

THE MAGICAL ROTULI FROM THE CAIRO GENIZAH

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Introduction

In spite of much progress in recent decades, the magical texts found in the Cairo Genizah have yet to receive the attention they deserve.¹ In the present paper, I shall focus on a previously unnoted type of Genizah magical fragments—namely those written on vertical parchment scrolls (*rotuli*).² Such scrolls are extremely interesting not only because of their format, but because of their contents as well, and especially the aggressive magical recipes they contain, some of which clearly stem from late-antique Palestine. But as these fragments are quite long, and the task of reconstructing them is in no way finished, no attempt will be made here to offer a full edition of any single rotulus; instead, I shall limit myself to a description of their codicological and scribal features, a brief analysis of their contents, and a selective edition of some of their magical recipes. In the future, I hope to provide a full edition of

¹ The present paper forms a part of a wider research project on the magical texts from the Cairo Genizah, which is based on a preliminary list of Genizah magical fragments compiled by Professor Shaul Shaked, and is funded by the Israel Science Foundation (Grant no. 725/03). I am grateful to my research assistants—Shani Levy, Karina Shalem and Irena Lerman—and to Ortal-Paz Saar, for their assistance throughout this research project. The final version of the present paper was written during my year-long stay in Cambridge, partly funded by the Genizah Unit of the Cambridge University Library (for which I am especially grateful to Stefan Reif and Ben Outhwaite, the former and current heads of the Unit), and by the Friedberg Genizah Project. I am also grateful to Judith Olszowy-Schlanger for her illuminating codicological and paleographical advice.

² For previous publications of Genizah magical texts, see especially Joseph Naveh and Shaul Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1985) (henceforth AMB); id., *Magic Spells and Formulae: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1993) (henceforth MSF); L. H. Schiffman and M. D. Swartz, *Hebrew and Aramaic Incantation Texts from the Cairo Genizah: Selected Texts from Taylor-Schechter Box K1*, [Semitic Texts and Studies 1] (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992) (henceforth HAITCG); Peter Schäfer and Shaul Shaked, *Magische Texte aus der Kairoer Geniza*, [Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum 42, 64, 72] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck)), vol. 1 (1994), vol. 2 (1997), vol. 3 (1999), vol. 4 (forthcoming) (henceforth MTKG).

these fragments, as of many other Genizah magical recipes and recipe-collections which deserve a more detailed analysis.³

The Magical Rotuli—A Broad Survey

The presence of rotuli—that is, vertical scrolls made of relatively narrow pieces of parchment sewn together one below the other—in the Cairo Genizah has occasionally been noted, and a few such rotuli have already been published.⁴ However, the number of unpublished Genizah rotuli known to me already amounts to many dozens, and as these fragments seem to belong to the earlier strata of the Cairo Genizah, and some of them clearly were in use even before Genizah times, they certainly deserve a close codicological analysis of their different forms and contents and of their place within the history of the Jewish book.⁵ My own interest in these fragments began when, during a short visit to Cambridge to study some magical fragments, I noticed that one or two fragments had a row of tiny holes at their top or at their bottom. This surprised me, as I could not see why anyone would bother to pin-prick his or her magical texts in this manner, but a few days later I was checking some of the Genizah fragments in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and discovered a most unusual magic scroll (Bodleian MS Heb. a3.31), which is made up of four unequal pieces of parchment stitched together vertically and then inscribed horizontally. I then realized that the pin-pricked fragments I had seen in Cambridge had once been parts of such vertical rotuli, but the threads of the stitches that

³ For a broad survey of the magical texts from the Cairo Genizah, and much further bibliography, see Gideon Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 215–221.

⁴ For the place of rotuli in the history of the Jewish book, see the brief remarks of Malachi Beit-Arié, *Hebrew Manuscripts of East and West* [The Panizzi Lectures, 1992], (London: The British Library, 1993), pp. 10–11, and of Colette Sirat, *Hebrew Manuscripts of the Middle Ages* (ed. and tr. by N. de Lange) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 102. For published Genizah rotuli see, for example, Nehemiah Allony, “RASAG’s Version of *Sefer Yezira* in Scroll Form from the Cairo Genizah,” in I. Weinstock (ed.), *Temirin*, vol. 2 (Jerusalem: Kook, 1981), pp. 9–29 (Heb.); Nicholas de Lange, *Greek Jewish Texts from the Cairo Genizah*, [TSAJ 51] (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1996), No. 15 (pp. 165–294); Yosef Tobi, *Poetry, Judeo-Arabic Literature, and the Geniza*, [Jewish Culture in Muslim Lands and Cairo Geniza Studies, IV] (Tel Aviv University, 2006), pp. 51–55 (Heb.). See also n. 6 below.

⁵ Judith Olszowy-Schlanger and I have recently begun to map out the Genizah rotuli, but the results of this survey will have to be published elsewhere.

once held them together had crumbled long ago, leaving only narrow sheets of parchment with stitching-holes at their tops, or bottoms, or both. I have since continued looking for such fragments, and gradually came to realize that in some cases the rotuli disintegrated to such a degree that not only the stitches disappeared, but even the stitched pieces of parchment broke into much smaller pieces, without any pin-prick holes to set them apart from other small parchment fragments. I therefore try to keep track not only of all the Genizah magical fragments I can find, but also of all the parchment rotuli and rotuli-fragments, even those which have nothing to do with magic. At present, I am aware of two rotuli with magical recipes and one astrological rotulus re-used for magical recipes, of possible fragments of other magical rotuli, and of many parchment rotuli and rotuli-fragments whose contents are non-magical.⁶ The magical rotuli are as follows:

1) Bodleian MS Heb. a3.31: A vertical parchment scroll, 92 cm long and 12 cm wide, made up of four pieces sewn together, measuring (from top to bottom) 38.5, 22.5, 17.2 and 13.8 cm, respectively. The first piece is of darkish brown color, the second is even darker, the third is a much lighter yellowish brown, and the fourth is even lighter in color. The scroll's right margin is preserved throughout, but the left margin is fully preserved only for small parts of the lower sections of the scroll, while for the rest of the scroll it has been damaged (by fire?) in differing quantities. From the "wavy" pattern created by the missing parts when the scroll is stretched out, it seems clear that the scroll's left margin was damaged while it was all rolled up, from bottom to top, which also explains why the bottom part of the scroll is much better preserved than its topmost section. It must be stressed, however, that the scroll begins and ends *in medias res*, and there is no telling how long the original scroll was or how much is missing on

⁶ For another magical fragment which may have come from a rotulus, see Westminster College Misc. 59, published as MTKG III, 74, with the editors' note on p. 179. In what follows, I focus only on parchment rotuli, whose pieces were stitched to each other, and ignore those cases in which loose pieces of paper—including used paper—were glued one below the other and used for writing different texts (including amulets and magical recipes), a phenomenon which seems to have occurred quite often, and not only in the earlier strata of the Cairo Genizah. For published paper rotuli see, for example, MTKG II, 24 (= Bodleian Heb. a3.25); MTKG III, 66 (= T-S AS 142.15 + NS 246.14).

either end.⁷ Moreover, it is quite possible that more fragments of this scroll would be identified in the future, either in Oxford or in other Genizah collections.

On the recto, the 145 lines of text are written in a well-trained hand, entirely uniform throughout, and clearly belonging to the earliest stratum of the Cairo Genizah (the hand was dated by Judith Olszowy-Schlanger to the (early) tenth century).⁸ The layout of the text also is remarkably uniform—each two recipes are separated by a few centimeters of blank space, many of the words in different recipes are deliberately written backward, abbreviations are marked by the same supralinear dots, and the abbreviation for “Name son of Name,” appears both as the standard *p(elsoni) b(en) p(elonit)* and as the hitherto unattested ŠWŠ, a sequence whose exact meaning still eludes me.⁹ Even the magical recipes themselves display a remarkable degree of internal consistency, both in their aims and in the magical practices they enjoin. In light of all this, it is quite certain that the scroll was produced by a single copyist, who was quite an experienced scribe and quite a sophisticated magician. On the verso, the scroll is sporadically covered by different magical texts, in several different hands, all of which seem to be later, and much less professional, than that on the recto. It thus seems quite clear that the rotulus was originally written on one side only (a common procedure on such rotuli), but later users decided to utilize the blank side too, and added their own magical recipes on the verso.¹⁰ This apparently means that the scroll remained in circulation and use over several generations of Jewish magicians.

⁷ Note that one of the two rotuli published by de Lange is estimated by him to have been about 3 meters long (*Greek Jewish Texts*, p. 165).

⁸ Both the hand and the style of writing closely resemble those of T-S Misc. 24.1 (see Neil Danzig, “Two Insights from a Ninth-Century Liturgical Handbook: The Origins of *Yeḩum Purḩan* and *Qaddish de-Hadata*,” in Stefan C. Reif (ed.), *The Cambridge Genizah Collections: Their Contents and Significance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 74–122 and Plate 10), which was dated by Danzig to the final quarter of the ninth century.

⁹ The most likely explanation seems to be that this is an abbreviation of שם ושם, “a name and a name” (i.e., the name of the victim and the name of his or her mother); as a partial parallel, one could adduce MS Sassoon 56 = NYPL 190, p. 117, ll.7–8: ונקמת את נקמתי מאת המקולל הארור האכזרי פלוי ש בן פלוני ש וכו’ (“And you shall exact my revenge from the accursed, the damned, the cruel *pel(oni)* Š son of *peloni(t)* Š, etc.”). It has also been suggested to me that שוש is four letters removed from פנפ, but this might be a mere coincidence.

¹⁰ For Genizah rotuli whose verso is blank, see the next item. For Genizah rotuli with different texts on both sides, clearly inscribed by different hands and in different

Looking at the recto of our rotulus, we find eighteen different recipes (including two of which only a few words are preserved), of which one is for gaining knowledge, one whose aim is not entirely clear (see recipe a in the next section), and all the rest are for aggressive purposes, and especially for “binding” the sexual potencies of male victims. Such uniformity of purpose is not unparalleled in some of the Greek magical papyri—I note, especially, PGM XXXVI, whose 19 recipes focus almost entirely on issues of interpersonal relations. These single-minded collections always make one wonder whether the practitioners behind them specialized in just one type of magical practices, or had their recipes arranged thematically, and only one of their collections (or a small part thereof) happened to be preserved. But be that as it may, the recipes found on the Bodleian rotulus are of the greatest interest: They are written in a mixture of Palestinian Jewish Aramaic and Hebrew, and contain virtually no Arabisms, a sure sign of their relative antiquity. They also display many Greek loanwords, including what seems like a whole Greek sentence in transliteration, as we shall see below. Moreover, some of the rituals enjoined by these recipes seem quite different, and often far more “daring,” than those found in other Genizah magical texts, and this too might be a sign of their relative antiquity, as in the later recipe collections the potentially offensive features tended to be filtered out of the textual transmission.¹¹ Finally, the extant recipes contain a few apparent references to extra-biblical myths, which also are quite rare in the more typical Genizah magical recipe books. Below, we shall edit and analyze some of the recipes on the recto of this intriguing rotulus.

2) T-S K 1.120 + T-S NS 258.153–154 + T-S K 1.154: The largest fragment of this rotulus is T-S K 1.154, a vertical parchment scroll 31.2 cm long and 8.8 cm wide, which is made up of three pieces sewn together,

periods, see the rotulus edited by Tobi (above, n. 4). Some Genizah rotuli seem to have been written on both sides by their original scribes, including the two rotuli edited by de Lange (above, n. 4), and the one analyzed by Danzig (above, n. 8). Having seen numerous Genizah rotuli, my own impression is that most of them were written on the recto only, and that some retained a blank verso while in others the verso was re-used by later scribes, often for different types of texts than those on the recto.

¹¹ For such processes of self-censorship, see Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, pp. 183 and 344.

measuring (from top to bottom) 7.4, 13.5, and 10.5 cm, respectively.¹² All three pieces are of a yellowish-brown color, and all three have their right margin intact, but are damaged on their left margin. Moreover, a stain caused by water runs vertically through all three pieces, and is the likely cause of the damage to the left margin, and certainly caused the effacement of many letters on the scroll's left half. Like the Bodleian rotulus, this one too begins and ends *in medias res*, but in this case I can already point to three more fragments which clearly belong with the same rotulus. Two parchment fragments—T-S NS 258.153 and 154—are quite small, measuring 5.5 by 7 cm and 3.2 by 6.5 cm respectively, and neither fragment displays the telltale prick-holes characteristic of broken rotuli. But the fact that these parchment fragments are quite narrow, and inscribed on one side only, suggests that they may have come from such a rotulus (and not from a codex, in which both sides should be inscribed), and a comparison of the parchment and the handwriting with that of T-S K 1.154 demonstrates their great similarity. The identification is made secure by the pattern created by the stain which runs vertically through both fragments, and matches perfectly the stain running through the top part of T-S K 1.154, thus proving that all three fragments once belonged together, and that the damage caused by water preceded the disintegration of the original rotulus. Moreover, T-S K 1.120 (13.2 by 9.8 cm), which was published as MTKG III, 60 but not identified as forming part of a rotulus, displays the same hand and the same stain, and ends with the first half of Num 21.28, whose continuation may be found on T-S NS 258.153. Thus, it is entirely certain that all four fragments once belonged in a single rotulus, and the original order was (from top to bottom) T-S K 1.120, T-S NS 258.153, T-S NS 258.154 and T-S K 1.154. Throughout the reconstructed rotulus, the right margin is well preserved, but the left margin is preserved only at the top section (T-S K 1.120) and parts of the bottom one (T-S K 1.154). On all four fragments the verso is blank, which means that this rotulus was not re-used by later scribes, perhaps because it was damaged by water at a relatively early stage. It must be stressed, however, that the reconstructed rotulus still begins and ends *in medias res*, so there is no doubt that more pieces are still

¹² This fragment was briefly mentioned by Peter Schäfer, "New Magical Fragments from the Cairo Genizah," in *Proceedings of the Tenth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Section C/1 (Jerusalem, 1990), pp. 245–252, on p. 248 (Heb.).

missing both at the top and at the bottom of this scroll. If and when more pieces are found, they may allow a more precise reconstruction of this rotulus and of its codicological history.

On the recto of the reconstructed scroll, 89 lines of text are written in a uniform hand, clearly later than that of the Bodleian rotulus (the hand was dated by Judith Olszowy-Schlanger to the (early) eleventh century).¹³ The text is written in a mixture of Aramaic and Judeo-Arabic, and some of the recipes use many biblical verses, which are cited in Hebrew. As this rotulus is not well preserved, it is not entirely clear how many recipes were written in the extant section, but one can detect the remains of at least ten different recipes and—as in the Bodleian rotulus—all of them are aggressive in nature. But unlike the Bodleian rotulus, the recipes found here seem much less unusual, and involve many magical practices which are quite standard in Genizah magical recipes. And while some of these recipes display signs of an early origin (including the use of the title קיבלוה for aggressive recipes, for which see Dan Levene's paper in the present volume), others probably stem from the Genizah period itself, or are watered-down versions of older recipes. Thus they are of considerably less historical interest than those of the Bodleian rotulus.

3) T-S K 1.50 + T-S K 1.133: Unlike the two previous items, this rotulus was first inscribed not with magical recipes but with an astrological text, best known as the *Treatise of Shem* in its Judeo-Arabic version (and in a phonetic transliteration which is characteristic of the earlier Judeo-Arabic Genizah fragments).¹⁴ T-S K 1.50 (6.9 cm long and 8.4 cm wide) preserves the section on Gemini, while T-S K 1.133 (25.1 by 8.8 cm) preserves the sections on Cancer, Leo, Virgo and Libra, so there is no doubt that the former once belonged directly above the latter, and that the original scroll was at least twice as long as these two fragments combined. The parchment is, once again, of a yellowish-brown color, and the margins of this rotulus are well preserved, but T-S K 1.50 is missing small pieces of both margins. The hand on the

¹³ And note that T-S K 1.120 = MTKG III, 60 was dated by its editors to the tenth century.

¹⁴ For the *Treatise of Shem*, see Reimund Leicht, *Astrologumena Judaica: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Astrologischen Literatur der Juden*, [Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Judaism, 21] (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), pp. 45–55 (who mentions both fragments on p. 46). For another rotulus with an astrological text see British Library 5557A 64, published by Tobi (above, n. 4).

recto was dated by Judith Olszowy-Schlanger to the late-tenth or early-eleventh century. Like the Bodleian rotulus, this rotulus too was re-used by a later scribe, whose hand may be dated to the later eleventh century, but this writer used the stitched up pieces of parchment not as a rotulus but as an horizontal scroll, on which magical recipes were written in columns, each some 6–7 cm wide. T-S K 1.50 preserves one full column of text and the end of another, while T-S K 1.133 preserves three columns of text and the beginning of a fourth one. Thus, the verso of both fragments presents the appearance of a parchment scroll—a very unusual occurrence in Genizah magical texts and in non-biblical Genizah fragments in general—but this is due solely to the re-use of an old rotulus.¹⁵ And in this case, the magical recipes are both aggressive and apotropaic (including a recipe for making an amulet), are written mostly in Judeo-Arabic, and display clear signs of a Muslim influence (including a reference to the lost tribes of ‘Ad and Thamud, mentioned in the Qur’an). We may therefore conclude that both in format and in contents this scroll differs greatly from the two magical rotuli discussed above.

Select Recipes from Bodleian Heb. a3.31

These, then, are the Genizah magical rotuli currently known to me, and it is hoped that more fragments of these rotuli, and more Genizah magical rotuli, will be identified in the future. But as my own interests lie less in codicology and more in the magical texts themselves, the rest of the present paper will be devoted to a closer analysis of some of the magical recipes found on the recto of the Bodleian rotulus. Being one of the oldest Genizah magical texts identified thus far, and displaying a long set of magical recipes which are characterized by their purely Palestinian Jewish Aramaic idiom and many Greek loanwords, this collection offers an excellent point of entry into the world of Jewish magic in late-antique Palestine. And as it is devoted almost exclusively to aggressive magic, it allows us a closer look at a set of practices

¹⁵ For non-biblical Genizah scrolls, which are quite rare, see T-S AS 74.324, published by Marc Bregman, “An Early Fragment of *Avot de Rabbi Natan* from a Scroll,” *Tarbiz* 52 (1983): 201–222 (Heb.); T-S K 21.95.S, published by Peter Schäfer, *Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur* [TSA], 6] (Tübingen: Mohr, 1984), G1 (Hekhalot Rabbati).

which are not as well documented as the apotropaic and medicinal magical practices of late antique Jews.¹⁶ To see this, we may focus on five different recipes, of varying length and sophistication, and analyze the magical technologies utilized in each of them. To facilitate future references to each recipe, I have included the line-numbers from my transcription of the entire rotulus; and in the transcription itself, I have used the following conventions:

() Uncertain reading of one or more letters.

= A letter which I could not read.

[] A lacuna in the text, and my reconstruction thereof.

X (bold type) Words which the scribe wrote “in reverse”—i.e., from left to right.¹⁷

a) The second (but first more or less complete) recipe on the recto of Bodleian Heb. a 3.31 is very short and quite obscure, but its great interest lies in its use of a whole Greek phrase, transliterated in Hebrew characters. The recipe itself runs as follows:

1 (סוף מרשם קודם) אין הווה] לך?
2 קופד אמור על קדרה אלין מלייא והדא] אמור?
3 תיאון פ(ג)יזמה קטיגורוס (תחילת המרשם הבא)

1 (end of prev. recipe) (vac) If [you?] have

2 meat?, say over a pot these words and [say] this

3 TY'WN PN?YWMH QTYGWRWS (vac) (beg. of next recipe)

Unfortunately, the aim of this short recipe—which is found at the very top of the rotulus, where much of the left margin was eaten away—is not very clear. If QWPD means “a piece of meat” (from the Greek

¹⁶ For the dearth of aggressive magic in the Jewish literature of Late Antiquity, apart from *Sefer Ha-Razim*, see Philip S. Alexander, “*Sefer ha-Razim* and the Problem of Black Magic in Early Judaism,” in Todd Klutz (ed.), *Magic in the Biblical World: From the Rod of Aaron to the Ring of Solomon* [JSNT Suppl. 245] (London: T&T Clark, 2003), pp. 170–190, whose conclusions will have to be revised in light of the Bodleian rotulus. See also Yuval Harari, “If You Wish to Kill A Man: Aggressive Magic and the Defense Against It in Ancient Jewish Magic,” *Jewish Studies* 37 (1997): 111–142 (Heb.), and Dan Levene’s paper in the present volume.

¹⁷ For this magical practice, common especially in aggressive magic, see Joshua Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition: A Study in Folk Religion* (New York: Behrman’s Jewish Book House, 1939) (repr. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004, with an Introduction by Moshe Idel), pp. 116, 126 and 129; Joseph Naveh, “Lamp Inscriptions and Inverted Writing,” *IEJ* 38 (1988): 36–43.

kopadion), as in rabbinic literature, then we might have here a spell to be uttered over a pot with meat, to make it cook faster, and such recipes are well attested in ancient magical texts.¹⁸ If, on the other hand, QWPD is derived from the Aramaic root QPD, “to be angry,” then we might have another aggressive magical recipe (which would fit the nature of almost all the other recipes in this rotulus), with an aggressive spell uttered over a pot (full of water, which is then poured near the victim’s home?). But be this as it may, the spell to be uttered is extremely interesting, for it consists of three Greek words, and may originally have consisted of four words, with one word now lost at the end of line 2. Of these Greek words, TY’WN is almost certainly Greek, *theos*, “god,” either in the accusative singular (*theon*) or in the genitive plural (*theôn*).¹⁹ The third word, QTYGWRWS, certainly is the Greek *katêgoros*, which is quite common in rabbinic literature (but note how here it preserves the nominative ending, whereas in rabbinic literature it often loses it and becomes קטגור), and means “accuser, prosecutor.”²⁰ The second word, on the other hand, is less certain—it may be the Greek *phainomai*, “I appear, I come,” but is more likely to be *pneuma*, “spirit.” In the first case, the phrase might mean something like “I come as an opponent of the gods,” whereas in the second case we might either assume a missing preposition at the end of line 2 and translate the whole sequence as “among the gods, the spirit is an accuser,” or assume a missing noun (or nothing missing) and translate “(X,) a spirit of gods, an accuser.”²¹ But be this as it may, it seems quite clear that we are dealing here with a short, but complete, Greek sentence, which would be quite like the famous transliterated Greek prayer in *Sefer Ha-Razim*, or the shorter Greek dismissal for-

¹⁸ For קופד, see Samuel Krauss, *Griechische und lateinische Lehnwörter im Talmud, Midrasch und Targum*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1898–99) (repr. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1964), vol. 2, p. 516; Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period* (Bar-Ilan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1990), 2nd ed., 2002, p. 483. For such magical practices, see Hippolytus, *Ref.* 4.33.2, and R. Ganschinietz, *Hippolytos’ Capitel gegen die Magier (Refut. Haer. IV 28–42)* [Texte und Untersuchungen 39/2], (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1913), p. 49, and note a similar practice attributed to Rav Nahman’s daughters in *bt Gitt* 45a.

¹⁹ And note the sequence *theon ha-gadol amona* in MSF, A22, briefly discussed in Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, p. 257.

²⁰ See Krauss, *Lehnwörter*, p. 524; Sokoloff, *Palestinian Jewish Aramaic*, p. 485.

²¹ A search for similar expressions in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* CD-ROM (version E, which also includes the Greek Magical Papyri), came up with nothing that seemed relevant for the present context, although *pneuma theôn* indeed is attested, for example in Philostratus, *VAT* 7.34.

mula found in the same text, or the Greek formulae which are found (together with their Aramaic translations), in the “sword” section of the *Sword of Moses*.²² In all these cases, the reconstruction of the original Greek sequences is hampered by the difficulty of reconstructing Greek formulae transliterated in an alphabet which was utterly unsuitable for this task. In the present instance, the difficulty is further exacerbated by the damaged state of our text and by the uncertainty about the nature of the recipe as a whole (although the presence of *katêgoros* certainly argues in favor of an aggressive context), which makes it less clear what kind of Greek phrase we might expect here. But in all these cases, the very presence of Greek sentences and phrases attests to the extensive Greek influences on the Jewish magical texts of Late Antiquity, including those written in Hebrew and in Aramaic.

b) The second recipe to be analyzed here, which is the fourth recipe on the recto of the Bodleian rotulus, involves an interesting example of a much debated issue in the study of late-antique Judaism, namely, the worship of angels, in this case on a *do ut des* basis, whereby the user of this recipe offers a specific angel various gifts, and explains what he or she would like to receive in return:

- (סוף מרשם קודם) לח] 11
 דאיבר ז' פרתותין ז' בולין דמלח וא(ד) 12
 ואמור עליהון ז' לך אנה קרי פוסיס] 13
 מלאכה רבה הכמה דאנה יהיב לך לחם מן [לחמי] 14
 ומלח מן מלחי וממון מן ממוני כן תתן ל(ש') ו(ש') 15
 ריוי מן ריוך וכיוב מן כיובד ושיקוץ מן (ש) [יקוצד] 16
 וניאוף מן ניאופד וניצוץ מן ניצוצד בשם] 17
 כלקיטס ובשם סמאל סטנה רבה בפריע] 18
 הדן בויכל (תחילת המרשם הבא) 19

11 (end of prev. recipe) (vac) For [...take...]

12 of lead and 7 chunks²³ of bread and 7 lumps of salt and [

13 and say over them 7 times,²⁴ to you I call, PWSYS[

²² For these, see M. Margalioth, *Sepher Ha-Razim: A Newly Recovered Book of Magic from the Talmudic Period* (Tel Aviv: Yedi'ot Aharonot, 1966), pp. 12–13 (Heb.); Claudia Rohrbacher-Sticker, “From Sense to Nonsense, From Incantation Prayer to Magical Spell,” *JSQ* 3 (1996): 24–46; Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, p. 179, n. 92.

²³ For פרתותין, see Syriac *pṛwt'*, “broken bits of bread, crumbs, fragments,” in R. and J. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903), p. 466.

²⁴ For זבנין, see Sokoloff, *Palestinian Jewish Aramaic*, p. 171.

- 14 the great angel, just as I give you bread from my [bread]
 15 and salt from my salt and money from my money, so shall you give
 N[N
 16 a dispute?²⁵ from your dispute? and a pain from your pain and an abo-
 mination from your ab[omination]
 17 and a fornication from your fornication and a spark from your spark;
 in the name of [
 18 KLQYT̥S, and in the name of Samael the great satan, quickly [
 19 this, for pain(?) (vac) (beg. of next recipe)

Unlike the first recipe we analyzed, here there are few problems of interpretation, in spite of the absence of a few letters at the end of each line.²⁶ Here the practitioner is instructed to take lead, bread and salt, all in groups of seven (a common typological number in such recipes), to offer these to an angel, and to ask that angel to dispense some of his special qualities in return and send his dispute, pain, abomination, fornication and spark upon the person's opponent. Such a ritual must be seen in the light of the recurrent claims in ancient Christian literature concerning the Jewish worship of angels, and the recurrent rabbinic condemnations of such practices, which also are attested in *Sepher Ha-Razim*.²⁷ In the present recipe, there is no doubt that the practitioner is appealing to a powerful evil angel, and is offering that angel monetary and alimentary offerings in return for his services. There also is no doubt that the angel is adjured by (the hitherto unattested KLQYT̥S and by) "Samael the great satan," who certainly is seen here as supervising the powers of evil.²⁸ In their search for aggressive powers, some

²⁵ For ירי, see Sokoloff, *Palestinian Jewish Aramaic*, p. 523, for the meaning "appearance, form." Such a meaning is not impossible here, but a meaning influenced by the Hebrew ריב, "strife, contest, dispute," seems more likely. Another possibility would be that the original text read דיין, or דיי, "sorrow."

²⁶ There are, however, some obscure points, such as the meaning of the last word of our recipe, "for pain." This might be a specification of the recipe's aim, "for (causing) pain," and placing a recipe's aim at the very end is paralleled both in this rotulus (in line 64), and in other Genizah magical texts. But in such a case, what should we make of the word לח with which the recipe opens, and which seems to state its aim, "For X"?

²⁷ See Margalioth, *Sepher Ha-Razim*, pp. 10–16; Michel-Yves Perrin, "Rendre un culte aux anges à la manière des Juifs: Quelques observations nouvelles d'ordre historiographique et historique," *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome: Moyen Âge* 114 (2002): 669–700.

²⁸ For Samael, see Gershom Scholem, *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974), pp. 385–388; Günter Stemberger, "Samael und Uzza: Zur Rolle der Dämonen im späten Midrasch," in Armin Lange, Hermann Lichtenberger and K. F. Diethard Römheld (eds.), *Die Dämonen—Demons: Die Dämonologie der israelitisch-jüdischen und frühchristlichen*

Jewish magicians clearly were willing to cross the line separating the worship of the One True God from angelolatry, and even from the worship of the powers of darkness. This does not necessarily mean that our recipes assume a dualistic theology, with Samael as God's opponent, but it does imply that they assume that it is to Samael and his ilk that one should turn when one seeks to harm a fellow human being.

c) Another interesting recipe in the Bodleian rotulus (the eleventh in the extant portion) makes use of a myth which seems to be unattested elsewhere, at least in Jewish sources. This recipe runs as follows:

64 [סוף מרשם קודם] אסר לרוחה]
 65 ואסר אנה ל'ש'ו'ש' כמה דאסירין]
 66 לעלם כן אסיר פ' לעלם וחתים לדרין דריין? ו... לא
 67 יהווי לה מן ברנש בשם אפס פפא נ(ט)
 68 עולמים ובשמה דקטריאל מלאכה דנ(ח) [ת ל...
 69 ענה ולבקרת תורייה ואסר תורין דכרין]
 70 כן אסור זרעה ד'ש'ו'ש' וסילוניה דלא ימר... ו...
 71 דלא תהלך עד זמן דנבעי ונשרי יתה בשן
 72 פצציאל ובשם חצציאל ובשם קטריאל מלאכה
 73 כן אסור לעלם וחתום לדרי דריין וסב מחט דפרזל
 74 ואמור עליה זמ' ז' ובזמנה שביעייה הב ראשה
 75 דמחטה בעוקצה וכרכה בכתן דלא עלת ל(א)
 76 וטמור בזווי צניעה שרייה אפק מחטן לשימשה?
 77 ואשווי מחטה (תחילת המרשם הבא)

- 64 (end of prev. recipe) (vac). A binding for a spirit [
 65 and I bind ŠWŠ just as [] are bound [
 66 forever, so is N bound forever and sealed for all gene[rations]?
 67 shall have from no one. In the name of 'PS PP' NṬ[
 68 forever, and in the name of Qaṭriel the angel who came do[wn for
 69 small cattle and for the herding of bulls, and he bound male bulls [
 70 so shall you bind the sperm of ŠWŠ and his sperm canal,²⁹ that it / he
 shall not [
 71 that she / it shall not walk until the time that we shall ask (for it) and
 loosen him, in the na[me of
 72 Paṣaziēl and in the name of Ḥaṣaziēl and in the name of Qaṭriel the
 ang[el
 73 so bind forever and seal for all generations. And take an iron needle

Literatur im Kontext ihrer Umwelt. The Demonology of Israelite-Jewish and Early Christian Literature in Context of their Environment (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), pp. 636–661.

²⁹ For סילון (Greek *sōlên*, “tube”) used for the sperm canal of the male organ, see Krauss, *Lehnwörter*, p. 383.

- 74 and say (it) over it 7 times, and in the seventh time put the head
 75 of the needle in its tip (sic) and wrap it in linen that did not go into [
 76 and bury (it) in a hidden place. (Its) loosening:³⁰ Take the needle out
 [to the sun?
 77 and straighten the needle out. (vac) (beg. of next recipe)

Like several other recipes in the Bodleian rotulus, this one too seeks to “bind” the male organ of its victim, a common magical practice in Late Antiquity, and one that also was known to, and discussed by, the rabbis of late-antique Palestine.³¹ It does this by way of an adjuration, accompanied by an interesting *historiola* (a mythical event used as a precedent or an analogy for the desired outcome of the magical procedure) and an intriguing ritual whose symbolic meaning is quite manifest. On the ritualistic-symbolical level, we see the practice (attested in other cultures as well) of “binding” a male victim by twisting a needle (whose phallic connotations are quite obvious) and turning it into a closed circle, with its tip inside its own eye (and thus unable to penetrate any other object).³² In this recipe, as in several other recipes in this rotulus and in other Genizah recipe books, and in the *Sword of Moses* as well, we also find instructions on how to loosen this piece of aggressive witchcraft once it is no longer deemed necessary—in this case, by taking the needle out of the dark spot in which it was buried and straightening it up, in the assumption that the same would now happen to the victim’s virile organ. On the mythical side, we have here a reference to the angel Qaṭriel (whose name is derived from the Aramaic root קטר, “to bind” + the standard ending -el, and who appears quite frequently in ancient Jewish magical texts), who came down from heaven to herd small cattle and bulls and “bound” (i.e., castrated?) the male bulls (a well known symbol of virility in many cultures, ancient and modern); just as this had happened *in illo tempore*, so shall the hapless victim be “bound” and rendered impotent as the practitioner wishes. The use of such *historiolae* is extremely common in ancient and medieval magical texts, including the Jewish ones, but whereas most Genizah magical recipes utilize well worn biblical stories as precedents—and especially the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, to

³⁰ For שרייה, see the use of שריא, and דגברא in MTKG III, 61 (= T-S K 1.162), 1c/25–1d/4.

³¹ For the “binding” of bridegrooms, see Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, p. 396.

³² For a possible medieval Latin parallel, see Catherine Rider, *Magic and Impotence in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 145.

which we shall return below—the composer of this recipe made use of a non-biblical, and perhaps even non-Jewish, myth.³³ Further research might shed more light on the possible origins of this myth, which does not seem to be an ad hoc invention but a casual reference to a myth which was circulating in the magician's own world.

d) The last two recipes in the extant part of our rotulus, and therefore also the best preserved, are also the most interesting. The first of these is described as intended to make peace between a man and a woman, but in fact is an aggressive / erotic magical recipe, involving the adjuration and slaughtering of a white cock:

117 (סוף מרשם קודם) למרמי שלם [בין]
 118 גבר לבין איתתה בס כל לונגרת רווח עבשאו (יול)[ע?]
 119 דע אוהד נייחב רומאו אנה פ'ב'פ' משבענה
 120 לך תרגלה בשמה דמלכה עלייא דיתב על
 121 כורסייה דדינה: המך תאד שיכך ינבל השנא
 122 הריעבלו נך שבכתי ש'ו'ש' במאתין מ'ח' אברין
 123 דאית בה ונעמתה תהווי מכיכה קודם פ'ב'פ'
 124 בשמה דכבשיאל דכבש ארעה בחיי(ל)ה ותהומ(ה)
 125 בתוקפיה מלין אמרית עובדין יתעבדון וכ(ל) אשר?
 126 דיברתי יצליח: בסו נולטיף דכסיט וכת' א[לין מלייה
 127 בגוה: בסו דדון גם יונאם הרבנר [בהו היתי
 128 הלטיפכ עוזבו הלגרת הבו (!) הכתך הוינ[ב בהו
 129 (ה)פושן דפיל לגו מעוי וכוף ראשה: הלגנר(ת)[ד]
 130 יעמל רומשו תשרפב התחרוא (ו)[הב?] עלוי כיף
 131 דלא יפק יתה חיווה ואשבע עלוי אלין מלייה

117 (end of prev. recipe) (vac) To make peace [between?
 118 a man and a woman, take a white cock and adjure over it
 119 while it is still alive and say, I, NN, adjure
 120 you, cock, in the name of the exulted king who sits upon
 121 the throne of judgment. Just as you are subdued by men
 122 and by cattle, so shall ŠWŠ be subdued by the two hundred 48 limbs

³³ By way of comparison, I note Mousaieff bowl M163 (edited by Dan Levene, *A Corpus of Magic Bowls: Incantation Texts in Jewish Aramaic from Late Antiquity* [The Kegan Paul Library of Jewish Studies] (London: Kegan Paul, 2003), p. 123): והיכדין קדמאה ודאיתכביש רימון תורא קדמאה “...and just as RYMWN, the primordial bull, was subdued.” I also note the traditions about the eschatological punishment of the Sun and the Moon “like castrated bulls,” as cited and discussed by David J. Halperin and Gordon D. Newby, “Two Castrated Bulls: A Study in the Haggadah of Ka’b al Aḥbār,” *JAOS* 102 (1982): 631–638. One may also go further afield, and cite the stories about Hercules and the bull or the Mithraic motif of the scorpion attacking the bull’s genitals, but such parallels do not seem to elucidate our recipe.

- 123 that are in her, and her tune?³⁴ shall be humbled before NN
 124 in the name of Kabshiel who subdued the earth by his strength and
 the abyss
 125 by his might. Words have I spoken, deeds shall be done, and all [that?
 126 I have spoken shall succeed. And take a tin lamella,³⁵ and write th[ese
 words
 127 upon it. And take a thread from the clothes of the man [and place it
 128 in the lamella and tear the cock apart and place the writing inside it
 [and place
 129 fine flour³⁶ of ??? inside its intestines and twist the head of the cock
 130 to its intestines and bury it at a crossroads. And [place?] upon it a
 rock
 131 so that no animal shall dig it out, and adjure upon it these words.

Once again, we are faced with an aggressive magical recipe, this time intended to subdue a person and make him amorously or sexually submissive to another person of the opposite sex; and once again, the recipe involves both a ritual and an adjuration. On the ritual level, the user is instructed to take a white cock, utter an adjuration over it, tear it apart, and place inside its intestines a tin lamella with the adjuration, a thread from the victim's clothes (what James Frazer would call "magic of contagion"), and fine flour. The cock is then twisted into a kind of a knot (an action which certainly is intended as analogous to what would happen to the victim should s/he fail to comply), and buried at the crossroads, a common location for the practice of magic rituals in many ancient cultures, and perhaps also symbolizing here the desired meeting of the man and the woman.³⁷ The use of white cocks in aggressive magical recipes seems to have been quite common, and one may cite parallels from other Genizah magical texts, from *Sepher Ha-Razim* (for which see Ithamar Gruenwald's paper in the present

³⁴ For נעמנה, see Sokoloff, *Palestinian Jewish Aramaic*, p. 354.

³⁵ For פִּיטְלוֹן, see Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, p. 374, n. 64; for כְּסִיטְרוֹן = Greek *kassiteros*, see Krauss, *Lehnwörter*, p. 556 (where the word is consistently spelled with a *qof*, not a *kaf*).

³⁶ For גִּשְׁוּפָה, see Jonas C. Greenfield, Michael E. Stone and Ester Eshel, *The Aramaic Levi Document: Edition, Translation, Commentary* [Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha, 19] (Leiden: Brill, 2004), p. 82 (= ALD 8:6): גִּישְׁפָּא בְּלִיל בְּמִשְׁחָא; "fine meal (Gr. *semidalin*) mixed with oil," with the editors' note on p. 176 (I am grateful to Matthew Morgenstern for this reference); I am still puzzled by the word פִּיל, but cf. Sokoloff, *Palestinian Jewish Aramaic*, p. 431. Note also the appearance of פִּילֹן as an ingredient in several Jewish magical texts, including Bodleian Heb. a 2.2.

³⁷ For Greco-Roman examples, see S. I. Johnston, "Crossroads," *ZPE* 88 (1991): 217–224, esp. 223–224; for rabbinic examples, see *bt Yoma* 84a; *Pess* 111a.

³⁸ See, for example, Bodleian MS Heb. a.2.2; *Sepher Ha-Razim* I/160–169 (pp. 75–76 Margalioth); Levene, *A Corpus*, M163, p. 122: תַּחֲוֹת הַנָּא תִּרְגְּלָא חִיּוּרָא דִּמְמוֹן ל' יִי? (‘‘under this white cock that is appoin[ted on your beh]alf’’); bt AZ 4a-b // Ber 7a // San 105b, with Gideon Bohak, ‘‘Magical Means for Dealing with *Minim* in Rabbinic Literature,’’ in Peter J. Tomson and Doris Lambers-Petry (eds.), *The Image of the Judaeo-Christians in Ancient Jewish and Christian Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), pp. 267–279.

⁴⁰ And cf. MTKG II, 45 (= T-S K 1.26), 1b/7–8: שמיה קודם ארעה כבש ("Kabshiel, who subdued the earth under heaven and subdued (the) [abyss], [by] and by his power"). The formula is echoed in Levene, *A Corpus*, M163, p. 124: ובשמה דאישו דכבש רומא ועומקא בוקיפה ("And in the name of Jesus, who subdued the height and the depth by his cross").

from the shift from Aramaic to Hebrew in mid-sentence—might be based on some very old Jewish magical formula.

e) The last recipe on our rotulus is in many ways the most interesting of them all. It is yet another aggressive recipe, and involves some exotic ingredients and a well known *historiola*, but this time with a special twist:

אשקיו לרוחה בדיקה סב מיין	132
חטיפין פראהורון מן מבוע ומי של(ק)ה ד(חט)י[א]	133
ומי טלופחין שלוקן ועקר צברה ותונין דח(מ)ר	134
ותונין דתורה אכומה ותונין מן דידך ואמו[ר]	135
עליהן זמ' ז' אתון הנון דינאמיס דאלהא רב[ה]	136
אתון הנון רוחתה דעלמה דהפך אלהא ב[] סדום	137
ועמורה אדמה וצבויים כן תהפכון ותע[ק]רון	138
ותגלון לש'ו'ש' גם התיב נמו הרתא וכל ר[וח]י[ן]	139
ושדין וכל מזיקין דעבידין על סרחונה וע(ל)	140
ועל ערבובה ייתון על פ'ב'פ' ויצערון יתיה וי'	141
יתה ויגלון יתה מן בייתה בשמה דנוריאל והפ[כיאל?]	142
סור(י)אל אל(י)ן ד(מ)שמשינ מלאך מותה' צ(י)ברו מוד[יק?]	143
(ה)תייב (תחילת המרשם הבא)	144

- 132 (vac) A watering for a spirit. Tested?, take fast-flowing?⁴¹ water
 133 PR'HWRWN⁴² from a spring, and water of cooked wh[eat?]
 134 and water of boiled lentils and the root of aloe⁴³ and the urine⁴⁴ of a
 don[key]
 135 and the urine of a black bull and your own urine, and sa[y
 136 over them 7 times, You are the power of the great God,
 137 you are the spirit of the world [by which?] God has overturned Sodom
 138 and Gomorrah Adama and Zeboim, so shall you overturn and uproot
 139 and exile ŠWŠ from his house and from his place and all the sp[irits
 140 and demons and harmers who are in charge of sin and of [
 141 and of turbulence shall come upon NN and shall cause him grief and
 [...
 142 him and exile him from his home, in the name of Nuriel and
 Hap[khiel?

⁴¹ I am not sure what מיין חטיפין really means, but the instruction to use מיים appears in other Jewish magical texts as well, including, for example, the *Shimmush Tehillim* instructions in MTKG III, 81 (= T-S NS 216.23) 1a/12 (and see the editors' note on p. 322); T-S NS 322.95, and several different recipes in MS Sassoon 56 = NYPL 190.

⁴² פראהורון clearly is a Greek word, but I am not yet sure which one, and the transliteration may be somewhat faulty.

⁴³ For צברה, see Syriac *šbr*, "the aloe," in Payne Smith, *Syriac Dictionary*, p. 473.

⁴⁴ For תונין, see Syriac *twñ*, "urine," in Payne Smith, *Syriac Dictionary*, p. 608.

- 143 Suri'el, those who serve the angel of death. And sprinkle bef[ore]
 144 his home. (vac) (beg. of next recipe)

As in the previous examples, this aggressive magical recipe—intended to harm a person and exile him or her from their home—involves both a ritual and a mythical component. On the ritual side, a smelly concoction is prepared from six liquids and a root (the inclusion of which may be due in part to the similarity between “root” (עקר) and “uproot” (here תעקרון), and perhaps also to the similarity between צברה, “aloe,” and רבץ, “to sprinkle”), and once the adjuration is uttered over it, it is sprinkled in front of the house of the intended victim. On the mythical side, we get an elaborate oral adjuration in which the unsavory concoction is equated with the *dynamis* of the great God, and with the spirit of the world by/with which God rained sulfur on Sodom, Gomorrah, Adama and Zeboim and brought about their utter destruction (see Genesis 19). In a similar manner, the magician insists, shall the liquids manipulated here overturn and uproot and exile the victim from his or her home. And as if this was not enough, the spell adds the wish that all kinds of harmful spirits would descend upon the victim and harm him and exile him from his house, and all this in the name of Nuriel (whose name is made of “fire” + -el ending) and probably Hapkhriel (whose name is derived from the root HPK, “to overturn” + -el ending), who are here identified as part of the entourage of the angel of death. The use of Sodom and Gomorrah as a *historiola* in Jewish magical recipes—in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, and later in Judeo-Arabic as well—is extremely common in Jewish magical texts, as is the identification of a substance used by the magician with substances used *in illo tempore* to destroy the troublesome cities.⁴⁵ Similarly, the appeal to the powers of evil should no longer surprise us, as we have found it in other recipes on this rotulus. But the use of the urine of several animals, and of the magician’s own urine, is—as far as I know—quite unattested in the Jewish magical tradition, and proves once again the relatively “daring” nature of the recipes found in the Bodleian rotulus. Finally, the sprinkling of the “adjured” substance in front of the victim’s home, yet another example of “contagious magic,” is well attested in other sources too; whether

⁴⁵ For a fuller discussion of this point, see Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, pp. 312–314.

the stench would have made the victim leave his or her home is quite doubtful, but I suspect it could have made them aware that some foul act was being perpetrated against them.

Summary

To sum up: While rotuli and rotuli fragments are relatively rare in the Cairo Genizah, and magical rotuli extremely rare, those magical rotuli which happened to survive turn out to be of great historical importance. This is especially true of Bodleian Heb. a3.31, which is one of the oldest available Genizah magical texts, is entirely based on much earlier Palestinian Jewish recipes which seem to have been neither “updated” nor censored in any significant manner, and provides important evidence on the aggressive magical practices of the Jews of late-antique Palestine and early medieval Cairo. The significance of this evidence may be highlighted by noting that among many hundreds of Genizah magical texts transcribed within the framework of my research project, not a single one provided as many early Jewish magical recipes in such a good state of preservation and with such a high concentration of very “daring” aggressive magical recipes. Moreover, my search for parallels for the recipes contained in this rotulus did not come up with much, neither inside the Genizah nor outside it, which seems to imply that most of these magical recipes were not re-copied by later Jewish practitioners (perhaps because they were deemed too offensive in their blatant transgressions of some biblical and rabbinic injunctions and in their frequent appeals to the forces of darkness), and would have been utterly lost were it not for the chance preservation of this rotulus. In the future, more fragments of the above-listed rotuli, and of other magical rotuli, might be identified, and further enhance our knowledge of an important stage in the textual transmission of the Jewish magical tradition from Late Antiquity to the early Middle Ages.