

The Mandaic Magic Bowl Dehays 63: An Unpublished Parallel to BM117872 (Segal 079A)

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1. Introduction

The publication of the Mandaic magic bowls from the British Museum (henceforth: BM) has enriched our knowledge of this understudied branch of the Aramaic language. Although the texts were published in an “official” edition by J. B. Segal, it was readily apparent that his transcriptions and interpretations were in great need of improvement.¹ Two seminal reviews of Segal’s edition have been published, one by J. N. Ford and the other by Ch. Müller-Kessler; both offer significant corrections to Segal’s readings and interpretations of these texts which greatly advance the study of these formulae.² Nonetheless, there still remains a need for further scrutiny of some of the more difficult passages, and for restoring the numerous lacunae in the texts as new parallels come to light.³ Furthermore, as will be noted below, not all of the readings proposed in the reviews are supported by the material evidence of the texts.

The present article is intended to make a modest contribution towards this endeavor. It aims to present a new edition of the fragmentary bowl BM 117872 (no. 079M in Segal’s *Catalogue*) based on both a rereading of the bowl-text from the original and from high-resolution digital images, and on an unpublished parallel text from the

This article is based upon digital images of the Samir Dehays bowl kindly sent to me by Dr. Dan Levene. This research was supported by the Israel Science Foundation grant No. 38/10. I was blessed with the assistance of many outstanding scholars in dealing with various aspects of this text. Prof. Shaul Shaked aided me greatly with the reading and interpretation of the personal names; see in particular the discussion in Section III below. He also graciously permitted me to cite from his unpublished transcriptions of the magic bowls in the Martin Schøyen Collection (henceforth: MS). Dr. Ekaterini G. Tsalampouni brought to my attention the Greek evidence, while Prof. W. G. Lambert and Prof. Victor Hurowitz aided me with the Assyriological evidence. In particular, Dr. James N. Ford read several drafts of this article and made numerous helpful suggestions regarding the readings and other aspects. Their contribution to this article is apparent throughout.

1. J. B. Segal, *Catalogue of the Aramaic and Mandaic Incantation Bowls in the British Museum* (London, 2002).

2. J. N. Ford, “Notes on the Mandaic Incantation Bowls in the British Museum (Review of J. B. Segal, *Catalogue of the Aramaic and Mandaic Incantation Bowls in the British Museum*),” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 26 (2002), 237–72. Ch. Müller-Kessler, “Die Zauberschälensammlung des British Museum,” *AfO* 48/49 (2001/2002), 115–45. See also J. N. Ford, “Another Look at the Mandaic Incantation Bowl BM 91715,” *JANES* 29 (2002), 31–47.

3. Several new readings of the Mandaic bowl texts are presented in M. Morgenstern, “The Present State of Mandaic Lexicography II: The Mandaic Magic Corpus” (forthcoming).

collection of Mr. Samir Dehays (hereafter SD).⁴ The editions published here build upon the valuable work of Ford and Müller-Kessler on the BM text, while presenting my own reading of the inscription, which differs at several points from theirs.⁵ These disagreements are noted in what follows. For technical reasons, the text is presented here in Hebrew transcription rather than in Mandaic characters.⁶ Uncertain readings are marked by a dotted underline, e.g., כֹּלִי [הוֹן]. Letters erased by the scribe are marked with a “strikethrough”: ~~כֹּלִי~~. The texts are presented in a synoptic edition, which serves to highlight the parallels and differences between the two versions. The formulae are divided according to sense units, which are discussed and analyzed in the commentary below. The article concludes with a structural analysis of the two versions.⁷

2. Epigraphic Considerations

The SD text is written on a light red clay bowl, and contains fourteen lines of writing. The ink is slightly faded but the text is readable in its entirety. The script is generally clear, and in contrast to many Mandaic sources, the scribe was particularly adept at distinguishing between the *dā* and *rā*. The *dā* is always written with a right hand ascending stroke, while the *rā* has a curve and only one ascending stroke in the upper left-hand corner. The scribe occasionally leaves letters that are usually connected in Mandaic un-joined, as in the verbal form וּקְרִיתִינוּן in l. 12. However since he writes his *yā* as a marked down-stroke, it is clearly identifiable and thus cannot be confused with the unlinked letters. Of orthographic interest is the SD bowl’s sporadic use of the digraph עִי to represent a high vowel (in the demonic name נַעֲרִיג in line 11), a feature that is occasionally found in the bowl texts.⁸

The BM bowl currently comprises six contiguous fragments which have been joined with adhesive. Only four of these were included in the photograph in Segal’s edition, though it is clear from his readings that two additional fragments had already been joined to the right of the lines represented in the photograph when he prepared his transcription. For example, at the end of l. 5 Segal read וּתְרַאֲתָא, a word found on the first fragment which the SD parallel reveals to be the end of the word וּעִסְתְּרַאֲתָא. Similarly, Müller-Kessler makes sporadic references to the letters on this fragment, e.g., at the start of l. 8 where she reads וּנַאקְעִיל (the correct read-

4. The digital images of the British Museum bowl were taken in December 2006 in the framework of my ongoing research project on Mandaic lexicography.

5. See Ford, “Review,” 240–41; Müller-Kessler, “Die Zauberschälensammlung,” 130.

6. The transcription system employed here essentially follows that of the two great founders of Mandaic scholarship, Nöldeke and Lidzbarski, though for technical reasons we have used a subscript on the ן- to represent the 3rd s. pronominal suffix *-h* and ן- to represent the relative particle *q-* (*dušemma*).

7. On the importance of the literary structure to the magic bowl texts, see S. Shaked, “The Poetics of Spells, Language, and Structure in Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity,” in T. Abusch and K. van der Toorn (eds.), *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical, and Interpretative Perspectives* (Groningen, 1999), 173–95; cf. also M. Swartz, “Scribal Magic and its Rhetoric: Formal Patterns in Medieval Hebrew and Aramaic Incantation Texts from the Cairo Genizah,” *HTR* 83 (1990), 163–80.

8. Compare, e.g., the Fitzwilliam Museum E.2-1907, wherein such spellings are reasonably common. The text has been collated in Ch. Müller-Kessler, “Interrelations between Mandaic Lead Rolls and Incantation Bowls,” in Abusch and van der Toorn, *Mesopotamian Magic*, 202–4.

ing is **צאורעיל**). From the second fragment, both Segal and Müller-Kessler cite the word **ופגרה** in l. 10, but seem to have been unable to decipher the other remains of words that it preserves.

Furthermore, it is also clear that at some point in their history at the BM, the four originally identified fragments were sprayed with a preservative layer, perhaps the liquid nylon used on other bowl texts.⁹ This has led to a considerable loss in the contrast between the color of the clay and the color of the ink that was still evident in the Segal photograph, and has added to the difficulties in reading the bowl's text. The contrast remains on the two fragments that were only later joined to the main body of the reconstructed text. It was perhaps the present state of the text that led Müller-Kessler to omit from her critique of Segal's readings the last few words on the bowl, **[. . .] ולבנא[ין ו]לבנאתון ולא**; in the bowl's present state these words are almost unreadable, though they are totally legible in the Segal photograph and the first two were included in Segal's transcription.

Particularly striking in the BM bowl is the use of a triangular *halqa* (*ʾaleph*) sign instead of the more regular circle. The proof that this triangular sign does not always reflect the possessive **ה-** may be found in such examples wherein it appears at the start of a word, most strikingly in the word **אלמא** in l. 5 (fig. 1).

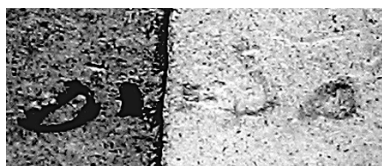


Fig. 1. BM117872:5 **אלמא** “worlds.”

That this is indeed the correct reading (following Segal and contra Müller-Kessler's **הלמיה**) is now confirmed by the SD parallel, wherein the word appears in its full context, **ניפקית ואסגית ועתית על כולהון אלמא ד-זיורא**, “I came out and went and came to all the worlds of light” (fig. 2).

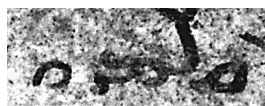


Fig. 2. SD 63:8 **אלמא** “worlds.”

Accordingly, it seems preferable to read forms such as **סטאניא** in line 6 of the BM bowl as having a word-final *halqa* rather than 3rd m. s. possessive suffix (fig. 3).

9. Dr. St. John Simpson of the BM informed me of the use of nylon to preserve the bowls. In some extreme cases, for example bowl BM 108822, the nylon layer is particularly evident and has caused a considerable darkening of the bowl.

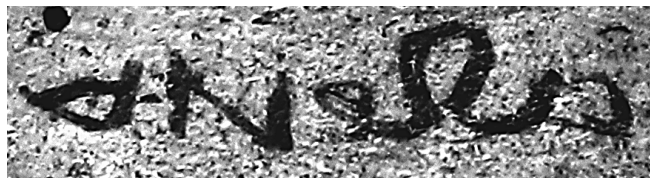


Fig. 3. BM 117872:6 סטאניא "satans."

3. Synoptic Transcription

BM 117872	SD 63	
(1) בשומאיהון ד-הייא	(1) בשומאיהון ד-הייא רביא נוכ[ך] אייא (2) קאדמאייא	I
אסותא והתמ[תא] . . . (2) [היכלה וביניאנה ולהמה ומ[אי]ה והיוניאת]ה . . .	אסותא תהיילה לפגרה ולבא[י]תה (3) ולדורה ולהיכלה ולקעניאנה ולפגרה	II
(3) ד-א[בדרה]מאן ד-אבאנגושנאסף בר מישווא	ד-סעבוכת בר שעשין גברא (4) ולזאנה דודאי פת קאקילתא ענתתא ולבנאיון שעשין פת כושאזאד ולפארוך בר (5) אניגראנדו ולבנאיון כרושיד ואנושתאי בנאי דודאי ולכולהין נישמאתא ד-עתלהון בבאתאיון	III
	(6) מן הייא ומן מנדעא ד-הייא ומן העביל עותרא בשומא ^א כ ^א כ ^א ון הייא רורבין[א] קאדמאייא	IV
כבין[ש הישוכא כביש רישה ועקבה כבין[ש (4) כולה הילה ד-הישוכא מינקודאם כולה הילה ד-נהורא רבא ^א	כביש (7) הישוכא כביש רישה ועקבה כביש כולה הילה ד-הישוכא מן קודאם כולה הילה ד-נהורא רבא	V
מן בית הייא ניפקית ואסגית ועתית על כולהון (5) אלמא ד-זיורא ונהורא הייא יאדילהון ואסגית ועתית על האזין אלמא ד-הישוכא	מן בית (8) הייא ניפקית ואסגית ועתית על כולהון אלמא ד-זיורא ונהורא הייא יאדילהון ואסגית ועתית על האזין אלמא ד-הישוכא	VI
על אלאהיא ומלאכיא ועכוריא ופתיכריא וע[סתראתא] (6) ועל סהריא ודיויא וסטאניא ועל מלאכיא וקיריאתון כולהין ועל שובא (10) ראזיא ועל תריסאר שורבאתון ועל קריאתא ד-עתקריא מן הומריא באיתא ועל קריאתא ד-עתקריא מן (7) הומריא באיתא ועל קיריאתא[ן] ד-קרון סהריא ודיויא וסטאניא ומהש[באתא בישאתא] (11)	(9) על אלאהיא ומלאכיא ועכוריא ופתיכריא ועסתראתא ועל סהריא ודיויא וסטאניא ועל מלאכיא וקיריאתון כולהין ועל שובא (10) ראזיא ועל תריסאר שורבאתון ועל קריאתא ד-עתקריא מן הומריא באיתא ועל קריאתא ד-קרון סהריא ודיויא וסטאניא (11) ומהשבתא בישאתא	VII
בשאיא שאייתא בעדאניא עדאניא	בשאיא שאייתא בעדאניא עדאניא	VIII
על שאמיש [רבות]אנא ועל צאורעיל העמון גבאר ועל נעיריג בירקא	על שאמיש רבותאנא ועל צאורעיל ועל העמין גבאר ועל נעיריג בירקא	IX
ועל כולהון עתית ועל כול[הון] אנסגית	(12) ועל כולהון עתית ועל כולהון אנסגית {אנסגית}	X
. . . (9) לבא[ר שדיתינ]ון . . .	וקירינתון ואסרתינן ורגלתינן וכרכתינן	XI
האזין באיתא ד-אבדרהמאן בר מישווי ודבשניראה פת שאה[א]פ[ריד]	מן האזין באיתא ד-סיבוכת בר שישין גברא (13) ומן זאנה דודאי ובנאנה ומן זירון ובאזירון ומן כולהין נישמאתא ד-עתלהון בבאתיון	XII
	כרכינתון לבאר שדיתינן	XIII
ואסותא תהיילה לנישימת[ה] (10) ופגרה ד- [אבדרה]מאן בר מישווא ודבשניראה פת שאהאפריד ולבנא[י]ון [לבנאתון ולא]ילה ולנפקה	ואסותא (14) תהיילה לסעבוכת בר שעשין גברא ולבנה ולבנאתא ולזאנה דודאי ולכולהין נישמאתא ד-עתלה בבאתיה ולאילה ולנפקה	XIV
	משאבין הייא <	XV

4. Synoptic Translation

	SD 63	BM 117872
I	(1) In the name of the Great, alien and (2) primordial Life!	(1) [In the name] of Life!
II	May there be healing unto the body and ho[u]se (3) and the dwelling place and residence and property and body	[May there be] healing and sea[ling . . . (2) unto] the residence and building and bread and water and animals [. . . of]
III	of Sebukht son of Šišin, the man, (4) and for his wife, Dodai daughter of the heap, the woman, and for their children Šišin daughter of Khwaš-āzād and Farrokh son of (5) Anigrandu and for their children, Khwaršēd and Anōštai, children of Dodai and for all the souls that they have in their houses.	(3) [Ab]drahman Ābān Gušnasp son of Mišoi.
IV	(6) From Life and the Knowledge of Life and from Hibil the Uthra. In your name, O Great Primordial Life!	
V	Subdued (7) is darkness, subdued is its head and its heel, subdued is the entire force of darkness from before the entire force of the great light.	Sub[dued is darkness, subdued is its head and its heel, su]b[dued] (4) is the entire force of darkness from before the entire force of the great light.
VI	I departed from the house of (8) Life, and I went and came upon all the worlds that Radiance and Living Light acknowledge. And I went and came upon this world of darkness,	[I departed the house of Life, and I went and came upon all the] (5) worlds that Radiance and Living Light acknowledge. And I went and came upon this worl[d of darkness,]
VII	(9) upon the gods and angels and temple-spirits and idol-spirits and goddesses and <i>sahras</i> and <i>dēvs</i> and satans; and upon the angels and all their invocations and upon the seven (10) mysteries and upon their twelve families, and upon the invocations that were invoked by the household <i>humras</i> , and upon their invocations that the <i>sahras</i> , <i>dēvs</i> and satans and (11) evil plans invoked.	[upon the gods and angels and temple-spirits and idol-spirits and god]desses (6) and <i>sahras</i> and <i>dēvs</i> and satans; and upon the angels and all their invocations and upon [the seven mysteries and upon their twelve families, and upon the invocations that were invoked by] (7) the household <i>humras</i> , and upon the(ir) invocations that the <i>sahras</i> , <i>dēvs</i> and satans and [evil p]lans invoked.
VIII	At every hour and every moment	[At every hour and every moment]
IX	Upon the great Shamish and upon Sauriel and the mighty Himin and upon Nerig (and) Birqa.	Upon the] great [Shamish] and upon (8) Sauriel and the mighty Himun and upon Nerig and Birqa.
X	(12) And upon all of them I came and upon all of them I went	And upon all of them I came and upon all [of them I wen]t
XI	and I called them and bound them and fettered them and turned them back	[. . . (9)] I cast [them ou]t
XII	from this house of Sebukht son of Šišin, the man, (13) and from his spouse Dodai and his sons and his daughters and from their seed and their progeny, and from all the souls that they have in their houses.	[from] this house of Abdrahman son of Mišoi Dodai and of Bašnira daughter of Šah[afri]d
XIII	I have turned them back and cast them out.	
XIV	And may there be healing (14) unto Sebukht son of Šišin, the man, and unto his sons and his daughters, and his spouse Dodai, and unto all the souls that he has in his house, and to those who enter it and those that leave it.	And may there be healing unto to the soul] (10) and the body of [Abdrah]man son of Mišoi and of Bašnira daughter of Šahafri]d and to [their] sons and their daughters and to [those who enter it . . .]
XV	Life is praised!	[. . .]

5. Commentary

I. The Invocation

SD opens with a lengthy epithet **בשומאיהון נ-היאי רביא נוכ[ר]אייא קאדמאייא** “In the name of the Great, alien and primordial Life!” while BM would appear to employ the shorter **בשומאיהון נ-היאי**, since the **אסותא** formula of § II commences immediately after the surviving word **היאי**.¹⁰ The fundamental significance of the invocation has rightly been noted by Harviainen, who emphasizes its role in marking the confessional identity of the bowl text’s writer.¹¹

II. The Blessings

Although they are structurally parallel and fulfill the same function, the blessing formulae of the two bowls are independent of one another, a fact that reflects the composite nature of the bowl texts. SD contains only blessing of **אסותא** “healing” while BM apparently contained a lengthier series of desired attributes which extended round the remainder of the first line. We may compare similar formulae such as **אסותא וזרזתא והאתמתא** in BM 91731 (Segal 090M) and **אסותא והתמתא ונטרתא תיהוילת** in BM 91722 (Segal 078M). The list of items protected also differs. In SD, it covers the home, property, and body, while the surviving section of the BM text list is more wide-ranging, covering the home, bread and water, and cattle. Both the longer and shorter formulae are attested in other bowls.¹²

The reading **ולהמה** “and his bread” in the BM bowl follows Segal. Müller-Kessler has proposed the reading **וליהמה**, but this is not supported by the material evidence, which clearly shows that the stroke following the *lā* is joined to the following letter, thus ruling out a *yā* in this scribe’s hand (fig. 4).



Fig. 4. BM 117872:2 **ולהמה** “and his bread.”

Theoretically, it might be possible to read **ולהמה**, since in the magic bowls the *h* sign is usually written from the bottom up with two “heads.” However, this scribe shows a tendency to write the *hā* with three heads, as demonstrated by his rendering of the word **נ-הישוכא** in l. 4 (fig. 4).

10. Müller-Kessler reads *d-hy'<y>'*, but this emendation is unnecessary as the text clearly reads **נ-היאי**.

11. T. Harviainen, “Syncretistic and Confessional Features in Mesopotamian Incantation Bowls,” *Studia Orientalia* 70 (1993), 29–37.

12. For the longer list, compare BM 117874 (Segal 077M): 6–7.



Fig. 4. BM 117872:4 הילך נ-הישוכא “the force of darkness.”

I have reconstructed the spelling מ[א]י[ה] rather than the more common מ[י]ה as the lacuna appears too wide for a *yā* alone. This spelling appears in the magic corpus in the similar expression ומן להמאיון ומאיון “from their bread and water” in BM 91722:14 (Segal 078M)¹³ as well as in the term ומאיה סיאריא “and the black waters” in MS1928/56:8; it is also occasionally attested in classical Mandaic manuscripts.¹⁴ I have also preferred to read והיוניא[ת]ה over Segal’s and Müller-Kessler’s והיוניא, since this is the plural form regularly found in these texts.

III. *The Clients*

The SD bowl contains a more detailed list of the clients than the BM bowl, which also reveals something of the complex relations within the clients’ family. The father of the house is named Sebukht b. Šišin. Sebukht’s wife is called Dodai, which is among the more common female names in the magic bowl texts. Her matronymic is of great interest, since קאקילתא generally means “refuse dump.”¹⁵ The possible interpretations of this name are discussed in the appendix to this article.

Sebukht seems to have fathered children with three different women: Šišin, presumably named after his mother, with Khwaš-āzād;¹⁶ Farrokh with Anigrandu;¹⁷ and finally two children, Khwaršēd and Anōštai with Dodai. Most of these names have Persian etymologies.¹⁸ Sebukht means “Saved by the three (deities).”¹⁹ If this is a

13. The text appears to read מאיון. Perhaps read with Müller-Kessler, “Review,” 130: ומאיון. The second *yod* would then be unusually connected.

14. E. S. Drower and R. Macuch, *A Mandaic Dictionary* (Oxford, 1963; henceforth: *MD*), 242 s.v. *maia* 1.

15. Drower-Macuch, *MD*, 412, s.v. *qiqila qiqilta*. The form with an *a* vowel in the first syllable is not recorded in *MD*, and as far I have been able to ascertain is not otherwise attested.

16. Dr. Ortal-Paz Saar has drawn my attention to several additional examples of this phenomenon, e.g., גושנאי Mihroi b. Gušnai (J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Magic Spells and Formulae: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* [Jerusalem, 1993], no. 19, l. 1), who had a daughter named גושנאי Gušnai, and לפנא Lana b. Hormiz b. Rašnedukh (Naveh and Shaked, no. 18) whose daughter was also named Rašnedukh.

17. This name is unknown and the vocalization is uncertain. Final נ sometimes occurs in Iranian personal names in the magic bowls as an abbreviation of *-dukht*(t). For example, אורמיון in Wolfe 26 (Mandaic); compare with PN אורמיון in JNF 85 (JBA).

18. This paragraph is based primarily upon the suggestions of Prof. S. Shaked and Dr. J. N. Ford, who independently proposed to me similar interpretations.

19. See P. Gignoux, *Noms propres sassanides en Moyen-Perse épigraphique, Iranisches Personennamenbuch: Mittliranische Personennamen Bd. 2 Fasz. 2* (Wien, 1986), no. 833 (p. 157).

reference to the Trinity, then we may perhaps assume that the client is a Christian.²⁰ The name Šišin appears elsewhere in the magic corpus (e.g., AIT 29; Gordon 4; JNF 162; JNF 285) but is of unknown origin. Khwaš-āzād. is a compound name which may mean “good (and) noble.”²¹ Farrokḥ is a common name that means “happy.”²² כְּרוּשִׁיד would appear to be an erroneous spelling for Khwaršēd, a Persian name meaning “sun,” as in כְּרוּשִׁיד בֶּר כְּרוּשִׁיד (MS 2053/77).²³ Compare the name כְּרוּשִׁיד גֻּשְׁנִס in BM 91776 (Segal 36A) in כְּרוּשִׁיד (CAIB 70:2).²⁴ Anōštai seems to be an Aramaic feminine form of the Persian name Anōš. It appears as a matronymic in MS 2055/19.

It is possible that the plural form בְּבֵתָהֶן “that they have in their houses” implies that some of the children are already grown up with their own homes. This assumption is strengthened by the reference to their progeny in §XII. The client list here is considerably more detailed than that found in §XIV.

On the BM bowl, Müller-Kessler is correct that the first *’aleph* of [א]בְּדִרְהֶמָּן is no longer extant. However, close examination of the text clarifies that the *hā* survives. Following the *nā*, there is a blotch of ink which seems to be an erased letter, perhaps the relative -ךְ. The reading אבְּאִנְגֻשְׁנֶאסְךְ follows Müller-Kessler and Ford; Segal read גֻּשְׁנֶאסְךְ but proposed the emendation גֻּשְׁנֶאסְךְ. The ink of the *s* has been slightly worn. Compare the *sā* here without a left hand “tail,” with that of וְאִסְגִּית in l. 6 (fig. 6).



Fig 6 a. The final two letters of the name אבְּאִנְגֻשְׁנֶאסְךְ in BM 117872:3; fig. 6b. the word וְאִסְגִּית in l. 5 of the same text.

After Abdrahman’s matronymic, the BM bowl contains two more letters before the text breaks off. Segal read this וְכַן, while Müller-Kessler proposed the reading וְכַן. However, it seems that Ford’s proposed reading כְּכַן is the correct reading, and that even the *yā* may be discerned at the end of the line (fig. 7).

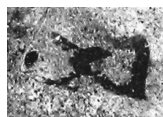


Fig 7. The letters כְּכַן at the end of BM 117872:3.

20. On the distinction between religion of the clients and the religion of the sorcerer, see most recently S. Shaked, “Magic Bowls and Incantation Texts: How to Get Rid of Demons and Pests,” *Qadmoniot* 129 (2005), 9 [Hebrew].

21. Cf. the PN כְּרוּשִׁיד בֶּת דִּירָאִי in JNF 19. Gignoux, *Noms propres*, no. 1043 (p. 189), lists the name Khwašag, based on Persian *khwaš* “joli, agréable.”

22. Gignoux, *Noms propres*, no. 352 (p. 82).

23. Ibid., no. 1039 (p. 188).

24. For both readings, see J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls, Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem 1987), 161 and n. 4.

IV. *The Propitious Agents*²⁵

The surviving letters כבי- prior to the break in line 4 of the BM bowl suggest that §V began immediately after the brief client's name, and that in contrast to the SD text, the propitious agents are not mentioned at this point. The brief invocation at the start of the spell is sufficient to grant the clients protection and guarantee the efficacy of the formula. Furthermore, this is the only place in the text that the propitious agents are addressed in the second person. A structural analysis of the entire text implies that this list of propitious agents is secondary at this point. See below, section 6 of this article.

V. *Suppression Formula*

The SD parallel provides us with the passage missing in the BM bowl. The parallelism וכביש רישאיון ד-עכוריא כבישיא as a merism for the entirety is found also in רישא/עקבא "suppressed are the heads of the temple-spirits, suppressed are the heels of the temple spirits" (MS 1928/44:6–7). It also indicates that the superlinear addition רבא found in the BM bowl is part of the original formula. The use of כביש "suppressed" in magic formulae is common, and is found as part of magic formulae that originate in both Babylonia and Palestine.²⁶

VI. *"Historiola"*

The SD text provides us with the complete formula for this section, which is badly damaged in the BM bowl. Such first person accounts related in the perfect of the protagonist's "mission" against the enemy forces are occasionally attested in the Babylonian Aramaic magic corpus,²⁷ and a few examples are found in Mandaic texts (e.g., MS 2054/26). For the reading אלמיא, see above, section 2, *Epigraphic Considerations*. The SD text reads ונהורא הייא rather than ונהורא והייא as previously read in the BM bowl, which suggests that, again, the scribe of the BM bowl employed a three-headed *hā*. הייא should be understood here as an adjective meaning "living." It could theoretically be plural and modify both זיוא "radiance" and ונהורא "and light."²⁸

The m.pl. participle יאדילון (BM: יאדילון) "they acknowledge them" represents a use of the root YDA (historically YD^ʿ) that is not recorded in *MD*. The verb is found elsewhere in Mandaic in parallelism with the root *šrr*, "to be strong, hold firmly, faithfully": רבא ד-יאדילין לקיניך ולשארשיך רבא "and anyone who holds faithfully to you, you

25. I have adopted this felicitous term and the equally appropriate "Maleficent Agents" from E. Yamauchi, "Aramaic Magic Bowls," *JAOS* 85 (1965), 511–23.

26. The Babylonian examples are too numerous to require proof, though some of the closer parallels have been adduced in Ford, "BM 91715," 42–43. For the Palestinian evidence, compare the Horvat Marish amulet published in J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Magic Spells and Formulae—Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem, 1993), 43, and commentary, 47.

27. Cf. S. Shaked, "The Poetics of Spells, Language and Structure in Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity 1: The Divorce Formula and its Ramifications," in Abusch and van der Toorn, *Mesopotamian Magic*, 178, who describes such a journey as "shamanistic."

28. *MD*, 118, s.v. *haia*, notes that the defective spelling *hiia* is sometimes employed for this adjective though it is unclear if this orthography is used only in the plural. In the magic corpus, I have found ופקדאיון הייא "and the commands of the living gods" (MS 2054/73).

hold faithfully to him; and anyone who acknowledges you and your family and your great primeval stem, you attend to (his) matters at all time(s)” (Drower Collection 40:448–51). This use of YD^c to indicate mutual recognition and acknowledgement of respective duties between a suzerain and his vassal is known from other Northwest Semitic languages.²⁹

VII. *The Maleficent Agents*

Segal’s reading of קיראתון in BM 1. 7 is supported by SD, while Müller-Kessler overlooked the final stroke and read קיראתא. The BM text appears to have been overwritten (fig. 8), and we may assume that the scribe initially wrote קיריאתא, as found a few words earlier in the formula (now lost in the BM text but preserved in the SD parallel), but then corrected the reading to match his *Vorlage*.³⁰



Fig. 8. קיריאתון (BM 117872:7).

The קיראתון mentioned here refer to the Zodiac signs (מאלואשיא), which are also referred to as the מלאכיא.³¹ The words הומריא באיתא were not successfully identified by Segal; the reading באיתא was suggested by Ford on the basis of the photograph in Segal’s edition (which lacks the fragment upon which the word הומריא is found), while Müller-Kessler proposed ובאיתא but did not offer a reading of the preceding letters. The expression הומריא באיתא, the correct reading of which is now confirmed by the

29. See in particular H. B. Huffmon, “The Treaty Background of Hebrew Yāda’,” *BASOR* 181 (1966), 31–37, and H. B. Huffmon and S. B. Parker, “A Further Note on the Treaty Background of Hebrew Yāda’,” *BASOR* 184 (1966), 36–38.

30. From the expressions וקיריאתון כולהין “and all of their invocations” and ועל קיריאתא ד-עתקריא “and the invocations that were invoked” it is apparent that the noun קיריאתא is feminine plural. Accordingly, there is no need to emend the verb אולא found in Fitzwilliam Museum bowl E.2-1907 III 38–40 עסירא אולא “bound are all the curses and invocations that go and dwell upon the house” to read אולא as proposed in Müller-Kessler, “Interrelations,” 203. Since both קיריאתא “curses” and קיריאתא “invocations” are feminine plural nouns, the verb אולא should be in the feminine plural as well. For the -ā ending of the feminine plural participles in Mandaic, see the ample documentation in Th. Nöldeke, *Mandäische Grammatik* (Halle an der Saale, 1875), 165. The orthography שאריא is ambiguous, since it may reflect both genders and numbers: masculine, feminine, singular, and plural. The form כולהין “all of them” cannot be taken as evidence of a masculine plural subject, as the 3rd m. pl. pronominal suffix may substitute for the 3rd f. pl., though the opposite appears not to be the case. Compare Nöldeke, *MG*, 180.

31. Compare פת שובא כוכביא פת תריסאר מאלואשיא “daughter of the seven planets, daughter of the twelve zodiac signs” in DC 40:203–5; and פת שובא שביאדיא אשאר עלה ותריסאר מלאכיהון אשאר עלה “the seven planets strengthened it, and their twelve angels strengthened it” in a Mandaic amulet published by M. Lidzbarski, “Ein mandäisches Amulett,” *Florilegium ou recueil de travaux d’érudition dédiés à M. Malchior de Vogüé* (Paris, 1909), 349–73, and reprinted in E. Yamauchi, *Mandaic Incantation Texts* (New Haven, 1967), no. 22, ll. 253–56 (pp. 234–57).

SD parallel, is fairly rare in the magic corpus, but is now attested in two bowl texts from the Schøyen collection, in the spelling *הומריא ביתא* (MS 1928/5:17, MS 2054/26:8). The demonization of evil thoughts (*מהשבאתא בישאתא*) is not recorded in the lexica, but is closely paralleled by the appearance of “evil thoughts of fear” in a list of maleficent agents in MS 2054/30a:8–9: *סהריא שידיא ודיויא ורוהיא והומריא וליליאתא ומהשבאתא* “Sahirs and *šēds* and *dēvs* and spirits and humras and liliths and evil thoughts of fear.”

VIII. *Validity Clause*

Like many magic texts, the SD bowl contains a formula declaring the eternal validity of its spell. Such clauses are very common in the Jewish Aramaic bowls, wherein they draw upon a long tradition of similar expressions in Aramaic legal documents with such expressions as *מן יומא דנה ולעלם* “from this day to eternity.”³² The most common Mandaic equivalent, couched in eschatological terms, is probably *אלמא ליומא יום דינא* “until the day, the day of judgment, and until the hour, the hours of deliverance” (e.g., Greenfield-Naveh 25–27; MS 2054/35:14–15).³³ In MS 1928/30:11 we also find *יומא ביומא שיתא שאייה בשאייה* “day by day, hour by hour,”³⁴ hours by hours.” In the latter example, the form *שאייה* appears to be used as a collective meaning “period.”

IX. *The Maleficent Agents II*

The list of maleficent agents now continues, mirroring the list in §VII. In the SD bowl, the left leg of the *nā* of *רבותאנא* does not join up with the following *halqa*, and it is also possible to read here *רבותאניא*. This would be an adjectival form of *רבותא*, though the *-āni* morpheme found in Classical Syriac is not attested for masculine forms in Classical Mandaic.³⁵ Working in favor of the reading of *רבותאנא* is the fact that this form is also found in MS 1928/29:8: *רבותאנא ד-האזין דיא* “the master of this *dēv*.” The same word should be reconstructed in the BM parallel. The word *ועל* has been omitted in the BM bowl after *צאורעיל*, perhaps through haplography. The SD text reads *העמין* with a very clear down stroke for the *yā*. Segal correctly notes that the name *העמון גאברא* is found in the *Ginza Yamina* 209:16³⁶. The SD bowl probably reads *גבארא*, though the final *halqa* (*aleph*) sign is unusually solid rather than hollow, which might reflect an attempt

32. See A. Yardeni, *Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek Documentary Texts from Nahal Hever and Other Sites with an Appendix Containing Alleged Qumran Texts* (The Seiyāl Collection II), *DJD* 27 (Oxford, 1997), 16; and compare, e.g., *מן יומא זנה ועד עלם* in A. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford, 1923), no. 15, l. 4.

33. J. C. Greenfield and J. Naveh, “A Mandaic Lead Amulet with Four Incantations,” *EI* 18 (1985), 97–106: 98; reprinted in Ch. Müller-Kessler, *Die Zauberschalentexte in der Hilprecht-Sammlung, Jena und weitere Nippur-Texte anderer Sammlungen* (Wiesbaden, 2005), 136–37. On the use of apposition in these expressions, see Nöldeke, *MG*, 320–21. Cf. also my comments on MS 2054/35:14–15 in M. Morgenstern, Review of Müller-Kessler, *Die Zauberschalentexte*, *JSS* 55 (2010), 287.

34. This could also be translated “year by year”; see Drower-Macuch, *MD* 464, s.v. *šita* 2.

35. For Classical Syriac, see Th. Nöldeke, *Compendious Syriac Grammar* (London, 1904), 83.

36. See also GY 175:15, for which we also find the alternative reading *דימן* (see ed. Petermann).

to erase it by turning it into an extension of the *rā*.³⁷ In my opinion, the *wā* of ועל before the name ניריג in the BM bowl can just be discerned.

X. Conclusion of Historiola

The conclusion of the historiola appears in the summarizing sentence על כולהון עתית לבאר שדיתינון ועל כולהון אסגית “unto all of them I came and unto all of them I went,” which represents a chiasmic repetition of the verbs previously found in §VI: מן בית הייא נפקית ואסגית “I departed from the house of Life, and I went and came upon all the worlds.” The passage serves to emphasize the comprehensive nature of the exorcism that is being performed.

XI. The Exorcism

The exorcism in the BM bowls appears to have been shorter and presented in a slightly different order. If our reconstruction is correct, the expression לבאר שדיתינון “I cast them out,” which reiterates the exorcism in the SD version, appears in the BM bowl as part of the main exorcism formula. It is possible that at least some of the verbs found in the SD parallel, קריתינון ואסרתינון ורגלתינון וכרכתינון “I called them and bound them and fettered them and turned them back,” were part of the formula now lost in the missing parts of the BM bowl.

The precise import of the verb קריתינון here seems uncertain. It may simply be an act of summoning the maleficent agents together in order to expel them, but it might also reflect the belief that calling the agent by name is a first stage to neutralizing it.

XII. The Clients II

In §III of the SD text, the extended client list included the personal names and matronyms of all of Sehbukht’s children. Here the resumptive list is abbreviated: Dodai is mentioned only by her personal name, while the children are not named individually. However, the list adds a reference to זירון ובאזירון “their seed and their progeny,” which from its appearance after the expression ובנאנתה “his sons and his daughters” would appear to refer to Sehbukht’s grandchildren.

The word-pair זירא and באזירא, both essentially meaning “seed” is already attested in Mandaic magic corpus in BM 103358:9–10 (Segal 099M): הא הזאיך-כראכתך: מן זירא ומן באזירא ומן בנאנתה “Behold, see that I have turned you back from the seed and progeny and from his sons and daughters” (my translation).³⁸ From this

37. Following M. Lidzbarski, *Ginza: Der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer übersetzt und erklärt* (Göttingen, 1925), 179, n. 4, Drower-Macuch, *MD*, 145, s.v. **himun**, intriguingly refer to A. Geiger, “Jüdische Begriffe und Worte innerhalb der syrischen Literatur,” *ZDMG* 21 (1876), 491, wherein Geiger discusses early interpretations of המון (Isa. 33:30) as an angel. Geiger notes Jerome’s claim that the Jews understand the word as referring specifically to the angel Gabriel. Although Gabriel is found in Mandaic literature in the form גברעיל, the epithet גבאר might itself reflect this early Jewish interpretation.

38. Segal also noted the parallelism in a later Mandaic manuscript, מן זירהך-ליליא ומן באזירהך “from his seed at night and from his seed by day” but mistakenly identified the reference in the Mandaic Dictionary as referring to *Drashia d-Yahia*. In fact, as the dictionary states, it comes from DC 43 section J (*Šafta d-Qaština*), line 202.

parallel it is also apparent that the root *k-r-k* may be used in the *qal* with a transitive meaning. In our text it appears in both the *qal* (SD l. 12) and *pa'il* (SD l. 13).

XIV. *Reiteration of Blessing*

The BM formula is broken, but is clearly not entirely parallel to that of SD; the reconstruction here follows that proposed by Müller-Kessler, though I believe that it is possible to read the final *eh* of *וּפְגִרָה* “and his body” and the genitive *dušenna* of *ן-אברדרה* [מאן]. On the reading *וּלְבָנָא [וּן]* “and to [their] sons and to their daughters” see above, section 2, *Epigraphic Considerations*.

The conclusion of the blessing in the SD text repeats for the third time the name of the main client, but mentions his spouse by her personal name alone and does not mention the children’s names at all. However, it slightly extends the range of the blessing to all those who frequent the house (*אֵילָה וְנַפְקָה*, literally “its enterers and its leavers”). A similar concluding formula appears at the end of the Mandaic bowl BM 91724:12–13, first published by Gordon in 1937 (= Segal 088M): *וּאִסְרֹתָא וְהַתְּמַתָּא: וְנִטְרַתָּא תְּהִילָה לְבֵיתָהּ דִּוְרָה הִכְלָהָ וּבְנִיאָנָה וְזֹאנָה וּבְנָהּ וּבְנִיאָתָהּ וְקִנְיָנָהּ וְאִבְרָהָ וְנִטְרַתָּא וְהַתְּמַתָּא וְאֵילָה וְנַפְקָה* “And may there be healing and sealing and protection for the house, dwelling, and residence and wife and sons and daughters and animals and property and slaves and slave-girls and those who frequent it.”³⁹

XV. *Doxological Proclamation*

The end of the BM bowl text is lost, so it is not possible to establish whether the common doxological proclamation with which the SD bowl concludes, *מְשַׁבְּיָן הִיא*, was also found in the BM exemplar. The reading of the final letters of *מְשַׁבְּיָן* is uncertain, and it possible that the scribe rewrote the end of the word (perhaps to read *מְשַׁבְּיָא*) after refilling his stylus. On the SD bowl, the words are followed by a visual symbol that indicates that the text has ended. James Ford has drawn my attention to a similar mark that appears at the end of the bowl text BM 91777 (Segal 107M). It is also found marking the end of the text in an unpublished Mandaic bowl from the Moussaieff Collection, M145.⁴⁰

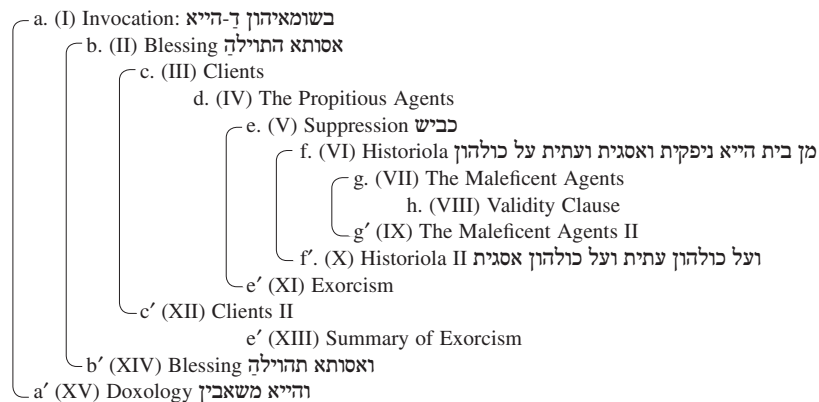
6. *Structural Analysis*

When divided into its constituent elements, the magic formula shows a very clear structure that, if our reconstruction of the BM text is correct, varies only slightly

39. On the idiom *‘āyil wənāpiq*, see M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic* (Ramat Gan, Israel-Baltimore, 2002), 865a (bottom) s.v. *עלל*. The expression *אֵילָה וְנַפְקָה* in BM 91724 was correctly understood and translated, albeit literally, by C. Gordon, “Aramaic and Mandaic Magical Bowls,” *Ar. Or.* 9 (1937), 105, in Yamauchi, *MIT*, 278, and in Segal, *Catalogue*, 117. Translate accordingly Nippur 12 N 493:7–8 (= Müller-Kessler, *Die Zauberschalentexte*, Appendix text 2A, p. 145) *וּמִן ךְּ-אֵילָהּ וּמִן נַפְקָהָ* “and from those who frequent it” (lit. its enterer and its leaver). Cf. also M. Sokoloff, “Notes on Some Mandaic Magical Texts,” *Or.* 40 (1971), 453, on Yamauchi, *MIT*, §9.17D, who interprets similarly but takes the pronoun to refer to the client rather than the house. However, in his online “*Addenda et Corrigenda* to the Babylonian Aramaic Dictionary” (2002), 11 (ad *DJBA* p. 865), Sokoloff now translates the Mandaic text “those who move about (this house).” In any case, both words must be interpreted as participles and cannot be translated “seinem Eingang und seinem Ausgang.”

40. The writer is currently preparing an edition of the Moussaieff bowl for publication.

between the two parallels. The spell is formulated in a chiasmic structure, at the center of which lies a declaration of the eternal validity of the spell.



It is notable that the two elements that break the chiasmic structure of the spell, namely §IV and §XIII, are absent from the BM formula. §IV is not found at all, while the parallel to §XIII of the SD bowl is all that remains of the exorcism formula in BM line 9. This may imply that the BM bowl preserves an earlier, shorter version of the spell, which was later expanded in the SD version. Perhaps the discovery of a more exact parallel of the BM version will confirm the reconstruction proposed here and add further support to this hypothesis.

The chiasmic structure serves to highlight several aspects of the text. The powers that are invoked by name at the opening (I) are praised in the doxological conclusion (XV), a repetition that reiterates the magician's dependence upon those powers and expresses (by way of the praise) his gratitude toward them. The repeated blessing (II and XIV) states the purpose of the magic text and reiterates that purpose at the close of the main body of the spell. The spell itself (V–XI) is structured as a series of concentric circles at the heart of which lies the validity clause, which emphasizes its eternal efficacy, and these circles contrast with those of the “outer ring” of the text. Corresponding to the blessing, we find the suppression (V) and expulsion (X); in place of the clients' names, we find the list of the maleficent agents. However, structurally, the maleficent agents are disposed of within the heart of the text, so that they are no longer mentioned again and the spell may end with a reiteration of the positive aspects of its content, namely the clients' names, the blessings, and the doxology. Once again, the additional passage found in the SD bowl, i.e., the summary of expulsion (XIII), breaks this structure, and is suspect as being a later addition to the text.

Appendix—On קאקילתא, *Copria* and *Wells*

The mostly likely translation of the interesting expression פת קאקילתא is “daughter of the refuse dump.”⁴¹ The lack of a matronymic and its substitution by the term “refuse dump” suggests that for Dodai the adage “*mater certa*” did not apply, and that she was

41. Though Mandaic קיקילתא בית perhaps means a “whorehouse” (the term requires further consideration), the expression here appears without בית.

a foundling who was either abandoned on the refuse dump or forced to live there after being bereaved of her unknown parents. Various social aspects of the refuse dump in Near-Eastern society have been discussed in Greenfield's and Shaffer's rewarding study on the *qlqlt*,⁴² but none seem to provide a direct parallel with our text.⁴²

However, the abandoning of unwanted children on the refuse dump is mentioned in Mandaic literature in the *draša d-yahia* or "Johannesbuch," though the true meaning of the passage was missed by Lidzbarski in his momentous translation of the work. The passage, which appears in the context of a polemic against sinners who believe that their sins are hidden, reads as follows:⁴³

כולמאן ד-אזיל אלואת זאמארתא וזירא זארא ד-כאדבא ומינה באטנא וסאמא שאקלא ואזלא בקיקליא
שאדיאלה והאפרא בירא וקאבראלה ומיהידרא בעקבה דאישאלה ואינה דיאלדא האזילה לעמה ועמה
ליאלדא לאהאזיאלה יאלדא מאיית בקיקליא ועמה באכיאלה בגנוב גנוב מישתאילא בהאנאתה מאטארתא
ד-כאלביא שיהאניא משארגיזאניא אלגיא טרושיא

Anyone who goes to a prostitute⁴⁴ and sows false seed, and (then) she conceives from him and takes a drug and goes to the refuse dumps (and) aborts him⁴⁵ and digs a pit and buries him, and then goes back and treads him down with her heel; and the eyes of the child see his mother, but the mother does not see the child. The child dies on the refuse dump, and the mother weeps over it in secret; she⁴⁶ will be held to account in the same purgatory as lustful, enraged, dumb, and deaf dogs.

Lidzbarski translated the expression *שאדיאלה בקיקליא* as "das Kind in den Kot wirft," i.e., "she cast (the child) in dung," and similarly rendered *יאלדא מאיית בקיקליא* "das Kind stirbt dann im Kot," i.e., "the child died in the dung." Lidzbarski's interpretations were followed by Drower and Macuch in *MD*.⁴⁷ However, *קיקליא* does not mean "dung" but rather "refuse dump," and we appear to have an allusion here to the practice of aborting unwanted children on the local dumps.

The connection between the dung-heaps and parentless children is also alluded to in the Babylonian Talmud, which refers to *קיקלתא דיתמי* "ההוא גברא דבנא אפדנא אקיקלתא דיתמי" (TB *B.Qam.* 21a). While in principle the collocation *קיקלתא דיתמי* "the refuse dump of the orphans" could be interpreted as simply a proper name, the Talmud itself does not understand the expression in this way, but rather as referring to an area over which orphans enjoyed certain ownership or user rights. The Talmud explains that the previous tenants of the dump used to provide the orphans with a small amount of money in return for use of the land, and the discussion assumes that it was an area that was publicly recognized as belonging to orphans. In passing, we may note that a similar discussion arises regarding the lands referred to as *באגא*, which Sokoloff has glossed "rural area adjoining the city."⁴⁸ Though the Talmud emphasizes *באגא בארעא דיתמי* *לא מחזקינן*

42. J. C. Greenfield and A. Shaffer, "qlqlt", *tubkinnu*, Refuse Tips and Treasure Trove," *An. St.* 33 (1983), 123–29.

43. Text: M. Lidzbarski, *Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer* (Giessen, 1915), 1.98; Lidzbarski's German translation and notes appeared in 2.99.

44. For *זאמארתא*, literally "singing-girl," with the meaning of "prostitute," see *MD*, 159.

45. See below.

46. Lidzbarski, translation, 99, n. 2, plausibly suggests that the participle here should be m. s. and refer to the sinning man, rather than the crying prostitute.

47. *MD*, 412, s.v. *qqla*, *qqlita*.

48. Sokoloff, *Dictionary*, 185 s.v. *באגא*, *באגא*.

“we do not presume that the (entire) rural district is a field of the orphans,” (TB *B.Meş.* 22b), the clarification presumably arises because certain areas on the fringes of the settlement were indeed regarded as the unwritten property of orphans.

The closest parallel to the use of פת קאקילתא as a matronymic would appear to be the names from Roman Egypt that start with *kopr-*, based upon κόπρος, the Greek word for “dung.” Predrizet proposed that the name was given to slaves who were taken from the dung heap after being abandoned by their parents at childbirth.⁴⁹ A recent reexamination of the evidence has suggested that in all probability the name was sometimes hereditary and some of the bearers of this name were not actually foundlings themselves rather the descendants of foundlings. Nonetheless, the similarity to the matronymic קאקילתא is striking, especially since we have not found a similar term from the Mesopotamian realm.⁵⁰

Reference to abandoned children may be found in some early Mesopotamian texts. The bilingual Sumerian-Akkadian legal text *ana ittišu* employs the following terms:⁵¹

ad . da . ù ama nu . un . tuk . a	ša a-ba ù um-mu la-a i-šu-ú	who has no father and mother
ad . da . a . ni . ù ama . a . ni nu . un . zu . a	ša a-ba-šu um-ma-šu la-a i-du-ú	who does not know his mother and father
túl . ta . pàd . da sil . t[a . ba . an t]u . ra	ina bur-ti a-tu-šu ina su-qí šu-ru-ub	he was found in the well he was brought in from the street
ka . ur . [zī]r . ta ba . an . [da] . kar	i-na pi-i kal-bi e-ki-im-šu	he has been snatched from a (his) dog's mouth
ka . ug[a] . ta mi . ni . fb . ta . šub	i-na pi-i a-ri-bi ú-šad-di	he made a raven let go of (him)

Landsberger dated this text to the 18th century B.C.E.⁵²

The parallelism of the street and the well is also found in another bilingual text, this time a glossary that also dates from the early second millennium B.C.E., and bears a close connection with the previous text.⁵³

pú	burtum	well, opening of a well
šub-ba	na-di	it (the child) has been cast
pú-ta pà-da	ina bur-tum a-tu	it has been found in a well
síl-ta ì- [*] TU-ra	ina su-ú-qí [*] šu- [*] ru- [*] ub	it has been brought in from the street (into the house)
ka-ur-KU-a-ni-šè ba-an-da-kar	ina pi-i kal-bi e-kim	it has been taken from the mouth of a (Sum.: its) dog

49. P. Predrizet, “Copia,” *Révue des études anciennes* 23 (1921), 85–94.

50. The evidence was reexamined by S. B. Pomeroy, “Copronyms and the Exposure of Infants in Egypt,” in Roger S. Bagnall and William V. Harris, *Studies in Roman Law in Memory of A. Arthur Schiller* (Leiden, 1986), 147–62. Cf. also W. V. Harris, “Child-Exposure in the Roman Empire,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 84 (1994), 1–22, esp. 8, and J. C. Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity* (Oxford, 2002), 74–75.

51. B. Landsberger, *MSL* 1 III iii 28–33.

52. Landsberger, *ibid.*, p 1- iii.

53. *MSL* 5, 50.

In addition to these sources, in his discussion of the adoption of abandoned children, M. Malul has drawn attention to names such as *Ša-pî-kalbi* (“He of the dog’s mouth”), *Ina-pî-kalbi-irîh*, “He has been left over from the dog’s mouth,” *Sūqā’a*, *S/Šulā’a*, *Sūqā’itum* “He/She-of-the-street,” and *Nāru-erība* “The river has compensated me.”⁵⁴ Malul concludes that that “all the above expressions and names clearly prove that the practice of exposing children by their parents was quite widespread in ancient Mesopotamian society. Children were exposed in various places, such as streets, woods, mountains, rivers, wells, and even swamps and puddles, and evidence for this practice runs throughout Mesopotamian history.”⁵⁵ W. G. Lambert has suggested that the abandoning of unwanted children at the well, a location frequented by locals (especially women), may imply that they were not always left to die; sometimes they were abandoned in a place where their mothers hoped they would be found, just as unwanted babies are occasionally left on hospital doorsteps today.⁵⁶ However, from the material that Malul has gathered, it emerges that not all unwanted Mesopotamian children were fortunate enough to be left in places where they were likely to be found, and that in many cases, their adoption probably saved them grave misfortune.

From these parallels it is clear that the matronymic פת קאקילתא “daughter of the dump” would not be unprecedented in the ancient world, since naming a parentless child after the place of its discovery was attested both in Mesopotamia and beyond. While Dodai’s matronymic may not have been used on a daily basis, it appears in a context where the mother’s name is usually obligatory.

54. A word of caution must be sounded about the evidence of the names. A. L. Oppenheim, “Assyriological Gleanings I,” *BASOR* 91 (1943), 36–37 noted that the name *Ša-pî-kalbi* may reflect a symbolic “throwing to the dogs,” i.e., handing over for adoption, rather than an actual one. Wunsch has noted that the name is generally held by people of lowly status: slaves, temple-dependents and agricultural workers. See C. Wunsch, “Findelkinder und Adoption nach neubabylonischen Quellen,” *AfO* 50 (2003/4), 174–244, at 182–83. Wunsch’s article contains a significant discussion of the subject at hand.

55. M. Malul, “Adoption of Foundlings in the Bible and Mesopotamian Documents: A Study of Some Legal Metaphors in Ezekiel 16:1–7,” *JSOT* 46 (1990) 97–126 at 105.

56. Oral communication. I thank Professor Lambert for bringing these texts to my attention.