

Yale Judaic Studies presents:

# The Aramaic Incantation Bowls in Their Late Antique Jewish Contexts

April 4th-5th 2022

This is a virtual event, held on Zoom

[Register as an attendee](#)

## Organizers:

### Alexander Marcus

Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Postdoctoral  
Associate in Ancient Judaism  
at Yale University

### Jason Mokhtarian

Associate Professor and Herbert and  
Stephanie Neuman Chair in Hebrew  
and Jewish Literature at Cornell University

## Participants:

Siam Bhayro (University of Exeter)  
Gideon Bohak (Tel Aviv University)  
Anne Burberry (University of Exeter)  
Shira Eliassian (Yale University)  
James Nathan Ford (Bar-Ilan University)  
Christine Hayes (Yale University)  
Tal Ilan (Freie Universität Berlin)  
Richard Kalmin (Jewish Theological Seminary)  
Reuven Kiperwasser (Ariel University)  
Avigail Manekin-Bamberger (Hebrew University)  
Rebecca Lesses (Ithaca College)  
Dan Levene (University of Southampton)  
Alexander Marcus (Yale University)  
Jason Mokhtarian (Cornell University)  
Sara Ronis (St. Mary's University)  
Ortal-Paz Saar (Utrecht University)  
Michael Satlow (Brown University)

This event is cosponsored by  
The MacMillan Center, ARCHAIA,  
Yale Religious Studies,  
and Yale Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations



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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.

\*Note that all times below are Eastern Time

## Monday, April 4th

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

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

9:00 am **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

11:00 - 11:30 Discussion facilitated by Christine Hayes

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

### Panel 2: "Clients and Households in the Bowls"

2:00 pm **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"

9:00 am **"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 facilitated by Richard Kalmin

11:30 - 12:30 pm **Conference Summary and Responses  
by Gideon Bohak and Rebecca Lesses**