

## Appendix

### *The Talmud's Aramaic Treatise of Simple Remedies*

#### PROLEGOMENA

The basis for the following reassembly of the medical treatise is its longest and almost continuous excerpt, now found in b. Git. 68b–70a. Just as the composers used this particular excerpt of the treatise in the Gittin passage because it fit the topic there, so too did they use other excerpts from the treatise in other parts of the Talmud. The recipes showing the structure “For X, bring (verb) Y, alternatively Z,” which I termed the “verb recipe” in Chapter 5, are collected here and ordered in what seems to have been the treatise’s original top-down structure, of which the Gittin passage is suggestive. However, like the other treatises of simple remedies discussed in Chapter 5, this one does not follow the top-down structure *ad calcem* but ends with the genitals and then moves to fevers and diseases pertaining to the whole body. For the following arrangement, then, the comparanda discussed in Chapter 5 – and, of those, I particularly considered the *Syriac Book of Medicines* – were more instructive than a focus on head-to-foot organization alone.

The translation takes as its basis the Talmud manuscript Munich 95, which is the only manuscript spanning almost the whole Talmud; it is dated to the year 1342. It is, therefore, suitable for the basis of a text that appears in several tractates. Unfortunately, manuscript Munich 95 is marked by many careless mistakes, and the text below benefited from the parallel reading of other manuscripts. The relevant manuscripts are the following: Arras 889 (fourteenth century); Bazzano, Archivio Storico Comunale Fr. ebr. 21 (twelfth to fifteenth centuries,

Italy);<sup>1</sup> Bologna, Archivio di Stato Fr. ebr. 145 (thirteenth century);<sup>2</sup> Cambridge T-S Fr 1 (1) 31 (medieval);<sup>3</sup> New York JTS ENA 3112.1; Vatican 130 (dated 14.1.1381);<sup>4</sup> Vatican 140 (late fourteenth century);<sup>5</sup> Oxford Opp. 38 (368) (fourteenth century);<sup>6</sup> and St. Petersburg, RNL Evr. I 187 (thirteenth or fifteenth century).<sup>7</sup> With the exception of the T-S fragment and St. Petersburg I 187, all of the manuscripts are ashkenazic. This explains the relatively few and minor textual variants and, unfortunately, minimizes the representativeness of the results achieved through comparison of the extant manuscripts.

Because of their particular technical content, the recipes under discussion contain many ingredients that appear only once in the Talmud (*hapax legomena*). The significance of many of these ingredients has been lost for this and other reasons. Some ingredients seem to bear colloquial names, and other names seem to have suffered corruption in the process of manuscript transmission. But comparative work with other Aramaic dialects and consideration of loanwords, both provided by Michael Sokoloff's dictionary, have done much to improve this situation.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Mauro Perani, "I frammenti ebraici di Bazzano: Un piccolo tesoro nella 'Genizah Italiana,'" in "Atti del Forum internazionale, Bazzano (Bologna) Rocco dei Bentivoglio, Sala dei Giganti, 25 Maggio 2000," ed. Mauro Perani, special issue, *Materia giudica* 6, no. 2 (2001): 193–199.

<sup>2</sup> See Mauro Perani and Enrico Sagradini, *Talmudic and Midrashic Fragments from the "Italian Genizah": Reunification of the Manuscripts and Catalogue*, Quaderni di materia giudaica 1 (Florence: Giuntina, 2004), 51.

<sup>3</sup> See Shelomo Morag, *Taylor-Schechter Old Series*, Vol. 1 of *Vocalised Talmudic Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collection*, Cambridge University Library Genizah Series 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 2.

<sup>4</sup> See Benjamin Richler and Bet-Aryeh Mal'akhi, eds., *Hebrew Manuscripts in the Vatican Library Catalogue, Compiled by the Staff of the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts*, Studi e testi/Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana 438 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2008), 93–94.

<sup>5</sup> See Richler and Mal'akhi, *Hebrew Manuscripts in the Vatican Library Catalogue*, 98–99. The manuscripts' order of words is often reversed in comparison to Ms. Munich 95, and it writes ס for ש (e.g., בישרא for בשרא).

<sup>6</sup> See Michael Krupp, "Manuscripts of the Babylonian Talmud," in *Literature of the Sages, First Part: Oral Torah, Halakha, Mishna, Tosefta, Talmud, External Tractates*, ed. Shmuel Safrai, *Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum* (Assen, Netherlands: Royal Van Gorcum, 1987), 355.

<sup>7</sup> See Krupp, "Manuscripts of the Babylonian Talmud," 353. Krupp refers to this Ms. as Leningrad-Firkow I 187.

<sup>8</sup> Still, Sokoloff's *Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic* is used here with caution, since it is, as any dictionary of languages past, eclectic and, at times, relies heavily on Geonic and even later medieval commentators for the reconstruction of meaning. See Theodore Kwasman, "Loanwords in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic: Some Preliminary Observations," in *The Archaeology and Material Culture of the Babylonian Talmud*, ed. Markham J. Geller, *IJS Studies in Judaica* 16 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 335.

## THE TREATISE

**1. For blood of the head (b. Git. 68b)**

Bring cypress, tamarisk, one myrtle, willow of the sea,<sup>9</sup> and *yabla*.<sup>10</sup> Boil them together and pour 300 cups over one side of the head and 300 cups over the other side of the head.

Alternatively, bring a white rose [with leaves on/to one side?]<sup>11</sup> and boil it. Pour 60 cups over one side of the head and 60 over the other.

**2. For migraine<sup>12</sup> (b. Git. 68b)**

Bring a wild cock and slaughter it with a white *zuz* over the side of the head that hurts. Beware that the blood does not blind the eyes. Hang it onto the door casing for the patient to rub his head against it when he enters and leaves.

**3. For flashes in the eye<sup>13</sup> (b. Git. 69a)**

Bring a scorpion of seven joints and dry it in the shadows. Crush two parts of *kohl* with one part of the former. Put three make-up spoons' full in that eye. Do not use more than that, as the eye may burst.<sup>14</sup>

**4. For night blindness<sup>15</sup> (b. Git. 69a)**

Bring a string made of white animal hair and tie with it one leg of the patient to the leg of a dog. Children should rattle potsherds behind him

<sup>9</sup> Giuseppe Veltri, *Magie und Halakha: Ansätze zu einem empirischen Wissenschaftsbegriff im spätantiken und frühmittelalterlichen Judentum*, TSAJ 62 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 239, translates with “camel grass” (*cymbopogon schoenanthus*). The term is here translated as “willow of the sea,” according to DJBA, see “חילפא דיםא.”

<sup>10</sup> Markham J. Geller translates “and dries it.” “An Akkadian Vademecum in the Babylonian Talmud,” in *From Athens to Jerusalem: Medicine in Hellenized Jewish Lore and in Early Christian Literature*, ed. Samuel Kotttek, Manfred Horstmanshoff, Gerhard Baader, and Gary Ferngren (Rotterdam, Netherlands: Erasmus, 2000), 17.

<sup>11</sup> Unclear. See Veltri, *Magie und Halakha*, 239n148.

<sup>12</sup> From Aramaic צלצ, to cleave, split (DJBA, see “צלח #1”). Greek *hemicrania*, “half head,” seems to express the same pain (DJBA, see “צילחחא”). The condition is also found in a number of Babylonian bowl-amulets, see Geller, “Akkadian Vademecum in the Babylonian Talmud,” 18n23.

<sup>13</sup> Although the term is unclear, this interpretation, based on contextual interpretations of Akkadian *burruqu*, seems to fit the context best (see Geller, “Akkadian Vademecum in the Babylonian Talmud,” 19).

<sup>14</sup> The mixture used by women to paint their eyes was called *kohl* (כחולא), and the instrument with which it was applied was called *makhol* (מכחול). The instrument is described in m. Kelim 13:2 as having a palm of a hand (כף) and a part that apparently looks like the male member, for it is called זכר. *Kohl* was typically made from charcoal, lead, copper, and antimony; see Nathan Wasserman, “Piercing the Eyes: An Old Babylonian Love Incantation and the Preparation of Kohl,” *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 72, nos. 5–6 (2015): 608–609. These ingredients are rather toxic and usually not meant to enter the eye, hence the warning.

<sup>15</sup> For a detailed discussion of the Akkadian *sí-nu-ri* or *Sin-lurmā*, night blindness, becoming *sanwērīm* in Hebrew and *šabrīrē* in Aramaic, see Marten Stol, “Blindness and

and say: “Old Dog! Mad Hen!” He should then take seven pieces of raw meat from seven houses. They should be placed at the doorpost, and he should eat them on the town’s trash pile. Then he should remove the string and say: “Blindness of PN, son of PN, may you leave PN, son of PN.”<sup>16</sup> Then blow into the dog’s eye.

### 5. For day blindness (b. Git. 69a)

Bring seven “reds” from inside the animals and roast them in the sherd of an *umana*.<sup>17</sup> He should sit inside the house and another person outside the house, and the blind man should say to the other: “Give me something to eat!” Then the other person should say: “Take and eat!” After he has eaten, he should break the sherd – otherwise, it will return to him.

### 6. For blood that comes from the nose (b. Git. 69a)

Bring a priest by the name of Levi and let him write his name backwards.

Alternatively, one should write for him backwards “I am Papi Shila son of Sumqi.”<sup>18</sup>

Alternatively, one should write for him: “The taste of [dli?] in silver-water; the taste of [dli?] in damaged water.”

Alternatively, bring a root of [old] alfalfa, rushes from an old bed, safflower seed, [unknown ingredient], and the red covering on the pith of the date palm and burn them. Then he should take a tuft of wool and twist it into two wicks. They should be dipped in vinegar and then rolled in the ashes and inserted into the nostril.

Alternatively, look for a canal flowing east to west. Step over it and stand with one foot on this side and with the other on that side. Take mud with the right hand from beneath the left foot and take mud with

Night-Blindness in Akkadian,” *JNES* 45, no. 4 (October 1986). In b. Pesah. 112a (//b. Avod. Zar. 12b), the reason for *shavrirei* is related to the nightly drinking of uncovered water. In this case, the remedy (תקנתא) consists of a spell.

<sup>16</sup> A common feature of texts using words to induce change is that they address a person with his or her matronym. This stands in contrast to juridical text, which makes use of the patronym. Hendrik Versnel has convincingly explained this feature in the context of a general reversal of standard habits in texts that try to persuade the divine or demonic. See Hendrik S. Versnel, “The Poetics of the Magical Charm: An Essay on the Power of Words,” in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, ed. Paul Mirecki and Marvin Meyer (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 144 and 146.

<sup>17</sup> The *umana* seems to have had very diverse functions. *DJBA*, see “אומנא,” notes the following: “artisan, bloodletter, circumciser, barber.” In Syriac sources, the term is also used for the surgeon (*DJBA*, see “אומנא”). Like the barber surgeon in the Middle Ages, the *umana* seems to have been the one in possession of sharp knives, even scissors.

<sup>18</sup> See Veltri, *Magie und Halakha*, 241n168, for the interesting reference to the Tetragrammaton in the Septuagint, which did not translate the latter literally but, rather, graphically, as ΠΙΠΙ (*pipi*).

the left hand from beneath the right foot. Twist a wick, dip it into the mud, and then insert it into the nostril.

Alternatively, let him stand under a rain spout<sup>19</sup> and pour [water] on him and say: “In the same way as these waters stop, so too should the blood of PN son of PN stop.”

#### 7. For the ear (b. Avod. Zar. 28b)

Bring the kidney of a bald buck and tear it open crosswise and place it on glowing coals. The fluid that comes out of it should be poured into the ear. But it should not be hot, but lukewarm.

Alternatively, bring the fat of a large beetle, melt it, and pour it into the ear.

Alternatively, fill the ear with oil and bring [cloves?] <sup>20</sup> of garlic that were violently torn out of the garden bed; stick one [garlic] head into the fire and one into the ear. Then remove one and leave the other.

Alternatively, make seven wicks of alfalfa and tie them with animal hair at their head [i.e., one end]. Set the wick afire while the other head sticks in his ear.

Alternatively, bring seven wicks made of animal hair and smear them with alfalfa oil and place one end into the fire and the other end into the ear. Remove one and leave the one and fill the ear with oil. Beware of the *maziq*-demon!

Alternatively, bring wool into the fire that has not been combed and let him place the ear towards the fire. Beware of the *maziq*-demon!

Alternatively, bring a hundred-year-old reed tube, fill it with rock salt,<sup>21</sup> burn it, and stick it into it [the ear]. The mnemonic is: the dry for the moist and the moist for the dry.

#### 8. For blood coming from the mouth (b. Git. 69a)

The patient should be tested with a wheat straw. If it [the blood] sticks to it, it is coming from the lungs, and there is a remedy for it. Alternatively, it is coming from the liver, and there is no remedy for it.

Bring seven fistfuls of chopped mangelwurzel, seven fistfuls of chopped leeks, five fistfuls of pomegranate seed, three fistfuls of lentils,<sup>22</sup> one fistful of cumin, and a fistful of spices and the same amount [as all this]

<sup>19</sup> See *DJBA*, see “מרובא.”

<sup>20</sup> The meaning of שובתא is unknown (see *DJBA*, see “שובתא”).

<sup>21</sup> See *DJBA*, see “מילחא גללניחא.”

<sup>22</sup> Ms. Munich 95 here reads שלפוחא, *bladder*. Yet most Mss. (Arras 889, Vatican 130, Vatican 140, and Bologna 145) דטלפחי “lentils,” which seems to make more sense given the posology of “a fistful.”

of unleavened bread.<sup>23</sup> Cook and eat it and drink strong beer of good quality.<sup>24</sup>

**9. For a molar tooth (b. Git. 69a)<sup>25</sup>**

Bring a garlic clove and grind it together with oil and salt. Place [the mixture] on the nail of the thumb on the side where the ache is and surround it with a ring of dough. And beware of leprosy!<sup>26</sup>

**10. For toothache [*tsafdina*]<sup>27</sup> (b. Avod. Zar. 28a//b. Yoma 84a)**

Bring pits of olives that have not finished ripening [for] more than a third [of their actual maturing time], burn them on a new hoe, and affix [the residue] to the [affected] row [of teeth].

**11. For “cooking”<sup>28</sup> (b. Git. 69a)**

Bring bran from the top of the sieve and lentils in their earth, fenugreek, a dodder seed, and [the patient] should keep a nut[-sized] amount [of the mixture] in his mouth.

**12. For the opening (b. Git. 69a)**

Someone knowledgeable<sup>29</sup> should blow white cress through a wheat straw.

**13. For closing of the wound<sup>30</sup> (b. Git. 69a)**

Bring dust from the shade of a toilet, mix it with honey and eat in order to fill [the wound] up.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>23</sup> See *DJBA*, see “פסירתא כנחא.”

<sup>24</sup> Here I follow Geller in his argument that טבת does not refer to the month of Tevet but is a calque (i.e., a literal translation) of the Akkadian standing expression *šikaru tabu*, “fine quality beer.” See Geller, “Akkadian Vademecum in the Babylonian Talmud,” 22.

<sup>25</sup> See *DJBA*, see “גבא.”

<sup>26</sup> Mss. Arras 889, Vatican 130, Vatican 140, and JTS 3 112.1 here add דקשי לבישריה, that is, beware of his flesh, because it could cause leprosy.

<sup>27</sup> The condition was subsumed into the foregoing discussion of the *tsafdina*-disease, which most likely concerns tooth or gum problems. On this condition see esp. Samuel Kottke, “Selected Elements of Talmudic Medical Terminology, with Special Consideration to Greco-Latin Influences and Sources,” in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Roemischen Wel*, Vol. 37, bk. 2, pt. 3, *Principate*, ed. Wolfgang Haase and Hildegard Temporini (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1996), 2925–2926.

<sup>28</sup> This condition seems to express the symptoms of the disease, which is most likely to be located in the mouth or in the throat, according to the therapy.

<sup>29</sup> See *DJBA*, see “חברא,” for the many different meanings of *haber*, including “friend,” “sage,” and “associate.”

<sup>30</sup> See *DJBA*, see “סלק #1.”

<sup>31</sup> Since the mixture needs to be eaten in order to fill the wound, the condition still seems to be one affecting the mouth.

**14. For pleurisy<sup>32</sup> (b. Git. 69a–b)**

Bring some sal ammoniac, about the size of a pistachio, and a few nut-sized amounts of honeyed galbanum, a spoonful of white honey and a full drinking cup from Mahoza of clean wine. Let them boil together. When the sal ammoniac is cooked, everything is cooked.

Alternatively, bring a fourth of the milk of a white goat and let it drip over three cabbage stalks and stir with a stem of marjoram. And when the stem of marjoram is cooked, everything is cooked.

Alternatively, bring the excrement of a white dog, knead it with a solution of dates. But if possible do not eat [excrement], because it may [expedite the process in an unhealthy way].<sup>33</sup>

**15. For jaundice<sup>34</sup> (b. Shabb. 110b)**

Alternatively, bring the head of a salted *shibuta*-fish,<sup>35</sup> boil it in beer, and drink it.

Alternatively, bring a brine of locusts, take [the patient] to a bathhouse, and smear it on him. If there is no bathhouse, stand him between the oven and the fire.<sup>36</sup>

Alternatively, bring a *qpiza*<sup>37</sup> of Persian dates, three *qpiza* of bitumen of *n*-,<sup>38</sup> [and] three [*qpiza*] of worm-colored alkali plant. Boil them in beer and drink.

Alternatively, bring a donkey, the foal of a donkey, and shave the middle of its head. Let blood from the forehead [of the donkey] and put it on the head [of the patient].

Beware that the patient's eyes do not get blinded [by the blood].

Alternatively, bring the head of a buck placed in a [...],<sup>39</sup> boil it in beer, and drink.

<sup>32</sup> See *DJBA*, see “ברסם.”

<sup>33</sup> This is *DJBA*'s interpretation of the verb פּרַש here. The use in the sense of “expedite” is, however, singular. The verb usually refers more generally to the notion of separating or setting aside. See *DJBA*, see “פּרַש.”

<sup>34</sup> The recipe introducing the condition “jaundice” is a pause recipe and not a verb recipe. (On this terminology, see Chapter 5.) Therapies from a verb recipe against jaundice appear to have been added by the composers as alternatives.

<sup>35</sup> See *DJBA*, see “שיבוטא.”

<sup>36</sup> Apart from Ms. Munich 95, which reads לְנוּרָא, for *the fire*, the Mss. read לְנוּרָא, for *the wall*, which seems more likely here.

<sup>37</sup> From Middle Persian *kabīz*, “a small measure, equal to one tenth *griv*” (*DJBA*, see “קפיזא”). A *griv*, on the other hand, is an otherwise undefined dry measure (see *DJBA*, see “גריזא”).

<sup>38</sup> Uncertain. See *DJBA*, see “נישתרופא.”

<sup>39</sup> Uncertain. See *DJBA*, see “יבשא.”

Alternatively, bring another thing<sup>40</sup> that is hunchbacked, tear it, and place it on his heart.

Alternatively, eat leek from the [...] <sup>41</sup> of garden beds.

**16. For the “arrow”<sup>42</sup> (b. Git. 69b)**

Bring the “shaft of an arrowhead,” turn it upside down with the bottom on top. Pour water over it and drink it.

Alternatively, bring water from which a dog drank at night – but beware of [possible effects of] *giluya* [i.e., the talmudic term for uncovered water].

**17. For heaviness of the heart<sup>43</sup> (b. Git. 69b)**

Bring three barley cakes and soak them in a *kamka*-dish that is no older than forty days, eat them, and afterward drink watered-down wine.

**18. For a fluttering [heart] (b. Git. 69b)**

Bring three wheat cakes and soak them in honey and eat them and afterward drink strong wine.

**19. For a weak heart (b. Git. 69b)**

Bring three “eggs”: an egg[-size] of *ammi copticum*,<sup>44</sup> an egg[-size] of cumin, and an egg[-size] of sesame.

**20. For pain in the intestines (b. Git. 69b)**

Bring three hundred long peppers and drink every day one hundred of them in hot water.

**21. For a fierce stinging<sup>45</sup> (b. Git. 69b)**

Bring a seed of a rocket, wrap it in a handkerchief,<sup>46</sup> soak in water overnight, and drink. Beware of the kernels [so] that they do not pierce [the intestines].

<sup>40</sup> The euphemism for a pig.

<sup>41</sup> Uncertain. See *DJBA*, see “בובתא.”

<sup>42</sup> It does not seem from the context that this condition has to be taken literally as referring to the injury from an arrow (cf. *DJBA*, see “גירא”). Rather, pain in the heart may be felt to be as piercing as an arrow.

<sup>43</sup> Adjusted according to the correction of the original condition as it appears later in the talmudic text (b. Git. 69b).

<sup>44</sup> See *DJBA*, see “גניא.”

<sup>45</sup> Following *DJBA*, see “בירצא,” Veltri (*Magie und Halakha*, 246) translates the condition as “white intestinal worm,” whereas Geller (“An Akkadian Vademecum in the Babylonian Talmud,” 26) concludes that this “should refer to an abdominal condition.” It seems that it would be best to think of the condition as a fierce stinging in the intestines – which may also result from worms.

<sup>46</sup> From Middle Persian *šustag*. See *DJBA*, see “שוסתג.”



**22. For the spleen (b. Git. 69b)**

Bring seven aquatic leeches and dry them in the shade. Drink two or three of them in wine every day.

Alternatively, bring a spleen from a virgin she-goat and stick it to the oven. Stand directly next to it and say: “Just as this spleen dries out, thus should the spleen of PN son of PN dry out.”

Alternatively, he should stick it between the bricks of a new house and say this.

Alternatively, search for a corpse of one who died on the Sabbath, place his hand on the spleen, and say: “Just as this hand dried out, thus should the spleen of PN son of PN dry out.”

Alternatively, bring a small fish and roast it in the blacksmith’s workshop and eat it in the water [coming from] the blacksmith’s workshop and drink from the water coming from the blacksmith’s workshop.

Alternatively, open a jug of wine in [the patient’s] name.

**23. For hemorrhoids<sup>47</sup> (b. Git. 69b)**

Bring acacia, aloe, white lead, silver dross, a bead of malabathrum, salves of glaucium. Keep this in rags of linen in summer and [rags of] wool in winter.

Alternatively, drink watered-down beer.

**24. For an upper anal fissure (b. Avod. Zar. 28b)**

Bring seven seeds of worm-colored alkaline plant and tie them up. Bring “the empty space of the neck area”<sup>48</sup> and wrap it around [the neck] with animal hair. Dip it into white naphta and burn it. Spread [the ashes] on him.<sup>49</sup> In the meantime, bring the pits of a Dilmun date and place its fissure on the [anal] fissure.

**25. For a lower anal fissure (b. Avod. Zar. 28b)**

Bring the fat of a virgin goat, melt it, and smear [the fat] on it.

<sup>47</sup> This is a Geonic explanation of the term *אחוש*, which in Syriac refers to “rust, verdeggris, or foulness” according to *DJBA*, see “אחוש.” Sokoloff, therefore, translates the term rather generally with “illness.” However, the condition “hemorrhoids” would fit the order of the recipes here.

<sup>48</sup> *DJBA*, see “אליא.”

<sup>49</sup> See also recipe no. 43. For the cultural residues behind the “cremation” of *materia medica* in Latin euphoristic treatises, see Patricia Gaillard-Seux, “La crémation des remèdes dans les textes médicaux latins,” in *Manus medica: Actions et gestes de l’officiant dans les textes médicaux latins; Questions de thérapeutique et de lexicque*, ed. Françoise Gaide and Frédérique Biville, Collection Textes et Documents de la Méditerranée Antique et Médiévale (Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l’Université de Provence, 2003).

Alternatively, bring three leaves of gourds that have been dried in the shade, burn them, pound [the ashes] in a mortar, and attach [the ashes] to it.

Alternatively, bring shells of snails, burn them, and affix them to it.

Alternatively, bring an anointment of bitumen. Keep this in rags of linen in summer and [rags of] wool in winter.

**26. For *shigrona*<sup>50</sup> (b. Git. 69b)**

Bring a bucket of brine and roll it sixty times over one thigh and sixty times over the other.

**27. For strangury<sup>51</sup> (b. Git. 69b)**

Bring three drops of the salve of henna, three drops of leek juice, and three drops of clear wine. If the patient is a male, insert it [into his member]; if the patient is female, in her place.

Alternatively, bring the handle of a skin-bottle. Let it hang from a man's member, or from a female's breast.

Alternatively, bring a crimson thread, which PN daughter of PN spun, and let it hang from a man's member, or from a female's breast. And when they urinate, they should urinate on bramble [twigs] on the door socket.

Keep an eye on the stone that will be falling out from it, because it improves all kinds of fevers.

**28. For the outer strangury<sup>52</sup> (b. Git. 69b)**

Bring three *griwa*-measures of the *supala*-plant,<sup>53</sup> three *griwa*-measures of a leaf of the *adra*-plant,<sup>54</sup> and boil each one by itself. Pour them into two washbasins. Bring a table and place it over [the basins] and sit on it. Then get up and sit on [a table] over the other basin until the vapor enters [the body]. Then bathe in them.

If [the patient] drinks, he should drink from the *adra*-plant water and not from the *supala*-plant water, because it causes sterility.

<sup>50</sup> The disease (*shigrona/shigdon*) cannot be identified on etymological grounds (see *DJBA*, see “שִׁירוֹנָא”). However, in b. Hul. 51a, an ewe dragging her hind legs is assumed to suffer from this *shigrona*-disease. This assumption is qualified and verified when the ewe is slaughtered. It appears that the cause was a severed spinal cord and *not* the *shigrona*-disease. However, it seems that *shigrona*-disease bears on the duct of a person.

<sup>51</sup> See *DJBA*, see “צִמְרוֹתָא #1.”

<sup>52</sup> See *DJBA*, see “צִמְרוֹתָא” (Akkad. *šemertu*).

<sup>53</sup> Unidentified. See *DJBA*, see “סְפִילָא.”

<sup>54</sup> Unidentified. See *DJBA*, see “אַטְרֵפָא.”

**29. For the inner strangury (b. Git. 69b–70a)**

Bring seven roots [fistfuls] of mangel-wurzel from seven garden beds and boil them with their earth and eat them. Drink leaves of the *adra* plant in beer or nightshade (*solanum nigrum*) in water.

**30. For the fever caused by strangury<sup>55</sup> (b. Shabb. 67a)**

Take a knife that is completely made from iron and go to a place with bramble and knot upon it a cord of horsehair.<sup>56</sup> On the first day he should notch a small amount of it and say: “And an angel of God appeared to him in a flame of fire” (Exod. 3:2). On the next day, he should notch a small amount of it and say: “And Moses said: let me turn aside and see” (Exod. 3:3). On the next day he should notch a small amount of it and say: “And God saw that he turned aside to see” until “and he said: here I am” (Exod. 3:4).

**31. For a fever of one day (b. Shabb. 66b)**

Take a silvered *zuz*<sup>57</sup> and go to the salt pit and exchange the weight of the *zuz* in salt. Tie it around the empty space of the neck area with a horse-cord made of horsehair.

Alternatively, sit [the patient] at a crossroads. And when he sees a large ant carrying something, he should take it and put it into a copper tube. Close it with lead and seal it with sixty seals. He must shake and carry it and say: “My burden upon you and your burden upon me!”

Alternatively, take a new pitcher and go to the river and say: “River, river, lend me a pitcher of water for the guest that came to me!” Turn the vessel seven times around the head and empty the pitcher into the river behind him. Say this: “River, river, take back the water that you lent me, for the guest that came to me came in its day and left in its day.”

**32. For a fever of three days (b. Shabb. 67a)**

Bring seven thorns from seven palm trees, seven ashes from seven ovens, seven dusts from seven dams, seven chips from seven logs, seven pegs

<sup>55</sup> Fever has many names in the Talmud as well as in Akkadian: “The cuneiform medical sources refer to the patient’s high temperature with the following Akkadian lexemes: 1) *emēnu* ‘to be hot’ and *ummu* ‘heat’; 2) *hamātu* ‘to be inflamed’ and *hīmtu* ‘inflammation, burning’; 3) *šarāhu* ‘to heat up’ and *širhu* or *širihtu* ‘heat’; 4) *šētu* ‘heat-radiance.’” András Bácskay, “The Natural and Supernatural Aspects of Fever in Mesopotamian Medical Texts,” in *Demons and Illnesses from Antiquity to the Early-Modern Period*, ed. Siam Bhayro and Catherine Rider, *Magical and Religious Literature of Late Antiquity* 5 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 42.

<sup>56</sup> ברקא may refer to Middle Persian *bārag*, “horse.” See *DJBA*, see “בארק #1.” However, it remains unclear if the cord is from the horse (i.e., made of hair) or for the horse (i.e., to tie it up, etc.).

<sup>57</sup> *Zuz* is the Aramaic term for the Sasanian drachma. See *DJBA*, see “זוז.”

from seven bridges, seven [pieces of] pitch from seven boats, seven kernels of cumin, and seven hairs from the beard of an old dog. Tie it around the empty space of the neck area with a horse-cord.

### 33. For an extended sun[-stroke] (b. Git. 67b)

Bring a black hen and tear it open crosswise. Shave the middle of the head [of the patient] and place [the hen] on it. Let [the patient] go down and stand in water until his world becomes weak [i.e., until he feels faint]. Then, he should stand, get up [out of the water], and sit down.

Alternatively, eat leeks and swim and stand in water until he feels faint, stand and get out and sit.

### 34. For a skin disease<sup>58</sup> (b. Git. 70a)

Bring seven [stalks] of *a*-wheat,<sup>59</sup> roast them in a new pan. Draw out the fat that is in them and smear it [on the skin].

### 35. For “uprooting” [i.e., abortion]<sup>60</sup> (b. Shabb. 110a)<sup>61</sup>

Bring the weight of a *zuz* of Alexandrian gum Arabic, [the weight of] a *zuz* of a tuft of wool, [the weight of] a *zuz* of saffron fiber and grind them together.

### 36. For gonorrheal issues (b. Shabb. 110a–b)

[Alternatively], bring three *qpiza* of Persian onions, boil them in wine and let her drink and say to her:<sup>62</sup> “Cease from your gonorrheal discharge.”

Alternatively, sit her<sup>63</sup> at a crossroads. She should hold a cup with wine in her hand and someone should come from behind and frighten her and say: “Cease from your gonorrheal discharge.”

<sup>58</sup> See *DJBA*, see “חויחא.”

<sup>59</sup> *DJBA*, see “ארונאה.”

<sup>60</sup> The condition and its meaning have been reconstructed from context.

<sup>61</sup> See John M. Riddle, “Women’s Medicines in Ancient Jewish Sources: Fertility Enhancers,” in *Disease in Babylonia*, ed. Irving L. Finkela and Markham J. Geller (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 205–208, for a contextual analysis of this drug. *Crocus sativus*/saffron was known to have an abortive effect (208). On the terminology (עיקרון-roots), see most recently Aaron Amit, “Methodological Pitfalls in the Identification of the עיקרון,” in *Collecting Recipes: Byzantine and Jewish Pharmacology in Dialogue*, ed. Lennart Lehmann and Matteo Martelli, Science, Technology, and Medicine in Ancient Cultures 4 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017).

<sup>62</sup> Mss. Oxford Heb. c. 27/10–15, JTS Rab 501:1–6, and the Soncino print edition here read לה, *to her*. Mss. Oxford Opp. Add. fol. 23 and Vatican 108, on the other hand, read ליה, as does the above Ms. Munich 95.

<sup>63</sup> Here, all the witnesses agree that the talk is about a female patient. When it comes to “say to *her*,” however, the manuscripts differ.

Alternatively, bring a fistful of cumin, a fistful of safflower [*carthamus tinctorius*], and a fistful of fenugreek. Boil it in wine and let her drink and say to her: “Cease from your gonorrheal discharge.”

Alternatively, bring sixty seals from clay vessels and rub them [on the patient] and say: “Cease from your gonorrheal discharge.”

Alternatively, bring a *p*-plant,<sup>64</sup> spread it out, and say: “Cease from your gonorrheal discharge.”

Alternatively, bring thistles from a Palestinian carob tree, burn them, and keep this in rags of linen in summer and [rags of] wool in winter.

Alternatively, dig seven pits and burn in them branches of *orla*. Let her keep a cup of wine in her hand. And she should get up [from crouching over one pit] and crouch over another, and each time, when she gets up from a pit, one should say: “Cease from your gonorrheal discharge.”

Alternatively, bring fine flour and smear it onto the lower part of her body.

Alternatively, bring an ostrich egg, burn it, and keep this in rags of linen in summer and [rags of] wool in winter, and say to her: “Cease from your gonorrheal discharge.”

Alternatively, open a jug of wine.

Alternatively, take barley found in the excrement of a white mule. If she holds it for one day, it will stop for two days. If she holds it for two days, it will stop for three days. If she holds it for three days, it will stop forever.

### 37. For the fluke worm<sup>65</sup> (b. Shabb. 109b)

Alternatively,<sup>66</sup> swallow white cress.

Alternatively, let [the patient] fast and bring fatty meat and roast it on live coals. Let him then suck a bone and swallow vinegar.

But there are those who say no to<sup>67</sup> vinegar, because it is harmful to the liver.

Rather, bring the scraping of *Dilum*-dates that have been scraped off from top to bottom. Maybe they will come out through his mouth. Boil it in beer from the neighborhood. On the next day, block the holes of [the patient’s] hands, and [the patient] should drink [from his hands]. And when he excretes, he should excrete on the date palm.

<sup>64</sup> Unidentified. *DJBA*, see “בשיטנא.”

<sup>65</sup> *DJBA*, “ארקתנא #2.”

<sup>66</sup> The recipe’s first therapy, “pennyroyal with seven white dates,” and the indicated condition have been split into a dialogue structure (see the discussion in Chapter 5).

<sup>67</sup> Ms. Munich 95 omits this “no.”

**38. For the effects of drinking uncovered water [giluya] (b. Shabb. 109b)**  
Bring fifteen melilots and fifteen cups of beer and boil them together until it is [boiled down to] one *anpaq* [of the solution] and drink it.

[Alternatively,]<sup>68</sup> bring a sweet citron, carve out a portion from it, fill it with honey, and put it on the coals in the oven.

**39. For intoxication (b. Shabb. 66b)<sup>69</sup>**

Bring salt and oil and smear it on the inside of their hands and on the base of their feet and say this: “Just as this oil dissolves, so let the wine dissolve in PN son of PN.”

Alternatively, bring the sealing clay of a vat and soak it in water and say this: “Just as this sealing clay dissolves, so let the wine dissolve in PN son of PN.”

**40. For a crack in the skin (b. Avod. Zar. 28a)<sup>70</sup>**

Hit it sixty times with a finger and tear it open cross-wise with a barley-corn.

But this was not said for a crack that did not have a white head, but for one with a white head.

**41. For [recovery after] bloodletting (b. Avod. Zar. 29a)<sup>71</sup>**

Bring a quarter of wine and a quarter of beer and mix them together and drink. And if he is relieving himself, he should relieve himself to the east because of the strong odor.

**42. For the heart?/wind? (b. Avod. Zar. 29a)<sup>72</sup>**

Bring a new cup and fill it with water. Bring [it] and let it rest under the stars until the morning.<sup>73</sup> Add a spoonful of honey.

**43. For the bite of a mad dog (b. Yoma 84a)<sup>74</sup>**

Take the hide of a male hyena and write on it: “Hide of the male hyena we write on you: *‘qngi, qndi, qlidis.’*” And say to it: “*qntu, qnti, qliris,*

<sup>68</sup> Omitted by the composers of the Talmud in favor of an attribution to Rav Huna bar Yehuda.

<sup>69</sup> Condition reconstructed from context.

<sup>70</sup> See *DJBA*, see “סימסא #1.” Condition reconstructed from context.

<sup>71</sup> Condition reconstructed from context.

<sup>72</sup> It is difficult to reconstruct the condition addressed by this particular recipe, since several conditions are discussed in this context.

<sup>73</sup> This sentence is missing in Ms. New York-JTS Rab. 15 and the print editions. A similar instruction can also be found in one of Columella’s recipes (*Rust.* 6.35).

<sup>74</sup> Reconstructed from context. The recipe is attributed to Abaye in Mss. Munich 6, New York JTS Rab. 218 (EMC 270), and London-BL Harl. 5508 (400). Mss. Munich 95 and Oxford Opp. Add. fol. 23, on the other hand, state the recipe anonymously.

God, God, God of hosts, amen, amen, selah.” Bury this at a crossroads<sup>75</sup> for twelve months of the year. And after the twelve months of a year have passed, dig it out again and burn it and scatter the ashes. And during the twelve months of the year, he should only drink through a small tube. [Otherwise] it may return and endanger him.<sup>76</sup>

**44. The one who was bitten by a snake (b. Shabb. 110b)<sup>77</sup>**

Bring the embryo of a white jennet, tear it, and place it [on the bite]. However, these words apply only if [the jennet] was not found to be *terefah*.

**45. For the fire of the bones (b. Git. 70a)<sup>78</sup>**

Bring him a *k*-measure<sup>79</sup> of *sh*-porridge<sup>80</sup> and a *k*-measure of aged wine. He should knead them together and eat it. Then he should be wrapped in an *s*-cloth<sup>81</sup> and sleep. And he should not be awakened until he wakes up on his own. When he gets up, he should take off the *s*-cloth immediately – if not, it will return to him.

**46. For invirility (b. Git. 70a)<sup>82</sup>**

Bring three *qpiza*-measures of safflower seeds, grind them, boil them in wine, and drink it.

### Recipes with Spoken Therapies

**47. For a crack in the skin<sup>83</sup> (b. Shabb. 67a)**

Say this [לִימָא הִכִּי]: “Baz Bazyyah, Mas Masyya, Kas Kasyyah, Sadlay and Askalay. These are the angels [מַלְאֲכֵיָא], which have been sent from the earth of Sodom to heal boils and sores. Bazah Bazih, Bazih Bazah, Kaman Kamin, Kamin Kaman: Your [investigative] look upon yourself, your place to yourself, your place to yourself!”

<sup>75</sup> Instead of *crossroads*, Ms. Oxford Opp. Add. fol. 23 has *at a grave* (בַּקְבֵּרָא). Ms. Munich 6 does not indicate a place.

<sup>76</sup> Use of the hide of a hyena to cure rabies is also mentioned by Scribonius Largus, albeit without further specification; see Scribonius Largus, *Der gute Arzt: Compositiones*, trans. Kai Brodersen (Wiesbaden: Marix Verlag, 2016), 243 (recipe C 172).

<sup>77</sup> Condition reconstructed from context.

<sup>78</sup> Condition reconstructed from context.

<sup>79</sup> Unknown. See *DJBA*, see “בִּנְיָא.”

<sup>80</sup> “A porridge made from the meal of various grains or dried fruits.” *DJBA*, see “שְׁתִּימָא.”

<sup>81</sup> “A cloth made of a light material and worn by wrapping it around the body or the head.” *DJBA*, see “סְדִינָא.”

<sup>82</sup> Condition reconstructed from context.

<sup>83</sup> See *DJBA*, see “סִימְטָא #1.”

“May your seed be like the earth of Sodom, like *saris* and *qalut*. May you be like a mule, which does not reproduce itself and multiply. In the same way you shall not reproduce yourself and multiply on the body of PN son/daughter of PN.”<sup>84</sup>

**48. For [a disease or demon: ביסא]<sup>85</sup> (b. Shabb. 67a)**

Say this [לימא הכי]: “A drawn sword and a flying sling:<sup>86</sup> His name is not Yohav, you painful illnesses!”

**49. For a demon (b. Shabb. 67a)**

Say this [לימא הכי]: “You were stopped up, stopped up you were! Cursed, broken, and banned, son of Tit, son of Tam’e, in the name of Margiz, Murifat, and Istamtiah.”

**50. For a demon of the privy (b. Shabb. 67a)**

Say this [לימא הכי]: “On the skulls of lions and on the nostrils of their cubs shall be found the demon Siriq’a Pand’a. On a garden bed of leeks did you throw him, with the jawbone of an ass did you strike him.”<sup>87</sup>

**51. For a thin fish bone<sup>88</sup> [stuck in the throat] (b. Shabb. 67a)**

Say this [לימא הכי]: “You are stuck like a needle, locked in like in a cuirass: Go down, go down!”

**52. [Hebr.] The one who has a bone stuck in his throat should bring one of the same type and place it on his head (b. Shabb. 67a)**

[Here follows a parenthesis in the talmudic text]

[Aram.] and say this [לימא הכי]: “One by one,<sup>89</sup> go down and be swallowed, be swallowed, go down, one by one.”

<sup>84</sup> For an analysis of this incantation, see Gideon Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 414–417.

<sup>85</sup> See *DJBA*, see “ביסא.” Ms. Vatican 108 reads ביסא, whereas the Soncino and Vilna printed edition render כיפה.

<sup>86</sup> קלע (Hebrew).

<sup>87</sup> On the possible Mesopotamian (Akkadian) background of the demon, see Avigail Manekin Bamberger, “An Akkadian Demon in the Talmud: Between Šulak and Bar-Širiqa,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 44, No. 2 (2013). The incantation is also alluding to Judge 15:15, where Samson smites the Philistines with the jawbone of an ass.

<sup>88</sup> The meaning of the condition is entirely derived based on context. See *DJBA*, see “אורא.”

<sup>89</sup> After each *one by one* (חד חד), Ms. Oxford Opp. Add. fol. 23 adds חר חר.



53. **The one who (מאן האי) encounters a sorceress (b. Pesah. 110a–b)**

Say this [לימא הכי]: “Hot excrement in a perforated *d*-basket<sup>90</sup> in your mouths! Here, women of sorceries, may your baldness be bald,<sup>91</sup> may your crumbs fly away, and your spices be scattered, the wind carry off the new saffron you are holding, you sorceresses! As long as he showed grace to me and to you, I did not find myself in your midst. But now that I am in your midst, your grace and my grace have cooled down.”<sup>92</sup>

54. **The one who (מאן האי) is frightened (b. Meg. 3a//b. Sanh. 94a)**

Although he does not see [his guardian angel], the guardian angel sees him.

What is the remedy [תקנתיה]?

He should recite the *Shema*. And if<sup>93</sup> he is standing in a filthy place, he should remove himself by four cubits.

Alternatively, he should say this [לימא הכי]: “The goat in the slaughterhouse is fatter than I am.”

55. [Hebr.] Ben Azzai taught this: “Go there [i.e., to the privy] early and go there in the evening so that you will not<sup>94</sup> be far away from it. Feel yourself and only then sit down and do not sit down and only then feel yourself. For even if someone is performing harmful charms [כשפים] against him in Aspamia they will come upon him” (b. Ber. 62a).

[Aram.] What is the remedy [תקנתא] if he did feel himself after sitting down?

He should say the following [לימא האי כי]: “Not me, not me, not *tahus*, not *tatahus*,<sup>95</sup> not these and not from those, not sorceries for sorcerers [חרשי] and not sorceries from sorceresses.”

<sup>90</sup> See *DJBA*, see “דיקולא #1.”

<sup>91</sup> קר קרחיכו. On the basis of the text found on a bowl, Sokoloff (*DJBA*, see “קר”) suggests that the text in b. Pesah. was corrupt and should be read according to the bowl as קר קרחיכו: “excrement to your cooking pots.”

<sup>92</sup> On this recipe, see also Yaakov Elman, “Saffron, Spices, and Sorceresses: Magic Bowls and the Bavli,” in *Daughters of Hecate: Women and Magic in the Ancient World*, ed. Kimberly B. Stratton and Dayna S. Kalleres (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 370–373.

<sup>93</sup> Some Mss. take this as the introduction to an alternative therapy and dispense with another “alternatively.”

<sup>94</sup> The negation is missing in Ms. Munich 95.

<sup>95</sup> Ms. Paris 671 here renders *bus bus* (חוס חוס).

56. [Hebr.] The rabbis taught: A human should not drink water: not in the nights of the fourth day [i.e., Wednesday] nor in the nights of the Shabbat. And if he did drink, then his blood is on his head (b. Pesah. 112a).

[Aram.] What is the danger?

An evil spirit.

And if he did drink, what is the remedy [תקנתיה]?

He should say [גימא] “the seven voices” that David said over the water and then drank, as it is written: “The voice of God is upon the water, the God of glory thunders, God dwells on mighty waters. The voice of God comes in strength, the voice of God swells up. The voice of God breaks cedars, and God scatters the cedars of Lebanon. The voice of God splits with flames of fire. The voice of God governs the desert: The voice of God governs the desert of Kadesh. The voice of God frightened the hinds and strips the forests bare, and in his Temple everyone will proclaim: ‘Glory!’” (Ps. 29:3–5, 7–9). Alternatively, he should say [גימא] this: “*Lul*<sup>96</sup> *Shafan*, *Enigaron*, *Andariga*: I sit between the stars, between thin and fat.”<sup>97</sup>

Alternatively, he should rattle the cover of the jar and then drink.<sup>98</sup>

Alternatively, if there is someone with him, he should wake [the person] up<sup>99</sup> and say to him: “PN son/daughter of PN is thirsty for water,” and only after that he should drink.<sup>100</sup>

57. [Hebr.] The rabbis taught: “No human should drink from rivers or ponds at night. And if he did drink, his blood is on his head” (b. Pesah. 112a).

[Aram.] What is the danger? The danger of *shavriiri*.

And if he did drink, what is the remedy [תקנתיה]?

If there is someone with him, he should wake [the person] up and say to him: “PN son/daughter of PN is thirsty for water,” and only after that he should drink.

Alternatively, he should say to himself: “PN son/daughter of PN, as his mother told him:<sup>101</sup>

‘Beware of *shavriiri*, *vriri*, *riri*, *iri*, *ri* in white cups.’”<sup>102</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Ms. Munich 95: *Lyl*.

<sup>97</sup> Ms. Vatican 109 here adds another therapy: “alternatively, he should spit into it.”

<sup>98</sup> This therapy is after the next one in the printed edition and is absent from Ms. Munich 95 altogether.

<sup>99</sup> This verb is missing in Ms. Munich 95. Ms. Oxford Opp. Add. fol. 23 further specifies that the person is sleeping.

<sup>100</sup> This therapy is absent from Ms. Vatican 109. Ms. Vilna adds here: “Alternatively, he should throw something into the water and only then drink.”

<sup>101</sup> Ms. Oxford Opp. Add. fol. 23 reads, “as your mother told you.”

<sup>102</sup> The oft-observed decrease of letters in words has been associated with the “desired decline of the illness” (Versnel, “Poetics of the Magical Charm,” 130).