

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

A HEBREW MANUSCRIPT OF *CLAVICULA SALOMONIS*, PART II

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NOWADAYS it is almost a truism to say that there are more and deeper marks of mutual influences between many Christian and Jewish religious traditions of the medieval and early modern period than have long been acknowledged. This is especially true where magic is involved, a branch of knowledge whose adherents seemingly tended to be less concerned than others about questions of religious propriety, and who often displayed a marked interest in foreign beliefs and practices. And yet it is surprising to encounter the manifold traces of inter-religious and cross-cultural contacts and to find even specifically Christian formulae and practices in a Hebrew manuscript which represents an important string of Jewish magical traditions.

Or. MS. 14759, a manuscript of 53 folios which was acquired by the Hebrew Section of the British Library in 1993, proved to be a continuation of Or. MS. 6360, a manuscript of 15 folios.¹ Written by the same hand, in Sephardic 'rabbinic' and square script, and in all probability dating back to the seventeenth or eighteenth century,² the two manuscripts add up to a complete copy of *Sefer Mafteah Shelomoh* ('The Book of the Key of Solomon').³ This Hebrew handbook of magic, a *vademecum* of astral magic and necromancy, is part of a very complex flow of traditions which goes back for many centuries. Since the Middle Ages, numerous Latin, Italian, French, German and English versions have appeared of a book entitled *Clavicula Salomonis*, *Clavis Salomonis*, and the like,⁴ of which quite a few purport to be translations from the Hebrew. To be sure, the claim that a text of this sort had been translated from a Hebrew original is not very conclusive in itself. Christian interest in the Kabbalah and, above all, in its magical aspects having greatly increased since the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries,⁵ such a claim of Jewish provenance more often than not simply served the purpose of establishing the antiquity and authoritative character of certain traditions or practices. Indeed, while there are indications that an old Hebrew version of this book did exist,⁶ it has never emerged.

For hundreds of years such a Hebrew version of *Clavicula Salomonis* had been referred to only in the most unreliable terms, and at the end of the nineteenth century was in fact believed to have been lost long ago.⁷ It came as a sensation, therefore, when Hermann Gollancz found a Hebrew manuscript entitled *Sefer [Mafteah] Shelomoh* in the library of his father, Samuel H. Gollancz, at the beginning of the twentieth century. Gollancz

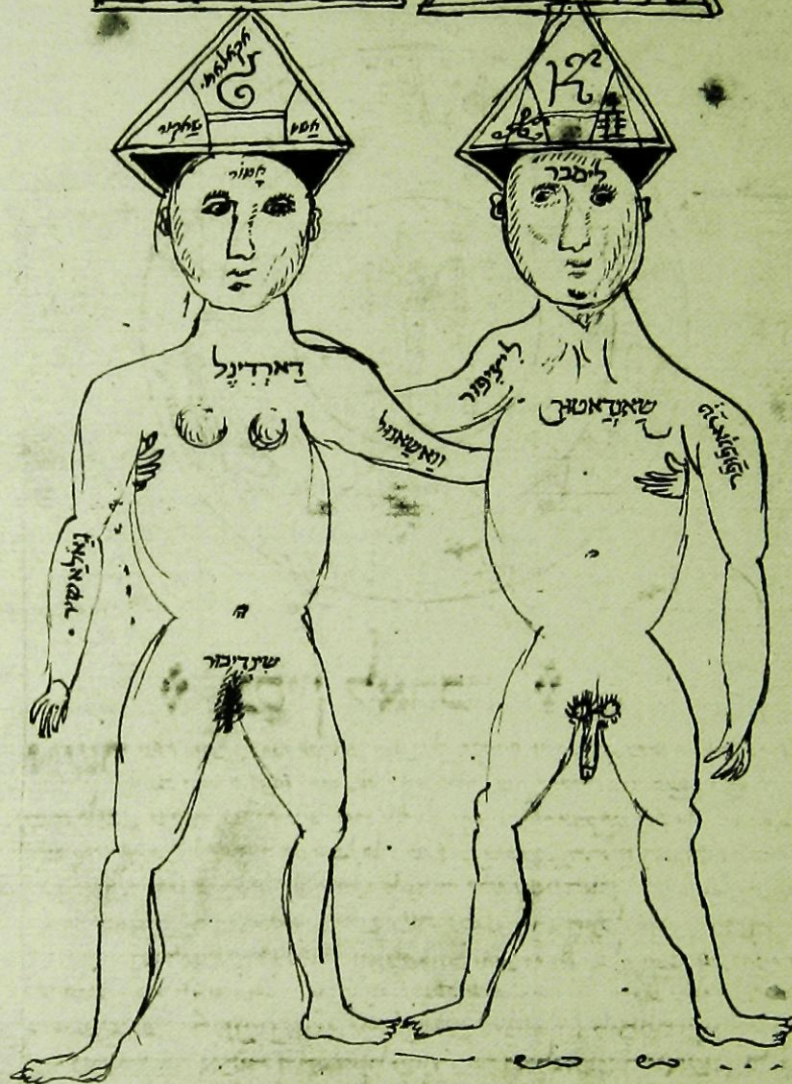
published a detailed description of this voluminous manuscript,⁸ which had been copied around 1700 in Amsterdam in Sephardic ('Italo-Spanish') cursive script, and later brought out a facsimile edition.⁹ Besides the manuscript edited by Gollancz, there is a second one in the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana in Amsterdam (MS. Ros. 12).¹⁰ This eighteenth-century transcript by Isaac Zekel ben Yidel Kohen Worms from a copy by Judah Perez (London, 1729) 'corresponds' to the Gollancz manuscript but seems to depend upon different exemplars.¹¹ British Library Or. MSS. 6360 and 14759 now supplement the scanty Hebrew textual basis.

While he did not claim to have discovered the 'original text' of the *Clavicula Salomonis* traditions,¹² and although he was aware of the numerous 'foreign' elements in his manuscript, Gollancz in a noticeably apologetic manner sought to prove its 'Jewishness'.¹³ According to Gershom Scholem, however, *Mafteah Shelomoh* is a compilation of various traditions of the most diverse provenances: it 'contains Christian, Jewish, and Arabic elements which either lie unmixed side by side or show in parts a mutual permeation.'¹⁴ In the case of one of the lesser traditions contained in the book, the incantation of King Baraqan,¹⁵ Scholem was able to prove its Arabic origin.¹⁶ The frequency of Christian, Latin, and Italian elements led him to the assumption that the text discovered by Gollancz was a late Jewish adaptation of a 'Latin (or rather Italian) Clavicula text of the renaissance period'.¹⁷ This view, which has been shared by other scholars,¹⁸ is supported by an examination of Or. MS. 14759.

It was probably the scribe himself who translated this text into Hebrew. However, many foreign-language words and even entire passages are not translated but just transliterated into Hebrew characters. It was essential to retain the magical potency of foreign-language names and incantation formulae, and therefore a translation of such names and formulae was not desirable. Or. MS. 14759 contains a considerable number of Greek and Latin elements of this sort.¹⁹ In the long and complex flow of magical traditions, some of these names and formulae may even have been conveyed through several different 'carrier-languages' before they were copied down by the scribe of Or. MS. 14759. There are at least two examples in this Hebrew manuscript for the re-emergence of Hebrew/Jewish elements which bear the unmistakable marks of such a history.²⁰

More frequently, foreign-language words are retained to preserve their specific meaning, and a Hebrew explanation is often added in parenthesis. In some instances the scribe explicitly admits that he 'did not understand' a certain term or 'did not know what it was', and he omits a whole paragraph because he 'did not understand the language'.²¹ Sometimes an Arabic equivalent is given. Italian appears to have been the predominant language of the original exemplar, but the scribe seems not to have been fluent in it. The Italian word for 'badger' is unknown to him, and so is the word 'rostri', for which he gives both a Hebrew translation and an Italian synonym. Some of his translations are rather clumsy, and at least in one case he needs to reintroduce the term he wanted to translate in order to make himself clear.²²

Apart from many names and words of Christian origin, Or. MS. 14759 contains

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לא תבנה

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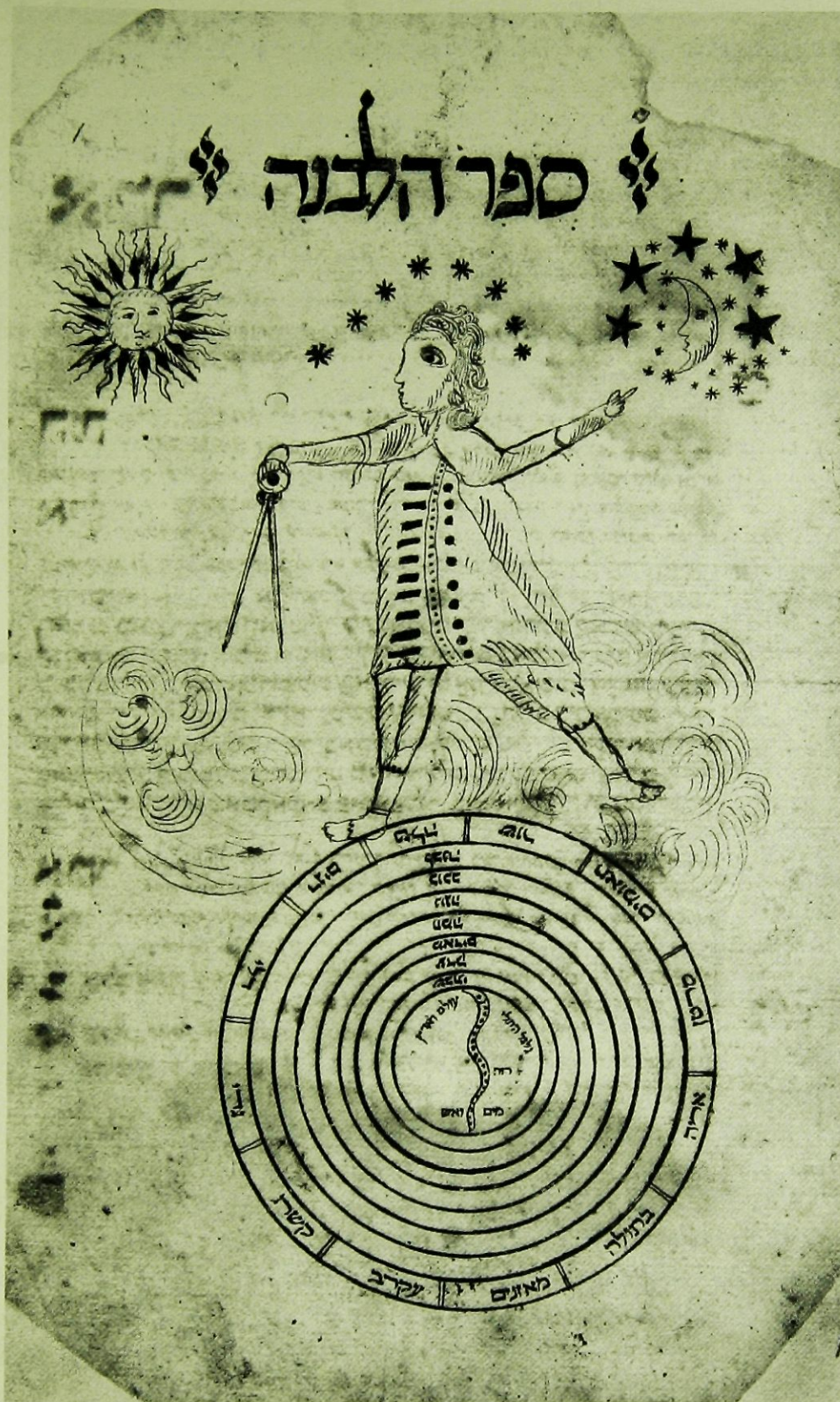


Fig. 2. Title-page of *Sefer ha-Levanah* ['The Book of the Moon'], Part I of the Hebrew *Clavicula Salomonis*, c. 1700. Or. MS. 6360

numerous recipes which explicitly refer to Christian rituals and symbols. The cross is depicted time and again in this Hebrew manuscript, which even advises the magical utilization of a sanctified cross put in holy water.²³

The rich pictorial illustrations in Or. MS. 14759 are of special interest. As in Or. MS. 6360, they were obviously executed by the scribe himself. Besides several diagrams, some remarkably naturalistic drawings (e.g. fig. 1) serve to illustrate magical prescriptions (*segulot*). One picture shows the escape of prisoners in a ship which is carried through the air by demons, the escapees wearing oriental garb. In Or. MS. 6360, a drawing on the title-page shows Solomon himself, dressed like a European gentleman of the Baroque (fig. 2). Again, *Mafteah Shelomoh* proves to be at the crossroads of cultures and religions.

APPENDIX

A selective list of Greek, Latin, Italian, and Arabic words and passages in Or. MS. 14759

Most of the words listed below appear only once in the manuscript, but some, like פִּינְטָקוּלִי ('pentacle'), פִּנְטָגוֹן ('pentagon'), and שֶׁשְׁאֲגוֹן ('hexagon'), are more frequent. However, a full list of all references seemed dispensable. The asterisk indicates that a Hebrew translation or an explanatory note is added to the relevant word or passage in the manuscript.

Greek

- קֶרֶקֶטִירִי (f. 8b) = *χαρακτήρ* ('sign, letter')
 אִוְקְטִינוֹמוֹשׁ (f. 12b) = *ὀκτώνομος* ('of eight names')
 כֶּאֱטִגָּאֵר (f. 20b) = *κατήγορος* ('prosecutor')
 קִירוֹיֶאֱקֶשׁ (f. 31a, in a magic circle) = *κυριακός* ('the Lord's; Sunday')
 פֶּרֶאֱקִלִּיטוֹשׁ (f. 34b, in a magic circle) = *παράκλητος* ('consoler' [Holy Spirit])
 אֶלְפָּא וָאוֹ (f. 34b, in a magic circle) = *ἄλφα [καὶ] ὦ* ('Alpha and Omega' [Christ])
 טֶטְרַגְרָאֲמָטוֹן (f. 34b, in a magic circle) = *τετραγράμματον* ('tetragram' [the ineffable name of God])
 הֶוֶקְשִׁישְׁטוֹס (f. 35b, in a drawing) = *ὕψιστος* ('Almighty')
 אֲגִיאוֹשׁ (f. 36a, in a magic circle) = *ἅγιος* ('holy')
 מֶאֱקִלִּיט <צ'ל ברזל יותר טוב> (f. 38a) = *μάκελλα** ('pick')
 אֶוֶן אֵלִיוֹן (f. 38b) = *ὦν* ('Supreme Being')
 אוֹזִיאוֹן (f. 38b) = *οὐσία* ('being; substance; essence')
 פִּנְטָהֶאֱקֶרֶאֲטוֹן (f. 38b) = *παντοκράτωρ* ('Almighty')
 שׁוֹטֶהֶר עֲמִנוּאֵל (f. 38b) = *σωτήρ Εμμανουήλ* ('saviour Emmanuel' [Christ])
 פֶּרִיטָאֲטוֹר (f. 38b) = *προπάτωρ* ('ancestor')
 אוֹטֶהֶאוֹשׁ אֲגִיאוֹשׁ (f. 41b) = *ὁ θεὸς ἅγιος* ('the Holy God')
 אִוְרֶבוֹט (f. 42a) = a derivation from *ἐρβηθ* and similar names which figure prominently in the *Papyri Graecae Magicae*

בראקאלא (f. 47a) = παρακαλέω ('I implore')
 אגיאוש אוטהאוש אטהאנאטוש אישקירוש (f. 47a-b) = ἅγιος ὁ θεὸς ἀθάνατος ἰσχυρός
 ('the Holy God, immortal, strong')

Latin

אטרמינטו <צ'ל דיו> (f. 5a) = atramentum* ('black dye, ink')
 טירצה... נוינה... ווישפיר <צ'ל בשליש היום... ובחצית היום... ובמנחה> (f. 6b)
 = tertia... nona... vesper ('third [hour], nones, vespers')
 פינטקולי <צ'ל חותמות> (f. 7a) = pentaculum* ('pentacle')
 קוודרייזולי <צ'ל כל מה שהוא כמין בשר והיוצא ממנו לא יאכלו> (f. 7b) =
 quadri[g]esi[m]ali* ('pertaining to the [Christian] season of fasting')
 מארבאליא (f. 7b) = mirabilia ('miracles')
 פינפיליה <מן עשב> (f. 9b) = pimpinella* ('saxifrage')
 טהוריבולו <שם כלי העשנה> (f. 10a) = turibulum* ('incense burner')
 פינקולו (f. 10b) = foeniculum ('fennel')
 ווירבינא (f. 10b) = verbenā ('holy herbs; verbenā')
 וואלארינא (f. 10b) = valeriana ('valerian')
 מינטא (f. 10b) = mentha ('mint')
 מאיוראנא (f. 10b) = [origanum] majorana ('marjoram')
 שלוויא (f. 10b); שאלווינא (f. 35b) = salvia ('sage')
 איוופו (f. 10b) = hysoppos ('hyssop')
 בזיליקון (f. 10b) = basilicum ('basil')
 כלי הברזל צ'ל שטילו (f. 11a) = stilus* ('style')
 שלבא שלווטור (f. 11b) = salve salvator ('hail saviour' [Christ])
 לוצרנא <צ'ל פאנוס> (f. 19b) = lucerna* ('torch; lantern')
 אראפון... שאטור (f. 20b) = Arepo, Sator (elements of the pseudo-Latin permutation
 formula: Sator Arepo Tenet Opera Rotas)
 דיציטור (f. 24a) = dicitur ('it is said')
 שיפירוש (f. 25a); שפירוש (f. 25b) = zephyrus ('west wind')
 בוראש (f. 25a); בוריאש (f. 27b) = boreas ('north wind')
 שובשולאנוש (f. 25b) = subsolanus ('east wind')
 אפריקוש (f. 25b) = africanus ('south-west wind')
 אווסתר (f. 25b) = auster ('south-east wind')
 ווייטי ווייטי אונא לגיוני קוניוריבוס אשטרוט אוני קוואנטם פיניותום עת
 אוקשיאם פר אטום (f. 33b) = venite venite omni legioni... Astarot... ('come, come,
 all legions... Astaroth...')

This passage is doubtlessly 'Latin' in its entirety. The same is true for the following passage, with the remarkable exception of a 'Greek' insertion:
 גראציאס שופרנאס שישטנס אין אומניבוס גראטאס גראטוש אין הוקשישטוס

- פורטטס שמפר נתו (f. 35b) = gratias ... in omnibus ... in ὑψίστος semper ... ('thanks ... in all ... in the Almighty ... always ...')
- אוציאנוש פוריאנש (f. 34a) = Oceanus furians ('furious Oceanus')
- אגנוש (f. 36a, in a magic circle) = agnus ('lamb', in all probability 'agnus Dei' [Christ])
- שי פאבר אינדיקו סוביטו פאריר יוגאטיס זואס \ אט נונקוואם שורגאש ניש
אד אינפמי \ וואדר קווידיקד אדשט ניזי פרמוטציא פראנא \ וואדר שינאס
רוורטר פרימו אטנון רישאשטוש ארנדו שיללאס ארגואש אין פונדו איט שיק
(f. 36a, in a magic circle) = ... et numquam surgas nisi ad infinitum ...
permutatio ... ('... and you shall never rise but to eternity ... permutation ...')
- מושטלא <עטלף> (f. 36b) = mustela* ('weasel', but explained to mean 'bat')
- אמור (f. 37b, in a drawing) = Amor
- ווינוש (f. 37b, in a drawing) = Venus
- ליציפר (f. 37b, in a drawing) = Lucifer
- לאנפאדא <צ'ל מנורה או איזה כלי נר> (f. 41b) = lampada* ('torch')
- רקש (f. 44b) = rex ('king')
- אוריאנש (f. 45a, in a magic circle) = Oriens
- קופידו (f. 45b) = Cupido
- שולפורה (f. 46b) = sulfur ('sulphur')
- פורמטור ושפונזור וויטור (f. 50a) = formator sponsor venator ('shaper, donor, investigator')

Italian

- צינאבריא <ובערבי גנופר> (f. 8b) = cinabro* ('red mercury sulphide')
- אבורי <צ'ל של פיל> (f. 9b) = avorio* ('ivory')
- פורציליטו <פורציליטו הוא מטה שבראשו יתכרת לשנים> (f. 9b) = forcellita*
('little fork')
- קרטילי (f. 9b) = cartella ('sheet')
- לנטירנא (f. 10a) = lanterna ('lantern')
- קוטון (f. 11a) = cotone ('cotton')
- קרישטאל (f. 16b) = cristallo ('crystal')
- אקשאורזיזמו (f. 19a) = exorcismo ('exorcism')
- פנטאגונו (f. 20a) = pentagono ('pentagon')
- שקשגונו (f. 20a) = sessagono ('hexagon')
- מארצו <אדר> (f. 24a) = marzo* ('March')
- זוניו <סיון> (f. 24a) = giugno* ('June')
- שיטימרי <אלול> (f. 24a) = settembre* ('September')
- דיזימרי (f. 24a) = dicembre ('December')
- רוסטרי <צ'ל פיות גדולות ובלעז ביקו> (f. 26a) = rostri* ('beaks, mouths'; in addition to the Hebrew paraphrase ['big mouths'], a synonym 'in the foreign tongue', likewise Italian, is given as well: ביקו becco)

שפינו (f. 26a) = spino ('brier')
 אשאנדלו (f. 26a) = sandalo ('sandalwood')
 משטיקו (f. 26a) = mastice ('mastic')
 <תשעה רגלים> ט' פידו (f. 27a) = 'ט' piedi ('[nine] feet')
 פאלמו (f. 27a) = palmo ('palm of the hand', given as a synonym of זרת ['span'])
 פונטא (f. 32b) = punta ('point of a knife', given as a synonym of חודו של הסכין)
 מאניקו (f. 32b) = manico ('sleeve', given as a synonym of לבוש זרועך)
 טאלפא (f. 32b) = talpa ('mole')
 <צ'ל ערבי נחל> שליצי (f. 33b) = salice* ('willow', but the Arabic 'synonym' means 'palm-tree')
 ספומא (f. 34a) = spuma ('foam'; here: 'albumen')
 <מין עץ גיפריש> ציפרשו (f. 34a) = cipresso* ('cypress')
 <כלי שמנקבין בו> טריווילא (f. 36a) = trivella* ('drill')
 טאשו (f. 36a) = tasso ('badger')
 <צ'ל קערה> קונקא (f. 37a) = conca* ('dish')
 נאפולי (f. 37a) = Napoli ('Naples')
 ווירגיליו (f. 37a) = Virgilio ('Virgil')
 נגרומנטיקו (f. 39a) = nigromantico ('necromantic')
 פריאדש (f. 39b) = periodo ('interval')
 <קרטא נתר> (f. 41b) = creta* ('clay', but explained to mean 'natron')
 אינצינשו (f. 45a) = incenso ('incense')
 שקטולא (f. 47a) = scatola ('small box')
 פיבררי (f. 48a) = febbraio ('February')
 מאיו (f. 48a) = maggio ('May')
 אוסטו (f. 48a) = agosto ('August')
 אוקטובריו (f. 48a) = ottobre ('October')
 אנולרי (f. 48b) = anulare ('ring-finger')
 <צ'ל הודהוד> אופופי (f. 48b) = upupa* ('hoopoe')
 ווירדו (f. 49a) = verde ('green')
 אזורו (f. 49a) = azzurro ('blue')
 וויאולי (f. 49a) = viole[tto] ('violet')
 מראה צ'ל שפיקולי (f. 49b) = specolo* ('mirror')

Arabic

גנוופר (f. 8b) = zinjafir ('red mercury sulphide', given as a synonym of the Italian word 'cinabro')
 אלקוראן (f. 13a); אלקוראן (f. 18a) = al-Quran ('the Koran')
 מחומד (f. 18a) = Muhammad
 מימון אלמודהב (f. 18a) = Maimun al-mudhhab ('the gilded 'Maimun' [a demon])

נחל (f. 33b) = *nakhl* ('palm-tree', erroneously given as a synonym of the Italian word 'salice')

הודהוד (f. 48b) = *hudhud* ('hoopoe', given as a synonym of the Italian word 'upupa')

- 1 For a short description of Or. MS. 6360, see G. Margoliouth, *Catalogue of the Hebrew and Samaritan Manuscripts in the British Museum*, part iii (London, 1915; reprinted 1965), pp. 102-4, no. 794.
- 2 Ibid. Greenup, who edited part of Or. MS. 6360, believed it to date from the sixteenth century; see A. W. Greenup, *Sefer ha-Levanah: The Book of the Moon* (London, 1912), p. i.
- 3 A preliminary report on Or. MS. 14759 was published by the present writer in 'Mafteah Shelomoh: A New Acquisition of the British Library', *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, i (1993/4), pp. 263-70. I would like to express my thanks to Brad Sabin Hill, Oriental and India Office Collections, who first recognized the connection of Or. MS. 14759 with Or. MS. 6360, and who brought the new manuscript to my attention.
- 4 See the title list of Latin, German and French versions in H. Gollancz (ed.), *Mafteah Shelomoh: Clavicula Salomonis* (Frankfurt, London, 1903), pp. 12-13. The texts in Romance languages which are in the British Library have already been edited and translated into English in S. L. M. Mathers (ed.), *The Key of Solomon the King: Clavicula Salomonis* (London, 1889). See also M. Steinschneider, *Die hebräischen Übersetzungen des Mittelalters und die Juden als Dolmetscher* (Berlin, 1893), p. 938.
- 5 See G. Scholem, 'Die Stellung der Kabbala in der europäischen Geistesgeschichte', *Wissenschaftskolleg Berlin, Jahrbuch 1981/1982* (1983), pp. 281-9, reprinted in his *Judaica*, vol. iv (Frankfurt, 1984), pp. 7-18.
- 6 See C. Rohrbacher-Sticker, p. 265.
- 7 See Mathers, op. cit., p. v.
- 8 Gollancz, op. cit.
- 9 H. Gollancz (ed.), *Sepher Maphteah Shelomo: Book of the Key of Solomon* (London, Oxford, 1914).
- 10 See L. Fuks and R. Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew and Judaic Manuscripts in Amsterdam Public Collections* (Leiden, 1973), vol. i, no. 242, pp. 110-12.
- 11 Ibid., p. 111.
- 12 See Gollancz, *Mafteah Shelomoh* (1903), p. 12, and the erroneous assertion by Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, op. cit., p. 112.
- 13 See Gollancz, *Mafteah Shelomoh* (1903), p. 18.
- 14 G. Scholem, 'Some Sources of Jewish-Arabic Demonology', *Journal of Jewish Studies*, xvi (1965), pp. 1-13, here p. 6; cf. idem, *Mada'e ha-Yahadut* (Jerusalem, 1926), vol. i, p. 116.
- 15 See Gollancz, *Sepher Maphteah Shelomo* (1914), ff. 24a-25b. Cf. also Scholem's edition of the text, *Journal of Jewish Studies*, xvi (1965), pp. 12-13.
- 16 Ibid., p. 6.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Cf. e.g. L. H. Schiffman and M. D. Swartz, *Hebrew and Aramaic Incantation Texts from the Cairo Genizah* (Sheffield, 1992), p. 20.
- 19 In one case (f. 17b), one is advised to utter a certain formula in Arabic as well. However, the Arabic version is not given.
- 20 Cf. the name 'Sabaoth' (f. 40a) and the names of the demons Sanvi and Sansanvi (f. 46b).
- 21 Ff. 36a, 39b, and more often.
- 22 'Garment of your arm, i.e. *manico* ('sleeve')', f. 32b.
- 23 F. 37a.

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