

The Aramaic Incantation Bowls in Their Late Antique Jewish Contexts

An International Conference

Yale University, Judaic Studies Program

April 4-5, 2022

Although known to specialists since the nineteenth century, the Aramaic incantation bowls have never been fully integrated into the field of Jewish Studies, largely due to their inaccessibility and the confounding nature of their contents. Fortunately, thanks to the recent publications of many new bowls, combined with an increasing interest in the study of the Babylonian Talmud within its wider cultural context, scholars are now beginning to recognize that the bowls hold tremendous value as the only other extant corpus, alongside the Talmud, produced by the Jews of the Sasanian Empire. Indeed, the vast collection of bowls has the potential to yield important new insights for the study of late antique Judaism. While recent research has demonstrated a range of linguistic, thematic, and cultural correspondences between the bowls and other Jewish corpora such as the Talmud, there are nevertheless many questions that remain to be evaluated. With the goal of advancing the study of this invaluable but neglected corpus, this international conference brings together leading and emerging scholars in the field to present cutting-edge research on the bowls in their late antique Jewish contexts.

The entire conference will be held over Zoom and is open to the public.

Register: <https://yale.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0sdeGspj0rGNAS4KZTSH5dc9lmR41OXZPK>

**Note that all times below are Eastern Time.*

MONDAY, APRIL 4TH

8:40am Introductory Remarks, *Alexander Marcus* and *Jason Mokhtarian*

Panel 1: "Jews, Rabbis, and Other Identities"

9:00am The Aramaic Magic Bowls and the Jews of Sasanian Babylonia, *Siam Bhayro*
9:30 Jesus Son of Mary Revisited: The Magical Jar from the École Biblique, *Tal Ilan*
10:00 The Rabbinic Body in Incantation Bowls, *Reuven Kiperwasser*
10:30 Families in the Incantation Bowls, *Jason Mokhtarian*
11-11:30 Discussion facilitated by Christine Hayes

Keynote Lecture

11:35-12:50pm "The Contribution of the Bowls to the Jewish Babylonian Aramaic Lexicon," *James Nathan Ford*

Panel 2: "Clients and Households in the Bowls"

2:00pm Gender and the Aramaic Incantation Bowls, *Ortal-Paz Saar*
2:30 The Matrons of Meishan: The Aramaic Bowls as an Archive of Motherhood, *Shira Eliassian*
3:00 When Fetuses Count in the Babylonian Incantation Bowls, *Sara Ronis*
3:30-4:00 Discussion facilitated by Michael Satlow

TUESDAY, APRIL 5TH

Panel 3: "Liturgy and Formulae"

9:00am "Therefore we should recite all of them": Liturgy in the Magic Bowls and Talmudic Redaction, *Avigail Manekin-Bamberger*
9:30 Jewish Aramaic Incantation Bowls and Jewish Liturgy, *Dan Levene*
10:00 "How to Join the Letters by Which Heaven and Earth Were Created": The Power of the Alphabet in the Magic Bowls, *Anne Burberry*
10:30 Variation and Purpose: Oral-Textual Transmission and Circulation, *Alexander Marcus*
11:00-11:30 Discussion (Q&A), facilitated by Richard Kalmin
11:30-12:30pm Conference Summary and Responses by Gideon Bohak and Rebecca Lesses