

## AN ARABIC VERSION OF “THE SWORD OF MOSES”

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In a recent article, I dealt with an Arabic version of *Sefer ha-Razim*, the manuscript of which I discovered in Egypt in 1973.<sup>1</sup> As I have shown, this Christian Arabic manuscript which bears the title *Sifr Ādam* (“The Book of Adam”) actually contained the translation of three different Jewish magical works. One of these proved to be a version of *Sefer ha-Razim* disclosing striking similarities with the work reconstructed by Margalioth.<sup>2</sup> This offered the general framework for the whole treatise which included two other magical works. One of these was a version of *Ḥarba de Moshe* (“The Sword of Moses”) which, however, did not even mention Moses as the recipient of the *Ḥarba*. The other piece contained many astro-magical elements and revealed a definite relationship to the *Sefer ha-Yashar* (“The Book of Righteousness”). A Jewish manuscript from Yemen which comprises versions of both *Sefer ha-Razim* and *Sefer ha-Yashar* was particularly illuminative in identifying the original source for the astro-magical section in the Arabic text.<sup>3</sup> This Arabic *Sifr Ādam* in its ultimate form might have been the result of the redactional activity of a Coptic priest. In addition to the Christianization of the work, some Islamic influence can also be detected in the text.

Recently, scholarly interest in *Ḥarba de Moshe* has manifestly grown. After a long period of silence, Gaster’s pioneering edition<sup>4</sup> was followed by the publication of another version of the *Ḥarba* by Schäfer together with other pieces of the Hekhalot literature. In his edition of the Hekhalot texts, §§ 640–650 are related to what he calls Gaster’s Recension A, while §§ 598–622 can be connected to Gaster’s Recension B.<sup>5</sup> Yuval Harari’s new edition of the treatise with a comprehensive study on the whole subject may give a new impetus to research

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<sup>1</sup> See Fodor 2006.

<sup>2</sup> See Margalioth 1966.

<sup>3</sup> MS New York 40. I am grateful to Reimund Leicht for this reference. For the edition of the *Sefer ha-Yashar*, see Wandrey 2004.

<sup>4</sup> Gaster 1925–28a (transl.), and Gaster 1925–28b (text).

<sup>5</sup> SHL (text), *ŪdHHL* IV. (transl.), 1–17, 42–50.

on the subject.<sup>6</sup> Claudia Rohrbacher-Sticker's article on deciphering an intelligible Greek text hidden behind a group of seemingly unintelligible *nomina barbara* or *voces magicae* in the *Ḥarba* must also be mentioned in this connection.<sup>7</sup> Although not related directly to the *Ḥarba*, several of Gideon Bohak's articles have relevance for this subject because they deal with the interpretation of the *voces magicae* in the Hekhalot literature.<sup>8</sup> Finally, Klaus Herrmann's paper<sup>9</sup> on the *Tefillat Rav Hamnuna Sava* can be cited, because this magical prayer and its background help to understand better the Arabic "Sword" and its supposed Jewish source.

In the following, I wish to examine this newly discovered Arabic version of the *Ḥarba de Moshe* which could shed light on the birth of the Arabic translation, on the work which might have served as a basis for the Arabic version and on the milieu of their composition. As a matter of fact, the questions raised by the study of the *Ḥarba* are closely related to one of the main concerns of research on the relationship between Jewish liturgy, Hekhalot literature and magical ritual,<sup>10</sup> so it will also be of relevance to show whether the Arabic text offers any clue for the elucidation of some problems in this respect. Since I do not wish to deal with the manuscript tradition of the *Ḥarba* in detail and since the occasional deficiencies of Gaster's edition do not affect my way of research or conclusions, I usually refer to the latter when I quote the *Ḥarba*.

*Sefer ha-Razim* in Margalioth's reconstruction described the seven firmaments with their ministering angels and recorded their names together with the magical recipes which were selected on the basis of the competences of each angelic group. Assessing the importance of the magical element in *Sefer ha-Razim*, it is worthwhile to quote Joseph Dan's opinion literally:<sup>11</sup>

In spite of the fact that this is one of the most methodical and extreme magical works in the history of Jewish literature, it is clear that the

<sup>6</sup> Harari 1997.

<sup>7</sup> Rohrbacher-Sticker 1996.

<sup>8</sup> See e.g. Bohak 1995 and Bohak 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Herrmann 2005.

<sup>10</sup> For the state of research on this subject, see e.g. Naveh and Shaked 1993. 17–31; Shaked 1995, MTKG II, 1–25; Herrmann 2005. 177–179.

<sup>11</sup> Dan 1993, 19.

author regards magic as belonging to an inferior realm. In describing the forces which rule the first and second heavens—the lowest levels—the author goes into great detail about the magical use of the mixtures and incantations that must be used in order for one to accomplish what he seeks. However, as the descriptions ascend to the higher realms of the heavens, the magical element decreases, and for the seventh heaven there is no magical information at all. The message is evidently that the person is able to enlist the aid of the relatively inferior angels, those which are close to our world and in contact with it, whereas the superior forces which are linked to the divine *Merkavah* are above such matters.

In contrast to this pattern, the Arabic version in *Sifr Ādam* separated the cosmological part of the original work from the practical section. Accordingly, at first it presented the description of the seven firmaments enumerating the angelic hosts which were on duty in them, and after that, an independent section of magical recipes revealed the goals for which the angels could be used. Adhering to this general structure, when the first redactor or compiler reached the subject of the seventh firmament he gave a description along the lines of the related section in *Sefer ha-Razim*. However, when he was expected to present the magical recipes using the angels of the seventh firmament he was confronted by the fact that there were no angelic names in connection with the uppermost firmament since it was characterized by the presence of the angelic hosts singing hymns in praise of the Lord. Because of this, he could have suddenly felt himself compelled to include a version of *Ḥarba de Moshe* to repair this deficiency. Evidently, he did not feel himself restrained by the considerations exposed by Dan and ended up by presenting the most detailed magical material of the whole *Sifr Ādam* in connection with the seventh firmament. This surprising procedure could have been perfectly logical from his point of view—namely, in the same way as each of the preceding six firmaments was connected to a certain group of angels, it must have seemed only natural for him that this arrangement must also apply to the seventh. So, at least from the pure dramaturgical aspect the redactor was perfectly correct when he sensed a kind of rupture in the course of the cosmological description that refrained from mentioning any angelic name in this section.

The Arabic "Sword" as the last section of the manuscript starts on page 162 and ends on page 223. The number of lines to the page is invariably 12 in agreement with the former pages. The introductory part reads like this in Arabic:

ص ١٦٢  
 صفة السماء السابعة  
 وهي لسيف الله ويده وهذه الأسماء  
 العظيمة المقدسة التي لها التأثيرات  
 والقوة المعروفة سيف الله طوبي للرجل  
 الذي تكون في صدره ويحفظها بقلب نقي  
 وجسم طاهر فانه يرتفع درجه عن  
 اجناسه الأدمين ويصل الى مطلوباته  
 وينال الدنيا الحسنه والآخرة الصالحه  
 وهو هذا السيف المذكور

In translation:

p. 162

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVENTH FIRMAMENT

And it concerns the Sword of God and His Hand. And these are the Holy, Great Names which have the influences and the power and are known as the Sword of God. Happy is the man in whose breast they can be found and who preserves them with pure heart and pure body because he will be elevated by one grade over his fellow human beings. He will reach his aims and will gain this good world and the other pious world. And this is the afore-mentioned Sword:

This is followed by a long list of *nomina barbara* comprising 215 names, which can be more or less divided into different groups according to certain organizing principles. A number of them reveal the permutations of the Tetragrammaton, others end in *a*, *ay* or *il*, and a third group has the word Š'B'WWT (from the Hebrew *ševa'ot*, "hosts," repeated 8 times) as a dividing component between the different names. Among the recognizable elements we can identify Michael, Gabriel, Rafael, Israel and such familiar expressions as *Adonai*, *Adon*, *El*, *Hu El* ("He is God"), *Ze Hu* ("This is He"), *Gibbor* ("Powerful"). Interestingly, the name S'M SYL'M also occurs in the list which most probably conceals "Semiselman," a well-known name from Jewish magic and the Greek Magical Papyri, and which can be interpreted as *shemi shalom* ("My name is Peace") or as *shemesh 'olam* ("The Sun of the World").<sup>12</sup> The

<sup>12</sup> For its occurrence in a Jewish magical text and for its interpretation, see e.g. SHL § 336, *ÜdHL* III. 3, n.8, MTKG I, 162, (Or. 1080.15.81, 1a/38.), 169; Swartz 1996, 116f; Leicht 1999, 159, n. 57.

last names contain the group M'RY QDŠ'Y' R'Š'NY ML'ḤY' which must be equivalent to *Mari qadshayya rishon malkhayya* (“Lord of the Holy Ones, Chief of the Angels”).

The closing section of this introduction specifies the benefits which the names offer for the person who knows them and wears them—mentioning, among other things, that “he will have /arouse/ dread in the the eyes of the creatures” (*wa-yakūnu lahu hayba fi 'a'yun al-mahlūqīn*). It also prescribes the conditions which must be observed before using the names. First of all, the practitioner must be in a state of purity because the noble names conceal the “Greatest Name” (*al-ism al-'a'zam*). Interestingly, in addition to such well-known prohibitions concerning the consumption of wine and fish it mentions that anything *ṭabiḥ* (“cooked”) or *ḥariq* (“burnt”) is also among the forbidden meals.<sup>13</sup> The reason for this might be looked for in the direct connection that may exist between the “cooked” or “burnt” food and the use of fire for their preparation. This prohibition may imply the reference to a day when labor was forbidden.

It is evident at first sight that this introduction is completely different from the relevant section in Gaster’s edition which starts with the description of the four angels appointed over the “Sword.” We can, however, find a passage of very similar content and tone in the Talmud Bavli which is preoccupied with the transmission of secret lore—namely, the forty-two-letter Divine Name—and stipulates the necessary preconditions for the operation in the following way:<sup>14</sup>

אמר רב יהודה אמר רב: שם בן ארבעים ושתים אותיות אין מוסרין אותו  
אלא למי שצנוע ועניו ועומד בחצי ימיו ואינו כועס ואינו משתכר ואינו  
מעמיד על מדותיו וכל היודעו והזהיר בו והמשמרו בטהרה אהוב למעלה  
ונחמד למטה ואימתו מוטלת על הבריות ונוחל שני עולמים העולם הזה  
והעולם הבא

In translation:

Rav Yehuda said: Rav said: As for the forty-two-letter Name, it must not be revealed except to him who is humble and modest, and stands in the

<sup>13</sup> For the ban on the “cooked,” see a similar case in “The Apocalypse of Abraham” cited by Gruenwald 1980. 100. Contrary to this, a Hekhalot text (SHL §§ 571–578) prescribes the baking of bread, the eating of cooked cake and the drinking of wine: Swartz 1996. 110, 161.

<sup>14</sup> b Qid 71a. For the translation of the text, see Gaster 1925–28a. 295, who treats the text from the aspect of the Name, and understandably does not pay attention to the subject of the “two worlds,” since it does not occur in the *Ḥarba*.

middle of his days /life/, and is not (inclined to get) angry and is not (inclined to get) drunk, and does not insist on his rights. And everybody who knows it and keeps it and guards it in purity will be beloved above and desirable below and dread of him will be imposed on the creatures and he will gain two worlds, this world and the coming world.

Although this passage does not mention the elements of the dietary regime, the reference to the ethical requirements, to the dread felt by fellow human beings toward the chosen person and to the possibility of gaining this world and the future world suffice to disclose a Talmudic provenance for the source of the Arabic text. The idea that the world to come is promised for the pious as a reward for the fulfillment of certain conditions including the knowledge of the secret name must have been a popular idea, since the very same motif occurs in different sources. So, although there is no trace of the phrase in the *Ḥarba* itself, it occurs regularly in the Hekhalot literature.<sup>15</sup>

The importance of the subject can be understood in the light of the efforts to prove that God created two worlds, as shown by a passage in the Babylonian Talmud. At first, it claims that for him who places his trust in God, He will be a shelter in this world and the world to come. Then, to support the existence of these two worlds it says that God created them by using the letter *yud* and the letter *hei* from the name YH.<sup>16</sup>

In connection with the importance attributed to the ethical requirements raised against the recipient of the “Sword,” it is worth mentioning that the influence of the Psalms can also be detected in this respect as shown in another passage.<sup>17</sup> Here, the Arabic version follows almost literally the text of the *Ḥarba*<sup>18</sup> which describes the recipients as men “whose heart is not divided and in whose mouth is no duplicity, who do not lie with their tongues and do not deceive with their lips, who do not grasp with their hand etc.” This wording and the reference to the purity of the heart, the mouth and the hands can be compared to a verse of a similar content in Ps 24:4 which presents the person who deserves to ascend to God in the following way:

<sup>15</sup> See e.g. SHL §§ 377, 500, 705, 712, 940, 952, 953. See also Dan 1993, 68. The idea of the “two worlds” is also present in 3 Enoch x. Cf. also Halperin 1988, 423.

<sup>16</sup> b Men 29b. See also *ŪdHL* III. 266, n. 24.

<sup>17</sup> *Sifr Adam* 192f.

<sup>18</sup> Gaster 1925–28b, 71/34–72/3, and Gaster 1925–28a, 315f.

He that hath clean hands (*naqi kappayim*), and a pure heart (*bar levav*), who hath not taken My name in vain, and hath not sworn deceitfully.

This introduction is followed by the description of 12 magical recipes which usually start with the formula *idā aradta* or *in aradta* ("if you wish") as a literal translation of its Jewish equivalent, *im biqqashta*. The arrangement of the recipes does not seem to disclose a thematically conscious structuring, but the first one is logically placed at the beginning since it wishes to show the practitioner how to decide the success or the failure of a would-be act:

ص ١٦٨-١٦٩

فاذا أردت أن تعلم الشيء ينجح أم لا  
وطريقك مستقيمه ام لا ومهما أردت  
خذ المغليط وهو الحيوان السائب اذبحه  
قدام الشمس وانت تذكر السيف فان  
جاء ذبحه مقلوب الوردين فانت تنجح  
وان لم ينقلب وجاء القطع مستقيماً ايأس  
من ذلك الأمر

In translation:

pp. 168-169

If you wish to know whether the thing will succeed or not and your way is right or not and whatever you wish, take the MĠLYṬ and it is the animal which is gliding along, slaughter it in front of the sun while you recite the "Sword" and if its slaughtering comes with the turning out of the two veins /?/ then you will succeed

but if it does not turn out /?/ and/while the cutting is straight /right/, be in despair because of this thing.

### Commentary

The peculiar character of this recipe is enhanced by the fact that none of the prescriptions in Gaster's versions of the *Ḥarba de Moshe* deals either with this subject or with the sacrifice of an animal for divinatory purposes. Although the description of the slaughter seems to be a literal translation of the original Jewish text, the technical details are not

clear enough to fully understand the whole procedure. Evidently, the position of the two veins (arteries?) after the ritual cutting of the neck plays a decisive role in recognizing the success of the future act or its failure. The scene of the ritual in front of the sun is unique among the recipes of this collection but it is quite familiar in other sources.<sup>19</sup>

The Arabic text also deserves a few remarks. The word *ward* evidently stands for *warīd*, the Arabic equivalent for the Hebrew *varid* (“vein”). The expression *al-warīdayn* refers to the two veins which can be seen after the cutting of the neck. The identification of the animal called MGLYṬ is more complicated. As we can see, the Arabic text tries to interpret it as “the animal which is gliding along.” This would suggest that the translator might have thought of a “mole” (?) but there are a number of animals which could suit this description. In my view, however, the choice of a bird would have been more evident and familiar for the purpose of a divinatory procedure. It seems to be conceivable, and the presence of the consonants ḡ, l, and ṭ may also suggest that the word could have originally stood for the Hebrew *‘ayit* “bird of prey” which has been corrupted to become MGLYṬ in the course of transcriptions by taking the *yud* for *lamed*.

This recipe is immediately followed by another divination text which reveals a case of necromancy:

وإذا وقفت على ميت  
اذكر اسم هذا السيف في اذنه اليسرى  
ولا تنظر إلى وجهه فهو يكلمك وتكون  
عينك إلى الارض وفمك عند اذنه

In translation:

p. 169

If you stumble upon a dead person  
recite this “Sword” in his left ear  
but do not look into his face and he will talk to you while  
your eyes should be /directed/ to the earth and your mouth should be  
at his ear.

<sup>19</sup> See e.g. SHL §§ 621, 646–648, *ÜdHL* IV. 48, n. 4.



*Commentary*

Necromancy was well-known in Jewish magic as not only the *locus classicus* from the Bible (1 Sam 28:7–9) but other examples also attest to its frequent occurrences.<sup>20</sup> There is, however, a basic difference between the biblical description of the practice and the procedure in our text. In the Bible, Saul, defying the prohibition of necromancy (among other pagan practices enumerated by Deut 18:11) asked the witch of Endor to bring up Samuel from the netherworld to hear his advice about the coming battle with the Philistines. Upon Saul's request the witch adjured her familiar spirit who emerged from beneath the earth impersonating Samuel and answered Saul's questions.

In the Arabic recipe the practitioner acts in a more "real-life way" since he deals directly with a corpse from whom he expects to get the required answers by simply whispering the "Sword," the secret Divine Name, into his left ear. On the other hand, the instruction to turn his eyes to the earth may indicate that he was supposed to communicate with the netherworld.<sup>21</sup>

Gaster's version of the *Harba* offers a recipe which could have served as a prototype for the Arabic prescription, as No. 78 shows:<sup>22</sup>

ואם בעית למללא עם מיתא אמר על אזנו דשמאל מן קהוהיהוט עד  
אהישוני ואד נגזריקי ורמי בחורתיהון.

In Gaster's translation:<sup>23</sup>

To speak with the dead, whisper /the *nomina barbara* of/ No. 78 into his left ear and throw into their holes (?).

The first part of the prescription is identical with the one in the Arabic version but the second instruction is completely meaningless. The reference to the "holes" may refer to the orifices of the body (of course, it is not "their" holes but "his" hole that is meant in the text). The context may also suggest that the "Sword" should somehow be allowed to get into the body. In contrast to this rather ambiguous wording, what distinguishes our text is its clear instructions for the practitioner

<sup>20</sup> See e.g. *EJ*, s.v. "Divination."

<sup>21</sup> In a magical rite (SHL § 424) the practitioner is instructed to whisper the names towards the earth, which means that he was supposed to get into contact with the demons (*ÜdHL* III. 182, n. 6).

<sup>22</sup> Gaster 1925–28b, 85.

<sup>23</sup> Gaster 1925–28a, 326.

concerning his position during the performance which are in perfect agreement with the necromantic character of the act.

The third type of divinatory recipe is represented by the following:

ص ١٧٧-١٧٩

وهذا استرتاد لاستحضار  
 من شئت من الأرواح ومخاطبته شفاهياً  
 أقف في الماء إلى عنقك واذكر هذه الأسماء  
 قود نحو نهوا فطنطير سع هطير  
 هلسيه ففعلس فسيلنطقس ظهقيد  
 ليه تنهتس نفع اتقيق قفقهتهنق  
 ينتسوفص سهيمسن عقيق فلمسطي  
 قبردسوس اتعصياه يا هيرزياه يسفر  
 صفنيا انتم أيضاً الملائكة الجليله اقسمت  
 بهذه الأسماء عليكم باسم القدوس الذي  
 ليس له بدل عفوفياه بصفياه جرفيسس  
 رشرهنش بسمعيه هنونياه اسونفطياه  
 هيشتا عشياه يا روح شيم كبور ملحوترا  
 لغولام اهاهين واضاذ ان تفهموني

وتكشفوا الى ما ارشد به وافهم وانظر  
 واحدا منكم ولا يؤذيني في جسمي ولا في  
 عقلي وتعرفوني كيف اصل واحضر من اريد  
 منكم فان كنت طاهر وإلا احذر أن تقترب  
 إليهم ولا تلتفت وإن ارشدك الله ورغبت  
 أن تستحضر شيئاً منهم وتصاحبه فلا  
 تميل إلا لصاحب كوكبك فهو أجود لك  
 واذا أردت أن تصرفه اذكر اسم السيف  
 وهو ينصرف

In translation:

pp. 177-179

And this is the preparation for adjuring  
 whomever you wish from the spirits and for talking to him mouth to  
 mouth:

Stand in the water up to your neck and recite these names:

QWDNḤW NHW FṬNṬMYR S' ḤṬYR  
 HLSYH FF'YS FSYNGṬQS ḌHFYD  
 LYH TNHTMS NF' ṬNQYQ QFQ'HTNHQ  
 YNTSWFṢ SHYMSN ṬYQ FLMSTY  
 QBRNSWS Ṭ'YDY'H Y' HYRZY'H YSFR  
 ṢFNY', you, too, the sublime angels I conjured  
 you by these names, by the name of the Holy One that  
 has no substitute ṬWFY'H BṢFY'H ḠRFSYS  
 RṢRHNSṢ BSM'YH HNWN'Y'H ṬSWNF ṬY'H  
 HYṢṬ' ḠṢY'H Y'RWHṢ ṢYM KBWR MLḤWTR'  
 LḠWL'M Ṭ'H'HYN W'D'D to make me understand

and to reveal for me what I will be guided by and what I will understand  
 and /let me/ see

one of you and do not let him hurt me either in my body or in  
 my mind and let me know how I can reach and adjure whom I wish  
 among you. And if you are pure /it is all right/ but if not, beware to  
 approach

them and do not turn /to them/. And if God guides you and you desire  
 to adjure something from them and to accompany him then do not  
 turn except to your planet because it is more propitious for you.

And if you wish to dismiss him, recite the name of the 'Sword'  
 and he will depart.

### Commentary

The structural analysis of this adjuration presents the following elements:

1. The indication of the aim of the procedure: the request of a personal encounter with an angel.
2. The practitioner is instructed to stand in water up to his neck as a precondition to receiving the angelic being.
3. The recitation of an incantation text which is made up mainly of unintelligible *nomina barbara*.
4. The dismissal of the angel.

Starting from the basic instruction of the prescription, this type of recipe in the Jewish sources can particularly be associated with the adjuration of the *Sar ha-Panim*, the "Prince of the Presence," describing the method by which he can be forced to appear to the practitioner.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> For the adjuration of the *Sar ha-Panim*, see Gaster 1925–28b, 91–93; Gaster 1925–28a, 332–336; SHL §§ 623–639. For the interpretation of the adjuration, see Schäfer 1988, 118–153; Lesses 1995; Swartz 1996, 135–147.

The instruction for the practitioner to bathe as a preparation for the magical act occurs also in other Jewish magical recipes.<sup>25</sup> It is worth mentioning that the Arabic text uses the words *istihḍār* (“wishing someone’s appearance”), *istahḍara* (“to wish that someone appears”) and *aḥḍara* (“to make someone appear”) to express the idea of bringing about the coming of the angel. These terms are of a rather general character, so do not specify the mode of the angel’s arrival which in the Jewish sources is conceived of as a descent. The use of the Arabic word *istinzāl* (“wishing someone’s descent”), a customary technical term in Arabic magical recipes, would have expressed this notion in a more adequate way if this was originally meant.

In the gibberish of the *nomina barbara* only those ending in Y’H for *yah*, as a variant of the Tetragrammaton, can be clearly discerned. The last names, however, composed of Y’RWḤ ŠYM KBWR MLḤWTR’ LḠWL’M Ḥ’HYN W’ Ḍ’Ḍ evidently conceal the well-known blessing *Barukh shem kevod malkhuto le-‘olam va-‘ed* (“Blessed be the Name of the glory of His kingdom for ever and ever”) which also closes the adjuration of the *Sar ha-Panim*.<sup>26</sup> These distorted words in the Arabic text appear as organic parts of the magical names but their original function as a blessing was, of course, totally different. It evokes the ritual on the Day of Atonement when in the imitation of Aaron’s act, the High Priest was supposed to lay his hands over the goat, confess the sins of the people and then send the goat to the wilderness (Lev 16, 21). The High Priest had the privilege of pronouncing the Ineffable Name during the ritual and upon hearing the Name, the congregation responded to it by prostrating themselves and reciting the *Barukh Shem* formula.<sup>27</sup> This also is the blessing which should be recited in a low voice after the first sentence of the Shema.<sup>28</sup> So the occurrence of this expression in a magical text after the recitation of a group of magical names which stand for the Ineffable Name, might be interpreted as a conscious imitation of the Yom Kippur ritual.<sup>29</sup> As a matter of fact, the command for the practitioner to stand in water up to the neck

<sup>25</sup> See e.g. SHL §§ 489, 495, 544, 572, 663. Cf. Swartz 1996, 165f.

<sup>26</sup> Gaster 1925–28b, 93/24; Gaster 1925–28a, 336; SHL § 638. See also e.g. §§ 394, 957, 961, 970.

<sup>27</sup> Yoma 3,8, 4,1–2, 6,2.

<sup>28</sup> *EJ s.v.* “Shema.”

<sup>29</sup> For the occurrence of the *Barukh Shem* formula after the Divine Name or a group of *nomina barbara* (as its replacement) in 3 Enoch, see xxxix 2, xlvi B 1–2, and in other magical texts, see SHL §§ 393, 394, 571, 696, 939, 957, 961; Swartz 1996,

reminds us of another ritual on Yom Kippur when the High Priest was supposed to bathe five times.<sup>30</sup> To emphasize the parallel elements in the magical adjuration and the Yom Kippur ritual, we may also refer to the above mentioned dietary prescription which forbade the consumption of anything “cooked” or “burnt,”—that is, prepared by using fire. Accordingly, this may point to the general prohibition of activities on the Day of Atonement.

Apart from the divinatory texts, there are a number of recipes with a wide variety of contents. The following one, concerning the prescription of a method to shorten the way, represents a favorite subject of both Jewish and Arabic magic termed as *qefiṣat ha-derekh* (“path jumping”) and *ṭayy al-arḍ* (“rolling the earth”) in Arabic.<sup>31</sup> The instruction runs like this:

ص ١٧٣-١٧٧

وإذا أردت أن تطوي الأرض لك  
 وتمشي في ساعه مسيره أيام اذكر أسماء  
 السيف أولا ثم تقول بعده مصهووال  
 ثلاثمائة دفعه وتستحلفه باسم  
 مصهوشهيوان نيقوه قرهويهوه  
 هعريهوه وتموا بهوه بهوه  
 ثم تقول اقسمت عليك يا سبعون  
 رئيسا المتقدمين الخدام قدام العرش وانت  
 هو ميططرون الملك الرئيس الكبير  
 قطنفا قادوش منفيغها تشاه قادوش  
 ناشطرعين قادوش ادزنيفسيه قادوش  
 سعيا صيطس قادوش نهو عمساهط قادوش  
 ستارغيناه قادوش فرانشففين قادوش  
 فيسبعشان قادوش يتحضيا قادوش

118–121; MTKG I, 31 (T.-S. K 1.56, 1a/1–8); MTKG II, 171 (No. 33, 1a/15), 172 (No. 33, 1b/8,13), 248f (No. 42, 1a/41,71–72), 329 (No. 53, 1a/22–24).

<sup>30</sup> Yoma 3,3.

<sup>31</sup> For the *qefiṣat ha-derekh*, see e.g. Verman and Adler 1993/94; Nigal 1994, 33–49; MTKG II, 127 (No. 28, 7b/1–8), 131, 155 (No. 31, 1b/6–18), 159–161; MTKG III, 137 (No. 68, 2b/1–6), 142, 155 (No. 70, 2b/9–13), 159. For the *ṭayy al-arḍ*, see Douitté 1908, 277–279.

فرتباه مالیا قادوش او حطا قادوش  
هنبصا همها فباه قادوش بر نهیغیا حرافباه

قادوش دغنعمصیا قادوش در غغسن  
قادوش قعطفر حیاہ قادوش

اعدو هیصیا قادوش سقر ویلفیا

قادوش طسفو سیقتناش قادوش

قلفیافاط قادوش اتهاماریاه قادوش

وعشطفطیال قادوش تو تعمیاه قادوش

نلفانهاح قادوش قطقیمصیاه قادوش

فیها ینطقاف قادوش کبر عازقیاه قادوش

مذهو هیاه قادوش بر هوترعیاه قادوش

نغمیسیاه قادوش قینشیتغاه قادوش

نقطنیشیناه قادوش اتههو هیاه قادوش

نعراسقنی قادوش هنید فغسانی قادوش

هورراهیاه قادوش قطانتها طفطاس

قادوش غفر وشعضامیا قادوش

شقعغیشهاش قادوش نظر نانا یانین

قادوش بو فاطمیناشیا قادوش

اندر شقاع قادوش فلا تعظفینشینی

قادوش بانغایه قادوش هلمیغیغیاه

قادوش یتفسسیتقیاه قادوش مرینا ققطا قادوش

افنغا سوماس قادوش همیها قفاش

قادوش نقارناه هواه قادوش

قطاطها رابع قادوش بیافیتماس

قادوش هواطرا هننسییاه قادوش

اققاش قادوش قنشقسقاء قادوش

طهاطیاه قادوش فیها شعاع قادوش انشعافیق

قادوش قفاقمها بهتوا قادوش سیلیرمفاص

قادوش فیها هفو حسبناق قادوش قلمسطا

قادوش قفاقیقا قادوش هتا قادوش

طتمار قطلیوا بوغیا قادوش قیاقیاطاس

قادوش هاجوعا يقطور قادوش  
 قنا نقشوه قادوش ثم تقول اقسمت  
 عليكم ايها الملائكة الذين اسمائهم ذكرت  
 عليكم ان تحملوني بسرعه الى البلد الفلانيه  
 ثم تمشي نحو البلد التي تقصدها فتوصل اليها  
 في ساعه واحده

In translation:

pp. 173-177

If you wish to roll the earth for you  
 and to walk the distance of days in an hour, recite the names  
 of the "Sword" at first then say after it MSHWW'L  
 three hundred times and you should adjure him by the name of  
 MSHWŠHYW'N NYBQWH QRHWYHWH  
 H'RYHWH WNQMW' YHWH YHWH.  
 Then you should say: I adjured you, O Seventy  
 Chiefs, the Forerunners, the Servants in front of the Throne and you  
 who are Meṭaṭron, the King, the Chief, the Great  
 QṬFN' Q'DWŠ MNFYĠYH' TŠ'H Q'DWŠ  
 NN'ŠTR'YN Q'DWŠ 'DZNFYSYH Q'DWŠ  
 S'Y ŠYṬS Q'DWŠ NHW 'MS'HT' Q'DWŠ  
 ŠT'RĠYN'H Q'DWŠ FR'NŠFFYN Q'DWŠ  
 FYSB'S'N Q'DWŠ YQHḌY' Q'DWŠ  
 FRTB'H M'LY' Q'DWŠ 'WHṬ' Q'DWŠ  
 HNBS' HHM' FB'H Q'DWŠ BRNHYĠY' ḤR'FY'H  
 Q'DWŠ DĠNF'MŠY' Q'DWŠ DRĠFĠSN  
 Q'DWŠ Q'ṬFR ḤY'H Q'DWŠ  
 'DWHY'SY' Q'DWŠ SQR WYLFY'  
 Q'DWŠ ṬSEW SYQN'S Q'DWŠ  
 QLFY'F'Ṭ Q'DWŠ 'TH'M'RY'H Q'DWŠ  
 W'ŠṬFTY'L Q'DWŠ TWT'MY'H Q'DWŠ  
 NLF'NH' Q'DWŠ QṬQYŠY'H Q'DWŠ  
 FYH' YNṬQ'F Q'DWŠ KBR'ZQY'H Q'DWŠ  
 MDHWHY'H Q'DWŠ BRHWTR'Y'H Q'DWŠ  
 NĠMYSY'H Q'DWŠ QYNŠYTĠ'H Q'DWŠ  
 NṬṬNYŠYN'H Q'DWŠ 'TFHW ḤY'H Q'DWŠ  
 N'R'SFN'Y Q'DWŠ HNYDFĠS'NY Q'DWŠ  
 HWRR'HY'H Q'DWŠ QṬ'THT' ṬṬṬ'S  
 Q'DWŠ ĠFR WŠ'D'MY' Q'DWŠ  
 ŠQ'YĠYŠH'S Q'DWŠ NṬRN'N'Y'NYN  
 Q'DWŠ BWF'FTFY'N'SY' Q'DWŠ  
 'NDRŠQ' Q'DWŠ FL'T'ZFYŠNY  
 Q'DWŠ B'NYĠ'YH Q'DWŠ HLYMYĠYĠY'H

Q'DWŠ YTFŠYTYQ'H Q'DWŠ MRNY'QTQ' Q'DWŠ  
 'FNG'SWM'S Q'DWŠ HHYHN' QF'S  
 Q'DWŠ N'Q'RN'H HW'H Q'DWŠ  
 QṬ'TH' R'B' Q'DWŠ BY'FYTM'S  
 Q'DWŠ HW'TR' HNYSY'H Q'DWŠ  
 'QQ'S Q'DWŠ QNŠQSQ'H Q'DWŠ

TH'TY'H Q'DWŠ FYHM' Š'' Q'DWŠ 'NFY 'FYQ  
 Q'DWŠ QF'Q'H'YHTW' Q'DWŠ SYTYR MFŠ  
 Q'DWŠ FHM'HFWHŠBN'Q Q'DWŠ QLMST'  
 Q'DWŠ QQ'QYQ' Q'DWŠ HT' Q'DWŠ  
 ṬTM'R QṬLYW' BWĠY' Q'DWŠ QY'QY'T'S  
 Q'DWŠ H'ĠW' YQTWR Q'DWŠ

QN'NQŠWH Q'DWŠ. Then you should say: I have adjured  
 you, O Angels whose names I have recited  
 upon you that you take me speedily to this and this city,  
 then you should go toward the city which you desire and you will reach it  
 in one hour."

### Commentary

Gaster's text also includes a recipe (No. 93) of this kind, but it says only that a certain group of *nomina barbara* should be recited over a lotus reed for the sake of shortening the way.<sup>32</sup>

Similar prescriptions in the Genizah material refer mainly to Jacob's case as it is related in the Talmud, which presents the biblical story about his return from Haran to Beer Sheba in the following form:<sup>33</sup>

As to Jacob, our father as it is written, 'And Jacob went out from Beer Sheba and went to Haran' (Gen. 28:10) and it is said, 'And he lighted upon a certain place and tarried there all night, because the sun had set' (Gen. 28:11). When he got to Haran, he said: 'Is it possible that I have passed through a place in which my ancestors have prayed, and I did not say a prayer there?' He wanted to go back. As soon as the thought of going back had entered his mind, the earth folded up (*qafaṣ*) for him. Forthwith: 'He lighted upon a place.' (Gen. 28:11)

In the Genizah recipes Jacob's story served as a case of reference, and as a kind of *historiola* was thought to be enough to guarantee the repetition of the same occurrence for the practitioner.

Seemingly, our Arabic recipe is more elaborate in the details and its main elements present a well-defined structure:

<sup>32</sup> Gaster 1925–28b, 85; Gaster 1925–28a, 326.

<sup>33</sup> b San 95a–95b, Talmud 1985, 121 (transl.).



1. The announcement of the aim to be reached.
2. The adjuration proper composed of
  - a. the 'Sword'
  - b. a single magical name recited 300 times
  - c. a group of other *nomina barbara*
  - d. another group of 70 magical names
3. The declaration of the success of the procedure.

This success is technically assured if one knows the appropriate names.

The text, however, is not completely unequivocal as to the addressee of the adjuration. At the beginning, the presence of a masculine 3rd person singular pronominal suffix (*tastahlifuhu*) would imply only one angelic being, but at the end the whole group of angels is adjured (*aqsamtu 'alaykum*). The main protagonist in this angelic community is definitely Meṭaṭron who appears as the head of the angels ministering in front of the Throne. It is thus possible that the adjuration was directed to him disguised behind the singular personal pronominal suffix and then all the angels serving under him were called upon to ensure the efficacy of the invocation.

The word Q'DWŠ separating 70 names is a clear reference to the main element in the heavenly liturgy, the *qadosh* of the *Qedusha*, the Trisagion as described in Is 6:3. The number 70 has multiple importance and can also be connected to Meṭaṭron himself. The redactor of the Arabic "Sword" might have felt himself absolutely justified by giving an eminent place to Meṭaṭron when he wanted to populate the Seventh Firmament with the angelic hosts performing the *qedusha*. According to 3 Enoch, God gave a throne to Meṭaṭron and seated him on it at the gate of the Seventh Hekhal; when Rabbi Yishma'el met him there Meṭaṭron disclosed to him that he had 70 names in conformity with the 70 languages of the earth.<sup>34</sup> In addition, the number of angels who represented the different nations in the heavenly community and who were put under Meṭaṭron's authority was again 70.<sup>35</sup> They might

<sup>34</sup> 3 Enoch x 2. Meṭaṭron's seventy names are enumerated in xlviij D. For Meṭaṭron's privileged place in the heavenly hierarchy, see 3 Enoch, Intr. 79–90. For his praise in the Hekhalot literature, see e.g. SHL § 389. For a reference to his seventy names in magical texts, see e.g. SHL § 387; MTKG I, 164 (Or. 1080.15.81, 1a/107), 173 (T.-S. 8.275, 1b/1–2).

<sup>35</sup> 3 Enoch iii 2, xlviij C 9, SHL §§ 295, 405. For Meṭaṭron's importance, see also Halperin 1988, 417–421.

have been concealed behind the figures of the angels who served at the Throne under the guidance of Meṭatron in our Arabic text. The importance of the number 70 is further enhanced by the fact that God Himself had 70 names.<sup>36</sup> The word *ra'īs* among the epithets of Meṭatron in the Arabic text: *al-malik al-ra'īs al-kabīr* (“the King, the Chief, the Great”) properly reflects its Jewish equivalent in his titles as *rosh le-kohanim* (“Chief of the Priests,” High Priest) or *rosh ha-mahanot* (“Chief of the Encampments”) which appear in magical texts.<sup>37</sup>

The following spell about the crossing of the sea is remarkable because it seems to be a version of a similar prescription in Gaster’s text labelled as No. 76. The Arabic text runs like this:

ص ١٦٩-١٧٠

وإن أردت أن يهرب الماء من  
 قدامك ويصير موضعه كالبر وتمشي فيه  
 اكتب هذه الأسماء مع السيف وأطرحها في  
 أربع جهات الماء وأنت تقول وقت  
 تكتبها وتطرحها هذه الأسماء أفيسند  
 دادود اقرسطا طيبون ايش رستود  
 وقرسيا ولافحوزاهد  
 وهذه الأسماء التي تكتبها وتطرحها في  
 الماء هادوناى نب غميص اودنيا  
 وسيطار فخصص فإن الماء يهرب إلى  
 داخل البحر فاذا عبرت فيه تقول أنت  
 عابر ولا تلتفت إلى ورائك فإن الماء يرجع  
 خلفك إلى موضعه بسرعه يوليه ابغراسر  
 بهيه هيهي

In translation:

pp. 169–170

And if you wish that the water run away in  
 front of you and its place become as the dry ground and you walk on it,

<sup>36</sup> 3 Enoch xlviii D 5, SHL § 948.

<sup>37</sup> MTKG I, 164 (Or. 1080.15.81, 1a/106,110), 170, 173 (T.-S. 8.275, 1a/22, 1b/3). See also Orlov 2005, 113–115.

write these names with the 'Sword' and throw them in the four directions of the water while you should say at the moment when you write them and throw them these names: 'FYSND

D'DWD 'QRST'TBYWN 'YŠ RSTWD  
WQRSY' WL'FHWZ'HD.

And these are the names which you should write and throw them into the water: H'DWN'Y NB ĠMYD' 'WDNY'  
WSYT'RFHDŠ. Then the water will run away to the innermost of the sea. And when you cross it you should say /the names/ while you are crossing and you should not turn behind you, and the water will return behind you to its place speedily YWLYH 'Y ĠR'SR  
YHYH HYHY.

The original Jewish-Aramaic version is formulated like this:<sup>38</sup>

76 אם בעית למעבד בימא כביבשתא אמ' על ד' קרנואי דסודרא בכר  
כסא חד קרנוהי נקוט בידך וחד קרנוהי ייזיל קדמך ואמ' מן גסמס ועד  
אפסומת.

In Gaster's translation:<sup>39</sup>

76. If thou wishest to pass dryshod through the sea, say upon the four corners of the head-dress (turban) No. 76, and take one corner in thy hand and the other is (?) to precede thee.

### Commentary

It is evident that the Arabic version is simpler but definitely much clearer in its instructions although it does not say how the names should be written. The Jewish-Aramaic recipe appears to be more elaborate, but the prescription to take a corner of the head-dress in the hand and then to follow it seems to be a bit enigmatic. First of all, if it is really about the practitioner's head-dress, in the given situation it would be technically too difficult to take it off and then follow the instructions. Another interpretation, however, is also possible if we suppose that not the head-dress but the traditional prayer shawl, the *tallit*, was meant by the *sudra* and the client was instructed to grasp one of the four fringes, the *šīšit*-s attached to it. The magical importance of the *šīšit* is

<sup>38</sup> Gaster 1925–28b, 84.

<sup>39</sup> Gaster 1925–28b, 325.

well-known,<sup>40</sup> so it is quite acceptable to think that one of the fringes played the role of the practitioner's guide through the sea.

It would be too misleading to compare this procedure to the description of Jesus's walking on the Sea of Galilee (Mt 14:25–26). Apart from the similarity of the aims concerning the crossing of water, the realization is totally different. Jesus was represented as walking effectively on the sea while the magical recipe helped the practitioner to part the waters in front of him (literally he pushes the waters back). So the prototype of the act must be sought in the story of the Exodus when the waters of the Red Sea were divided and Moses and his people could cross the sea on dry ground (Ex 14:21–22). What is worth mentioning in this respect is the fact that the Arabic text does not contain the slightest hint of this event.

On page 180 of the Arabic manuscript starts the version of the *Ḥarba de Moshe* proper which seems to correspond more or less to Gaster's text. The transition from the preceding section to this is solved in a very clever way, and again the "dramaturgically" conscious redaction must be emphasized. As a matter of fact, there is no real introduction in the well-known version of the *Ḥarba* because it starts rather abruptly with the announcement that four angels are appointed over the "Sword." The redactor of the Arabic recension simply presents another magical prescription in the list of recipes, which says that he who wishes to be elevated to a higher position among people should know the names of the four angels appointed over the "Sword." As for the preconditions to use the 'Sword', in addition to the general ethical and dietary requirements mentioned already in Gaster's Recension A, our text also requests the eating of *ḥalāl* ("permitted") food with salt as the sign of a covenant.<sup>41</sup> This peculiar instruction must be an echo of such biblical prescriptions which order that all food offerings should be made with salt (Lev 2:13).

Similarities occur particularly in the historical introductory parts preceding the recipes which, however, reveal significant differences both in their number and in their content. In spite of the parallel passages which describe how the "Sword" will be revealed to the perfor-

<sup>40</sup> For the *ṣiṣit* as amulet, see *EJ* s.v. "zizit."

<sup>41</sup> *Sifr Adam*, 183. For an instruction to eat one's bread with salt in SHL § 560, see Swartz 1996, 161.

mer of the adjuration, the structure of the Arabic version appears to be composed in a more coherent form. The revelation of the "Sword" comes as the result of a threefold adjuration (called *Ṣalāt Yad Allāh*, "The Prayer of the Hand of God"), one form of which is represented by this passage:

ص ٤١٩-١٩٦

ثم ارجع واذكر القسم

دفعه ثانيه باسمه تقسم وبالله تنجح ما  
تطلب فطوبى لمن يهديه الله تعالى الى ذلك  
ويوفقه فيه وهذه اسماً الملائكة

الذين يخدمون بني آدام عن امر يهوه خالق  
الكل سبحانه ثم يسلم له سر السيف وهذه  
اسماً الملائكة المذكوره الجليله وهم اجلال

السمأ السابعة ميظطرون سفر ريشيه

ميظطرون سبحو نيشتايل ونصيقخايل

ويغوا يستقايل وانقسايل وانشيشفايل

وهفتغصايل وميخايل وجبرايل وستقصيست

وهد قرونتايل واتهاسجا اليهودايل

وتيزر تشصيايل وتيسهايل وغيغي

ويغوقصيايل ونهر جطحعميايل ويحفيانهايل

واقنغلويايل قهنيفقتيايل وهذه القسم

تقوله بعد صلاة السيف وتذكر اسمائهم

وتقول استحلّفكم بمن تخدمونه هو هديزيرون

بهوهوهديزيرون هو هي هذه هد

نيريرون هو ان تقبلوا مني تجيبوني

ولا اصلي الا هذه الدفعه الواحده

وتقضوا حاجتي بهذا السيف وتذكر

ما اردت كما تصنعون مع كل من يقرب

اليكم ويشرف ذكره باسم العزيز القوي

فاعل العجائب. ثم تذكر الأربعة الملائكة

وهم شنفد وهورين مرجوايل مططروس

وهزرعيون وتقول أقسمت عليكم

باسم يه هو هديزيون أن تقبلوا  
 مني ولا أصلي غير هذه الدفعة الواحدة  
 وتقصوا حاجتي بهذا السيف وتذكر ما أردت  
 باسم المتعال هذا هو هو سفر هو  
 هيه يه.

In translation:

pp. 194–196

Then return and recite the adjuration

a second time, by his name you should adjure and by God you will  
 succeed in whatever

you request. And happy is he whom God—May He be exalted—guides  
 to this

and makes him succeed in it. And these are the names of the angels  
 who serve the sons of Adam on the order of YHWH, the Creator  
 of Everything—May He be praised. Then he should transmit the secret  
 of the ‘Sword’ to him and these are

the names of the afore-mentioned, glorious angels. And they are the  
 glorious ones

of the seventh firmament: Meṭatron SFR RYDYHH

Meṭatron SBḤW NYFT’YL WNSYQH’YL

WYĠW’ YSTQ’YL W’NQS’YL W’NŠYŠF’YL

WHFQTĠS’YL WMYḤ’YL WĠBR’YL WSQŠYST

WHDQRWNT’YL W’THSĠ’ LYHW’YL

WTYZR TŠY’YL WTQYSH’YL WĠYĠY

WBĠWQQDY’YL WNHR ĠTH’MY’YL WYḤFY’NH’YL

W’QTĠLW’YL QHNYFFTY’YL. And this is the adjuration,

you should say it after the prayer of the ‘Sword’ and you should recite  
 their names

and you should say: I adjure you by Him whom you serve, He is HDYZY-  
 RWN

BHW He is HDYZYRWN, He is HY HDH HD

NYRYRWN, that you accept (from) me and answer me

and I shall not pray except this one and only time

and fulfil my request by this “Sword”—and you should mention

whatever you wish—as you do with everybody who comes near

to you and honours His mentioning /?/ by the name of the Powerful,  
 the Strong.

the Maker of Miracles. Then you should mention the four angels

and they are ŠFDWHWRYN MRĠW’YL MṬTRWS

and HRZ’YWN and you should say: I have adjured you

by the name YH, He is HDYZYRWN that you accept

(from) me and I shall not pray except this one and only time

and fulfill my request by this ‘Sword’—and you should mention whatever you wish—  
by the name of the Most High, this is HWH HWH SFR, He is  
HYH YH.”

### *Commentary*

If we examine the different elements of this multiple adjuration it becomes clear that basically it resembles the components of the adjuration of the *Sar ha-Panim*, the “Prince of the Presence.” It reflects the structure of the relevant passages in Recension A and Recension B of the *Ḥarba*, but these relate the revelation of the “Sword” in a somewhat different form and they do not give the impression of the same logical structure that can be found in the Arabic “Sword.” The Arabic redaction gives a distinguished place to the threefold division of the heavenly hierarchy represented by the three angelic groups. Following the arrangement of the *Ḥarba*, the first group consists of four angels, then comes a group of five and finally a group of three which occupies the lowest position in the Arabic version.<sup>42</sup> Seemingly, the adjuration repeated three times wishes to correspond to these three groups.

The main elements of the Arabic text can be summed up in two basic points: at first, the practitioner applies for the revelation of the “Sword”; then, having received it, he can ask for the fulfilment of his request with its help. Again, it is not quite clear who is addressed at the beginning to reveal the secret; we can only suppose that *Meṭaṭron* is called upon and referred to by the 3rd masculine singular pronominal suffix. The fact, however, that the adjuration must be repeated three times and the practitioner even menaces the heavenly hosts that he will stop his supplication if he does not get a hearing, indicates that there is an enmity on the part of the angels toward the human being. Finally, he has to make recourse to the use of the Divine Name by the force of which the angels cannot refuse his request any more—because in this case they must take it as if God Himself had asked them.

This scene may recall a similar event in 3 Enoch when God has to declare that whatever *Meṭaṭron* says in His name the angels have to obey. The text relates that when Moses reached the 7th Hekhal during

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<sup>42</sup> *Sifr Ādam*, 193–198.

his heavenly ascent, Meṭatron wanted to disclose secrets to him but the angels opposed this and at first were inimical toward the human being whom they considered impure. In the end, under the pressure of God's interference they had to give their consent and Moses received the secret of memorizing the Torah.<sup>43</sup>

The next passage which cannot be found in Gaster's versions is particularly interesting because elements of a Jewish liturgical song of praise can be pieced together on the basis of the corrupted Arabic text:

ص ۲۰۲-۲۰۳

- ۱ لي شيم يهوه
- ۲ افراها بوعدول ليالا هيوال فاعلولي
- ۳ حل دراغوا مشقطل امونا اين عول
- ۴ صديق دياشسارهو يا يهيمي جنود
- ۵ يهوه لقولام بشماخ يهوه بماعسا
- ۶ ووياروخ بيشنم كودي ولقولام
- ۷ وبمالام جنود واق كل ها ارض ائي
- ۸ من ياروخ شنيم كندر ملخوال
- ۹ بتوال بقولام دهاديبي سموخاي
- ۱۰ وقيام لقولام ياروخ هوهاخ مالاچيم
- ۱۱ وقادوش قدشيم تنوعوز تموقثمت
- ۱۲ مهدوه وغفواوخابور هويه اوهه
- ۱۳ جاد عليوان ياوايه يهي هيلين ملخا
- ۱۴ مابه باخش به متالا ياروخ
- ۱۵ صوري حدوب وغوش شينم

In transliteration:

pp. 202-203

1. LY ŠYM YHYH
2. 'FR'H' BW'WDL LY'L' HYW'L F'LWLY
3. HL DR'GW' MŠQT'L' MWN' 'YN 'WL

<sup>43</sup> 3 Enoch xlvi D 7-10. This "secret" is also interpreted as the secret knowledge of letters and Names (3 Enoch, Intr. 177).



4. ṢDYQ DY'ŠS'R HW Y'YHYMY Y ḠNWD
5. YHWH LQWL'M BŠM'H YHWH BM'S'
6. WWY'RWḤ BYŠNM KBWDY WLQWL'M
7. WBM'L'M ḠNWD W'Q KL H' 'RD 'NY
8. MN Y'RWḤ ŠNYM KBDR MLḤW'L
9. BTW'L BQWL'M DH'D YHY Y SMW H'Y
10. WQY'M LQWL'M Y'RWḤ HW H'H ML'ḠYM
11. WQ'DWŠ QDŠYM TNW'WZ TMWFTMT
12. MHDWH W'FW'W H'BWR HWYH 'WHH
13. ḠD 'LYW'N Y'W'YH YHY HLYN MLḤ'
14. M'BH B'ḤŠ BH MT'L' Y'RWḤ
15. ŠWRY ḤDWB WḠWŠ ŠYNM

The reconstructed Jewish liturgical song might have looked like this:<sup>44</sup>

כי שם יהוה	1
אקרא הבו גדול לאלוהינו אל גדול	2
כל דרכיו משפט אל אמונה ואין עול	3
צדיק וישר הוא יה יהי מיי כבוד	4
יהוה לעולם ישמח יהוה במעשיו	5
וברוך שם כבודו לעולם	6
וימלא כבודו את כל הארץ אמן	7
ואמן ברוך שם כבוד מלכו	8
תו לעולם ועד יהיי שמו חי	9
וקיים לעולם ברוך הוא מלך מלכים	10
וקדוש קדשים חנון חנונים	11
מהדוה ועפואו גבור הוא יה אוהה	12
חד עליון יאו איה יהי הוא איש מלח	13
מה ברוך	14
צורי וירום ועוש שינם	15

In translation:

1. "For the name of the Lord
2. I will proclaim, Ascribe ye greatness unto our Lord,"<sup>45</sup> "Great God,"<sup>46</sup>
3. "for all his ways are justice, a God of faithfulness and without iniquity,
4. just and right is He,"<sup>47</sup> YH YHY from God. "May the glory
5. of the Lord endure for ever, let the Lord rejoice in His works."<sup>48</sup>

<sup>44</sup> I am grateful to Dora Zsom for her help in identifying the Jewish sources.

<sup>45</sup> Deut 32:3

<sup>46</sup> This compound occurs also in the first benediction of the *Shemone Esre*, the "Eighteen Benedictions."

<sup>47</sup> Deut 32:4

<sup>48</sup> Ps 104:31

6. "And blessed be His glorious name for ever
7. and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen,
8. and Amen."<sup>49</sup> "Blessed be the name of his king-
9. dom for ever and ever."<sup>50</sup> "YHYH is his name, Living
10. and Eternal forever."<sup>51</sup> Blessed be He, king of kings,
11. saint of saints,<sup>52</sup> compassionate of the compassionate ones,
12. MHDWH W'FW'W Almighty, he is YH 'WHH
13. One, "Most High"<sup>53</sup> Y'W 'YH YHY, He is "man of
14. war"<sup>54</sup> BH B'HS BH MTL' "blessed be
15. my Rock; and exalted be"<sup>55</sup> WGWŠ ŠYNM

### Commentary

In theory, this passage should have been found in the published versions of *Harba de Moshe* (Recension A and SHL §§ 640f) since both the preceding lines and the following part run parallel with the original and present more or less the same unintelligible *nomina barbara*. Its exact place should have been among the names of the "Sword" between HDRS' and HYDRST' but none of the texts of the three edited versions contains it.

As we see, the components of the text can be traced back to the Bible, Midrash, Mishnah and the *Shemone Esre*, and they represent the permanent formulae in the magical adjurations. Some elements deserve particular attention. The blessing in lines 6–8 is identical with Ps 72:19 ("And blessed be his glorious name: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen and Amen"). It also has a close parallel in the heavenly liturgy of Is 6:3 ("Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory").<sup>56</sup> Following this, lines 8–9

<sup>49</sup> Ps 72:19

<sup>50</sup> See above, nn. 27, 29.

<sup>51</sup> Tanhuma, Parashat Ve-ethanen, No. 6, dibbur ha-mathil: *al-tosef*. For their occurrences in magical texts, see e.g. MTKG II, 133 (No. 29, 1b/2).

<sup>52</sup> These kinds of epithets structured in the form of a *status constructus* are frequent in Hekhalot literature in the form of double construct states like *melekh mal-khei ha-melakhim* or *qedosh qedoshei ha-qedoshim* (for the latter see also *ŪdHL* IV, 29, n. 4) like in SHL § 631. The constructions *el elohim*, "god of gods" and *adon ha-adonim*, "lord of the lords" in a slightly corrupted form can also be found in the Arabic "Sword" 180.

<sup>53</sup> This epithet occurs also in the first benediction of the *Shemone Esre*. See also Gen 14:18–20, 22; MTKG II, 219 (No. 38, 1b/8).

<sup>54</sup> Ex 15:3; MTKG II, 219 (No. 38, 1b/7).

<sup>55</sup> Ps 18:47, cp. also 2 Sam 22:47.

<sup>56</sup> For its occurrences in Hekhalot literature, see e.g. SHL §§ 183, 951, 966.

present the *Barukh Shem* formula, the standard element of the magical adjurations.

The epithets *ḥay ve-qayyam* (“living and eternal”) frequently appear as a pair but apart from their occurrence in the Midrash, the expression *shmo ḥay ve-qayyam* (“His name, living and eternal”) is the closing phrase of one of the blessings, the *ma‘ariv ‘aravim* to be recited after the Shema: מעביר יום ומביא לילה יהוה צבאות שמו. חי וקיים (“He makes the day pass and he brings the night, Lord of hosts is *His name. Living and Eternal*, may He rule upon us for ever and ever”).<sup>57</sup>

Doubtless, the most questionable expression in this tentative reconstruction is the interpretation of TNW`WZ TMWFṬMT as ḤNWN ḤNWN YM in Line 11. In theory, only its context—preceded by two similarly formed *status constructus*—and the rhythm of the letters would suggest such a highly hypothetical solution. It is a fact, however, that the name *ḥanun* (‘compassionate’) is another frequent epithet of God<sup>58</sup> and the combination of the consonants themselves with the presence of similar letters like the *t* (which could have easily been copied from a Hebrew quadrate *ḥ*), the *w* and the *m* may also indicate the plausibility of this identification. At any rate, even if this is not the case, we still have another pair of two magical names which can perhaps be related to TFṢMT and TFSNRNY in Gaster’s edition (listed under Nos. 33 and 44).<sup>59</sup>

The Arabic text of the “Sword” ends with these lines:

ص ٢٢١-٢٢٣  
والسلام على ملائكتك

المؤيدين المنصورين سلام على خدامك  
المرشدين المتهجين سلام على خدامك  
المباركين وعلى خدامك العظماء الطاهرين  
المقدسين المخوفين الأقوياء المعظمه  
النيره الكارويم المسرعين في الرسائل

<sup>57</sup> For the popularity of this double epithet, see also 3 Enoch xv B 3; SHL §§ 558, 592, 976. For its occurrences in magic, see MTKG I, 153 (Or.1080.5.4, 1a/13); MTKG II. 133 (No. 29, 1b/2), 177 (No. 34, 1a/17).

<sup>58</sup> See e.g. Ex 34:6, SHL § 362 and particularly § 572, MTKG II. 97 (No. 25, 1b/2), 100, 219 (No. 38, 1b/10).

<sup>59</sup> Gaster 1925–28b, 77 (1/12, 9/1, 9/12).

والمخوفين الذين هم في صورة الوحش  
والأسد والثور وفي صورة آدم وسلام  
على ملائكته النهار والليل والساعات  
والأزمنة والشهور والسنين والأدوار  
والأكوان. والفصول سلام على ملائكته  
السبع سموات والسبع العساكر  
والأثنى عشر برجا سلام على سائر

سائر الأرواح الذين لأربع جهات  
العالم المشرق والمغرب والشمال  
واليمين سلام على كل الأرواح الذين  
يشكرون ويخدمون القادر خالق الكل  
ورحمته على الكل سلام على ايرفيوقس  
وخدامه سلام على ملائكته السبعة  
أيام وكل ملائكة القادر أمين  
تم سفر الخفايا والحمد لله على الدوام  
ما دام الليل والنهار بسلام  
من الله  
آمين

In translation:

pp. 221–223

And peace be upon Your angels,

who are giving support, the victorious. Peace be upon Your servants,  
the guides /to the right way/, the happy. Peace be upon Your servants,  
the blessed, and upon Your servants, the great, the pure  
the saint, the frightening, the strong, the glorified  
the shining, the Cherubs, hurrying with messages,  
and frightening, who are in the figure/s/ of the beast,  
the lion and the bull and in the figure of man and peace be  
upon the angels of the daytime and the night and the hours  
and the times and the months and the years and the cycles  
and the events and the seasons. Peace be upon the angels of  
the seven firmaments and the seven encampments  
and the twelve zodiacal signs. Peace be upon

the rest of the spirits who belong to the four directions of  
the world, the East and the West and the North  
and the South. Peace be upon each of the angels who

thank and serve the Almighty, the Creator of Everything and His mercy be upon everything. Peace be upon 'YRFYWQS and his servants. Peace be upon the angels of the seven days and each of the angels of the Almighty. Amen.  
 'The Book of the Secrets' ended. And glory be to God permanently as long as there is night and day in peace from God.  
 Amen.

### *Commentary*

This closing passage is totally different from the end of the edited versions of the *Ḥarba*. First of all, as can be expected from a work which describes the Seventh Firmament and is deeply influenced by the description of the heavenly scene in Is 6:3, it blesses the host of angels who minister in front of the Throne. In this context, when it speaks about the Cherubs which appear as "beast, lion, bull and man" and which have not been mentioned earlier, it refers evidently to the four faces of the Cherubs in Ez 10:14 or of the *ḥayyot*, the four "living creatures" in Ez 1:10.<sup>60</sup> Naturally, the lists of the four figures are not completely identical and the change of the original "eagle" for *wahš*, "beast" in the Arabic text is hard to explain. In addition to this, the four Cherubs here are represented as independent figures; in this respect they resemble more the four living creatures in Rev 4:7.

Another new element appears with 'YRFYWQS who was not mentioned until this last section, and it is not clear who is hidden behind this undeciphered name. What seems to be evident is his leading position in the heavenly community. On this basis, even Meṭaṭron could be concealed behind the name since his importance was manifest in the quoted passages. The name 'YRFYWQS could have been the result of a multiple mis-transliteration of Meṭaṭron's name written in quadrate characters.

Apart from these blessings on the protagonists of the liturgical scene in the Seventh Firmament, the redactor greeted all the angels who served in the other firmaments and also those who appeared in the astro-magical section. On the one hand, this was in conformity with his redactional technique on the basis of which he considered each of the

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<sup>60</sup> For the occurrence of the *ḥayyot* with the different faces in the Hekhalot literature, see e.g. SHL § 954.

originally independent three works as organic parts of what he called *Sifr Ādam*, (“The Book of Adam”). On the other hand, however, this time he referred only to the *Sifr al-Ḥafāyā* (“The Book of Secrets”), the Arabic equivalent for *Sefer ha-Razim*, saying that it was finished. By this statement he seemingly reconfirmed his own claim that the description of the Seventh Firmament with all the angels and the *nomina barbara* must represent the closing chapter of one and the same work, let it be called *Sifr Ādam* or *Sifr al-Ḥafāyā*.

### Conclusions

From all that has been said above, some basic points can be put together to form a general idea about the Arabic version of the *Harba de Moshe*. We can also arrive at some remarks which may help us to better understand the background of the original magical treatise and the governing principle that motivated its composition.

The most striking characteristic of the Arabic text is that the name of Moses as the receiver of the revelation of the “Sword” is totally missing. In the Arabic version the whole section comes under the headline *Sayf Allāh* (“The Sword of God”) but the name *Yad Allāh* (“The Hand of God”) is also mentioned as its equivalent. In spite of this, however, the appearance of Meṭaṭron in the text several times and the evident importance attributed to his figure might suggest that he could have been considered as the revealer of the “Sword.” A kind of special relationship between the “Hand of God” and Meṭaṭron is signalled by the text which says that God placed His Hand on Meṭaṭron’s head.<sup>61</sup> The connection between Meṭaṭron and a special group of magical names called *ḥarba* (literally “lance” in Arabic) must have been a well-known idea in the Arabic milieu. A chapter in the famous magical encyclopaedia, the *Šams al-Ma‘ārif* written by al-Būnī (d. 1226 CE), speaks about different *ḥarba*-s attributed to Meṭaṭron, ‘Azrā’il, Yūša‘ (Joshua, whose *ḥarba* was identical with Meṭaṭron’s) and a certain ‘Abd al-Qayyūm (referred to as *falaku l-šams*, “sphere of the Sun,” perhaps a mistake for *malaku l-šams*, ‘the angel of the Sun’).<sup>62</sup> The text makes it clear that these *ḥarba*-s are composed of the names of angels who are appointed over the different firmaments. So, Meṭaṭron’s *ḥarba* contains the

<sup>61</sup> SHL § 957

<sup>62</sup> al-Būnī, *Šams* III, 93. Cited by Vajda 1948, 389; and Harari 2005, 298, n. 25.

names of the angels of the 3rd firmament because the *Šams* assigns him this firmament. This magical cosmology must have been influenced by the *Sefer ha-Razim* since this section of the *Šams* also alludes to the *Sifr Ādam*, "The Book of Adam," as one of its sources.<sup>63</sup>

The word *Sayf* in itself as the name of a large group of *nomina barbara* is understandable because it reflects the original meaning of the word *ḥarba* in the sense that Moses used the divine names in the form of a powerful adjuration as a real sword.<sup>64</sup> The Jewish equivalent of the other expression, "the Hand of God," which occurs also in the *Harba*<sup>65</sup> on several occasions is in perfect harmony with this idea since it symbolizes God's power as attested by a number of biblical verses.<sup>66</sup> The appearance of God's hand on different synagogal representations indicates that this symbol was generally known and accepted in this sense in spite of its possible anthropomorphic connotations.<sup>67</sup> As a matter of fact, judged by the frequent occurrences of the expression *Yad Allāh* in the Qur'ān,<sup>68</sup> the image of the 'Hand of God' might have been among the ideas that could have been easily acceptable in an Islamic milieu.

Not only was Moses ignored, but any other hint that could be directly connected to a definite Jewish background disappeared. Accordingly, such elements of the Jewish-Aramaic version of the *Harba* as the emphasis placed on the role of Moses, the mentioning of the names of Rabbi 'Aqiva or Rabbi Yishma'el, the explicit reference to the *Sar Torah* or *Sar ha-Panim* complex or to the Israelites, or even to the God of the Israelites came to be simply "censored out."<sup>69</sup> The reason for this can most probably be explained by the person of the editor.

<sup>63</sup> al-Būnī, *Šams* III, 94. A *Sifr Dī l-Qarnayn*, "The Book of Alexander the Great," is also mentioned here among the sources.

<sup>64</sup> Harari 2005, 298, 301; Herrmann 2005, 198.

<sup>65</sup> Gaster 1925–28b, 70/31, 72/7,9, and especially 93/18 which says *Mashbia' ani alekha be-yamin qadosh*, ("I conjure thee with the right hand of sanctity," Gaster 1925–28a, 336). See also *Sifr Ādam* 221.

<sup>66</sup> Ex 15,6. The "hand" as a symbol is particularly popular in the Psalms: Ps 17:7, 20:6; 44:3; 60:5; 63:8; 91:7.

<sup>67</sup> For the "Hand of God," see Bar Ilan 1993. For an amulet with the "Hand of God" from the 3rd–5th centuries CE, see Goodenough 1953. 219, Fig.1024. For the symbolism of the "hand" in general, see *Jewish Symbols* 70f.

<sup>68</sup> See e.g. Q 3:73; 5:64; 9:29; 48:10; 57:29.

<sup>69</sup> For the procedure of "censoring in" and "censoring out" certain elements of a text, see Hoffman 1981.

In this respect, the question of the date of the work must also be raised here. Without going into details, I think the data offered by Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist*<sup>70</sup> when it mentions a *Sifr Ādam* claimed by the Jews, can be accepted as *terminus ad quem*. As for the *terminus post quem*—we have a much wider range of time. Regarding Gaster's Jewish-Aramaic recensions, I think he might have been right when he advocated the idea that quite a number of the components could be traced back to the first centuries CE, notably to the world of the Greek Magical Papyri.<sup>71</sup> He also rightly emphasized the parallels in the structuring of the *Ḥarba* and the Papyri.<sup>72</sup> The *Ḥarba* starts with the description of the heavenly hierarchy, continues with the elaboration of the *nomina barbara* and finally presents the magical prescriptions. In a very similar way, the Papyri present the following arrangement: cosmogonical section—unintelligible names—magical recipes. Thinking, however, of the Arabic "Sword" and particularly of its Jewish-Aramaic source, I agree with those opinions which are inclined to place the final redaction of the Jewish work in the second half of the first millenium.<sup>73</sup> This can be particularly valid of the work that served as the source for the Arabic version. The numerous connections to the different pieces of the Hekhalot literature and its milieu seem also to support this supposition. As I will try to show, the Geonic Period and Mesopotamia as the place could have been particularly appropriate to the emergence of the Arabic version.

Starting from this assumption, we may suppose that the redactor could have been an opponent of official Rabbinic circles from within the Jewish community who wanted to write an independent treatise void of any closer indication of the direct Jewish connection, because he had a larger public in mind. This work could have served as a basis for an Arabic translation either by the same person or another member of his community dealing with magical practices. As for his religious preferences, he could have been somebody who favored Meṭaṭron's paramount role and his elevated position which was second only to God. With this attitude he might have opposed Rabbinic circles who wished to lessen Meṭaṭron's importance. An evident sign of this is that his name occurs only three times in the Talmud.<sup>74</sup> As a matter

<sup>70</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist* 379.

<sup>71</sup> Gaster 1925–28a, 311; Rohrbacher-Sticker 1996, 46 also supports this idea.

<sup>72</sup> Gaster 1925–28a, 308.

<sup>73</sup> *ÜdHL* IV. X–XII, Harari 2005. 296f. See also Wandrey 2004, 9.

<sup>74</sup> *EJ* s.v. "Meṭaṭron."



of fact, the redactor was right when he emphasized Meṭaṭron's role as the revealer of the secret and ignored Moses as its recipient, since 3 Enoch firmly established this view.<sup>75</sup> He could also have been a Jew who converted to Islam, who wished to transmit a definitely important and popular work to his new coreligionists in a form that had to be modified according to their taste. Whatever the case was, the use of Arabic as the vernacular of the transmitting medium was a good choice since everybody must have understood it. Although the final redaction of the complete Arabic version in view of the characteristically Egyptian allusions and expressions in the text (which do not occur in the *Ḥarba*) can be attributed with most certainty to a Copt, it seems highly improbable that he could have been its original translator or even redactor. The skill manifested in the elimination or the "censoring out" of the non-desired elements from the text, the deep knowledge of biblical and Talmudic lore, the consequent adherence to some basic points in creating a unified work from three different pieces—all of these would contradict this hypothesis.

As we have seen, the unified character of *Sifr Ādam* was assured by the inclusion of the *Ḥarba de Moshe* material into the general framework of *Sefer ha-Razim* as the description of the Seventh Firmament. A further technical procedure to create the impression of one single work was offered by the use of a few permanently recurring expressions like *ṭūbā li-l-raḡul* ("happy is the man"), the Arabic equivalent for the Hebrew *ashrei adam* throughout the text.<sup>76</sup> Limiting ourselves to the examination of the *Ḥarba de Moshe* section in our Arabic version we can delineate the following main elements in presenting the material:

1. Description of the conditions required for the use of the "Sword" (concerning the performer's physical and spiritual purity, his eventual acts or bodily positions, the timing of the procedure)
2. The prescription proper consisting of:
  - a. the announcement of the concrete purpose
  - b. the recitation of the "Sword" (the *nomina barbara* representing the Divine Name) to adjure the angels serving the names

<sup>75</sup> See above, n. 43.

<sup>76</sup> In addition to the above cited introductory passage of the "Sword" (*Sifr Ādam* 162), see also *Sifr Ādam* 179, 184, 194, 199, 200, 201, 221.

- c. the recitation of a certain liturgic formula (the *Barukh Shem* blessing)
- d. the dismissal of the angels

This consciously followed structure gains a deeper sense with the help of an exceptionally illuminating source of the Geonic Period which had already been used by Gaster, but the importance of which has never been assessed in its real dimensions to the best of my knowledge. Since Gaster was too keen on showing the ancient origin of the *Harba* and its relationship with the world of the Greek Magical Papyri, he did not pay enough attention to the milieu in which the formation of the magical material received its final shape. The source in question is the Responsum of Hai Gaon (d. 1037) which he sent to the Jewish community in Qairouan answering their questions about certain customs which must have been familiar to everybody at that time.<sup>77</sup>

From the letter of the community we may assume that these acts could have been quite easily considered as magical procedures and this is why they were so anxious to get the Gaon's answer. At first they inquired about some magical practices, but their main problem concerned a general phenomenon. Putting their cautiously formulated question in a more direct way, they wanted to know whether it is acceptable if a man who protects the Name in purity and is just, old, has a broken heart and praiseworthy qualities, presents his request during prayer and then pronounces that particular Name in the moment when "YY" (the Name of the Almighty) should be said at the end of the prayer or blessing.

To summarize the Gaon's answer I have picked out the basic points from his Responsum in the following arrangement because they seem to be the most relevant for our subject:

ויש דברים שאי אפשר היותם כל עיקר כאשר אמרתם כי יש שאומ' שם  
ומחביאין עצמם מן הלסטים.  
ויש בהם עוד דברים אחרים ומהם כי [שם] זה אתה אומרו על המת  
והוא חיה.  
אבל למר משה הכהן ז"ל היו טוענים כי היה רגיל בקמיעין ובלחישות  
וכיוצא בהן  
ובישיבת סורא היו דברים הללו רחבים כי הם קרובין למדינת בבל ובית  
נבוכדנצר ואנו רחוקים משם. וקפיצת דרך אינו מן הדברים שאי אפשר

<sup>77</sup> *Teshuvot*, No. 115. For a partial translation of the text, see Gaster 1925–28a, 300–302.

והנוסחים שראיתם הרוצה לעשות כך וכך יעשה כך וכך הרבה מאד יש  
אצלנו מזאת כאשר נקרא ספר הישר ואשר נקרא חרבא דמשה אשר  
תחלתה ארבעה מלאכים ממונים על החרב כי יש בה גבהות ונפלאות  
ובספר הנקרא רזא רבה חוץ מן המחותרות והפרטים שאין להם קץ ולא  
מספר

כאשר אמרתם כי יש ספרים ושמות וחותמות והיכלות רבתא (והלילות)  
[והיכלות] זעירתא ושר תורה ומשניות אחרות שהרואה אותם מתפחד  
מהן וכך היו קדמונינו ואף אנחנו כן שאין אנו מגיעין אליהם אלא בטהרה  
וברתת ובזיע וגם שמענו שמועות חזקות כי כמה נתעסק[ו] בהם ואבדו  
מהרה

וגם יש בזאת תשובה לאשר שאלתם מי שרוצה להתפלל ולהתחנן בו היאך  
אומר כי כבר נגלה שאסור לאמרו  
במקומותינו ומקומותיכם ועוד מי יודע היאך יאמר ושמה יטעה האומר  
טעות גוררת עון. ואעפ"כ במקום שראוי לאמרו לא יכשר לשומו בכלל  
ברכה אלא האומר סודר אותו ואומ' אחריו תהלה שבת וזמרה כסדר שיר  
כסא ותובע צרכיו מלפני המקום.

In translation:

And there are things which are absolutely impossible, as you have said  
that there are /people/ who say a name and they hide themselves from  
the thieves.

And there are also other things in them, and from these is that this /  
Name/ you say over the dead and he becomes alive.

But in connection with Mar Moshe ha-Kohen—may his memory be  
blessed—they claimed that he was well (familiar) versed in the amulets  
and the adjurations and similar matters.

In the yeshiva of Sura were these things common because they are near  
to the city of Babel and the house of Nebukadnezar but we are far from  
there. But the *qefīṣat derekh* / "path jumping"/ is not from the things  
which are impossible.

And the copies /of texts/ that you have seen about the one who wishes  
to do such and such a thing, should do such and such a thing, /there/  
are very many from these among us, like the one called *Sefer ha-Yashar*  
("The Book of Righteousness"), and the one called *Ḥarba de Moshe*  
("The Sword of Moses") the beginning of which is that four angels are  
appointed over the "Sword" because there are excellent and miracu-  
lous things in it as there are in the one called *Raza Rabba* ("The Great  
Secret") apart from the pieces and fragments that have no limit and can-  
not be counted.

As you have said that there are books and names and seals and *hekhlat  
ravta (helelot)* ("Great Palaces") and */hekhlat/ ze'irta* ("Small Palaces")  
and *Sar Torah* ("Prince of the Torah") and other *mishnayot* ("teach-  
ings"). He who sees them is afraid of them, and so were our ancestors,  
and so are we that we do not touch them unless in purity and in trem-  
bling and shivering. And we also heard strong rumors that some people  
dealt with them and they died soon.

And there is in it a response to what you have asked about him who wishes to pray and to supplicate with that /Name/ and how he should pronounce it. Since it has already been declared that it is forbidden to pronounce it in our places and in your places. And to that, who knows how it should be pronounced and maybe he who pronounces it makes such a mistake which entails a sin. In spite of this, in such a place where it is appropriate to pronounce it, it is not correct to include it in some blessing. But he who pronounces it should arrange it in /a special/ *seder* ("order") and should say after it praise /Psalm/, laudation and glorification like the *seder* of the Throne Song and after it he should ask his request from the Almighty.

From this summary the following picture arises about the Gaon's personal views concerning the questions of the Qairouan community: He flatly refused to give credit to such magical procedures which pretended to be capable of making someone invisible or raising the dead but he seemed to accept the possibility of the *qefiṣat derekh*, "the path jumping". He also acknowledged that there were people like a certain Mar Moshe ha-Kohen who dealt with amulets and magical adjurations indicating that the questions posed to him reflected everyday problems not only for the Qairouan community but also for his own coreligionists. More important, however, is what he says about the most popular magical works in use and about the technique generally applied in magical procedures.

From the evidently high number of magical works and fragments (which might have been separate magical prescriptions scribbled occasionally on pieces of some writing material) he deemed it necessary to cite the *Sefer ha-Yashar* and the *Harba de Moshe*, and in this order. Although the Gaon did not mention *Sefer ha-Razim*, the first component in our *Sifr Ādam*—and it might, of course, be a sheer coincidence—it is certainly interesting that the redactor of our manuscript included these two treatises in his work in the very same arrangement. It is also remarkable that the Gaon referred to the pieces of Hekhalot literature (*hekhalot ravta* and *ze'irta*) together with the magical books revealing the existence of the close connections between them.

As for the description of magical procedures, at first he warned against uttering the /Ineffable/ Name in supplications, emphasizing that nobody knew how to pronounce it in a correct form. On the other hand, however, he approved of its use on condition that it was included in a special *seder* imitating the liturgy of the Throne Song and was followed by the recitation of different kinds of songs of praise. Here, he might have had in mind the parallel scenes of the heavenly

liturgy as they were described in the Hekhalot literature in the following form:<sup>78</sup>

כי את' כוננת' בכסאך שירה וזמרה שיר ושבח הלל וזמרה תהלה ותפארת ונצח.

In translation:

Because You directed on Your Throne song and song of praise, song and glorification, exultation and song of praise, and praise and glory and jubilation.

Or in another place:<sup>79</sup>

ויפתחו בשיר וקילוס תהלה שירה וזמרה ברכה שבח והלל

In translation:

And they burst into song and rejoicing, praise, song and song of praise, blessing, glorification, and exultation.

It is striking that the Gaon uses the same technical terms (*tehillah*, *zimra*, *ševaḥ*) as the Hekhalot texts to designate the different kinds of hymns, so the literally identical phrasing cannot be a coincidence.<sup>80</sup> This also means that he practically described existing and widely spread practices. Actually, the main elements we can bring together from the different magical recipes seem to comply with the Gaon's advice in every respect. In the quoted magical prescriptions, the "Sword" which was supposed to contain the Ineffable Name or appeared as the Name itself, was followed by the *Barukh Shem* blessing or other liturgical components as we have seen in the case of the reconstructed hymn of praise.

We have tried to show that the general structure of the magical procedures based on the use of the *nomina barbara* or *voces magicae* (containing the Ineffable Name) followed by a liturgical element (the *Barukh Shem* blessing) could be discovered equally in the Hekhalot literature, the Jewish magical texts and in the different recensions of the *Ḥarba* including the Arabic version. Speaking about the influence of liturgy on the magical rituals, an important formula of the Arabic text must not be left unnoticed.

<sup>78</sup> SHL § 594.

<sup>79</sup> SHL § 974.

<sup>80</sup> 3 Enoch also uses these terms, see *e.g.* i 12, xv 20, xlviii A 2.

We have to refer again to the Arabic expression starting with *tūbā li-l-raḡul* (“Happy is the man”) which, as we have seen, regularly appears in the text of the three components of *Sifr Ādam*.<sup>81</sup> This expression is not only a literal translation of the Hebrew *ashrei adam* (“Happy is the man”) used as a simple stylistic device, but again indicates the presence of a very consciously selected liturgical element. It can be related to the use of the Psalms in the *Ashrei* prayer<sup>82</sup> made up of Ps 145 and some other verses (see especially Ps 84:13) which are read both in the morning and in the afternoon services. The different pieces of the Hekhalot literature also attest to the conscious use of this characteristic expression. Suffice it to cite here two of its occurrences, traces of which can be recognized in the Arabic “Sword.”<sup>83</sup>

אבל אשרי אדם יודעו ומזדהר בו זוכה ויורש לחיי העולם הבא  
לפיכך אשרי אדם המשתמש ברז זה יקדיש אותו בקדושתו

In translation:

But happy is the man who knows it, and takes care of it, he deserves and inherits the life of the coming world.

And for this, happy is the man who uses this secret and sanctifies it in its sanctity.

For the sake of comparison we can pick out the following two phrases from the Arabic text:<sup>84</sup>

فظوي لمن عرف سر هذا السيف  
فظوي لعارف ذلك

In translation:

And happy is he who knows the secret of this Sword.

And happy is he who is knowing that.

The first statement from the Hekhalot text is particularly interesting since it combines elements of the *ashrei* formula with reference to the world to come. This was the motif that appeared in the Arabic recension, the origin of which could be discovered in the Babylonian Talmud

<sup>81</sup> For its occurrences in the “Sword,” see 162, 179, 184, 194, 199f, 201, 221.

<sup>82</sup> *EJ* s.v. “Ashrei.”

<sup>83</sup> SHL §§ 712, 821. See also *ÜdHL* II, 57. For the *ashrei* formula see also Wandrey 2004, 302.

<sup>84</sup> *Sifr Ādam* 179, 201.

as attested to in the above quoted passage.<sup>85</sup> These kinds of phrases, however, together with the particular liturgical background connected to them are missing from the existing Jewish-Aramaic versions of the *Ḥarba*. In contrast, the Arabic work and its supposed Jewish-(Aramaic) origin show again the influence of the redactor's imposing knowledge of Rabbinic and mystical lore and his manifest insistence on using the characteristic terminology.

Another type of expression interwoven in the text of the whole Arabic *Sifr Adam* including the "Sword" is construed on the pattern of "God *does* what He *wants*" such as the following: *Allah—tabāraka wa-ta'ālā—yahdī man yašā'u* ("God—May He be blessed and exalted!—guides whom He wishes") or *Allah yu'tī li-man yašā'u* ("God gives to whom He wishes"). The background can possibly be looked for in such verses of the Psalms as 115:3 (*Velohenu ba-shamayim kol-ḥafeṣ 'asa*, "Our God is in the heavens, everything He wished, He did") or 135:6 (*Kol asher-ḥafeṣ YHWH 'asa*, "Everything YHWH wished, He did"). These formulae may point again to some liturgical usage. Here, however, another consideration may offer itself for exploring a new layer in the influences that effected the Arabic revision of the Jewish source, and this may also point to the supposed Islamic connection of the redactor. Notably, one cannot ignore the parallel phrasing that connects these characteristic expressions to such almost literally identical Qur'anic verses as *Allāhu yaf'alu ma yašā'u* (Q 3:40 "God does what He wants"), *wa-l-Lāhu yahdī man yašā'u* (Q 2:213 "and God guides whom He wishes") or *wa-l-Lāhu yu'tī mulkahu man yašā'u* (Q 2:247 "and God grants His sovereignty to whom He wishes").

The review of the influence of the liturgical elements on the magical procedure cannot be complete without indicating that the instructions given to the practitioner prescribed not only what he was supposed to recite but also what kind of bodily position he had to take. Several passages describe that the angels who minister in front of the Throne participating in the heavenly liturgy direct their faces downward as a sign of respect and humility.<sup>86</sup> As if to imitate their position, the performer of the magic rite is also advised to bow his head and turn his face towards the earth, and finally to prostrate himself at the end of his supplication.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>85</sup> See above, n. 14.

<sup>86</sup> See, e.g., SHL IV. § 966.

<sup>87</sup> *Sifr Adam* 172, 181f, 191.

The question arises: What could have been the reason for making such drastic changes in the *Ḥarba de Moshe*? As we have seen, the Arabic text—or better said, its Jewish source—has amply drawn on Hekhalot material and 3 Enoch. According to Schäfer’s opinion, the main issue of the Hekhalot literature must be sought in the magical adjuration and not in the mystic’s heavenly journey, since the mystic wanted to control the “Prince of the Torah” (*Sar ha-Torah*) by magical means to gain perfect knowledge of the Torah and protection against forgetting it. Closely related to this was the mystic’s ambition to take part in the heavenly service centered upon the recitation of the *Qedusha* and hymns of praise to realize a kind of liturgical communion with God.<sup>88</sup>

The *Ḥarba* used the magical techniques and methods of the pious mystic but surpassed his primary aim by far. This meant that the original setting came to be ignored and the knowledge of the Ineffable Name in the form of a fascinating number of *nomina barbara* was supposed to help the practitioner in realizing his most varied goals by pure magic. The Arabic adaptation attests that there must have been a revised version of the *Ḥarba* which took a further step on the way of giving the contents an even more general character when it “censored out” all the direct references that could have been related to a specific Jewish background or even to the Hekhalot literature.

As a result of this purificatory zeal, such characteristic elements of the Hekhalot literature as the word *hekhal* itself, or *merkava* (“chariot”) together with such protagonists as Rabbi ‘Aqiva, Rabbi El’azar, Rabbi Nehemia or Rabbi Yishma’el—some of which appear also in the *Ḥarba*—have been eliminated. *Shamayim*, however, represented by *al-samā’ al-sābi’a*, “the Seventh Firmament,” has been given a prominent place in the structure of the Arabic work and its Jewish source. Similarly, as we have seen in the closing section, the reference to the Cherubs has preserved another favourite Hekhalot subject<sup>89</sup> which did not appear in the *Ḥarba* in this form.

As we have seen, the adjuration of the *Sar ha-Panim* has greatly influenced the structure of the invocations in both the *Ḥarba* and the Arabic “Sword”. As if to complete this picture, Ḥai Gaon’s Responsum

<sup>88</sup> Schäfer 1993, 233f.

<sup>89</sup> See e.g. SHL § 954.



actually explained why such liturgical elements as the *Barukh Shem* had to be included in the magical procedure. The Hekhalot literature, the different redactions of the *Harba* and the Arabic "Sword" illustrate how his description was put into practice. We have also seen that the use of these liturgical components could be interpreted in the light of the ritual on the Day of Atonement. In this respect, we might also say that the most dramatic change concerned the main protagonist of the original scene, the High Priest of the Temple liturgy. This development brought about the elimination of his role; on the other side, the change also helped to proliferate or even to "democratize" an element in the Temple liturgy—namely, the act of pronouncing the Ineffable Name by the High Priest on Yom Kippur and responding to it through the recitation of the *Barukh Shem* by the congregation was relegated to a new actor, the magician. This means that according to the opinion of the redactor or compiler of the text, the magician could play the role of the High Priest—and that, not only on a special occasion but at any time and at any place in case of need. Then, following this course, the role of the professional magician could have been performed by anybody else who claimed the knowledge of the Names and had the necessary expertise in using them to achieve the desired goal.

This phenomenon as a sign of a kind of "democratization process" shows well the dual character of the magical act. On the one hand, it is characterized by exclusiveness because it is limited to a certain group of chosen persons, the initiates. On the other hand, however, it tends to be democratic since anybody can easily fulfill the requirements which are necessary to be able to perform the magical rite.

The structure of these names which compose the "Sword" present a further peculiarity of the Arabic version. As we have seen, the Gaon clearly distinguished two elements in the procedure of the supplication: the recitation of the (Ineffable) Name and the liturgical elements which should follow it. The different prescriptions of the Arabic work, and in particular the reconstructed liturgical song of praise, show that these two independent elements have been merged together, and the originally intelligible liturgical component became part of the *nomina barbara*. It is worthwhile to take a look at the long history of the latter and at the process of transformations which they underwent.

*Hekhalot Zutarti* considered the epithets in Cant 5:10–16 as Divine Names and initiated a pattern to express them in a proper form by using the word *ševa'ot* seven times as a dividing element between them,

while the original components came to be replaced by unintelligible *nomina barbara*.<sup>90</sup> As we have seen, this kind of structure appeared at the beginning of our Arabic text.<sup>91</sup> Here we are confronted with the same phenomenon of deterioration characterized by Rohrbacher-Sticker as a tendency from “sense to nonsense.” The final phase in this process was reached when the liturgical formulae came to be incorporated into the *nomina barbara*, that is the “Sword,” and lost every sign of their primary function or meaning in the Arabic redaction. Apart from the case discovered by Rohrbacher-Sticker, the prayer to Helios in Greek hidden behind a group of *nomina barbara* in *Sefer ha-Razim* offers the best example for this “development.”<sup>92</sup>

The text tradition of the *Ḥarba* shows that it has undergone many changes until it reached its final form with the Arabic “Sword.” Due to the numerous connections to the main pieces of Hekhalot literature and its milieu, the redactional work could most probably be traced back to the Geonic period. A seemingly very good parallel to our Arabic “Sword” could be offered by the case of another magical text, the *Tefillat Rav Hamnuna Sava* (“The Prayer of Rav Hamnuna Sava”).<sup>93</sup> This *Tefilla*, although attributed to Rav Hamnuna Sava, a 3rd–4th century CE authority, can also be dated to the Geonic period. The apparent similarities of its structure and composing elements with those that can be detected in the “Sword” are striking. To indicate some of these basic common features, the evident importance attributed to Meṭatron (although his name is not mentioned in the “Prayer”), the motif of the promise of the coming world to the practitioner if he fulfills certain conditions, the parallel situation between the performer’s asking for forgiveness by pronouncing the Name and the corresponding act of the High Priest on Yom Kippur should be pointed out.<sup>94</sup> A substantial difference, however, between the *Tefilla* or the Hekhalot texts and the *Ḥarba* or the Arabic “Sword” is that these have been transformed to a real magical handbook representing the level of pure

<sup>90</sup> SHL §§ 419, 951, *ÜdHL* III. 171, nn. 13,15. For the interpretation of this development, see Dan 1993, 36, 75, 124.

<sup>91</sup> A similar arrangement with seven (!) ŠB’WWT-s can be found in another passage in *Sifr Adam* 205f. The *Ḥarba* has a longer list of *nomina barbara* with *ševa’ot* as the dividing element (Gaster 1925–28b, 76/28–77/6).

<sup>92</sup> Margalioth 1966, 12, 99f; Morgan 1983, 71.

<sup>93</sup> Herrmann 2005.

<sup>94</sup> Herrmann 2005, 202.

magic without giving expression to such original goals as the acquirement of the knowledge of the Torah or the forgiveness of sins.

Summing up what has been said in the foregoing, we may state that the Jewish(-Aramaic) source of the Arabic "Sword" offers another good example for the intermingling of different elements from the Hekhalot literature, liturgy and magic. On the other hand, however, with its characteristic features it represents an independent work within the "*Harba de Moshe* tradition." Among its distinctive attributes a kind of anti-Rabbinic tendency (manifested in the censoring out of certain elements and the preference given to Meṭaṭron) should be indicated. Due to this and other specific traits, it can be clearly distinguished from the related pieces of Jewish magical literature. In this sense, the Arabic "Sword," deprived of almost every specifically Jewish connotation, was meant to serve the needs of a wider public—whether Jews, Muslims or Christians—by offering them solutions for their everyday problems. With these developments, the Arabic version partly shows the end of a long road that Jewish magical tradition has followed, and has partly turned out to be an important channel for conveying this magical lore to the Islamic world where its influence has made itself felt for long centuries until the recent past. To be more specific on the latter point, we may even say that it might have played a decisive role in transmitting the elements of the magical cosmology which has become fundamental for Arabic magic and might have also contributed to the formation of Meṭaṭron's formidable career in the Islamic environment.<sup>95</sup>

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