NOTES ON THE ARAMAIC SECTIONS OF
HAVDALAH DE-RABBI AQIBA

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One of the interests of our dedicatee, Professor Tapani Harviainen, is early Jewish magical literature, especially Aramaic magic bowl texts. He has written a series of articles on both the linguistic features of these texts and their religio-cultural background.

The study of early Jewish magic has been greatly benefited by the publication of a large number of new texts over the past two decades. This includes, inter alia, a significant number of magic bowl texts and a variety of magical texts from the Cairo Genizah. This rapidly growing material may now be compared with the texts published earlier and, consequently, a better understanding of early Jewish magic and its relationship to related magical traditions is attainable. Equally important are the improved possibilities of studying the Aramaic and Hebrew idioms of the era. In the light of the new material, for instance, the different varieties within Babylonian Jewish Aramaic may be better understood.

In early Jewish magical literature, Hebrew and Aramaic are commonly used side by side. Many texts include both Hebrew and Aramaic sections, or a text that is written in one of these also includes at least some words in the other.

The magic bowl texts were written in Aramaic in the Talmudic and Geonic periods.1 Hebrew is only used in biblical quotations and in some stereotyped phrases and words. The type of Aramaic that is overwhelmingly represented in these texts is a conservative variant in comparison with standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic. In my study of the peculiarities of this Aramaic dialect,2 the close connection between this dialect and the Nedaim type of “non-standard” Babylonian

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1 The practice of writing Aramaic incantations on clay bowls flourished in Mesopotamia between the 5th and 8th centuries C.E. See e.g. Hunter 1995: 61; 1996: 220.
2 Juusola 1999b.
Talmudic Aramaic became apparent. In addition to the bowl texts, Aramaic is the main language in the Jewish amulets from Palestine. These, however, attest to a Palestinian dialect. Furthermore, Aramaic is used alongside Hebrew in many other early Jewish magical texts, notably in Ḥarba de-Moshe and Havdalah de-Rabbi Aqiba. The latter was published posthumously by Gershom Scholem in 1980–81, and the former has lately been re-edited by Yuval Harari.

As with many other early Jewish magical works, Havdalah de-Rabbi Aqiba (henceforth HdRA) is a composite, whose date and place of origin are hard to determine unequivocally. It is evident that various elements of the text were inserted at different times and in different places, the final literary form of the text possibly being received in Southern Italy during the Geonic period. According to Scholem, the basic elements of the work, notably those in Jewish Aramaic, go back to the Babylonia of the Geonic period, or even earlier. The Aramaic parts – in some cases only short sentences and words – are found in most sections or paragraphs of the work, as divided by Scholem in his publication. The most important in this respect are sections 2, 4, 5, 8, and 11. It is possible that each of the Aramaic parts is of different origin and was, perhaps, incorporated at different times. Given that Scholem is correct in his assumption and the Aramaic sections of the text originate from Babylonia in the Geonic period or even earlier, they are roughly speaking contemporary with the Aramaic bowl texts. Scholem, who paid attention to evident textual similarities, already noted the close connection between the Aramaic parts of HdRA and the bowl texts. In this paper, the salient features of the language of the Aramaic sections of HdRA are analyzed and compared with the Aramaic of the bowl texts.

**SPELLING AND PHONETICS**

The fem. sg. ending in the absolute state and the ending of the determinate state are both spelled כ-. Only a few exceptions occur: הִנֹּל (2:8); הִנֶּשׁ (3:1) and else-

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3 Originally noted by Tapani Harviainen (1983). Christa Müller-Kessler and Theodore Kwasman have lately employed the term “Standard Literary Babylonian Aramaic” to describe the main dialect of the bowl texts (Müller-Kessler & Kwasman 2000: 159).

4 See the sketch in Naveh & Shaked 1985: 33–34.

5 Harari 1997. Scholem published the text of Havdalah de-Rabbi Aqiba (according to MS Oxford-Bodley 1531) in Tarbiz (= Scholem 1980–81) and also included critical notes and a Hebrew translation of some parts of the text. In addition to his main source (i.e. MS Oxford-Bodley 1531), Scholem took into account a variety of other MSS and other sources.

6 For a general review of early Jewish magical literature, see Alexander 1986; Schäfer 1990.

7 Scholem 1980–81: 249.

8 In this paper, I follow the division of the text applied by Scholem in his publication. In the MS, the text appears as a whole without divisions (see Scholem 1980–81: 247–248).
where);\(^9\) Only if the word ends with ‘aleph is the ending regularly marked with he, e.g. דָּרָה (3:2); חֵתָה (3:4); מֶשֶׁה (5:23). In the bowl texts, נ- predominates, but נ- also commonly occurs.\(^1\) The latter ‘aleph is sometimes employed to mark נ in medial position, e.g. לֶהָאָשֶׁר (8:12-13).\(^2\) As in the bowl texts, the trait is common with fem. pl. determinate state endings (see below).\(^3\)

As is the regular practice in the bowl texts, too, the final bet, mem, nun, resh, and taw are maintained, e.g. בֵּית (5:32); מִימֵין (2:9), אָמִיר (2:1); דָּרָה (8:21). Exceptions (all of them concerning the final nun) are מִייעלָה (2:9); מִייעלָה (5:14); מִייעלָה (5:17); מִייעלָה (11:17).\(^4\)

The letter yod sometimes appears in a place where one would expect a shwa mobile to occur in a vocalized text, e.g. רְעַה מַעַן (5:11, 12); רְעַה מַעַן (5:14); רְעַה מַעַן (5:9).\(^5\) Parallel instances are well attested in the magic bowl texts and also appear in some other traditions within Babylonian Jewish Aramaic.\(^6\)

In two cases (אַנְנָא ‘built’ in 5:1, 6),\(^7\) the letter ‘aleph is apparently used with the same function.

In accordance with the bowl texts, the laryngeals and pharyngeals are mainly maintained in the script. Some instances indicating weakening of the laryngeals and pharyngeals are, however, attested, e.g. נִיַרְדֵּה ‘I returned’ (5:8).\(^8\)

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\(^9\) Note, however, שְׁמָה in 8:20.

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INDEPENDENT AND SUFFIXED PERSONAL PRONOUNS

The only Aramaic independent personal pronouns attested in HdRA are the 1st p. sg. זָא (5:1; 8:3) and 2nd p. masc. pl. אָנוּחַ, 'you' (8:20). In the bowl texts, both זָא and אָנוּחַ appear and זוּ🥞 is standard for the 2nd p. pl. In addition, one encounters some instances of the 1st p. sg. enclitic personal pronoun א, e.g. מְשַבֵּעָנה יִדְעָה 'I adjure and bind' (2:6).

As for suffixed forms, a number of instances occur. In the 3rd p. masc. זוּ� is mostly employed with masc. pl. nouns and זוּ� with sg. nouns, e.g. זוּ� עַל תַּלְסָל הַשֵּׁמֶשׁ מִפְנַי מֹעֵד, 'and from his whole body, and from his tendons, and from his bones, his head, his flesh, and his blood, and from his limbs' (4:22–23). This is even more conservative than in the bowl texts, where זוּ� is also common (alongside זוּ�) with masc. pl. nouns. Once זוּ�, typical of Western Aramaic, appears with a pl. noun: זוּ� his tendons' (5:24).

In most other persons, too, the forms with sg. nouns appear without זוּ�: the 2nd p. sg. suffix is always spelled זוּ (and not זוּ) and the 3rd p. fem. זוּ (and not זוּ), e.g. זוּ תַּלְסָל הַשֵּׁמֶשׁ מִפְנַי מֹעֵד, 'to the city where you came from' (5:13). Further, the 3rd p. masc. זוּ with sg. nouns (e.g. זוּ נָמָה 'to your home' in 5:13) and זוּ with masc. pl. nouns (e.g. זוּ נָמָה in 5:17; זוּ נָמָה in 11:2).

The exception to the general rule is the 1st p. sg., where there is the suffix זוּ, with sg. nouns: זוּ תַּלְסָל מִפְנַי 'my house' (5:1); זוּ תַּלְסָל לְבָרֵךְ 'to my entrance' (5:2); זוּ תַּלְסָל 'my gate' (5:3); זוּ תַּלְסָל 'and my land' (7:25). The same form also appears with the prepositionozo 'they came against me' (8:4); זוּ תַּלְסָל לְבָרֵךְ 'that serves me' (7:24). The suffix -o is the form originally used in Aramaic with masc. pl. forms and with those prepositions, such asozo, which follow their model in this respect. In standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic, the distinction between the suffixed pronouns originally used with masc. pl. nouns and those used with sg. nouns has been neutralized. Consequently, -o may also be used with sg. nouns. The characteristic spelling is with רָאָף (רָאָף). Thus, such instances as זוּ� in our text follow standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic usage.

20 As opposed to standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic רָאָף and Geonic Aramaic רָאָף. See Juusola 1999b: 75ff.
21 See Juusola 1999b: 81ff. That in the actual spoken vernacular the classical system had disintegrated (cf. Standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic) is further indicated by the fact that in a bowl text published lately by J. B. Segal (2000) רָאָף occurs with a pl. feminine noun: רָאָף וָתוֹלָעָה 'and for his daughters' (016A:9).
22 Fassberg 1990: 114ff.
23 If not a scribal error for רָאָף.
Alongside ב- and ד- also appears with sg. nouns, e.g. ב- 'my mouth be like the mouth of a lion, my tongue like the tongue of a heifer' (8:13); ד- 'my body' (4:22); ד- 'my body' (8:4). The ending ב- also occurs in the bowl texts with masc. sg. nouns, but this is exceptional.24

DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

The forms attested in HdRA agree very much with the bowl texts, ב- and ד- for masc. sg. and ד- and ב- for fem. sg. ב- 'with this great oath and with this great name' (6:11-12); ד- 'this is the secret' (8:1, 8); ד- 'this secret of the secrets' (8:1).25 ד- also appears in the phrase 'from this day and for ever' (5:24) that is frequently met with in the bowl texts, too. In the pl. there occurs ב- שמהו ד'רא'הו א'אילין 'in the name of these holy names' (13:3). א'אילין also appears as a minority form in the bowl texts; א'אילין here is most likely a hybrid Aramaic-Hebrew form or a highly conservative Aramaic variant.

NOUNS

The ending of the masc. pl. absolute state is י-ר, e.g. י-ר והיכן (4:13-14). The form typical of standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic, with apocopation of the final nun, is exceptional, e.g. י-ר והיכן (5:28-29); יר והיכן (8:10). As has already been noted, the ending of the fem. pl. absolute state is totally

25 For the demonstrative pronouns in the bowl texts, see Juusola 1999b: 101ff.
26 The spelling י- ד- occurs with שמה (3:3). Note also the name תורתא ו'](ʔ) (4:23).
27 Juusola 1999b: 144.
unattested. The same trait is typical of the bowl texts: even though the masc. pl. absolute state is common, in the fem. pl., the determinate form (אִנַּוּס/אִנֹא) clearly predominates. No explanation is known to me.

In the sg. the absolute state is also common, e.g. 2nd p. pl. (2:8); the majority of sg. nouns are, however, in the determinate state, e.g. 3rd p. masc. (8:3); 3rd p. masc. (2:6). The majority of sg. nouns are, however, in the determinate state, e.g. 1st p. sg. (8:1); 2nd p. pl. (8:1); 3rd p. masc. (8:13–14); 3rd p. fem. (5:33); 2nd p. pl. (6:12–13); 1st p. pl. (8:14); 2nd p. pl. (8:21) In accordance with the bowl texts, the masc. pl. absolute state seems to be especially common in the lists of spirits and demons. One might possibly suggest that the frequency of the absolute state masc. pl. (i.e. כְּ) may be connected with the similarity of this form to the corresponding Hebrew form (in Mishnaic Hebrew). The appearance of Hebrew and Aramaic side by side in our text supports this possibility. Note the following mixed Hebrew-Aramaic sentence from paragraph 8 which clearly illustrates this possibility: כְּסָפוּר הוֹשֵׁבָה מִדָּוֶל מִלְּכֵי שָׁלֹתָן מִיָּדָם בֶּבַלְמִךְ מִנְנֵי קְרֵם הַשָּׁמֶשׁ (8:15–16). In line with the bowl texts, absolute and determinate forms fluctuate without any evident reason, as may be noted by comparing the following instances: כְּלֲשָׁם אֲמָרָן מִיָּדָם (2:8); כְּלֲשָׁם אֲמָרָן מִיָּדָם (4:13); כְּלֲשָׁם אֲמָרָן מִיָּדָם in 5:26 as opposed to the parallel form כְּלֶה אֲמָרָן in 5:28. The noun may appear in the absolute state, while the attribute is in the determinate state: כְּלֶה אֲמָרָן מִיָּדָם (4:17–18).

Alongside analytical constructions with the particle כְּ, the classical construct state construction is still used to indicate the genitive: כְּלֶה אֲמָרָן מִיָּדָם (4:20–21).

VERBS

In the perfect the conservative variants predominate. Note the following instances:

כְּלַעֲפַת (רְאוֹת) ‘I went up, spoke and said’ (5:8); כְּלַעֲפַת (רְאוֹת) ‘I tied them’ (8:4); כְּלַעֲפַת (רְאוֹת) ‘they spoke and said’ (5:5); כְּלַעֲפַת (רְאוֹת) ‘you came in’ (5:9). Parallel forms are the norm in the bowl texts. Two instances of specifically Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic 3rd p. masc. pl. forms are attested: כְּלַעֲפַת (רְאוֹת) ‘and they perforated them in their nostrils and hung them’ (11:1–2). The pattern כְּלַעֲפַת (רְאוֹת) and the pattern identical to the corresponding sg.

28 For the use of different states in the bowl texts, see Jusola 1999b: 134ff.
29 1st p. sg. with the final כְּ as opposed to standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic.
30 3rd p. masc. pl. with the final כְּ maintained in the script.
31 2nd p. pl. with the final כְּ.
form (i.e. וְהָיָה) also exceptionally occur in the bowl texts. In addition, one encounters two instances of Palestinian Jewish Aramaic 3rd p. masc. pl. forms, with the final nun: 'אַחַת וְדַוִד בָּעָשׁ 'evil sorcerers came' (5:2–3); 'גַּלְגַּל 'they revealed' (11:1).

The imperfect prefix of the 3rd p. masc. sg./pl. is either -ו or -ל. Only -ו appears repeatedly in paragraphs 4 and 6, e.g. בִּדְרֵשֶׁת וְיִדְרַשֶׁת וְיֶרְדִּסְתָּן (6:11) By contrast, all three appear in paragraphs 5 and 8 (with many instances) and both -ו and -ל appear in 11, e.g. וַיְדַרְשֶׁת וְיִדְרַשֶׁת וְיֶרְדִּסְתָּן (5:19); וַיִּתְּרָפֶק וְיִתְּרָפֶק וְיֶרְדִּסְתָּן (5:19); וָיִשְֹתַת וְיִשְֹתַת וְיֶרְדִּסְתָּן (5:19); וַיְיִרְדִּסְתָּן וְיִרְדִּסְתָּן וְיֶרְדִּסְתָּן (5:19); וְיִרְדִּסְתָּן וְיִרְדִּסְתָּן וְיֶרְדִּסְתָּן (5:19). The vacillation between various imperfect prefixes is typical of the bowl texts as well. It seems, however, that -ו and especially -ל are relatively more frequent here than is normal in the bowl texts.

The n-infix in אֶתְפֶּל̄/אֶתְ-pọ-al forms is occasionally assimilated, as is typical of Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic: 'I went back onto the roof' (5:8); אֱלִפַּרְמָא (5:9); cf. 'and may their deeds fall apart' (5:26).

Normally, however, n is maintained in the script, e.g. רַבַּנָּא (5:16); רַבַּנָּא (5:17); רַבַּנָּא (5:18); רַבַּנָּא (5:19); רַבַּנָּא (5:19); רַבַּנָּא (5:19); רַבַּנָּא (5:19); רַבַּנָּא (5:19); רַבַּנָּa (8:2).

In the imperfect, pl. forms are attested. All the forms appear with the final -ו, e.g. וַחֲרָפֶלֶה 'go' (5:11). The trait is in accordance with the bowl texts.

The infinitives of the derived stems are generally considered good "markers", indicating dialectal differences and boundaries between various Aramaic dialects. HdRA here presents a complicated picture, even though only a few forms are found. The occurrences are as follows:

'זֵד קֵיִמְתֵּי לְבֵן לְמַכְּאָשָׁא 'who stand opposite us doing us evil' (11:4); 'זֵד קֵיִמְתֵּי לְמַכְּאָשָׁא 'who stand opposite me doing me evil' (8:12–13).

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33 One should note, however, that the 3rd p. masc. pl. with the ending י- is probably found in the bowl texts, too (Juusola 1999b: 168ff.). These occurrences may imply that the ending was employed in some sub-dialects of Babylonian Jewish Aramaic, too. Its appearance in Mandaic, alongside other forms, also supports this possibility (see below).
34 In the bowl texts, -ו is the preferred prefix both in the sg. and pl. (Juusola 1999b: 179).
35 The 1st. p. sg. perfect form יָדַרְשֵׁת stands for יָדַרְשֵׁת וְיִדְרַשֶׁת וְיֶרְדִּסְתָּן.
36 Probably אֶתְפֶּל or אֶתְ-pọ-al imperative from the root בָּרֶכֶם. On the possible meaning, see Schoen 1980–81: 21 n. 70.
37 Probably אֶתְפֶּל or אֶתְ-pọ-al imperative from the root בָּרֶכֶם.
38 Infinitive of the quadra-radical root בָּרֶכֶם. Cf. Also מְשַׁע in Targum Neophyti (Gen. 32:3) (see Sokoloff 1990: 546).
39 אֶתְפֶּל is an אֶתְfֶל infinitive from the root בָּרֶכֶם.
40 The instance is basically parallel to that in 11:4 (see above). אֶתְפֶּל is likewise an אֶתְfֶל infinitive from the root בָּרֶכֶם.
The form אבּא is equivalent to the pattern qattālā,⁴¹ that is the classical pattern in Aramaic, whereas both אבּ and אבּ are equivalent to mgattālā, typical of Palestinian Jewish Aramaic.⁴² In the bowl texts, like many other varieties of Aramaic, different patterns are used side by side, the most common variants being standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic qattõlë and qattālā.⁴³ To the best of my knowledge, Palestinian Jewish Aramaic forms with the ꞌ-prefix are unattested in the bowl texts published so far.

OTHER FEATURES

As in the bowl texts, ꞌ is used to indicate the direct object: ‘‘I Enoch son of Yared wrote it’’ (8:3); ‘‘I tied them’’ (8:4); ‘‘and they perforated them in their nostrils and hung them’’ (11:1–2).

⁴¹ This is the pa’el form; the corresponding form of the pa’el would be qattālā.
in line 11). This does not necessarily mean that exactly the same version of any part of the text was actually used in any bowl text. That is only to say that they stem from the very same Aramaic magical tradition. The salient linguistic features that the bowl texts and HdRA have in common may be enumerated as follows:

1. The tendency to maintain final *bet*, *mem*, *nun*, *resh* and *taw*.
2. The pharyngeals and laryngeals are mostly maintained in the script.
3. The letter *yod* occasionally appears as a counterpart of *shwa mobile*.
4. The occurrence of conservative suffixed pronouns (e.g. a distinction is maintained between נ and נו for the 3rd p. masc. sg.) alongside those familiar from standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic (e.g. the use of נ with masc. sg. nouns).
5. Conservative demonstrative pronouns, such as י🃽, יִ, and ייִ.
6. The frequent use of the absolute state, especially in the masc. pl. (i.e. ה) but the curious absence of the fem. pl. absolute state.
7. The preference for conservative forms in the perfect as against standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic variants.
8. The vacillation between the imperfect prefixes -י, -י and -י for the 3rd. p. masc. sg./pl.
9. Other conservative features held in common with the bowl texts, such as נ as an object marker and נא as a marker of existence ('there is/are').

Many more could be added. Note, for instance, that the participle marker נ, that is at least rare in the bowl texts, is unattested here. In some cases standard Babylonian Talmudic forms are more common in HdRA than in bowl texts. In the imperfect, the prefixes -י and -י are proportionally more common than in the bowl texts, and the same goes for standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic perfect patterns (notably נו). As regards the counterpart of *shwa mobile*, HdRA presents an interesting picture. On the one hand, *yod* may appear as the reflex of *shwa* – in accordance with the bowl texts – and on the other, 'aleph is curiously used with the same function (only twice). The latter counterpart may reflect an ultra-short (or short) a-vowel that appears as the main reflex of *shwa* in the Yemenite reading tradition of Babylonian Jewish Aramaic. Note that in the Yemenite reading tradition, the vowel *i* also appears alongside the main reflex. Thus both counterparts (*yod* and 'aleph) in HdRA may well reflect actual pronunciations in the Geonic period. Of

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45 This, of course, is not a conservative feature, even though it is shared with the bowl texts.
46 In the Yemenite tradition, *i* only appears in the 3rd p. masc. imperfect prefixes. See Morag 1988: 91ff.
course, this is most uncertain, given that only two instances with ‘aleph are present.

Most Babylonian Talmudic forms in HdRA that differ from the main bowl dialect nevertheless also appear in the bowl texts, even though as minor variants. It is clear that the bowl texts do not represent only a single dialect, and often forms of apparently different dialectal origin appear intermingled in the same text. Most interestingly, the first bowl text of a standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic character has recently been published by Christa Müller-Kessler and Theodore Kwasman.47 This impression of “multi-dialectalism” is made even stronger by so-called koiné features that frequently appear in the bowl texts. These koiné features are, for example, typical Mandaic features that appear in a Jewish Aramaic bowl text or vice versa.48 The koiné features most likely reflect mutual (textual and conceptual) borrowings between Jewish, Mandaic and Syriac (Christian?) magical traditions. By contrast, they probably do not imply that there was a common shared vernacular (supradialectal language), which would have consisted of Jewish Aramaic, Syriac and Mandaic features (koiné in the linguistic sense).

The most striking difference between HdRA and the bowl texts is the ending of the masc. pl. determinate state, which is נ- in HdRa, but normally נ- in the bowl texts. Furthermore, HdRA presents some typically Palestinian Jewish Aramaic features that are rarely if at all met with in the bowl texts. These include the 3rd p. masc. pl. perfect ending נ- (with the final nun) and the derived state infinitive pattern with prefixed mem. The masc. pl. determinate state ending נ- (-ayyã), noted above, could of course be included in this list, since the parallel form is standard in Palestinian Jewish Aramaic.49 The fact that the spelling in the Palestinian tradition is נ- makes Palestinian influence unlikely. There are, besides, other possibilities for interpreting this form in HdRA. Firstly, it may be understood as an archaism. Secondly, since the ending נ- also appears in some bowl

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47 Müller-Kessler & Kwasman 2000. Even some other texts published earlier contain more standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic features than is normal in the bowl texts (see Juusola 1999b: 253). The fact that standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic and Mandaic are in many respects close to each other sometimes makes it difficult to be certain if a given feature in a Jewish Aramaic bowl text is a standard Babylonian Talmudic feature or a Mandaic koiné feature. Even in the text published by Müller-Kessler and Kwasman there are elements that – as the publishers rightly point out – suggest a Mandaic Vorlage. Thus, the question, to what extent standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic features in the magic bowl texts are actually Mandaic textual influences is rather difficult to answer.

48 The term Eastern Aramaic “koiné” was introduced by Tapani Harvianen (Harvianen 1978). It is apparent that Mandaic features (especially lexical) played a major role in this “koiné” (see Harvianen 1978; 1981; Müller-Kessler 1998; 1999). For the koiné in the bowl texts, see also Juusola 1999b: 21ff. It seems that scholars have used the term in slightly different senses.

49 See e.g. Dalman 1905: 189ff.
texts in both Jewish Aramaic and Syriac (!) and is moreover standard in Mandaic (including Mandaic bowl texts),\textsuperscript{50} one could argue that it is one of the koiné features (probably of Mandaic origin) that penetrated into the (Jewish) Aramaic magical tradition.\textsuperscript{51} This possibility is, however, rendered less likely by the rarity of the form in the bowl texts. Yet one cannot totally exclude it. Besides, the 3rd p. masc. pl. perfect ending ญ- is also attested in the bowl texts and, importantly, in Mandaic. Hence, there remains a possibility that some “Western” features in Jewish Aramaic magical texts (bowl texts and HdRA) actually originate from a Mesopotamian koiné tradition.\textsuperscript{52} This possibility is, however, rendered less likely by the rarity of the form in the bowl texts. Yet one cannot totally exclude it. Besides, the 3rd p. masc. pl. perfect ending ญ- is also attested in the bowl texts and, importantly, in Mandaic. Hence, there remains a possibility that some “Western” features in Jewish Aramaic magical texts (bowl texts and HdRA) actually originate from a Mesopotamian koiné tradition, with a heavy Mandaic influence. At least for the time being, it seems, however, more likely that the majority of “Western” features are either archaisms or actual Western influence. In the case of HdRA Western Aramaic forms may imply something about the redaction process, which the text has undergone. Note that ใับ de-Moshe, another early Jewish Aramaic magical text, also attests to both Eastern and Western linguistic features, a fact which probably reveals a long and complicated textual history. It is equally possible that Palestinian features were already present in that Aramaic tradition in the Geonic Mesopotamia represented in the Aramaic parts of HdRA. Importantly, Palestinian influences (magical terms, formulae etc.) in the magic bowl texts were already detected by Joseph Naveh and Shaul Shaked.\textsuperscript{52}

The basic linguistic similarity of the Aramaic parts of HdRA to Jewish Aramaic magic bowl texts is one more indication that an essentially conservative type of Aramaic predominated in Jewish Aramaic magical literature. Interestingly, a similar kind of linguistic conservatism seems to prevail in the Aramaic parts of ใับ de-Moshe, too. In line with HdRA, ใับ de-Moshe (henceforth HdMO) is a work of composite character, whose provenance and date are uncertain.\textsuperscript{53} Some scholars argue that HdMo is of Palestinian origin, while others believe that it originated in Babylonia. Since HdMO testifies to both Palestinian and Babylonian linguistic features, in both theories of its origin, linguistic criteria have been used as evidence. The Geonic period is probably the most likely dating. No linguistic study of HdMO has been made, but it is evident that in many respects its Aramaic sections tally with both the bowl texts and HdRA or with either of them. The following isoglosses that they have in common are easily detectable:\textsuperscript{54}

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\textsuperscript{50} Yamauchi 1967: 95.

\textsuperscript{51} See Juusola 1999a: 86, where, however, a different interpretation is given.

\textsuperscript{52} Naveh & Shaked 1993: 20ff.

\textsuperscript{53} See Harari 1997: 52ff.

\textsuperscript{54} The instances are enumerated from Harari’s recent edition of the text (Harari 1997).
Notes on the Aramaic sections of Havdalah de-Rabbi Aqiba

(1) A tendency to maintain final consonantal elements, e.g. ממח (XIX:16); תמח (XVI:10); במח (XXIII:12); דמח (XXI:20).

(2) Conservative independent personal pronouns and demonstrative pronouns, e.g. דמ (XX:22); דמ (XVI:15); דמ (XVII:3); דמ (XXIV:15–16).

(3) Fluctuation between the conservative and Talmudic model with suffixed personal pronouns. For instance, in keeping with the bowl texts, both ו and וי appear with the preposition עליה, e.g. עליה (XVII and passim).

(4) The masc. pl. absolute state (י) is frequent.

(5) In the masc. pl. determinate state both ו and וי occur, e.g. עליה (XVII:15); עליה (XXIII:7); עליה (XXIII:17); עליה (XXV:3).

(6) In the 3rd p. masc. sg./pl. imperfect prefix -י strongly predominates, e.g. יבת (XVII:1); יבת (XX:8).

(7) In the infinitives of the derived stems both qattâla and qattâlê appear in line with the bowl texts, e.g. עליה (XV:3); עליה (XX:24); עליה (XX:13).

(8) ה as a common object marker, e.g. עליה (XVIII:18); עליה (XX:12)

(9) ה and ה as opposed to Talmudic א and א.

Apart from these standard features, one may also note that the characteristically Syriac demonstrative pronoun רמא is attested in HdMO. The appearance of this form in HdMO is an additional piece of evidence for the preservation of some Babylonian koiné elements (in this case of Syriac origin) in Jewish magical literature. Even though the Aramaic used in HdMO, of course, deserves a study of its own, it is clear on the basis of these tentative notes that it basically follows the linguistic model of the bowl texts and of HdRA. In all of them – with some differences – archaic features and more developed features familiar mainly (but not entirely) from standard Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic vary, with the predominance of the former. It is highly interesting that a conservative idiom is indeed so commonly used in Jewish Aramaic magical texts, in a genre where, more than perhaps anywhere else, one would expect a Volksprache to be employed. Not much is known of Jewish Aramaic magical literature prior to the Talmudic and Geonic periods. The

55 Exceptions are found, e.g. ו (for בה) in XIX:18.

56 Note the plene spelling here.

overall conservative linguistic character of the texts from these periods, however, suggests a long-standing literary tradition. One may also assume that the archaic Hochsprache gave a solemn impression in the magical rites, which were the original context. Perhaps even the demons would appreciate this!

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


