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**JEWISH MAGIA IN RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE ITALY:
PRELIMINARY NOTES ON MS. GFC 325¹**

The research on Jewish magic has thrived in the last decades. The recent publication of both single magical texts and broader theoretical surveys has shed light on different magical techniques and highlighted the existence of a specific Jewish magical tradition, which was produced, performed and bequeathed within Jewish culture for centuries and, to a certain extent, millennia². Yet, a remarkable number of Hebrew manuscripts presenting consistent sections devoted to magic still await to be catalogued, studied and published by the academic community³. Coming from all

¹ The study presented in this note is part of my post-doctoral project, with which I seek to evaluate the transfer of Jewish magical knowledge from the Middle East to the European area and, specifically, to Italy between the XIV and XVII centuries. As for the academic year 2017-2018 my project has been supported by the NLI Fellowship hosted at the National Library of Israel, I wish to express my profound gratitude to this Institution, as well as to the academic staff and, in particular, to the academic director, Elchanan Reiner. I would also like to thank William Gross, who granted me access to his private collection of Judaica (Gross Family Collection, Tel Aviv) and who heartily encouraged me in the study of the codex GFC 325, presented in the following contribution. I am deeply grateful also to Gideon Bohak, Gal Sofer and Ortal Paz Saar for sharing with me their valuable comments. I consider myself the sole responsible for the views expressed herein and for the remaining errors. An Italian version of this paper will be published in Alessia BELLUSCI, *Un manuale moderno di magia in ebraico ed italiano dalla Collezione di Lisa e William Gross*, in *L'eredità di Salomone. La magia ebraica in Italia e nel Mediterraneo*, edited by Emma ABATE and Saverio CAMPANINI, MEIS-Giuntina, Florence 2018, forthcoming.

² For thorough and updated surveys on Jewish magic, see Gideon BOHAK, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, Cambridge University, Cambridge 2008; Yuval HARARI, *Early Jewish Magic, Research, Method, Sources*, Bialik Institute, Ben-Zvi Institute, and Hebrew University, Jerusalem 2010 (Heb.), recently amplified in the English version, ID., *Jewish Magic before the Rise of Kabbalah*, Wayne State University, Detroit 2017 (tr. di Batya Stein). For useful bibliography on editions and studies of single Jewish texts, see Gideon BOHAK, *Prolegomena to the Study of the Jewish Magical Tradition*, in «Currents in Biblical Research», 8 (2009), pp. 107-150.

³ For a useful introduction on Hebrew magical manuscripts, see BOHAK, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, pp. 214-224; ID., *Jewish Magic in the Middle Ages*, in *The Cambridge History of Magic and Witchcraft in the West*, edited by D. J. Collins, Cambridge University, Cambridge 2015, pp. 268-300. To date, the scholarly community lacks of a catalogue of the existing Hebrew magical codices and excerpts. Furthermore, there are only few editions and studies focused on single manuscripts; among those, see Meir BENAYAHU, *The Book 'Shoshan Yesod ha-Olam' by Rabbi Joseph Tirshom (MS Sassoon 290)*, in *Temirin: Text*

corners of the Jewish diaspora and written in many different Jewish vernaculars, these are remarkable documents, vital for the reconstruction of the Jewish magical tradition and for the study of its development and transmission during the Middle Ages and the modern era. Hebrew manuscripts often include ancient textual material, which can even predate of several centuries the epoch in which they were copied, thus offering insight also on late antique and even earlier magical traditions⁴. Similarly, these sources often exhibit borrowings from other magical traditions and turn out to be deeply related to other coeval or earlier non-Jewish texts, thus attesting to the cultural exchange between the Jews and their neighbours and informing us on the different strategies of cultural appropriation adopted by magicians, intellectuals, and copyists⁵. This is particularly true in the case of Jewish magico-mystical texts circulated in medieval, renaissance and baroque Italy, which not only share some affinities with contemporary Latin and Italian magical excerpts from miscellaneous *compendia*, *libri secretorum*, and collections of *remedia*, but also had a considerable impact on the Italian intellectual milieu of the time.

Within a broader research I am currently conducting on Jewish magical texts preserved in Hebrew manuscripts copied in renaissance and early modern Italy, I came across an unpublished codex – ms. Gross Family Collection 325 (from now on, ms. GFC 325) – today part of the private collection of Judaica of Lisa and William Gross

and Studies in Kabbalah and Hasidism, edited by I. Weinstock, Mossad ha-Rav Kook, Jerusalem 1972, vol. I, pp. 187-269 (Heb.); Gabriel BAREL, *Rav-Pe'alim – un manuel de médecine populaire de Maroc*, in *Recherches sur la culture des juifs d'Afrique du nord*, edited by I. Ben-Ami, Communauté Israelite Nord-Africaine, Jerusalem 1991, pp. 211-32 (Heb.); Mark VERMAN, *Signor Tranquillo's Magic Notebook*, in *Studies in Jewish Manuscripts*, (Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Judaism 14), edited by J. Dan and K. Herrmann, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 1999, pp. 231-237; Yuval HARARI, *Jewish Magic: An Annotated Overview*, in «El Prezente: Studies in Sephardic Culture», 5 (2011), pp. 13*-85* (Heb.); Piotr MUCHOWSKI, *Folk Literature of the Polish-Lithuanian Karaites: Abkowicz 3 Manuscript, Part 2*, Editions Suger Press, Revue Européennes des Etudes Hébraïques, Paris 2013; Gideon BOHAK, *A Fifteenth-Century Manuscript of Jewish Magic: MS New York Public Library, Heb. 190 (Formerly Sassoon 56). Introduction, Annotated Edition and Facsimile*, Cherub Press, Los Angeles 2014, 2 voll. (Heb.); Avishai BAR-ASHER, 'Uses of the Quran': *Muslim Formulae in a Jewish Manuscript of Adjurations from Morocco*, in *Studies in the Culture of North African Jews: Edited and Annotated Texts* (Proceedings of the Symposium at Yale University April 25, 2010), edited by M. Bar-Asher and S. Fraade, The Program in Judaic Studies, Yale University and Jerusalem, The Center for Jewish Languages and Literatures, The Hebrew University, New Haven 2015, vol. 4, pp. 113-134 (Heb.). For printed Hebrew magical works, see Hagit MATRAS, *Hebrew Charm Books: Contents and Origins (Based on Books Printed in Europe During the 18th Century)*, Dissertation PhD, Hebrew University, Jerusalem 1997 (Heb.); EAD., *Creation and Re-Creation: A Study in Charm Books*, in *Creation and Re-Creation in Jewish Thought: Festschrift in Honor of Joseph Dan on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*, edited by R. Elior and P. Schäfer, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen 2005, pp. 147*-164* (Heb.).

⁴ For a remarkable example of the uninterrupted transmission of Jewish magical lore, at least since Late Antiquity onwards, see the discussion on an erotic spell first documented on clay shreds from Horvat Rimmon (V-VI century C.E.) and then in several medieval and later parallels, in BOHAK, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, pp. 156-58.

⁵ There are many examples of foreign elements in Jewish magic and, vice versa, of Jewish elements appropriated in foreign magical traditions; on this subject, see BOHAK, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, pp. 227-90 and Katelyn N. MESLER, *The Three Magi and Other Christian Motifs in Medieval Hebrew Medical Incantations: A Study of the History of Faithful Translation*, in *Latin-into-Hebrew: Texts and Studies*, edited by R. Fontaine and G. Freudenthal, Brill, Leiden 2013, vol. 1, pp. 161-218.

in Tel Aviv⁶. Probably penned by a modern Italian intellectual who had a fair knowledge of Hebrew, ms. GFC 325 includes a variegated selection of magico-mystical excerpts in Hebrew and Italian, as well as a few representations of the pentacles associated with perhaps the most popular grimoire of all times, the *Clavicula Salomonis*, thus well reflecting the encounter between Jewish magical lore and Italian renaissance and baroque culture.

In this brief contribution, I present the preliminary results of my studies on ms. GFC 325, introducing its most relevant physical, structural and content features and showing how this remarkable source – like the many other Hebrew magical manuscripts which still lie unpublished in public and private collections around the world – may prove extremely useful for reconstructing important aspects of both Jewish and Western intellectual history. By discussing some of the linguistic and content specificities of ms. GFC 325 and a few textual parallels with other magical excerpts, I attempt to reconstruct the historical context in which the codex was written and the logic with which the author gathered, adapted and translated the magical knowledge conveyed in it.

Ms. GFC 325: a fine product of Jewish Magic in Italy

The codex GFC 325 is a relatively small book (height: 13,6 cm; weight: 9,5 cm; thickness: 2cm), overall preserved in very good condition, which according to a preliminary palaeographic analysis does not predate the XVII century⁷. The manuscript is written in black ink, in a beautiful and clear handwriting, which often imitates the fonts of printed texts and presumably belonged to a single copyist⁸. In its current state, ms. GFC 325 exhibits a rigid binding and includes ninety-one paper *folia*, most of which present moth holes. The *folia* are generally inscribed on both sides and the text occupies on average 14-15 lines. The first and last *folia* of the codex are treated as end-leaves, while the pagination (a number written in lapis in the right top of the page) begins from the second leaf and runs from 1 to 91, from right to left according to the order of Hebrew books. As we shall soon see, the codex can be read also from left to right, according to the orientation of Latin books⁹. The manuscript includes a long section of blank *folia* (58 *verso* – 73 *recto*), which the copyist might have planned to fill with further texts at a later time. There are no annotations in margins, nor graphical decorations, except for some point-like signs used to separate the different textual sections. In a few

⁶ The shelf mark of ms. GFC 325 is It. 011 016; the related microfilm can be found at the *Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts* of the National Library of Israel under the shelf mark F 71663. A more detailed historical study of ms. GFC 325 will complement the annotated edition and translation into English of the whole codex that I am currently preparing for publication.

⁷ As I attempt to demonstrate later on in the paper, this does not exclude that the textual material – or single texts – copied in the manuscript may have predated of several centuries the final redactional arrangement of the codex.

⁸ Unfortunately, the codex is anonymous and does not preserve a colophon; similarly, there is no trace of watermarks.

⁹ It is likely that the pagination was added in a later time, by one of the owners or antique dealers who handled the codex.

passages, the manuscript exhibits *charakteres*, stars of David, magical triangles and squares, as well as seventeenth magical pentacles, all apparently drawn with the same stylus and ink used for the text¹⁰.

Moving to the contents of the codex, we can identify three main textual units, each of them apparently independent from the others. As we shall soon see, some of these texts can be related to fixed literary traditions known to us also from other Jewish and non-Jewish sources, while other excerpts seem unique at least in the specific form in which they are registered in ms. GFC 325¹¹.

Opening the codex from left to right, we encounter a first textual unit (90 verso – 73 verso) composed by two different magico-mystical texts, which are written in part in Italian and in part in Hebrew and focus on the seventy-two divine names and their magical properties¹². The first text (90 verso – 81 verso) opens with an introduction in Italian aimed at illustrating how from the seventy-two divine names one can derive also the same number of angelic names, which can be invoked in certain days of the month to obtain nocturnal revelations¹³. After a series of admonishments – also in Italian – on

¹⁰ On the use of *charakteres*, see Joshua TRACHTENBERG, *Jewish Magic and Superstition: A Study in Folk Religion*, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia 2004 (1st edition 1939), p. 141; Karl E. GRÖZINGER, *The Names of God and the Celestial Powers: Their Function and Meaning in the Hekhalot literature*, in «Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought», 6 (1987), pp. 53-69; John G. GAGER, *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World*, Oxford University, Oxford 1992, pp. 3-30; David FRANKFURTER, *The Magic of Writing and the Writing of Magic: The Power of the Word in Egyptian and Greek Traditions*, in «Helios», 21 (1994), pp. 189-221; Giulio BUSI, *Qabbalah Visiva*, Einaudi, Torino 2005, pp. 31-33; Gideon BOHAK, *The Charaktères in Ancient and Medieval Jewish Magic*, in «Acta Classica Universitatis Scientiarum Debreceniensis», 47 (2011), pp. 25-44; Richard GORDON, *Charaktères between Antiquity and Renaissance: Transmission and Re-invention*, in *Les savoirs magiques et leur transmission de l'Antiquité à la Renaissance. Colloque Fribourg 17-19 mars 2011*, (Micrologus' Library 60), edited by V. Dasen and J.-M. Spieser, Galluzzo, Florence 2014, pp. 253-300. On the use of the *technopaignion*, that is on the technique of writing words in the form of objects and in the use of magical triangles in the Graeco-Egyptian and Jewish traditions, see Franz DORNSEIFF, *Das Alphabet in Mystik und Magie*, Teubner, Lipsia 1922, pp. 63-67; Christoph LENZ, *Carmina figurata*, in «Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum», 2 (1954), pp. 910-12; Dierk WORTMANN, *Neue magische Texte*, in «Bonner Jahrbücher», 168 (1968), pp. 56-111, especially p. 104; Günter WOJACZEK, *Daphnis: Untersuchungen zur griechischen Bukolik*, Anton Main, Meisenheim am Glan 1969, especially p. 62; BOHAK, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, pp. 265-70; ID., *Some 'Mass Produced' Scorpion-Amulets from the Cairo Genizah*, in *A Wandering Galilean: Essays in Honor of Sean Freyne*, edited by Z. Rodgers, M. Daly-Denton, and A. Fitzpatrick McKinley, Brill, Leiden 2009, pp. 35-49.

¹¹ The alternation of different and apparently unrelated texts that we observe in ms. GFC 325 is a common feature of Hebrew magical manuscripts; on this topic, see BOHAK, *A Fifteenth-Century Manuscript of Jewish Magic*, pp. 10-11. Below, I summarize the contents of the three textual units forming ms. GFC 325; for a more detailed description, see BELLUSCI, *Un manuale moderno di magia*.

¹² The seventy-two divine names mentioned in ms. GFC 325 are known in the Jewish tradition also as «the divine name of seventy-two letters» and are derived from three verses in Exodus 14:19-21. These divine names were already known in the Geonic period, yet the first source known to us that describes them is the commentary by Rashi to b. Sukkah 45a, see TRACHTENBERG, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, pp. 95-97; on divine names and their use, see BOHAK, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, pp. 305-308 and 377-88.

¹³ The magical operations for receiving nocturnal revelations described in this text share several affinities with the Jewish magical technique known as *she'elat halom* (dream request); among the most recent publications on the *she'elat halom*, see Moshe IDEL, *Nocturnal Kabbalists*, Carmel, Jerusalem 2006 (Heb.); Gideon BOHAK, *Cracking the Code and Finding the Gold: A Dream Request from the Cairo Genizah*, in *Edición de Textos Mágicos de la Antigüedad y de la Edad Media*, edited by J. A. Alvarez-Pedrosa nuñez

how to use the magical text properly, the codex preserves twelve tables in Hebrew – one for each month – which register the above-mentioned seventy-two angelic names together with the related Biblical verses. A Latin version of the text is attested to in the *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, penned by the Jesuit Athanasius Kircher, who abundantly relied on Kabbalistic sources in his writings¹⁴. The second text that we encounter opening the codex from left to right (80 verso – 73 verso) registers, instead, several *segullot* derived from the seventy-two names. The *segullot* are ordered in six main sections – named *ma'alot* (grades) – and are first reported in Hebrew and then in an Italian translation. Slightly different Hebrew versions of this text are documented in other Hebrew magico-mystical manuscripts,¹⁵ while a later version is found in the work *Shorshei Ha-Shemot* by Moses ben Mordecai Zacuto (about 1620-1697)¹⁶.

The second textual unit that can be identified in the codex occupies the central *folia*, from 50 *recto* to 58 *recto*, and preserves seventeen drawings of magical circles which correspond to part of the planetary pentacles associated with the tradition of the *Clavicula Salomonis* (*The Key of Salomon*)¹⁷, a very popular renaissance grimoire – or,

and S. Torallas Tovar, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid 2010, pp. 9-23; Yuval HARARI, *Metatron and the Treasure of Gold: Notes on a Dream Inquiry Text from the Cairo Genizah*, in *Continuity and Innovation in the Magical Tradition*, edited by G. Bohak, Y. Harari and Sh. Shaked, (Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture 15), Brill, Leiden 2011, pp. 289-320; Alessia BELLUSCI, *A Genizah Finished Product for She'elat Halom based on Sefer Ha-Razim*, in «*Journal of Jewish Studies*», 67.2 (2016), pp. 305-326.

¹⁴ The text is found in the section «De Nomine Dei septuaginta duarum literarum, quod Dei Nomen appellatur, deque abusu eiusdem», in the volume devoted to the *Cabala Hebraeorum*; see Athanasius KIRCHNER, *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, Mascardi, Rome 1652-54, vol. 2, ch. VI, pp. 267-281. For an introduction on Athanasius Kircher and the *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, see Daniel STOLZENBERG, *Egyptian Oedipus. Athanasius Kircher and the Secrets of Antiquity*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago e London 2013; on the tradition and use of the seventy-two divine names in the *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, see ID., *Four Trees, Some Amulets, and the Seventy-Two Names of God: Kircher Reveals the Kabbalah*, in *Athanasius Kircher: The Last Man Who Knew Everything*, edited by P. Findlen, Routledge, London 2004, pp. 149-169.

¹⁵ A version of this text is found, for instance, in a Hebrew manuscript of Italian provenance from the XVI century, today preserved in Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ms. Vat. ebr. 243, 9 *recto*, 20-23 – 10 *verso*, 1-22. The study of this manuscript represent a consistent part of my post-doctoral research and I hope to prepare its integral or partial annotated edition for publication in the near future.

¹⁶ Moses ben Mordecai ZACUTO, *Shorshei Ha-Shemot: 'Al Shemot Ha-Qodesh*, Nezer Sheraga, Jerusalem 1999 (with the notes of Abraham ben Joseph Alnakar), 2 vols., vol. 1, pp. 202-204 (Heb.).

¹⁷ For an introduction on *Clavicula Salomonis* and its manuscript tradition, see Federico BARBIERATO, *Nella stanza dei circoli. Clavicula Salomonis e libri di magia a Venezia nei secoli XVII e XVIII*, Bonnard, Milano 2002, especially pp. 34-49; Robert MATHIESEN, *The Key of Solomon: Toward a Typology of the Manuscripts*, in «*Societas Magica Newsletter*», 17 (2007), pp. 1-9. On the Hebrew manuscript tradition of *Clavicula Salomonis*, namely on *Maftē'ah Shelomoh*, see Herman GOLLANCZ, *Clavicula Salomonis: A Hebrew Manuscript Newly Discovered and Now Described*, Kauffmann/Nutt, Frankfurt/London 1903; ID., *Sefer Maftē'ah Shelomoh (Book of the Key of Solomon): An Exact Facsimile of an Original Book of Magic in Hebrew*, Oxford University, Oxford 1914; Claudia ROHRBACHER-STICKER, *Maftē'ah Shelomoh: A New Acquisition of the British Library*, in «*Jewish Studies Quarterly*», 1 (1993/4), pp. 263-270; EAD., *A Hebrew Manuscript of Clavicula Salomonis, Part II*, in «*The British Library Journal*», 21 (1995), pp. 128-136; Gal SOFER, *The Hebrew Manuscripts of Maftē'ah Shelomoh and an Inquiry into the Magic of the Sabbateans*, in «*Kabbalah: Journal for the Study of Jewish Mystical Text*», 32 (2014), pp. 135-174 (Heb.). For an edition of *Clavicula Salomonis*, though prepared for practical use within the context of ceremonial magic, see Samuel LIDDELL MACGREGOR MATHERS, *The Greater Key of Solomon*, L. W. De Laurence, Chicago 1914 (revised edition; 1a edition 1899).

better, literary corpus – whose origins go back at least to the Middle Ages¹⁸. As in most of the versions of *The Key of Salomon*, the planetary pentacles registered in ms. GFC 325 are drawn as two concentric circles very close to one another: Biblical verses are inscribed in the space between the external and inner circles, while, in the inner circle, there are Hebrew letters and magical signs. Each pentacle occupies a separate page of the codex together with a brief description in Italian of its magical properties; most of the pentacles are also associated with a specific colour, whose name is annotated in Italian in the top margin of the page. While the excerpt from the *Clavicula Salomonis* in ms. GFC 325 overall follows the so called «Colorni» tradition, it seems that the author/copyist of the magical *compendium* deliberately introduced certain changes, such as different associations between pentacles and colours, or the language of the Biblical verses (Hebrew instead of Latin)¹⁹. As ms. GFC 325 does not register further excerpts from the *Clavicula Salomonis* besides the above-mentioned drawings, it is possible that the author/copyist of the codex was specifically interested in a talismanic use of the pentacles, not necessarily related to the complex traditions of Solomonic magic²⁰.

Opening the codex from right to left, one encounters the third section of the codex GFC 325, which is represented by an anthology of magical recipes and medical *remedia*, each of which first given in Hebrew and then translated into Italian. While the other textual units of the codex – i.e. the magico-mystical section and the seventeen Solomonic pentacles – can be regarded, broadly speaking, as literary texts of magic which underwent a certain degree of textual crystallization, the anthology represents a free-formulary of magical recipes copied, or composed *ex novo*, for professional or personal use, which is probably unique in its specific structural and content features²¹. For this and other

¹⁸ Although the manuscripts attesting to this tradition do not precede the XV century and most of them are dated to the XVII-XVIII centuries, part of Solomonic literature finds its origin in the early medieval era. Traditions portraying the Biblical king Solomon as magician, exorcist and astrologer are even earlier, see GOLLANZ, *Clavicula Salomonis*, pp. 7-11; BARBIERATO, *Nella stanza dei circoli*, pp. 12-34; Pablo A. TORIJANO, *Solomon the Esoteric King: From King to Magus, Development of a Tradition*, (Supplements to the Journal for the study of Judaism 73), Brill, Leiden 2002, pp. 225-230. A Jewish origin of the *Clavicula* was proposed by Herman Gollancz, while Gershom Scholem refuted this hypothesis; see, respectively, GOLLANZ, *Clavicula Salomonis*, p. 12, and Gershom SCHOLEM, *Kabbalah*, New American Library, New York 1978 (1a edition 1974), p. 186.

¹⁹ The «Colorno/Colorni» version began to circulate from the end of the XVI century, soon becoming one of the most popular; see BARBIERATO, *Nella stanza dei circoli*, pp. 41-44; MATHIESEN, *The Key of Solomon*, p. 3.

²⁰ The section on the Solomonic pentacles – or part of it – often circulated as a separated unit, independent from the rest of the *Clavicula*, see BARBIERATO, *Nella stanza dei circoli*, p. 48. In particular, popular traditions appropriated certain features of the pentacles – either figurative components or the formulae/Biblical verses – and used them in the production of protective talismans, without referring or even knowing the literary tradition of the grimoire to which they were originally associated; on this subject, see Don C. SKEMER, *Binding Words. Textual Amulets in the Middle Ages*, (Magic in History), Penn State University, University Park, PA 2006, p. 117; Owen DAVIES, *Grimoires: A History of Magic Books*, Oxford University, New York 2009, p. 67. In several Hebrew manuscripts transmitting *Maft'e'ah Shelomob*, the section with the pentacles often represents a separated unit, thus highlighting the practical character of the magical circles; see SOFER, *The Hebrew Manuscripts of Maft'e'ah Shelomob*, pp. 152-153.

²¹ Even though they often circulated in different versions, literary books of magic exhibit a coherent internal structure for all – or most of – their length and were accurately copied, thus forming a consolidated and fixed textual tradition. The textual material transmitted in free-formularies

reasons, the magical anthology, which occupies more than half of the total *folia* of ms. GFC 325 (2 *recto* – 49 *recto*), represents perhaps the most interesting section of the codex. The relative antiquity of the textual material that it preserves, as well as its peculiar linguistic and translational features make this section remarkable. In the remaining part of this note, I wish to deepen my discussion on the magical anthology, examining some of its specific textual features which turn out to be quite valuable for studying the synergy between Jewish magic and Italian culture which took place in renaissance Italy.

The Magical Anthology of Ms. GFC 325: Contents, Language(s) and Textual Parallels

The anthology of magical recipes and medical *remedia* preserved in ms. GFC 325 is preceded by a programmatic frontispiece in Hebrew, which informs readers on the efficacy of the secrets revealed thereafter and admonishes to put them into use only when strictly necessary. The frontispiece was probably written *ad hoc* by the person who assembled together the magical *compendium*²². In this way, the author/copyist could present the various recipes as part of a single work, even though they had been presumably gathered and copied from a vast array of magical sources.

Contents

The anthology is formed by eighty-one magical recipes and *remedia* for various purposes, most of which are quite concrete and down to earth, while others of a more psychological or spiritual character. In particular, fifteen recipes are either for *shmirat ha-derekh* (i.e. protection along the way) or self-defence from different types of aggressions; fourteen recipes concern the well-being of the user, suggesting remedies for different ailments and medical problems; twelve describe erotic incantations aimed for actively affecting the love/erotic relation between two parties or for nullifying aggressive erotic spells²³. The codex includes also nine recipes for divination or for

maintained instead a much higher degree of fluidity, as single copyists could change specific excerpts or integrate them on the basis of other manuscripts, thus creating each time new magical *compendia*. On the different types of Jewish magical sources, i.e. insider/outsider sources, finished products/recipes, literary books of magic/free-formularies, see Gideon BOHAK, *Reconstructing Jewish Magical Recipe Books from the Cairo Genizah*, in «Ginzei Qedem», 1 (2005), pp. 9*-29*; ID., *Ancient Jewish Magic*, p. 70, pp. 148-226. Among the most famous literary books of magic in the Jewish tradition there are *Sefer Ha-Razim*, *Harba de-Moshe* and *Pisbra de-Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa*, on which see BOHAK, *Ancient Jewish Magic*, pp. 170-179; Franco MICHELINI TOCCI, *Note e documenti di letteratura religiosa e parareligiosa giudaica*, in «Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli», 46 (1986), pp. 101-108. The *Clavicula Salomonis/Mafte'ah Shelomoh* can be also regarded as a literary book of magic.

²² Ms. GFC 325, fol. 1 *recto*, 1-13. The frontispiece includes several grammar and language mistakes, such as *בכתבי החכמים הקדמונים* instead of *בכתבי החכמים קדמונים* («in the writings of the ancient sages/ in the writings of ancient sages»), or *ולסכנה גדולה* instead of *ולסכנה גדול* («and for a great danger»). As we shall see later on in this paper, an imperfect use of the Hebrew language is widely documented throughout all ms. GFC 325.

²³ For a complete and updated study on Jewish erotic magic, see Ortal-Paz SAAR, *Jewish Love Magic: From Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, (Magical and Religious Literature of Late Antiquity 6), Brill, Leiden 2017; see also Yuval HARARI, *Love Charms in Early Jewish Magic*, in «Kabbalah», 5 (2000), pp. 247-264 (Heb.).

acquiring hidden knowledge²⁴; eight for attaining prestige, grace and favour, or for prevailing in a certain situation; five recipes against the evil eye or for nullifying other magical incantations; four for *qefīṣat ha-derekh* (i.e. path jumping)²⁵; three for invisibility²⁶; three for the specific protection of the parturient and the baby; two for aggressive magic²⁷; two for obtaining prosperity; two for acquiring spiritual gifts; and, finally, two against forgetfulness and lack of memory.

As documented in several other handbooks of magic, the magical prescriptions in ms. GFC 325 are often registered in thematic clusters, where two or more recipes for the same goal are copied in succession²⁸. Some of the recipes copied in the anthology consist of only few lines of text, while others are longer and document relatively complex rituals involving the manipulation of specific magical ingredients and the use of linguistic magic, i.e. a set of magical acts that exploit the power of speech, either written or uttered). In general, the magical techniques described in the codex belong to known traditions of Jewish magic and a few recipes – or part of them – find ample parallels in other magical excerpts preserved in coeval and earlier Hebrew manuscripts. At the same time, though, some of these texts exhibit foreign features, especially for what concerns the *materia magica*, thus attesting borrowings from a non-Jewish milieu.

Language(s)

In the anthology, the magical recipes appear both in a Hebrew and an Italian version. As both these languages are used in the codex oddly and, sometimes, even incorrectly, it is quite challenging to understand the history of the Hebrew and Italian texts, as well as their mutual relation.

Each recipe in the anthology is first reported in Hebrew and introduced by a title which indicates the specific scope of the magical technique described. Despite other manuscripts, however, no special characters or signs are employed to distinguish the title from the text that follows. The Hebrew featured in the anthology often exhibits Aramaisms – such as the use of *כלבתא* instead of the Hebrew *כלבה* («she-dog»), or the common Aramaic magical formula *אתון מלאכיא קדישייא* («you, holy angels») – which might indicate that the textual material transmitted predated the codex itself²⁹. Except for

²⁴ Among them, there are three recipes for *she'elat ḥalom*, see ms. GFC 325, 27 *recto*, 7-15, – 28 *recto*, 1-5; 28 *recto*, 6-15, – 28 *verso*, 1-4; 46 *recto*, 1-13, – 46 *verso*, 1-15. For studies on the *she'elat ḥalom*, see above, note 13, pp. 26-27.

²⁵ Already mentioned in the Babylonian Talmud (b. Sanh. 95a), the technique known as *qefīṣat ha-derekh* was widely practiced in the Jewish world; see Mark VERMAN and Shulamit H. ADLER, *Path Jumping in the Jewish Magical Tradition*, in «Jewish Studies Quarterly», 1 (1993-94), pp. 131-48.

²⁶ I am currently preparing an article on the recipes for invisibility preserved in the codex GFC 325, which will be published elsewhere.

²⁷ On aggressive magic in the Jewish tradition, see Yuval HARARI, *If You Wish to Kill a Person: Harmful Magic and Protection from it in Early Jewish Magic*, in «Jewish Studies», 37 (1997), pp. 111-142 (Heb.).

²⁸ Thematic clusters of magical recipes show how experts were animated by a quite practical spirit – gathering as many magical traditions as possible just in case one was not sufficient for the positive result of the operation – as well as how they followed a rational, almost scientific attitude which brought them to organize their magical knowledge thematically.

²⁹ Respectively in ms. GFC 16 *verso*, 6, and in 31 *verso*, 7-8.

three cases, each recipe in Hebrew is followed by an analogous version of the text in Italian³⁰. The Italian recipes also present a programmatic title, except for ten cases where it has been omitted³¹. The drawings and the divine/angelic/magical names that occur in the recipes in Hebrew are generally not reported or transliterated in the Italian section, being merely indicated in the text by expressions such as «i nomi suddetti» («the above-mentioned names»)³². All these data suggest that the excerpts in Italian are translations from the Hebrew and not vice versa.

Overall, the Italian translations found in the anthology are literal and faithful to the Hebrew sections that precede them. Yet, we note the general tendency to expand and clarify the Hebrew text, as if it was not intelligible enough – for instance, we can appreciate how the Hebrew noun אגם («lake») is paraphrased as «pantano che vi sia acqua» (literally, «swamp where shall be water») in the Italian translation of the recipe³³. This phenomenon seems particularly evident in the translations of the titles, which are usually longer and more explicative than their Hebrew equivalents – for instance, the long expression «per malie fatte che li sposi non si congiungono» («for spells performed so that bride and groom will not have sexual relations») is used to translate the Hebrew title לכרות וכלות כשוף התנים ובטל, which should have been rendered with the more literal «per annullare l'incantesimo di sposi e spose» («to nullify the spell of grooms and brides»)³⁴.

In certain cases, the Hebrew text is not translated correctly in Italian, as if the copyist/translator had misunderstood a word or an idiomatic expression. Particularly indicative of this phenomenon is the misinterpretation of the Hebrew מים חיים, which is translated as «acqua vita» (literally, «water life»), instead as the correct «acqua corrente» («spring water», «flowing water»); apparently, the copyist/translator was unfamiliar with this common idiomatic expression and interpreted the term מים חיים as a noun («vita», «life») instead as a participle/adjective (literally, «living»)³⁵.

These observations indicate that the Italian translation is later than the Hebrew textual material gathered in the codex. In particular, while the individual recipes in Hebrew might have been copied from earlier sources, it seems plausible that their translations into Italian were added *ad hoc* by the author/copyist of ms. GFC 325 while assembling the codex in the early modern era. In other words, the copyist of the manuscript – presumably, a native Italian speaker with a fair yet not excellent knowledge of the Hebrew language – gathered and copied the different recipes from one or more Hebrew handbooks of magic at their disposal, each time translating the specific excerpt into Italian, perhaps having received a commission by an Italian Christian client.

³⁰ See ms. GFC 325, 6 verso, 11 recto; 20 verso.

³¹ See ms. GFC 325, 6 verso, 7 recto and verso; 10 recto; 10 verso; 11 recto; 12 recto; 14 verso; 22 verso; 28 recto and verso; 43 recto; 46 recto and verso.

³² See, for instance, the instruction reported in ms. GFC 325, 2 recto, 12-14, «e scrivere sopra detta cera quelli nomi suddetti» («and write on the above-mentioned wax those above-mentioned names»), which refers to the angelic names «MKŠPY'L, SNDRY'L, HNDRY'L» and to the divine names «YHWH ŠDY ŠB'WT God», in the Hebrew passage in 2 recto, 4-6; I edit and comment upon this recipe later on in the paper, see pp. 39-41.

³³ See ms. GFC, 4 recto, 7, and 4 verso, 4-5.

³⁴ See ms. GFC, 3 recto, 12-13, and 3 recto, 1.

³⁵ For the Hebrew, see ms. GFC 325, 14 verso, 3, for the Italian, 14 verso, 8. The expression מים חיים occurs already in the Hebrew Bible, see Genesis 26:19.

While the hypothesis of a later Italian translation of the recipes seems the most probable, there are a few linguistic features in both the Italian and Hebrew sections that remain unclear challenging this interpretation.

First of all, the conjecture that the Italian translation was carried out by the modern copyist of the manuscript fails to explain the many archaisms identified in the Italian text. Terms such as «coccia» (modern Italian: «guscio»; English: «peel»), «cosce» («cosce»; «thighs»), «pila» or «piletta» («mortaio»; «mortar»), and «pizza» – the latter used to translate the Hebrew עוגה («cake»), which can be reconducted to different medieval Italian vernaculars, seem anachronistic in a modern translation³⁶. Therefore, we cannot rule out that the Italian version (or translation) of certain recipes of the anthology actually dated back to an epoch preceding the final redaction of the codex. It is possible, in fact, that single recipes translated in Italian – either matched or not by their equivalent in Hebrew – circulated independently in an earlier epoch, before being collected and copied by the modern copyist in the magical *compendium* under exam.

Second, the interpretation of the recipes in Hebrew as the originals on which the Italian translation was based is complicated by the occurrence of several grammar mistakes and inaccuracies documented in the Hebrew section. An author proficient in Hebrew would have hardly made banal mistakes such as using the incorrect feminine form בצות as plural of the irregular feminine noun ביצה («egg»), instead of the correct masculine ביצים («eggs»)³⁷. This inaccuracy seems to conceal the influence of the Italian language, as the feminine form בצות might have been automatically adopted based on the Italian «uova», which is the feminine plural of the irregular masculine noun «uovo» («egg»). Indeed, a more detailed analysis of the Hebrew used in the magical anthology confirms the presence of several Italianisms, as if the Hebrew recipes were either translated from Italian or composed by an Italian speaker. A common example of this phenomenon is, for instance, an incorrect use of enclitic pronouns, as in the sentence קחי שקד בקליפתה («take an almond with its peel»): here the feminine enclitic possessive pronoun ה- is referred to the masculine noun שקד («almond»), presumably under the influence of the feminine Italian noun «mandola» (archaic for «mandola»)³⁸.

A further issue seems to prevent us to offer – at least for the time being – an exhaustive reconstruction of the modalities with which ms. GFC 325 was composed, as well as a secure dating of both the codex and the single recipes transmitted in it: many of the Hebrew recipes in the anthology register the required *materia magica* and *medica* in Italian, though transliterated in Hebrew characters.

For instance, a recipe for causing a woman to have an abortion (להפיל אישה) refers to several plants and magical ingredients by their Italian names not only in the Italian translation, but also in the Hebrew version that precedes it³⁹. The list of ingredients

³⁶ See, respectively, ms. GFC 325, 2 *recto*, 10; 42 *recto*, 4; 31 *recto*, 2, e 45 *recto*, 10; 30 *verso*, 14; 25 *verso*, 13. I edit, translate and comment upon the recipe in which the term «pizza» occurs in a separate study devoted to the experiments of invisibility preserved in ms. GFC 325 and in other Hebrew manuscripts.

³⁷ See ms. GFC 325, 3 *recto*, 2.

³⁸ See ms. GFC 325, 2 *recto*, 2. For a discussion of the term «mandola», see later on, note 73, p. 40.

³⁹ See ms. GFC 325, 16 *verso*, 1-15.

mentioned in Italian includes: the *dracunculus vulgaris* (סִירפֿנֿטֿרֿאֿרֿיָא; «serpentaria»), i.e. a plant famous since antiquity for its haemorrhagic properties⁴⁰, the root of gentian, from which the user shall produce a suppository (אוֹ עֵשָׂה סוֹפּוֹטָטָא מִשֵּׁרֶשׁ גִּינְצִיָאנָא) («ò fà una soppota di genziana»), i.e. a medical device which is also indicated by its Italian name transliterated in Hebrew, and petroleum oil (שֶׁמֶן פִּיטְרוֹלִיָא) («oglio di petrolio»). In addition, the recipe prescribes the use of ginger, which is yet referred to by its Hebrew name זִנְגִּבִּיל (from the Aramaic term זִנְגִּבִּילָא, derived from the Greek ζγγίβρις), while in the Italian translation the same ingredient is indicated by the dialectal Italian term «sensegolo»⁴¹.

Another interesting example of the use of an Italian nomenclature for the *materia magica* and *medica* mentioned in the Hebrew recipes is found in an erotic spell among the very few in the anthology that are not matched by an Italian translation⁴². Here the hybrid expression עֵץ צִיפְרִיסוֹ («cypress wood») clearly refers to the Italian word «cipresso» («cypress»).

Similarly, in a recipe against fever, the Hebrew section reports the expression פִּרְסִיכִי עֲצָמוֹת (literally, «bones of *persichi*»), which is rendered in the Italian translation as «ossa di persichi»⁴³. While the Italian term «persico» usually indicates the «perch fish», here the reference is to the seed shells found insides peaches/apricots, which contain apricot kernels full of amygdalin, as suggested by the instruction that follows, i.e. «rompili e pesta sottilmente le mandole» («break them and mash finely the apricot kernels»). Another remedy for the same purpose refers to the use of מִיץ מִינְטָא רֹמָאנָא («juice of *menta romana*»), expression clearly derived from the Italian and matched in the Italian translation by the analogous «succo di menta romana»⁴⁴.

⁴⁰ The plant known as *dracunculus vulgaris* (*serpentaria mayor*, *dragon arum*) belongs to the family of the *Araceae* and, although native of Oriental and Central Europe, it is widespread also in Italy, where it is commonly known as «dragontea». According to the Cilician physician Dioscorides (I century CE) the serpentaria to which he refers by the name of «drakontion meca», it had an abortive action; see Dioscorides, *De Materia Medica*, book II, 196a. A beautiful miniature of the plant is preserved in the codex London, British Library, ms. Egerton 747, 93 verso, «Watercress and Dragon Arum», <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/ILLUMIN.ASP?Size=mid&IllID=10083>

⁴¹ The inclusion of ginger among the magical ingredients used to make a woman having an abortion is logical, as this plant is known since antiquity for its emmenagogic properties, if consumed in large quantities.

⁴² See ms. GFC 325, 11 recto, 8-12.

⁴³ See ms. GFC 325, 22 recto, 1-11.

⁴⁴ See ms. GFC 325, 22 recto, 12-14, – 22 verso, 1-6. The plant known as «menta romana» («spearmint») is documented, for instance, in an anonymous vulgarization of the treatise of agriculture by Pietro de' Crescenzi (Petro de Crescentiis, *Liber ruralium commodorum*), from the Tuscan area and dated to the XIV century. In the chapter devoted to mint (sixth book, ch. 75), the «menta romana» is distinguished both from the «menta ortolana» and the «menta selvatica»: «Ed enne un'altra, la quale ha più lunghe e più late e più acute le foglie, e questa è la menta Romana ovvero Saracinesca, e volgarmente s'appella erba Santamaria: e questa è più diuretica che l'altre»; see Bartolomeo SORIO, *Trattato della Agricoltura di Piero de' Crescenzi traslato nella favella fiorentina, rivisto dallo 'Nferigno, Accademico della Crusca, ridotto a migliore lezione da Bartolomeo Sorio*, Vicentini e Franchini, Verona 1851-52, 3 voll., vol. 2, pp. 297-299.

A recipe for becoming invisible mentions a plant called פלמא קריסטו, «palma Cristo» in the Italian section, which probably refers to the castor-oil-plant (*ricinus communis*), from which it is possible to obtain the homonymous oil⁴⁵.

An Italian nomenclature for the magical ingredients is found also in a remedy against forgetfulness, which instructs to take עלי סינא אורינטאלי – «foglie di sena orientale» («leaves of the senna plant») in the Italian translation⁴⁶, as well as in a recipe for causing a menstruation, which refers to the infusion of a plant called טיטאמו גריקו – «erba detta tittamo greco» in the Italian translation – which might be interpreted either as a type of gas plant or hay⁴⁷.

An additional example is given in a recipe for defeating a rival, which lists among other magical ingredients also a specific anatomical part of birds and reads, ספירוני מרגל ימין של תרנגול זקן («a spur from the right foot of an old rooster») – «spirone del piede dritto di un gallo vecchio», in the Italian translation⁴⁸.

As documented in several medieval and modern Hebrew, a sporadic use of Latin or Italian to refer to plants or other magico-medical ingredients was not uncommon. Yet, the adoption of an Italian nomenclature for the *materia magica* and *medica* in ms. GFC 325 is extensive and, from a preliminary analysis, the majority of the Italian technical terms identified in the Hebrew sections of the magical anthology are not attested to in other Hebrew codices. It is possible, then, that those Hebrew recipes preserved in ms. GFC 325 which abundantly employ an Italian technical terminology had been originally composed either on the basis of Italian sources (e.g. Italian *herbaria*, books of secrets and *remedia*) or within Jewish circles in the Italian area.

Textual Parallels

Although the final redaction of the codex GFC 325 does not seem to precede the XVII century, the textual material transmitted in the magical anthology turns out to be much earlier, as documented by the numerous textual parallels found both in medieval Hebrew manuscripts of European provenance and in the fragments of the Cairo Genizah. In other words, some of the angelic names, *nomina barbara*, and magical formulae registered in ms. GFC 325 – but even the whole text of single recipes – appear also in earlier Jewish magical sources, thus pointing to a long and uninterrupted Jewish magical tradition that reached Italy and continued to be transmitted there. In what follows, I wish to provide some examples of this interesting phenomenon.

One of the most attested magical formulae in medieval Christian and Jewish manuscripts is the palindrome *Sator Arepo Tenet Opera Rotas*, documented in the sources from the I century CE onwards⁴⁹.

⁴⁵ See ms. GFC 325, 24 verso, 1-15, – 25 recto, 1-8. This recipe is extensively discussed in the article on recipes for invisibility that I am preparing for publication.

⁴⁶ See ms. GFC 325, 26 verso, 1-15.

⁴⁷ See ms. GFC 325, 30 verso, 1-15, – 31 recto, 1-7. The expression «tittamo greco» seems to refer to the plant known as «dittamo», (*dictamnus albus*, gas plant, fraxinella); see SORIO, *Trattato della Agricoltura*, vol. 2, p. 275 (sixth book, ch. 41). Alternatively, the term «tittamo» might be a dialectal form for «fieno» («hay»), thus referring to the plant *trigonella foenum-graecum*.

⁴⁸ See ms. GFC 325, 34 verso, 1-12.

⁴⁹ On the square-palindrome SATOR AREPO, see, for instance, Ulrike HORAK, Christian GASTGEBER, *Zwei Beispiele angewandter Bildmagie: Ein griechischer Diebszauber und ein 'verknötetes' Sator-Quadrat*, in

Among the Genizah fragments, there are a few recipes for the parturient and the baby that feature the *PWQ formula. One of the earliest and most interesting examples is represented by an amulet for easing the delivery of the baby preserved on the XIII century Genizah fragment T-S NS 70.77. The amulet, which was fabricated for practical use and might have been actually used in a contingent situation, not only registers the *PWQ formula, but – as in ms. GFC 325 – matches it with a quotation from Exodus 11:8, thus proving the antiquity of the magical tradition transmitted in the modern codex⁵³.

As shown in Table 2, while the Biblical verse is fully quoted in the Genizah fragment, ms. GFC 325 reports only the second part of the verse («Leave us, you and all the people who follow you. After that I will leave»), repeating it forwards and backwards. Furthermore, in the medieval amulet, the *PWQ formula is associated also with another verse from the Scripture, Psalms 142:8, which is inscribed around a magical square of nine letters (3 x 3)⁵⁴. Despite the recipe in ms. GFC 325, the title that identifies the specific magical technique (למקשה ליליד), the ritual instructions (קח קלף כשר וכתוב עליו בשם ... וקשר לה על טבורה ולחוש לה באוזנה הימנית' ... ג"פ) «take a kosher parchment and write on it in the name of {*PWQ formula} and tie it to her navel and whisper to her in her right ear {passage from Exodus 11:8} for three times»), as well as the declaration of the efficacy of the procedure (בדוק ומנוסה) «verified and tested») are omitted in the Genizah amulet, as they were not required in a «finished product» ready for use⁵⁵.

Tab. 2 The *PWQ Formula in ms. GFC 325 and T-S NS 70.77

GFC 325, 43 <i>recto</i>	T-S NS 70.77
קוף קפו וקף ופק פקו פוק	פקו פקו קפו קפו פקו קפו
	[צחק יצוא יצא צא]
צא אתה וכל העם אשר ברגלך ואחרי כן אצא ויצא	וירדו כל עבדיך אלה אלי להשתחות לי לאמר צא אתה וכל העם אשר ברגלך ואחר יכין אצא
ויצא אצא כן ואחרי ברגלך אשר העם וכל אתה צא	ויצא

Another interesting magical formula that deserves to be examined here is the sequence עזרות עזקן עזורי (from now on, the *ŠYQ' formula), found in a recipe for calming a storm in ms. GFC 325⁵⁶. While the meaning of this formula

⁵³ Cambridge, University Library, T(aylor)-S(chechter) N(ew)S(eries) 70.77 is a small paper fragment – 8,4 cm x 17,7 cm – written only on one side and exhibiting the signs of having been folded.

⁵⁴ Psalms 142:8, הוציאָה ממסגֶר, נִפְשִׁי – לְהוֹדוֹת אֶת-שִׁמְךָ: בִּי, יִכְתְּרוּ צְדִיקִים – כִּי תִגְמַל עָלַי («Bring me out of prison, so that I may give thanks to your name. The righteous will surround me, for you will deal bountifully with me»); clearly, also this verse was chosen for its use of the root יצא*. In addition, the Genizah amulet registers also the letters יאהדונהי, copied in square script probably by a different hand as a calligraphic exercise.

⁵⁵ On finished products and other types of Jewish magical documents, see above, note 21, pp. 29.

⁵⁶ See ms. GFC 325, 45 *recto*, 4-5.

eludes us completely, slightly different versions of it are preserved in at least two other Jewish magical sources, i.e. a medieval Hebrew codex of Italian provenance from the XIII-XIV century, ms. JTSL 8114 and a modern manuscript dated to the XVII-XVIII century, ms. JER BENAYAHU K 153 (see Table 3)⁵⁷. In the above-mentioned codices, the *ŠYQ' formula appears in the context of an erotic spell rather than in a recipe for managing a critical atmospheric event as in ms. GFC 325. Yet, all the three recipes seem to follow the same magical logic. They all instruct to inscribe the *ŠYQ' formula on a specific surface in clay – referred to by the expression קדרה חדשה («new cauldron») in ms. GFC 325 and by הרש חדש («new clay») in the other manuscripts – that shall be either thrown in the sea, if the scope of the magical procedure is placating a storm, or buried under the doorpost of the beloved, in the case of an erotic spell. In both cases, the magical charge of the *ŠYQ' formula was believed to be propagated by contamination (i.e. by means of the inscribed clay) directly on the object/person on which users intended to act magically – either on the stormy sea or on the beloved.

Taking into account the textual and phenomenological analogies between the three recipes, as well as the antiquity of ms. JTSL 8114, we can confidently affirm that part of the magical tradition associated with the *ŠYQ' formula gathered in mss. GFC 325 and JER BENAYAHU K 153 preceded of several centuries the final redaction of these modern codices.

Tab. 3 The ŠYQ' Formula in ms. GFC 325 and other Hebrew Codices

GFC 325, 45 <i>recto</i>	עזרות	עזקן	שרייכי	ורב	נעמי	יקאל	שיקא
JTSL 8114, 93 <i>recto</i>	עגזרות	עזקן	שרייכר	ורב	נעמן	יקאל	שיקא
JER BENAYAHU K 153, 1 <i>verso</i>	ענזרות	עזקן	שבייבר	ולב	נעמן	קאל	שיקא

The textual parallels between the codex GFC 325 and earlier sources are even more remarkable when they interest entire recipes rather than single formulae. A beautiful example of a textual parallel of a full recipe is given by a remedy against the tiredness of the traveller:

הרוצה ללכת בדרך ולא ירצה ליגע\ ולא ליעף⁵⁸ כתוב זה על קלף כשר\ חתנאל מריאל צופיאל
תמניאל⁵⁹\ וקשור אותו ברגל ימין ואפי⁶⁰ שתלך\ חדש אחד אינו ייגע

⁵⁷ See respectively, New York, Jewish Theological Seminary Library, ms. 8114 (microfilm F 11305), fol. 93 *recto*, 3-7; Jerusalem, Meir Benayahu, ms. K 153 (microfilm F 72333), fol. 1 *verso*, 15-16.

⁵⁸ The long periphrasis functions as title of the recipe expressing its specific purpose. No special graphical types are used to highlight the title.

⁵⁹ Above the four angelic names, there is a horizontal line.

⁶⁰ אפי⁶⁰ is abbreviation for אפילו.

Uno che invole viaggiare, e/non vuole che li penda fatica, ne stracchezza:⁶¹/scriva li nomi suddetti⁶² sop/ra carta pecora cascer⁶³, e/ legali nel piede destro: et/ ancora che caminasse un/ mese intiero⁶⁴ non si stan/carà⁶⁵:

«If one wants to walk on a journey, but does not want to get fatigued or tired, he shall write this on a *kasber* parchment: ḤTN'L MRY'L ŠWPY'L TMNY'LT; and he shall tie it to (his) right foot. And, even if he walks⁶⁶ one month, he will not be fatigued»

[GFC 325, 44 verso, 1-14]

The same recipe is preserved in at least two other Hebrew manuscripts which are both earlier than the modern codex discussed in this article, namely a Genizah fragment dated to the XII-XIII century and the above-mentioned medieval manuscript ms. JTSL 8114⁶⁷:

באב אדא ארדת אן תמשי\\ כתיר כתוב על קלף בתול\ וקשור ברגל ימין ואי דכומריאל\ פמפואל
תמניאל א {charakteres}\ {charakteres} אפילו\ תלך חדש לא תיגע

«If you want to walk// a long distance⁶⁸, write (the following names) on a pure parchment/ and tie (it) to the right foot, and these are (the names)⁶⁹: DKWMRY'L/ PMPW'L TMNY'L A {charakteres}/ {charakteres}, even if you walk one month, you will not be fatigued»

[T-S K 1.16, 2 verso, right side of the *bifolium*, 12; 1 recto, left side of the *bifolium*, 1-5]

לעייפות\ ללכת בלי עייפות כתוב אלו השמות וקשור בקלף ימין\ ודין כתוב ואי {charakteres}
דני מריאל פמפיאל {charakteres}\ אפילו תלך א' חדש לא תיגע בעה"י⁷⁰

⁶¹ Archaic for «uno che vuole viaggiare e non vuole che lo prenda la fatica né la stanchezza».

⁶² The reference is to the angelic names indicated in the Hebrew section: ḤTN'L, MRY'L, ŠWPY'L, TMNY'L.

⁶³ The term «cascer» is underlined by a horizontal line.

⁶⁴ Archaic form of «intero».

⁶⁵ Archaic/dialectal form of «stancherà».

⁶⁶ Literally: «if you walk».

⁶⁷ See, respectively, Cambridge, University Library, T(aylor)-S(chechter) K(box) 1.16; New York, Jewish Theological Seminary Library, ms. 8114 (microfilm F 11305), fol. 101 verso, 13-16.

⁶⁸ The title of the recipe, in Judeo-Arabic, is preceded by the term באב (بَاب) – literally «gate» – commonly used in magical formularies for indicating the incipit of a new recipe.

⁶⁹ Literally: «which are».

⁷⁰ Abbreviation for [יתברך] ה' [השם] בעזרת ה', «with God's help (may be blessed)».

«Against tiredness/ to walk without (feeling) tiredness, write these names and tie (the surface on which they are inscribed) to the right foot/ and this is what shall be written: {*charakteres*} DNY MRY'L PMPY'L {*charakteres*}/ even if you walk one month, you will not be fatigued, with the help of God»

[ms. JTSL 8114, fol. 101 verso, 13-16]

All the three manuscripts indicate the same magical operation required for the success of the incantation, namely the inscription of a series of angelic names on a parchment that shall be tied to the user/traveller's right foot. Even more outstandingly, the angelic names mentioned in the recipes and, therefore, associated with this specific magical tradition coincide, except for slight differences which shall be imputed to copying mistakes⁷¹. Furthermore, the three manuscripts all include the conclusive formula (לא תיגע) אינו ייגע (אחד) אפילו (ש)תלך חדש (אחד) אינו ייגע (לא תיגע) which repeats the specific aim of the incantation. In the modern codex GFC 325, however, there is no trace of the *charakteres* found in the earlier sources. Similarly, despite the Genizah recipe, the title and ritual instructions are given in Hebrew – and in Italian, in the Italian translation – rather than in Judeo-Arabic.

The final example of textual parallel that I wish to discuss in this note concerns the first recipe found in the magical anthology preserved in ms. GFC 325

לבטל הכישוף\ קחי שקד בקליפתה וישים בתוכה מעט\ כסף חי ואח"כ יכרכנה בשעוה בתולה\ ויכתוב על השעוה אלו השמות:\ (מכשפיאל סנדריאל הנדריאל)⁷² שתבטילו בשם\ יהוה שדי צבאות אלהים:

Per annullare qualunque/ malia/ Pigliasi una mandola con la coccia, e ponervi dentro un po/co di argento vivo, et coprire detta ma/ndola con cera vergine, e sc/rivere sopra detta cera quelli/nomi suddetti.

«To nullify the incantation/ Take an almond in its outer shell, and put in it a little bit of/ quicksilver and, after that, wrap it with pure wax/ and write on the wax these names:/ MKŠPY'L SNDRY'L HNDRY'L that you will nullify (the spell) in the name of/ YHWH ŠDY ŠB'WT God»

[GFC 325, 2 *recto*, 1-14]

⁷¹ While the first angelic name in the recipe preserved in ms. GFC 325, ḤTN'L, is not attested to in the other manuscripts, the second, MRY'L, is indeed documented, probably preceded by an additional name, i.e. DKW/DNY (DKWMRY'L, DNY MRY'L). The fourth name preserved in ms. GFC 325, TMNY'L, is documented in the Genizah fragment but is absent in ms. 8114. The *lectio* ŠWPY'L for the third angelic name in ms. GFC 325 might be reconducted to the name PMPW'L/PMPY'L found in the other manuscripts; in particular, in the codex GFC 325, the letter *Šadi* substitutes the letters *Pei-Mem*, sequence of letters that may easily generate a copying mistake of this type.

⁷² The angelic names are all written within round brackets and present *nikkud*.

Both the Hebrew and Italian versions of the recipe present a few archaic forms, respectively the *hip 'yil* form תבטילו and the terms «mandola» and «coccia»⁷³. In the Hebrew text, the expression כסף חי is used instead of כספית («mercury») and represents a literal transliteration of the Latin *hydrargyrum*, or even of the Italian «argento vivo». Even though the Italian translation of the Hebrew recipe is overall literal, there are a few inaccuracies, according to a general trend identified also in the rest of the magical anthology and discussed in the previous section of this note. In particular, the title is slightly changed from the Hebrew version, as we read «per annullare qualunque malia» («to nullify every incantation») rather than «per annullare la malia» («to nullify the incantation»). The copyist probably does not understand the abbreviation ואח"כ for the Hebrew ואחר כך («and after that») and omits the entire expression in the translation, while the locution יכרכנה is rendered as «et coprire detta mandola» («and wrap the above-mentioned almond») rather than literally as «et copririla» («and wrap it»). As usual, the angelic and divine names mentioned in the Hebrew text are omitted in the Italian translation.

A version of the same recipe for nullifying an incantation is preserved also in the medieval codex JTSL 8114:

לכישוף\ לבטל הכישוף ' קח שקד בקליפתה ותין תוכה כסף\ חי ואחר יכניסנה תוך שעוה בתולה
ויכתוב על\ השעוה אלו השמות וככה משפטו משביע אני ע' עליכ' משפ"יאל⁷⁴ סנדריאל הגדריאל
י"י שדי\ צבאות אלהי ישראל שתבטלו מפלו' בן פלו' כל כישוף\ אשר נעשה לו מעולם ויכרוך הכל
בעור כפול או ב' בשני כפלי בגד⁷⁵ ויקשרנו בזרועו הימני אמנם ילך\ למקום שיגלו תחתיו המים

«For an incantation:/ To nullify the incantation, take an almond in its shell and put inside it quick/silver and afterwards insert it within pure wax and write on/ the wax these names and so its formula 'I adjure you/ you MŠP'Y'L SNDRY'L HGDRY'L (in the name of) YY ŠDY/ ZB'WT God of Israel that you nullify from N son of N every incantation/ that was done to him since always.' And everything shall be wrapped in a folded skin or two/ in two folds of a cloth and shall be tied

⁷³ The use of verbal forms from the root בטל* conjugated in a causative construction (*bip 'yil*) is archaic and usually documented in rabbinic literature. The term «mandola» is an archaic form for the Italian «mandorla» («almond»), which is typical of the medieval vulgar of Northern Italy. For instance, the term is documented in the Latin-Vulgar glossary of the XV century preserved in ms. Parma 1441 (Parma, Biblioteca Palatina), which exhibits several features of North-Italian vernaculars and, especially, of the area of Brescia and Bergamo; see Alessandro ARESTI, *Un glossario dei glossari degli antichi volgari italiani: preliminari, risultati, prospettive*, in «Bollettino dell'atlante lessicale degli antichi volgari italiani», 3 (2010), pp. 9-25 (especially, p. 13 and p. 18). The term «coccia» is an archaic form for the Italian «guscio» («shell»). For instance, the expression «coccia dela noce» («nutshell») is documented in a Latin-Eugubian (vulgar of Gubbio) glossary preserved in a codex from the second half of the XIV, Zaragoza, Biblioteca del Real Seminario de San Carlos de Zaragoza, ms. A, 4,5 9358; see María Teresa NAVARRO SALAZAR, *Un glossario latino-eugubino del Trecento*, in «Studi di lessicografia italiana», 7 (1985), pp. 21-155; ARESTI, *Un glossario dei glossari degli antichi volgari italiani*, pp. 11-12, p. 16.

⁷⁴ In the left margin of the codex, the name is reported as מכשפיאל (MKŠPY'L).

⁷⁵ The expressions כפול and כפלי might be reconducted to the root קפל*, the first a participle present passive at the *piy 'el* form (מקופל), the latter the noun קפל used at the construct case plural.

to his right forearm, (and it shall be kept tied) even though he will go/ to a place under which they will discover water»⁷⁶

[ms. JTSL 8114, fol. 81a, rr. 8-16]

The codices GFC 325 and JTSL 8114 clearly preserve two different versions of the same recipe: in the medieval manuscript, the text is longer and more exhaustive, as it also includes the full quotation of the magical formula with which the angels shall be adjured. Yet, the analogies between the two sources – chronologically separated by a couple of centuries – are remarkable on both a textual and ritualistic level. Most of the *materia magica* required for the magical operation coincides in the two manuscripts, as well as the angelic and divine names⁷⁷. Particularly significant is the incorrect use of the enclitic pronoun ה- in the expression קליפתה, which occurs in both manuscripts and which can be explained as an Italianism, since both sources were copied in the Italian area⁷⁸. While ms. GFC 325 preserves the *lectio* יכרונה rather than יכניסנה as in ms. JTSL 8114, a verbal expression formed from the root כרך* occurs also in the medieval source, יכרוך, thus validating the rendition found in the modern codex. Furthermore, the use of the *hip 'yil* form תבטילו in ms. GFC 325 might reflect an earlier stage of the language than the use of the *piy 'el* form תבטלו in ms. JTSL 8114.

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In the present note, I introduced a previously unknown Hebrew manuscript of magic, ms. GFC 325, which from Italy – presumably after passing through different places and having been handled by many hands – reached Tel Aviv, where it is today part of the private collection of the Gross family. With my investigation, which is part of a broader study I am currently developing, I wish to take part in the academic endeavour of exploring the extensive corpus of Hebrew magical codices, which – deliberately or not – still remains for the major part uncharted and neglected by the scientific community. The potential of these deserted sources is priceless, as they document various aspects of the intellectual, social and religious life of the individuals that copied, transmitted and used them for different purposes over the centuries. A careful survey of a consistent number of manuscripts of this type, together with a comparative analysis

⁷⁶ The passage אמנם ילך למקום שיגלו תחתיו המים is not clear; it might refer to the necessity of keeping the phylactery with the inscribed incantation tied to the arm while taking a bath or performing a ritual immersion. The reference to the discovery of a place with a water source seems improbable in this context. Another possibility is that the sentence was copied by mistake in the recipe and belonged to an unrelated passage.

⁷⁷ Additional magical ingredients are mentioned in ms. JTSL 8114. In ms. GFC 325, all the angelic names present *nikkud*; the difference between the *lectiones* HNDRY'L and HGDRY'L can be understood as a copying mistake caused by the graphic resemblance between the letters *Nun* and *Gimel*. Based on ms. GFC 325, the *lectio* מכשפאל (MKŠPY'L) annotated in margin in ms. JTSL 8114 should be preferred to the one listed in the main text, namely משפאל (MŠP'Y'L). The *lectio* אלהי ישראל («God of Israel») in ms. JTSL 8114 is preferable to the one attested to in ms. GFC 325, אלהים.

⁷⁸ For the incorrect use of the enclitic pronoun in the expression קליפתה, see my discussion above, p. 32.

with analogous sources from the Latin and Arabic traditions, would represent a tremendous aid to understanding the impact of Jewish magic not only on Jewish culture but also on the Western cultural horizon. A large-scale study of these sources would enable to monitor the transmission of intellectual knowledge from the Middle-East to Europe, from Late Antiquity to the early modern era, and comprehend some of the dynamics of cultural exchange and interaction between Jews, Christians and Muslims in the pre-modern world.

According to a preliminary historical-linguistic analysis, ms. GFC 325 is a variegated and complex work. The different textual units preserved in it are not directly related to one another, yet they all reveal the author/copyist's marked interest for the magical and esoteric arts. Though copied in the modern era, the codex transmits ancient magical traditions and textual excerpts, which precede of several centuries its final redaction, as demonstrated by the many textual parallels identified in both the fragments of the Cairo Genizah and other Hebrew manuscripts – some of which were discussed in this note. The codex represents, then, an important source for the reconstruction of ancient Jewish magic, as well as of certain streams of Western magical lore, especially if we consider the textual unit devoted to the *Clavicula Salomonis*. The great value of this manuscript lies also in its linguistic specificities and in the peculiar combination of passages in Hebrew and Italian that characterizes it. While Hebrew magical manuscripts often include sections written in different Jewish vernaculars, magical handbooks in Hebrew entirely translated into Italian, such as ms. GFC 325, are pretty rare. Therefore, the manuscript examined in this note not only documents the diffusion of Jewish magic in Italy, but also reflects the outcomes of an Italian creative effort, arisen from the will to understand and transmit the very sources of Jewish magical learning.