problem. On the contrary, given the fulfillment of certain preconditions, Maimonides perceives this to be a high stage of prophecy. To be sure, this is the sole case of true prophetic revelation of an angel. Any other

[46] Lit. with him.

[47] Moses Maimonides, *Mishne Torah—The Book of Knowledge,* ed. and trans. by M. Haymson (Jerusalem, 1962), pp. 79b–80a.

kind of angelic vision, whether in wakefulness or in a dream, is simply impossible.[48]

Even though Maimonides did not relate explicitly to the practice of dream inquiry, his denouncement and ridicule of magic in general and the belief in the performative power of words in particular, together with his view of angelic revelation, apparently left no room for even the slightest tolerance toward the idea or the practice of inducing an angel to appear in one's dream and speak to him.[49]

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[48] Moses Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, translated with an Introduction and notes by Shlomo Pines (Chicago, 1963), II, 42 (pp. 388–90). Cf. Maimonides' discussion on dreams and prophecy, ibid., II 41–46 (pp. 385–407).

[49] On Maimonides' attitude toward magic, see Harari, "The Debate," pp. 90–101 and bibliography. A totally different approach towards the efficacy of dream inquiries and the authority of their outcome was adopted at almost the same time by R. Jacob of Mervege. His unique response, widely referred to in later halakhic literature, was compiled at the very beginning of the 13th century on the basis of a long series of dream inquiries posed by him. See Margalioth, *She'elot u-teshuvot*. Cf. I. Ta-Shma, "*She'elot u-teshuvot min ha-shamayim*," *Tarbiz* 57 (1987), pp. 51–66 (Heb.); N. Danzig, "Geonic Responsa *Sha'arei Teshuvah* and *She'elot U-Teshuvot Min Ha-Shamayim*," *Tarbiz* 58 (1988): 21–48 (Heb.). For more general perspectives on the subject, see Heschel, *Prophetic Inspiration*, pp. 1–67; E. E. Urbach, "Halakha and Prophecy," *Tarbiz* 18 (1946): 1–27 (Heb.); Idel, *Nocturnal Kabbalists*. Medieval Europe is outside the scope of this paper, as are also "eastern" famous dreamers such as R. Yosef Taitazak, R. Yosef Karo, or R. Hayim Vital. See G. Scholem, "The *Magid* of R. Yosef Taitazak and the revelations attributed to him," *Sefunot* 11 (1971): 69–112 (Heb.); R. J. C. Werblowsky, *R. Joseph Karo, Lawyer and Mystic* (Philadelphia, 1977); M. M. Faierstein, *Jewish Mystical Autobiographies: Book of Visions and Book of Secrets* (New York, 1999). However, two brief comments concerning R. Jacob's praxis are feasible: (a) He always addresses God and asks Him to order the angels to appear in his dream and give him the desired answer (for example, Margalioth, *She'elot u-teshuvot*, §§ 3, 5, 47, pp. 47, 52, 72). God is perceived as the unique source of both the heavenly knowledge and the uncovering of it. The angels—and not a specific one of them!—are nothing but informants (§§ 5, 12, pp. 51, 57). Textual characteristics of adjuration (Harari, "Magical Text," pp. 116–21) are absolutely missing. This fits well with the answer R. Jacob receives upon inquiring about the use of the 42-letter Name for the adjuring of angels: "Holy holy holy is the Lord of hosts [Is. 6:3] and he alone will take care of all your needs" (§ 7, pp. 53–54). (b) R. Jacob was not a blind follower of his dreams. He was familiar with the talmudic concern about the possible demonic origin of dreams and in certain matters he requested a repeat answer in order to be sure. In one case he turned to God a third time with an explicit inquiry concerning the reliability of the messages of the previous nights: "Whether [the dreamed words] came into my mouth from God or not […] whether the words were inspired by the holy spirit and thus are useful […] or they came onto my mouth from another spirit and they are not useful and it is better for me to hide and conceal them." (§ 5, p. 52). The answer to these questions was expected in yet another dream revelation and thus what we are actually dealing with here is a kind of (contextually absurd) ars poetica of dream inquiry in which the practice is applied in order to inquire about its own reliability. Cf. the closely similar but different matter in § 22, pp. 61–62). On later, Kabbalistic developments of the practice of dream inquiry and their theological meaning, see M. Idel, *Nocturnal Kabbalists*.

As always, highly intellectual views make little impression on the common man. The very hagiography of Maimonides, where he is celebrated as nothing less than a powerful magician, is surely one of the most brilliant and amusing confirmations supplied by history.[50] The testimony of the Genizah is a more modest one.

Ṣedaqah, Metatron and the Gold Coins: A Dream Inquiry Adjuration from the Cairo Genizah

The magical evidence in the Cairo Genizah is not extensive in comparison to its entire body of texts. Nevertheless, more than two thousand fragments relating to magic have already been identified by Shaul Shaked. Some dozens of them have been published over the last twenty years by him and others.[51] In the past few years, a few hundred more fragments have undergone examination by Gideon Bohak and await further publication.

The magical testimony from the Cairo Genizah is of extreme importance for the study of common life of (at least one Mediterranean community of) Jews in the Middle Ages.[52] Constituting practical, professional evidence, the magical texts from the Genizah reflect a sphere of day-to-day reality that until recently could only be approached, if at all, through the lens of a usually hostile "outsider" mediator. With these texts at hand, we now have thousands of pieces of "insider" evidence that attest to the vast and deep penetration of the use of adju-

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Cf. the contemporary discussion on the authority of dreams in determining halakha in R. Ovadia Yosef, *Sefer she'elot u-teshuvot yabi'a omer* (Jerusalem, 1963–2001), 1, pp. 140–47 (*Orakh Hayim* §§ 41, 42) (Heb.).

[50] Y. Avishur, *In Praise of Maimonides* (Jerusalem, 1998) (Heb.).

[51] See Schäfer and Shaked, *Magische Texte* (the fourth volume in this series, authored also by R. Leicht, is about to be published); J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls* (Jerusalem, 1987); idem, *Magic Spells and Formulae* (Jerusalem, 1993); L. Schiffman and M. Swartz, *Hebrew and Aramaic Incantation Texts from the Cairo Genizah* (Sheffield, 1992). Magical fragments from the Cairo Genizah, including the one presented below, were published before this wave of research and publication in the last two decades. See the detailed survey on research in the field in Harari, *Early Jewish Magic*, pp. 103–119.

[52] The most celebrated example of such a study is still S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza* (vols. 1–6) (Berkeley, 1967–93). However, this comprehensive and highly detailed study lacks any discussion of magic, as noted by S. M. Wasserstrom, "The Unwritten Chapter: Notes Towards a Social and Religious History of Geniza Magic," in *Officina Magica*, ed. S. Shaked (Leiden, 2005), pp. 269–93.

ration practices into almost every aspect of life of the Mediterranean Jews in the Middle Ages.[53] The more texts we look at the clearer it becomes that magic was actually put into operation for almost any conceivable objective. From expelling crickets out of the house to exorcising demons out of the body, from support of labor to release from jail, from kindling love to the destruction of a rival, from the cure of hemorrhoids to the study of the Torah—magic had to do with everything.[54] Economic success was not exceptional.[55] Ancient books of magic recipes like *Sefer Harazim* (the Book of the Mysteries) or *Ḥarba de-Moshe* (the Sword of Moses)[56] provide relatively early evidence of economically oriented practices of magic, whereas a rare example among the huge corpus of Aramaic incantation bowls written in Babylonia in the fifth to the seventh centuries CE,[57] attests to

[53] The earliest magical fragments in the Cairo Genizah are from the 10th century and a large amount of them stem from the following three decades. However, there also exist fragments of a much later origin in the Genizah and one should not automatically assign antiquity to every Genizah text.

[54] For detailed studies of realms in which magic was employed, see Y. Harari, "If You Wish to Kill a Person: Harmful Magic and Protection from It in Early Jewish Magic," *Jewish Studies* 37 (1997), pp. 111–42 (Heb.); idem, "Love Charms in Early Jewish Magic," *Kabbalah* 5 (2000), pp. 247–264 (Heb.); idem, "The Opening of the Heart: Magical Practices for Gaining Knowledge, Understanding and Good Memory in Judaism of Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages," in *Shefa Tal: Studies in Jewish Thought and Culture*, ed. Z. Gries, H. Kreisel and B. Huss (Beer-Sheva, 2004), pp. 303–47 (Heb.); O.-P. Saar, *Jewish Love Magic from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages* (dissertation, Tel Aviv University, 2008) (Heb.). In all this research the Genizah material is studied together with earlier magical evidence deriving from Palestine and its environs. On the corpus of Jewish writings and artifacts from Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, see Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, pp. 143–226; Harari, *Early Jewish Magic*, pp. 159–228.

[55] See Y. Harari, "Economic Aspects of the Use of Magic by Jews in Ancient Times and the Early Middle Ages," *Peamim* 85 (2001): 14–42 (Heb.).

[56] Y. Harari, *The Sword of Moses—A New Edition and Study* (Jerusalem, 1997) (Heb.); M. Margalioth, *Sepher Ha-Razim: A Newly Recovered Book of Magic from the Talmudic Period* (Jerusalem, 1966) (Heb.). For an English translation see M. A. Morgan, *Sepher Ha-Razim, The Book of the Mysteries* (Chico, 1983).

[57] The history of publication of the Babylonian incantation bowls goes back to the mid-19th century. The main published corpuses are J. A. Montgomery, *Aramaic Incantation Texts from Nippur* (Philadelphia, 1913); Naveh and Shaked, *Amulets*; idem, *Magic Spells*; J. B. Segal, *Catalogue of the Aramaic and Mandaic Incantation Bowls in the British Museum* (London, 2000); D. Levene, *A Corpus of Magic Bowls: Incantation Texts in Jewish Aramaic from Late Antiquity* (London, 2003); and C. Müller-Kessler, *Die Zauberschalentexte in der Hilprecht-Sammlung, Jena, und weitere Nippur-Texte anderer Sammlungen* (Wiesbaden, 2005). Dozens of Aramaic, Mandaic and Syriac incantation bowls were published elsewhere. For a detailed survey of the study of the bowls, see Harari, *Early Jewish Magic*, pp. 104–109. For a concise survey of the bowls and their magic, see D. Levene, "Curse or Blessing, What's in the Magic Bowl?" *Parkes*

the practical manifestation of the idea as early as that period.[58] In the Cairo Genizah we find both types of evidence—professional recipes for economic success and amulets prepared for that end—which in some cases prove to be dependent upon one another.[59]

Multiple options for economic success provided multiple needs for magical aid. Thus, ritual practices based on the reciting of adjurations are recommended in the magical books of recipes for various aspects of the agricultural, artisanal, and commercial activities. Beside these somewhat trivial yet realistic goals, a few other opportunities can be detected: to "turn the heart of a prominent or rich woman towards you"; to "make horses run with all their power [so] they will not fail in their run and will be light as wind and no animal will precede them […] and no [evil] sorcery or witchcraft will harm them" and thus win a chariot race; to turn "simple, worthless stones" into silver and gold; or simply "to become rich."[60] However, we take special interest in yet another type of option—the discovery of a treasure.[61]

Institute Pamphlet 2 (University of Southampton, 2002); Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, pp. 183–93; Harari, *Early Jewish Magic*, pp. 182–96.

[58] See D. Levene and S. Bhayro, "'Bring to the Gates…upon a Good Smell and upon Good Fragrances': An Aramaic Incantation Bowl for Success in Business," *Archiv für Orientforschung* 51 (2005–6): 242–46. Almost all the incantation bowls were produced with the aim of protecting client(s) from demonic or sorcerers' attacks or of expelling evil sorceries and spirits from a client's body or house that they had already invaded.

[59] These cases show, on the one hand, that the writing of amulets actually relied upon the professional literature, and on the other, that it left the writer some space for personal improvisation. See M. D. Swartz, "Scribal Magic and its Rhetoric: Formal Patterns in Medieval Hebrew and Aramaic Incantation Texts from the Cairo Genizah," *HTR* 83 (1990): 160–80; Harari, "Economic Aspects," pp. 32–33.

[60] See Harari, "Economic Aspects."

[61] The idea appears in the famous legend of Solomon and Asmodeus in the Babylonian Talmud (Git 68b). It is told that on his way to Jerusalem, Asmodeus laughed when he saw a magician performing his magic. When he was asked why he laughed, he replied: "[It was] because he was sitting above the king's treasure [buried in the ground]. Let him bewitch (לקסום) that which is beneath him [and gain it]." One possible interpretation is that Asmodeus mocks the magician for being busy with all kinds of (effective) magical acts instead of turning his power toward something really big. This reading suggests that it is the blindness of the magician which is at stake. This motif is in line with the one that characterizes the whole story. See H. Schwarzbaum, "The Shortsightedness of the Angel of Death," in *Roots and Landscapes,* ed. E. Yassif (Beer Sheva, 1993), pp. 56–73 (Heb.). I prefer this over the other possible reading, according to which the magician was performing a hocus-pocus show in order to obtain some money from his spectators and Asmodeus laughed at his very capability to perform anything real.

Only very few of the prescriptions in the Genizah material known to me were designated for that purpose.[62] A relatively early one of them (eleventh century), which relates to the case of a known hidden treasure, suggests the practice of divination through a drunk cock:

> A section [i.e., recipe] for buried money whose place of concealment is known to no one. He [i.e., the client] should take a white cock and you [i.e., the magician] should let it drink old wine for seven days and then write [the following] on a plate and hang it on its right wing. And at the place it goes [to] he should dig, [for] there it is buried. And this is what you should write: In the name of MYK'L GBRY'L RF'L ZWRY'L ḤMRY'L QDWŠY'L MDBNY'L MDNY'L and KMŠY'L[63] BRQY'L MWG'L MR'WT YH YH '"S [Amen Amen Amen Selah].[64]

Two other options are proposed in another, much later fragment.[65] One is based on divination through a child.[66] The other, "tested and efficient,"[67] requires the use of a candle made of "virgin wax," sulfur, a finger bone from a human corpse, another uncertain ingredient, and a thread taken out of a rope that was used for an execution.

In times where no secured cellars for safes were available, people had to hide their money somewhere. Thus, concealed treasures were apparently known to exist. But where? Relatives of a deceased person, who died without telling them the secret, greedy neighbors and mere

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[62] That is not surprising in light of the realistic, pragmatic character of the professional literature of magic. In contrast to the imaginary potency of magic in folk narratives and fantastic literature, most of the magical recipes suggest assistance in achieving goals that in principle can be attained without that aid. The main exception is the demonical sphere, which kept the sorcerers very busy and could not be approached except through magical means.

[63] The word וכמשיאל can also be read as a name—WKMŠY'L.

[64] Schäfer and Shaked, *Magische Texte*, III, p. 56 (20a:2–10).

[65] Ibid., pp. 92–93 (2a:9–3a:4)—a 16th-century manuscript.

[66] On child divination in the Babylonian Talmud, see Harari, "The Sages," p. 546. On the use of this practice in the Greco-Roman world, see S. I. Johnston, "Charming Children: The Use of the Child in Ancient Divination," *Arethusa* 34 (2001): 97–117. For a psychological perspective on the practice in medieval Judaism, see Y. Bilu, "Pondering 'the Princes of the Oil'—A New Light on an Old Phenomenon," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 37 (1981): 269–78.

[67] In this context the Hebrew בחון ומנוסה should be understood as "tested and efficient" rather then "tested and examined." This is clear from prescriptions where מנוסה appears in a way that excludes the meaning "examined." For example, MS New York Public Library 190 pp. 82–83, §§ 33, 36: "and this name if efficient for every good thing"; "the power of this name is efficient for everything" (וזה השם מנוסה לכל טובה; זה השם כוחו לכל דבר מנוסה). Idioms testifying to the empirically proven efficiency of a recipe are widespread in the magical literature. See Harari, "Economic aspects," p. 31, n. 104, and below, n. 70.

adventurers were all anxious to look for them and find them.[68] And magic was there to support them in a variety of ways. Ṣedaqah, son of Sitt al-Ahl, used the one of dream inquiry.

If Ṣedaqah himself was not a practitioner of magic, he probably turned to someone who was in order to be directed toward his desired aim—the uncovering of a treasure of gold coins. As we have seen above, the professional knowledge possessed by such a person comprised various options for the exploring of treasures. However, there was always the old familiar way of summoning an angel and directly asking him about it. The preparations required for the revelation were usually a combination of certain ritual behavior with the recitation of an incantation. In some cases, such as the following recipe from the Cairo Genizah (eleventh century), the writing of the incantation was required, too:[69]

> Dream inquiry, tested and efficient.[70] Purify yourself three days and fast every day [during these] three days and wear pure, clean, washed clothes. And write on the left hand: For the name of NN [i.e. the adjurer] QQQQQ[71] this is My name forever and this is My[72] ŠDY ŠDY I am who I am[73] ḤSYN YH[74] ’ḤD[75] let His name be YY ṢB’WT YY ṢB’WT YY ’LHYM YY ’LHYM who seats upon the wheels of the chariot. I call you Michael the great prince to come to me and show me everything I ask you this night truly. And fast and do not eat and do not drink two days

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[68] Regarding the first category see the stories in the Babylonian Talmud (Ber 18b) about Ze’iri and Shemu’el who went to the cemetery (on different occasions), called certain deceased persons and asked them about some money they had hidden which could not be found. In both cases the deceased told them where the money was and indeed they found it. See also the story about the man who was informed in a riddle dream of the place where his father’s money had been hidden (bBer 56b; yMS 4:12; *Midrash Bereshit Rabba* 68:12 [Theodor-Albeck, II, pp. 784–5]; *Midrash Eicha Rabba* 1 [Buber, pp. 27b–28a]) and the discussion in G. Hasan-Rokem, “An Almost Invisible Presence: Multilingual Puns in Rabbinic Literature,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, eds. C. E. Fonrobert and M. S. Jaffee (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 222–39.

[69] Schäfer and Shaked, *Magische Texte*, I, p. 136 (1a:11–1b:7).

[70] This idiom and parallels are used abundantly by the author of the book of recipes quoted here. See Schäfer and Shaked, *Magische Texte*, I, p. 146, note on line 2.

[71] These are the initials of 5 times *kadosh*—holy.

[72] Ex. 3:15.

[73] Ex. 3:14.

[74] Ps. 89:9.

[75] Deut. 6:4.

> and one night[76] and you should sleep in a pure place[77] and he (will) tell you everything you wish.

In any case, whether recited or even written on the dreamer's body, no traces of the incantation could have survived to attest to the performance of the practice. It is only in cases like the one described below, also found in the Genizah (in a relatively late manuscript—sixteenth century), that material evidence could have survived to our day:[78]

> To uncover a finding. Write on deer hide: I adjure you Sandalphon Gabriel Hadatiel in the name of YHVY ŠDY N' holy I am who I am to come to me this night and show me a great finding that I shall be very happy with and tell me where is that finding truly. And put the writing under your head and lie down and sleep and they will tell you. End.

This was indeed the case of Ṣedaqah, son of Sitt al-Ahl, who probably lived in Cairo during the eleventh century.[79] And because of the certain practice he carried out that required the writing of the adjuration on a durable material (and some luck), we have at hand this unique example of an actual implementation of dream inquiry.

It seems that Ṣedaqah knew about a certain treasure of gold coins that was hidden somewhere in his vicinity, but he had no idea where it was. He decided to pose a dream inquiry and to induce Metatron, the most notable angel in the heavenly hierarchy, to disclose this secret to him. In line with our type of testimony—the very written adjuration used by Ṣedaqah—nothing is known about the enveloping ritual. However, we can quite confidently speculate about what happened before that special night, relying on other instructive literature we have encountered.

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[76] Heb. מב ימים ולילה אחד. Peter Schäfer and Shaul Shaked read it literally: forty-two days and one night (ibid., p. 140, 1b:6), but this is quite uncertain. They referred to other cases of such a long fast but also suggested the option of a corruption of ב ימים—two days. Perceiving the text as practical I believe that this indeed is the case and that the recipe suggests a realistic fast for the two days and the night in between, which anticipate the night of the dream inquiry.

[77] In an adjacent prescription also aimed at a dream revelation, it is also demanded to "keep away from a house in which a woman stays." See ibid., p. 136 (1b:8–16). No specific angel is adjured in this case, but some unnamed ones. The result however is the same: "And you will see a wonder for they will come and speak to you [concerning] your desire and request."

[78] Schäfer and Shaked, *Magische Texte*, III, p. 369 (2a:9–13).

[79] The amulet prepared for Ṣedaqah (or by himself) is written in a non professional semi-cursive eastern (*mizrahi*) script, which is typical of that period. I would like to thank Dr. Edna Angel from the Department of Manuscripts and the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts at the Jewish National and University Library for this information.

Ṣedaqah probably fasted during the whole day, maybe even the day before, and might even have abstained from drinking water. He most likely went through some kind of purification, avoiding dirt and apparently also close contact with women. He almost certainly washed himself and put on clean clothing. Concentrating on his desire, he possibly prayed throughout the day and recited incantations before he went to sleep. However, one thing is quite sure: upon getting into bed he took with him a small sheet of paper on which an adjuration was written (by him? for him?) and most likely placed it below his head. Then he closed his eyes and waited for sleep to overtake him.

It would take a great deal of luck to find any evidence for the results of that night. Maybe nothing happened. Maybe he did converse with Metatron in his dream but in the morning he forgot his words. Maybe he tried it more than once. Maybe he even found the treasure—who knows? However, when everything was over he had to take care of that small sheet of paper. Throwing it away did not even occur to him as it bore holy names of God. So he went to the synagogue and put it there among all kinds of old documents and torn and worn-out writings that no one needed any more.[80]

And this is what was written on it:[81]

Recto

1	In the name of YHVH we shall do and succeed[82]	בשם יהוה נעשה ונצלח
2	by (the word of) YHVH[83] may the prince	עלפי יהוה יבא אלי שר

[80] This is, of course, just one possible, imagined illustration.

[81] The suggested reading is based on an examination of new photographs of the manuscript. I would like to express my gratitude to the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery at the Smithsonian Institution, for both supplying the reproduction and granting permission to publish it in this article. Both my reading and understanding of the text diverge from those of Gottheil and Worell who misread the entire text. I would like to thank Shaul Shaked, Gidi Bohak, Reimund Leicht, Edna Angel, and especially Uri Melammed for their remarks, which improved my reading.

[82] The left-hand stroke of the ח in ונצלח is missing due to the cutting of the paper strip after the spell had been written. The (expected) letter י might have been added between the letters ל and ח (resulting in the broad right-hand stroke of the ח), after the word had been written. The phrase בשם יהוה נעשה ונצליח opens many incantations. It is also known to appear in Jewish spells in its initials form—בינו. The earliest occurrence known to me is an amulet found in the ruin of an ancient synagogue in Ḥorvat Marish (in a layer dated to the first half of the 7th century). See Naveh and Shaked, *Magic Spells*, pp. 43–50 (and note on line 1).

[83] The idiom על פי יהוה (by the word/command of God) is frequent in the Bible (e.g., Ex. 17:1; Num. 3:16, 39, 51; Deut. 34:5).

3	of princes come to me, Oh[84] Metatron[85]	השרים אך מיטטרון
4	Oh, he is beloved and dear	אך הוא אהוב וחביב
5	over all the dwellers of height,[86] a faithful servant	מכל פני מרומו עבד נאמן
6	of God of Israel, high[87] priest,	לאלהי ישראל כהן גודל
7	head of the priests.[88] You have[89]	ראש הכוהנים שיש לך
8	seventy names, you are[90]	שבעים שימות שאתה
9	appointed over the great princes	הממונה על השרים הגדולים
10	and you are the head of the (heavenly) camps	ואתה ראש המחנות
11	I adjure you[91] in the name of YHVH	משביע אני עוליך בשם יהוה
12	Sabaoth, God of Israel who is enthroned among	צבאות אלוהי ישראל יושב

[84] I read the two אך as a kind of vocative. אך appears (rarely) in sequences of *nomina barbara*, e.g., Schäfer and Shaked, *Magische Texte* II, pp. 140, 172; P. Schäfer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (Tübingen 1981), § 566, but this does not seem to be the case here.

[85] Metatron is directly addressed in other adjurations from the Cairo Genizah. Parallels to the formula recited here are found in three other amulets from the Genizah: TS K1.168, lines 39–45 (Schiffman and Swartz, *Hebrew and Aramaic Incantation Texts*, pp. 145–47); TS Or. 1080.15.81, lines 104–11, TS 8.275, lines 1a/19–1b/8 (Schäfer and Shaked, *Magische Texte* I, pp. 164, 173). See below. See also Metatron's adjuration to cut down all enemies—Schäfer and Shaked, ibid., p. 129 (an amulet), and for "opening of the heart," i.e. improvement of learning and good memory—Naveh and Shaked, *Magic Spells*, p. 162. For other occurrences of Metatron in Genizah adjurations see, for example, Schiffman and Swartz, ibid., p. 99; Schäfer and Shaked, *Magische Texte*, II, pp. 33, 88, 192, 219–20, 259; III, p. 121.

[86] פני מרומו is a corruption of בני מרומו (dwellers of height), as evident from the three parallels to our text mentioned in the previous note. The Hebrew מרומו (*meromo*) is apparently a pronunciation spelling of the Aramaic מרומא (*meroma)*. For בני מרומא see the parallel quoted below from TS Or. 1080.15.81. Cf. TS K1.168, line 40 (above n. 85). See also the discussion below on the linguistic characteristics of this amulet. Like other occurrences of the replacement of *kamatz* (long *a*) with *holam* (*o*)—e.g., גודל (recto 6, 14, 25, verso 9, 19), עוליך (recto 11, 24, verso 8. But see verso 18—עליך), שושן (recto 18), פעומים (verso 6, 12)—the spelling מרומו (*meromo*) probably represents a Babylonian pronunciation characteristic to the writer of the amulet. Thus, even though the words בני מרומו appear in the third parallel of our text (TS 8.275 line 1a/20—above n. 85), I prefer the reading "dwellers of height" over the translation of the written words—"dwellers of His height."

[87] For the spelling גודל (cf. recto 14, 25, verso 9, 19), see the discussion below. The word גודל is highlighted by a line above it.

[88] The ו is attached to the right-hand stroke of the ה and looks like part of it. Notice the untypical thickness of the right-hand stroke of the ה.

[89] Lit., that you have (שיש לך).

[90] Lit., that you are (שאתה).

[91] Cf. the spelling עוליך on recto 24 (but see verso 18—עליך). And see the discussion below.

13	the cherubim,[92] and in the Ineffable Name	הכרובים ובשם המפורש
14	and in the great, mighty and awesome,	ובשם הגודל הגבר והנרא
15	powerful, brave, exalted, magnificent[93] name,	החזק האמיץ המסגב הנפלא
16	and in the name of ’SSYṬSS ’L, who is[94]	ובשם אססיטסס אל שהוא
17	to come [to me][95] and to my mother[96] in joy,	שתאבא [לי] ולאמי בשושן
18	in happiness, with good message,	בשמחה בבשרה טובה
19	and show me, me and my mother[97]	ותראיני לי וליה אמי
20	this night[98] quickly where	בזה הלילה מהירה אי
21	is the place of the gold coins here.	זה מקם אלזהובים פה
22	Toward here[99] [with] our eyes we shall see this	אלפה עינינו נראה זה
23	place fully fully.	המקם תמים תמים
24	In the Name[100] I adjure you, you	בשם השבעתי עוליך אתה
25	the great prince, act quickly,	השר הגודל עשה במהירה

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[92] Isa. 37:16

[93] The reading of the Hebrew המסגב is uncertain. The ה is possible, however not typical, and the ס is not clear. מסגב is apparently a corruption of נשגב (magnificent). Though it can also be read as a mistaken spelling of the word משגב (fortress, shelter), which occurs in the Bible in relation to God—God is my/our/a poor man’s shelter (e.g., 2Sam. 22:3; Ps. 9:10, 46:8, 59:18)—the Bible never uses משגב in the adjectival manner in which it functions in the amulet according to this (problematic and thus improbable) reading. All the attributes mentioned here are widespread in the Hekhalot and Merkavah literature in various combinations. For a close parallel to our text, in which all the attributes (including נשגב) appear, see Schäfer, *Synopse*, § 582.

[94] The reading of the Hebrew שהוא is uncertain. If it is correct then the rest of the sentence is missing. The whole line is highlighted by a line above it.

[95] The next word, ולאמי (and to my mother), which starts with a conjunctive vav, elucidates the absence of a word before it. Ṣedaqah is denoted throughout the text by singular demonstrative pronouns, one of which was no doubt omitted here by mistake. Cf. the phrase ותראיני לי וליה אמי (and show me and my mother. Recto 19 with note 95), which probably follows the intended phrasing of this line.

[96] Interestingly, Metatron is adjured to appear in the dreams of both Ṣedaqah and his mother. His mother is denoted again as אמי (my mother) two lines below (recto 19) and in her own right on recto 28—verso 1.

[97] The words וליה אמי are probably a (peculiar) corruption of the correct spelling ולאמי. Even though it is hard to explain such a spelling mistake two lines below a correct occurrence of the word (recto 17), I see no better explanation of the word וליה in this context.

[98] On the demonstrative pronoun preceding the subject (בזה הלילה) in Hebrew syntax under Arabic influence, see M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, *Syntax and Vocabulary of Medieval Hebrew as Influenced by Arabic,* revised by S. Assif and U. Melammed, (Jerusalem, 2006), pp. 155–59 (Heb.). More examples of this kind of syntax can be found below (recto 22–23, verso 7–8 and n. 106).

[99] The Hebrew אלפה is probably a conjunction of אל פה—toward here. The syntax of the whole sentence is very problematic.

[100] The writer does not indicate the precise name in which he adjures. He either dropped part of the text or wrote the definite form—in the Name.

26	in wholesome manner act and do not tarry[101]	ברפואה עשה ואל תאחר
27	and your greatness, which is the Ineffable[102] Name.	וכבודך של שם המפורש
28	May there be good grace in the presence of YHVH	יהי רצון מלפני יהוה
29	for Ṣedaqah son of Sitt al-Ahl[103]	לצדקה בן שת אלאהל

Verso

1	and for Sitt al-Ahl and may He reveal	ולשת אלאהל ויודיע
2	thoughts.[104] Amen Amen	מחשובת אמן אמן
3	Selah. Let us[105] know which one	סלה הודיענו איזה
4	is the place, in which place,[106]	מזה מקם אשר במקם
5	and I shall see and shall not forget it[107]	ואראה ולא אשכח אתה
6	and I shall recognize it seven times.	ואכירה שבע פעומים
7	And my soul will be saved from this death.[108]	ותנצל נפשי מן זה המות

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[101] See Dan. 9:19: ועשה אל תאחר (and act, do not tarry), where the words are addressed to God. Cf. Ps. 40:18, 70:6. This phrase was embedded in early medieval *piyyutim* (A. M. Habermann, *Liturgical Poems of R. Shimon bar Yitzhak* [Berlin/Jerusalem 1938], p. 155 [Heb.]; D. Goldschmidt, *Mahzor la-Yamim ha-Nora'im*, vol. 2—*Yom Kippur* [Jerusalem 1970], p. 753, apparatus [Heb.]), and also in *Mahzor Vitry* (S. Hurwitz, *Machsor Vitry nach der Handschrift im British Museum* [Bulka 1923], section 93, p. 69). It is possible that our scribe was familiar with its use in the local liturgy.

[102] The word המפורש is highlighted by a line above it.

[103] Women named Sitt al-Ahl ("Mistress of the Family") are mentioned in three other amulets from the Genizah, in none of them, however, as the mother of Ṣedaqah. See Naveh and Shaked, *Magic Spells*, pp. 209–11, 238–40; Schäfer and Shaked, *Magische Texte* I, p. 173. For this name in the Genizah documents see Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 6 (coauthored with P. Sanders, Berkeley 1993), p. 108.

[104] For the spelling according to pronunciation of מחשובת (thought), see above, n. 86 and the discussion below. Lines recto 28—verso 2 indicate that the information was disclosed by God and sent to the dreamer through Metatron.

[105] The plural seems to result from the reference to both Ṣedaqah and Sitt al-Ahl in the plea starting in recto 28.

[106] The syntax of the Hebrew איזה מזה מקם אשר במקם is very problematic. The translation makes the phrase much more legible than the original.

[107] I.e. the place of the gold coins shown in the dream.

[108] Either זה or הזה is superfluous. Death may refer here to the danger of death resulting from the very adjuration of Metatron and his revelation in the dream, or to the sleep itself. The words "and my soul will be saved" (ותנצל נפשי), taken from the words of Jacob after his night struggle with the angel: "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: 'for I have seen God face to face, and my soul was saved'" (Gen. 32:31), may tip the scale toward the first option. On the fear of death during night sleep, see bBer. 60b, where it is stated that the words "lighten my eyes lest I sleep the sleep of death" (Ps. 13:4) are to be recited as part of the bedtime recitation of the *Shema* prayer. The words to be recited on waking in the morning, which relate to God's control over the soul (especially: "Blessed are You, God, who restores souls to dead corpses" [ibid.]), indicate the same fear. Both the formulae were incorporated into the daily liturgy and are still part of it today. On sleep as an "inferior variety"

8	I adjure you	הזה השבעתי עוליך
9	the great prince who is appointed over the princes	השר הגודל הממונה על השרים
10	in the name of YHVH God of Israel who is enthroned	בשם יהוה אלהי ישראל יושב
11	among the cherubim that you will show me the dream	הכרובים שתראיני אלחלם
12	seven times and I shall not forget	שבעה פעומים ולא אשכח
13	it. Blessed be His glorious	אתה ברוך שם כבוד
14	sovereign Name for ever and ever[109] Amen	מלכותו לעולם ועד אמן
15	Amen Selah TT TT TTTT	אמן סלה תת תת תתתת
16	TT TT TT X[110] TT WTT	תת תת תת X תת ותת
17	Amen Selah. Blessed be His glorious [sovereign] Name for ever and ever.[111]	אמן סלה ברך שם כבוד [מלכותו] לעולם ועד
	vacat	
18	I adjure you[112] the great prince	השבעתי עליך השר
19	who is appointed	הגודל הממונה
20	over the great princes	על השרים הגדלים
21	in the Ineffable Name[113]	בשם המפורש
22	that you will show me the place of	שתראיני מקם
23	the gold coins and I shall not	אלזהובים ולא
24	forget it completely	אשכח אתה בצדק
25	truly,[114] and reveal it to me,	תמים ותגלה לי

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of death see *Midrash Bereshit Rabba* 17:5 (Theodor-Albeck I, p. 157). Cf. *Midrash Devarim Rabba*, Shoftim 15 (Liebermann, p. 101); *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer* 33 (Higger, *Horev* 10 [1948], pp. 202–3).

[109] This liturgical formula, mentioned already in the Mishnah and the Tosefta, was integrated into magical spells at least as early as the fifth to seventh century CE. It appears on two Aramaic magic bowls from Babylon. See D. Levene, "Heal O' Israel: A Pair of Duplicate Magic Bowls from the Pergamon Museum in Berlin," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 54 (2003): 104–121. It is a common element of Jewish spells, mainly in the form of the initials—בשכמלו.

[110] A magical sign—X.

[111] The words לעולם ועד (for ever and ever) are written in the margin. The ד of ועד is strange and untypical but there is no reason to suspect it for another letter. The word מלכותו (His sovereign) was probably dropped by the author by mistake, while moving to the margin. The entire phrase appears correctly a few lines above (verso 13–14).

[112] The spelling עליך is inconsistent with the usual spelling of the word in the amulet—עוליך (recto 11, 24, verso 8). See further below on the traces of Babylonian vocalization in the text.

[113] The words בשם המפורש are highlighted by lines above them.

[114] The word בצדק should be read as an Arabism, meaning truly.

26	to me. Please help[115] quickly.[116]	לי אנא עזרה[?] במהירה
27	Amen Amen Selah.	אמן אמן סלה

We do not know much about the writer of this adjuration. He could have been Ṣedaqah himself or a professional charm writer whose help Ṣedaqah had sought. His spelling and punctuation (of the first two lines) indicate that his pronunciation was Babylonian.[117] This is manifested foremost from the spelling of words like גודל (*godel*—big), פעומים (*peomim*—times), שושן (*sosen*—joy), עוליך (*olekha*—upon you), מחשובת (*mahshovet*—thoughts), that follow the vocalization of the long *a* (*kamatz*) as *o*. One can also discern in some of these words (גודל, שושן, מחשובת) probable traces of the pronunciation of *o* (*holam*) as *e*—the writer dropped the *holam* of the last syllable (but did not mark the *tzerei*). This, as well as the punctuation of the word על (recto 2) with *segol*, following the vocalization *el*, are also written expressions of Babylonian pronunciation. Two communities existed in Cairo in the eleventh century which maintained this vocalization of Hebrew: the Babylonians and the Karaites. The angelology of the amulet (parallel to another amulet from the Genizah; see below) and the fact that Ṣedaqah belonged to a Rabbanite community (his amulet made its way to the Genizah at Ben Ezra Synagogue) tip the scale toward the option that also the writer of the amulet belonged to that community.[118]

Anyway, he composed a very cryptic text. His handwriting is unclear, his grammar is bad, and his syntax is meager. In one case he seems to mistake a word for a similar one, contextually meaningless.[119] If one

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[115] The first two letters of the word עזרה are dubious and so is the meaning of the word. The first letter seems more like ס than like ע, and the ז is not typical. One might be tempted to read here סורה—come (from the root סור. See Judges 4:18; Ruth 4:1). This kind of Hebrew, however, is very far from the vulgar style in the entire amulet (and the second letter is also not a typical ו). Thus, I tend to accept Uri Melammed's proposal that the author started a word and then changed his mind and corrected the first two letters in order to write עזרה (help).

[116] The word במהירה is highlighted by a line above it.

[117] For the following linguistic remarks I am deeply indebted to Uri Melammed. See also the discussion on "phonetic pronunciation" in the Babylonian magic bowls in M. Morgenstern, "On Some Non-Standard Spellings in the Aramaic Magic Bowls and Their Linguistic Significance", *Journal of Semitic Studies* 52 (2007), pp. 245–77.

[118] The Yemenites also held this pronunciation. Theoretically it is thus possible that the amulet was written by a Yemenite who dwelled in or arrived at Cairo at that time.

[119] See recto 5, where פני appears instead of בני (*pnei—bnei*). See also the word מסגב (recto 15 and note 91).

does not assume all these to be deliberate difficulties and miswritings (which I see no reason to do), then one might suspect the degree of his literacy. In comparison to other scribes known from the Genizah his literary style is quite poor. He does not use biblical verses, let alone *historiolae*,[120] neither does he employ a variety of *nomina barbara* or magical signs in the adjuration. The only hegemonic tradition represented in his text is the liturgical one. Thus, one can also hardly tell whether he had a professional scribal tradition to rely on. However, he was familiar with at least some aspects of Jewish angelology including the supreme status of Metatron.

This archangel, who seems to be summoned to the dream as a messenger of "God's thoughts" rather than as an autonomous source of knowledge,[121] is depicted not only as "the prince of princes…appointed over the great princes…head of the (heavenly) camps," but also as "high priest, head of the priests."[122] All these epithets (except for "prince of princes") are also embedded in three other invocations of Metatron in amulets found in the Cairo Genizah. Two of them (TS Or. 1080.15.81, TS K1.168) are long and relatively beautifully written amulets, prepared by the same scribe[123] more or less at the same time of our amulet (mid-eleventh century).[124] In the former, Metatron is

[120] On this magical genre, see D. Frankfurter, "Narrating Power: The Theory and Practice of the Magical *Historiola* in Ritual Spells," in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, eds. M. Meyer and P. Mirecki (Leiden, 1995), pp. 457–76; G. Bohak, "A Jewish Myth in Pagan Magic in Antiquity," in *Myths in Judaism: History, Thought, Literature*, ed. I. Gruenwald and M. Idel (Jerusalem, 2004), pp. 97–122 (Heb.).

[121] Cf. above, note 49.

[122] As far as I am aware, this and the parallel text in TS K1.168 (below) are the only places where Metatron is referred to as a high priest or head of the priests. These epithets derive from earlier traditions about the heavenly altar and sacrifices headed by Michael "the Great Prince" (bZev 62a, bHag 12b, bMen 110a). In *The Story of the Ten Martyrs*, it is Metatron who is asked by R. Isma'el concerning a certain object in heaven and he explains to him that it is an altar upon which souls of the righteous are sacrificed (G. Reeg [ed.], *Die Geschichte von den Zehn Martyren* [Tübingen, 1985], pp. 40–41, §§ 20.1–5). Metatron does not mention himself as the one who is particularly in charge of heavenly sacrifice, but one might suspect that this status was also part of the features "transmitted" to him from the image of Michael. See R. Boustan, *From Martyr to Mystic: Rabbinic Martyrology and the Making of Merkavah Mysticism* (Tübingen, 2005), pp. 165–73.

[123] This is evident from the handwriting, the organization of text and magical signs (*characteres*) on the long strips of paper, and the typical sign ⊙ at the ends of the phrases. On the publications of these amulets, see above, n. 85).

[124] See Schäfer and Shaked, *Magische Texte* I, p. 160.

invoked to inflame love, and in the latter—to protect and to restore love. In the third amulet (TS 8.275), written some two centuries later,[125] he is invoked to make the client graced and honored. Here is one of the texts side by side with ours:[126]

TS Or. 1080.15.81, lines 104–111	F1908.440, recto, lines 2–10
אשבעית עליך	עלפי יהוה יבא אלי שר השרים
מיטטרון אהוב וחביב מכל בני מרומא עבד נא[מן] לאלהי ישראל כהן גדול ראש לכהנים שיש לך שבעים שמות	אך מיטטרון אך הוא אהוב וחביב מכל פני מרומו עבד נאמן לאלהי ישׂראל כהן גודל ראש הכהנים שיש לך שבעים שימות
ושמך הגדול ביקרתא תאגא מן חץ שת	
שר הגדול הממונה על השרים הגדולים והוא ראש המחנות משביע אני עליך בשם יי' צבאות יושב הכרובים ...	שאתה הממונה על השרים הגדולים ואתה ראש המחנות משביע אני עוליך בשם יהוה צבאות אלוהי ישראל יושב הכרובים ...

Translation

TS Or. 1080.15.81, lines 104–111	F1908.440, recto, lines 2–10
I adjure you	By (the word of) YHVH may the prince of princes come to me
Metatron beloved and dear over all dwellers of height, a faith[ful] servant of God of Israel, high priest, head of the priests. You have[127] seventy names	Oh Metatron Oh, he is beloved and dear over all the dwellers of height, a faithful servant of God of Israel, high priest, head of the priests. You have seventy names,

[125] Ibid., p. 171.

[126] The Metatron paragraph in TS Or. 1080.15.81 is almost identical to the one in TS K1.168 (both written by the same hand). The lacunae in the latter should be restored according to the former. The similarities of the Metatron paragraphs in TS K1.168 and in our amulet have already been depicted in Schiffman and Swartz, *Hebrew and Aramaic Incantation Texts*, p. 143.

[127] Lit. That you have. Surprisingly, this is the same difficult syntax found in our amulet and also in TS K1.168, line 42 (above, n. 85).

	and your name, which is great in honor[128] (is) T'G' MN ḤṢ[129] ŠT
you are appointed over the great princes and you are the head of the (heavenly) camps I adjure you in the name of YHVH Sabaoth, God of Israel who is enthroned among the cherubim…	great prince, who is appointed over the great princes and he is the head of the (heavenly) camps[130] I adjure you in the name of YHVH Sabaoth who is enthroned among the cherubim…

Scholars have argued in the past for the significance of such parallels as evidence of the transmission of written magical literature and mainly of its use by charm writers.[131] Nevertheless, I doubt whether this case can indeed teach us that our writer used a guide book from which he copied parts of the spell. Actually, it seems to me that the differences in the spelling of the two parallels (מרומו—מרומא, גודל—גדול, עוליך—עליך), deriving from the typical vocalization of our writer, demonstrate that he did not copy a written formula but on the contrary, wrote the text out of his memory. While doing that he was thinking in his day-to-day language, which was Arabic, hence the Arabisms like the definite forms אלחלם (the dream), or אלזהובים (the gold coins), or the linguistic structures such as מן זה המות הזה (from this death) that recur in the spell.

All of these investigations and speculations, of course, were of no importance to Ṣedaqah, as the amulet was not written to be read and understood but to be put into action. It is not a descriptive text that we are dealing with but a performative one, a text whose "success" is

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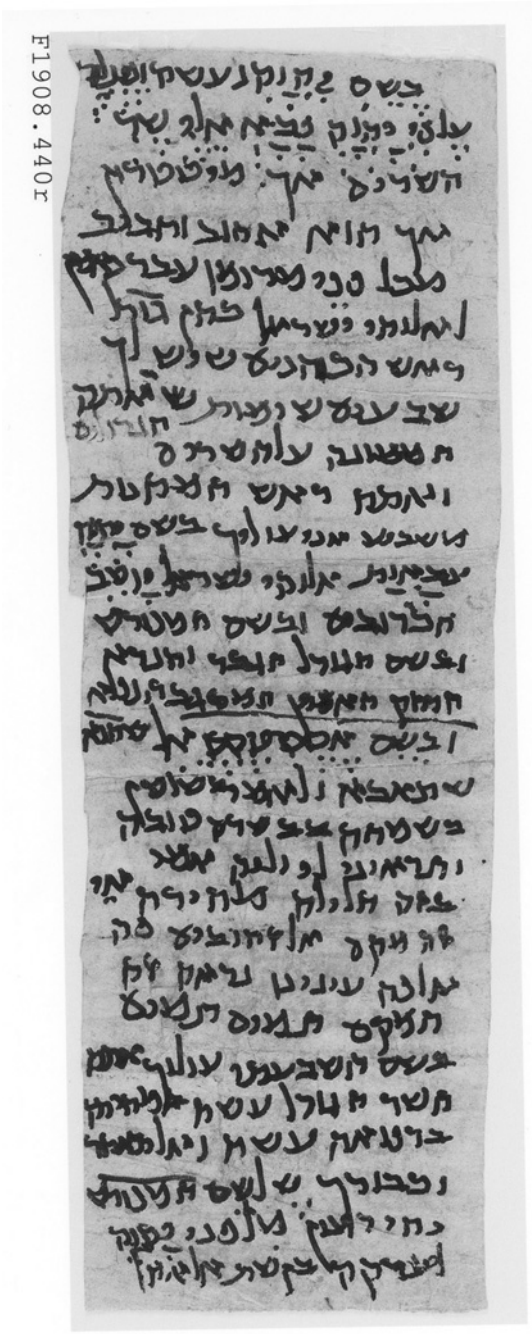
[128] Peter Schäfer and Shaul Shaked read the letters ביקרתא as the first of the *nomina barbara* that constitute Metatron's name. I cautiously propose that it derives from the root יקר—honor, dignity. The normative and recurrent form is the masculine יקרא or יקארא (Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*, p. 541), but see also *Midrash Bereshit Rabba* 17:3 (Theodor-Albeck I, p. 153, apparatus), where the word ליק־רתך derives from the feminine יקרתא. Cf. M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (London, 1903), p. 593.

[129] Schäfer and Shaked, *Magische Texte* I, p. 164, read רוץ, but see the plate on p. 290 and cf. Schiffman and Swartz, *Hebrew and Aramaic Incantation Texts*, p. 147 and the plate on p. 146.

[130] In TS K1.168, line 45 (above, n. 85): "and he is the head of all the (heavenly) camps."

[131] On the significance of parallel amuletic texts for detecting the professional context of the manufacture of amulets, see M. D. Swartz, "Scribal Magic." On earlier examples of parallel texts of incantation (in the magical bowls) and their significance, see Levene, *A Corpus*, pp. 24–30, and Shaked's article in this volume.

measured in terms of efficacy rather than legibility. Thus, the questions that bothered Ṣedaqah concerning the charm writer and his results were probably quite different from those raised here. For him, I believe, what really mattered was the treasure of the gold coins, for which he was striving so hard. The whole issue was reduced to the pragmatic matter of whether Metatron indeed appeared in his dream and disclosed to him the place of the treasure and whether this information remained retrievable and vivid upon awaking. For what is the benefit of all these rites and writing and sleeping and dreaming, if at the end of the night all that one is left with is a harking back to a past shadow of an impression of a possible revelation in one's dream, though nothing real; a dream inquiry with no answer; frustrating knowledge of a treasure of gold still hidden somewhere nearby. Well, maybe tomorrow night.



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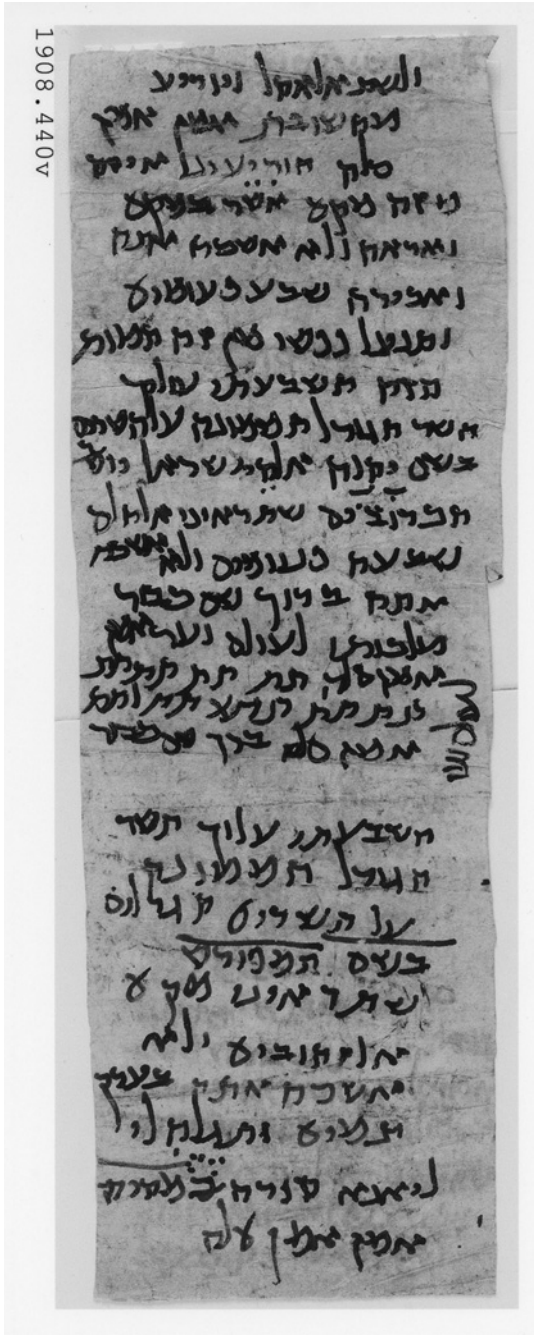

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