

On some readings and interpretations in the Aramaic incantation bowls and related texts*

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Abstract

This study takes a new look at a number of obscure passages in the Aramaic incantation bowls and related texts discussed in Christa Müller-Kessler's article "More on puzzling words and spellings in Aramaic incantation bowls and related texts", published in *BSOAS* 75/1, 2012, 1–31. Among the words discussed are ברזא 'wild boar', מנוביא 'wailing', מסחיפתא 'overthrower (type of demon)', ספסיפא 'burning' and פרהזני 'protectors', all new to the Jewish Babylonian Aramaic lexicon, נכא 'tusk' and תברי "'broken' sounds of the *shofar* (as a maleficent force)", which show new meanings for previously attested lexemes, and the new plural form שולניתא 'maidservants'. Additional evidence for the words or expressions פגיתא 'attack (a type of demon)', אידיורא 'helper' / אידיורתא 'help', חי הי מין (a divine epithet), מרוביא (a type of demon), נירבא (a hard metal)

- * Bowls labelled JNF, Wolfe, Davidovitz, DS, DCG and PC are in various private collections and are being prepared for publication by J.N. Ford. All are presently unpublished unless otherwise noted. We would like to thank the present or former owners for access to the texts and, in particular, Ms Lisa Marie Knothe, Mr L. Alexander Wolfe, Mr Gil Davidovitz and Ms Ester Davidovitz and Mr David Sofer. We would also like to thank Prof. Shaul Shaked for permission to quote from unpublished bowls in the Martin Schøyen collection (labelled MS) and the late Dr Shlomo Moussaieff for access to the bowls in his collection (labelled Moussaieff). The photographs of the unpublished bowls in the aforementioned collections were taken by M. Morgenstern with the exception of Figs 2 and 11 (L.M. Knothe) and 12 and 54 (J.N. Ford), as were the photographs of the bowls in the British Museum (published with the permission of the trustees) and the Frau Hilprecht Collection, Jena (published with the permission of Prof. Manfred Krebernik), and the photographs reproduced here from the Moussaieff Collection. We wish to thank Dr Dan Levene for providing us with the photographs of bowls in the Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin (published with the permission of Prof. Joachim Marzahn), the family of the late Professor Joseph Naveh for the original photographs of the bowls published in Naveh and Shaked 1985, and Prof. Tapani Harviainen for original photographs of the Borsippa bowl. Prof. Shaked also provided us with several additional photographs of bowls in the Moussaieff Collection. CAD = Ignace J. Gelb et al. (eds), *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (Chicago, 1956–2010). The research of Matthew Morgenstern for this article was supported by the Israel Science Foundation grant No. 38/10, while that of James Nathan Ford was supported by the Israel Science Foundation grant No. 1306/12.

and שיפורי *'shofars* (a type of demon)' is also adduced and a preliminary edition of the magic bowl Nippur 12 N 387 is presented.

Keywords: Aramaic magic bowls, Incantation bowls, Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, Mandaic, Syriac

The challenges presented by the Aramaic incantation bowl texts are well known to all those who work on them, and there is no doubt that the readings and interpretations presented in the existing editions may often be improved through collation and in the light of new sources. Many formulae that are difficult to read in one copy, due to the shape of the script or damage, are often more easily deciphered in parallel copies. The amount of material that remains unpublished is significantly greater than what has already been published, and this large body of new material provides a great advantage to the present generation of scholars over its predecessors.

In an article published in this journal (*BSOAS* 75/1, 2012, 1–31), Christa Müller-Kessler (henceforth MK) has offered readings and explanations for 74 'puzzling' words in the Aramaic incantation bowls and related texts.¹ Some of these proposals are new, while others had previously been published and are conveniently gathered and arranged in alphabetical order. Since MK's study generally deals with passages that were not satisfactorily explained by their original editors, it naturally concentrates on some of the more difficult and challenging parts of the magic corpus. Some of the explanations proposed, such as אלימני 'young ones' (no. 7) or אספריס 'sphere' (no. 10), represent a significant advance in the reading and understanding of these texts.² Others appear less convincing to the present authors. In this article, alternative readings and interpretations are presented for a number of the passages discussed in the aforementioned study, often in light of unpublished parallels. Wherever possible, the readings proposed here are supported with photographs and representative examples. The numbering of the entries here follows that of MK. However, since not all the entries in MK's article are discussed, the numbering below is not complete but rather jumps between entries in the original article.

1. אזה. On the basis of a parallel offered for sale at Christie's in 2000, MK has proposed correcting Naveh and Shaked's reading ובטילו אזה 'they annihilated *'zh*' (AMB B13: 9) to read ובטיל ראזה 'and annul the mystery'. MK writes (p. 3): "The space between ראזה and ובטיל is quite large, therefore the badly executed *resh* is not part of ובטיל". However, Naveh and Shaked's material reading is closer to the correct interpretation. From the unpublished parallels it is clear that the formula is ובטיל ואזה 'and annul and remove'.³ This is also the correct reading in the Christie's bowl.⁴ (See [Figures 1–5](#).)

1 Müller-Kessler 2012.

2 However, in no. 10, *tyštg'š kwlh' 'wspyr' d-šwmy'* (Munic lead roll Ia: 33–4; unpubl.) should be translated 'the entire sphere of the heavens shall be shaken', rather than MK's 'you shall stir up each sphere of heaven'. The feminine gender of *'wspyr'* is proven by the 3 f.s. suffix pronoun *-h'* in *kwlh'*. The same gender is evident in *w'syr' 'wspyr'* 'and the sphere was bound' (BM 134699), cited by MK.

3 The transliteration ואזה is also possible. See Sokoloff 2002: 739, s.v. 2# אזה, בזה.

4 We have read the Christie's bowl from the photograph published in the catalogue.

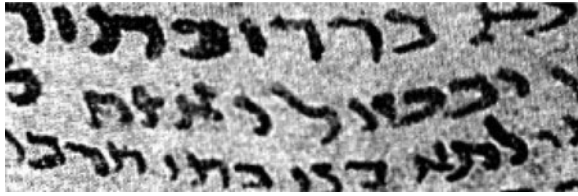


Figure 1. ובטיל ואזה (Christie's bowl)

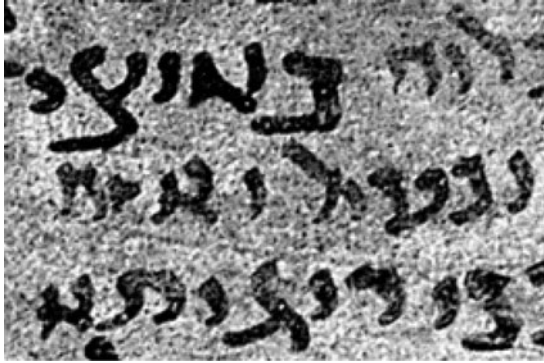


Figure 2. ובטיל ואזה (JNF 29: 5)

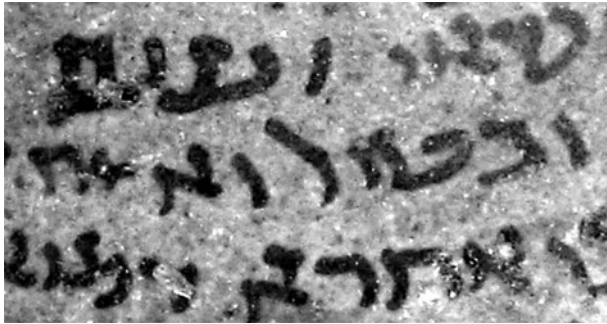


Figure 3. ובטיל ואזה (JNF 30: 7)

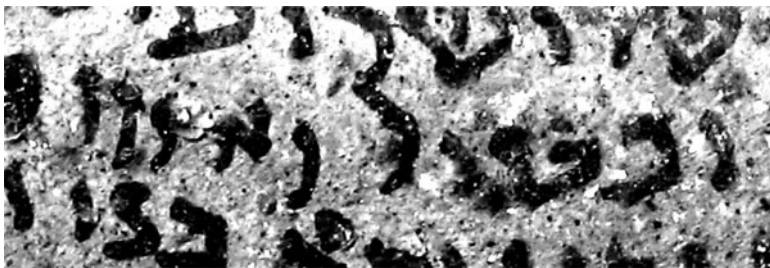


Figure 4. ובטיל ואזה (JNF 43: 7)



Figure 5. ובטיל ואזה (AMB B13: 9)

MK further notes: “The plene spelling of ראזה is obviously induced by a Mandaic ‘Vorlage’, since only this Aramaic dialect tends here to spellings with *aleph*”. This assumption is not convincing. First, the spelling ראזא is amply attested in Syriac, both in the magic bowls⁵ and in Christian Syriac literature.⁶ Furthermore, we find the form ראזי, for example, in a typically Jewish context in HS 3047 (= TMHC 7, B17; reading from unpublished photographs):⁷

- 1 אסותא דישלמא על ביתה דאדורביט [...] שִׁיר תְּשַׁבַּחֹת לַמֶּלֶךְ יֵה
 2 יֵה יֵה יֵהוּ מֶלֶךְ יֵהוּה בְּצוֹר עוֹלָם אֵהִיא אֵשֶׁר אֵהִיא [מֶלֶךְ דִּי מַמְלַל] בְּרֵאזִי פְּרִי {x} שְׂתֵּא⁸ כִּי אֵל
 חֲזֹק
 3 וּגִיבּוֹר⁹ שְׁלַח בִּיד [שְׁלַמִּי] אֵל רִפְאֵל¹⁰ קְנַאֵל¹¹ לַמִּי (י) כֵּאֵל מִי... [12... לַמִּסֵּר (?) כֵּל עֵין בִּי] שְׁהֵ כֵּל
 מֵאֵמֵר כּוֹל לוֹטֵה א...
 4 שְׁלַמִּי [...] לַמֵּא

- 1 (May there be) complete healing upon the house of Ādur-beṭ son of [PN].
 A song of praise to the King, Yah
 2 Yah Yah Yahu, the King, YHWH, by the Rock of Ages, “I am who I am”,
 [a King who speaks] with wondrous mysteries, for a strong

- 5 See, for example, the typical Syriac incantation bowls MSF B16: 7 (= TMHC 7, B33a) and IBC 2: 1 (Abousamra 2010).
 6 See the examples cited by Sokoloff 2009: 1424a.
 7 Compare the same formula in the Jewish Palestinian Aramaic amulet AMB A3. The reference to שִׁיר תְּשַׁבַּחֹת ‘a song of praise’ in the context of exorcism reflects a Jewish magical tradition that can be traced back to Qumran. See Nitzan 1986 and, most recently, Bohak 2012, and the bibliography cited there in n. 11.
 8 The extraneous letter is probably a *samekh*.
 9 The reading חֲזֹק וּגִיבּוֹר כִּי אֵל חֲזֹק וּגִיבּוֹר was suggested to us by Shaul Shaked.
 10 Müller-Kessler 2005a: 72 reads רִפְאֵל, taking the second letter as a ligature for פִּי. Compare the form of the *pe* in פְּרִי {x} שְׂתֵּא (line 2).
 11 Reading with the parallels. The stroke of the *mun* is very narrow and the bottom virtually illegible, probably due to lack of ink on the stylus. The following letter is written with thick, dark strokes, suggesting that the scribe refilled his stylus at this point. MK 2005a: 72 reads קֵאֵל, which she deletes.
 12 MK 2005a: 72 reads {מִי} מִיִּבְּ [אֵל]. The initial *lamedh* in לַמִּי (י) כֵּאֵל is probably an error (with MK). The scribe probably began to write לַמִּסֵּר, or the like, and then realized that he had omitted מִיכֵאֵל from his list of angels (in the parallels Michael is regularly listed between Šalmiel and Raphael). The following word, beginning with מִי, is probably a rewriting. We would hesitantly read [ל] (מִיכֵאֵל), but the *kaf* is uncertain and looks more like *mem*, as read by MK (in either case, there are one or more extraneous strokes). We see traces of only one additional letter before the break, which we tentatively take as the first two strokes of an *aleph*.

- 3 and mighty God has sent by means of [Šalmi]el, Raphael, Qanael, {to} Michael, ..[. in order to bind (?) every e]vil [eye], every utterance (and) every curse. ...
- 4 ...

Note also the plene spellings with 'aleph in תשבאחות and מאלך in the same context.¹³

The use of 'aleph as a vowel marker for ā has a long history in the Jewish Aramaic dialects, including linguistically reliable early Eastern Talmudic manuscripts, and cannot be adduced as evidence of a Mandaic *Vorlage*.¹⁴

3. איכא. The attestation of this word in MSF B23 is based on an incorrect reading.¹⁵ See below, no. 23.

MK presents a new interpretation of BM 91767: 11 (= CAMIB 040A): כ/בינא בחילן דילן דאכא, which she interprets as 'where exists understanding/nature in our own power'. However, the proposed translation of this difficult passage is not suited to the wider context. A different translation is presented on p. 22 (entry no. 58, עד אמא ד-, where the passage is cited in greater detail, עדאמי דנמטי זבן ואידן דאכא בינא, translated 'until comes time and season so that there is understanding',¹⁶ but it is hard to justify בינא as an absolute noun in JBA with this meaning. We may hesitantly propose that the correct reading is עדאמי דנמטי זבן ואידן דאנא בינא 'until the time and season that I desire shall come', in accordance with Segal's basic material reading (Segal deletes בינא and puts דאנא in the following sentence). The letter in question looks more like kaf (as read by MK, and by Morgenstern 2007a), but the reading דאנא is supported by the following contexts:

- 1. JNF 322: 5–6:

והוא ישתמע ל... אגושנספ בר אימי בכל עידן דאנאיבעיה לעלם
 And he shall heed ... a-gušnasp son of Immay whenever I desire it forever¹⁷

- 13 Similar spellings also occur in the parallel bowls Istanbul 5361: 1–2 (= Isbell 1975, B67; reading from the photograph in Jeruzalmi 1963): שיר תושבאחות למלך יה יה יה מלך יהוה: בצור עולםם אהיא אשר מלך די ממלל בראזי פרישתא אסותא: דישלמא לממי בת אימי שיר תושבאחות למאלך יה יה יה מלך יהוה בצור עולםם אהיא אשר אהיא מלך די ממלל בראזי פרישתא. The spelling מאלך in HS 3047: 1 and JNF 112: 1–2 would appear to represent a pausal form מללך (Babylonian מללך), as opposed to the pausal form מללך (Babylonian מללך) in the Massoretic text. For an explanation of the absence of the expected pausal form *מללך in the MT, see Fassberg 2002.
- 14 See e.g. Muraoka 2011: 28–9; Morag 1972–73: 61–3.
- 15 For this reading, see also Müller-Kessler 2003: 642. The derivation of Iraqi Arabic 'aku from Babylonian Aramaic was first posited in Lidzbarski 1915: 130, n. 7.
- 16 The basic reading and interpretation of עדאמי 'until' was first proposed by Segal 2000: 81–2, 216. Segal notes the same plene spelling with 'aleph in BM 91765: 7, 9 as well as BM 91719: 10. Müller-Kessler 2001–02: 128b read עד אמיר נמטי זבן ואידן דאנא. See also MS 1928/22: 9: עדאמי למישרא שמיא וארעה: 'until the dissolution of heaven and earth' (Shaked, Ford and Bhayro, forthcoming). The consistent plene spelling of this word in the incantation bowls suggests that the related term עדאמא 'until' in Moussaieff 163: 24 should be analysed as a plene spelling of עדמא, rather than a misspelling of it (see Morgenstern 2007a: 18 and contrast MK, no. 58).
- 17 דאנא איבעיה is a phonetic spelling (sandhi) of דאנא איבעיה. Here we have an imperfect form of בע"י (+ direct object pronoun) instead of an active participle.

2. JNF 90: 11–12 (Ford, [Forthcoming](#)):

תלתין יומי ירחא תרי עשר ירחא שתא שבתא כסא ורישרחא כמא דאנא תליפא בר אימי
צבינא מן שעתא ה[דא ולעלם]

thirty days of the month, twelve months of the year, and on the sabbath, full moon and first day of the month, just as I, Talifa son of Immay, wish, from [this] moment [and forever]

The following example lacks the independent pronoun אַנא, but further demonstrates the use of a 1st person singular active participle in a subordinate clause corresponding to בִּינָא ... 7 in a similar context.

3. MS Berlin Or. Sim. 6, 4a: 7–9 (Bohak and Morgenstern [2014](#): 29*):

תריסר ירחי שתא לא בכצומי ולא בכלדאיי אסיא לא נשתכח ליה א... דשרינא ליה ומית
twelve months of the year, neither amongst magicians nor amongst
Chaldeans may a healer be found for him, [until] I release him and he dies.

4. MK has interpreted כשורי אילן in Moussaieff 145: 11 as ‘beams of wood’. However, אילן means ‘tree’, not ‘wood’.¹⁸ Furthermore, Levene’s interpretation of אילן as a demonstrative pronoun is supported by the published parallel from MS 2053/159: 12, which reads כשוריה אילין (see [Figure 6](#)).¹⁹

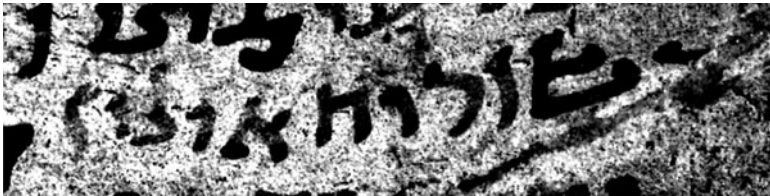


Figure 6. כשוריה אילין (MS 2053/159: 12)

11. אצמומי. The relationship between this form and the Mandaic forms presented by Drower and Macuch ([1963](#): 345) has already been posited by Sokoloff ([2002](#): 160a). While it is generally agreed that these words historically derive from Greek $\sigma\tau\omicron\sigma\mu\mu\omicron\varsigma$, the question remains whether the same Greek etymon has produced synchronically semantically different words in Aramaic. MK states that אסטמא (Sokoloff [2002](#): 147) and סטומא (Sokoloff [2002](#): 798) should be subsumed under a single lexical entry along with איסטמומי פרוזא ‘spears of iron’, and writes: “A similar explanation was given by the Geonim, respectively”. In fact, the Geonim did not regard the form סטומא in *b. Ber.* 62b as referring to a weapon, but rather to spikes of iron that are attached to a hoe to make it sharp. The -ל in the Talmudic text is not necessarily a genitive particle, as suggested by MK, but rather a dative one: ‘is like a steel spike to an iron’, i.e. something that is added to strengthen it.

18 Sokoloff [2002](#): 116.

19 Levene read here אינון. For the reading אילין see Ford [2006](#): 212. The form כשוריה, moreover, is most likely an archaic spelling of the old plural definite state and would therefore not be appropriate as the nomen regens of a construct chain, as envisaged by MK for כשורי אילן in M145. Cf. כוכביא ... מזאליה in line 8, as opposed to מזלי ... כוכבי in M145: 8. The context as a whole, however, is still obscure.

14. MK defends Naveh and Shaked’s interpretation (1985: 200–01) of בִּירֵי ‘canals’ in AMB B13: 6 against the doubts expressed in Sokoloff (2002: 199), but all of the parallel texts read here בִּירֵי ‘wells’, including the Christie’s bowl, and this is also the correct reading in AMB B13. What appears to be the lower stroke of a second ב in the published photograph of AMB B13: 6 is in fact part of a crack in the bowl (see Figures 7 and 8).²⁰



Figure 7. ימא דלא בירי (JNF 30: 4)



Figure 8. דלא בירי (AMB B13: 6)

For the relationship between the sea and wells, which presumably supply it with water, compare Gs 16: 23–24 (reading with MSS Paris A and B): *wkwlhyn byry’ wy’ m’ my’ y’ bšy’* ‘and all the wells and seas will dry up’.

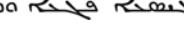
19. נִיזֵי נֹרֵי. MK is correct in reading the *resh* of Naveh and Shaked’s נִיזֵי נֹרֵי (AMB B13: 15) as a *kaph* and translating ‘let us go and devour’. However, in accordance with Aramaic grammar, the reading must be נִיכֵי with *yod* in the second place, rather than MK’s נִיכֵי. This reading is supported by the parallels.

23. Naveh and Shaked marked part of their reading of MSF B23: 4 as uncertain: וְנִדְרָא וְקִירִיתָא וְלוּטְתָא וְשִׁקּוּפִי(תָא) (דְאִיכָא ב) גִּיתָא וּמְלִלְתָא ‘vow, calamity, curse, affliction that is (?) in the world, (magical) words’. They suggested that the *hapax legomenon* גִּיתָא may be a loanword from Middle Persian *gētīg* ‘the material world, the world’.²¹ The existence of this lexeme was subsequently accepted by Sokoloff 2002: 284, s.v. 1# גִּיתָא ‘inhabited world’. MK has proposed reading the doubtful words with greater certainty and with a minor emendation as וְשִׁקּוּפִיתָא <י>א דְאִיכָא בְּגוּתָא ‘and plague that exists in the inside (of PN bar

20 In the original photographs of AMB B13 the reading בִּירֵי is clear and there are no traces of a lower horizontal stroke along the crack.

21 Naveh and Shaked 1993: 132–3.

PN).²² She interprets the *hapax legomenon* גותא as a native Aramaic term meaning ‘inside’.²³ However, in spite of the existence of etymologically related terms in JBA and cognate dialects,²⁴ both גיתא ‘world’ and גותא ‘inside’ presently appear to be “ghost words” in JBA, as the correct reading of the text is ונידרא ווללתא ומללתא גיסא פגיתא ושיקופתא וקיריתא ולוטתא וקיריתא ושיקופתא גיסא פגיתא ומללתא ומללתא ‘and vow, and imprecation, and curse, and smittings, band (of demons), attack (by a demon or sorcerer), and (magical) word’. This reading, which may be discerned from the published photograph, is confirmed by similar sequences in two unpublished parallel bowls, one written in JBA and the other in Syriac:

1. Wolfe 55: 3: ...] ושיקופתא גיסא פגעא ומללתא קיריא קרותא [...];
2. MS 2055/11: 3–4:  ²⁵

The demon פגיתא (and its by-form פגעיתא) is well attested in Babylonian Aramaic magic texts,²⁶ and it appears in collocation with מללתא in several bowls, e.g. מן מבכלתא ומן ליליתא ומן פגיתא ומן מללתא ומן קרותא (JNF 255: 13); ורוח פתכרי ורוחא פורחתא פגיתא ומללתא ונוסיא ונאלה ובני איגרי ובני חיצבי מן גידרא דכלתא ודחתמה ומן לוטתא דימא ודיברתה ומן פגיתא ומן מללתא (MS 1927/7: 2); מן גידרא דכלתא ודחתמה ומן לוטתא דימא ודיברתה ומן פגיתא ומן מללתא (MS 2053/189: 22–3, see [Figure 9](#)).



Figure 9. ומן פגיתא ומן מללתא (MS 2053/189: 23)

For דאיכא of the previous studies we read גיסא. The latter term is also well attested in lists of demons in Babylonian Aramaic magic texts. In addition to the above-cited parallels, compare the collocation of גיסי with ושיקופתא ואשלמתא ומללתא ושידי ודיוי ושובטי וליליתא {ו.} ²⁷ ופתכרי ומבכלתא וכל מידיעם ביש ‘they shall annul and ban all bands (of demons), and counter-charms, and

22 On p. 4 (no. 3) a slightly different reading is proposed: דאיכא בנותא <‘and affliction that exist inside’.

23 For this interpretation, see also Müller-Kessler 2011: 227. In that study MK reads ושיקופתא, without emendation.

24 For גיתא ‘world’, cf. Syriac *גיתא* ‘world of living creatures’ (Sokoloff 2009: 267) and JBA גיתאני ‘villagers’ (Sokoloff 2002: 284), both deriving from the same Middle Persian word. For גותא ‘inside’, cf. for example, JBA גווא ‘inner part’ (Sokoloff 2002: 266–7) and גוואתא ‘inner part’ (ibid., 267, s.v. גוואתא).

25 For a discussion of the plural form *גלגל* see Ford, [Forthcoming](#).

26 See Sokoloff 2002: 887.

27 The writing is a false start for some term and does not appear in Montgomery’s transcription, but solely in the hand-copy. Read possibly {וב}.

necklace-charms, and curses, and imprecations, and smiting, and spells, and (magic) words, and demons, and *dēvs*, and plagues, and liliths, and idol-spirits, and *mevakkaltas*, and everything evil'.²⁸ A similar collocation of *gys'* with *šyqwpt'* and *q'ry'* appears in a list of malevolent forces in a late Mandaic formula: *mn 'š' t' gys' q'ry' wšyqwpt' wšyqwpt'* (DC 46. 180: 12–3).²⁹

25. MK rejects Naveh and Shaked's reading כניה ככי דיבתה 'his molar teeth are the molar teeth of a she-wolf' (AMB B13: 4) in favour of כניה ככי {ב} דיבוזה 'of a goat' in l. 3 of the Christie's bowl. She derives כניה from Middle Persian *buz* 'goat'. Although MK's proposed emendation seems necessary and is supported by the unpublished parallels, the actual reading of the Christie's bowl would appear to be דברזא 'of a wild boar' (see Figure 10). The interpretation of דברזא was suggested to us by Shaul Shaked, who immediately identified the term with Middle Persian *warāz* 'boar' based on our new reading. The same word can be identified in the PN בראזוך (VA 2180: 8 and 10; unpublished), which is equivalent to Warazduxt.³⁰ In the PNN *warāz* / בראז 'wild boar' undoubtedly refers to the Zoroastrian god Bahrām. The same reading occurs in several unpublished parallels written by the same hand as AMB B13 and the Christie's bowl, for example, JNF 29: 2 (see Figure 11).

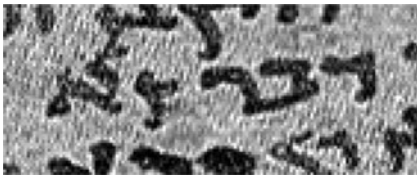


Figure 10. דברזא (Christie's bowl)

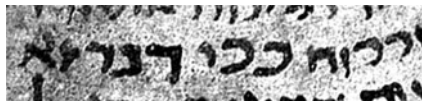


Figure 11. כניה ככי דיבוזה (JNF 29: 2)

In AMB B13: 4 one may thus read כניה ככי {ב} דיברזא 'his tusks are the tusks of a wild boar'.³¹ The term is equivalent to Classical Syriac ܩܘܘܙ, which is defined by Bar Bahlul (following Bar Serošway) as ܩܘܘܙ ܩܘܘܙܐ 'wild boar'.³² The spelling with *beth* also occurs in Syriac in the title of the Sassanian general Shahrbarāz/Shahrwarāz (شهروراز = ܩܘܘܙܐܐܘܪܐܘܙܐ).³³ The variant spellings reflect the shift *w > b* already in Middle Persian.³⁴

28 Cf. Sokoloff 2002: 282, s.v. גיסא #3 'type of demon'. Müller-Kessler 2011: 227 classifies גיסא in this context under גיסא #2 'side'.

29 Erroneously ascribed to DC 26 in Drower and Macuch 1963: 91, s.v. gisa 1. For *wšyqwpt' wšyqwpt'*, a parallel copy in Codex Sabéen 27. 42a: 11–2 reads *qwpt' wšyqwpt'*. Compare also the expression *wlgysy' d-lyly' w'l qyry' d'-wm'm'* (DC 40: 461–2) cited by Drower and Macuch.

30 See Justi 1895: 350; Gignoux 1986: 173–4.

31 The extraneous letter appears most likely to be a poorly formed ב (with MK).

32 See Payne Smith 1879–1901: 1069; Bar Bahlul (ed. Duval 1901), col. 668. For the Syriac term, see further Ciancaglini 2008: 168 and Audo 1897: 248.

33 See Payne Smith 1879–1901: 1069.

34 For this shift in Modern Persian, see Horn 1895–1901: 76. For similar evidence for this shift in Persian loanwords in Mandaic, see Nöldeke 1875: xxxii, n. 1. Dr Hezy Mutzafi

little portion of the left stroke is missing at the bottom of the sign'.³⁹ The reading is corroborated by an unpublished parallel magic bowl (PC 1:6) which reads at this point ܠܗܘܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ ܠܗܘܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܗܘܢ [‘may they (the angels) be] helpers, and protectors, and sheltering shields’ (see [Figure 12](#)).⁴⁰

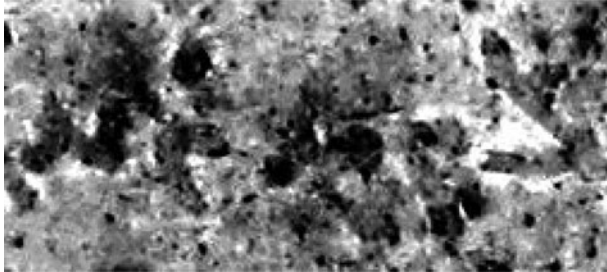


Figure 12. ܠܗܘܢ (PC 1)⁴¹

Syriac ܠܗܘܢ ‘helper’ appears to be cognate with Mandaic ‘dy’wr’ ‘helper’, a loanword from Parthian *adyāvar*.⁴² The Mandaic term, in fact, appears in the corresponding context in an unpublished parallel Mandaic magic bowl (MS 2054/100: 41–2): *hlyn ml'kyf' n'hwylh 'dy'wr' ... wm.. wmg'ny' ...* ‘these angels shall be for him a helper ... and shields ...’. The writing of the Syriac term with a non-etymological ‘ayin reflects the weakening of the pharyngeal ‘>’.⁴³ The same word occurs in the JBA incantation bowl MS 2053/159: 14,

39 See henceforth Moriggi 2014: 154–60. The same reading is evident in high-resolution close-up photographs of the bowl recently taken by J.N. Ford.

40 The translation of ܡܠܟܝܢ in this context follows de la Fuy  1924: 394 and Moriggi 2004: 291. MK interprets ܡܠܟܝܢ as ‘keepers’. As opposed to previous scholars (with respect to ܡܠܟܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ in Louvre AO 17.284: 8), we understand ܡܠܟܝܢ as an attribute of ܡܠܟܝܢ (cf. Payne Smith 1879–1901: 1782, s.v. ܡܠܟܝܢ). For the feminine gender of Syriac ܡܠܟܝܢ ‘shield’, see N ldeke 1898: §84. The same gender is now attested for JBA ܡܠܟܝܢ ‘shield’ in Moussaieff 4: 5 (and parallels): ܡܠܟܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ ‘and he has erected before him a shield of pure steel’ (see below). For the analysis of ܡܠܟܝܢ as the *qtil l h* construction, which implies that the gender of ܡܠܟܝܢ is feminine, see M ller-Kessler 2011: 251.

41 The word is poorly preserved. The *daleth* is faint, but legible; the *waw* is only partially legible.

42 For ‘dy’wr’, see Drower and Macuch 1963: 7, with additional bibliography. We would like to thank Shaul Shaked for his helpful discussion of these words. ܠܗܘܢ / ‘dy’wr’ ‘helper’ is thus etymologically distinct from the native Syriac term ܠܗܘܢ ‘helper’ from the root ܠܗܘܢ ‘to help’ (Sokoloff 2009: 1070). The semantic and phonetic similarity between ܠܗܘܢ and ܠܗܘܢ, however, probably led to their merging. A case in point is the spelling ܠܗܘܢ in MS 2055/1: 10: ܠܗܘܢ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܗܘܢ ‘You, O angels who were created in heaven ... be for him helpers and makers of abundance and providers and sustainers and uplifters’. The *plene* spelling of the initial syllable recalls Mandaic ‘dy’wrwt’ (var. ‘dy’rwt’) ‘help’ and JBA ܠܗܘܢ ‘idem’ and ܠܗܘܢ ‘helper’ (see below notes 44 and 50), whereas the lack of consonantal *yodh* after the *dalath* accords with ܠܗܘܢ.

43 Compare ܠܗܘܢ (line 5) and ܠܗܘܢ (line 9) for historical ܠܗܘܢ ‘roofs’ (the Borsippa bowl reads ܠܗܘܢ and ܠܗܘܢ, respectively); ܠܗܘܢ (line 7) for historical ܠܗܘܢ ‘four’; ܠܗܘܢ (line 10) for historical ܠܗܘܢ ‘by a bond’ (the Borsippa bowl reads ܠܗܘܢ);

In light of the correspondence with ܕܝܘܪܐ / 'dy'wr' 'helper(s)' in some of the Syriac and Mandaic parallels and the use of JBA אידיוּרܐ 'helper' and אידיוּרܘܬܐ 'help' with reference to angels in other incantation bowls in similar contexts, we would read אידר in the Borsippa bowl and would suggest that the word may be a corruption of אידיוּרܐ 'helpers'. A derivation from Syriac ܕܝܘܪܐ 'aid, help; pl. auxiliary troops' is also conceivable. Hopefully additional parallels will come to light and provide a definitive solution for this word. The variant readings 'yry' / 'ydy' in Mandaic and ܕܝܘܪܐ in Syriac appear in three discrete textual witnesses and represent a distinct textual tradition. The writer of Macuch Ia could conceivably have understood 'yry' as 'watchers', as proposed by MK (we would translate *n'try* 'yry' as 'alert guards'). The precise relationship between the two textual traditions, however, remains to be determined.

34. MK's material reading זיגודיתא is correct, but the possibility of emending the text to <מ>זיגודיתא should not be considered,⁵¹ since the word is equivalent to Mandaic *sygwdt'*, pl. *sygwdy't'*,⁵² and is otherwise attested in the form זיגודתא in VA 2430: 7–8 (unpublished): ושלניתא והטיתא זיגודתא ודיי בישׁי ורוחי בישׁתא. The Mandaic plural form *sygwdy't'* suggests that זיגודיתא is likewise the plural form of זיגודתא.

36. זלעיקא. See the comments on no. 57.

37. חי חימך. The basic reading in Moussaieff 101: 11 is טיטיוּס חיחמך, as read by Levene⁵³ (see Figure 13). If we understand Müller-Kessler correctly, she recognizes that חיחמך is indeed the material reading in Moussaieff 101, but believes that the formula “can be understood through its text parallels which constantly [*sic*] show רגש ופגרי רעש ופגרי רעש בשים טיטוניס חיי חמך פגרי רעש ופגרי רגש ‘In the name of Ṭiṭinus my life turned sour, my body reacted, and my body trembled’”.⁵⁴ She cites TMHC 7, Bowls 5–7; Istanbul 1167 (= Gordon 1934, Bowl B); and BM 117824 (= CAMIB 027A) as published examples of this reading. It should



Figure 13. חיחמך (Moussaieff 101: 11)

51 This emendation was proposed without reservations in Müller-Kessler 2005a: 230, and 2006: 269.

52 Drower and Macuch 1963: 324.

53 Levene 2003a: 40 (correctly) divides the final sequence of letters into three words: חי חימך (see below).

54 For this interpretation, see also Müller-Kessler 2005a: 24–6.

first be noted that the basic reading in both Istanbul 1167: 8 and BM 117824: 18 is, in fact, identical to that of Moussaieff 101 (see [Figures 14 and 15](#)).

טוטינוס חיחמין

Figure 14. טוטינוס חיחמין (Istanbul 1167: 8)⁵⁵



Figure 15. חיחמין (BM 117824: 18)⁵⁶

The same basic reading is shared by additional textual witnesses, likewise in collocation with טוטינוס or equivalent names, as in JNF 123: 8 (see [Figure 16](#)). JNF 210: 12 reads טיטיונים but nonetheless like the Moussaieff bowl reads חי חי מין (see [Figure 17](#)).

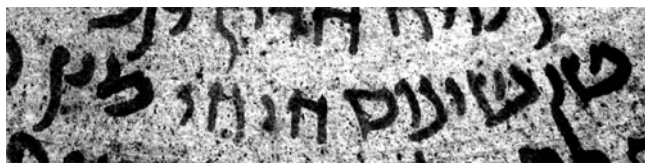


Figure 16. טוטינוס חי חי חמין (JNF 123: 8)



Figure 17. טיטיונים חי חי מין (JNF 210: 12)

55 (Gordon 1934: pl. XI); Gordon 1934, p. 324 reads חתימין. MK's citation of this bowl here appears to be an oversight, since according to her own reading in Müller-Kessler 2005a: 25–6 (חי חמין), to which she refers the reader, the material reading of Istanbul 1167 is the same as that of Moussaieff 101.

56 Müller-Kessler 2001–02: 123 reads חיחמין (epigraphically equivalent to חיחמין), whereas Segal 2000: 68 reads חיחי.

The precise reading of *הי הי מן* has been debated. Levene read *הי הי מן*, while one of the present writers proposed reading *הוהי מן* and regarding *מן* as *Atbash* (a well-known alphabetic code) for *יה*.⁵⁷ The interpretation of *מן* as *Atbash* was first proposed by Montgomery in relation to a different formula, CBS 16917 (AIT 14): 2: בשום אגרבוס קדישא בשום מן מן ביום סף סף יהוק יהוק דחיק ית: 'in the name of the Holy 'grbws, in the name of *mš mš*, in the name of *sp sp yhwq yhwq* who pushed his chariot upon the Sea of Reeds'.⁵⁸

Similarly, in MS 2053/278: 9–10 we read: ובשום מן מן מן מן מן (see Figure 18). Since in these cases the letter sequence *מן* is repeated, it cannot be a part of another word, and must be regarded as a holy epithet.

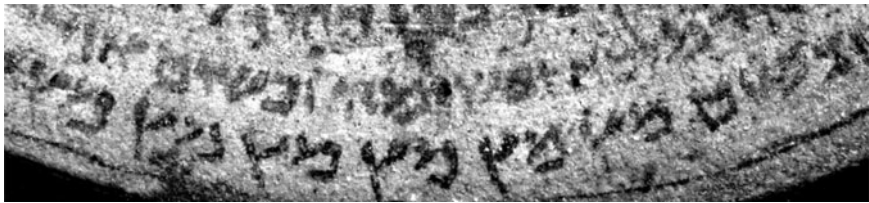


Figure 18. ובשום מן מן מן מן מן (MS 2053/278: 9–10)

מן is also found as a divine name in several magic formulae preserved in the Cairo Geniza, e.g. בשמיה דמן מן רבה גיברא ודחילא דאיתגלי למשה בסנה. 'in the name of *mš mš*, the great mighty and awesome,⁵⁹ who appeared to Moses in the bush' (T-S K 1.162 1a, 6–7).⁶⁰ As discussed by Herrmann, the name also appears in the Hekhalot literature,⁶¹ including several texts that bear a close resemblance to the formula at hand, e.g. והויאל השר והויאל הקדוש וטיטינוס הי הי מן ואטינו (T-S K 21.95.A 2b: 26).⁶² One may also note that the name *מן* occurs in collocation with a phrase resembling פגרי רעש פגרי רגש in T-S K 21.95.P, 1b: 11–14.⁶³

57 Morgenstern 2005: 352.

58 Montgomery 1913: 183 (collated reading): the name *mš mš* is discussed on p. 184. The fact that Montgomery was the first to propose this interpretation was regrettably missed in Morgenstern 2005. See also Herrmann 1988 (see below) and Schäfer and Shaked 1999: 79 (discussion of T-S K 1.162, quoted below).

59 This sequence of divine epithets is based upon Deut. 10: 17: האל הגדל הגבר והנורא. Here *mš mš* is a substitution for האל.

60 Schäfer and Shaked 1999: 67. Cf. Herrmann 1988: 81.

61 Herrmann 1988: 78–86. See the exhaustive list of attestations in Schäfer 1986: 430 s.v. מן. Herrmann likewise explains מן as *Atbash* for יה (see pp. 78–9, 81). The name also occurs as a component of longer magical or angelic names discussed by Herrmann. Note especially מצפן (*Atbash* for יהוה). Cf. JNF 205: 14–5: מן באה מן ביה אה באה מן בישמיה דיה ביה אה באה מן 'In the name of *yh byh 'h b'h mš ps*, whose Divine Presence dwells upon chariots of glory'.

62 Schäfer 1984: 178–9. Cf. Herrmann 1988: 81. Herrmann does not refer to the material in the incantation bowls.

63 Schäfer 1984: 142.

אלה יה ביה אשה שה בשה אשר ראוה הוה יד יה ביה שר בשר אורו דבור או אמץ מץ במץ
 אבץ ביץ אבק בק בבק רעש אפק פק בפק אפץ פץ בפץ קלקש בקש קל פיגרי רגש קול
 ^רעש^

Accordingly, the interpretation *הי חימץ* ‘my life soured’ is unlikely. Furthermore, the above-quoted Genizah parallel from T-S K 21.95 clearly reads *הי חי מץ* (see the published photograph and Schäfer’s transliteration), and this is to be regarded as the correct reading in the present formula, in accordance with Levene. TMHC 7, Bowls 5–7, all written by the same hand, would appear to preserve a variant reading that would best be transliterated *הי יה מץ* (see Figure 19). There, too, *מץ* is undoubtedly a divine name (*Atbash* for the preceding *יה* – see above) and, accordingly, the interpretation ‘my life soured’ must be rejected.



Figure 19. *הי יה מץ* (TMHC 7, B6: 4)

42. For BM 117880: 10 (= CAMIB 081M), MK proposes that the verbal form *l'pwly' bny' n's'* ‘to prostrate humankind’⁶⁴ is “a scribal error for *l'p(d)wly'*” and states: “This emendation is possible on account of similar usage in *wb'y' lpdwly' t't mn gbr'* ‘and she tries to separate wife from man’ instead of emended *lprw{l}{t}y'* (YBC 2364: 23–4)”.⁶⁵ The question here is not whether the emendation is possible, but whether it is necessary. In fact, the verb as it stands is both lexically and grammatically suited to its context. Moreover, as MK herself notes, the textual witnesses to this formula differ greatly at this point. While the BM version reads *l'pwly'*, a parallel she herself published reads *l'npwqy'* ‘to make leave’. An unpublished parallel in the Moussaieff Collection reads *l'n'qwpy'* ‘to strike’ (see Figure 20).

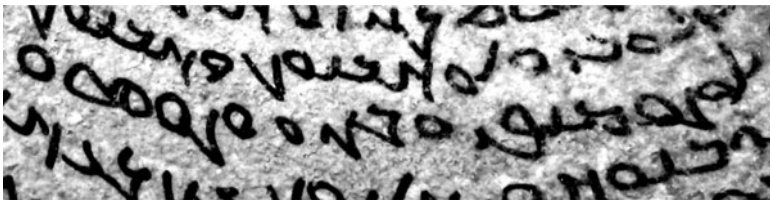


Figure 20. *wl'n'qwpy' bny' n's'* (Moussaieff 25: 11)

64 MK’s translation; we would translate ‘to cast down people’.

65 For this interpretation see also Müller-Kessler 2001–02: 131a. The emendation to YBC 2364 was proposed by Müller-Kessler 1996: 193.

Given this wide variety of readings, all of which are grammatically and contextually acceptable, it is not possible to establish an ‘original’ reading for this formula, and there is certainly no justification for emending it to an unattested reading on the basis of speculation alone.

43. In Moussaieff 145: 4, first published in Levene 2003a: 100, MK proposes reading *לִימְעִיָּא*, which she interprets as a *pəʿal* infinitive and translates ‘to accumulate’. This proposal may be questioned for several reasons: (1) the infinitive pattern *מִקְטִיָּא* is not normal in Babylonian Aramaic; (2) if the pattern were employed, we would expect to find a *shewa* after the *l-* preposition, i.e. *ləmiqtəyā* (or perhaps *ləmiqityā*), which would not normally be represented with a *yod*; (3) the *pəʿal* stem of *עב”י* has the stative meaning ‘to be thick’, and is never transitive; in the *paʿil* it has the meaning of ‘to thicken’ and not ‘to accumulate’⁶⁶; (4) the word appears in the context *א(ימ) נפק ליקרבה וליליתא נפק לימ(א)* ‘when the *devs* went out to battle, and the *liliths* went out to ...’, and hence we would expect a noun.

It appears that the correct reading here is *מְנוּבִיָּא* ‘wailing’. The reading is somewhat difficult in the Moussaieff bowl, where part of the ink of the *beth* appears to have flaked off, but is much clearer in the parallel from the Schøyen Collection, where Shaked correctly read *לְמְנוּבִיָּא*.⁶⁷ The letter that MK reads as an *ayin* is clearly written as two letters in the Moussaieff bowl (see Figures 21 and 22).⁶⁸

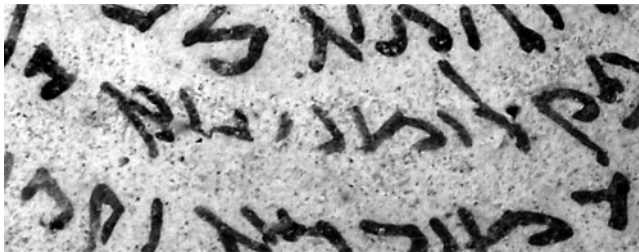


Figure 21. *לִימְנוּבִיָּא* (Moussaieff 145: 4)

The reading *נפק לִימְנוּבִיָּא* can also be discerned in the unpublished parallel bowl MS 2053/17: 4, written by the same hand as Moussaieff 145 (see Figure 23).

מְנוּבִיָּא is a previously unattested Jewish Babylonian Aramaic form of Mandaic *mnwmbiy* ‘mourning’, derived from the Akkadian verb *nubbû* ‘to mourn’.⁶⁹

66 Sokoloff 2002: 840a; 2009: 1063a. The evidence presented in Drower and Macuch 1963: 1 for this root in Mandaic is more problematic. The forms **abiat** and **aba abulh** appear in DC 43 G 39 in the context of magic words that cannot be interpreted, while the C-stem **aubuk** DC 43 [E 53] is probably a copying error for **d-abuk**, which is the reading that appears in the parallel copies of this text in DC 20: 116 and DC 49. This variant from DC 43 was not presented in the critical edition of this text published in Müller-Kessler 2010: 462, while DC 49 was not included at all in the edition.

67 Shaked 2010: 229. Shaked did not translate the word. In Moussaieff 145 he read *לִימְבִיָּא* (*ibid.*, n. 30).

68 A new edition of these parallels is in preparation by the present authors.

69 Drower and Macuch 1963: 275a, s.v. **mnumbia**; CAD N/1, 39, s.v. *nabû B* ‘to wail, lament’; Kaufmann 1974: 78.

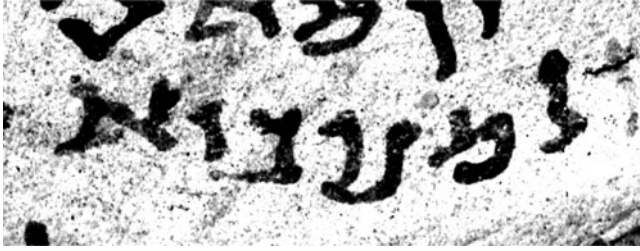


Figure 22. למנוביא (MS 2053/159: 4)

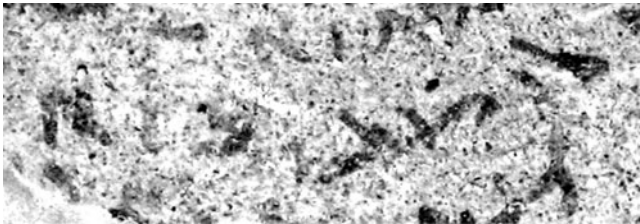


Figure 23. לימנוביא (MS 2053/17: 4)

While the male *devs* go out to fight, it is the female *liliths*' role to mourn.⁷⁰

46. In his original publication of Moussaieff 1: 5, Shaked marked several letters as uncertain: ומחתא מוה ו(מו)ל(ה) מן אודנה.⁷¹ MK reproduces the same reading without brackets and presents a different interpretation. However, examination of both this text and the parallel in MS 2046: 4 indicates that Shaked's hesitation was well placed (see Figure 24). Unfortunately, both copies of the text are damaged at this point, but for the word that was read ומולה, MS 2046 most likely reads ונטלא from the root נט"ל 'to pour'.⁷² The third letter is poorly preserved, but the *nun* is clear.⁷³

We may tentatively transcribe and translate דמחתא מיה ונ(ט)לא מן אודנה 'who brings down water and pours (it) from her ear'.

51. Shaked read Moussaieff 1: 6 as follows: מן רוה (ה)יצ(ב)אי מן רוה מזריבי מן רוה בי קברי 'from the spirit of jugs; from the spirit of drain-pipes; from the spirit of the cemetery'. He interpreted מזריבי as a metathesized form of JBA מריזיבי 'drain-pipes' and adduced convincing evidence from the Babylonian Talmud for the

70 The cognate term מנובייתא 'female mourners' is discussed in Ford, in press.

71 Shaked 1995: 207.

72 Sokoloff 2002: 745. Cf. Syriac ܢܬܠܐ 'to pour out' (Sokoloff 2009: 912), again attested with reference to ܡܢܐ 'water'.

73 The reading of the Moussaieff text is far from clear; the material remains appear to support a reading ניזלא 'liquid'. Such a reading may be possible in MS 2046 as well. However, the root נז"ל is poorly attested in Eastern Aramaic, and to date there are no recorded examples of such a noun.

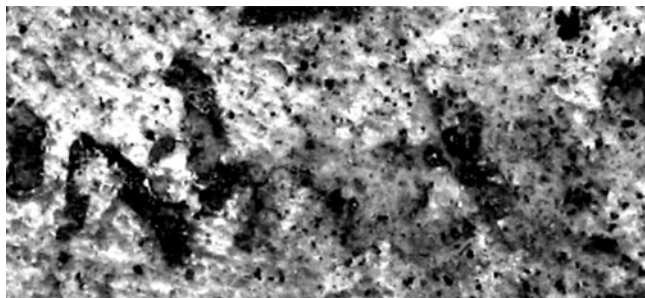


Figure 24. ונ(ט)לא (MS 2046: 4)

belief in demons infesting drain-pipes.⁷⁴ MK has accepted Shaked's basic identification of the term, but has emended מזוריבי to מרזיבי and translated 'spirit of gutter demons', understanding מרזיבי itself as a type of demon. She finds support for this interpretation both in Mandaic, where *n'rzwby* = *m'rzwby* signifies both 'gutters' and 'gutter-demons', and in several JBA bowls where she reads מרזובין or מרזביא, both referring to a type of demon. The same spelling מ[ז]וריבי רוח, however, occurs in the parallel MS 1927/63: 6, and another parallel, MS 2046: 6, reads רוח ניזוריבי (or רוח ניזרובי), again with the *zayin* preceding the *resh*.⁷⁵ The fact that all three texts show metathesized forms suggests that מרזיבי is what the scribe intended to write and that, accordingly, the text should not be emended. Furthermore, the parallel terms רוח היצבאי 'spirit of jugs' and רוח בי קברי 'spirit of the cemetery' suggest that מרזיבי denotes the place that the demon haunts and not the demon itself.⁷⁶

In fact, the existence of a category of demons called מרזובין 'gutter-demons' or מרזביא 'idem' in the extant JBA bowls in general seems unlikely to the present authors. Not all of the bowls that MK cites have been published with photographs that allow independent verification of the reading, but when we have been able to verify the reading, what MK reads as *zayin* appears in fact to be *waw*, usually in accordance with the reading by the original editor of the text. The reading in MSF B15: 6 (Naveh and Shaked: וימרובין) is difficult, but compare the letter in question with the *waw* in ומן directly below in line 7, and contrast the *zayin* in מזיקין (line 6) and in ראזי (line 8). The tip of the vertical stroke consistently extends above the horizontal stroke of the *zayin*, but one sees this

74 Shaked 1995: 207, 209–10 and n. 65. Note also Gordon 1937: 86, Bowl H: 3 and VA 2180: 5–6 (unpublished): ימא דמילחא תחות ומתביה בראשיה צוצייתה ליה צוציירה ליה קלילא דקטירה ליה צוצייתה בראשיה ומתביה תחות ימא דמילחא 'the swift demon, who binds his lock (of hair) on his head, and his dwelling place is under the Salt Sea and he dwells under a drain-pipe'. In line 7 the same text refers to מרזוביא מרזובי (for this demon, see below).

75 For מרזובי or ניזוריבי, cf. Sokoloff 2002: 777, s.v. נרזבא (especially the pl. form נרזבאי cited *ad loc.*); Gordon 1937: 89 (note to Bowl H: 3); and MK, n. 124 and the reference cited there.

76 In the JBA bowls we have been able to find a sole example of היצבין as an appellation of a demon (JNF 310: 5). Cf. Mandaic *h'swbty* (Drower and Macuch 1963: 126 s.v. *hašub-tia*). The usual term in the JBA bowls, however, is בר היצבי (pl. בני היצבי). See the discussion of this demon by Kwasman 2007: 169. To the best of our knowledge, the term בי קברי 'cemetery' is not attested as the name of a demon.

neither in the *waw* nor in the letter in question. Geller (1980) read מריבין in Bowl A:18 (MK: מרזבין). The word is clearly visible in the published photograph. The letters *waw* and *zayin* are consistently distinguished in this text. The head of the *waw* usually extends slightly to the left or is occasionally without a prominent point, whereas the head of the *zayin* extends to the right. Compare, for example, the *waw* and *zayin* in אזרמידוך (lines 8 and 15), וחיוני (line 5), and וגזרית (line 6) and cf. also the *zayin* in דזעקי (line 12). The letter in question resembles a typical *waw* with the head extending to the left and is distinct from all clearly preserved examples of *zayin*. In Moriah I: 25, Gordon indeed read ומרזבין, but marked the *zayin* as only partially preserved.⁷⁷ No photograph of the bowl has been published, but Gordon’s own handcopy suggests the reading מרובין. Compare the traces of the letter in question with the *waw* at the beginning of the word and with the *zayin* in אזרמידוך (line 26), see Figures 25 and 26.⁷⁸

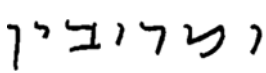


Figure 25. ומר.בין (Moriah I: 25)

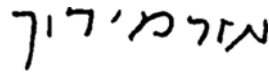


Figure 26. אזרמידוך (Moriah I: 26)

MK reads מרזביא in Nippur 12 N 387: 4 (MK: line 3),⁷⁹ but the letter in question lacks the short upper horizontal stroke of a *zayin*.⁸⁰ Contrast the *zayin* in זויהא (line 2), see Figures 27 and 28.⁸¹

77 Gordon 1984: 222.

78 Gordon 1984: 237.

79 For “McCown and Haines 1967, *Nippur I*” in n. 118, read “Gibson 1978, *Nippur XII*”.

80 For the form of the *zayin* in this text, cf. Müller-Kessler 2005a: 80.

81 Gibson 1978, Fig. 80, 1a. We would read Nippur 12 N 387 as follows (based on the photographs in Fig. 80):

- 1 ... ש
- 2 ... א. ובר איגרי ובר זויתא ופלגא ורוחרשי ורה מיתי
- 3 וכיב מעי וכב עיני וכיב ליבא ואובינא וירקנא ו(כ)שוכתא
- 4 וח(ר)ק(י)נ וסבטיתא ומרוביא ושידא ולילי וידא דאינשא וכל כיבין וכל (מ)חינ
- 5 וכל חרשינ בישין וכל עובדינ תקיפי {ק}נ בינ {דינ} דינשי ובינ ד {x} גברי בינ בני דברא
- 6 ובינ בני מתא בינ דכר שמהונ ובנ לא דכר שמה מיד איזילו עלה ואסותה לגושנצפאנהיד בת ככר ברוך
- 7 אתא יהוה מכא ורופא אמנ סלא יד ובימי מיפני סליסלי סלסלי יפא מאכס וסכני
- 8 סוסי וספריגי כל די עובר עלוהי על גושנצפאנהיד בת כ[כ]ר אים דכר אים ניקבה יתקטיל

Translation

- 1 §...
- 2 ... and roof spirit (epilepsy), and corner spirit, and stroke, and spirit of witchcraft, and spirit of the dead,
- 3 and pain of the intestines, and pain of the eyes, and pain of the belly, and swelling, and jaundice, and oozing pus (?),
- 4 and ..., and ..., and MRWBV', and demon, and lili, and the hand of men, and all pains, and all wounds (?),
- 5 and all evil witchcraft, and all mighty magical acts, whether of women or of men, whether people of the countryside
- 6 or people of the town, whether their names are mentioned or its name is not mentioned – immediately attack (lit. 'go against') it. And (may there be) healing for Gušnašp-Anahid daughter of Kakkar. Blessed be

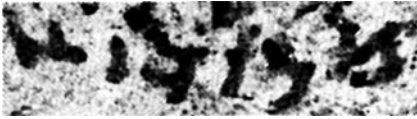


Figure 27. מרוביא (Nippur 12 N 387:4; Gibson 1978, fig. 80) Figure 28. זייתא (Nippur 12 N 387:2; Gibson 1978, fig. 80)

The same demon is named in VA 3854: 5, where Levene correctly read מרוביא (MK: מרזביא).⁸² See Figure 29.

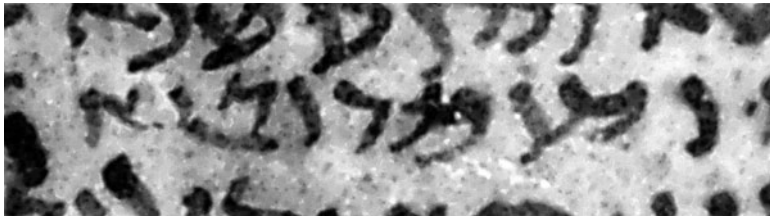


Figure 29. ומן מרוביא (VA 3854: 5)

Although it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between *waw* and *zayin* in the script of the JBA bowls, in VA 3854 the two letters are quite distinct. Contrast, for example, the *zayin* as shown in Figures 30–32.



Figure 30. וזיקין (VA 3854: 9)

7 You, O Lord, the One who smites and heals. Amen, Amen, Selah. **yd wbymy mypny slyslly slsly yp' m'ks wskyny**

8 **swsy wsprnygy** anyone who trespasses against Gušnašp-Anahid daughter of Ka[kka]r, whether male or female, shall be killed.

The scribe uses contextual *nun* for final *nun* as well. For line 3, cf. *Ḥarba de-Moshe* (ed. Harari 1997), 38: 7; 37: 10; 39: 7; 38: 4; 39: 1. The spelling ארבייא shows weakening of *' >' (cf. Sokoloff 2002: 846). ו(כ)שוכתא may possibly be an error for ו(כ)שוכתא, for which see recently Ford 2011: 263. For lines 6b–7a, compare, for example, AMB B12b: 13 and the references cited by the editors on p. 197; BM 103359: 5 (CAMIB 033A); JNF 60: 1: ברוך מכה ורופא; JNF 67: 1: ברוך מכה ורופא; JNF 258: 9: ברוך יה על שמו מכה ורופא. Müller-Kessler 2005a: 82 reads differently.

82 Levene 2003b: 105.

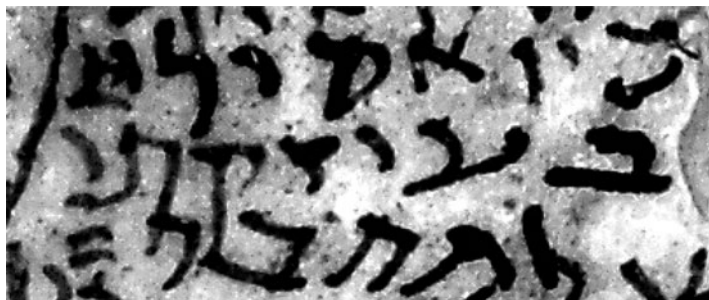


Figure 31. בְּעִזְקָתָהּ (VA 3854: 13)

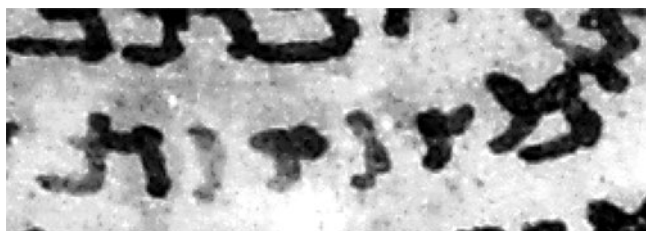


Figure 32. מְזוּזוֹת (VA 3854: 45)

The demon מְרוּבִּיא is otherwise attested in DCG 3: 6: 'ובר איגרי ומרוביה וכל סטני' 'and the roof spirit, and MRWBYH, and all satans' (see [Figure 33](#)).

Contrast the *zayin* in the words shown in [Figures 34](#) and [35](#).



Figure 33. ומרוביה (DCG 3: 6)



Figure 34. יִזְלוֹן (DCG 3: 2)



Figure 35. יִזְלוֹן (DCG 3: 4)

Similarly, MS 2053/2: 12 reads: ‘and the banned demoness, and Ronay, and MRWBY’, and Danaḥiš, and the roof spirit’. What appears to be a defective spelling of the same term occurs in JNF 271: 8–9: ‘and may you roast the demon, and the *dēv*, and Danaḥiš, and ŠŠNŠR, and MRBH, and the evil spirit’. The collocation with the demon ששנצר is not accidental, for מרובייה is amply attested specifically as the epithet of this demon (also written שנאצר and שלאצר). For example, ‘you, ŠL’ŠR MRWBYH, the evil demon, and any (other) name that you have’ (JNF 60: 5); ‘and may he be healed from ŠN’ŠR MRWBYH, the evil demon’ (JNF 141: 2). The reading מרובייה in these contexts cannot be doubted, since the same demon **ܫܫܢܫܪ** **ܡܪܒܝܝܗ** occurs in a Syriac amulet (Naveh 1997, line 12), where there is no ambiguity between *waw* and *zayin* in the script (see Figure 36).



Figure 36. **ܫܫܢܫܪ** **ܡܪܒܝܝܗ** (Naveh 1997: 35)

Naveh translated “Sheshnašar the educator”, but stated that the expression “seems rather to belong to the list of magic words of lines 9–11”, rather than to the list of malevolent elements in line 12. The evidence from the incantation bowls, however, confirms the existence of **ܫܫܢܫܪ** **ܡܪܒܝܝܗ** as an independent demon.⁸³

52. For Segal’s מרוקופתא ‘hanging’ in BM 91771: 7 (= CAMIB 039A), MK proposes reading מרזהיפתא,⁸⁴ which she explains as “a nominal form of the *saḫel* סרהב ‘to hasten, to be angry’ based on the sound shifts /z/ < /s/ and /p/ < /b/”. MK is correct that Segal’s reading is unsatisfactory, but rather than posit a series of sound changes and metathesis, one may simply read מסחיפתא ‘overthrower’ from the attested root סח”פ ‘to throw down, overturn’ (see Figure 37).⁸⁵ A similarly written *samekh* is found in line 17 of the same text (see Figure 38).

Compare the demonic epithet *m’syhp’n* ‘overthrower’ in DC 37: 64–6 // BL MS Add. 23602B fol. 26 (unpublished):⁸⁶ *mš’rhyb’n l’k m’syhp’n d’yw’ tb’r*

83 In later medieval manuscripts one similarly finds the class of demons מרובין in *Havdala de-Rabbi Akiva* (Scholem 2004: 163) and the demon מרובייה in both *Havdala de-Rabbi Akiva* (Scholem 2004: 162) and *Ḥarba de-Moshe* (Harari 1997: 41 and 180; 2012: 88; Sokoloff 2002: 705).

84 Also proposed in Müller-Kessler 2001–02: 125a.

85 Sokoloff 2002: 798; Drower and Macuch 1963: 320.

86 Cf. Drower and Macuch 1963: 249 (DC 37 is not cited in the entry). BL MS Add. 23602B fol. 26–8 has been identified as a parallel copy of DC 37: 54–159, 311–40

h'yl'k mn p'gr' d-y'hy' byhr'm br h'w' sym't 'I terrify you, Masihpan the dēv. Break your power from the body of Y. son of H.'⁸⁷

54. MK presents a revised reading גיפ>ר<הוניה in the Borsippa bowl: 10, which she interprets as a miscopying for the quadrilateral root *prhz*.⁸⁸ Although this emendation is plausible, she further states (p. 20): "Obviously Mandaic '*prwz* 'l'hy' (DC 40: 491; unpubl.) is a short form of *prhz* as well, and not a loan from Hebrew". Here MK has been misled by Drower and Macuch 1963: 379, s.v. PRZ, wherein '*prwz* is mistakenly interpreted as a verb. The full context of this text is *bšwm' d-z'n' prwz 'l'hy'*, in which '*prwz* is certainly an epithet of the divine *Zan*, probably derived from Persian *afroz* 'dazzling, illuminating'. In any case, it has nothing to do with the verb *prhz*.



Figure 37. מסחיפתא (BM 91771: 7)



Figure 38. ואיסרי (BM 91771: 17)

55. MK writes: "עברא, in תא על מחו [...]. תא על ליביה כ[...]. ותובי כי עברא על ליביה כ[...]. and sit like a slave on his heart, like a ... on his brain' (BM 91767: 4–5 = CAMIB 040A) is clearly

by M. Morgenstern. (The missing lines were presumably originally present in a missing section of the scroll which is torn at this point.)

87 The equivalent name *mshyp'n* is attested in MS 2054/68: 12–4 as the name of a punishing angel: *q'ryn' l'ykyn h'd ml'k' mshyp'n šwmh gbr' d-mn 'l'hy' šwd' ln'syb wmn 'str't' qwrb'n' lmqb'yl' ... shypl'kyn 'l'np'ykyn* 'I will invoke upon you an angel, Mashipan is his name, a manly one who does not take bribe(s) from the gods and does not accept gift(s) from the goddesses ... he will throw you down upon your faces'.

88 Also proposed in Müller-Kessler 1998: 344; 2001–02: 121; 2005a: 150 and compare 2006: 267; 2010: 476.

to be read עירבא, and not with ‘*ayin* and *resh* עברא ‘bolt’ as suggested by Ford in Morgenstern 2007a: 13”. MK’s material reading is not possible, since in the text itself the *beth* precedes the *resh* (see Figure 39).⁸⁹



Figure 39. עברא (BM 91767: 4)

With respect to the reading of the first letter as ‘*ayin*, rather than MK’s *nun* + *yodh*, compare the ‘*ayin* in ועמורה (line 15, see Figure 40).

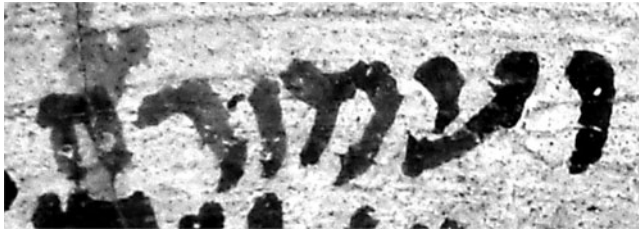


Figure 40. ועמורה (BM 91767: 15)

Cf. also the form of the ‘*ayin* especially in על רוהא על (line 1), אשבעית (line 2), מעוהי (line 4), וארבעין (line 9) and כל עשב (line 15).

MK further states: “It is an obvious misspelling of צירבא ‘lead or purified silver’ (AO 1177: 4)”, though according to her own testimony presented elsewhere,⁹⁰ AO 1177: 4 reads נירבא not צירבא.

In that previous study, MK cast doubt upon the existence of the lexeme *nyrb*’ [/*nirbā*/?], an unidentified hard metal, and suggested that it resulted from a scribal error for *šyrb*’ [/*širbā*/?] that arose due to the graphic similarity of ligatured *wn* and *š* in Mandaic.⁹¹ Recent findings provide evidence that seems to point in the opposite direction. The form *nyrb*’ is attested in several Eastern Aramaic magic texts from late antiquity in different scripts (see Figures 41–43).

89 The same reading is presented in n. 139, where it is claimed “Even the BM 91767 text does not show עברא, since the first letter is not an ‘*ayin*”.

90 Müller-Kessler 1999: 113. MK’s original reading עירבא is also evident in high-resolution photographs of the bowl recently taken by J.N. Ford.

91 Müller-Kessler 1999: 113–4.



Figure 41. דנירבא (MS 1927/35: 11)

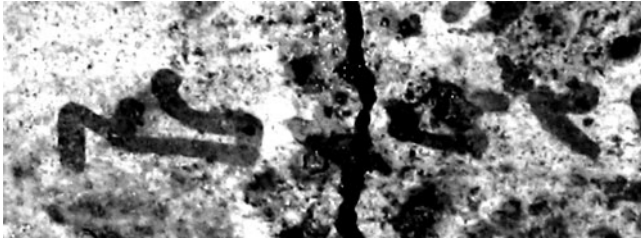
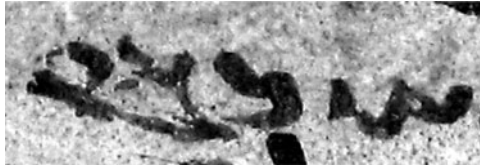


Figure 42. גנזכא (Wolfe 24: 13)

Figure 43. wnyrb' (BM 91715: 14)⁹²

By contrast, *syrb'* is found only at a single point in parallel copies of the *šafta d-qāština*, all of which are very late and unreliable manuscripts.⁹³ It is therefore likely that *syrb'* is to be regarded as a scribal error that corrupted the textual tradition of this word in this specific context.⁹⁴ On the basis of these late attestations of a single example, there is certainly no reason to posit that all the evidence for *nyrb'* found in epigraphic texts from late antiquity written in several Aramaic dialects is to be ascribed to a scribal error in a posited but unattested Mandaic *Vorlage*.

56. MK has suggested that the root *s-g-m* 'shut up' is a ghost in Aramaic that arises from the graphic similarity of *g* and *ṭ* in the Mandaic script, even though it is attested in several independent formulae in both the Jewish and Mandaic scripts. The reading *סגמה פומה* in Moussaieff 1: 11 also occurs in the unpublished parallel MS 2046: 11. The explanation that all these attestations stem from a scribal error or a misreading of Mandaic is not convincing, and so an etymology

92 See the discussion in Ford 2002: 39–40 and Müller-Kessler 2001–02: 133a.

93 Drower and Macuch 1963: 394. It also appears in the copy of this work preserved in DC 39.

94 The form *nyrb'* appears in the same work at DC 43 J: 172 and parallels (unpublished).

must be sought elsewhere. We would cautiously propose that it is a denominative verb derived from the noun אַסְבַּלְתָּ ‘bolt’.⁹⁵

57. In CBS 16041: 15 = AIT 27 (unpublished section), MK has read באדא אכלא רבא דזיוא {סורא} {פסיפ} {ר} רבא דולעיקא, which she translates ‘with a great mace of splendour, a great sword of ray’.⁹⁶ MK writes that ספסיפא “is an obvious scribal error for Iranian ספסירא ‘sword’”. However, the emendation appears to be unnecessary and most likely based upon a misreading of the text. An unpublished parallel to AIT 27 is found in the Moussaieff Collection, wherein the phrase אכלא רבא דזיוא וסיפא ספסיפא רבא דילעולם ‘a great mace of light and a great eternal burning sword’ may be clearly read in two places (see Figures 44 and 45). For the previously unattested ספסיפא ‘burning’, compare Syriac ספסר ‘blazing, burning’;⁹⁷ it is presumably employed here in alliteration with the common Aramaic סיפא ‘sword’.⁹⁸



Figure 44. סיפא ספסיפא רבא דילע[ו]לם (Moussaieff unnumbered: 13–4)

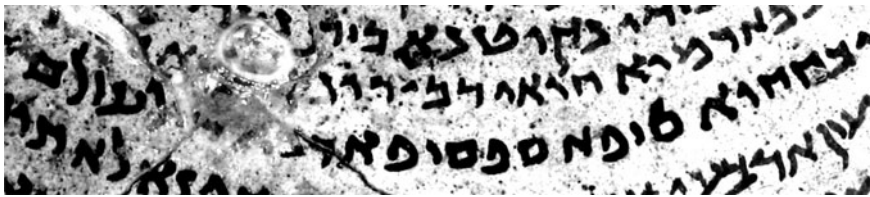


Figure 45. בההוא סיפא ספסיפא רבא דילעולם (Moussaieff unnumbered: 15)

The hapax legomenon דולעיקא in MK’s reading of AIT 27 (see no. 36) corresponds to the common דילעולם ‘eternal’ in the Moussaieff bowl, the latter reading occurring in both contexts. Although variant readings are always a possibility (cf. the note to no. 42, above), in light of the apparent poor state of preservation

95 See Sokoloff 2009: 66b, and compare אַסְבַּלְתָּ ‘bolt of a gate’ (ibid. 24). Both nouns are derived from Greek ζύγμα ‘bolt, bar’. For a semantic precedent, compare פומה סגמה פומה ‘shuts up her mouth’ in Moussaieff 1: 11 with לסכורי פומה ‘to shut up the mouth’ (AMB B6: 1; Sokoloff 2002: 811) and the cognate noun סוכרא ‘bolt’ (ibid. 793).

96 On the “missing sections” of this text, which were reconstructed by MK from fragments, see Müller-Kessler 1999–2000: 302, n. 36.

97 Sokoloff 2009: 1030b. The verbal root s-p-p ‘to burn’ is also attested in Mandaic; see Drower and Macuch 1963: 335. For its occurrence elsewhere in the JBA incantation bowls, see Ford, *Forthcoming*. The quadrilateral root ספסר also appears in Tannaic Hebrew with this meaning. See Moreshet 1980: 252 with previous literature.

98 Sokoloff 2002: 803b, with parallels from other dialects.

of AIT 27 and the new evidence from the parallel, a collation would be in order before accepting זלעיקא 'ray' into the JBA lexicon. It is not clear to the present authors how MK analyses באדה. The word most likely corresponds to בההוא in the second occurrence of the phrase in the Moussaieff bowl. Here, too, a collation would be a desideratum in light of the new parallel. In any case, the major emendation proposed by MK in this context in AIT 27 does not appear justified. 58. See above, no. 3 (n. 16).

62. The original editor of the Borsippa bowl, Tapani Harviainen (1981), read in line 9 פרהוני. On the basis of a Mandaic parallel, $pw\{r\}r\acute{s}'n'$, MK has proposed emending the word in the Borsippa bowl to read פרושוני, which she translates 'divisions'. But the correct reading is פרהוני 'protectors', derived from Middle Persian *parhēz* (see no. 54).⁹⁹ The variant reading in the Mandaic version should not be employed to emend the comprehensible Jewish Aramaic text.¹⁰⁰

66. MK rejects Levene's interpretation of the expression ימא קינא (Moussaieff 145: 9) and its variant קאינא {קאינא} אכיף ימא (MS 2053/159: 9) as 'I am standing upon the shore of the sea'¹⁰¹ in favour of the translation 'he bend down the reed sea'. According to MK, this clause would belong to the preceding narrative in the third person, rather than the following section (beginning at the end of line 9) where the first person is used. She states that "קאינא was obviously borrowed in this spelling from Mandaic $q'y'n'$ ['reed']" and that "ימא קינא corresponds to $y'm' d\text{-swp}$ in Mandaic". According to MK, the spelling קינא (along with other features) would speak for a Mandaic forerunner to the text. It is nevertheless the opinion of the present authors that Levene's interpretation here is correct, for the reasons outlined below.

Without entering into the theoretical question of why Mandaic $y'm' d\text{-swp}$ 'reed sea' would not have been rendered here with its common JBA etymological correspondent ימא דסוף,¹⁰² one may first note that the interpretation of the present context as a reference to a 'reed sea' is syntactically unlikely, as such a meaning would normally require the reading ימא דקינא* or ימא קינא*.¹⁰³

99 MacKenzie 1986: 64, s.v. pahrēxtan, pahrēz 2.

100 MK's emendation of $pw\{r\}r\acute{s}'n'$ is corroborated by the parallel Mandaic bowl MS 2054/102: 15, which reads $nyhwy' pwr\acute{s}'n' byny' \{t'\} t'by' lby\acute{s}'y'$ 'may there be a division between the good ones and the evil ones'.

101 Levene 2003a: 103.

102 For ימא דסוף in the JBA incantation bowls, see e.g. CBS 16917 (AIT 14): 2, quoted above, no. 37.

103 Cf. דמילחא 'Salt Sea' (VA 2180: 6; quoted above, n. 74). Occasional examples of what appear to be construct chains in which the *nomen regens* retains the nominal suffix $-ā$ of the old definite article may be cited from the JBA magic bowls, but they are too rare a phenomenon to serve as proof of the meaning of an obscure context. An example is גיטא דפיטורין ושיבוין {ב} בשום אות מיתוך אות 'namely, a deed (of) divorce and separation. By the name of a letter within a letter' (JNF 78: 8) in the Court Session of R. Joshua b. Perahia formula. Compare CBS 9010: 5 (AIT 9): גיטא דפיטורין ושיבוין בשום אות מיתוך אות (reading from the hand copy); Moussaieff 50: 3: גיטא גיט פיטורין ושיבוין בשום אות מיתוך אות (see the synopsis in Levene 2003a: 36); JNF 175: 7–8): גיטא גיט פיטורין ושיבוין בשום אות מיתוך אות (note to JBA 45: 6). In some cases the phenomenon may be due to factors that would not apply in Moussaieff 145. In particular, the construction sometimes appears to be the result of the genitive particle ד assimilating to the initial *d* of the following word. Contrast מלכא דשיי 'king of the demons' and מלכא דיי 'king of the *dēvs*' in

The structure of the text also speaks against the proposed analysis. The following discussion is based on the version in MS 2053/159.¹⁰⁴ Lines 1–2a read as follows:

אטור גלל קאינה	I stand upon a mountain of rock
ואטורה רבה דגללא	and upon a great mountain of rock.
... מציתנא ושמענא ליה לשמיש וחור.	I heed and listen to Šamiš and Ḥwr ¹⁰⁵

In light of parallel material, the forms קאינה and קינא were explained in Morgenstern 2007b: 265 as 1 c.s. participles showing assimilation of the 3rd radical to the *n* of the appended personal pronoun.¹⁰⁶ Further evidence for the derivation of these forms from ק"י is now forthcoming in a new bowl formula, wherein the standard and phonetic orthographies appear side by side: אנא דמינא דוכתיש בת בהרוי בבאבי קימנא לבאביל דמינא בסופי קינא {ד} לבורסיף דמינא 'I, Dukhtīč daughter of Bahārōy, stand at my doorway (and) I resemble Babylon, I stand in my vestibule (and) I resemble Borsippa' (Davidovitz 2: 1–2a).¹⁰⁷

This use of a 1 sing. participle of ק"י at the beginning of an incantation (or section thereof) is quite common in Aramaic historiologiae. In addition to the preceding texts one may adduce the following representative examples: בביל קמינא לבביל 'I stand (in) Babylon, I resemble a Babylonian; I stand in Borsippa, I resemble a Borsippean' (JNF 90: 2–4); 'l klyl nhwr 'y'r q'yymn' 'I stand upon the wreath of light of ether' (BM 117880: 5 and parallels); 'l b'b' d-byt hyy' q'yymn' 'n' hw q'styn' q'syš' d-mn byt hyy' q'l t'wry' š'm'n' wq'l p'q't' d-pq' 'I stand at the door of the House of Life, I am the Elder Archer from the House of Life; I hear the sound of the mountains, and the sound of the valleys that were split' (DC 43 J 3–5 // DC 39 6–9 // Oxf. Bod. MS Syr.g.2(r) 11–13, unpublished); bmyš' t'lm'y'

MS 2053/121: 3–4: בהתמא רבה דאשמדי מלכא דשידי בהתמא אוחרנא דאשמדי מלכא דיזי 'by the great seal of Ashmeday, king of the demons, by the other seal of Ashmeday, king of the *dēvs*' (similarly with minor spelling variations MS 2053/147: 8–9; MS 2053/144: 4–6; MS 1927/36: 2–3; MS 2053/39: 6) and JNF 84: 7: בהתמא דאשמדי מלכא דיזי ובהתמא אוחרנא 'by the seal of Ashmeday, king of the *dēvs*, and by the other seal of Ashdadod, king of the demons'. Some of the parallels read דיזי מלכא דדיזי (e.g. MS 2053/226: 3–4; JNF 8: 1–2). See further Ford 2014a: 242 (note to JBA 49: 5) and Faraj and Moriggi 2005: 75–6. The expression חיוא בלא 'wild beasts' in line 10 of the present text, quoted below, although treated as if composed of the masculine noun חיוא, was probably originally formed as the result of either apocope of the *t* of the feminine ending of the *status constructus* חיוות* or the use of the feminine *status absolutus* for the *status constructus*. See Nöldeke 1875: §219, who includes the formally equivalent Mandaic expression *hyw' k'k'* 'fanged beasts' (likewise treated as masculine) in his discussion of this phenomenon in Mandaic. The same phenomenon is apparent in דמו חרביה 'the likeness of his sword, his sabre (and) his spear' in Moussaieff 4: 4–6, quoted above (see n. 47).

104 The reading presented here is based on our own photographs.

105 The supernatural being Ḥwr is now attested in the magic bowl BM 1957–9–25.1: 10, where it is identified as the son of Danaḥiš. See Levene and Bohak 2012: 6.

106 Contra MK, it was not claimed in that article that the *m* is apocoped in this position.

107 See provisionally Ford 2014b: 276–7. For JNF 90: 2–4, quoted below, see *ibid.* 275–6.

*wd'ry'*¹⁰⁸ *q'yymn' gymr' 'n' gmyr'* 'I stand in the midst of the eternities and generations, I am the perfect gem (?)' (DC 12: 211 // BM Or 6593: 447–9, unpublished); *l'myntwl q-l b'b' q-byt hyy' q'yymn' wq'ryn' lwn l'wtry' 'dy'wr'y'*¹⁰⁹ 'for I stand at the gate of the House of Life, and I call the Uthras, my helpers' (DC 26: 307–8 // DC 28: 406–8);¹¹⁰ *lryš tws t'nyn' q'yymn' 'n' m'lk' q-l'hy' wd'y'n' rb' q-'styr't'* 'I stand upon the head of Tus, the dragon, I am the king of the gods and the great judge of the goddesses' (DC 26: 542–4 // DC 40: 556–8); *l'rq' q-nh's' q'yymn' wlb'b' q-byt l'hy'* 'I stand upon the earth of copper, and at the gate of the house of the gods' (DC 26: 550–1 // DC 40: 565–7; unpublished); *ltwr' q-r'zy' q'y^y^mn' wltwry' q-r'zy' m'sgyn'* 'I stand upon the mountain of mysteries, and I walk upon the mountains of mysteries' (DC 40: 79–80, unpublished); *l'rq' q-nh's' q'yymn' wlb'b' rb' q-bythy'y'* 'I stand upon the earth of copper, and at the great gate of the House of Life' (DC 40: 681–2; unpublished).

MK accepts this general interpretation of קאינה in MS 2053/159: 1 // M145: 1,¹¹¹ but, as noted above, rejects it in line 9 of both texts, appealing to the structure of the text. The structure of lines 9–10, however, strikingly parallels that of line 1:

Lines 1–2

אטור גלל קאינה
ואטורה רבה דגללא
... מציתנא ושמענא ליה לשמיש וחור

Lines 9–10

אכיף ימא {ק^אי^נה} קאינה
ואכיפא רבה דרביתא
לציצא וציפרא אמנה ליה
ומשילנא ליה לחיוא בלא
אמנא ומומינאליה לעופא רבה דזיבי

One may note the similarity between the first bicolon in each context. Both lines in each case begin with the preposition -א followed by the same word, the first time without final *'aleph* and the second time with final *'aleph* and followed by the word רבה. The parallelism A // B *rabbā* is amply attested in the incantation bowls and related magical literature. In addition to *m'lk' q-l'hy'* 'the king of the gods' // *d'y'n' rb' q-'styr't'* 'the great judge of the goddesses' (DC 26/40) and *'rq' q-nh's'* 'earth of copper' // *b'b' rb' q-bythy'y'* 'the great gate of the House of Life' (DC 40), quoted above, see, for example: בצורת עיזקתא דישלמו מלכא בר דויד ובהתמא רבה ובהתמא רבה דיהתימין ביה שמיא וארעה sealed (JNF 245: 10–11); ובציצא דצבאות ובזיוא רבא דקדוש and by the brightness of Sebaoth and by the great radiance of the Holy One' (AIT 7: 5); אליסור בגנא אליסור בגנא דהוא [רמ]א אידיא בימא ותוהא רבה ברביתא¹¹² who [pu]t high water in the sea and a great agitation in the ocean' (Tarshish Bowl: 14–15; Ford and Ten-Ami 2012).

108 So BM; DC 12: *ld'ry'*.

109 Reading of DC 28; DC 26 reads *'dy'wry'*.

110 Drower 1938: 39; our revised translation.

111 MK translates this as 'stood', but the participle here is better interpreted as a present tense.

112 Reading according to Müller-Kessler 2005a: 65.

Next comes a parallel pair, which in the second line in each context is preceded by the relative pronoun **ܘܢ**. Line 1 shows the repetitive parallelism // **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ**, whereas line 9 has the synonymous parallelism // **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ ܗܘܐ**. The latter parallel pair is otherwise attested in both JBA (see the Tarshish Bowl, quoted above) and Mandaic: *km' š'pyry' y'm' wš'pyry' d-m'sgyn bg' wħ*¹¹³ *d-rbyl'* 'how beautiful is the sea, and how beautiful are those that go about within the ocean!' (DC 21: 34–5 // DC 29: 40–1 // MS Berlin 22–3).¹¹⁴ For the construct chain **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ** 'the shore of the sea', compare **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ ܘܠܒܢܝ ܝܡܐ** 'I go up to the shore of the sea, and ask the inhabitants of the sea' (BM 91767: 13).¹¹⁵ The corresponding construct chain **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ** 'a mountain of rock' in context 1 is otherwise attested in Wolfe 10: 9: **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ ܘܝܫܝܘܐ ܗܘܐ** 'and they brought you to a mountain, a mountain of rock, from this day and forever'.

Finally, the first line of each bicolon ends with **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ**. Given the formal similarity between the two contexts, **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ** must have the same meaning in each case, namely, it must be the 1 sing. participle of **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ**. As shown above, this use of *qāyimmā* is quite frequent at the beginning of an incantation or section thereof. Accordingly, in line 9 it must signal the beginning of a new section. In both contexts the lines following the initial bicolon are likewise formulated in the first person singular and contain verbs of communication (verbs of hearing in context 1 and verbs of speech in context 2). One may thus propose the following translation (in general accordance with Levene):

ܘܢ ܗܘܐ ܘܠܒܢܝ ܝܡܐ { ܘܢ ܗܘܐ ܘܠܒܢܝ ܝܡܐ	I stand at the shore of the sea
ܘܢ ܗܘܐ ܘܠܒܢܝ ܝܡܐ	and at the great shore of the ocean.
ܘܢ ܗܘܐ ܘܠܒܢܝ ܝܡܐ	I speak to the nighthawk and the bird,
ܘܢ ܗܘܐ ܘܠܒܢܝ ܝܡܐ	and question the wild beasts,
ܘܢ ܗܘܐ ܘܠܒܢܝ ܝܡܐ	and I adjure the great fowl of the rivers.

69. MK is correct in removing **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ** from the JBA lexicon, the reading originating under the influence of an infelicitous proposal by Scholem to emend **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ** in the original editions of two bowls to **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ**.¹¹⁶ MK's comments have been appropriately accepted by Sokoloff in his corrections to his dictionary. The same reading **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ** (with its orthographic variant **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ** and phonetic variants **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ**, **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ**, and **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ**) appears in the published and unpublished parallels known to the present authors.¹¹⁷ It should nevertheless be noted that the demon **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ** (essentially the JBA form corresponding to JPA **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ**) is amply attested in the JBA incantation bowls. In addition to the sole (remaining) reference cited by Sokoloff 2002, s.v., see the example in Figure 46.

113 So DC 29, MS Berlin; DC 21: *bg'w'*.

114 See Drower 1937: 591; cf. pp. 590, 592.

115 Reading with Morgenstern 2004.

116 See in greater detail Müller-Kessler 2005a: 47, where she notes that Shaked also objects to this reading. As pointed out by MK, the demon **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ** appears in JPA (see the occurrences in the amulets published by Naveh and Shaked 1985 and 1993).

117 For **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ** (with *waw* for *qamas*), see Levene and Bohak 2012: 208. For the phonetic variants, see Shaked, Ford and Bhayro 2013: 268 (note to line 2), and Wolfe 39: 3 (**ܘܢ ܗܘܐ**). The phonetic variant **ܘܢ ܗܘܐ** occurs in K3449: 5 (Geller 1980: 60) and in the unpublished parallel VA 2485: 8.



Figure 46. כל טולניתא (MS 2053/261: 4)¹¹⁸

In Moussaieff 164: 11, however, the form שולניתהין is not merely a *plene* spelling of שלניתא ‘robbing one’, as proposed by MK, but most likely the plural of a different lexeme. In several Mandaic magic texts we find an Akkadian loanword שוליתא (*šawālītā*) ‘(female) apprentice’ or ‘maidservant’.¹¹⁹ However, in two copies of this formula, one in JBA and the other in Mandaic, we find instead the form שולניתא/*šwlnyt*’.

מן לוטת אבא ואימא ומן לוטת אחא ואחחא ומן לוטת יחמתא וכלתא ומן לוטת זניתא ושולניתא

From the curse of a father and mother, and from the curse of a brother and sister, and from the curse of a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, and from the curse of a whore and her maidservant (JNF 247: 9–10; see [Figure 47](#))).



Figure 47. זניתא ושולניתא (JNF 247: 10).

mn lwṭṭ’ db’ [...] wd’ m’ {wm’ n} wmn lwṭṭ’ dznyt’ wzmrt’ wmn lwṭṭ’ drpt’ y’ wšwlnyt’

‘from the curse of a father and of a mother, and from the curse of a whore and a singing girl, and from the curse of a mistress and a maidservant’ (MS 2054/50: 23–26, see [Figure 48](#)).¹²⁰

118 For further unpublished examples, see MS 2053/8: 5; MS 2053/34: 5; MS 2053/261: 6; MS 2053/267: 9; DS 9: 5; JNF 285: 4. Gordon’s reading טולניתא in Ashmolean no. 1932.619: 13 (Gordon 1941: 279), considered ‘unzutreffend’ by MK 2005a: 47, should thus not be rejected a priori, since the portions of the poorly preserved bowl that Gordon was able to decipher suggest that the context is not that typical for שלניתא. The same demon is also well attested in Mandaic incantations. See the numerous references in Drower and Macuch 1963: 177b.

119 On this lexeme see Sokoloff 1971: 458; Müller-Kessler 2001/2: 135a; Greenfield 1994: 12; and see Kaufman 1974: 99 and CAD Š/1, 291–4, s.v. šamallū ‘assistant; apprentice scribe, apprentice scholar’ for the Akkadian etymology.

120 For the corresponding Mandaic m. pl. form *šw’l’ny’*, see Nöldeke 1875: §136; Macuch 1965: 225; Drower and Macuch 1963: 452. According to Nöldeke, masculine *-ānē* and



Figure 48. *drpt'y' wšwlnyt'* (MS 2054/50: 26)

Compare also:

ומן שבע חרשיא ויתמני שולתהון

and from seven sorcerers and their eight maidservants (MS 2053/29: 7, see [Figure 49](#)).

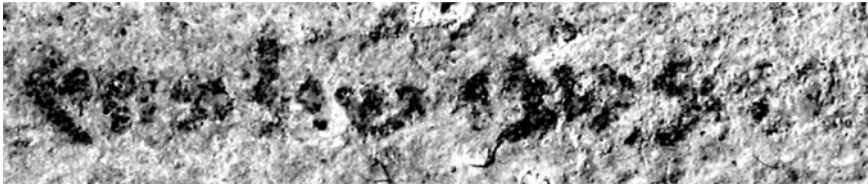


Figure 49. ויתמני שולתהון (MS 2053/29: 7).

With respect to the general context, Levene's reading of ר(כ)בין 'are riding' in Moussaieff 164: 11 is correct.¹²¹ The *samekh* is always written in this text with a rounded head, e.g. in the name of the client סמי בת פרסיתא (see [Figure 50](#)). What appears to be an extra stroke in the *kaph* (giving the impression of *samekh*) is most likely the result of a small crack in the surface of the bowl into which some ink spilled from the base of the letter (see [Figure 51](#)).



Figure 50. דסמי בת פרסיתא (Moussaieff 164: 12)

feminine *-ānyātā* function as plural endings. Cf. Macuch 1965: 224–6. The singular forms שולניתא/*šwlnyt'* in JNF 247 and MS 2054/50, respectively, would thus appear to be back-formations from the feminine plural *šwālānyātā* recorded in Moussaieff 164.

121 Levene 2007: 62. MK reads דסכין 'who see'. The m.pl. is used here as a common plural, as occasionally in Mandaic (Nöldeke 1875: 411) and consistently in the various Neo-Aramaic dialects (Goldenberg 2000: 73–4).



Figure 51. רכבין (Moussaieff 164: 11)

MK's translation of *ויליכון עליכון* as 'and if he does not bring upon you ...' does not fit the context. The correct translation is that provided by Levene: 'And if not, I shall bring against you ...'.¹²² The entire passage may be translated: 'And if not, I shall bring against you a reed of seven pieces that seven sorcerous women are riding, (they) and their maidservants'.¹²³

70. This paragraph contains three misreadings of the sources. BM 91771: 2 does not read *ועמומתית* but rather *שמומתית* or *שמומתות*, most likely with the meaning 'bans' (see Figure 52). The complete context is *ושלאמתא שופהרי שמומתות בית כנישהא* 'and spells, *šwphry*, bans of [i.e. pronounced in] the synagogue'.¹²⁴

VA 2416: 10 (see Figure 53) does not read *ושפורי ושמהתא* but rather *ושיפורי ושמתהא*, as read by Wohlstein.¹²⁵

DC 47 (222) does not read *br špwhr*³ as MK reports, but rather *brspwhr*³ as a single word and with an *s* as Drower (1946: 331) recorded (collated from the original manuscript).¹²⁶

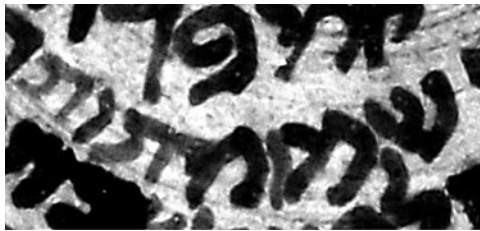


Figure 52. שמומתות (BM 91771: 2)

122 The same translation is correct for the next attestation of this phrase in Moussaieff 164: 11, which MK translates on p. 15 (no. 33) 'and if I do not bring'. On p. 6 (no. 6) MK translates *ויליכון עליכון* in lines 10 and 11 (i.e. here) as 'I shall bring against you', in accordance with Levene.

123 MK's reading *קניא שב גובי* for Levene's correct *קניא דשב גובי* is presumably due to an oversight.

124 See the new edition of this bowl in Levene 2013: 117–8. Levene translates *שופהרי* as 'shofar-bans'. For the pronunciation of bans in the synagogue, see *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (2nd ed.), vol. 9, pp. 15–6.

125 Wohlstein 1894: 12. The same word pair also occurs in line 8. There is often little difference between *he* and *taw* in this text. See the new edition of this bowl in Levene 2013: 45–51.

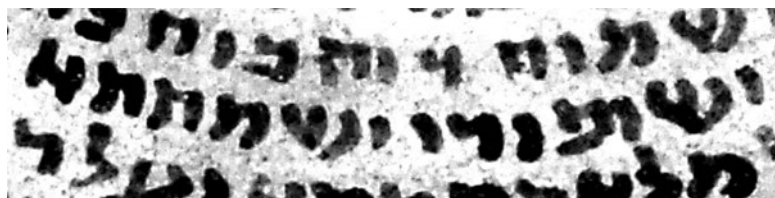


Figure 53. ושיפורי ושממתא (VA 2416: 10)

Wohlstein translated שיפורי as ‘Aechtungen’ and, in light of the collocation with שמתתא ‘bans’, compared the reference to שיפורי in *b.MQ* 16a: בארבע מאה שיפורי שמתתא ברק למרוז ‘Baraq banned Meroz with four hundred *shofars*’.¹²⁷ Sokoloff 2002: 1139 accordingly classifies שיפורי in the above-cited bowls s.v. שיפורא ‘*shofar*’, meaning c: ‘used for proclaiming a ban’, noting that in the examples from the incantation bowls the term refers to a type of demon. MK rejects this derivation of שיפורי, stating that in the above-cited texts the word “has no connection with the Hebrew [*sic*] word שיפורא ‘*shofar*, trumpet””, and that both occurrences are “shortened variants of שופהרי, meaning something like ‘exorcism’ or ‘slander’”. Although the collocations שיפורי ושממתא and שופהרי ושממתא appear to support MK’s basic identification of שיפורי with שופהרי, they also support the interpretation of שיפורי as referring to the use of the *shofar* in excommunicating. This interpretation is confirmed by the occurrence of שיפורי in an enumeration of maleficent forces in collocation with תברי “‘broken’ sounds of the *shofar*”¹²⁸ in DS 9: 6 (= JNF 317): נידרי ושבועתאתה: תברי ושיפורי שיקופתא ענקא לוטתא וקרותא “vows, oaths, ‘broken’ sounds of the *shofar*, *shofars*, smiting, ‘*nq*’-demon, curse, and imprecation” (see Figure 54).

An even more explicit collocation appears in VA 3381: 10–11: וכל לוטתא ושיפורי ושממתא ותברי וגזירתא ואחרמתא of the *shofar*, court oaths, anathemas’.¹²⁹

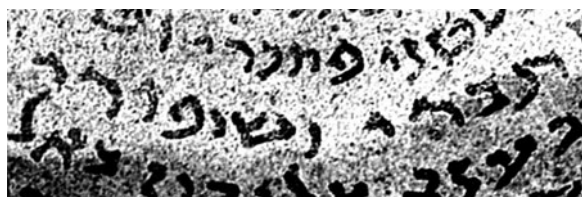


Figure 54. תברי ושיפורי (DS 9: 6)

126 The parallel in Oxf. MS. Syr. g. 2(R) reads *b' sphwbh*.

127 Wohlstein 1894: 16, 23–4. Gordon 1934: 332 similarly rendered שיפורי as ‘excommunications’ and was followed by Isbell 1975: 108.

128 For this meaning of תברי, see Sokoloff 2002: 1192–3, s.v. 1# תברא, meaning 5.

129 See the edition of this bowl in Levene 2013: 79–83. In VA 3381 there is no difficulty in distinguishing between *he* and *taw* in ושממתא.

The context of bans (as maleficent forces) in these texts is unmistakable, as the word תברי occurs in the Talmud with the meaning “broken” sounds of the *shofar*’ in *b. MQ* 17a–17b,¹³⁰ precisely in a context of banning with a *shofar* (-ban):

ההוא אלאמא דהוה קא מצער ליה לההוא צורבא מרבנן. אתא לקמיה דרב יוסף. אמ' ליה: זיל שמתיה. אמ' ליה: מסתפינא מניה. אמ' ליה: שקיל פתיחא עליה. אמ' ליה: כל שכן מסתפינא מניה. אמ' ליה: שקליה ואחתיא בכדא ואנחה בי קברי וקרי ביה אלפא דשיפורי בארבעין יומי. אזל עבד הכי. פקע כדא מית אלאמא. מאי שיפורי? אמ' רבא. שנפרעין ממנו. מאי תבארי? אמר רב יצחק בריה דרב יהודה. תברי בתי. תניא. שמעון בן גמליאל אומ'. כל מקום שנתנו חכמים עיניהם בו או מיתה או עוני.

A certain violent man used to cause grief to a certain Rabbinic scholar. He came before R. Joseph. He said to him: “Go and excommunicate him”. He said: “I fear him”. He said to him: “Get a summons against him”. He said: “All the more so I would fear him”. He said: “Take it and place it in a jar and put it in the cemetery, and blow upon him a thousand *šippurs* over forty days”. He went and did so. The jar split open and the violent man died.

What are *šippurs*? Rava says: that one is recompensed [*šenniprā' in*] by them. What are *tābārs*? R. Yitzhaq b. R. Yehudah says: they destroy [*tābrī*] houses. It is taught, Shime'on b. Gamaliel says: wherever the sages cast their eye, (there is) either death or poverty.

It would thus appear that Wohlstein’s identification of שיפורי in the magic bowls with Hebrew שופר *‘shofar* (used for proclaiming bans)’ and Aramaic שיפורה *‘idem*’ was correct, and that שופהרי is most probably a variant of שיפורי, rather than being the basic form as posited by MK.¹³¹

73. MK cites the parallel to AMB B13: 6 from the Christie’s bowl, and correctly notes that the emendation proposed by Naveh and Shaked for תי יתי בדיה הרבא דקטלא {ת} *‘he(?) comes and in his hand there is a sword of slaying’* is not supported by the other textual witnesses, which all read תיהי.¹³² However, her own translation, *‘you shall come with a sword that kills’*, cannot be accepted as it does not take account of the 3 s. possessive pronoun on בדיה *‘in his hand(s)’*. Since הרבא is feminine, it may be taken as the subject of the verb (in the G-stem), providing an alternative translation of *‘let a sword of killing come into his hand’*. The direct invocation of lord Bagdana would then begin with the following word את *‘You!’*, which would also suit the use of the personal pronoun to change the discourse to direct address.

130 Our text is drawn from MS Columbia X 893–T 141.

131 One might hesitantly suggest that JBA שופהרי and Mandaic *šwp'ry'* (cited by MK from an unpublished lead roll) derive from Hebrew שופר.

132 We may note in passing that in contrast to the Christie’s bowl, the other unpublished parallels known to the present authors read like AMB B13 דקטלא.

Conclusion

We shall conclude with two general observations. The first regards textual emendations. Emendation of ancient written sources must always be a last resort. While the magic bowl formulae are not free of scribal errors, all attempts to understand the text as it is written must be exhausted before emendations are proposed. Frequently, apparent difficulties will stem from phonetic spellings,¹³³ unfamiliar lexemes or syntactic structures.¹³⁴ The second remark is that although the Mandaic language and literature are undoubtedly of great importance for the proper understanding of the JBA magic bowls (and of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic in general), not every phonetic or *plene* spelling or collocation shared with Mandaic is to be taken as evidence of a Mandaic forerunner for the formula in question. There is considerable evidence to suggest that the loss of the pharyngeals, for example, was common to many central and southern Babylonian Aramaic dialects, and this is reflected in both orthography and morphology;¹³⁵ furthermore, many lexemes, and expressions and even religious concepts were common to several religious groups. The fact that a word, phrase, or idea is attested or ‘at home’ in Mandaic does not necessarily mean that it derives from Mandaic.¹³⁶

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133 Morgenstern 2007b.

134 Morgenstern 2010b: 283, 286.

135 See Morgenstern 2010a.

136 For example, the phrase סדנא דארעא (no. 29) does not necessarily reflect “a well known concept of the Gnostic world”. It is a cosmological expression that reflects the contemporary scientific view that the dry land of the world comprises a single block. The same expression appears in entirely non-Gnostic contexts in the Babylonian Talmud. These are conveniently recorded in Sokoloff 2002: 788b. A crown of splendour (no. 47) for the righteous is already mentioned in IQS iv 10 (כליל כבוד) and is a common religious theme in Judaism (b. Ber. 17a), Christianity (1 Peter 5: 4) and non-Mandaean Gnosticism (e.g. Pistis Sophia).

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