

Reconstructing Jewish Magical Recipe Books from the Cairo Genizah

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The magical texts from the Cairo Genizah have yet to receive the attention they deserve.¹ Spurned by many Genizah scholars, most notably Schechter and Goitein, many thousands of fragments relating to magic and to every conceivable method of divination lay dormant in Genizah collections worldwide — unpublished, uncatalogued, and in some cases simply unnoticed. In spite of sporadic publications by such scholars as Marmorstein, Mann, Gottheil or Margalioth, it is only in recent decades, and with the shifting priorities of Jewish Studies as a whole, that more systematic efforts have been made to identify and publish some of the magical texts from the Cairo Genizah.² And yet,

- 1 The following study is part of a research project, “Jewish Magical Recipe Books from the Cairo Genizah”, funded by the Israel Science Foundation (Grant no. 725/03). It is based in part on a preliminary list of Genizah magical fragments painstakingly compiled by Prof. Shaul Shaked, which he kindly placed at my disposal. I am also grateful to my research assistants — Irena Lerman, Shani Levy, Ortal Paz Saar and Karina Shalem — for their help throughout this project. Successive versions of this paper were presented at Tel-Aviv University and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, as well as in Cambridge, Berlin, and Boston (at the AJS conference, 2003). On each of these occasions, I benefited greatly from the suggestions and comments I received. I am also grateful to Shaul Shaked and Prof. Stefan Reif for their comments and suggestions. All remaining errors are, of course, my own.
- 2 For the most important publications, see J. Naveh & Sh. Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity*, Jerusalem 1985 (henceforth *AMB*); L. H. Schiffman & 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 1992 (henceforth *HAITCG*); J. Naveh & Sh. Shaked, *Magic Spells and Formulae: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity*, Jerusalem 1993 (henceforth *MSF*); P. Schäfer & Sh. Shaked, *Magische Texte aus der Kairoer Geniza* [Texte und Studien

much work remains to be done in exploring and mapping this *terra incognita*, an exploration which will shed much light not only on the Jewish magical tradition, but on many other aspects of Jewish history and culture. It is as a contribution to this exploration that the present study seeks to demonstrate some ways in which small, and in some cases individually useless, Genizah magical fragments can be rejoined, thus greatly improving the quantity and quality of sources available for the study of the magical recipes they contain. Following a brief introduction on the nature of Genizah magical recipe books, we shall look at two specific examples of disparate fragments of magical formularies which may be rejoined to form larger units. In both cases, however, we shall stress not only what can already be achieved, but also how much hard work remains to be done.

A. Jewish Magical Recipe Books from the Cairo Genizah³

As a rule, different magical traditions may be divided roughly into two distinct types. On the one hand there are magical traditions in which both the magical praxis itself and its transmission from one practitioner to the next are performed orally. Such magical traditions have often been studied by anthropologists, who have access to the oral lore of their informants, but are rarely accessible to historians studying a given society of a bygone age, who rely primarily on written sources. On the other hand there are magical traditions which underwent a process of scribalization, and in which writing formed a major part of either the magical praxis or its transmission, or both. In such cases, historians may gain direct access to the magicians' work — if, that is, the written texts and artifacts happen to be preserved. Thus, while those magical traditions which employ no writing and those which employ much writing may resemble each

zum Antiken Judentum 42, 64, 72], Tübingen, vol. 1, 1994, vol. 2, 1997, vol. 3, 1999, vol. 4, forthcoming (henceforth *MTKG*). For earlier publications, see also *MTKG* I, pp. 11–13.

3 The following discussion is based on a more detailed analysis, to be included in my forthcoming book on ancient Jewish magic.

other in many ways, they differ greatly with respect to our ability to study them, especially when dealing with magical traditions of the distant past.

Looking at the Jewish magical tradition, at least from the Byzantine period onwards, we find a fully scribalized magical activity. Examining what the practitioners actually did, we find they often produced written objects — amulets, curses, erotic spells and other “finished products”, written on papyrus (or, in the Middle Ages, paper) or parchment, on pieces of cloth, on clay bowls and shards, on thin sheets of metal, or on any other writing surface — as part of the magical praxis itself. Thus, the best clues for the study of the Jewish magical tradition in late antiquity are provided by those magical spells which were written down, for the use of specific clients, on durable writing surfaces, especially metal lamellae and clay bowls or shards, and some of which therefore happened to survive. Needless to say, the Jewish practitioners who produced them also performed many magical rituals in which materials were manipulated and spells recited without anything being written, but such rituals rarely leave any traces within our archaeological record, and are therefore mostly inaccessible to us a millennium and a half later. Moreover, the act of writing played a central role not only in the magical praxis itself, but also in its transmission from master to disciple and from one period or region to another by way of written magical recipes. These recipes were written solely on papyrus and parchment, and are therefore virtually inaccessible to us, but for a few tiny papyrus fragments preserved by the dry sands of Egypt. Yet these recipes continued to be copied in later periods as well, and were still in circulation in medieval Cairo. It is for this reason that the Cairo Genizah provides us not only with “finished products” and magical recipes from the Middle Ages, but also with medieval copies of much older recipes, some of which can be traced back all the way to late antique Palestine. Of course, we must always bear in mind that much magical lore of all periods was transmitted by word of mouth alone, and therefore left no trace in the Genizah, but such is the task of all historians — to study the evidence that we have, and speculate on that which was lost.

Given these circumstances, it should be clear why the Genizah magical recipes — and especially those which may be paleographically dated to the “classical period” of the Genizah, from the 10th to the 13th centuries — provide an excellent point of departure for the study of the Jewish magical tradition in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, and why the many hundreds of Genizah fragments of magical recipes and recipe-books are so deserving of a close examination. As a rule, these fragments may be divided roughly into three distinct groups. A few fragments contain a single recipe, or a small group of recipes scribbled down by a practitioner on a loose sheet of paper or in the margins of an older (and often non-magical) text, probably in response to a query from a client or a fellow practitioner, or even as a mnemonic aide for oneself. Such fragments can tell us much about the diffusion and transmission of magical lore in medieval Jewish society, but, because of their limited scope, tell us little about its actual contents. In a few other cases, we find fragments of “literary” books of magic, such as *Sefer ha-Razim*,⁴ *Harba de-Moshe*,⁵ *Sefer ha-Yashar*, *Sefer ha-Malbush*,⁶ and so on. In most of these cases, the books themselves are known from non-Genizah manuscripts, which often are much better preserved, and while the Genizah fragments may contribute greatly to the study of the text- and transmission-histories of these “literary” magical compositions, their overall significance is quite limited. Thus, it is the third, and by far the largest, group of Genizah magical fragments — those pertaining to “free-form” collections of magical recipes, prepared by individual practitioners

- 4 For which see M. Margalioth, *Sefer Ha-Razim: A Newly Recovered Book of Magic from the Talmudic Period*, Tel Aviv 1966 (Hebrew), pp. 47–48, 53–54. A research team based in Berlin and headed by Prof. Peter Schäfer has now identified many more Genizah fragments of this work, and will publish them shortly.
- 5 For four Genizah fragments of this text, see Y. Harari, *Harba de-Moshe (The Sword of Moses): A New Edition and a Study*, Jerusalem 1997 (Hebrew), pp. 153–156. A few additional fragments have since been identified.
- 6 For the last two, see I. Wandrey, “*Das Buch des Gewandes*” und “*Das Buch des Aufrechten*”: *Dokumente eines magischen spätantiken Rituals, editiert, kommentiert und übersetzt* [TSAJ 96], Tübingen 2004, pp. 125–126, 284–285, 298–300. Other Genizah fragments of these two books still await identification and publication.

for their own use and existing in unique copies — which are the most significant for the study of the Jewish magical tradition. These formularies, some of which occupy only a few pages, while others are dozens of pages long, contain endless series of magical recipes, each recipe generally preceded by a rubric which explains its aim (“For love,” “To kill (someone),” etc.), and usually with no indication of its (real or imagined) origins.⁷ Sometimes the recipes are arranged topically, with recipes for similar aims clustered together; in other cases the order of the recipes appears entirely arbitrary, the result of the gradual accumulation, by a single practitioner or over a few generations, of magical recipes from every conceivable source. Each of these formularies — which apparently were placed in the Genizah after they went out of use — sheds much light on the services provided by its user for his (or her?) clients, on the practices it recommends, and even on the transmission of the recipes themselves from one practitioner to another and from one generation to the next. It is therefore these “free-form” formularies — or, rather, their mutilated remains — on which we shall focus in the present paper.

Upon examining the hundreds of fragments of magical formularies from the Cairo Genizah, one finds them to be in widely divergent states of preservation, ranging from a few fully-preserved or mostly-preserved booklets (whose codicological features will be dealt with elsewhere), through well-preserved bifolia or single pages, to tiny scraps with no more than a word or two. As is only natural, previous publications of these materials tended to focus on the better preserved texts and neglect the smaller ones, many of which seem virtually useless. A closer look at the evidence, however, reveals that in many cases smaller fragments can be joined together, thus enabling us to produce larger and more significant textual units. Moreover, one may note three different modes of “joining up” disparate fragments: First, there are those instances in which small scraps can be shown to come from the same leaf, or even be joined

7 In later Jewish formularies (including some in the Genizah), recipes are sometimes preceded by an attribution to a Rabbi X or to a source Y, but this seems never to occur in the older Genizah formularies, all of whose recipes are transmitted anonymously.

together, thus resulting in somewhat larger scraps. But given the great number of much larger fragments which have yet to be identified and published, such joins are relatively insignificant, and will therefore not be studied here. At a much later stage, when all the larger Genizah magical fragments have been identified and published, additional efforts may be devoted to piecing together the scraps, but at present this process would hardly repay the great efforts it would require.

A second type of “joining up” involves the reconstruction of quires that were broken up during or after their disposal in the Genizah. In such cases, we find folios or bifolia which originally formed a single quire but have since been dispersed. As this process would be familiar to every Genizah scholar, we shall content ourselves here with a single example. More unique, and more important, is a third method of “joining up” Genizah magical fragments, one necessitated by the deliberate tearing or cutting up of some magical formularies prior to their disposal in the Genizah. Such torn quires have reached us in the form of narrow strips of paper, each of which is individually useless; it is only when we place the right strips side-by-side that we can begin reading the texts they once contained. This process is potentially more significant for the reconstruction of the magical texts, and is far less common in other types of Genizah texts; we shall therefore focus most of our attention on this type of scholarly jigsaw puzzle.⁸

B. Rejoining Separated Folios and Bifolia

One of the commonest occurrences in Genizah texts of all types is the (presumably accidental) dispersal of leaves which originally belonged to a single quire. In many cases, what once were consecutive bifolia, or even the

8 A fourth method of rejoining disparate fragments — identifying the texts whence they came and then grouping them into their original manuscripts — is only applicable to previously-published “literary” books of magic (see above, nn. 4–6) and is irrelevant when it comes to the free-form recipe books, whose contents cannot be determined in advance.

two folios of a single bifolium, are now found under different shelfmarks in a single Genizah collection, or even in different collections worldwide. This is, of course, a process of which all Genizah scholars are well aware, and to which earlier students of Genizah magical texts were by no means oblivious. Thus, their publications include some successful joins of consecutive folios and bifolia, and some correct identifications of folios which can be shown — on the basis of physical layout, paleography, and contents — to have belonged to the same quire or at least the same formularly, though not to consecutive folios thereof.⁹ In some cases, however, errors did occur, and I would like to take this opportunity to correct one such mistake.

Some twenty years ago, in his groundbreaking edition of all the known Genizah fragments of the Hekhalot literature, Prof. Peter Schäfer included a publication of T-S AS 142.13, a paper folio with Hebrew magical recipes for success in fishing, for expelling mice from one's home, and for making people shudder.¹⁰ The text was re-published in Schäfer and Shaked's collection of Genizah magical texts, where it really belongs, but this time another paper folio, T-S NS 317.18, was published together with it.¹¹ This second folio contains Hebrew magical recipes for dealing with fugitives, for revealing secrets, and for stopping a ship in mid-sea. As the two folios display a great paleographic and stylistic resemblance, the editors were no doubt correct to suggest that "Die Fragmente gehörten ursprünglich vermutlich zu demselben Kodex". They erred, however, in assuming that the two sheets "schließen jedoch nicht direkt aneinander an," and that "Die ursprüngliche Reihenfolge der Fragmente ist nicht bestimmbar." A closer look at their transcription, and at the excellent photographs they provide, reveals that the two folios indeed formed consecutive pages in the original quire,

9 For pertinent examples, see, e.g., *MSF*, text G16 (=T-S K1.91 + K1.117); *MTKG* II, text 22 (=T-S K 1.144 + T-S K 21.95.T + T-S K 21.95.P); *ibid.*, text 26 (=T-S K 1.35 + T-S K 1.48); *ibid.*, text 34 (=T-S K 1.25 + T-S AS 142.72); *ibid.*, text 37 (=T-S AS 142.192 + T-S AS 143.314); etc.

10 P. Schäfer, *Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur* [TSAJ, 6], Tübingen, 1984, text G20 (pp. 169–170).

11 *MTKG* III, text 69 (pp. 143–152).

although they did not belong to the same bifolium.¹² To see this, however, we should not follow the editors' suggested order of the four pages (1a, 1b and then 2a, 2b), but rather read them in the order 2b, 2a, 1a, 1b, in which case they constitute four consecutive pages. The result would be as follows:

T-S NS 317.18 recto (the editors' 2b) begins with a recipe for revealing secrets, the beginning of which was found on a previous page and which ends at line 10. This is followed by a recipe for stopping a ship in mid-sea and one for releasing it, both of which are fully preserved. Then comes a recipe for extinguishing fire, which continues on the verso (the editors' 2a), where, in the first line, the editors' reading לָ should be corrected to לַע. The verso then continues with two recipes for catching fugitives or making them return home, which are followed by a recipe for catching fish; the end of this recipe is found in T-S AS 142.13 recto (the editors' 1a), which continues with two more recipes for catching fish. The second of these recipes ends on the verso (the editors' 1a), which then turns to a recipe for driving mice away from a house, a recipe for stopping (or transfixing) an attendant in the bath-house, a recipe for making people shudder in the bath-house, and one for making a person shudder (presumably, even outside a bath-house). This last recipe ended on the next page of the quire, which is still lost. But as the two folios display a distinct hand-writing, unique scribal habits, and very similar magical language and technique, it seems highly likely that more pages from this formulary, coming either before or after the present 4-page sequence, will be identified in the future.¹³ Moreover, as our sequence begins with the end of a recipe which began on the previous page, and ends with the beginning of a recipe which ended

12 The editors also note (p. 144) that the Arabic letters, written with a different ink on the margins next to the recipes' beginnings, do not appear in the correct order of the Arabic alphabet. In the new arrangement of the two folios the order is still imperfect, but much closer to the correct order (note, however, that the letter at the end of 2b, line 11 is not the Arabic *kaf* but the Hebrew *bet*!).

13 And note the suggestion of J. R. Davila, *Descenders to the Chariot: The People Behind the Hekhalot Literature*, Leiden: Brill, 2001, p. 232, n. 43, that these two fragments and MSF, text G11 (=T-S K 1.19) stem from the same formulary.

on the following page, identifying these pages — if they have been as well preserved as the ones under discussion here — should pose no great difficulty. In this way, it is hoped that the joining together of many disparate folios and bifolia will produce larger textual units with greater numbers of fully preserved magical recipes. Moreover, the more consecutive pages we acquire, the more we may learn about the order of the recipes — or the total lack thereof — within the original formularies. Whether this process will lead to the reconstruction of complete quires, or even of large parts thereof, is a question to which no answer can be given at present. Furthermore, it is possible that the next method of “joining up” Genizah magical recipe books, though far more laborious, might eventually yield even better results.

C. Rejoining Cut Strips

Whereas the accidental dispersal of folios and bifolia from their original quires is common enough in all types of Genizah texts, the deliberate cutting up of whole quires seems to be much less common, and has not yet been adequately noted with regard to the magical texts. In examining many hundreds of Genizah magical fragments, I was struck by the great frequency of magical texts of which only a part of the folio(s) is preserved, yet which show no signs of physical deterioration due to humidity or insects, but rather the straight edges characteristic of the deliberate tearing or cutting of used paper. In some cases, pages and quires were cut horizontally, thus resulting in half-page (or smaller?) units in which whole lines of the original text may still be read. A few such examples have even proved large enough for earlier scholars to publish, or were successfully joined together with their missing halves.¹⁴ In many more cases, however, quires were cut vertically, with each folio thus cut into (two?), three, four, or more narrow strips of paper. On such strips, parts of many lines of text are preserved, but each line displays only a few letters, or a few words,

14 For a pertinent example see *MTKG* II, text 23 (=T-S NS 322.21 + T-S NS 322.72); *MTKG* III, text 59 (=JTSL ENA 1177.20) may be the bottom half of a horizontally-cut fragment.

of the original text. It is for this reason that earlier scholars simply ignored these small, and mostly useless, fragments, and published only a few strips which happened to be wide enough to make some textual sense.¹⁵

Why some owners of magical formularies in the Genizah period deliberately cut up their used booklets before depositing them in their Genizah is a matter of speculation. Unlike the so-called “European Genizah”, where Jewish parchment codices were cut up by their Christian confiscators and recycled for use as book bindings, the paper strips which we find in the Cairo Genizah clearly had no such use.¹⁶ Moreover, my search for non-magical texts from the Cairo Genizah which were deliberately cut into strips has revealed only a handful of pertinent examples, as against many dozens of strips cut from magical formularies. This process, in other words, was not unique to the magical texts, but its incidence there was much greater than for any other type of text. Such formularies, it would seem, had to be placed in the Genizah (and not burned, for example), because they contained many divine names and biblical verses, but some owners did not wish to leave them there for all to read, and decided to tear or cut them up first. That not all owners of such formularies felt this urge is made clear by the many examples of folios and bifolia which were preserved intact, including those we examined in the previous section of the present study. Finding more and more such cut strips of magical texts, I soon began collecting them — in copies made from the microfilms available at Tel-Aviv University — so as to see whether they could be rejoined in order to reconstruct the original folios and bifolia to which they once belonged. Having assembled more than a hundred such fragments, I have yet to reconstruct even a single folio in its entirety. On the other hand, I can already, with the help of paleographic and stylistic criteria, identify some strips which clearly came from the same magical formularies, and probably even from the same quires. In some cases, moreover, the contents show that the strips came from a single folio, or from

15 See *MTKG* II, text 30 (=JTSL ENA 2397.6); *MTKG* III, text 57 (=T-S Misc. 11.91).

16 For the “European Genizah” see A. David and J. Tabory (eds.), *The Italian Geniza: A Collection of Essays*, Jerusalem 1998.

two consecutive folios. In one case, I have identified three of the four strips which originally made up one half of a bifolium, and can thus reconstruct two consecutive pages from the original formulary. It is on these three strips that I shall focus here, as a paradigmatic example of the process of reconstructing deliberately cut magical formularies and its eventual results.

The three strips in question are all in the Cambridge University Library, and their shelf-marks are Taylor-Schechter AS 142.228 (about 7.6 x 18 cm.), NS 322.53 (about 4.2 x 18 cm.), and AS 142.23 (about 4 x 18 cm.).¹⁷ The handwriting, as Edna Engel has kindly informed me, probably points to the 11th century as the time of copying of this text. The join between the first two strips is almost perfect, with a few small gaps and holes demonstrating that after the tearing of the page the individual strips began deteriorating at their new edges. The third strip, however, is separated from the first two by one more strip, which has yet to be identified. Once the three strips are placed side-by-side, both sides of this folio may now be read quite easily. Moreover, some of the recipes found on this page have close parallels in other Genizah formularies, which help us fill in some of the remaining lacunae. Our reconstructed folio may thus be read as follows:

17 Since the strips are not entirely regular in shape, the measurements refer to the maximum width and maximum height of each fragment. I would like to thank the Syndics of Cambridge University Library for granting me permission to publish, in part or in full, the following Genizah fragments from the Taylor-Schechter Collection: T-S K 1.142, T-S Ar. 43.303, T-S Ar. 44.26, T-S NS 322.53, T-S AS 142.23, T-S AS 142.228.

Recto:

On the margin, from top to bottom: כחזירא ותנעיר יתיה כתורא ותפעי יתיה:

	1	ליתיה ותעביד לי שליחות[א]]ה למריה
	2	ותזל על פ'ב'פ' ותנעיר [יתיה כ?]ה ותנבח
	3	יתיה ככלבה ולא תימר [ליה? דא?]נה
		שדרתך
	4	ולא תיפוק מיניה עד דש[רינא? ליך?]כד
		אמרנא
	5	פוק. א'א'ס': (.)
	6	באב:
T-S Ar. 44.26 ¹⁸		
	7	חורן שלוח אש ..
3		שלוח אש בדיק סב ביעתא
	8	סב ב[י]עתא נולדה ביום [אלו'? ו]כת' עליה
4		נולדה ביום אלו' וכתוב עליה
	9	אש תמיד תוקד על פ'ב'פ' [לא תכבה.]
5		בשם כבשיאל נוריאל אש תמיד
	6	בשם
6		תוקד על פבפ לא תכבה. בשם
	10	כבשיאל נוריאל טהר[יאל דלק]יאל
7		כבשיאל נוריאל טהריאל טהליאל
	11	שמשילא דיתעביד ¹⁹ פג[ריה ובסר]יה
8		דלקיאל שמשילא דיתעביד
	9	ונפשיה
9		פגריה ובסריה ונפשיה וגידוי
	12	וגידוי דפ'ב'פ' באשתא ו[נורא.]
10		דפב באשתא ונורא (<i>characteres</i>)
	13	(<i>characteres</i>)
11		ת'ת אלבאב
	14	באב:
	15	קבלה.
	16	סב כן [וסמור באתונא דב[יתיה?]א'א'ס' ²⁰

18 This recipe was published as *MTKG* III, text 56, 1b, lines 3–11 (p. 32). The paleography (the editors date this text to the 12th century), the unnecessary duplications within this spell (lines 5–7) and obvious errors (e.g., the spelling <פב>באשתא in line 10, or the miscopying of תם in line 11) show it to be a later copy of the recipe, which must have circulated in numerous such copies. But it is interesting to note how carefully the *characteres* (the “ring-letter” magical signs) have been copied, so that they are virtually identical in these two copies of a single recipe, made by different scribes in different periods.

19 The scribe wrote דתעביד, and then added the first י above the line.

20 For the scribal decoration at the end of line 16, see below, n. 24.

The text is written entirely in Aramaic. Lines 1–5 contain the end of a recipe to send an evil demon upon one’s intended victim; the demon will make that person bellow like a long range of domestic animals, and will not leave the person until ordered by the magician to do so.²¹ Lines 6–13 contain another aggressive recipe, which is closely paralleled in a fragment published by Schäfer and Shaked. Finally, lines 14–16 contain a short recipe, which is likely to be equally aggressive in nature. The entire page may be translated as follows:

On the margins, top to bottom: like a pig, and make him bellow like a bull and make him bleat

- 1 ... him, and you will perform the mission for me [] to his master?,
- 2 and you will descend upon NN and make him bellow [like a],²² and make him bark
- 3 like a dog, and you will not say [to him that?²³] I sent you,
- 4 and do not come out of him until [we loosen you?] and when we say,
- 5 Come out! A(men) A(men) S(ela).
- 6 Chapter:
- 7 Another for sending fire:
- 8 Take an egg born on [Friday?] and write on it:
- 9 Eternal fire shall burn upon NN, [it shall not be extinguished] (cf. Lev. 6.6!). In the name of
- 10 Kavshiel, Nuriel, Tahar[iel Dalq]iel
- 11 Shamshiel, that the bo[dy, fl]esh, soul and
- 12 sinews of NN shall become (consumed) in fire and [flame].
- 13 (*Characteres*).

21 For demoniacs bellowing like bulls, etc., see G. Nigal, “*Dybbuk*” *Tales in Jewish Literature*², Jerusalem 1994 (Hebrew), pp. 17, 20.

22 The original sequence probably was, “and make him bellow(?) like a pig and make him bellow like a bull, and make him bleat like a sheep, and make him bark like a dog.” Having forgotten a part of the text, the scribe then copied the missing section in the margin of the page, from top to bottom. The same scribe apparently made a similar insertion on the margins of T-S AS 142.11.

23 I owe this plausible reconstruction to Prof. M. A. Friedman.

14 Chapter:

15 A (Counter-)Spell:

16 Take [] and nail it in the hearth in his house, A(men) A(men) S(ela).

Verso:

T-S K 1.142 (unpublished) ²⁶	T-S Ar. 43.303 (unpublished) ²⁵
1 באב : כראב : וצרפה :	15 באב : [בא]־5 :
ובעץ' :	16 כראב וצרפה ובגץ ופרקה
2 ופרקה : ולכל : פסאד :	17 ולכל פסאד כתב פי צץ [צר]פה ובגץ' ופרקה
כתב :	ולכל (3 סימנים מאגיים)
3 פי : צפיחה : קצריר :	1 [] אן ארדתה כרב
ובכר :	מאגיים) ובכר
4 בספרט : וקנה : ואמחווה	2 בספר [] אמחווה במא
	כת' פי ציץ ²⁷ [] אן?ך (6 סימנים מאגיים)
5 במא : קנאה ²⁸ : חמאם :	3 קנאה [חמאם?] וצבה עלי
וצבה :	באב קנאה חמאם
6 עלי : באב : מן : שית :	4 מן שית ואכתב איצ[א]
ואכתבה	פי רק או שית וכת' איצ'א פי רק

24 The letter *aleph* + a scribal decoration. This scribe's fondness for such decorations may also be seen on the recto (see above, note 20), and in T-S AS 142.22A. The *aleph* could be a quire signature (see M. Beit-Arié, "Some Observations on the Early Hebrew Codex," *Quinio: International Journal on the History and Conservation of the Book* 1 [1999], pp. 25–40, at p. 33), but its location on the verso of a folio which clearly was not the first in its quire seems to rule this out, and its meaning remains elusive.

25 My reading is based on a photograph, for which I am grateful to Cambridge University Library, and on my inspection of the original. Note the minor differences between the two copies of the same recipe. The magical signs too display only minor variation.

26 My reading is based on inspection of the original. Note that this is a later and more corrupt copy of the same recipe — for example, the Aramaic words *אנך ציץ* were replaced by their Judeo-Arabic equivalent, *צפיחה קצריר*, and the magical signs dropped out of the recipe. On the other hand, the *characteres* at the end of the recipe were copied in a relatively accurate manner.

27 The scribe wrote *צץ*, and then corrected it to *ציץ*.

28 The scribe wrote *כנאה*, and corrected it to *קנאה*.

7	או פי כר[קה? כפן? ו]בכר	5	פי כרקה []פֶּץ ובכר	7	איצ'א : פי רק / או : פי
	באלבכור ואדפנה		באלבכור		כרקה /
8	תחת א[לבאב? וכ?די	6	ואדפנה תחת אלבאב	8	כפן ²⁹ ובכר : באלבכור
	תכון תכתוב לכל שי		וכדי תכון	9	ואדפנה : תחת : אלבאב :
9	מן אלפס[אד אנה?]	7	תכתוב לכל שי מן	10	וכדי : תכון : תכתב :
	ג'יד מג'רב ואלין		אלפסאד		לכל :
10	(characteres)	8	אנה גייד מגרב ואילין	11	פסאד : גייד : מגרב :
11	(characteres)	9	(characteres)	12	(characteres)
12	(characteres)	10	(characteres)	13	(characteres)
13	(characteres)	11	(characteres)	14	(characteres)
		12	(characteres)		

The verso of our reconstructed folio contains a single aggressive magical recipe, closely paralleled by recipes from two well preserved, but previously unpublished, Genizah fragments, and by a recipe found on another strip from a cut magical formulary (but not our own!), found in the Mosseri collection.³⁰ It may be translated as follows:

- 1 Chapter:
- 2 [For? sepa]ration and hatred and breaking up, and for every
- 3 [] if you want it destroyed.
- 4 Write on a [tin?] *lamella* [(magical signs)]
- 5 and fumigate it with [] and wash it with water from the canal of a bath-house,
- 6 and pour it on [the door of?] whomever you wish. And also write on parchment,
- 7 or on a rag [from a shroud?] and fumigate (it) with incense and bury it

29 The word כפן, "shroud," is enclosed in a box as if it were a magical name, perhaps reflecting the scribe's misunderstanding of its true nature.

30 Mosseri VI.14.3 (Microfilm #26204 in the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, Jerusalem). Only about 8 letters from each line are preserved, but the original recipe was clearly the same.

- 8 under the [door. And?] so you should write for every type
 9 of (causing) dam[age. It is?] good (and) tested. And these³¹
 10 (*characteres*)
 11 (*characteres*)
 12 (*characteres*)
 13 (*characteres*)

We may now make several general observations about the reconstructed folio. First, it seems clear that the remaining gap on both recto and verso is about 6 to 7 letters in width, and so it seems highly likely that only a single strip, about 3 centimeters wide, is missing to complete the entire folio (whose original width would have been about 15 cm. and its height about 18 cm.). Second, the order of the two sides is determined by the fact that the recto begins with the end of an aggressive magical recipe whose beginning does not appear on the verso; we then find “another” magical recipe for “sending fire”, which ends at the bottom of the page; the verso then begins with a new aggressive recipe, for causing hatred and enmity between people (e.g., for separating married couples). This recipe ends at the bottom of the page, and the next page began with a new recipe. Third, looking at T-S AS 142.228, which preserves the “gutter” of the original bifolium, we see not only the beginnings of the lines of our recto and the ends of the lines of our verso, but also the remains of the other half of our bifolium. Even from these meager remains, it seems clear that this folio too contained juicy aggressive recipes, as can be seen from such words as תאסרון (you [the angels] shall bind [the victim]) or מהפכת (which clearly refers to the overturning of Sodom and Gomorrha, a favorite *exemplum* in Jewish aggressive magical recipes). Fourth, I would argue that even our modest reconstruction is not without value, even though some of the recipes we have found here are indeed paralleled elsewhere. On the one hand, we may

31 It seems clear that a few words fell out here, and the original wording was probably “And these are the *characteres* to be written” or the like. Note that this error appears both in our formulary and in T-S Ar. 43.303; the problem was “solved” in T-S K 1.142 by omitting the word ואלין. Such textual entropy is extremely common in the magical formularies.

note that both the first and the last recipes on the recto are as yet unparalleled, and the first of these, written in good Aramaic, is likely to be quite old. Equally noteworthy are the casual reference to a pig among the list of domestic animals and the noises they produce, which seems quite unexpected in a Jewish context, and the verbal form תפעי, “you shall make (the victim) bleat,” which seems to be unattested elsewhere. On the other hand, we must stress that even recipes with known parallels, in spite of their seemingly repetitive nature, tell us much about the world of medieval Jewish magic, and about how recipes were copied, transmitted and transformed.

This, however, is not the end of the road, and our fifth and most important observation has to do with the search for additional strips from the original booklet, in order to reconstruct much more of it than we have done so far. As our formulary is quite distinctive in its paleographic and stylistic features, identifying additional strips as probably deriving from the same booklet is relatively easy. With this in mind, we may search for additional strips from the second half of our bifolium, and our search soon leads to T-S Ar. 14.14, a set of 7 strips under a single shelfmark, one of which joins directly with T-S AS 142.228, thus giving us two strips (out of four?) of that folio too. As this is not yet enough to reconstruct entire lines (except for a few whose contents are certain), I have not added that strip to the above reconstruction. This additional fragment is, however, of great significance as an example of a process which occurred quite often, namely, the adhesion of strips from consecutive folios or bifolia at the time when the original booklet was cut. In most cases, it was the “gutter” strips which stuck together, thus giving us the beginnings and ends of lines of several consecutive bifolia.³² In the case of T-S Ar. 14.14, however, the cutting and dispersal of the original booklet left us with strips from the middle of seven folios from consecutive bifolia which stuck together and were assigned a single shelfmark. Thus, by joining one of these strips to the bifolium from which we have already reconstructed three strips,

32 For pertinent examples see T-S AS 143.86, AS 143.131, etc.

we immediately gain parts of six other folios in the original formulary (whose quire(s) may have been larger than the standard quinion), and a sound basis from which to proceed in our attempts to reconstruct the entire booklet. And when we find a large number of identically-shaped strips from the external edges of some folios of this formulary in T-S AS 142. 11, 19, 20, 22A, 22B, 22C, and 27, we learn that these strips too traveled together, at least a part of the way, and are now ready to rejoin their long-lost brethren. And once again, attempts at reconstruction may be facilitated by the fact that some of the recipes inscribed upon these strips find parallels in better preserved formularies, so that we can tell in advance what some lines on some of the missing strips should look like.³³ As with any other jigsaw puzzle, this complex three-dimensional puzzle becomes progressively easier to solve as more pieces are put into place. We may reasonably expect that, with patience and luck, it will be possible to identify additional strips of this booklet and to make further joins with the help of the “skeleton” provided by T-S Ar. 14.14 and with the related strips from T-S AS 142. It is too early to say whether this process will lead to the reconstruction of the entire formulary, but I am certain that much more will be known about this specific collection of magical recipes in the future, and that this is only one Genizah magical recipe book of many which were deliberately cut up. Which of the many three-dimensional jigsaw puzzles will prove easiest to solve is impossible to say in advance, and so we must collect as many pieces as possible, and assume that the more such strips we have, the greater the chance of joining them together. Luckily, the process of identifying additional pieces is made easier by the peculiar shape of these long and narrow strips of paper, and by the magical signs and terminology they often display, features which set them apart from most other Genizah fragments. Whenever different strips of this type display a similar handwriting or writing style, we may suspect that they came from the same booklet and group them together. Within each group, we may begin to look for joins, or for strips separated

33 See, for example, the editors' notes to *MTKG* III, text 56 (=T-S Ar. 44.26), on p. 31.

from each other by a small gap only, as well as searching for parts of recipes for which parallels can be found in better preserved formularies, whether in the Genizah or outside it. To undertake such a project in isolation would be sheer madness, but as a part of a wider study of the Genizah magical texts, and of the Jewish magical tradition of late antiquity and the Middle Ages, it demands little specific effort and promises great rewards. It is, moreover, a project in which many scholars could cooperate, each benefiting from the progress achieved by the others. While the deliberate destruction of so many magical formularies is to be regretted in many ways, it may prove not to be as irreversible as the scissors-wielding practitioners presumably expected. In the long run, with much hard work and even greater luck, we may yet discover that those magical recipe books which they so carefully cut up are the ones which we will best be able to reconstruct.